Initial Study & Environmental Analysis
For:

Green Valley Logistics Center Project

Prepared By:

COUNTY OF IMPERIAL
Planning & Development Services Department
801 Main Street
El Centro, CA 92243
(442) 265-1736
www.icpds.com

August 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1
INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

This document is a ☐ policy-level, ☒ project level Initial Study for evaluation of potential environmental impacts resulting from the proposed Green Valley Logistics Center Project .

B. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) REQUIREMENTS AND THE IMPERIAL COUNTY'S GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING CEQA

As defined by Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and Section 7 of the County's "CEQA Regulations Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA, as amended", an **Initial Study** is prepared primarily to provide the Lead Agency with information to use as the basis for determining whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Negative Declaration, or Mitigated Negative Declaration would be appropriate for providing the necessary environmental documentation and clearance for any proposed project.

☐ According to Section 15065, an **EIR** is deemed appropriate for a particular proposal if the following conditions occur:

- The proposal has the potential to substantially degrade quality of the environment.
- The proposal has the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals.
- The proposal has possible environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.
- The proposal could cause direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings.

☐ According to Section 15070(a), a **Negative Declaration** is deemed appropriate if the proposal would not result in any significant effect on the environment.

☒ According to Section 15070(b), a **Mitigated Negative Declaration** is deemed appropriate if it is determined that though a proposal could result in a significant effect, mitigation measures are available to reduce these significant effects to insignificant levels.

This Initial Study (IS) is prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et. seq.); Section 15070 of the State & County of Imperial's Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000, et. seq.); applicable requirements of the County of Imperial; and the regulations, requirements, and procedures of any other responsible public agency or an agency with jurisdiction by law.

Pursuant to the County of Imperial Guidelines for Implementing CEQA, depending on the project scope, the County of Imperial Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission and/or Planning Director is designated as the Lead Agency, in accordance with Section 15050 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Lead Agency is the public agency which has the principal responsibility for approving the necessary environmental clearances and analyses for any project in the County.

C. INTENDED USES OF INITIAL STUDY AND NEGATIVE DECLARATION

1) This IS and Notice of Preparation (NOP) are informational documents which are intended to inform County of Imperial decision makers, other responsible or interested agencies, and the general public of potential environmental effects of the proposed applications. The environmental review process has been established to enable public agencies to evaluate environmental consequences and to examine and implement methods of eliminating or reducing any potentially adverse impacts. While CEQA requires that consideration be given to avoiding environmental damage, the Lead Agency and other responsible public agencies must balance adverse environmental effects against other public objectives, including economic and social goals. The IS and NOP prepared for the Project will be circulated for a period of 35 days for public and agency review and comments.

D. CONTENTS OF INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study is organized to facilitate a basic understanding of the existing setting and environmental implications of the proposed applications.

SECTION 1

I. INTRODUCTION presents an introduction to the entire report. This section discusses the environmental process, scope of environmental review, and incorporation by reference documents.

SECTION 2

II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM contains the County's Environmental Checklist Form. The checklist form presents results of the environmental evaluation for the proposed applications and those issue areas that would have either a significant impact, a potentially significant impact, or no impact.

PROJECT SUMMARY, LOCATION, AND EVIRONMENTAL SETTINGS describes the proposed project entitlements and required applications. A description of discretionary approvals and permits required for project implementation is also included. It also identifies the location of the project and a general description of the surrounding environmental settings.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS evaluates each response provided in the environmental checklist form. Each response checked in the checklist form is discussed and supported with sufficient data and analysis as necessary. As appropriate, each response discussion describes and identifies specific impacts anticipated with project implementation.

SECTION 3

III. MANDATORY FINDINGS presents Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

IV. PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED identifies those persons consulted and involved in preparation of this Initial Study.

V. REFERENCES lists bibliographical materials used in preparation of this document.

E. SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

For evaluation of environmental impacts, each question from the Environmental Checklist Form is summarized and responses are provided according to the analysis undertaken as part of the Initial Study. Impacts and effects will be evaluated and quantified, when appropriate. To each question, there are four possible responses, including:

1. **No Impact:** A "No Impact" response is adequately supported if the impact simply does not apply to the proposed applications.

2. **Less Than Significant Impact:** The proposed applications will have the potential to impact the environment. These impacts, however, will be less than significant; no additional analysis is required.

3. **Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated:** This applies where incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact".

4. **Potentially Significant Impact:** The proposed applications could have impacts that are considered significant. Additional analyses and possibly an EIR could be required to identify mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts to less-than-significant levels.

F. POLICY-LEVEL or PROJECT-LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This Initial Study will be conducted under a ☐ policy-level, ☒ project level analysis. Regarding mitigation measures, it is not the intent of this document to "overlap" or restate conditions of approval that are commonly established for future known projects or the proposed applications. Additionally, those other standard requirements and regulations that any development must comply with, that are outside the County's jurisdiction, are also not considered mitigation measures and, therefore, will not be identified in this document.

G. TIERED DOCUMENTS AND INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Information, findings, and conclusions contained in this document are based on incorporation by reference of tiered documentation, which is discussed in the following section.

1. Tiered Documents

As permitted in Section 15152(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, information and discussions from other documents can be included into this document. Tiering is defined as follows:

"Tiering refers to using the analysis of general matters contained in a broader EIR (such as the one prepared for a general plan or policy statement) with later EIRs and negative declarations on narrower projects; incorporating by reference the general discussions from the broader EIR; and concentrating the later EIR or negative declaration solely on the issues specific to the later project."

Tiering also allows this document to comply with Section 15152(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, which discourages redundant analyses, as follows:

"Agencies are encouraged to tier the environmental analyses which they prepare for separate but related projects including the general plans, zoning changes, and development projects. This approach can eliminate repetitive discussion of the same issues and focus the later EIR or negative declaration on the actual issues ripe for decision at each level of environmental review. Tiering is appropriate when the sequence of analysis is from an EIR prepared for a general plan, policy or program to an EIR or negative declaration for another plan, policy, or program of lesser scope, or to a site-specific EIR or negative declaration."
Further, Section 15152(d) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

"Where an EIR has been prepared and certified for a program, plan, policy, or ordinance consistent with the requirements of this section, any lead agency for a later project pursuant to or consistent with the program, plan, policy, or ordinance should limit the EIR or negative declaration on the later project to effects which:

(1) Were not examined as significant effects on the environment in the prior EIR; or

(2) Are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by the choice of specific revisions in the project, by the imposition of conditions, or other means."

2. Incorporation By Reference

Incorporation by reference is a procedure for reducing the size of EIRs/MNDs and is most appropriate for including long, descriptive, or technical materials that provide general background information, but do not contribute directly to the specific analysis of the project itself. This procedure is particularly useful when an EIR or Negative Declaration relies on a broadly-drafted EIR for its evaluation of cumulative impacts of related projects (*Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation v. County of Los Angeles* [1986, 177 Ca.3d 300]). If an EIR or Negative Declaration relies on information from a supporting study that is available to the public, the EIR or Negative Declaration cannot be deemed unsupported by evidence or analysis (*San Francisco Ecology Center v. City and County of San Francisco* [1975, 48 Ca.3d 584, 595]). This document incorporates by reference appropriate information from the "Final Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Assessment for the "County of Imperial General Plan EIR" prepared by Brian F. Mooney Associates in 1993 and updates.

When an EIR or Negative Declaration incorporates a document by reference, the incorporation must comply with Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines as follows:

- The incorporated document must be available to the public or be a matter of public record (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[a]). The General Plan EIR and updates are available, along with this document, at the County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243 Ph. (442) 265-1736.

- This document must be available for inspection by the public at an office of the lead agency (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[b]). These documents are available at the County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243 Ph. (442) 265-1736.

- These documents must summarize the portion of the document being incorporated by reference or briefly describe information that cannot be summarized. Furthermore, these documents must describe the relationship between the incorporated information and the analysis in the tiered documents (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[c]). As discussed above, the tiered EIRs address the entire project site and provide background and inventory information and data which apply to the project site. Incorporated information and/or data will be cited in the appropriate sections.

- These documents must include the State identification number of the incorporated documents (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[d]). The State Clearinghouse Number for the County of Imperial General Plan EIR is SCH #93011023.

- The material to be incorporated in this document will include general background information (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[f]). This has been previously discussed in this document.

This document incorporates by reference the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and Mesquite Lake Specific Plan EIR (SCH# 2005021116), both prepared by the County of Imperial in 2006. The Mesquite Lake Specific Plan consists of approximately 5,100 acres located in central Imperial County, between State Route (SR) 86 on the west and SR 111 plus ¼ mile on the east and is bordered by Harris Road on the south and Keystone Road on the north. Imperial County designated the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan Area on the 1993 General Plan to provide an opportunity to develop new job-producing light, medium, and heavy industrial uses.

The overall goal of the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan is to support economic development within Imperial

County and allow for heavy industrial development in an area that is away from urban conflicts and its cities through job creation in the employment sectors of manufacturing, fabrication, processing, wholesaling, transportation, and energy resource development; and create and preserve an area where a full range of industrial uses with moderate to high nuisance characteristics may locate. The Project would accommodate continuation and expansion of the Holly Sugar Plant, including the potential for an ethanol production plant for both on-site power and export; continuation and expansion of the existing alternative energy production operations; and establishment of new manufacturing uses and warehousing and distribution facilities.

II. Environmental Checklist

1. **Project Title**: Green Valley Logistics Center Project
2. **Lead Agency**: Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department
3. **Contact person and phone number**: David Black, Planner, (442) 265-1736, ext. 1746
4. **Address**: 801 Main Street, El Centro CA, 92243
5. **E-mail**: DavidBlack@co.imperial.ca.us
6. **Project location**: The Project would be located on approximately 285 gross acres within Imperial County (County), California, approximately 1.25 miles north of the City of Imperial. The Project would be west of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), east of SR 86 (Imperial Avenue), north of Harris Road, and south of Newside Drain Number 1-A, entirely within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and on land owned by Tomcat Development LLC. The Project would be within Section 31 of Township 14 South, Range 14 East, San Bernardino Base Meridian, and Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 040-340-004, 040-340-006, 040-340-032, and 040-340-033.
7. **Project sponsor's name and address**: Tomcat Development LLC
   224 South 8th Street, El Centro, California 92243
8. **General Plan designation**: Mesquite Lake Specific Plan
9. **Zoning**: Mesquite Lake Specific Plan, ML GS (Mesquite Lake Government / Special Public), ML I-2 (Mesquite Lake Medium Industrial), ML I-3 (Mesquite Lake Heavy Industrial). All parcels have a Renewable Energy Overlay.
10. **Description of project**: The Project would allow for the development and operation of three (3) rail loop tracks totaling approximately 33,000 track feet, a rail ladder track totaling approximately 25,000 track feet, and approximately 2,000 track feet of spur that all tie into the adjacent Union Pacific Railroad ROW ('rail system'). The rail system will facilitate inbound and outbound trains of commodities as well as the transloading of commodities to and from trucks. Also included in the Project are a grain elevator; shipping container depot, including but not limited to the function of hay/grain export; a veterans memorial area adjacent to the existing cemetery; a fuel blending / transloading area; a fueling station, including but not limited to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG, methane); the extension of a SoCal Gas line from Keystone Road approximately 1.3 miles along State Route 86 to the Project Site; warehousing; and areas for transloading and storage of commodities (Proposed Project). Further, the Project's Tentative Tract Map proposes to re-configure the existing parcels and a grant of road right-of way to the County for an Industrial Street. The Project also includes a specific plan amendment and zone change application to change land use and zoning from Light and Medium Industrial to Heavy Industrial.
11. **Surrounding land uses and setting**: Mesquite Lake Specific Plan is located north, east, and south of the Project site, with agricultural land uses and equipment dealerships and other businesses located west of the Project site. North of the site is vacant, disturbed land, followed by a sugar manufacturing facility. East of the site is the UPRR, followed by agricultural fields. South of the site are agricultural fields as well as a property with a CUP for the development of a fertilizer terminal. The constructed portion of the fertilizer terminal is 3-phase power located in the center of the parcel, which tenant farmers farm around. A mix of agricultural fields and manufacturing uses, including Bakersfield Pipe Supply, RDO Farm Equipment, Empire Construction Machine Rental, and Rain for Rent, are located west of the Project site. The nearest single-family home is located approximately 0.25 mile east of the Project site.
12. **Other public agencies whose approval is required** (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement): Imperial Irrigation District (IID), Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD), California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA).
13. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested**

consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?

In accordance with Senate Bill (SB) 18 and Assembly Bill (AB) 52, Native American tribes with potential resources in the area were notified of the Project on August 29, 2022, with a late SB 18 letter being sent out on October 18, 2022 and offered the opportunity for consultation. Responses for SB 18 were due by November 28, 2022 and January 16, 2023 respectively, and AB 52 responses were due by September 28, 2022. As of January 17, 2023, the Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation was the only Tribe to respond, noting that they have no comments on the Project.

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code, Section 21083.3.2). Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code, Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code, Section 21082.3 (c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

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.

☐	Aesthetics	☐	Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☒	Air Quality
☒	Biological Resources	☒	Cultural Resources	☐	Energy
☒	Geology /Soils	☐	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☒	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
☒	Hydrology / Water Quality	☐	Land Use / Planning	☐	Mineral Resources
☒	Noise	☐	Population / Housing	☒	Public Services
☐	Recreation	☒	Transportation	☒	Tribal Cultural Resources
☐	Utilities/Service Systems	☐	Wildfire	☒	Mandatory Findings of Significance

ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE (EEC) DETERMINATION

After Review of the Initial Study, the Environmental Evaluation Committee has:

☐ Found that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ Found 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.

☐ Found that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ Found 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.

☐ Found 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.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE DE MINIMIS IMPACT FINDING: ☐ Yes ☒ No

EEC VOTES	YES	NO	ABSENT
PUBLIC WORKS	☒	☐	☐
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SVCS	☒	☐	☐
OFFICE EMERGENCY SERVICES	☒	☐	☐
APCD	☒	☐	☐
AG	☒	☐	☐
SHERIFF DEPARTMENT	☒	☐	☐
ICPDS	☒	☐	☐

For [signature] 8-10-2023

Jim Minnick, Director of Planning/EEC Chairman Date:

PROJECT SUMMARY

Tomcat Development LLC (Applicant) is proposing the Green Valley Logistics Center Project (Project or Proposed Project), a Railroad Facility on approximately 285 acres in Imperial County (County), California. The Project would allow for the development and operation of three (3) rail loop tracks totaling approximately 22,000 track feet, a rail ladder track totaling approximately 25,000 track feet, and approximately 2,000 track feet of spur that all tie into the adjacent Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way (ROW; 'rail system'). The Railroad Facility will facilitate inbound and outbound trains of commodities as well as the transloading of commodities to and from trucks. Near the tracks will be a warehousing building(s) and covered storage area(s). Also included in the Project are a grain elevator; shipping container depot, including, but not limited to, the function of hay/grain export; a veteran's memorial area adjacent to the existing cemetery; a fuel blending / transloading area, a fueling station, including, but not limited to CNG (compressed natural gas), unleaded fuel, electrical vehicle chargers, hydrogen fueling and diesel; the extension of SoCal Gas's main line will be extended approximately 1.3 miles along State Route 86 to the Project site from Keystone Road to the north; and areas for transloading and storage of commodities (Proposed Project). Further, the Project's Tentative Tract Map proposes to re-configure the existing parcels and grant of road right-of way to the County for an Industrial Street. After the Tentative Tract Map is approved by the County, a Final Map will need to be recorded to effectuate the proposed property lines and dedicate the road ROW to the County. The Project also includes a specific plan amendment and zone change application to change land use and zoning for a portion of the site from Light and Medium Industrial to Heavy Industrial for land use, and Mesquite Lake Governmental / Special Public and Mesquite Lake Medium Industrial to Mesquite Lake Heavy Industrial for zoning.

A. PROJECT LOCATION

The Project is located on approximately 285 gross acres within Imperial County, California, approximately 1.25 miles north of the City of Imperial (Project site; Figure 1, Project Site Location). The Project is west of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), east of SR 86 (Imperial Avenue), north of Harris Road, and south of Newside Drain Number 1-A. The Project is entirely within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan on land owned by Tomcat Development LLC. The Project is within Section 31 of Township 14 South, Range 14 East, San Bernardino Base Meridian on APNs 040-340-004, 040-340-006, 040-340-032 and 040-340-033.

The Project area is zoned Mesquite Lake Specific Plan, including ML GS (Mesquite Lake Government / Special Public), ML I-2 (Mesquite Lake Medium Industrial) and ML I-3 (Mesquite Lake Heavy Industrial), with a Renewable Energy Overlay Zone (Figure 2, Zoning Map). The General Plan Land Use designation for the entire Project is Mesquite Lake Specific Plan (Figure 3, Land Use Designation Map).

B. CURRENT USE OF THE PROJECT SITE, SURROUNDING AREAS, AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Project site contains existing agricultural operations, including approximately 120 acres of recently harvested wheat that is planted and harvested as a rotation crop between other crops as well as approximately 84 acres that has been periodically farmed and is currently growing sugar beets and sudan grass. The Project has an existing mainline switch on the Union Pacific Railroad and approximately 0.5 mile of on-site track. The Project site has vacant areas that have previously been farmed and the existing Memory Gardens Cemetery. Over the last 10 years, the Project site has consumed approximately 630 acre-feet per year (AFY) of water for agricultural purposes based on an average use factor of 5.25 acre-feet per acre. Based on delivery records from IID from 2013 thru 2022 the Project site has his historically used an annual average of 1,708 AFY for agricultural and landscaping purposes.

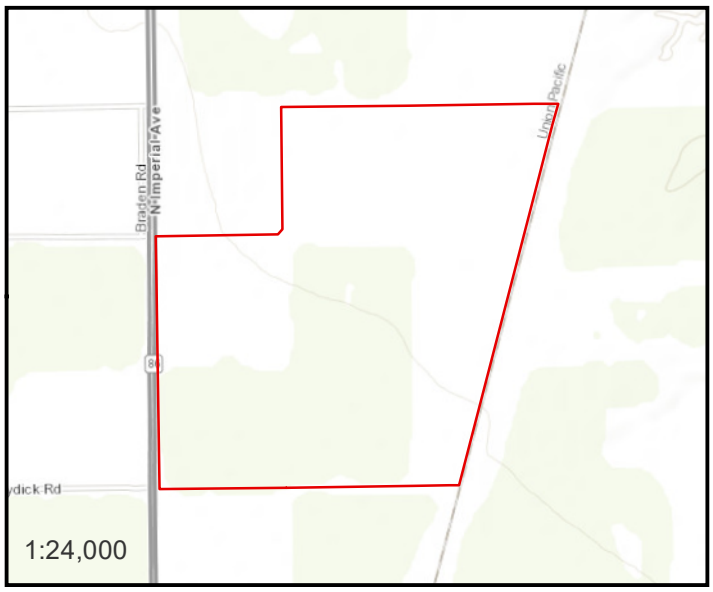
Mesquite Lake Specific Plan is located north, east, and south of the Project site, with agricultural land uses and equipment dealerships and other businesses located west of the Project site. North of the site is vacant, disturbed land, followed by a sugar manufacturing facility. East of the site is the UPRR, followed by agricultural fields. South of the site are agricultural fields as well as a property with a CUP for the development of a fertilizer terminal. A mix of agricultural fields and manufacturing uses, including Bakersfield Pipe Supply, RDO Farm Equipment, Empire Construction Machine Rental, and Rain for Rent, are located west of the Project site. The nearest single-family home is located approximately 0.25 mile east of the Project site.

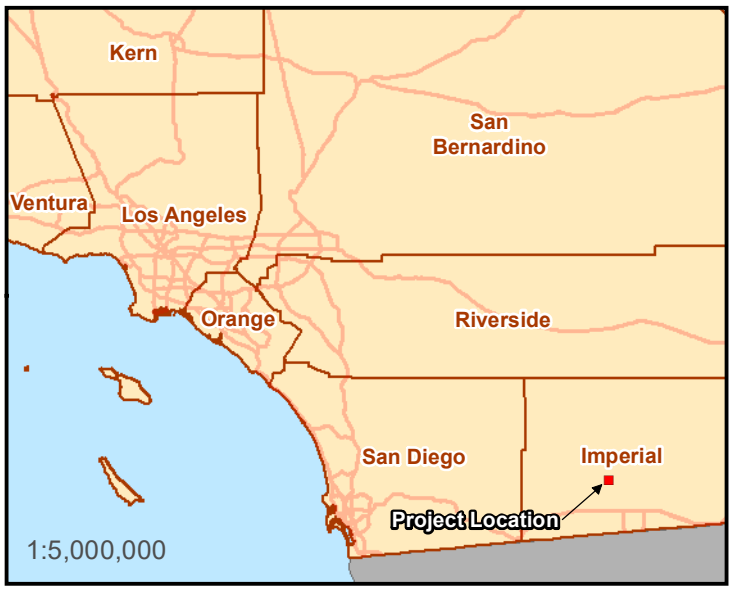
As previously mentioned, this document incorporates by reference the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and Mesquite Lake Specific Plan EIR (SCH# 2005021116), both prepared by the County of Imperial in 2006. The Mesquite Lake Specific Plan consists of approximately 5,100 acres located in central Imperial County, between State Route (SR) 86 on the west and SR 111 plus ¼ mile on the east and is bordered by Harris Road on the south and Keystone Road on the north. Imperial County designated the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan Area on the 1993 General Plan to provide an opportunity to develop new job-producing light, medium, and heavy industrial uses. The following specific environmental issues were identified by the County for evaluation in the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR):

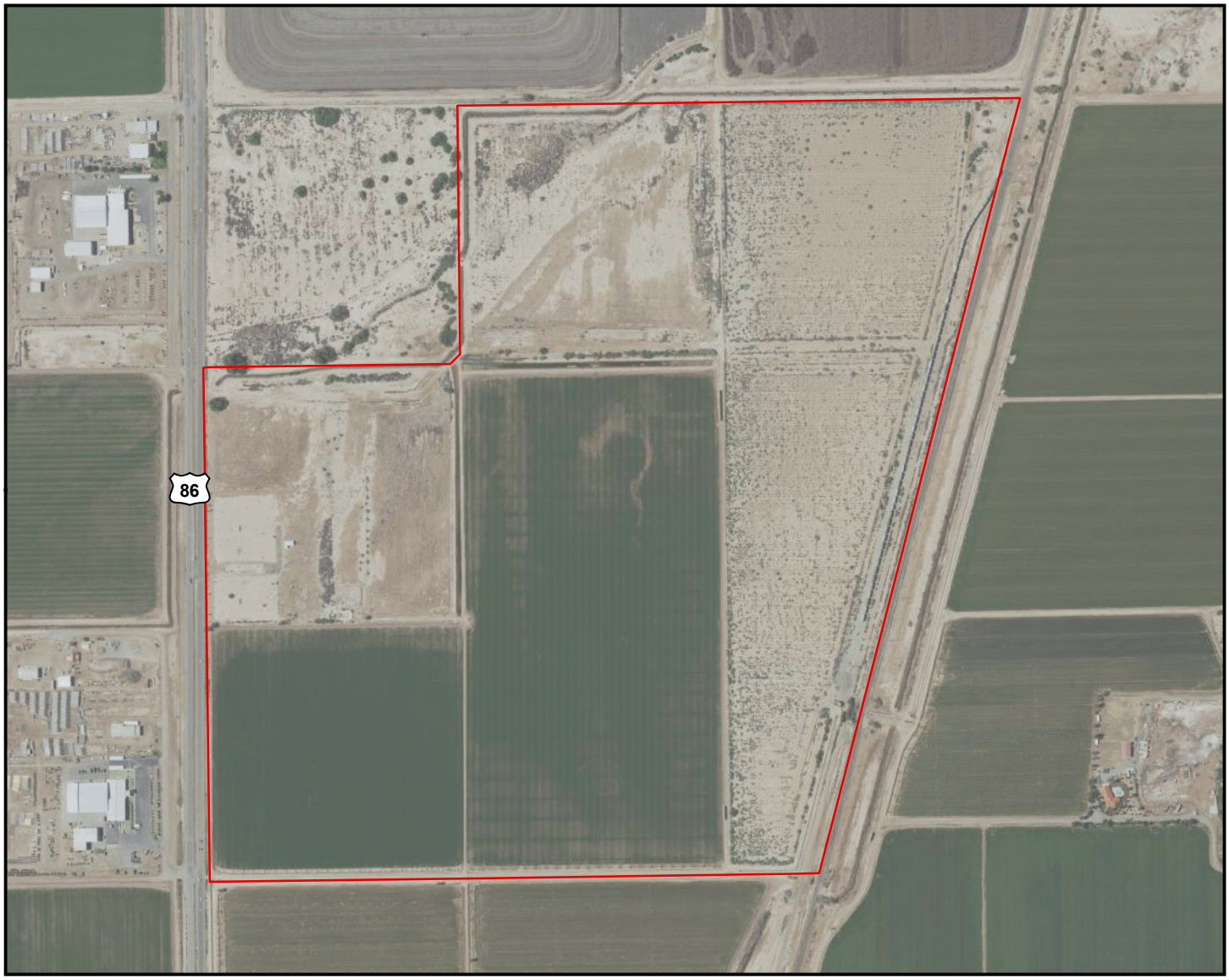
- Agricultural Resources
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Air Quality and Odor
- Land Use and Planning
- Biological Resources
- Archaeological Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Public Services and Utilities
- Traffic/Circulation

Impacts to Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, and Recreation were evaluated under the effects found not to be significant section of the MEIR. All other resource areas that are evaluated per the 2022 Appendix G CEQA Guidelines, were not required to be evaluated at the time 2006.

The overall goal of the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan is to support economic development within Imperial County and allow for heavy industrial development in an area that is away from urban conflicts and its cities through job creation in the employment sectors of manufacturing, fabrication, processing, wholesaling, transportation, and energy resource development; and create and preserve an area where a full range of industrial uses with moderate to high nuisance characteristics may locate.







Project Location

N

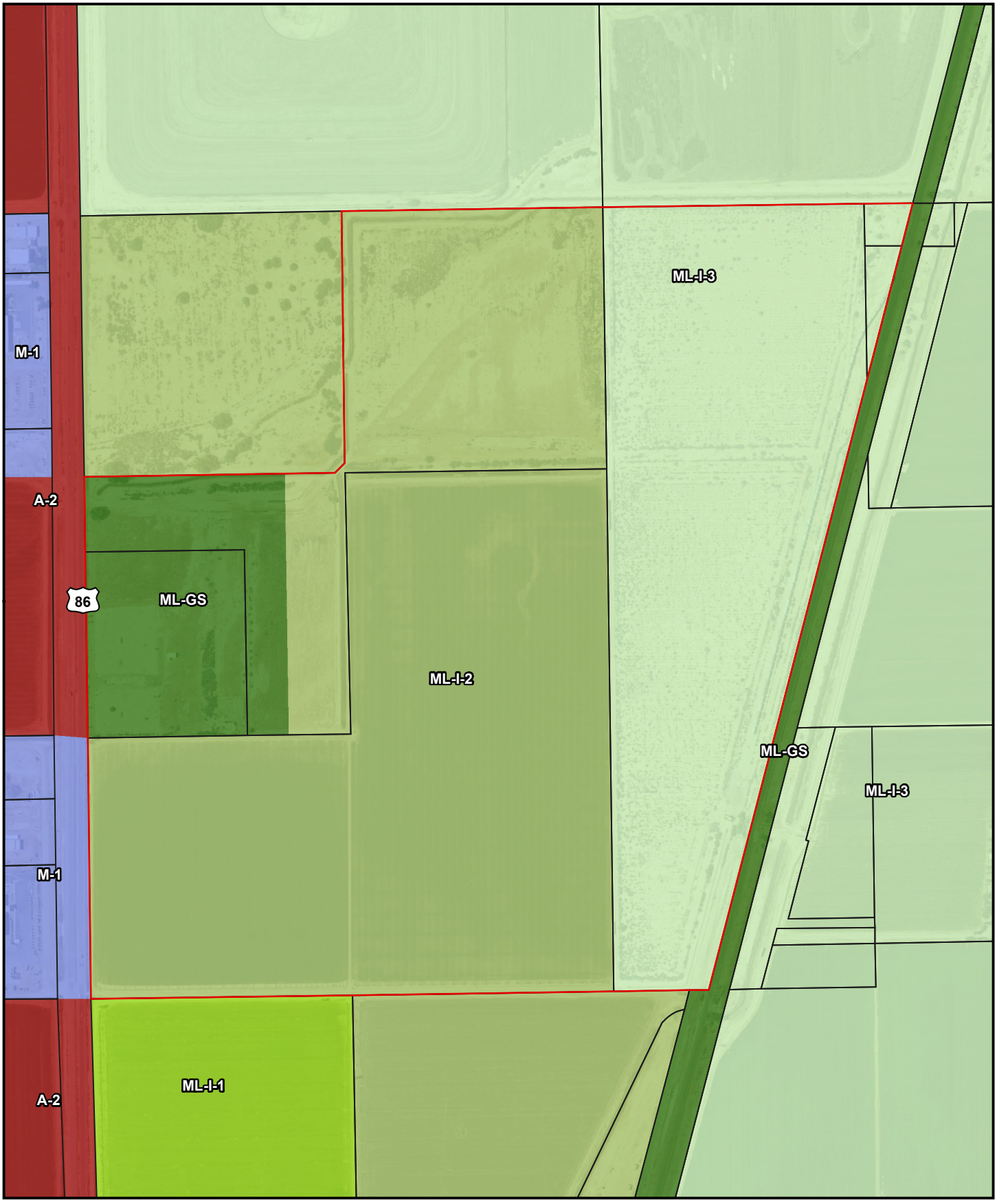
0 250 500 1,000

Feet

Figure 1
Green Valley Logistics Center
Project Location and Vicinity

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 1 Project Site Location.Mxd
Print Date: 5/11/2022 8:55:00 PM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP



Project Location Parcels

Zoning

- A-2
- M-1
- ML-GS
- ML-I-1
- ML-I-2
- ML-I-3

N

0 250 500 1,000

Feet

Figure 2
Green Valley Logistics Center
Zoning

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 2 Zoning.Mxd
Print Date: 5/12/2022 4:37:53 PM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP

Project Location

Land Use

Agriculture
Heavy Industrial
Medium Industrial
Light Industrial
Mesquite Lake Specific Plan Area

N

0 250 500 1,000

Feet

Figure 3
Green Valley Logistics Center
Land Use Designation

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 3 Land Use Designation.Mxd
Print Date: 6/30/2022 10:34:07 AM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP

C. PROJECT SUMMARY

The Project would include the uses as described in Table 1: Proposed Uses.

Table 1: Proposed Uses

Use	Logistical Function / Description	Approximate Area (acres)
Existing Cemetery and Memorial Area	Regular Vehicle Traffic	10
Grain Elevator System	Inbound Rail – Outbound Truck for Corn/Grain Distribution to Cattle Feeder Yards	10
Centralized Water Treatment & Storage System	Provide Potable & Fire Water to the Project Area	2
Hay and Grain Export and Container Depot	Hay/Grain: Inbound Truck – Outbound Rail Containers: Inbound Rail – Outbound Rail and Truck	144
Produce / Food Export Transloading/Warehousing	Inbound Truck – Outbound Rail	10
Fuel Blending / Transloading	Inbound Rail – Outbound Truck	10
Fueling Station, including but not Limited to CNG	Trucks Already On-Site Fuel Up and Public Use	9.5
General Commodities: Transloading/Warehousing	Inbound Rail – Outbound Truck	64
Storm Water Retention Basin	Project Hydrology Program	19
Circulation	On-site Project Roadway	6
Total		**284.5**

As mentioned in Table 1, the Project includes development of a stormwater retention basin. The Project site layout is illustrated in Figure 4, Project Site Plan. The Project's Tentative Tract Map proposes to re-configure the existing parcels, and grant of road right-of way to the County for an Industrial Street. Site uses are further described in Project Operations below.

As mentioned, the Project also includes a specific plan amendment and a zone change to amend parcels, approximately 195 acres, from ML-GS and ML I-2 to ML I-3 and from Light and Medium Industrial to Heavy Industrial, as shown in Figure 5, Proposed Land Use and Zoning Changes. The Heavy Industrial designation would allow for greater flexibility in terms of industrial uses. The proposed zoning and lot line adjustments are shown in Figure 6, Proposed Zoning, Land Use, and Lot Lines. The allowed uses for each zone are described below and in Table 2: Allowed Uses.

ML GS (Mesquite Lake Government/Special Public)

The ML GS (Mesquite Lake Government/Special Public) zoning designation may be applied within the Specific Plan to allow for the construction, development, and operation of governmental facilities and special public facilities, as permitted in the G/S (Government/Special Public) Zone of the County Land Use Ordinance but excluding jails or other incarceration facilities.

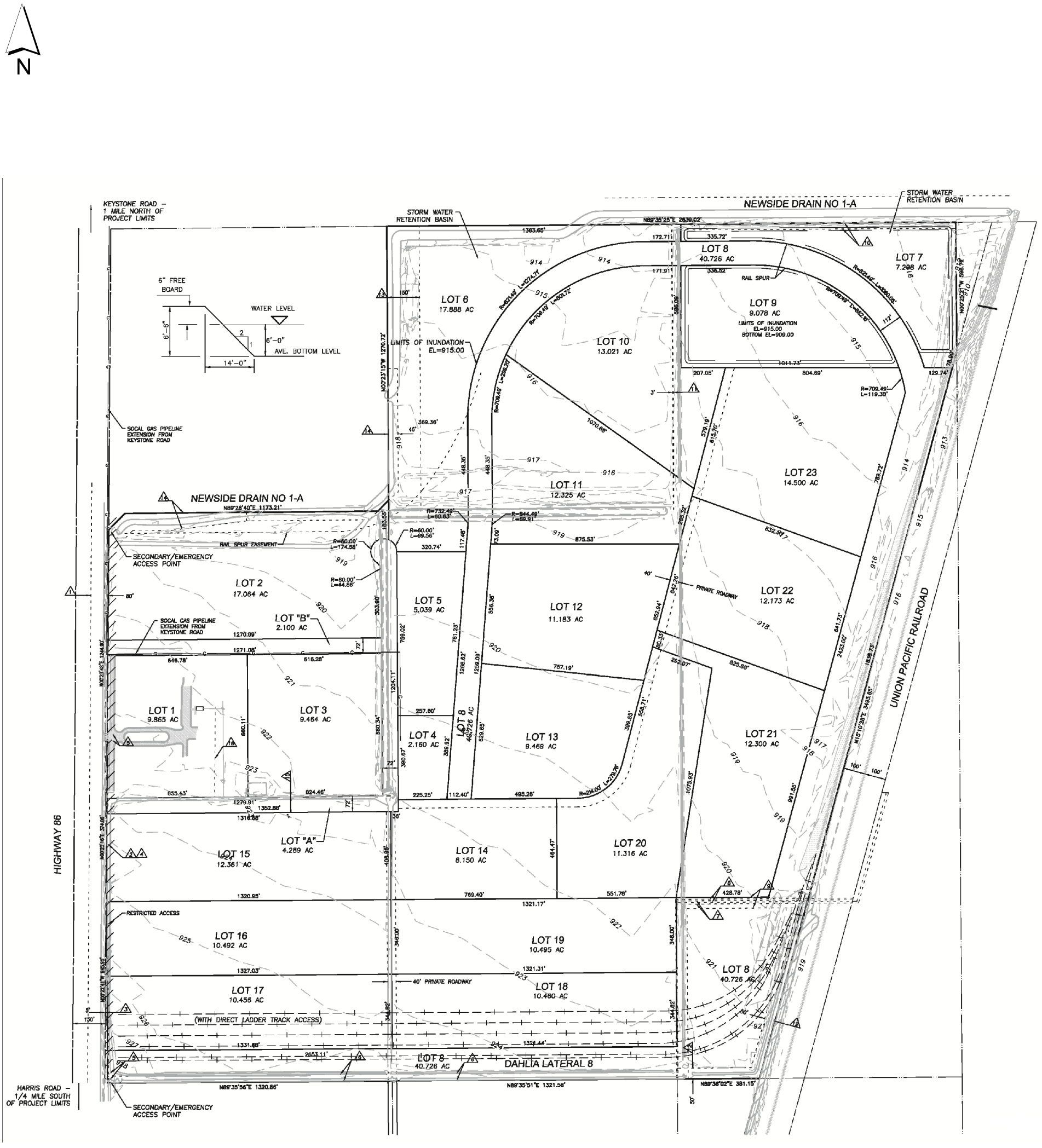
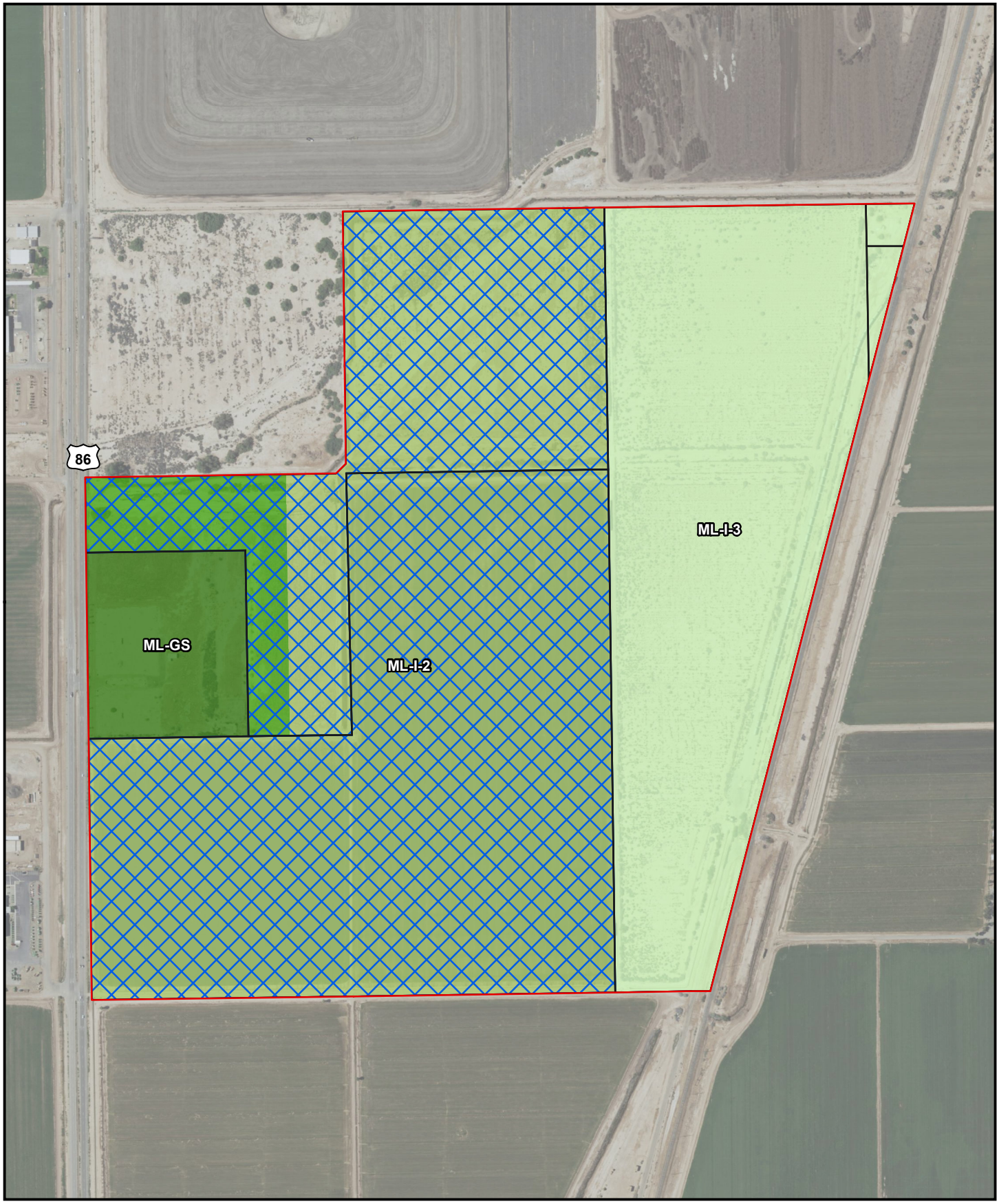


Figure 4
Green Valley Logistics Center
Project Site Plan

CHAMBERS GROUP

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 4 Project Site Plan.Mxd
Print Date: 7/19/2023 2:13:32 PM Author: pcarlos



Project Location

Proposed ML-I-3/Heavy Industrial Zoning and Land Use Area

Zoning/Landuse

- ML-GS/Light Industrial
- ML-GS/Medium Industrial
- ML-I-2/Medium Industrial
- ML-I-3/Heavy Industrial

N

0 250 500 1,000

Feet

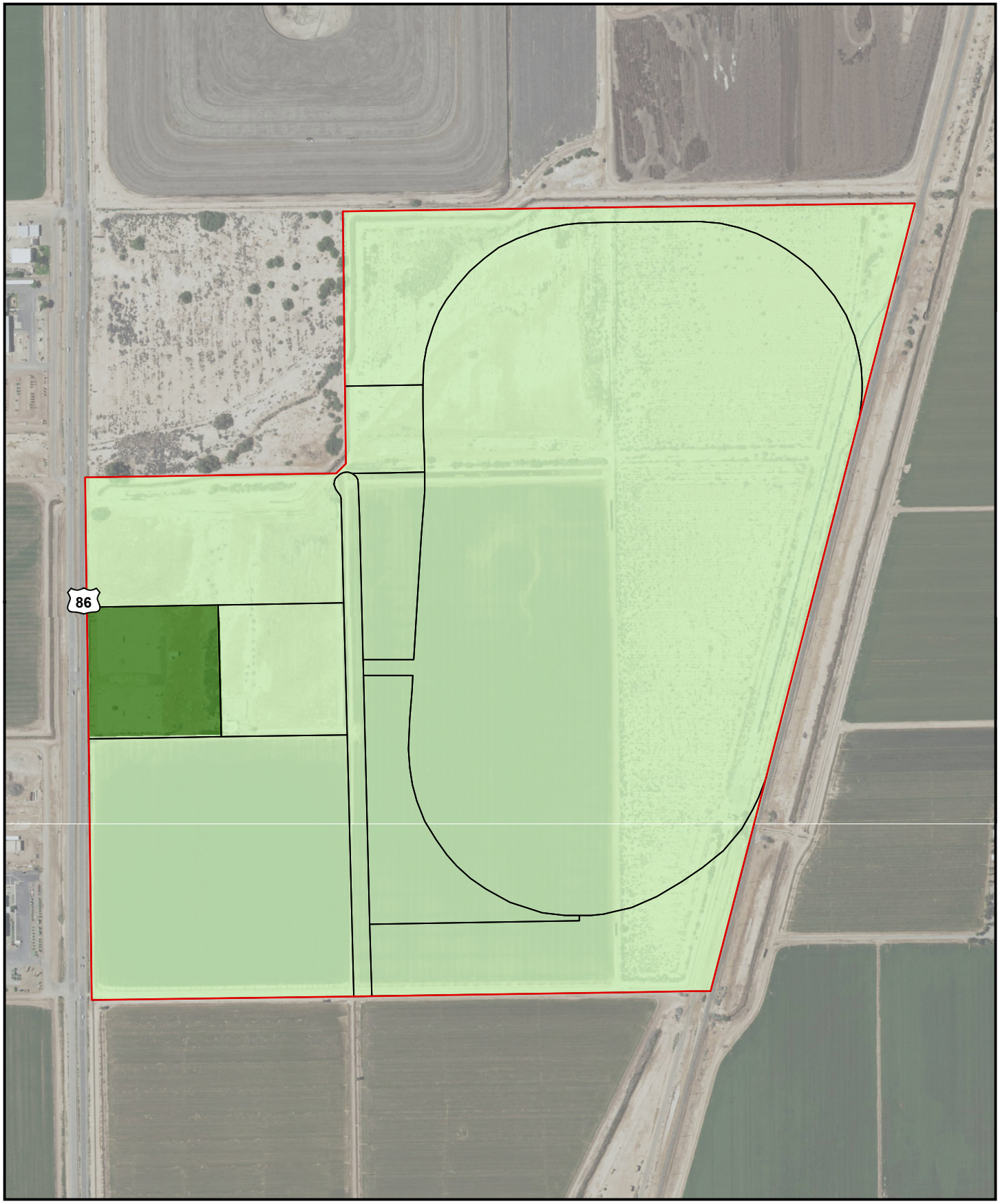
Figure 5

Green Valley Logistics Center

Proposed Land Use and Zoning Changes

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 5 Proposed Land Use and Zoning Changes.Mxd
Print Date: 6/30/2022 1:05:42 PM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP



Project Location

Proposed Lot Line Adjustment

Zoning/Land Use

ML-GS/Light Industrial

ML-I-3/Heavy Industrial

N

0 250 500 1,000

Feet

Figure 6

Green Valley Logistics Center

Proposed Zoning, Land Use, and Lot Lines

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 6 Proposed Zoning Land Use and Lot Lines.Mxd
Print Date: 7/1/2022 2:41:52 PM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP

ML I-2: Medium Industrial

The MLI-2 (Mesquite Lake Medium Industrial) zoning designation is intended to provide areas to accommodate light (MLI-1) and medium intensity industrial type uses such as wholesale distribution centers, warehousing, storage, trucking, assembly type manufacturing, general manufacturing, research and development, medium intensity fabrication, and other similar medium intensity processing facilities, industrial/business parks, industrial plants, power plants (generation and transmission of electrical energy), truck and rail container storage, and research and development facilities. The processing or fabrication within any of these facilities is to be limited to activities conducted either entirely within a building or within securely fenced (obscured fencing) areas. Provided further that such facilities do not omit fumes, odor, dust, smoke, or gas beyond the confines of the property line within which their activity occurs or produces significant levels of noise or vibration beyond the perimeter of the site. Certain specified agricultural and agricultural processing uses would also be permitted.

ML I-3 Allowed Uses

The MLI-3 zoning designation is for most intense, heaviest type of manufacturing processing, or fabrication facilities. It will however also allow "permitted" uses from the MLI-1 and MLI-2 type of uses, provided they are compatible and meet the standards of the plan. Processing or fabrication in these areas is allowed to be conducted entirely within a building or outside of a building, provided however the facility does not omit fumes, odors, dust, smoke, or gas beyond the confines of the property upon which the activity occurs, nor produces significant levels of noise or vibrations beyond the perimeter of the site. Certain specified agricultural uses would also be permitted.

Table 2: Allowed Uses

Use	Zoning		
	ML GS	ML I-2	ML I-3
Airport (public).	A	–	–
Adult care facilities.	–	–	–
Agricultural products (growing, harvesting, and processing).	A	–	–
Business and industry incubation space (non-volatile materials).	A	–	–
Cargo container (provided they have an approved building permit).	A	–	–
Childcare facilities.	–	–	–
Commercial cannabis (cultivation non-volatile materials), subject to Division 4, Chapter 6 of Title 9, Land Use Ordinance and Title 14 of the Imperial County Codified Ordinances.	A	–	–
County buildings.	A	–	–
Electrical vehicles charging stations as an accessory use (incidental to primary use).	A	–	–
Incarceration.	–	–	–
Industrial hemp, including the cultivation, harvesting and testing, and light processing, subject to Division 4, Chapter 6 of Title 9, Land Use Ordinance and Title 14 of the Imperial County Codified Ordinances.	A	–	–
Industrial hemp (non-volatile materials): Manufacturing into semi-finished and finished products, subject to Division 4, Chapter 6 of Title 9 Land Use Ordinance and Title 14 of the Imperial County Codified Ordinances.	A	–	–
Maintenance facilities.	A	–	–
Offices.	A	–	–
Parks, organized camps.	A	–	–
Public buildings.	A	–	–
Research and development (non-volatile materials).	A	–	–
Schools.	A	–	–
Solar energy extraction generation if it is for on-site consumption only.	A	–	–
Solid waste recycling facility.	A	–	–
Airport (private)	CUP	–	–
Business and industry incubation space (volatile materials).	CUP	–	–

Use	Zoning		
	ML GS	ML I-2	ML I-3
Commercial cannabis manufacturing (volatile materials), subject to Division 4, Chapter 6 of Title 9, Land Use Ordinance and Title 14 of the Imperial County Codified Ordinances.	CUP	–	–
Communication towers, including radio, television, cellular, digital, along with the necessary support equipment such as receivers, transmitters, antennas, satellite dishes, relays, etc. (subject to requirements of this zone and Division 24; Section 92401 "Communications Facilities Ordinance" et al).	CUP	–	–
Hazardous materials disposal	CUP	–	–
Hazardous materials processing	CUP	–	–
Hazardous materials recycling	CUP	–	–
Hazardous materials treating	CUP	–	–
Industrial hemp (volatile materials): manufacturing into semi-finished and finished products, subject to Division 4, Chapter 6 of Title 9, Land Use Ordinance and Title 14 of the Imperial County Codified Ordinance	CUP	–	–
Major facilities relating to the generation and transmission of electrical energy provides such facilities are not under state or federal law, to approved exclusively by an agency, or agencies of the state or federal government, and provided such facilities shall be approved subsequent to coordination review of the IID for electrical matters. Such uses shall include but be limited to the following: Electrical generation plants (less than 50 WW). Facilities for the transmission of electrical energy (100—200 kV). Electrical substations in an electrical transmission system (500 kV/230 kV/161 kV)	CUP	–	–
Research and development (volatile materials)	CUP	–	–
Solid waste landfill facility	CUP	–	–
Training facility	CUP	–	–
Water treatment facility	CUP	–	–
Wastewater treatment facility	CUP	–	–
Caretaker or security residence	A	A	A
Retail Trade	–	A	A
Agricultural/Nursery Supplies and Services	–	A	A
Automotive and Light Truck Repair	–	A	A
Building Contractor's Offices and Yards	–	A	A
Services and Related Support Facilities	–	A	A
Administrative and Professional Offices	–	A	A
Conference/Convention/Meeting Facilities	–	A	A
Repair and Rental Services	–	A	A
Manufacturing and Assembly	–	A	A
Light Manufacturing	–	A	A
Medium Manufacturing	–	A	A
Heavy Manufacturing	–	–	A
Wholesale, Storage, and Distribution	–	A	A
Light/Medium Wholesale, Storage, and Distribution Activities	–	A	A
Heavy Wholesale, Storage and Distribution	–	CUP	A
Agricultural Crops and Processing (growing and harvesting agricultural crops)	–	A	A
Agricultural Processing (packing and processing excluding animal products or byproducts)	–	CUP	A
Agricultural Crops and Processing (growing and harvesting including fish and frog farms or other agricultural packing and processing for products sold for human consumption)	–	–	A
Agricultural Processing (packing and processing including products or byproducts)	–	–	CUP
Public, Semi-Public, and Institutional Uses	–	A	A
(i) Post Office	–	A	A
(ii) Law Enforcement/Life Safety Facilities	–	A	A

Use	Zoning		
	ML GS	ML I-2	ML I-3
(iii) Water treatment plants	–	A	A
(iv) Sewage treatment plants	–	A	A
(v) Flood Control Facilities (other than on-site detention)	–	A	A
Similar Uses Permitted by Planning Commission Determination	–	A	A
Generation and Transmission of Electrical Power	–	CUP	A
Manufacturing and Assembly	–	CUP	A
Minimum Impact Heavy Manufacturing	–	CUP	A
Wholesale, Storage and Distribution	–	CUP	A
Transportation Facilities	–	CUP	A
(a) Heliports/helistops	–	CUP	A
(b) Railroads spurs and yards	–	CUP	A
Communication and Public Utilities	–	CUP	A
Recycling Facilities	–	CUP	CUP
Alternative Fuel Power Generating Facilities	–	–	CUP
Tire/Rubber Rendering Plan	–	–	CUP

Notes:
A = Allowed
CUP = Allowed with Conditional Use Permit
- = Not Allowed Use
Specific Allowed Uses:

Light Manufacturing:
Activities typically include, but are not limited to, labor intensive manufacturing, assembly, fabrication, or repair processes that do not involve large container truck traffic or the transport of large scale bulky products but may include limited rail traffic. The new product may be finished in the sense that it is ready for use or consumption, or it may be semi-finished, meaning it would become a component for further assembly and packaging. These types of business establishments are customarily directed to the wholesale market or inter-plant transfer rather than the direct sale to the consumer. Such uses may include, but are not limited to: electronic microchip assembly; printing, publishing and allied industries; candy and other confectionery products; bottled or canned soft drinks and carbonated waters; apparel and other finished products; paper board containers and boxes; drugs; small fabricated metal products such as hand tools, general hardware, architectural and ornamental metal work; and toys, amusements, sports, and athletic goods. The activities do not produce odors, noise, vibration, hazardous waste material or particulates that would adversely affect other uses in the structure or on the same site. Where 24-hour on-site surveillance is necessary, a caretaker's residence may be permitted when approved by a CUP.

Medium Manufacturing:
Activities typically include, but are not limited to, manufacturing, compounding of materials, processing, assembly, packaging, treatment or fabrication of materials and products that require frequent large container truck traffic or rail traffic, or the transport of heavy, bulky items. The new products are semi-finished to be a component for further manufacturing, fabrication, and assembly. These types of business establishments are customarily directed to inter-plant transfer, or to order from industrial uses, rather than for direct sale to the domestic consumer. Such uses may include, but are not limited to, activities involving the following products: frozen foods; canned food; fresh agricultural products; textile products; furniture and fixtures; converted paper and paper board products; plastic products made from purchased rubber, plastic, or resin; graphite, gypsum, and fabricated metal products made from sheet metals; electrical and electronic machinery, equipment and supplies; and office, computing, and accounting machines. Activities may produce noise, odors, vibrations, illumination, or particulates that affect the persons residing in or conducting business in the vicinity. Where 24-hour on-site surveillance is necessary, a caretaker's residence may be permitted when approved by a CUP.

Heavy Manufacturing:
Activities typically include, but are not limited to, manufacturing, compounding of material, processing, assembly, packaging, treatment, or fabrication, and activities that may have frequent rail or truck traffic or the transportation of heavy large-scale products. Activities in this area may generate noise, odor, vibration, illumination, or particulates which may be obnoxious or offensive to persons residing or conducting business in the vicinity. Uses typically use raw materials such as

wood, metal, glass, composites, plastic, rubber, gelatin, or aggregate materials (e.g., gypsum, sand, rock, granite, concrete) to fabricate semi-finished products that include, but are not limited to, forge shops, metal fabricating facilities, open welding shops, lumber woodworking facilities, heavy machine shops, chemical storage and distribution, plastics plants, and light or vacuum casting facilities.

Manufacturing uses allowed in the MLI-3 Land Use Designation include the following:

(i) All manufacturing uses allowed in the MLI-2 Land Use Designation.

(ii) Acid manufacturing, ammunition manufacturing, asbestos manufacturing plant, creosote manufacturing, curing, tanning and storage of raw hides or skins, distillation of bones, distillation of coal, wood or tar, drop forge industries, explosive manufacturing and storage, fat rendering, gas manufacturing, graphite manufacturing, iron, steel, brass or copper foundries or fabrication plants, rubber and rubber products manufacturing, automobile assembly plants (body and fender works).

(iii) Smelting of tin, copper, zinc or iron ore, ore reduction plants, quarry, or stone mills, rolling mills, lumber mills.

(iv) Petroleum refineries, incinerators, coke ovens.

Development Standards

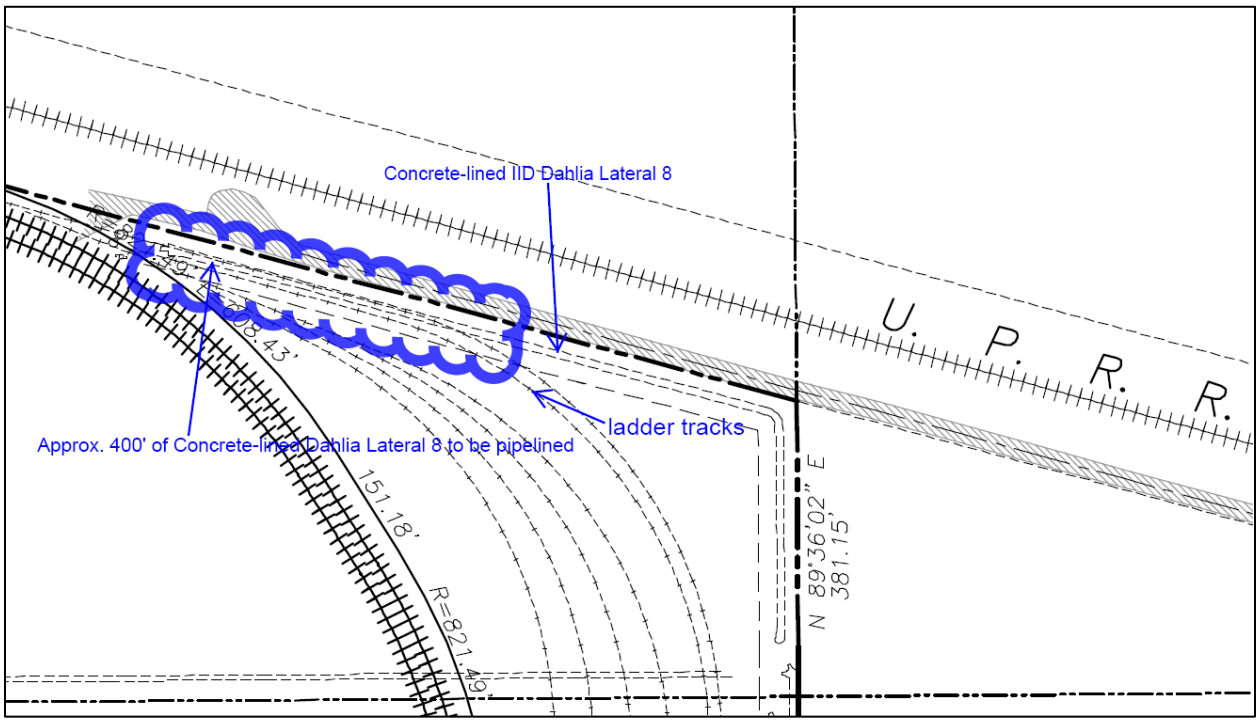
All new construction and future use of land within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan must be in accordance with the Development Standards specified in Section IV of the Specific Plan. Where the provisions of Section IV differ from specified development standards or regulations in the County Land Use Ordinance, the provisions in the Specific Plan take precedence. Where Section IV of the Specific Plan does not address a particular use, standard, or regulation specified in the County Land Use Ordinance, the provisions of the Land Use Ordinance apply.

D. PROJECT CONSTRUCTION:

Construction of the Project is expected to begin in approximately 2024 and would continue for an estimated 18 months if the site is built-out under a single construction effort. Site preparation is anticipated to take approximately 2 months, grading to take approximately 2 months, and vertical construction to occur over approximately 14 months. The Project is expected to employ approximately 400 construction workers over the course of build-out, with as many as 200 workers on-site daily during construction once structures and buildings go vertical. The Project is expected to use approximately 1,000 AFY of water during construction. Project build-out is expected to occur in approximately 2026. Construction activities of the Proposed Project will be scheduled in compliance with the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County's Municipal Code Title 9 for the provisions of operating and permitting the use of tools and equipment during construction, drilling, repair, or alterations. Project construction may occur incrementally overtime as a function of the need for incremental access to rail and other site infrastructure, and accordingly building permits may be issued incrementally over time.

Site preparation will include clearing and grubbing. The land development includes grading the site to create a rough graded street, native soil preparatory work for track facilities, and pads for new construction. The site preparation will include an estimated 150,000 cubic yards of cut and 150,000 cubic yards of fill; soil will be balanced on site. Other material imports would include an import of approximately 140,000 cubic yards of granular select fill for use underneath concrete building pads, an import of approximately 225,000 tons of ballast and 90,000 tons of sub-ballast for the three (3) loop tracks (approximately 22,000 track feet in total), ladder track (approximately 25,000 track feet in total) and rail spur (approximately 2,000 track feet in total), and 28,000 tons of road base for the Industrial Street roadway, which will be surface finished with asphalt concrete. Other on-site flatwork will be finished with asphalt concrete and Portland cement concrete, including building and structural pads, which will be comprised of rebar and Portland cement concrete. A concrete and rebar bridge/over-pass or a culvert/under-pass may ultimately be built in order to take trucks to and from the middlei of the Project once full loop tracks are built. Prior to the full loop tracks being constructed, a private roadway will be constructed for access to the central part of the Project.

In order for the aforementioned ladder track to be built approximately 400' of the IID Dahlia Lateral 8 Canal will need to be pipelined near the SE corner of the Project Site. Encroachment Permit drawings will be prepared and submitted to the IID for the pipelining and proposed ladder tracks. A detail showing the approximate limits of the canal pipelining is provided as follows:



In addition to contractor vehicles, heavy equipment will be used on site and will include, but is not limited to, excavators, backhoes, trenchers, cranes, bulldozers, graders, compactors, track laying equipment, pavers, and dump trucks. All equipment will be staged within the Project site. Access to the UPRR Right-of-Way (ROW) and The County ROW will be needed for construction.

E. PROJECT OPERATIONS

Routine operations and maintenance of the facility will include preventative maintenance and repairs of any damaged or otherwise inoperable equipment on an as-needed basis. The operation and maintenance staff will monitor the facility operations over the Project life to ensure that the logistics center is operating to meet design standards. Approximately 56 full-time employees are expected each day of the week during Project operations to cover the below shown elements of the Project, with approximately 2 shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm). The below shown Project elements will be developed in accordance with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County development standards.

Existing Cemetery and Memorial Area

The existing Memory Gardens Cemetery is part of the subject property and has existing water and electrical service from the Imperial Irrigation District. The property lines around the existing 7-acre cemetery are being adjusted for inclusion of a memorial area in honor of veterans east of and adjacent to the cemetery and the new cemetery overall area will be approximately 10 acres in total. The cemetery and memorial area will be fenced-off from the remaining portion of the Project area with either chain link and privacy slats, wood, or vinyl fencing. Access to the cemetery (and memorial area) will be via the cemetery's existing and historical access from SR 86. Improvements at the memorial area would consist of landscaping and lighting consistent with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County Planning & Development Services requirements. This portion of the cemetery will include memorial improvements, restrooms, and hardscaped walkways and will contain a septic system and leach field in accordance with State and County standards. Water service would be provided from the overall Project's centralized water treatment and distribution system. Raw water for landscaping is currently provided from the IID Dahlia Lateral 8 and such serviced will be continued in the future for irrigation purposes. Volunteers currently maintain the cemetery and will continue to do so in the future, likely under the ownership and management of a newly formed non-profit entity. The existing

cemetery has approximately 20 vehicles coming on-site per day and an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 40 and no increase in traffic is expected to occur.

Grain Elevator System

The grain elevator is primarily for receiving corn and similar grain products via rail and distributing them to cattle feeding yards. The grain elevator system will be up to 180 feet tall and be comprised of up to four (4) large tanks/bins initially, expanding to a total of eight (8) large tanks/bins, and several ancillary mechanical components and will be built on a parcel that is approximately 10 acres. The grain elevator would receive approximately 450,000 tons (40-unit trains) of corn annually and approximately 150,000 tons (20 trains) of Dried Distillers Grain (DDG) annually via the proposed loop tracks or via other on-site tracks. This portion of the Project would employ approximately eight people split between approximately two shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm). UPRR unit trains of corn are currently 110 rail cars in length; however, the rail industry is moving to expand unit rail length to approximately 126 cars. The DDG would come into the site via approximately 75-car trains and may come in via the loop tracks or via the ladder tracks south of and adjacent to, the loop tracks. Grain such as corn and DDG may also be brought to the site by Union Pacific in smaller blocks such as 30 to 50 rail cars. Ancillary improvements beyond the actual grain elevator system will be consistent with the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County Planning & Development Services requirements, including development of office area, landscaping, and lighting. This portion of the Project would also include restrooms, hardscaped walkways, and hydrants for fire suppression. This portion of the Project would contain a septic system and leach field in accordance with State and County standards and water for the restrooms, fire water and water for operations would be provided from the overall project's centralized water treatment and distribution system or as otherwise approved by the County.

Centralized Water Treatment, Storage & Distribution System

The Project will include a water treatment, storage and distribution system that will satisfy potable water and fire water requirements. The system will receive water from the IID Dahlia Lateral 8 canal located along the southerly boundary of the Project. The treatment, storage and pump elements of the system will be located on the approximately 2-acres of the Project area. The distribution element of the system will be a looped pressurized water line that will provide access to water for all Project parcels. The water treatment, storage and distribution system will likely be developed in phases with an initial phase having a storage capacity of approximately 180,000 gallons and a built-out storage capacity of up to 1.5 million gallons. A 1.5 million gallon tank would be approximately 50 feet tall and approximately 100 feet in diameter. During initial operations and prior to the need for a public water system, the applicant may truck-in purified/potable water.

Hay and Grain Export and Container Depot

The area in the middle of the loop tracks will be used primarily as a shipping container depot and for exporting hay and grain products via UPRR. The hay and grain export and container depot would employ approximately 12 people split between approximately two shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm). Hay and grain trucks each carrying approximately twenty-five (25) containerized tons would be required per day to bring inbound hay and grain to the facility where it would be railed to the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. The hay and grain would be grown within the irrigated area of Imperial County and brought to the site intermittently during hours of operation. Ocean shipping containers would arrive on-site via UPRR from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach full of miscellaneous products from overseas that are destined for distribution throughout the United States and Mexico. The miscellaneous products from overseas would be sorted and placed into domestic shipping containers for out-bound shipment via UPRR to major metropolitan hubs throughout the United States. In addition, full containers of miscellaneous products from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach would arrive on-site via UPRR and be transloaded to truck for delivery to Mexico. The ocean shipping containers stuffed with hay and grain would be exported from the site via UPRR and returned to the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach for shipment overseas to pre-dominantly Asian and Middle Eastern markets. This area will also intermittently receive empty containers from coastal and inland ports for storage and shipping reuse and may be used for the rail served transloading and warehousing of general commodities.

Ancillary improvements beyond the actual hay and grain export and container depot system will be consistent with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County Planning & Development Services requirements and include parking, an office area, landscaping, and lighting. This portion of the Project would also include restrooms, hardscaped walkways, and a hydrant for fire suppression. This portion of the Project would contain a septic system and leach field in accordance with State and County standards and water for the restrooms, fire water and water for operations would be provided from the overall project's centralized water treatment and distribution system.

Produce / Food Export

The produce export function would employ approximately six people split between approximately two shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm). Produce would be trucked in on-site from locally grown sources, may be temperature treated (cold storage prior to customer shipment), and would be exported via UPRR to domestic and international customers. Such produces would likely consist of the following: (a) Broccoli: 45,000 tons, (b) Cabbage: 26,000 tons, (c) Carrot: 128,000 tons, (d) Cauliflower: 77,000 tons, (e) Cantaloupe: 120,000 tons, (f) Citrus: 2,000 tons, (g) Onion: 110,000 tons, and (f) beef: 42,000 tons.

Produce and food grown outside of the County would be railed into the County via UPRR, sorted, stored and shipped to Mexico via truck. Such produce and food would likely consist of the following: (a) Apples, Onions and Potatoes: 35,000 tons, (b) Dry food goods : 20,000 tons, (c) Palletized food products packaged in cans : 25,000 tons, (d) Frozen pork : 145,000 tons, (e) Frozen poultry : 160,000 tons, and (f) Processed food grain corn in super sacks : 20,000 tons.

Ancillary improvements beyond the actual product export system include parking, office area, landscaping, and lighting consistent with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County Planning & Development Services requirements. This portion of the Project would also include restrooms, hardscaped walkways, and hydrants for fire suppression. This portion of the Project would contain a septic system and leach field in accordance with State and County standards and water for the restrooms, fire water and water for operations would be provided from the overall project's centralized water treatment and distribution system.

Fuel Blending / Transloading

Fuel products will be railed in on-site and transloaded/blended for outbound movement via truck to off-site locations, including Mexico. The approximate amount of fuel that will be annually transloaded/blended at the Project are as follows: (a) Biodiesel fuel: 130,000,000 gallons, (b) Regular diesel: 50,000,000 gallons, and (c) Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG)/Natural Gas Liquids (NGL): 90,000,000 gallons. The fuel blending / transloading function would employ approximately four people split between approximately two shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm). The facility would have the ability to store up to 2,000,000 gallons of fuel on-site via up to four (4) above ground tanks.

Ancillary improvements beyond the actual fuel blending / transloading system include, but are not limited to, parking, office area, landscaping, and lighting consistent with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County Planning & Development Services requirements. This portion of the Project would also include restrooms, hardscaped walkways, and hydrant(s) for fire suppression. This portion of the Project would contain a septic system and leach field in accordance with State and County standards and water for the restrooms, fire water and water for operations would be provided from the overall project's centralized water treatment and distribution system.

Fueling Station Including CNG

The fueling station would be used to fuel vehicles and trucks on site. The approximate amount of fuel sold from the fueling station on an annual basis is as follows: (a) Unleaded fuel: 2,500,000 gallons, (b) Diesel: 4,750,000 gallons, (c) CNG: 5,500,000 gallons. Electric vehicles and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles will also be able to fill up at the fueling station. There would also be truck scales on-site at the fueling station and throughout the rest of the Project site as well as an approximately 30,000 square foot travel center area. The SoCal Gas pipeline that is being extended to the Project site approximately 1.3 miles along State Route 86 from Keystone Road would supply gas to the CNG fueling component of the fueling station.

Ancillary improvements beyond the actual fueling station system include, but are not limited to, landscaping and lighting consistent with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County Planning & Development Services requirements, hardscaped walkways, and hydrant(s) for fire suppression. This portion of the Project would contain a septic system and leach field in accordance with State and County standards and water for the restrooms, fire water and water for operations would be provided from the overall project's centralized water treatment and distribution system.

General Commodities: Transloading/Warehousing

The remaining portion of the Project area that is not occupied by the above-mentioned Project elements will be used for the transloading, storage and shipment of additional commodities. The approximate types and amounts of general commodities being transloaded/warehoused on an annual basis on site is as follows: (a) Lumber: 150,000 tons, (b) Fertilizers: 30,000 tons, (c) Plastics: 60,000 tons, (d) Rolled Steel: 85,000 tons, (e) 35% Hydrochloric Acid: 60,000 tons, (f) 50% Caustic Soda: 40,000 tons, (g) 95% Sulfuric Acid: 25,000 tons and (h) Paper: 50,000 tons. Transloading/warehousing of general commodities would employ approximately 18 people split between approximately two shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm).

Ancillary improvements beyond the transloading/warehousing system(s) include, but are not limited to, parking, office area, landscaping, and lighting consistent with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County Planning & Development Services requirements. This portion of the Project would also include restrooms, hardscaped walkways, and tanks for fire suppression. This portion of the Project would contain a septic system and leach field in accordance with State and County standards and filtration treated raw water for the restrooms and raw water service from IID for operations, along with trucked in drinking water.

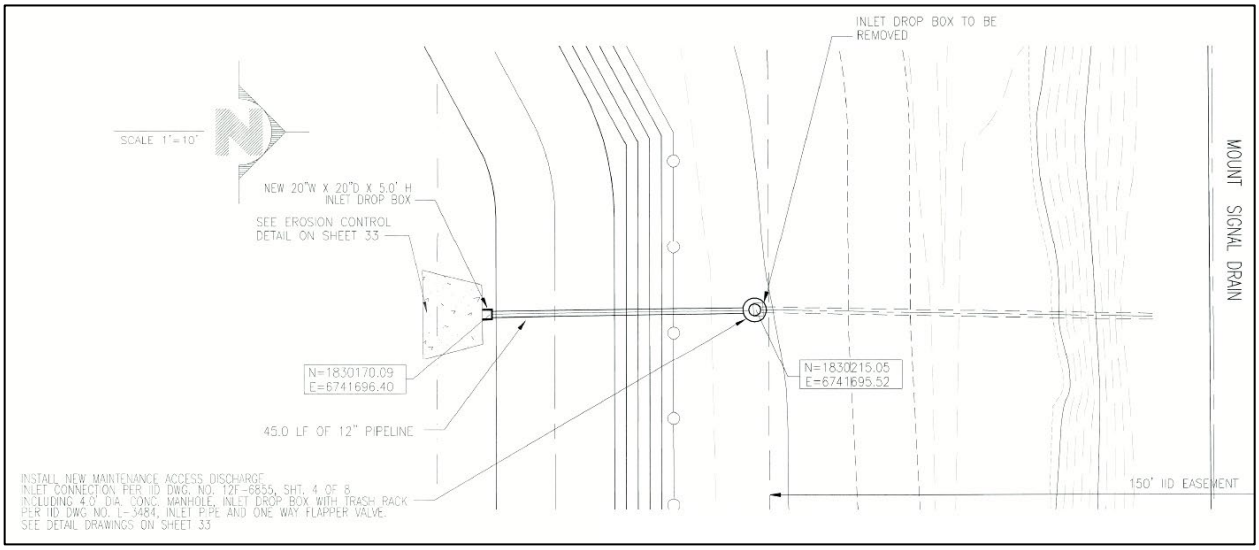
Parking and Site Access

The Project area's only existing access is from State Route 86 and the Project proposes continued access from State Route 86 via 2 driveways – a right in and a right out. The cemetery and memorial area will be accessed via its existing historical SR 86 access or via a frontage road located between the 2 new State Route 86 access points. All individual elements of the logistics center will each have their own quantity of dedicated parking spots consistent with the Signs, Parking and Fences section of the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan. After all related approvals are complete and prior to building permit issuance, the applicant will submit final site plan with proposed parking to County Planning & Development Services for review and approval.

Stormwater

The entire Project site would drain into a stormwater retention basin located on the northern portion of the Project site that is approximately 19 acres.

This Project retention basin will connect and drain into the IID Newside Drain Number 1-A after upgrading the site's historical connection to said IID drain. The upgrade typically consists of the installation of a storm drain manhole with a one-way flapper valve along the existing pipe that conveys storm water/tail water from the drop box inlet on the adjacent private property to the point of outflow within the IID drain. Said manhole is typically located outside of the IID drain right-of-way and an upstream segment of new pipe is typically connected to said manhole along with a new inlet installed at the low point of the retention basin. An example of a typical construction detail is shown below. Encroachment Permit drawings will be prepared and submitted to IID for the drain connection. The retention basin will be designed to meet SWRCB requirements and will include an appropriate mosquito abatement per County guidelines if the retention basin does fully discharge in less than 72 hours.



The Proposed Project will receive raw water from IID via the Dahlia Lateral 8 and treat said raw water to potable standards for distribution to all Project elements which will procure their own respective quantities of water. Conversely, if potable treatment and distribution throughout the Project is cost prohibitive, individual users of the Project may address potable water by other means e.g., truck in potable water, individual user treatment facilities, etc. The Project will also have its own dedicated raw water line for access to bulk process water from IID.

Over the last 10 years the Project site has consumed approximately 630 acre-feet of water per year on average in order for 120 acres of the Project site to be farmed based on an average use factor of 5.25 acre-feet per acre per year (AFY). Based on delivery records from IID from 2013 thru 2022 the Project site has his historically used an annual average of 1,708 AFY for agricultural and landscaping purposes. The proposed annual water usage, including operational water and drinking water for the Project site once fully developed is shown in the following **Table 3: Proposed Water Use**.

Table 3: Proposed Water Use

Use	**Acre-Feet Per Year (AFY)**
Existing	
Agricultural Operations	630
Total	*630*
Proposed	
Existing Cemetery and Memorial Area	50
Grain Elevator System	20
Hay and Grain Export and Container Depot	30
Produce / Food Export	25
Fuel Blending / Transloading	15
Fueling Station Including CNG	10
General Commodities: Transloading/Warehouse	30
Total	*180*
Net Decrease	**450**

The Project will include septic systems with leach fields for the different elements of the logistics center in accordance with State and County standards. Electrical service will be from IID existing on-site distribution level voltage facilities near the cemetery, the existing IID on-site distribution level voltage facilities near the UPRR, IID existing distribution level voltage facilities south of the site along Harris Road, and/or self-generated with solar panels. If solar panels are used, they would be installed on the roofs of buildings and would interconnect by way of a

bi-directional meter that would also serve as the metering element for power purchased from IID. The solar panels would be used solely for Project operations. The solar panels could utilize a battery energy storage element that would require approval from the County Planning Department, prior to installation.

Natural gas will come from the SoCal Gas existing pipeline system on Keystone Road. IID also has transmission level voltage facilities east of the site along the UPRR ROW, which can be tapped as needed for substation development. The applicant will develop the necessary off-site improvements that are required to bring natural gas service to the Project site. The Project will contract with third party utility companies for other utilities like telecom, internet and solid waste pick up services.

Fire Protection and Safety

Water for fire protection would be purchased from IID and stored in ponds and/or above ground storage tanks in accordance with County Fire Department standards. The system will be designed in accordance with federal, state, and local fire codes, occupational health and safety regulations and other jurisdictional codes, requirements, and standard practices.

Hazardous Materials and Waste

The Project will develop and implement a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP), in compliance with California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Sections 25500-25519 and California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 4. The HMBP will be provided to the California Office of Emergency Services, the County Fire Department, and the Certified Unified Program Agency for the County (the local California Department of Toxic Substances Control office), for review and approval before plant operation. The HMBP will include, at a minimum, procedures for:

- Hazardous materials handling, use and storage
- Emergency response
- Spill control and prevention
- Employee training
- Reporting and record keeping

Portable bins or other storage containers will be on site for storage of maintenance lube oils, chemicals, paints, and other construction materials, as needed. Hazardous materials that are expected to be used during construction will include:

- Unleaded gasoline
- Diesel fuel
- Oil
- Hydraulic fluids
- Lubricants
- Solvents
- Adhesives
- Paint material

Hazardous materials that are expected to be used during operation will include:

- Unleaded gasoline
- Diesel fuel
- Transformer Oil
- Hydraulic fluid

Hazardous material carriers and hazardous waste transporters are required by law to adhere to applicable local, State, and federal regulations regarding proper truck signage, indicating the materials being transported, carrying a shipping/waste manifest of the types and concentrations of materials being transported, and other appropriate measures. Hazardous material carriers also are responsible for their loads, reporting spills, and initiating appropriate

emergency response to releases of any transported hazardous materials, from the point of origin up to the destination of the hazardous material delivery.

F. PROJECT DECOMMISSIONING AND ABANDONMENT

The projected life of the Project is approximately 50 years. At the end of operations, a Site Abandonment Plan will be prepared and implemented in conformance with The County and CUPA requirements, for consideration by the Planning Commission prior to Project approval. The Plan will describe the proposed equipment dismantling and site restoration program in conformance with the wishes of the respective landowners/lessors and requirements in effect at the time of abandonment and would be implemented at the end of Project operations.

H. REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Lead Agency Approval
Imperial County Planning Department is the lead agency for the Proposed Project. The following permits would be required from the lead agency:

- Imperial County Planning Department – Zone Change for ML GS and ML I-2 to ML I-3
- Imperial County Planning Department – Mesquite Lake Specific Plan Amendment from Light Industrial and Medium Industrial to Heavy Industrial
- Imperial County Planning Department – Tentative Tract Map (including grant of road ROW to the County for 72-foot-wide Industrial Street)
- Imperial County Planning Department – Variance for structures over 80 feet tall
- Imperial County Planning Department – Development Agreement (if required)
- Imperial County Planning Department – Occupancy Permits

Reviewing Agencies

State Agencies:

- Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPA) – Underground Storage Tank (UST) Permit
- Caltrans – Encroachment Permit
- CDFW – Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement and ITP
- California Department of Toxic Substances/CUPA – Hazardous Materials / Environmental Protection Agency Approvals and Permits
- Union Pacific Railroad – Encroachment Permit(s), Industry Track Agreement(s), and Joint-use Agreement(s)

Regional Agencies:

- Regional Water Quality Control Board – Waste Discharge Requirement and 401 Water Quality Certification
- IID – Water Supply Assessment, Electrical Service Permitting, Encroachment Permit(s) and Water Supply Agreement(s)
- ICAPCD – Permit to Construct and Permit to Operate
- Imperial County Building Department – Building and Grading Permits
- Imperial County Public Works Department – Encroachment Permit(s) and Improvement Plans
- Imperial County Fire Department and Office of Emergency Services – Emergency Access and Fire Prevention and Suppression Systems, California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program
- Imperial County Environmental Health Services – water treatment permitting and septic system permitting and Hazardous Materials Business Plan
- Joint Agencies: Local Enforcement Agency, CalRecycle and Regional Water Quality Control Board – Solid Waste Facility Permit

I. OBJECTIVES

The Project objectives include the following:

- Develop a logistics center with an emphasis on agri-business uses that is also capable of servicing other commodities/sectors.
- Develop a rail system for the unloading of up to unit train volumes of corn-filled rail cars from the UPRR.
- To support the Imperial County Mesquite Lake Specific Plan policies and objectives:
    - Develop new industrial land uses
    - Focus on job-producing uses
    - Diversifying employment opportunities
    - In addition to direct job creation, encourage and promote local economic growth and secondary employment opportunities at off-site locations such as in commercial services and construction employment sectors
    - Increase local tax base, which will enable improvement to community services and construction of new public buildings and facilities
- To locate the Project at a location along the existing Union Pacific Railroad ROW in a land use and zoning designation where it is feasible to import, transload, store and export commodities.
- To meet the terms and requirements of any Industry Track Agreement (ITA) that the Applicant has or may enter into and that require Applicant to have access to the Union Pacific Railroad main line from land with supporting land use and zoning characteristics.
- To operate a logistics center efficiently and at a cost that is competitive in the supply-chain marketplace on real property controlled by the Applicant.
- To expand/enhance trade with Mexico and national and international markets for the opportunity to diversify the County's employment base.
- To provide an additional source of supply chain services to assist the region, state, and nation in decongesting roads, freeways, and ports.
- To assist the State of California and United States in their environmental policies and objectives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the number of miles products and commodities must be trucked to get from origin to destination.
- To maximize local construction jobs for a variety of trades thereby helping maximize the reduction of unemployment in the construction sector.
- To locate the Project in an area that has historically been identified and zoned for industrial development and job creation.
- To diversity the County's economic base.
- To provide tax revenue through sales, use and property taxes generated by development within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan.

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 "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, 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). Reference 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 significance 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 significance

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

I. *AESTHETICS*

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surrounding? (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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:
The MEIR included an analysis of the aesthetic and visual resources within the specific plan area. Among other development standards, the MEIR evaluated a maximum height of six stories or 80 feet. At the time the MEIR was approved, most of the specific plan area was covered with farmland or farm-related auxiliary structures with minimal ornamental vegetation. Most of the trees were associated with the cemetery. Given the flat topography of the specific plan area, there are no surrounding elevated views possible. The viewshed included surrounding farmlands and segments of State Route (SR) 86, SR 111, Keystone Road, Dogwood Road, and Harris Road.

The MEIR found that the Mesquite Lake specific plan area was not located within a scenic vista or near a scenic highway. It determined that, due to the aesthetics of the area, no sensitive viewers would be impacted by development occurring within the specific plan area. Given that the area was on a former flat lakebed with little topographic relief, any grading required during development would not result in significant landform alteration. Construction at the undeveloped areas (or proposed redevelopment) would be introducing utilitarian structures that would be comparable to the existing facilities, in addition to complying with the development standards within the specific plan area. While future development within the specific plan area would intensify the number of structures and scale of the built environment, the majority of the viewers (which would be motorists and workers) would have low visual quality expectations.

Construction related effects with the presence of equipment and stockpiles would have short-term, negative visual impacts. However, it was determined that these would be less than significant due to it being temporary, and that there are no sensitive vistas or viewers that would demand high visual quality in the area.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant Impact. The MEIR identified the Specific Plan to not be located on or within a scenic vista. According to the County's Conservation and Open Space Element, the Proposed Project and its immediate surroundings are not located within areas designated to have significant visual quality or scenic potential (County 2016a).

The General Plan EIR (County 1993a), notes that there were highways within the County that had potential to be considered as state-designated, or eligible scenic highways. These included Interstate (I) 8 (I-8), SR 78, SR 111 and the Borrego-Salton Seaway, also known as S-22. According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) State Scenic Highway System Map (Caltrans 2018), these highways are part of the eligible and state-designated highways listings. However, these designated/potentially eligible routes are not located within the vicinity of the Proposed Project. The closest portion of Highway 111 that is eligible for listing, is almost 33 miles north of the Project site.

The Project requires a variance request for any structures over 80 feet, which would include the grain elevator system that will be up to 180 feet tall and comprised of up to eight large tanks/bins. Due to this variance request for several structures, visual simulations were prepared for the proposed Project as shown in Figure 7 through Figure 10 below. In particular, Figure 10 shows a view of the Project as it would be seen from the direction of Highway 111. A very faint portion of the Project can be seen from this location, which is about 1.5 miles closer than Highway 111. Therefore, it is assumed that none of the Project site would be seen from Highway 111 at this location. While the Proposed Project may be viewed from various roadways by motorists such as those traveling along Dogwood Road, SR-86 and Harris Road, these areas are not designated as scenic, and views would be consistent with and typical of, industrial uses as shown in Figure 8. Additionally, only one single-family home is located approximately 0.25-mile east of the Project site. Figure 9 shows that views from this house would remain largely unchanged. Implementation of the Project would be

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	No Impact (NI)

consistent with the MEIR, and would not result in any new impacts that were not previously analyzed, and impacts would be less than significant.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

b) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in part a), the Proposed Project is not located within a state scenic, or eligible scenic highway, nor is the Proposed Project nearby or within scenic vistas, or areas that may provide users with visual quality. The Project site contains existing agricultural operations, including approximately 120 acres of recently harvested wheat that is planted and harvested as a rotation crop between other crops. The Project has an existing mainline switch on the Union Pacific Railroad and approximately 0.5 mile of on-site track. The Project site has vacant areas that have previously been farmed and the existing Memory Gardens Cemetery. The Project site remains largely unchanged from the conditions described in the MEIR. Additionally, there are no rock outcroppings, or current historic buildings within the Proposed Project site. A couple trees exist on site, mostly surrounding the canals, several of which would remain on site. However, these trees do not define the visual characteristics of the site and removal of the limited number of trees as proposed does not substantially change or damage the visual character. Therefore, implementation of the Project would be consistent with the MEIR, and impacts would be less than significant.

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surrounding? (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? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

c) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant Impact. The MEIR conducted a Visual Resources Analysis discussing the potential visual impacts of development within the specific plan area. As discussed in part a) above, the MEIR and the County's General Plan Conservation Element identified that the Project site area does not have significant visual quality or scenic potential. The Project site would be defined as a mostly non-urbanized area. Visual simulations were prepared for the Proposed Project to display what visual changes from the existing conditions to the proposed conditions would occur, from various locations. Three viewpoints were selected to demonstrate the visual changes of the area as shown in Figure 7 through Figure 10. Based on the simulations, the Proposed Project is not seen to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views. As discussed in the MEIR, the specific plan area has been designated to be used for industrial and agricultural uses. The Proposed Project would be consistent with the uses as defined in the specific plan. Furthermore, the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the Development Standards of the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan to ensure the design would be consistent with existing and future development. Therefore, implementation of the Project would be consistent with the MEIR, and impacts would be less than significant.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

d) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant Impact. Existing light and glare sources at the Proposed Project are from vehicles commuting along the roadways and from adjacent facilities including those along SR-86, Grimes Road, and Harris Road. Also existing directly west of the Project site is the Empire CAT Truck and Trailer store, the Rain for Rent store, RDO Equipment Company, and BPS Supply Group, and north of the site is Spreckels Sugar and SunHarvest Ag Services Inc., all of which would contain existing light and glare sources. During construction, sources of light and glare would come from the construction equipment being used and stored at the Project site. Once operational new light sources would come from the newly constructed buildings and from the presence of vehicles. Glare sources would come from any areas with reflective surfaces that includes building facades and windows. As discussed in the MEIR, construction effects would be temporary and short term and would be limited during the hours of 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday through Friday, and 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Saturdays as per the County's General Plan Noise Element (County 2015a).

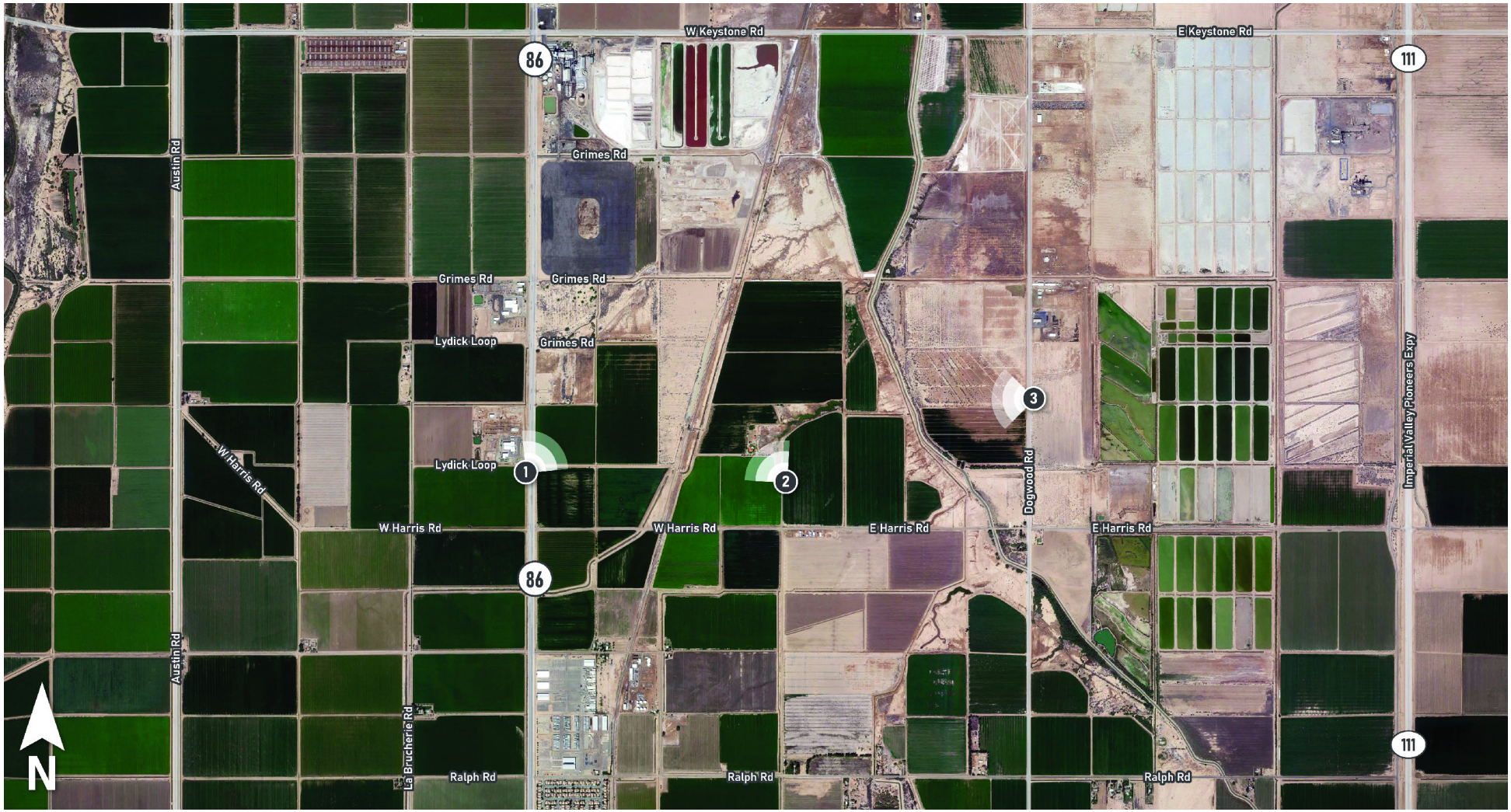


Figure 7
Green Valley Logistics Center
Overview

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 7 Overview.Mxd
Print Date: 1/10/2023 3:20:21 PM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP

Figure 8
Green Valley Logistics Center
Project Site From SR 86 Looking North East

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 8 Project Site From SR 86 Looking North East.Mxd
Print Date: 1/10/2023 3:36:39 PM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP

Figure 9
Green Valley Logistics Center
Project Site From North of Harris Rd Looking North West

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 9 Project Site From North of Harris Rd Looking North West.Mxd
Print Date: 1/10/2023 3:36:34 PM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP

Figure 10
Green Valley Logistics Center
Project Site From Dogwood Rd. Looking West

Name: 21347 PLAN Fig 10 Project Site From Dogwood Rd. Looking West.Mxd
Print Date: 1/10/2023 3:36:44 PM Author: pcarlos

CHAMBERS GROUP

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

agricultural resources and no mitigation would be required.

Additionally, no portion of the project is subject to a California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) contract for agricultural preservation; however, the County has been very active in preservation of farmland under the Williamson Act program (County 2006).

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

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? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

a) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant. The Proposed Project is located on land classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Local Importance (DOC 2022a). Approximately 163 acres of the site is classified as Farmland of Local Importance, with 5 acres classified as Prime Farmland, and 106 acres of Statewide Importance. Additionally, a majority of the site is currently utilized for agricultural production. Currently no agricultural production exists on the Local Importance, with the Statewide and Prime Farmland being utilized for agricultural production. However, impacts associated with conversion of this land from agricultural uses to non-agricultural uses, were evaluated in the MEIR, and it was concluded that no impacts to agricultural land would occur due to poor soil conditions and farmlands within this area being less productive than their designation would imply. Implementation of the Project would be consistent with the MEIR, would not result in any new impacts that were not previously analyzed, and impacts would be less than significant.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

b) Consistent with the MEIR, No Impact. As previously mentioned, the MEIR noted that no portion of the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan was identified in containing any land subject to the Williamson Act. Additionally, since 2006, no new lands have been subject to the provisions of a Williamson Act contract (DOC 2022b). No land within the Project site is zoned for agricultural use, as the current zoning for the site is Mesquite Lake Specific Plan consisting of Light Industrial, Medium Industrial, and Government/Special Public (County 2006). Implementation of the Project would be consistent with the MEIR and would not result in any new impacts to a Williamson Act Contract or existing agricultural zoning and no impacts would occur.

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))? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

c) and d) Consistent with the MEIR, No Impact. Currently no land within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan is zoned for forest land or timberland (County 2006). As discussed in Threshold (b), the Project site is zoned Mesquite Lake Specific Plan consisting of Light Industrial, Medium Industrial, and Government/Special Public (County 2006). Additionally, no forests or tree production occurs on the site, therefore no impacts to forest land or timberland would occur.

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? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

e) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant. As mentioned in Threshold (a) above, impacts associated with conversion of this land from agricultural uses to non-agricultural uses, were evaluated in the MEIR, and it was concluded that no impacts to agricultural land would occur due to poor soil conditions and farmlands within this area being less productive than their designation would imply. Implementation of the Project would not result in any new impacts that were not previously analyzed and would be consistent with the MEIR, and impacts would be less than significant.

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 the following determinations. Would the Project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**
under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?				
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutants concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR included an analysis of the existing air quality conditions at the time of preparation of the MEIR, and an impact analysis for construction and operation based on full build out of the Specific Plan.

The MEIR noted that at the time of preparation, neither Imperial County nor the APCD had quantitative thresholds for determining significance of impact under CEQA. On federal projects in a marginal O3 (8-hour) nonattainment area, thresholds for the presumption that a project would conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) were 100 tons per year for both NOX and ROC. In recognition of the State "nonattainment" designation for O3 and to be conservative, thresholds of 50 tons per year for NOX and ROC were used. The federal SIP conformity threshold for PM10 in a federal "nonattainment-serious" area was 70 tons per year. Because the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) was in compliance with both State and federal standards, the conformity threshold for CO of 100 tons per year was used as a significance guideline.

Construction
The MEIR noted that the principal concern for potential impacts during construction would be the generation of fugitive dust and particulates, including PM10 and PM2.5. Grading, earth moving, driving on unpaved haul roads, and exposure of graded surfaces and stockpiles to the wind would be the major sources of fugitive dust. Windblown dust and dust from unpaved roads are the predominant sources of particulates in Imperial County. Construction equipment operations would result in emissions of O3 precursors NOX and ROC. The quantity of emissions would be dependent on the level of activity and number of concurrent projects, as well as other parameters. The MEIR concluded that to avoid a significant air quality impact, the anticipated quantity of emissions should be calculated and compared with the guidelines for significant impact.

Operation
The MEIR noted that the operation of many industrial facilities has the potential to emit non-negligible amounts of regulated air pollutants. To protect the public and maintain air quality, the APCD has a process for the permitting of all sources with the potential to emit such pollutants. In addition, vehicle operations would result in the regional emissions of O3 precursors NOX and ROC. The quantity of emissions would be dependent on the types of vehicles, number of trips, and average trip distance, as well as other parameters. The MEIR concluded that for all proposed developments within the Specific Plan, the anticipated quantity of emissions should be calculated and compared with the guidelines for significant impact specified above.

Odors
The MEIR noted that there are very few residences within 1 mile of the Specific Plan and, therefore, it is unlikely that odors emitted from project facilities would result in a significant impact. However, projects within the Specific Plan that include composting, sorting of recyclables, or biosolids transformation would require that an Odor Impact Minimization Plan (OIMP) be prepared in order to obtain a Solid Waste Facilities Permit (SWFP). To avoid the potential for significant impact to workers at these and other on-site properties, as well as off-site populations, a mitigation measure for potential odor impact is included below.

The MEIR concluded that with implementation of the following mitigation measures, future projects would avoid conflict with local air quality plans, prevent violation or a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, protect sensitive receptors from substantial air pollutant concentrations, and minimize objectionable odors. However, the MEIR also concluded that individual air quality analyses would be required for each project within the Specific Plan and additional mitigation measures may be required.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1: Prior to issuance of any grading permit or building permit, the applicant shall provide evidence that construction specifications incorporate the requirement to comply with APCD Regulation VIII, Fugitive Dust Rules and the standard and discretionary mitigation measures for construction equipment and fugitive PM10 control for construction activities in Section 7.1 of the Imperial County APCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.2: Prior to issuance of any grading permit or building permit, the applicant shall provide evidence that construction plans and specifications incorporate elements that ensure the paving, planting, or equivalent long-term dust stabilization of all surfaces that would be disturbed during construction.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3: Prior to issuance of any grading permit or building permit, the applicant shall provide an analysis to APCD of forecast construction equipment emissions attributable to the project as well as all foreseeable concurrent construction within 1 mile of the project. If forecast direct or cumulative NOX or ROC emissions would exceed 50 tons per year, the applicant shall incorporate feasible emission reduction measures to reduce emissions to less than 50 tons per year to the satisfaction of the Air Pollution Control Officer. If

emission reduction measures do not provide adequate reduction, applicant shall conduct further project-specific environmental review pursuant to CEQA or provide evidence from APCD that forecast emissions from construction activities would not cause a significant air quality impact.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.4: Prior to issuance of any building permit, the applicant shall provide evidence from APCD that the project is in compliance with APCD rules for permitting of new or modified stationary sources, or is exempt from permitting requirements.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.5: Prior to issuance of any discretionary approval or building permit, the applicant shall provide information to the Planning and Development Services Director on average daily truck and employees trips and one-way average miles traveled. Based on this information, the Planning and Development Services Director, in consultation with the Air Pollution Control Officer, may require an analysis of potential long-term vehicle emissions attributable to the project. If forecast NOX or ROC emissions would exceed 55 pound per day, the applicant shall be required to incorporate feasible emission reduction measures to reduce emissions to a less than significant level. If emission reduction measures do not provide adequate reduction, applicant shall conduct further project-specific environmental review pursuant to CEQA or provide evidence from APCD that forecast long-term vehicle emissions from the project would not cause a significant air quality impact.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.6: Prior to issuance of any building permit, the permit applicant shall provide, for approval by the County Planning/Building Department, a description of the odor-producing potential of the facility and the controls that would be incorporated into the project to avoid an impact to on-site or off-site receptors. Uses proposing composting, sorting of recyclables, or biosolids transformation, shall be required to obtain approval by the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) at the County Environmental Health Services Division (EHS), which may require preparation of an Odor Impact Minimization Plan (OIMP) and approval of a Solid Waste Facilities Permit (SWFP).

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

Construction Assumptions

Construction of the Project is expected to begin sometime in 2024 and would continue for approximately 18 months if the site is built-out under a single construction effort. Site preparation is anticipated to take approximately 2 months, grading to take approximately 2 months, and vertical construction to occur over approximately 14 months. Project build-out is expected in 2025. It should be noted depending on market demands, the Project construction may occur incrementally over time though analysis under a single effort is considered worst case.

Site preparation will include clearing and grubbing which would require export to a local recycling area. The land development includes grading to create rough graded streets, native soil preparatory work for track facilities, and pads for new construction. The site preparation will include an estimated 150,000 cubic yards (CY) of cut and 150,000 CY of fill; soil will be balanced on site.

The Project would require material imports which would include 140,000 CY of granular select fill for use underneath concrete building pads, an import of approximately 315,000 tons of ballast or 410,000 CY of material to construct the three (3) loop tracks and 28,000 tons or 32,000 CY of road base for the Industrial Street roadway, which will be surface finished with asphalt concrete. In all, the Project would import 582,000 CY of material and export roughly 1,000 CY of grubbed material.

A concrete and rebar bridge/over-pass or a culvert/under-pass may ultimately be built to take trucks to and from the central part of the project if full loop tracks are built. Prior to the full loop tracks being constructed, a private roadway will be constructed for access to the central part of the Project.

Table 4 below shows the expected timeframes and construction equipment necessary to fully construct all the project infrastructure, structures, and rail lines. Additionally, the project would implement several design features which are identified on the following page. These design features were assumed within all modeling and therefore would be required and considered a condition to this Project's approval.

Table 4: Expected Construction Equipment

Equipment Type	Start Date	End Date	Quantity
Site Preparation	1/1/2024	3/1/2024	
Rubber Tired Dozers			3
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes			4
Grading	2/1/2024	4/3/2024	
Excavators			2
Graders			1
Rubber Tired Dozers			1
Scrapers			2

Equipment Type	Start Date	End Date	Quantity
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes			2
Building Construction	4/4/2024	6/30/2025	
Aerial Lifts			2
Cranes			2
Rough Terrain Forklifts			2
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes			3
Welders			1
Paving	4/4/2024	5/8/2024	
Pavers			2
Paving Equipment			2
Rollers			2
Architectural Coating	4/1/2025	4/1/2025	

Construction Impacts

Construction emissions in pounds per day from the construction operations and equipment identified in Table 4 above is shown in Table 5 below. The project construction model includes project design features listed below:

Table 5: Expected Construction Emissions without Mitigation – Lb/Day

Year	ROG	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10} (Dust)	PM_{10} (Exhaust)	PM_{10} (Total)	PM2.5 (Dust)	PM2.5 (Exhaust)	PM2.5 (Total)
2024	69.93	66.19	50.26	0.16	1,100.65	2.65	1,101.46	110.82	2.44	111.57
2025	69.64	29.54	38.21	0.14	1,100.65	0.73	1,101.38	110.82	0.68	111.57
Significance Threshold (lb/day)	75	100	550	150	-	-	150	-	-	150
ICAPCD Impact?	No	No	No	No	-	-	Yes	-	-	No

Based on the modeling results, the project would exceed ICAPCD standards for PM10 and is largely attributed to the 24,250 CY of ballast and roadways that will be imported to the site during Grading and Building Construction activities. It was found that all PM10 impacts could be reduced to less than significant if 100% of all hauling trucks were to utilize paved roadway sections only. A haul route for stone and construction materials would need to be prepared to the satisfaction of ICAPCD showing the route is 100% paved. Table 6 shows the mitigated emissions which are less than significant.

MM AQ-1: The Project shall prepare a haul route plan for all construction materials to include ballast stone, road base or import materials requiring hauling. The haul route plan shall be approved to the satisfaction of ICAPCD and shall be over a 100% paved roadway surface. In addition, all employes working on the Green Valley Logistics Project shall be trained and sign off that each trip to and from the site would be on 100% paved surfaces.

Table 6: Expected Construction Emissions with Mitigation – Lb/Day

Year	ROG	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10} (Dust)	PM_{10} (Exhaust)	PM_{10} (Total)	PM2.5 (Dust)	PM2.5 (Exhaust)	PM2.5 (Total)
2024	69.14	55.68	62.60	0.16	14.41	0.42	14.83	6.58	0.42	6.99
2025	68.96	32.54	41.73	0.14	6.11	0.33	6.44	1.67	0.32	1.99
Significance Threshold (lb/day)	75	100	550	150	-	-	150	-	-	150
ICAPCD Impact?	No	No	No	No	-	-	No	-	-	No

Odor Emissions

Potential onsite odor generators would include short term construction odors from activities such as paving and possibly painting as well as exhaust from construction equipment. Odors created during short term construction activities would most likely be from placing asphalt which has a slight odor from the bitumen and solvents used within hot asphalt. Since the nearest sensitive receptor is located just over 0.25 mile from the site, a less than significant odor impact from construction is expected.

Operational Emissions

Routine operations and maintenance of the facility will include preventative maintenance and repairs of any damaged or otherwise inoperable equipment on an as-needed basis. The operation and maintenance staff will monitor the facility operations over the Project life to ensure that the logistics center is operating to meet design standards. Approximately 56 full-time employees are expected each day of the week during Project operations to cover the below shown elements of the Project, with approximately two shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm). The below shown Project elements will be developed in accordance with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County development standards.

Based on the projected traffic volumes estimated by the Project Traffic Engineer, the proposed project would generate approximately 107 regular employee ADT and as many as 436 ADT from heavy trucks. As noted by the Project traffic engineer, the Green Valley Logistics Project would reduce regional vehicle miles travelled since the Logistics Center essentially would allow for train containers to bulk transfer goods between the Los Angeles Area to Imperial County which are currently being carried via trucks mostly. The regional truck mileage associated with the Project site would essentially drop regional trips by more than a factor of 2/3 or 25miles vs 80 miles previously. Since each truck using the Green Valley Logistics center would reduce miles traveled withing the County of Imperial, only the employee trips were modeled within CalEEMod.

As was noted earlier within the construction methodology section, CalEEMod includes an assumption for roads within imperial county to be only 50% paved. Project trips would only be on paved road sections or a 100% paved scenario in CalEEMod. To be conservative however, this analysis assumes a 90% paved roadway condition in the modeled inputs.

Operational air quality emission sources would also include area sources such as landscaping, consumer products and architectural coatings during maintenance, energy sources from electrical usage, solid waste from trash generation, and water uses, which are calculated within CalEEMod.

The Project area is currently being used for agricultural purposes and will use 630 acre-feet of water each year. The Project would reduce water consumption by 450 acre-feet per year based on a historical use factor 5.25 acre-feet per acre per year and would use 180 acre-feet annually at buildout. CalEEMod assumes 180 acre-feet of water usage annually by the project and no credit for the 450 acre-feet was taken in this analysis.

Operational Impacts

The Green Logistics Development Project would bring roughly 4 locomotives into the 1.75 mile loop daily. These trains would be expected to generate air quality emissions daily. Table 7 below shows the estimated emissions generated from these locomotives daily.

Table 7: Expected Rail Emissions

PM10	NOx	CO	Units
0.16836	6.1587	1.28	(g/bhp-hr)
4000	4000	4000	horsepower
4	4	4	trains

PM10	**NOx**	**CO**	**Units**
1.75	1.75	1.75	miles
1	1	1	miles/hour
0.1	0.1	0.1	Load Factor
1.75	1.75	1.75	hours
6300	6300	6300	Seconds
0.0748	2.7372	0.5689	Grams/sec
471.41	17244.36	3584.00	Grams
1.04	**38.02**	**7.90**	**Pounds/day**

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to the following determinations. Would the Project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

a) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact With Mitigation. The ICAPCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook calls for a consistency analysis with the regional clean air plans, namely ozone and PM10 attainment demonstration plans, for large residential and commercial developments that are required to develop an EIR. Projects that are projected to exceed ICAPCD thresholds of significance for its operations are considered large developments and are required to demonstrate consistency with regional air quality plans.

As discussed above, the project would exceed ICAPCD standards for PM10 and is largely attributed to the 24,250 CY of ballast and roadways that will be imported to the site during Grading and Building Construction activities. It was found that all PM10 impacts could be reduced to less than significant if 100% of all hauling trucks were to utilize paved roadway sections only. A haul route for stone and construction materials would need to be prepared to the satisfaction of ICAPCD showing the route is 100% paved.

Mitigation Measure AQ-1: The Project shall prepare a haul route plan for all construction materials to include ballast stone, road base or import materials requiring hauling. The haul route plan shall be approved to the satisfaction of ICAPCD and shall be over a 100% paved roadway surface. In addition, all employes working on the Green Valley Logistics Project shall be trained and sign off that each trip to and from the site would be on 100% paved surfaces.

With the implementation of mitigation measure **AQ-1**, impacts would be less than significant.

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? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

b) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact. Cumulative impacts would exist when either there are direct air quality impacts or when multiple construction projects occur within the same area simultaneously. To illustrate this, if a project were to produce air quality emissions simultaneous to a nearby construction project the addition of both project emissions to the environment could exceed significance thresholds. For this project, the construction emissions were found to be less than significant as shown in Table 3.1 above. These impacts were discovered to be regional as opposed to onsite since these impacts would be on Imperial County roads which are not paved. The Proposed Project calls for specific mitigation measures (AQ-1) to require that all hauling and employee trips during construction utilize only 100% paved roadway sections. It will be up to the Construction Contractor to ensure that a haul route plan is approved by the ICAPCD by showing that the entire route is 100% paved. In addition, the Construction Contractor shall educate construction staff to only drive on 100% paved roads when traveling to or from the Project site.

The Project site is zoned industrial, and the Proposed Project has been designed to be consistent with this zoning designation. The Proposed Project would generate less than significant direct air quality impacts and by the very nature of the Project would reduce regional truck trips by greater than two thirds (2/3) since each truck trip would reduce mileage from roughly 80 miles per day to only 25 for the same tasks since the emissions would be bulk via train instead of individually trucked into the Imperial County area from the Los Angeles area. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutants concentrations? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	No Impact (NI)

c) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact. Sensitive receptors are people who would be more susceptible to air pollution than the general population, such as children, athletes, the elderly, and the chronically ill. Examples of land uses where substantial numbers of sensitive receptors are often found are schools, daycare centers, parks, recreational areas, medical facilities, nursing homes, and convalescent care facilities. Residential areas are also considered to be sensitive to air pollution because residents (including children and the elderly) tend to be at home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to pollutants. The closest sensitive receptor is a rural residence near the intersection of State Highway 86 and La Brucherie Road, approximately 2,000 feet southwest of the center of activity of the Project Site. This residence is too far away to be affected by emissions from the proposed Project, and therefore impacts would be less than significant.

d)	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

d) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact. As discussed above, **p**otential onsite odor generators would include short term construction odors from activities such as paving and architectural coating as well as exhaust from construction equipment. Odors created during short term construction activities would most likely be from placing asphalt which has a slight odor from the bitumen and solvents used within hot asphalt. Since the nearest sensitive receptor is located just over 0.25 miles from the site, a less than significant odor impact from construction is expected.

IV. *BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES* *Would the project:*

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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Interfere substantially with the movement of any 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinance protecting biological resource, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

At the time the MEIR was prepared, the existing conditions described were based on the results of the site assessment prepared in 2004. Observations were made for sensitive species, though no focused surveys pursuant to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) protocols were conducted.

Three vegetation communities were found to occur within the SPA: bush seepweed–iodine bush scrub (total of 729.7 acres, with 562.2 acres disturbed), tamarisk scrub (total of 287.5 acres, with 64.5 acres as disturbed and 161.2 classified as tamarisk scrub/ponds), and disturbed wetlands (total of 6.6 acres of disturbed wetlands). The remaining lands were occupied by agriculture (2,244.3 acres, with 1,336.2 under active agriculture, 268.10 as fallow agriculture, and 640 acres of aquaculture facility and developed and disturbed areas (1,831.9 acres).

Wildlife

A total of 26 wildlife species were observed or detected within the SPA in the bush seepweed-iodine bush scrub habitat, tamarisk scrub communities, disturbed wetland area, and within the agricultural fields. While the developed and disturbed areas do not support native vegetation, these areas provide access to perches, roosts or covers for various disturbance-adapted animal species. These species are

detailed within the MEIR.

Sensitive Habitats

Sensitive habitats within the MEIR were identified to be areas that were regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) as federal wetlands or waters under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), regulated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly known as the California Department of Fish and Game[CDFG]) as State wetlands or waters under Section 1600 of the CDFG code, and/or were areas worthy of consideration by the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). While some portions of the SPA were found to possibly fall under ACOE and CDFG jurisdiction, none of the habitats were found to be rarer or worthy of consideration. Implementation of SPA would result in disturbance to bush seepweed-iodine bush scrub, tamarisk scrub, and disturbed wetlands. However, these impacts to the vegetation communities (or portions thereof) would be significant if they were qualified as federal and/or State jurisdictional waters or wetlands. Agricultural lands within the SPA would be impacted by future development; however, impacts would not be significant because these lands were not considered as sensitive. However, there would indirect and temporary impacts during development. Therefore, the following mitigation measures provided in the MEIR, would address these impacts to vegetation, including wetland habitats, that could arise during construction generated erosion, sedimentation, and fugitive dust.

Mitigation Measure 4.5.1: Prior to approval of any discretionary permit, final map, grading plan, or building permit for any phase or unit of development within the Specific Plan, the Planning and Development Services Director shall determine whether the Project could potentially impact wetlands or waters of the U.S. Where the Planning and Development Services Director determines that a potential impact could occur, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that a qualified biologist has inspected the site and made a determination regarding the presence of wetlands or waters of the U.S. If determined to be present, the following actions shall be taken: (1) a formal wetland and waters of the U.S. determination and delineation shall be conducted by trained personnel to determine the extent of these resources on the Project site; (2) any required ACOE permit pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA and certification from the RWQCB pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA shall have been issued; and (3) any required Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFG pursuant to Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code and either a Statewide General Order (2004-0004-DWQ) or Form 200-Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) from the RWQCB under Section 13260 of the California Water Code has been issued.

As part of the permitting process for impacts to either federal or State wetlands or waters, mitigation in the form of habitat compensation (either creation, restoration, or enhancement) would be required. Because of the federal and State policy of a no net loss of wetland functions and values, habitat creation at least equal to the amount of jurisdictional habitat impacted, shall be included with the habitat compensation program. The ultimate mitigation replacement ratios would be determined through consultation with the appropriate resource agencies during the permitting process.

Mitigation Measure 4.5.2: Prior to approval of any discretionary permit, final map, grading plan, or building permit for any phase or unit of development within the Specific Plan, the Planning and Development Services Director shall determine whether the Project could potentially impact rare plants. Where the Planning and Development Services Director determines that a potential impact could occur, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that focused rare plant surveys by a qualified biologist were conducted during the appropriate season. If these surveys detect sensitive plant species and determine that significant impacts would occur, mitigation in the form of habitat compensation would be required as determined appropriate by the County.

Mitigation Measure 4.5.3: Prior to construction within the Specific Plan, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that standard best management practices (BMPs) have been installed to avoid erosion and sedimentation into federal and/or State jurisdictional waters and wetlands. It is anticipated that such BMPs would be components of a Stormwater Prevention Pollution Plan required as a component of the State Water Resources Control Board's NPDES General Permit, which prevents construction pollutants from contacting storm water and with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving off-site into receiving waters. A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit is required for construction projects that encompass more than 5 acres of soil disturbance that would discharge stormwater into waters of the U.S.

Sensitive Plant Species

Sensitive plants were listed to be as endangered, threatened, or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened by the USFWS, CDFW, and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants in California. Based on a CNDDB search at the time of the preparation of the MEIR, no federally or State listed or proposed for listing plant species were found to be within the SPA. Two species, Abram's spurge *(Chamaesyce abramsiana)* and Sand food *(Pholisma sonorae)* were found near the Project site; however, they were considered to have low potential to occur. Sensitive plant species present within the SPA would be impacted, but the intensity of the impact would be based on current status and population size of the population. However, as noted in the MEIR, the potential for such species to be present is low.

Sensitive Wildlife

Sensitive wildlife was listed to be as endangered, threatened, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing by the USFWS and CDFW. The three sensitive wildlife species detected within the SPA were the burrowing owl *(Athene cunicularia)*, prairie falcon *(Falco mexicanus)*, and black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*). Six other sensitive species known from the region with a low to moderate potential to occur within

the SPA are the federally endangered and State-threatened Yuma clapper rail (*Rallus longirostris yumanensis*), as well as the Colorado River toad (*Bufo alvarius*), flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosma mcalli*), ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*), Crissal thrasher (*Toxostoma crissale*), and mountain plover (*Charadrius montanus*), which are State species of special concern.

The MEIR concluded that implementation of the Specific Plan would directly impact wildlife such as the burrowing owl if proposed activities occur within 50 meters (160 feet) of occupied burrows, burrows and entrances are destroyed, or foraging habitat adjacent to burrows is degraded. Depending on the timing of development within the SPA, other bird species covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act MBTA) may be impacted during the breeding season. Therefore, direct impacts would be significant if development were to occur during the nesting season (February 1 through September 30). While burrowing owl was not present at the time of the reconnaissance during the preparation of the MEIR within the Proposed Project site (or known as the Palo Verde Valley Disposal Service site in the MEIR), there is potential for them to colonize the site and therefore, impacts would be addressed with implementation of the following mitigation measure.

Mitigation Measure 4.5.4: Prior to grading or construction within the Specific Plan, the Planning and Development Services Director shall determine whether the Project could potentially impact burrowing owl. Where the Planning and Development Services Director determines that a potential impact could occur, the applicant shall engage the services of a biologist who has been determined by the USFWS as qualified to conduct burrowing owl surveys. An initial survey to determine the presence of burrowing owls shall be conducted between February and September. Prior to conduct of any burrowing owl survey, CDFG and the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement shall be contacted regarding use of the CBOC Guidelines for the survey and for relocation requirements. Information received from these agencies shall be provided in writing to the Development Services Director prior to commencement of any survey. The survey shall be conducted in accordance with the latest USFWS-approved guidelines for conducting borrowing owl surveys and the requirements of CDFG. A report on the results of the survey and recommended avoidance or mitigation measures shall be provided by the applicant to the USFWS, CDFG, and Imperial County Planning and Development Services Department. No clearing or ground-disturbing activities may be taken until the report and recommendations have been accepted by the USFWS, CDFG, and Imperial County Planning and Development Services Department. Relocation of found burrowing owls may be required. All burrowing owls found on the Project site shall be tagged by a USFWS-qualified burrowing owl biologist. If burrowing owl burrows are found present within construction areas and a 50-meter (165-foot) boundary of construction limits, avoidance is the preferred level of mitigation. Avoidance requires no disturbance within 50 meters (165 feet) of occupied burrows during the nonbreeding season (September 1 through January 31), no disturbance within 75 meters (250 feet) of occupied burrows during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31), and a minimum of 6.5 acres of foraging habitat preserved contiguous with occupied burrow sites for each pair of breeding burrowing owls.

If avoidance cannot be met, or no burrowing owls were detected during the first survey, a second survey shall be conducted no less than 30 days prior to any clearing, ground disturbance, or demolition of existing structures. If no burrowing owls are present, a third survey shall be conducted no less than five days prior to the commencement of construction and, if no burrowing owls are present, clearing, grading, demolition, or construction may commence. If burrowing owls are present at the time of the second survey and CDFG and USFWS Office of Law Enforcement concur, on-site passive relocation can be implemented wherein owls are encouraged to move from occupied burrows to alternate natural or artificial burrows beyond 50 meters from the impact zone, within a minimum of 6.5 acres of foraging habitat for each pair of relocated owls. The project biologist shall evaluate the suitability of nearby habitat, the availability of an existing or constructed alternate burrow for each burrow excavated, and the opportunity for preservation of the site, such as through a conservation easement that would be managed to promote burrowing owl use of the site. Relocation requires that owls should be excluded from burrows in the immediate impact zone and 50-meter buffer zone by installing one-way doors in burrow entrances, left in place for 48 hours before excavation. Relocation of owls should only be implemented during the nonbreeding season. Passive relocation may occur only if there is at least 6.5 acres of suitable nearby habitat for each relocated pair, and an alternate burrow for each burrow excavated.

Mitigation Measure 4.5.5: Prior to finalization of construction plans, timing of construction within the Specific Plan shall be scheduled, if feasible, to avoid the migratory bird nesting season in the Project area (February 1 through September 30). One week prior to commencement of construction activities outside of the nesting season, a focused bird nest survey shall be conducted within the plan area by a qualified biologist. Should any inactive or active bird nests be noted, the CDFG shall be notified pursuant to CDFG Code 3503 and appropriate actions shall be taken per CDFG recommendations.

However, if construction is necessary before close of the nesting season, the applicant could elect to have a qualified biologist conduct focused surveys for migratory bird nests throughout the individual project site in the season of planned construction. If this measure were selected, surveys shall be completed 1 week prior to commencement of construction. If surveys noted no sensitive wildlife species or migratory bird nests within the area of potential construction impact, construction could occur during the nesting season. If the biologist determines that habitat slated for removal/disturbance is being used for nesting at the time of the focused survey, disturbance shall be avoided until after the young have fledged from the nest and achieved independence. Results of focused bird nest surveys shall be submitted to the CDFG via a letter report. Should construction halt for any reason for longer than 1 week after initial commencement of activities, an additional focused survey for migratory bird nests would be required 1 week prior to recommencement of construction activities. If the surveys were completed and no sensitive wildlife species or nests were observed, construction could recommence during the nesting season.

Because construction equipment could have temporary impacts, such as construction noise above ambient levels in locations within 500 feet of an active nest covered by the MBTA, during the nesting season construction, activities are required to limit noise levels. The County precedent for construction noise is that projects shall not exceed a 60-decibel level at a nesting site of designated habitat.

Wildlife Corridors

Wildlife migration corridors are linear landscape features with sufficient width and buffer to allow the movement of animals between patches of similar undisturbed habitat or between habitats and vital resources. Regional corridors links two or more large areas of natural open space, while local corridors allow resident animals to access critical resources such as food, cover and water in smaller areas that may be isolated by urban development. The MEIR notes that the SPA is part of a major contiguous wildlife corridor in the County, situated between the New River and Alamo River, and south of the Salton Sea. Areas within the SPA provide bush seepweed-iodine bush and tamarisk scrub habitats that support wildlife movement and are part of an important avian and wildlife corridor to the Salton Sea. However, no direct impacts were found to occur within because the SPA is surrounded by large amounts of similar habitat and linkages that would be available for wildlife movement.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

Chambers Group completed a literature review and reconnaissance-level survey for proposed work activities to develop the Green Valley Logistics Center (Proposed Project). The survey identified vegetation communities, potential for the occurrence of special status species, or habitats that could support special status wildlife species, and a preliminary jurisdictional delineation (PJD) of potential wetland and waters on site. Information contained in this Biological Technical Report is in accordance with accepted scientific and technical standards that are consistent with the requirements of United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

The Proposed Project is located between the City of Imperial and Brawley in Imperial County, California. The Proposed Project area is in the Brawley USGS 7.5-min quadrangle, within Section 31, Township 14 South, Range 14 East. The Proposed Project site is primarily an open space dominated by minimal topographical variation. The Proposed Project site is bordered by Dahlia Lateral 8 to the south, the Union Pacific Railroad to the west, State Route (SR) 86 to the west, and the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) Newside Drain No. 1-A to the north. The elevation at the Proposed Project site ranges from approximately 70 to 90 ft. below mean sea level (bmsl). The proposed development of the Study Area lies outside the scope of the IID Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), according to communication with the County of Imperial.

Special Status Plants

Factors used to determine the potential for occurrence included the quality of habitat, elevation, and the results of the reconnaissance survey. In addition, the location of prior CNDDB records of occurrence were used as additional data, but since the CNDDB is a positive-sighting database, this data was used only in support of the analysis from the previously identified factors.

Current database searches (CDFW 2022 and CNPS 2022) resulted in zero federal- and/or state-listed threatened and/or endangered species documented to occur within 5 miles of the Study Area. However, two CNPS CRPR plants species that may potentially occur within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan were listed on the MEIR and identified in the CNDDB. No federal- and/or state-listed threatened and/or endangered or rare plant species were observed during the Chambers Group reconnaissance survey. After a literature review and an assessment of the various habitat types within the Study Area, it was determined that one species is considered absent, and one species has a low potential to occur within the Study Area. Factors used to determine potential for occurrence included the quality of habitat and the location of prior CNDDB and MEIR records of occurrence.

The analysis of the MEIR records, CNDDB search, and field survey resulted in one species considered to be absent on the Study Area:

- sand food (Pholisma sonorae)

Although observation records for this species occur within 5 miles of the Study Area and arrow weed was observed on site, which is one of the host species, sand food is considered absent from the Study Area as the species is restricted to habitats or environmental conditions that do not occur within the Study Area.

The analysis of the MEIR records, CNDDB search, and field survey resulted in one species with a low potential to occur on the Study Area:

- Abram's spurge (Chamaesyce abramsiana)

Historic records indicate one observation of Abram's spurge documented approximately 4 miles north of the Study Area (CDFW 2022). Although observation records for this species occur within 5 miles of the Study Area, Abram's spurge has a low potential for occurrence in the Study Area as habitats or environmental conditions needed to support this species are of poor quality.

Special Status Wildlife

A current database search (CNDDB 2022) resulted in a list of three federal- and/or state-listed endangered or threatened, SSC, or otherwise special status wildlife species that may potentially occur within the Study Area (Appendix A Figure 6). An additional seven federal- and/or state-listed endangered or threatened Species of Concern, or otherwise special status wildlife species that may potentially occur within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan were listed on the MEIR. After a literature review and the assessment of the various habitat types within the Study Area, it was determined that seven species had a low potential to occur, one species had a moderate potential to occur, one species has a high

potential to occur, and one was determined to be present, within the Study Area. Factors used to determine potential for occurrence included the quality of habitat and the location of prior CNDDB and MEIR records of occurrence.

The analysis of the MEIR records, CNDDB search, and field survey resulted in one species considered absent since habitat and environmental conditions do not exist on the Study Area:

- Colorado River toad (Bufo alvarius)

The analysis of the MEIR records, CNDDB search, and field survey resulted in five species with a low potential to occur on the Study Area since habitat is of poor quality and historical records of these species do not exist within 5 miles of the site:

- crissal thrasher (Toxostoma crissale)
- ferruginous hawk (Buteo regalis)
- flat-tailed horned lizard (Phrynosoma mcallii)
- prairie falcon (Falco mexicanus)
- western yellow bat (Lasirus xanthinus)
- Yuma clapper rail (Rallus longirostris yumanensis)

The analysis of the MEIR records, CNDDB search, and field survey resulted in one species, mountain plover, with a moderate potential to occur on the Study Area as described below:

- mountain plover – SSC

  The mountain plover (wintering) is listed as a California Species of Special Concern. This species breeds from the prairie and sagebrush country of north-central Montana, eastern Wyoming, and the area around southeastern Colorado. It winters from central California along the southern border southward to northern Mexico (Udvardy 1977). The mountain plover is a relatively nondescript shorebird with a short tail, long legs, plain brown plumage above, and whiter plumage below. Males develop a black patch on the forehead during the breeding season. This species is sometimes confused with the American golden plover, but unlike the American golden plover, the belly and under-wing is a clean, white color and the legs are pale. Breeding habitats include semi-arid plains, grasslands, and plateaus. Mountain plovers often use prairie dog mounds as nest sites. Common wintering habitats consist of dry, barren ground, smooth dirt fields, agricultural fields, and shortgrass prairies. This species tends to form small flocks in the winter. It is one of the few shorebird species that prefers habitats away from water. It is an insectivore that eats flies, beetles, grasshoppers, crickets, and other insects. Populations are in decline due to overgrazing practices and are linked to declining prairie dog populations. The continued loss and alteration of habitats on breeding and wintering grounds are the primary threats to the mountain plover. The Proposed Project area contains suitable habitat for this species, no historical records of this species occur within 5 miles of the site, and no individuals were observed during the survey. Therefore, this species has a moderate potential to occur within the Study Area. This species was not observed during the field survey effort.

The analysis of the MEIR records, CNDDB search, and field survey resulted in one species, San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, with a high potential to occur on the Study Area.

- San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit

  The San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (Lepus californicus bennettii) is listed as a California Species of Special Concern. It is found on the coastal slope from Kern County, California south into Baja California, Mexico between sea level and approximately 3,000 feet amsl. It occurs in a variety of habitats, but prefers intermediate canopy stages of shrub habitats, grasslands, and open shrub, along herbaceous and tree edges within coastal sage scrub habitats in southern California. It also occurs on agricultural lands. This species does not typically burrow but sits in depressions called forms at the bases of shrubs by day (Howard 1995). No nest structure is typically built by this species. The Proposed Project area contains suitable habitat for this species, this species was detected in open bush seepweed-iodine bush scrub adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad on the western side of the Specific Plan during the MEIR site assessment, and no individuals were observed during the survey. Therefore, this species has a high potential to occur within the Study Area. This species was not observed during the field survey effort.

One species, burrowing owl, was observed during the reconnaissance survey (Appendix A Figure 7) and is therefore considered present within the Study Area.

- burrowing owl

  The burrowing owl (Athene cunicularia) is a California Species of Special Concern. It is broadly distributed across the western United States, with populations in Florida and Central and South America. The burrowing owl breeds in open plains from western Canada and the western United States, Mexico through Central America and into South America to Argentina (Klute 2003). This species inhabits dry, open, native or non-native grasslands, deserts, and other arid environments with low-growing and low-density vegetation (Ehrlich 1988). It may occupy golf courses, cemeteries, road rights-of way, airstrips, abandoned buildings, irrigation ditches, and vacant lots with holes or cracks suitable for use as burrows (TLMA 2006). Burrowing owls typically use burrows made by mammals such as California ground squirrels (Spermophilus beecheyi), foxes, or badgers (Trulio 1997). When burrows are scarce, the burrowing owl may use man-made

structures such as openings beneath cement or asphalt pavement, pipes, culverts, and nest boxes (TLMA 2006). Burrowing owls often are found within, under, or near man-made structures. Prey sources for this species include small rodents; arthropods such as spiders, crickets, centipedes, and grasshoppers; smaller birds; amphibians; reptiles; and carrion. Threats to the burrowing owl include loss of nesting burrows, habitat loss, and mortality from motor vehicles. At least sixteen burrowing owls and burrowing owl signs were observed in the southwest portion of the Study Area, along the edges of the concrete-lined irrigation canal (Dahlia Lateral 8). Based on the preliminary design, no impacts to this portion of the canal are anticipated (temporary impacts to Dahlia Lateral 8 are proposed in the southeast corner of the Study Area).

In order to minimize potential impacts to sensitive species with the potential to occur within the Study Area, the following mitigation measures should be implemented prior to and during construction activities:

BIO-1: The construction footprint will be clearly defined with flagging and/or fencing and will be removed upon completion.

BIO-2: Prior to the start of construction activities, an environmental education program will be provided for all project personnel. The education program will include the following: (1) the potential presence of covered species and their habitats, (2) the requirements and boundaries of the project, (3) the importance of complying with avoidance and minimization measures, (4) environmentally responsible construction practices, (5) identification of sensitive resource areas in the field, and (6) problem reporting and resolution methods.

BIO-3: Preconstruction surveys will be conducted for the burrowing owl within 30 days of construction in all suitable habitat within the proposed Project Impact Areas.

BIO-4: If any ground disturbing activities are planned during the burrowing owl nesting season (approximately February 1 through August 31), avoidance measures shall include a no construction buffer zone of a minimum distance of 250 feet, consistent with the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFG, 2012). Compliance shall be maintained with CDFW burrowing owl mitigation guidelines as detailed in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFG, 2012) or more recent updates, if available.

BIO-5: If project activities will occur during the bird breeding season (February 15-August 31), a qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction nesting survey to ensure that no active nests are present within or adjacent to the project areas. If an active nest is observed that may be impacted by project-related activities, avoidance measures shall be implemented to avoid impacting the nest. Avoidance measures include delaying construction within the immediate vicinity of the active nest until the young have fledged or naturally failed, or instituting a buffer around the nest that prohibits construction activities to occur but allows construction to continue outside the buffer. The appropriate avoidance buffer is to be determined by the qualified biologist based on vegetative cover, topography, stage of nest or young development, and species type.

BIO-6: A preconstruction sweep for San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit should be conducted before initial construction activities. If a jackrabbit is found, the jackrabbit should be allowed to move out of harm's way.

BIO-7: A focused survey for burrowing owl should be conducted prior to commencement of construction activities, in compliance with the CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (March 7, 2012). The surveys will determine the potential effects of the Proposed Project and activities on burrowing owls, and to avoid take in accordance with CDFW Code sections 86, 3503, and 3503.5. The assessment will determine how burrowing owls are utilizing the Project and surrounding area, where the owls are located, and the status of the owls (i.e., breeding, satellite burrows, etc.). Occupied (breeding) burrows must be avoided during the nesting period, from February 1 through August 31. Occupied burrows during the non-breeding season by migratory or non-migratory residents should also be avoided. Avoidance buffers will be based on the CDFW recommended restricted activity dates and setback distances outlined in the CDFW Staff Report. If non-breeding occupied burrows cannot be avoided, coordination with CDFW will be required to determine if passive relocation is possible. In this event, a Burrowing Owl Exclusion Plan that details a burrowing owl exclusion plan will be required and approved by CDFW before such activities are conducted. Biological monitoring of the owls (prior to, during and after exclusion) will be required in accordance with the CDFW Staff Report recommendations. Mitigation for permanent impacts to nesting, occupied and satellite burrows and associated burrowing owl habitat will be required in accordance with CDFW mitigation requirements. A Burrowing Owl Monitoring and Mitigation Plan, approved by CDFW, will be required prior to initiating ground disturbance activities.

BIO-8: Take avoidance surveys in accordance with the CDFW Burrowing Owl Staff Report (CDFW 2012) for burrowing owl will be required prior to commencement of construction activities. The survey must be completed no less than 14 days prior to initiating ground disturbance activities.

BIO-9: Biological monitoring of the burrowing owls will be required during Project construction activities to ensure no impacts to burrowing owl occur. The level of effort and duration of the monitoring will be provided in the Burrowing Owl Monitoring and Mitigation Plan.

Jurisdictional Waters

The Study Area is located within the Salton Sea Watershed and Alamo River Watershed, within the USACE Hydrological Unit Code (HUC) 12: 181002040801 – Town of El Centro Sub-Watershed. This sub-watershed contains an area of approximately 158 square miles (CWIP 2022). Many agricultural drainages and canals within this sub-watershed connect to the Alamo River and flow northward towards the Salton Sea. The Alamo River originates approximately 2 miles south of the U.S. border with Mexico, flows northward across the border for approximately 50 miles until it terminates into the Salton Sea.

According to the NWI and NHD databases, two streams (agricultural drainages) exist within the northern and southern boundaries of the Study Area (Figure 3). The Dahlia Lateral 8 canal (ID-1) enters the Study Area from the southwest corner along Highway 86 and Lydick Loop, flowing east and northeast into the Newside Drain. Based on the preliminary designs, approximately 850 linear feet of a concrete lined agricultural ditch (Dahlia Lateral 8 canal) may be temporarily impacted in the southeast corner of the Study Area; portions the canal will be covered and left in place to support the proposed ladder tracks along the southeastern corner of the Study Area. This portion of the canal is concrete-lined (unvegetated) and does not provide suitable habitat for sensitive plant or wildlife species.

The second drainage, Newside Drain (ID-2) enters the northern area of the Study Area on the west side of Highway 86 from Lydick Loop and Highway 86 and directs flow east/northeast to the Newside Drain. A small outlet of approximately 33 linear feet from the proposed drainage basin into the Newside Drain is anticipated.

The Newside Drain continues off site and flows northeastward to the Rose Canal, east to the Rose Outlet, northeastward to the Alamo River, and northward to the Salton Sea. These drainages facilitate water around the site and eventually to the Salton Sea; therefore, these drainages may be considered WoUS subject to potential USACE jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, waters of the State pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act and the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code, Division 7, §13000 et seq.), and subject to potential CDFW jurisdiction under Sections 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code.

The following mitigation measures are proposed that specifically relate to jurisdictional features located within the Proposed Project in general:

BIO-10: The construction footprint will be clearly defined with flagging and/or fencing to avoid impacts to jurisdictional waters and will be removed upon completion.

BIO-11: BMPs including erosion control measures, such as weed-free straw wattles should be in place during the construction near jurisdictional water areas to avoid downstream sedimentation.

BIO-12: Additional protection measures for the protection of jurisdictional waters and associated mitigation will be identified in the 401/404/1600 permits.

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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

a) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. As discussed in the MEIR, there is a potential for sensitive species to occur within the study area and the MEIR required Mitigation Measure 4.5.2, to evaluate rare plant species within areas of specific development prior to construction. As mentioned above, Chambers Group surveyed the Proposed Project site to evaluate the potential for sensitive species on site, and thus meet the requirements of Mitigation Measure 4.5.2. As mentioned above, while there is a potential for sensitive plant species to exist on site, none were observed during the survey. The only special status species identified within the study area was the Burrowing Owl (Athene cunicularia). At least sixteen burrowing owls and burrowing owl signs were observed in the southwest portion of the Study Area, along the edges of the concrete-lined irrigation canal (Dahlia Lateral 8). Based on the preliminary design, no impacts to this portion of the canal are anticipated (temporary impacts to Dahlia Lateral 8 are proposed in the southeast corner of the Study Area).

The Project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure **BIO-2**, which would require worker awareness training prior to construction so sensitive species can be spotted by on-site employees.

Additionally, the MEIR included mitigation measures to protect these species; however, since protocols and requirements have changed since the time of adoption of the MEIR, those mitigation measures have been replaced with similar, new mitigation measures. In lieu of MEIR Mitigation Measure 4.5.4, the Project would be required to implement Mitigation Measures **BIO-3, BIO-4,** and **BIO-7** through **BIO-9** which would require protection for Burrowing Owls. In lieu of MEIR Mitigation Measure 4.5.5, the Project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure **BIO-5**, which would protect migratory birds during nesting and breeding seasons.

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	No Impact (NI)

With implementation of Mitigation Measures **BIO-1** through **BIO-9**, impacts would be less than significant.

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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

b) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. As discussed in the MEIR, portions of the SPA were found to be considered jurisdictional waters and the MEIR required Mitigation Measure 4.5.1 to evaluate if wetlands or waters would be impacted with implementation of projects in the SPA. As mentioned above, Chambers Group surveyed the Proposed Project site to confirm the hydrology and hydrologic connectivity of the area, and thus meet the requirements of Mitigation Measure 4.5.1. Approximately 0.04 acres of permanent and 0.01 acres of temporary impacts of non-wetland waters (concrete-lined canal) of the State within the overall Study Area that are subject to the potential regulatory authority of the RWQCB jurisdiction are regulated under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. Under Section 401 of the CWA, the RWQCB regulates any activity that requires a federal permit for discharges to a water body. The State Water Board General Order (Order No. WQ 2021-0048-DWQ) is pre-certified for USACE NWP 14 but requires the project to be exempt from CEQA and comply with the size threshold of no more than 0.01 acre and 100 linear feet permanent impact and no more than 0.2 acre and 300 linear feet total impact. This Project does not meet the requirements for the General Order. A 401 Water Quality Certification may be required from the RWQCB for this Project.

Approximately 0.13 acre of permanent and 0.05 acre of temporary impacts to the concrete-lined canals are subject to potential CDFW jurisdiction under Sections 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code. CDFW regulates impacts or alterations to streambeds, including any obstruction or diversion to the natural flow of a stream, substantial change or use of material from a stream, or a deposit or disposal of any debris into a stream as part of Fish and Game Code Sections 1600-02. A Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) may be required from CDFW for this Project.

As the Project may be subject to potential USACE jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, waters of the State pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act and the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code, Division 7, §13000 et seq.), and subject to potential CDFW jurisdiction under Sections 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code, mitigation measures BIO-10 through BIO-12 would be implemented.

With the installation of the proposed water detention basin and conversion of open canal to closed canal, no net loss of waters is anticipated for this Project. No native vegetation is associated with the concrete-lined canals; therefore, no restoration of native habitat is proposed. Any temporary impacts to concrete-lined portions of the canal will be restored to its original condition. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not result in any new impacts that were not previously analyzed and would be consistent with the MEIR. Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Bio-10 through BIO-12.

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? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

c) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact. Three vegetation communities identified within the Study Area have vegetation that can be found in wetland communities including Bush Seepweed Scrub, Tamarisk Thickets, and Arrow Weed Thickets. Five soil pits were dug in the areas mapped as Bush Seepweed Scrub (Figure 5). Two of the soil pits were investigated between the cemetery and the agricultural fields, while three soil pits were investigated north of the central agricultural field in locations where seepage from the non-jurisdictional agricultural ditches had been observed on historical aerial imagery. The entire area where Bush Seepweed Scrub was found looked to have been regularly tilled. Soils within the first six inches of the soil profile (for all soil pits) were identified as friable sandy clay soils with a color of 7.5YR 4/2 (Munsell 2015). The lower sections in the soil profile were very compact, clay loam soils with a color of 7.5YR 6/2 (Munsell 2015). No redoximorphic features were observed in any of the soil pits; thus, no hydric soils exist within the Bush Seepweed Scrub and are therefore not considered a wetland community.

Additional test pits were dug in areas where Arrow Weed Thickets and Tamarisk Thickets were identified. These communities were primarily found in the southeast corner and the northwest area of the Study Area. The same soil profiles with no redoximorphic features were identified in these communities.

The agricultural areas within the Study Area are proposed to be developed; therefore, the agricultural ditches used to support the area will no longer be in use and will not support Arrow Weed Thickets or Tamarisk Thickets. No hydric soils were identified in these communities; therefore, Arrow Weed Thickets and Tamarisk Thickets are not considered wetland communities. Based on the results of the database analysis and field delineation survey, no wetlands exist within the Study Area and impacts would be less than significant.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	No Impact (NI)

resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

d) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant with Mitigation. As discussed in the MEIR, the SPA is part of a major contiguous wildlife corridor in the County. Development within the SPA was found to have no indirect or direct impacts because the SPA is surrounded by large amounts of similar habitat and linkages that would be available for wildlife movement; thus, development of the SPA would not result in removing significant acres of migration corridors. However, the potential for migratory birds to utilize the site still exists. As mentioned above, the Project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure **BIO-2** which would require worker awareness training prior to construction so sensitive species can be spotted by on-site employees. In addition, the Project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure **BIO-5**, which would protect migratory birds during nesting and breeding seasons. Similar to the MEIR, the implementation of Mitigation Measures **BIO-2** and **BIO-6**, impacts would be less than significant.

e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinance protecting biological resource, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☒	☐

e) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact. The County's Land Use Ordinance Section 90302.03 outlines the requirements for landscaping withing industrial uses. The Proposed Project's grading activities would remove the existing vegetation. However, as discussed in the Biological Reconnaissance Assessment, the Project would not result in significant impacts to sensitive habitats and would be required to follow the requirements in the County's Land Use Ordinance. Implementation of the Project would not result in any new impacts that were not previously analyzed and would be consistent with the MEIR. Impacts would be less than significant.

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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

f) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant. As discussed in the Biological Reconnaissance Assessment, the Proposed Project lies outside the scope of the IID Habitat Conservation Plan. Based on the results of the survey, it was found that the Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts to habitats and would have no impacts to wetlands based on the vegetation and soils present at the Proposed Project site. Furthermore, the area currently is zoned for industrial use and is not designated to be part of any local, regional, or State conservation plan. Implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in any new impacts that were not previously analyzed and would be consistent with the MEI. Impacts would be less than significant.

V. *CULTURAL RESOURCES* *Would the project:*

a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c)	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The existing MEIR evaluated historical and archaeological impacts associated with development of the Mesquite Specific Plan. The MEIR noted that Imperial Valley's agricultural and water resource development beginning in the late 1800s also represents important historic elements. However, in the study area, surviving structures or sites reflecting Imperial County historical development are not likely to be found. The nearest documented historic resource is the Imperial Cemetery located south of the study area approximately three-quarters of a mile. There are also roads, canals, drains, powerlines, and the Niland to Calexico rail line that are old enough (50 years or older) and perhaps important enough in the development of Imperial County to be considered significant historic resources for planning purposes. Most of these appear to have been constantly modified, maintained, and improved over the years so that little of the original historic fabric is left. There may be roads, canals, drains, powerlines, and the Niland to Calexico rail line that are old enough to be considered historic resources. The significance of these potential historic features would have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Further, the MEIR noted that Development within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan would have the potential to impact Late Prehistoric archaeological materials in areas associated with lower elevation recessional shorelines of Lake Cahuilla. These potential resources sites are most likely to occur in the southwestern portion of the study area between elevation -75 feet at the corner of Harris Road and SR 86 and elevation -100 feet just west of the Rose Canal in the western part of the study area. Areas where intensive cultivation for agriculture use has occurred would have a low probability for the presence of significant cultural resource due to deep excavation for drainage tiles and recurring surface disturbance. Pre-construction surveys of existing cultivated areas would also have a low probability of discovery of cultural resources. However, cultural resources could be uncovered during site clearing, grading, or construction, in which case site development should be halted and a qualified archaeologist should be consulted.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

The MEIR concluded that with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6.1 and 4.6.2, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure 4.6.1 No pre-construction archaeological surveys shall be required in areas previously developed. However, if during grading or construction, evidence of potential archaeological resources is encountered, grading and construction shall be halted, the [South Coastal Information Center (located at California State University, San Diego)] and the County Planning and Development Services Director shall be notified, and a qualified archaeologist shall be contracted by the developer to inspect the site. Resumption of grading or construction shall not be commenced until the archaeologist has advised the Planning and Development Services Director regarding the potential for cultural resources at the site and the Planning and Development Services Director notifies the developer that grading, or construction may proceed. If further archaeological investigation is required by the Planning and Development Services Director, the procedures in Mitigation Measure 4.6.2 shall be followed.

Mitigation Measure 4.6.2 Prior to approval of a CUP, tentative map, site plan, grading plan, or building permit for any phase or unit of development on lands not previously disturbed by agricultural use that are within the portion of the Specific Plan shown as the Cultural Resource Survey Area in Figure 4-5, field surveys shall be conducted to determine the presence/absence of archaeological resources and a report of the surveys provided to the Planning and Development Services Director. A testing program shall be approved by the Planning and Development Services Director for any identified resources to determine their significance and proper mitigation. Mitigation may include preservation in place, documentation, including recordation of findings at the Southeastern Information Center (located at the Imperial Valley College Desert Museum), and curation of materials at an appropriate local facility for long-term preservation and study. If a testing and/or excavation program is required, local Native American groups shall be notified, and a Native American monitor shall be present during excavation.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐

a) and b) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant with Mitigation. Chambers Group conducted a site visit on September 16, 2022, in accordance with the MEIR Mitigation Measures 4.6.1 and 4.6.2 (Appendix C). Additionally, Chambers Group requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) records search from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The purpose of the request is to determine if any sacred lands or other resources have been recorded within the Project site or adjacent areas. The results of the SLF search, provided by the NAHC on October 18, 2022, were positive.

MEIR Mitigation Measure 4.6.1 stipulates that "no pre-construction archaeological surveys shall be required in areas of existing agricultural or other substantial development." The Project site contains existing agricultural operations, including approximately 120 acres of recently harvested wheat that is planted and harvested as a rotation crop between other crops. The Project site also has vacant areas that have previously been farmed and the existing Memory Gardens Cemetery. Upon initial review of the Project site and publicly available historic maps and both historic and current aerial imagery, Chambers Group observed that there is evidence of current and previous agricultural activity within all open space outside currently developed areas in the Project site. Specifically, Chambers Group observed evidence of previous agricultural land use in aerial photographs dating to 1953, 1976, and 1984 (NETR 2022, UCSB 1976). In the effort to further confirm the historic land use within the portions of the site not currently utilized for agricultural purposes or developed with built environment, the Imperial County Agricultural Commission (Ag. Commission), the Imperial Irrigation District (IID), and the County Surveyor (Surveyor) were contacted to review their records. IID didn't have records dating back that far, the Ag. Commission didn't have a history of farming on the sites; however, the Surveyor was able to provide photographic evidence of farming occurring historically on all sites not actively being farmed. Finally, in the effort to further verify the current conditions of the Project site, Chambers Group visited the Project site to confirm that this condition was met. During the site visit, Chambers Group observed that the overall condition of the Project site was largely unchanged from the conditions cited in the MEIR. Evidence of historic agricultural activity was observed in areas not currently utilized for agriculture and not previously developed with built environment.

Chambers Group concluded that while surface manifestations of cultural resources were not observed during the previous cultural resources study in support of the MEIR, and the current site visit, it should be noted that the landscape has been under historic-period use and settlement. This historic utilization may have resulted in unrecognized buried features such as footings and foundations or refuse area such as trash pits or outhouses. Similarly, ethnographic data and historic-period maps indicate that Native American groups such as the Kamia occupied and utilized major and minor drainages within the Salton Basin, as is documented on the 1856 General Land Office map, which depicted an "Indian Village" in the northeast quarter of Section 36 (Township 14S, Range 14E). The understanding that the area is important to Native American groups is further supported by the positive NAHC SLF records search results. However, the Project would implement MEIR Mitigation Measures 4.6.1 and 4.6.2, the former of which notes that if any unanticipated discovery of potential cultural resources are encountered during the Project, that proper protocols would be implemented.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

Additionally, as previously mentioned, the MEIR noted that there are roads, canals, drains, powerlines, and the Niland to Calexico rail line that are old enough (50 years or older) and perhaps important enough in the development of Imperial County to be considered significant historic resources for planning purposes, that would need to be evaluated on a case by case basis. While canals and railway surround the Project site, the Proposed Project would not impact either of these resources. Therefore, with implementation of MEIR Mitigation Measures 4.6.1 and 4.6.2, impacts to cultural resources would be consistent with the MEIR and impacts would be less than significant.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

c) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant. As discussed in Thresholds (a) and (b) above, it is unlikely that any resources would be found onsite. However, in the unlikely event that human remains are discovered during ground-disturbing activities, then the Proposed Project would be subject to California Health and Safety Code 7050.5, CEQA Section 15064.5, and California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If human remains are found during ground-disturbing activities, State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Ventura County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains, the County Coroner shall be notified immediately. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the County Coroner shall notify the NAHC, which shall notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the site within 48 hours of notification and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials. Therefore, consistent with the MEIR, a less than significant impact would occur.

VI. *ENERGY Would the project:*

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

In 2018, the Office of Planning and Research updated the CEQA Guidelines to include Energy as a resource area to the Appendix G checklist. The section aimed to evaluate project energy usage during both construction and operation to ensure wasteful or inefficient energy usage was being properly evaluated. During the preparation of the MEIR, energy impacts were not part of the analysis as it was not a resource area required for discussion. The only mention of energy usage was in regards to building standards, which are in the Specific Plan and include recommendations for sustainable building design that is efficient in its use of natural resources for building construction and maintenance and also promotes use of the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System,™ developed by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

a) **Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant.** The Proposed Project would allow for the development and operation of three (3) rail loop tracks totaling approximately 33,000 track feet, a rail ladder track totaling approximately 25,000 track feet, and an approximately 2,000 track feet spur that will tie into the adjacent Union Pacific Railroad Right of Way (ROW).

The rail system will facilitate inbound and outbound trains containing commodities as well as the transloading of commodities to and from trucks. Also included in the Proposed Project is a grain elevator; shipping container depot, a fuel blending/transloading area; a fueling station, warehousing, and a veteran's memorial area adjacent to the existing cemetery. The Project would also provide an extension to the SoCal Gas line from Keystone Road approximately 1.3 miles along State Route 86 to the Project Site.

Additionally, the Proposed Project seeks a specific plan amendment and zone change from Light and Medium Industrial to Heavy Industrial.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

Based on the air quality modeling, the project would on average consume ,469 thousand British Thermal Units (kBTU) of natural Gas and 1,036,422 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity each year. Under that analysis, reductions from T24 (2019) were accounted for which would improve the efficiency of the project in terms of energy consumption.

Construction emissions from workers vendors and hauling are based on the estimated vehicle miles traveled (VMT) for the total construction duration which is 1,921,345 miles total. In California, the average fuel intensity for on-road vehicles is 0.0615 gal/mile (University of California, Irvine, 2005). Based on this, vehicular trips would consume roughly 118,163 gallons total during construction.

The long-term energy demand during operations of the project would not result in a wasteful or inefficient use of energy since the Proposed Project would largely shift the transport of goods from Long Beach and Los Angeles to Imperial County and from trucks to rail which is known to reduce the demand on fuel by as much as 4 times (Union Pacific, 2022). Given this, the Proposed Project would not result in a wasteful or inefficient use of energy and a less than significant impact is expected.

b)	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

b) Consistent with the MEIR, No Impact. The purpose of the Proposed Project is to construct and operate of three (3) rail loop tracks totaling approximately 33,000 track feet, including a rail ladder track totaling approximately 25,000 track feet,and an approximately 2,000 track feet of spur that tie into the adjacent Union Pacific Railroad ROW ('rail system'). The rail system will facilitate inbound and outbound trains of commodities as well as the transloading of commodities to and from trucks. Also included in the Project are a grain elevator; shipping container depot, including but not limited to the function of hay/grain export; a veterans memorial area adjacent to the existing cemetery; a fuel blending / transloading area; a fueling station, including but not limited to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG, methane); and areas for transloading and storage of commodities.

Senate Bill 350, Senate Bill 100, and the California Global Warming Solutions Act (Assembly Bill 32) and greenhouse gas emissions reduction objectives in Imperial County. Once in operation, it will decrease the need for energy from fossil fuel–based power plants in the state and would help offset GHG emissions. Additionally, the Proposed Project would also be consistent with the County's General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element, Objective 9.2. The proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for energy efficiency; therefore, no impact would occur.

VII. ***GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the project:***

a)	Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
	1) 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	2) Strong Seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	3) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction and seiche/tsunami?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	4) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b)	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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 landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in the latest Uniform Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risk to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e)	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems	☐	☒	☐	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**
where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:
While Geology and Soils were not a separate environmental category under CEQA in 2006, potential impacts due to geological hazards were evaluated under the Hazards and Hazardous Materials Section of the MEIR. The MEIR notes that the specific plan area contains geologic features that must be considered during site planning and development. The Imperial Fault passes through Mesquite Lake, generally on a north-south alignment. In accordance with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Chapter 7.5 of Division 2, California Public Resources Code), the Office of State Geologist has delineated Special Study Zones, which encompass potentially and recently active traces of major faults. MEIR Figure 2-2 shows the location of the Special Study Zone within Mesquite Lake. Division 15 of the County Land Use Ordinance includes procedures for review of structures intended for human occupancy that are located within a special study zone. These procedures require preparation of a geologic report by a State-registered geologist. In most cases, a minimum setback of 50 feet from the trace of a fault would be required and, in all cases of a proposed human-occupied structure to be located within a special study zone, a determination must be made and supported by the geologic report that no undue hazard would be created by the proposed structure.

Compliance with Division 17 of the County Land Use Ordinance would ensure that all project structures intended for human occupancy that are proposed to be located within the special studies zone shown in MEIR Figure 2-2 would require preparation of a geologic report and a determination that no undue hazard would be created by the proposed structure.

While the MEIR didn't explicitly discuss impacts associated with septic systems, septic systems were noted as being a possibility with build out of the Specific Plan and MEIR MM 4.2.3 as described in Section X Hydrology and Water Quality, would require material and waste management programs for septic systems to address proper secondary containment requirements.

Liquefaction, seiches, tsunamis, and landslides, were not previously discussed in the MEIR. However, all other impacts related to geology and soils were considered to be less than significant with compliance to existing regulations.

As previously discussed in Section V Cultural Resources, the MEIR concluded that with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6.1 and 4.6.2, impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
1) 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
2) Strong Seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐

1) and 2) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant. The Imperial Fault, which is an Alquist-Priolo designated fault, passes through the Specific Plan area, generally on a north-south alignment, however the fault and fault hazard study zone, do not overlap with the Project site (DOC 2022c). Additionally, the Proposed Project is not located on or near the fault zone as shown in the MEIR Figure 2-2, which means that a geologic study is not required. No other faults or fault hazard zones are located near the Project site. Nonetheless, similar to all of California, Imperial County is a seismically active area and could result in strong seismic ground shaking. To lessen potential hazards related to seismic ground shaking, Project structures would be analyzed for earthquake loading during design, and would be designed in accordance with the 2022 seismic requirements provided in the California Building Code. Compliance with the 2022 CBC would ensure that impacts due to seismic hazards would remain less than significant.

3) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction and seiche/tsunami?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3) Less than Significant. The Proposed Project is not located near an ocean or large body of water and would not result in any seiche or tsunami. Additionally, the Project site is not located in a liquefaction zone (DOC 2022c). Nonetheless, the Project would be designed in accordance with the 2022 CBC, which would ensure that impacts associated with seismic-related ground failures would be less than significant.

4) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

4) No Impact. The Proposed Project is located in the Imperial Valley and the area surrounding the site is relatively flat with no chance for seismic induced landslides (DOC 2022c). According to the County General Plan, the closest area of landslide activity is on the border of San Diego and Imperial Counties approximately 30 miles west of the Project site (County 1993b). The Project would not exacerbate the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. No impacts would occur and no further analysis is required.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

b) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant with Mitigation. Project construction and operations have the potential to result in soil erosion and loss of topsoil mainly through grading. The site preparation will include an estimated 150,000 cubic yards of cut and 150,000 cubic yards of fill; soil will be balanced on site. Other material imports would include an import of approximately 140,000 cubic yards of granular select fill for use underneath concrete building pads, an import of approximately 161,000 tons of ballast and 48,000 tons of sub-ballast for the three (3) loop tracks (approximately 33,000 track feet in total), ladder track (approximately 25,000 track feet) and approximately 2,000 track feet of additional spur. Compliance with Specific Plan Mitigation Measure 4.2.3, Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, as described in Section X Hydrology and Water Quality, would require that a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) be prepared for the Project. The SWPPP would include erosion and sediment control measures, Best Management Practices (BMPs) and would require that all erosion and sediment control measures be inspected and maintained for proper integrity. Compliance with the MEIR mitigation, would ensure impacts would remain less than significant.

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 landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in the latest Uniform Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risk to life or property? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

c) and d) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant. As previously discussed, the Project site is flat and is not located within a Department of Conservation identified liquefaction or landslide zone (DOC 2022c). However, the County General Plan identifies that liquefaction is a common hazard in the County (County 1993b). Soils on the Project site are also majority wet Imperial silty clay and Imperial-Glenbar silt clay loams, which may be susceptible to soil instabilities causing subsidence, liquefaction, and expansion (USDA 2022). However, the Project would be required to adhere to the 2022 CBC which would ensure that impacts due to unstable or expansive soil would remain less than significant.

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? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

e) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant with Mitigation. The Project will include septic systems with leach fields for the different elements of the logistics center, which would result in up to nine separate septic systems. The septic systems and leach fields would be required to be constructed with State and County standards. Additionally, compliance with Specific Plan Mitigation Measure 4.2.3, Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, as described in Section X Hydrology and Water Quality, would require material and waste management programs for septic systems to address proper secondary containment requirements. Compliance with regulatory measures and MEIR mitigation, impacts would remain less than significant.

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

f) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant with Mitigation. As previously mentioned under Section V Cultural Resources, Chambers Group conducted a site visit of the Project site and concluded that while surface manifestations of cultural resources, including paleontological resources, were not observed during the previous cultural resources study in support of the MEIR, and the current site visit, it should be noted that the landscape has been under historic-period use and settlement. This historic utilization may have resulted in unrecognized buried features such as footings and foundations or refuse area such as trash pits or outhouses. Similarly, ethnographic data and historic-period maps indicate that Native American groups such as the Kamia occupied and utilized major and minor drainages within the Salton Basin, as is documented on the 1856 General Land Office map, which depicted an “Indian Village” in the northeast quarter of Section 36 (Township 14S, Range 14E). The understanding that the area is important to Native American groups is further supported by the positive NAHC SLF records search results. However, the Project would implement MEIR Mitigation Measures 4.6.1 and 4.6.2, the former of which notes that if any unanticipated discovery of potential cultural resources are encountered during the Project, that proper protocols would be implemented. Therefore, consistent with the MEIR, with implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.6.1 and 4.6.2, impacts would be less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

VIII. ***GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION*** ***Would the project:***

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan or policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

In 2010, the Office of Planning and Research updated the CEQA Guidelines to include Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHGs) as a resource area to the Appendix G checklist. The section aimed to evaluate project GHG generation during both construction and operation. In 2018, the guidelines were updated again to include further provisions on how to evaluate GHG impacts. These provisions touched on both climate change mitigation and adaptation, providing more detailed guidance on topics such as assessing the significance of GHG emissions, analyzing energy impacts and efficiency, estimating vehicle emissions, and evaluating environmental risks in light of a changing and uncertain baseline. During the preparation of the MEIR, GHG impacts were not part of the analysis as it was not a resource area required for discussion.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

Project Construction

Construction of the Project is expected to begin sometime in 2024 and would continue for approximately 18 months if the site is built-out under a single construction effort. Site preparation is anticipated to take approximately 2 months, grading to take approximately 2 months, and vertical construction to occur over approximately 14 months. Project build-out is expected in 2025. It should be noted depending on market demands, the Project construction may occur incrementally over time though analysis under a single effort is considered the worst case.

Site preparation will include clearing and grubbing which would require export to the local recycling area. The land development includes grading to create rough graded streets, native soil preparatory work for track facilities, and pads for new construction. The site preparation will include an estimated 150,000 cubic yards (CY) of cut and 150,000 CY of fill; soil will be balanced on site.

The Project would require material imports which would include 140,000 CY of granular select fill for use underneath concrete building pads, an import of approximately 315,000 tons of ballast or 410,000 CY of material to construct the three (3) loop tracks and 28,000 tons or 32,000 CY of road base for the Industrial Street roadway, which will be surface finished with asphalt concrete. In all, the Project would import 582,000 CY of material and export roughly 1,000 CY of grubbed material. A concrete and rebar bridge/over-pass or a culvert/under-pass may ultimately be built to take trucks to and from the inside of the loop tracks. Prior to the full loop tracks being constructed, a private roadway will be constructed for access to the central part of the Project.

Table 4 shows the expected durations and construction equipment necessary to fully construct all the project infrastructure, structures, and rail lines. Additionally, the project would implement several design features which are identified on the following page. These design features were assumed within all modeling and therefore would be required and considered a condition to this Project's approval.

GHG impacts related to construction and daily operations were calculated using the latest CalEEMod 2020.4.0 air quality model, which was developed by BREEZE Software for South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) in 2017.

Project Related Construction Emissions

Construction of the Project is expected to begin sometime in 2024 and would continue for approximately 18 months if the site is built under a single construction effort. Utilizing the CalEEMod inputs for the model as discussed above, grading and construction of the Proposed Project will produce approximately a maximum of 1,599.06 MT of CO_2e within the first year of construction. Based on SQAQMD methodology, the Proposed Project would not exceed the 10,000 MT screening threshold for CO_2e during any of the expected construction years. Based on this, a less than significant GHG impact would be expected from Construction. The emissions summary from CalEEMod is provided in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Proposed Project Construction CO_2e Emissions Summary MT/Year

Year	Bio-CO2	NBio-CO2	Total CO2	CH4	N2O	CO2e
2024	0.00	1,556.79	1,556.79	0.17	0.13	1,599.06

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	No Impact (NI)

2025	0.00	819.68	819.68	0.06	0.07	843.48

Project Operations

Routine operations and maintenance of the facility will include preventative maintenance and repairs of any damaged or otherwise inoperable equipment on an as-needed basis. The operation and maintenance staff will monitor the facility operations over the Project life to ensure that the logistics center is operating to meet design standards. Approximately 56 full-time employees are expected each day of the week during Project operations, with approximately two shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm). The Project elements will be developed in accordance with Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and County development standards.

Based on the projected traffic volumes estimated by the Project Traffic Engineer, the proposed project would generate approximately 107 regular employee ADT and as many as 436 ADT from heavy trucks (LL&G, 2023). As noted by the Project traffic engineer, the Green Valley Logistics Project would reduce regional vehicle miles travelled since the Logistics Center essentially would allow for train containers to bulk transfer goods between the Los Angeles Area to Imperial County which are currently being carried via trucks mostly. The regional truck mileage associated with the Project site would essentially drop regional trips by more than a factor of 2/3 or 25 miles vs 80 miles previously. Since each truck using the Green Valley Logistics center would reduce miles traveled withing the County of Imperial, only the employee trips were modeled within CalEEMod and no credit for the regional truck reductions was taken or calculated.

The Project area is currently being used for agricultural purposes and the site currently uses 630 acre-feet of water each year based on an average use factor of 5.25 acre-feet per acre (AFY). Based on delivery records from IID from 2013 thru 2022 the site has his historically used an annual average of 1,708 AFY for agricultural and landscaping purposes.. The Project would reduce water consumption by 1,528 acre-feet per year and would use 180 acre-feet annually at buildout. The Project model assumes 180 acre-feet of water usage annually by the Project and no credit for the 1,528 acre-feet was taken in this analysis.

The primary use of the site would enable goods to be shipped from the Los Angeles area into the County of Imperial in bulk via trains as opposed to via trucks which are currently being used. This effort would require as many as two trains daily. Each train was assumed to have two locomotives each and would have as many as 60 rail cars on each train.

Locomotive emissions within the Project site were not modeled within CalEEMod and instead were modeled separately using locomotive emissions inventories published by the EPA (EPA, 2012) analyzed separately from CalEEMod. Emissions inventories and calculations for locomotives onsite are provided in Appendix B.

Project Related Operational Emissions

Based on the CalEEMod analysis, the Project buildout would generate 465 MT CO_2e annually without the use of locomotives, which is shown in Table 9 below. Locomotives were estimated to generate 6,822 MT CO_2e annually. Combined, the Proposed Project would generate 7,482.81 MT CO_2e annually as shown in Table 9 below. Based on this, the project would not exceed the 10,000 MT annual screening threshold and would generate a less than significant operational GHG impact.

Table 9: Operational GHG Emissions (MT/Year)

Source	Bio-CO2	NBio-CO2	Total CO2	CH4	N2O	CO2e (MT/Yr)
Area	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.03
Energy	0.00	443.04	443.04	0.05	0.00	446.84
Mobile	0.00	13.00	13.00	0.00	0.00	13.12
Waste	50.75	0.00	50.75	3.00	0.00	125.73
Water	3.81	58.13	61.93	0.40	0.01	75.08
Project GHG Emissions without locomotives						**660.79**
Locomotive Emissions						**6,822.02**
Total Emissions						**7,482.81**
Data is presented in decimal format and may have rounding errors.						

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**
indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?				
b) Conflict with an applicable plan or policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) and b) There are currently no regional or local climate action plans or general or specific plan provisions to reduce GHG emissions in the study area. The only applicable plan is the set of regulations to be developed under AB 32, which has a target of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The potential significance of emissions from the Project therefore depends upon the extent to which the project furthers or hinders implementation of AB 32. Given the net reduction in GHG emissions, the project would further the implementation of AB 32.

As discussed above, the development of the Project will produce approximately a maximum of 1,599.06 MT of CO2e within the first year of construction. Based on SQAQMD methodology, the Project would not exceed the 10,000 MT screening threshold for CO2e during any of the expected construction years. Additionally, the Project operations will generate 660.79 MT CO2e annually without the use of locomotives and 6,822 MT CO2e annually with them. Combined, the Project would generate 7,482.81 MT CO2e annually and would not exceed the 10,000 MT annual screening threshold. Impacts would be less than significant.

IX. *HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS* *Would the project:*

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☒	☐	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:
As previously mentioned, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Public Services related to fire, were all discussed under the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the MEIR in 2006.

The handling, storage, and transport of hazardous materials are regulated by federal and State codes. Within Imperial County, the EHS of the Public Health Department administers the requirements of the State Health and Safety Code that a Business Plan be prepared for businesses that handle more than 500 pounds of a solid substance, 55 gallons of a liquid, or 200 cubic feet of a compressed gas. The Business Plan is required to provide an inventory and map of materials stored or used on the premises, an emergency response plan, and employee training procedures for materials handling and emergency actions. The EHS Division conducts routine inspections of businesses required to submit Business Plans and requires updates at least every 3 years. Businesses are also required to notify specified State and local authorities of an imminent or actual on-site emergency so that action to avoid or minimize public health or environmental impacts can be taken.

In addition to the County EHS Business Plan program, businesses within the MEIR will also be subject to regulation by the California Office of Emergency Services under the California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program. The CalARP program merges the federal and State programs for the prevention of accidental release of regulated toxic and flammable substances from stationary sources that handle more than a threshold quantity of regulated substances. The regulated substances and their threshold quantities are specified in Section 2770.5 of the CalARP Program contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 4.5. The CalARP Program requires that a Risk Management Plan and an Emergency Response Program be prepared and submitted to the County EHS.

The MEIR noted that the County EHS Division would determine the need for a Business Plan pursuant to the State Health and Safety Code. Business Plans would be required for the storage of hydrocarbon fuels, solvents, and other substances necessary for the maintenance of vehicles and equipment. The MEIR also noted that potential human and wildlife exposure to hazards could also result from storage or evaporation ponds for containment of wastewater from industrial processes that might contain toxic substances.

The MEIR concluded that with compliance with County EHS Division requirements for a Business Plan and CalARP Program requirements for a Risk Management Plan and an Emergency Response Program, as further required in compliance with mitigation, significant impacts associated with handling of hazardous materials would be avoided. The measures relevant to the proposed Project are as follows:

Mitigation Measure 4.7.4: Prior to approval of a final map, grading plan, or building permit for any phase or unit of development within the Specific Plan, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that (1) a hazardous materials Business Plan has been prepared and implemented in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations; and (2) all local, state, and federal permit requirements to generate, use, store, and transport hazardous materials have been satisfied. This evidence shall include a determination by the County EHS Division whether toxic substances may be present in wastewater or stormwater runoff directed to a storage pond. If toxic substances could be present, measures shall be implemented to prevent such transport of toxic substances or to prevent human and wildlife, including birds, access to the storage pond. Additionally, in coordination with the County Fire Department's Office of Emergency Services and the Hazardous Materials Response Team, specific routes shall be established for the transport of hazardous materials to avoid public use areas.

Mitigation Measure 4.7.5: For any project determined by the Planning and Development Services Director to require County EHS approval under the CalARP Program, and prior to approval of a final map, grading plan, or building permit for any such project, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that (1) a determination has been made by the County EHS Division on the need for project approval under the CalARP Program to prevent accidental release of regulated toxic and flammable substances from stationary sources that handle more than the threshold quantity of regulated substances; and if applicable to the project, (2) all local, state, and federal permit requirements to prevent accidental release of regulated toxic and flammable substances pursuant to the CalARP Program have been satisfied, including the requirement for preparation of a Risk Management Plan and an Emergency Response Program.

Impacts regarding wildfires are further discussed in Section X, Wildfire, however as mentioned, wildfire impacts were not previously discussed in the MEIR, as the thresholds were not a required topic in 2006.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐

a) **Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant with Mitigation.** The Proposed Project proposes construction of a logistics center and rail loop tracks to connect to the existing UPPR. Project operations will involve transport of general commodities including

grain and hay and potentially hazardous materials such as fuel. The Project will also include operations of a fueling station.

During short term construction activities, the Proposed Project would involve the use of heavy equipment for grading, hauling, and handling of the construction materials and equipment. Construction will require the temporary use of fuels and other similar materials that may have hazardous properties (such as flammability, corrosivity, combustibility, etc). During construction, the handling and disposal of these materials will be done to comply with the manufacturer's requirements and local, State, and federal regulations. Portable bins or other storage containers will be on site for storage of maintenance lube oils, chemicals, paints, and other construction materials, as needed. Hazardous materials that are expected to be used during construction will include:

- Unleaded gasoline
- Diesel fuel
- Oil
- Hydraulic fluids
- Lubricants
- Solvents
- Adhesives
- Paint material

The Proposed Project will involve the routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Hazardous materials that are expected to be used during operation will include:

- Unleaded gasoline
- Diesel fuel
- Transformer Oil
- Hydraulic fluid

The Project would be required to implement mitigation measure 4.7.4, which will require that the Project develop and implement a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP), in compliance with California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Sections 25500-25519 and California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 4. The HMBP will be provided to the California Office of Emergency Services, the County Fire Department, and the Certified Unified Program Agency for the County (the local California Department of Toxic Substances Control office), for review and approval before plant operation. The HMBP will include, at a minimum, procedures for:

- Hazardous materials handling, use and storage;
- Emergency response;
- Spill control and prevention;
- Employee training; and
- Reporting and record keeping.

The Proposed Project would also be required to implement mitigation measure 4.7.5, which requires compliance with the CalARP Program, including the requirement for preparation of a Risk Management Plan and an Emergency Response Program. Additionally, the Proposed Project may be required to prepare a Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan given the nearby potentially navigable waters. The purpose of the SPCC Plan is to prevent the discharge of oil into navigable waters. For any occupational hazards that may be encountered by the workers, the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) that relate to worker risk of exposure and on-site safety procedures.

Hazardous material carriers and hazardous waste transporters are required by law to adhere to applicable local, State, and federal regulations regarding proper truck signage, indicating the materials being transported, carrying a shipping/waste manifest of the types and concentrations of materials being transported, and other appropriate measures. Hazardous material carriers also are responsible for their loads, reporting spills, and initiating appropriate emergency response to releases of any transported hazardous materials, from the point of origin up to the destination of the hazardous material delivery.

Given the proposed construction and operations of the Project, adherence with the required mitigation, and compliance with local, State, and federal regulations, impacts associated with the proposed Project would be less than significant.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

c) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The nearest schools are located south of the Project site within the City of Imperial downtown area, the nearest being Frank Wright Middle School, which is approximately 2.75 miles driving distance south (Google 2023). The Proposed Project will connect to the existing UPPR railroad for goods transport. The UPPR railroad is an existing railway system that has historically transported materials through the City. The proposed operations would not be introducing new materials to be transported by UPPR. In addition, the UPPR railway line in the City of Imperial is not located adjacent to any existing schools. Therefore, impacts

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

would be less than significant.

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? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

d) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant. According to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Geotracker (SWRCB 2023) and DTSC EnviroStor (DTSC 2023) databases, the nearest leaking underground storage tank (LUST) clean-up site is located at Empire Southwest Company at 3393 Highway 86, immediately west of the Project site. The LUST cleanup site case began with the discovery of a leak. The potential contaminants of concern found during the investigation involved gasoline. The leak was reported in 1988 with the case closed as of 1992. No other leaks were reported at Empire Southwest Company or in any other areas within 1,000 feet of the Project site. Therefore, the Proposed Project is not expected to result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment from existing sites that may have contained hazardous materials. Impacts would be less than significant.

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? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

e) Consistent with the MEIR, No Impact. The nearest airport to the Project is the Imperial County Airport which is approximately 3 miles to the south (Google 2023). Because the Project is not located near an airport or within an airport zone of influence, the Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise . Therefore, no impacts would occur.

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

f) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact. Temporary or single-lane closure of some roadways may occur during the transport of oversized equipment or construction activities. Road closures would be coordinated with County Public Works, the County Sheriff, and ICFD prior to closure, and would be scheduled to occur during off-peak commute hours. The Project's construction and operational activities would be in compliance with the Imperial County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP), and would not physically interfere with the execution of the policies and procedures in these plans (County 2015b; 2016b). Therefore, the Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant
.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

g) Less than Significant Impact. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) provides a Fire Hazards Severity Zone Viewer (FHSZ) to provide a visual reference to locate fire hazards areas in California. The maps were developed utilizing science and field-tested models that assign a hazard score based on factors that influence fire likelihood and behavior. Factors include but are not limited to fire history, existing and potential fuel (natural vegetation), predicted flame length, embers, terrain, and typical fire weather in the area.

The Project site is not located within a FHSZ area. Most of the moderate to very high fire hazard areas are located to the north adjacent to the Salton Sea near Salton City, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and the Cleveland National Forest. There are no areas within the immediate vicinity of the Project site that are designated as areas that have potential for wildland fires.

The Proposed Project may utilize solar panels for Project operations. The solar panels could utilize a battery energy storage element, which may result in an additional fire hazard. However, if a battery storage element is utilized, it would require approval from the County Planning Department, prior to installation. Additionally, as noted in Section V Public Services, as required by mitigation measure 4.7.8, the Project the applicant would be required to provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that a determination has been made by the County Fire Department that an adequate system for delivery of an adequate supply of water for fire suppression, and other required equipment, alarms, and water connections, is provided to serve the project. Therefore, with implementation of this mitigation, impacts would be less than significant.

X. *HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project:*

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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:				
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☒	☐	☐
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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;	☐	☒	☐	☐
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR analyzed the potential impacts to hydrological conditions and water quality associated with build out of the Specific Plan. The MEIR discussed flooding, surface water, rainfall, groundwater, and water quality. A summary of the existing conditions are discussed below:

Flooding
The MEIR noted that the Specific Plan contains a depressed "sink" area adjacent to Keystone Road that causes water to be detained during heavy rainstorms, which can make Keystone Road impassable. The MEIR included migration for projects near Keystone Road or within the Mesquite Lake lakebed.

Surface Water
The MEIR noted that surface waters in the Valley mostly drain toward the Salton Sea (north).

Rainfall
The MEIR noted that the average annual precipitation ranges from less than 3 inches over most of the planning area, to 8 inches in the mountains along the western border.

Groundwater
The MEIR noted that groundwater is stored in the Pleistocene sediments of the valley floor, the mesas on the west, and the East Mesa and sand hills on the east. However, the fine-grained lake sediments in the central portion of Imperial Valley inhibit groundwater movement. Tile-drain systems are used to dewater sediments to a depth below the root zone of crops to prevent the surface accumulation of saline water. Few wells have been drilled in these lake sediments because the yield is poor and the water is generally saline. The few wells in the Valley are for domestic use only.

Water Quality
The Mesquite Lake Specific Plan area is located within the Colorado River Basin, which contains two substantial surface water bodies of State and national significance: the Colorado River and the Salton Sea. The major local rivers that flow into the Salton Sea are the New and Alamo rivers, both of which originate in Mexico. The New River carries treated wastewater from point sources in the Imperial Valley, as well as in Mexico; and the Alamo River carries mostly agricultural return flows and treated municipal wastewater from the Imperial Valley. Existing topographic conditions in the project area direct drainage to the Alamo River via the Rose Outlet, which discharges approximately 4 miles northeast of the project site. The New River is approximately 2 miles west of the project site, but is upgradient and is separated from the project site by the Central Main Canal.

The Valley's agricultural drain system provides over 1,450 miles of surface drains that discharge directly into the Alamo and New rivers, and the Salton Sea. The Imperial Valley portion of the Colorado River Basin region faces several water quality issues, including increasing salinity, selenium, and eutrophication in the Salton Sea; and silt, nutrient, and pesticide pollution of the agricultural drains and the New and Alamo rivers. Discharges of water and stormwater runoff into the Valley's drains and river systems are subject to federal and State water quality regulations.

The MEIR concluded that from a watershed perspective, the topography, soil condition, vegetation, drainage features and other relevant hydrology and water quality factors would not be adversely affected by development within the Specific Plan Area, with implementation of the listed mitigation. The MEIR provided both general mitigation measures for all projects within the Specific Plan, as well as project-specific mitigation measures for the developments that were proposed at the time of the Specific Plan implementation. Some of the previously proposed projects are similar to the proposed Project, and therefore, some project-specific mitigation measures will be relevant for the proposed Project. Alternatively, the Project site is not located in or near the Mesquite Lake depression area and therefore some general mitigation measures do not apply. The relevant mitigation measures are as follows:

General Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measures 4.2.1: Hydrological Analysis: As part of the building permit application process for each project, a hydrologic analysis shall be conducted to determine that:

- The proposed project would not cause undercutting erosion, slope stability degradation, vegetative stress (due to flooding, erosion, water quality degradation, or loss of water supplies), sedimentation, or habitat alteration in downstream areas as a result of an altered flow regime.
- Downstream IID drainage systems would have sufficient capacity to convey the increase in site runoff due to the increase in impervious surfaces, and the ability to attenuate the resulting peak flows.
- Any on-site BMPs are designed in accordance with the County Engineering Design Guidelines Manual (County of Imperial 2004) and to the satisfaction of the County Engineer.

Mitigation Measure 4.2.2: Hydrologic Design: Based on the hydrological analysis conducted in the MEIR, natural hydrologic designs shall be integrated into site layouts to the maximum extent practicable by:

- Reducing imperviousness and directly connected impervious surfaces to facilitate natural infiltration of runoff, conserving natural resources and areas, maintaining and using natural drainage courses in the stormwater conveyance system, and minimizing clearing and grading.
- Providing runoff storage measures dispersed uniformly throughout a site's landscape with the use of a variety of detention, retention, and runoff practices.
- Implementing on-site hydrologically functional landscape design and management practices.
- Incorporating pervious pavements wherever practicable.

Mitigation Measure 4.2.3: Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan: Prior to issuance of a grading permit for any phase or unit of development within the Specific Plan, an NOI shall be submitted to the SWRCB, and an SWPPP shall be developed and implemented on-site in compliance with Water Quality Order 99-08-DWQ/NPDES General Permit No. CAS000002 (General Construction Permit). The County Director of Public Works shall be provided an opportunity to review the SWPPP as part of the review/approval process at least 30 days prior to construction. The SWPPP shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- BMPs to prevent construction-related pollutants from being exposed to runoff that can transport pollutants into nearby receiving waters. The selection and placement of BMPs shall be designed to protect all areas disturbed by construction activities from erosive forces and capture sediment from stormwater before it leaves the site. Erosion and sediment controls shall include both stabilization (erosion control) and structural (sediment control) measures. These measures shall be implemented such that the exposure of unprotected, disturbed earth during site development is minimized to the shortest duration practicable.

- Soil-tracking BMPs to limit off-site transport of sediment from the construction areas by implementing tire-cleaning measures such as stabilized construction entrance/exit designs (e.g., metal corrugated shaker plates, gravel strips, and/or wheel-washing facilities) at access points.

- Inspect/maintain all erosion and sediment control measures for proper integrity and function during the entire construction period. All stabilization and structural controls shall be inspected at least monthly or after any significant storm event and shall be repaired or maintained for optimum performance. Access to these facilities shall be maintained during wet weather.

- Examples of erosion control include:
  - slope benching and terracing
  - soil roughening
  - temporary revegetation
  - soil stabilizers
  - mulches and matrices
  - erosion control blankets
  - fiber rolls
- Examples of sediment control include:
  - perimeter controls (e.g., gravel bag or straw bale berms, silt fence)
  - stormwater inlet protection (e.g., fiber roll, gravel bags, geofabric grate covering)
  - silt fencing
  - gravel construction site entrance/exits
  - truck tire wheel wash
  - check dams

- Material and waste management programs during construction such as solid, sanitary, septic, hazardous, contaminated soil, concrete, and construction waste management; spill prevention; appropriate material delivery and storage; employee training; dust control; and vehicle and equipment cleaning, maintenance, and fueling. Each of these programs would address proper secondary containment requirements, spill prevention and protection, structural material storage needs, proper concrete wash-out design and containment, perimeter and surface protection for laydown and maintenance areas, and relaying all such requirements to construction staff.

- Structural and non-structural programs (i.e., routine procedures or practices) to reduce the amount of pollutants in runoff; to prohibit the storage of uncovered hazardous substances in outdoor areas; to prohibit the use of pesticides and herbicides; and to prevent spills.

- A monitoring program involving inspection and maintenance procedures for all post-construction stormwater pollution control measures to ensure that they continue to function properly. The monitoring program shall specify the monitoring entity; the funding source for the inspection/monitoring program; and enforcement provisions in the event of failure to implement, operate, or maintain the approved stormwater pollution control measures.

- Maintaining records of all stormwater control measure implementation, inspection, and maintenance activities for at least 5 years.

Mitigation Measure 4.2.4: Industrial SWPPP: Thirty (30) days prior to new facility start-up for any phase or unit of development within the Specific Plan, an NOI shall be submitted to the SWRCB, and a SWPPP shall be developed and implemented on-site in compliance with Water Quality Order 97-03-DWQ/NPDES General Permit No. CAS000001 (General Industrial Permit), which requires:

- Verifying that any illicit connections to storm drains have been eradicated.

- Incorporating non-structural and structural BMPs to reduce pollutants in site runoff, such as outfall protection and treatment devices, proper storage and disposal of potential pollutants, secondary containment protection, and prohibiting pesticide and herbicide use; waste management, employee training, erosion control, vehicle/equipment cleaning, maintenance, and fueling; spill prevention/response practices; and shipping/receiving practices. Storage of potential pollutants shall be contained within approved safety lockers with secondary containment, within constructed secondary containment structures, or stored off-site in suitable protective enclosures. Disposal shall occur at an authorized landfill, waste collection center, or other certified disposal facility approved for disposing the waste in question. The methods and procedures shall be consistent with the philosophies of EPA and California guidance documentation for industrial stormwater pollution prevention.

  Developing and executing a Monitoring and Reporting Program to assess the effectiveness of BMPs through visual inspection of storm drains and outfall points during wet and dry weather and storm sampling. The program shall also address the maintenance needs of any on-site BMPs to ensure optimum functionality.

- Preparing and submitting an annual report to the RWQCB with monitoring results.

- Maintaining all related records of all control measure implementation, inspection, and maintenance for at least 5 years.

Mitigation Measure 4.2.5, Service Area Agreement: The Imperial County Planning and Development Services Director shall review and approve the County Service Area agreement or other documents establishing an independent authority responsible for operation of public facilities and services within the Specific Plan. The agreement or other documents shall include information sufficient to address the ongoing

maintenance of stormwater facilities on individual lots/parcels as well as future storm drain systems within the County road rights-of-way. These considerations shall include, but not be limited to, maintaining erosion control BMPs to minimize on-site soil loss, clearing of sediment from BMPs on an as-needed basis, trash and debris collection (aesthetic maintenance), and maintaining public safety. The agreements shall demonstrate that there are sufficient funding sources to operate these facilities in an environmentally responsible manner, and that stormwater controls will be implemented and maintained throughout their operational lifetime.

Relevant Portions of Project Specific Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure 4.2.6:

Storage and Biosolids

- Storage silos and other tanks or containment systems shall incorporate spill control and secondary containment design.
- Biosolids haul trucks shall be washed at the biosolids reception units, which shall be paved and designed to direct all washwater into the storage silos for incineration in the project's furnaces. No other truck or equipment wash areas shall be permitted without approval of the County Planning and Development Services Department and RWQCB to ensure that all potential pollutants are directed into plant incinerators or other County-approved system equally effective at disposal of washwater.

Mitigation Measure 4.2.8:

Fueling Station

The fueling area shall incorporate the following: (1) self-containing sumps or other retaining devices to capture a spill from the largest fuel delivery, plus 10 percent; (2) the fueling area shall be covered with a roof or overhang; (3) the drainage around the perimeter of the fueling area shall be sloped to convey any spills inward toward the fueling area sump and slopes outside the fueling area shall divert sheet flow away from the fueling area to avoid runoff contamination; (4) be equipped with a clarifier, grease trap, or other pretreatment facility, as appropriate; (5) be equipped with spill kits; (6) be provided with other features that are comparable or equally effective.

Stockpiles

Any stockpiling of materials near the stormwater retention basin shall have perimeter controls to capture debris and other materials that could be transported by wind or stormwater to the retention basin.

Stormwater Retention Basin

The stormwater retention basin shall be designed to appropriately treat all water released to the Rose Drain such that any off-site discharge causes no further impairment of local water quality and complies with IID specifications and all other locally imposed performance-based regulations.

The retention pond shall also be designed to retain the volume generated by a 100-year frequency storm. An emergency drain valve shall incorporate a standpipe to bleed off surface water from the retention basin such that sediment and other settled materials are not conveyed to the natural drainage in the event of severe rainfall. Protocols for managing the emergency release of such waters shall meet all requirements of the IID, County EHS, the RWQCB, the CDFG, and the County Planning and Development Services Department.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

a) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant with Mitigation. As mentioned above, groundwater is stored in the Pleistocene sediments of the valley floor, mesas to the east, and East Mesa and sand hills in the east. The sediments within the central portion of Imperial Valley inhibit groundwater movement. Therefore, tile-drain systems are used to dewater the sediments below the root zone of the crops to prevent accumulation of saline water on the surfaces. There are only a few wells in the Valley for domestic use.

The Proposed Project is located within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan, which is within the Colorado River Basin. It contains two surface water bodies that are state and national significance which are the Colorado River and the Salton Sea. Surface waters within the Imperial Valley drain north towards the Salton Sea. The Alamo and New rivers convey agricultural irrigation drainage water, surface runoff, and treated municipal land industrial waste waters from the Imperial Valley to the Salton Sea.

The Project proposes construction and operation of an industrial logistics center for food and commodity imports and exports, warehousing, rail loop and ladder tracks to connect to the existing UPPR, and a fueling station. Construction and operational discharges could generate sediments, debris, oil and grease residue, feed stocks and food products and would be from activities such as truck washout, site cleanups, accidental spills and other similar activities that may be carried over during rain or site water uses. Potential impacts during construction and operation are described below.

Construction Impacts

As previously discussed in the MEIR, any development occurring within the Specific Plan would not result in adverse impacts with implementation of the required permitting, construction measures and mitigation measures. Similar to the MEIR, the Project would be required to implement mitigation measures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, which would ensure that runoff amount would be minimized, and that BMPs approved by the County engineer, would be implemented to ensure that runoff would not violate water quality. Additionally, mitigation measure 4.2.3 would be implemented which would require a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) be developed to prevent construction-related pollutants from being exposed to runoff. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts would be less than significant.

Operational Impacts

Implementation of the Project could result in accidental releases and/or spills due to normal operations which could affect water quality. Similar to the MEIR, the Project would be required to implement mitigation measure 4.2.4, which would require that 30 days prior to the start of the project, that a notice of intent (NOI) be submitted to the SWRCB, and an industrial SWPPP be developed and implemented on-site to ensure that runoff during operation would not violate any water quality standards. Nonetheless, the fueling stations could result in accidental spills. The fueling process is proposed to occur within enclosed tanks which would be designed to prevent leakage, however, the Project will also develop and implement a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) as required by mitigation measures 4.7.4 above, in compliance with California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Sections 25500-25519 and California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 4. The HMBP will be provided to the California Office of Emergency Services, the County Fire Department, and the Certified Unified Program Agency for The County (the local California Department of Toxic Substances Control office), for review and approval before plant operation. The HMBP will include, at a minimum, procedures for hazardous materials handling, use and storage; emergency response; spill control and prevention; employee training; and reporting and record keeping.

In addition to preparation of the HMBP, the Project would conduct a hydrological analysis and design the Project around the findings of the analysis, as discussed in mitigation measures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, in order to ensure that runoff amount would be minimized, and that runoff would not violate water quality. Additionally, the proposed Project would be required to implement applicable parts of MEIR mitigation measures 4.2.6 and 4.2.8 as written above, to ensure compliance with onsite storage and containment, biosolids, fueling, stockpiles, and the stormwater retention basin. The stormwater retention basin would be constructed and designed to meet the County Engineering Design Guidelines

With implementation of the aforementioned mitigation measures and the HMBP, operation of the proposed Project would not violate any water quality standards, and consistent with the MEIR, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

b) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in the MEIR, development within the Specific Plan will receive raw water service from IID. The Proposed Project would result in a net decrease water demand of 1,528 acre-feet per year (AFY).

The Project will include a water treatment, storage and distribution system that will satisfy potable water and fire water requirements. The system will receive water from the IID Dahlia Lateral 8 canal located along the southerly boundary of the Project. The treatment, storage and pump elements of the system will be located on an approximately 2-acre lot in the Project. The distribution element of the system will be a looped pressurized water line located within the Project roadway that will provide access to water for all Project parcels. The water treatment, storage and distribution system will likely be developed in phases with an initial phase having a storage capacity of approximately 180,000 gallons and a built-out storage capacity of up to 1.5 million gallons. Conversely, during initial site operations and prior to the need for a public water system, the Project may truck in purified/potable water.A 1.5 million gallon tank would be approximately 50 feet tall and approximately 100 feet in diameter. The Project will also have raw water service from IID Dahlia Laterial 8 for industrial process water.

A Water Supply Assessment (WSA) was prepared for the proposed Project for all water demands, to show water supply is able to meet demand over the next 54 years.

The introduction of new impervious surfaces to the Project would affect the amount of water absorption through the soils. However, the Project would implement mitigation measures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 which would ensure that the amount and quality of stormwater would remain as unchanged as possible. The entire Project site would drain into a stormwater retention basin located on the northern portion of the Project site that is approximately 20 acres. This basin connects and would drain into the IID Newside Drain Number 1-A after upgrading the site's historical connection to said IID drain. The retention basin will be designed to meet SWRCB requirements and will include an appropriate mosquito abatement per County guidelines if the retention basin does fully discharge in less than 72 hours. With implementation of these mitigation measures and project design features, impacts would be consistent with the MEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

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:

(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☒	☐	☐
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

c) i) through iii) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. Drainage patterns are typically formed by the streams, rivers, lakes or other bodies of water. Overtime, the system is formed via a network of channels and tributaries that are determined the type of geologic features of a particular landscape. Soil erosion occurs when water or wind deteriorates soil particles in a given area. Siltation is caused by soil erosion and occurs when dirt, soil and sediment is carried by water and is accumulated.

The Proposed Project would require grading of the Project site which could affect the existing topographic and drainage features of the site. In addition, the proposed construction work could result in soil disturbance that could result in soil erosion or siltation.

However, the Project would implement mitigation measures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 which would ensure that drainage, including erosion control, would be evaluated and that proper BMPs be implemented. Additionally, mitigation measures 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 would require SWPPPs during both construction and operation respectively, to ensure that erosion control, runoff, and spill prevention would be properly managed via BMPs.

Additionally, the Project would implement mitigation measure 4.2.5 which would require that the Project prepare a service area agreement with the County to address the ongoing maintenance of stormwater facilities on the site, as well as future storm drain systems within the County road rights-of-way. The agreement considerations shall include, but not be limited to, maintaining erosion control BMPs to minimize on-site soil loss, clearing of sediment from BMPs on an as-needed basis, trash and debris collection (aesthetic maintenance), and maintaining public safety. The agreement should also demonstrate that there are sufficient funding sources to operate these facilities in an environmentally responsible manner, and that stormwater controls will be implemented and maintained throughout their operational lifetime.

With implementation of mitigation measures 4.2.1 through 4.2.5, impacts related altering drainage, erosion, and runoff, would be considered less than significant.

(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐

c) iv) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact. As mentioned above, the MEIR noted that the Specific Plan contains a depressed "sink" area adjacent to Keystone Road that causes water to be detained during heavy rainstorms, which can make Keystone Road impassable. However, this area along with the lakebed of Mesquite Lake are located over a mile north of the Project site. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) number 06025C1375C, the Project site is located in Zone X, areas of 0.2% annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square miles; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual chance flood (FEMA 2008). As such, impacts due to impeding or redirecting flows, would be less than significant.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

d) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact. Tsunamis are high sea waves typically caused by earthquakes and underwater landslides. Seiche occurs in bodies of water (semi or full-enclosed) and are caused by strong winds or rapid changes in the atmosphere that pushes water from one end to another and typically acts as a standing wave/oscillating body of water. Floods are an overflow of large bodies of water beyond its normal capacity. The proposed Project is over 20 miles from the nearest large body of water (Salton Sea) and over 90 miles from the ocean, therefore tsunamis or seiches would not occur.

As discussed above, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) number 06025C1375C, the Project site is located in Zone X, areas of 0.2% annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square miles; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual chance flood (FEMA 2008). As such, flood hazards would be less than significant.

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

e) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation As described under Thresholds a and b above, the proposed Project would be required to implement mitigation measures to help ensure that impacts to water quality would remain less than significant.

The proposed Project will utilize water from IID, which is ultimately sourced from the Colorado River. Nonetheless, a WSA was prepared for the proposed Project to show water supply is able to meet demand over the next 54 years. Additionally, the Project would implement mitigation measures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 which would ensure that flow and drainage of the site would remain as unchanged as possible. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts would remain less than significant.

I. *LAND USE AND PLANNING Would the project:*

a)	Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR discussed the impacts of the Specific Plan with regards to land use and zoning associated with the build out of the Specific Plan. A summary of the existing conditions are discussed below:

At the time of the preparation of the MEIR, the area contained a variety of existing agricultural, industrial and commercial uses as well as extensive vacant or fallow lands. Land uses onsite consisted of agricultural support services, agricultural processing, roofing and building materials, auto dismantling, a fleet storage and repair facility for a waste disposal company, a communications tower, and the Memory Gardens Cemetery and Memorial Park. Although caretaker dwellings may have been present, they were not located along public roads. Surrounding properties mainly included agricultural fields and one residence. The nearest urban centers were the City of Imperial (1 mile south) and Brawley (4 miles north). The Holly Sugar plant, two alternative-fuel-burning electrical power plants along Old Highway 111 and a 640-acre fish-farming operation are main land use operations existing in the area.

The designation of the Specific Plan was established by the 1993 County General Plan to provide opportunities to construct new job-producing light, medium, and heavy industrial uses. Future development, including the project-specific development of the MEIR summarized that these would be typical of the types of uses that would be developed in the future and, "…would have visual and operational characteristics that are generally not compatible with residential uses. The Specific Plan's permitted uses would also not be compatible with uses such as hospitals or care facilities where occupants would have reduced tolerance for dust, noise, and potential air contaminants that might be associated with heavy industrial uses. The plan does not permit residential uses, other than caretaker dwellings, or uses such as hospitals or care facilities."

The MEIR summarized that because the surrounding properties would be for agricultural and/or industrial purposes, it would avoid any potential for land use conflicts and therefore would not require mitigation measures. In addition, individual proposed projects are anticipated to conform to the land use goals and any permitting and conditions of approval shall be reviewed by the County to assure consistency with the land use and development regulations.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

The Proposed Project is located within the adopted Mesquite Lake Specific Plan. As mentioned, the Project would require a specific plan amendment and a zone change to amend parcels, approximately 195 acres, from ML-GS and ML I-2 to ML I-3 and from Light and Medium Industrial to Heavy Industrial, as shown in Figure 5. The Project would also require new configuration of parcels via a Tentative Tract Map. The Heavy Industrial designation would allow for greater flexibility in terms of industrial uses. ML GS permits governmental facilities and special public facilities. ML I-2 permits medium industrial uses such as distribution center, warehousing, manufacturing, research and development and other similar medium intensity processing facilities. Other permitted uses include powerplants, truck and rail container storage and processing or fabrication. ML I-3 permits the most intense, heavy manufacturing or prefabrication facilities, in addition to permitted uses under ML I-2.

Additionally, the Project requires a variance request for any structures over 80 feet, which would include the grain elevator system that will be up to 180 feet tall and comprised of up to eight large tanks/bins.

The Project proposes construction and operation of an industrial park, logistics center for food and commodity imports and exports, and rail loop and ladder tracks to connect to the existing UPPR, and a fueling station. Additionally, the Project would include approval of a Tentative Tract Map.

a)	Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒

c) **Consistent with the MEIR, No Impact.** The Project proposes construction and operation of an industrial park, logistics centers for food and commodity imports and exports, and rail loop and ladder tracks to connect to the existing UPPR, and a fueling station. The Proposed Project would not include the construction of new roadways or physical barriers between

residential communities.

The Project site does not contain any residences, nor is the area zoned for residential uses. As discussed in the MEIR, future development of the area would be consistent with the land uses designated for government and industrial with a renewable energy overlay. The area surrounding the Project site consists of agricultural land uses, dealerships and manufacturing. One single-family home is located approximately 0.25-mile east of the Project site.

While there is a residence located adjacent to the Project site, there are no established communities in the area. Furthermore, the zoning of the area consists of industrial operations. While the Project proposes a specific plan amendment and zone change from Light and Medium Industrial to Heavy Industrial, these would be consistent uses with the Specific Plan and larger Project site area, and therefore, the addition of the Project would not be an incompatible use. As such, the Proposed Project would not physically divide an established community. The Project would be consistent with the MEIR, would not result in any new impacts that were not previously analyzed, and no impact would occur.

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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

b) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant Impact. The Project would require submittal and approval of the CUP, Variance for height exceedance, and Tentative Tract Map, the approval of which would result in the Proposed Project to be compliant with the land use and zoning requirements. Furthermore, the existing land use and zoning of the Project site are compatible with industrial uses and other uses within the Specific Plan area. The Project is proposing industrial operations at an increased intensity, however, based on the results of the air quality and traffic analyses, the change in land uses would not result in a significant impact to these resources areas.

Additionally, as a result of the proposed changes, future heavy industrial uses as indicated in Table 2, Allowed Uses above, would now be able to be developed either with a CUP or as an allowed use. Although the newly allowed heavier industrial uses may have the potential to cause additional impacts as compared to the existing lighter industrial uses, the same standards and mitigation measures that the MEIR applied to those heavies uses would also be applied to these uses and parcels and therefore, as demonstrated throughout this IS/MND, impacts would remain less than significant. Similar to the MEIR, with the Specific Plan Amendment and Zone Change, all future projects shall be subject to County review and compliance with specific conditions of approval to ensure consistency with land use and development regulations. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

II. *MINERAL RESOURCES* *Would the project:*

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:
The MEIR noted that the County's mineral resources with the highest economic value, which are gold, gypsum, sand, gravel, lime, clay, and stone. Industrial materials are also readily available, including kyanite, mineral fillers (clay, limestone, sericite, mica, and tuff), salt, potash, calcium chloride, and manganese. Most of the active mining operations are in the desert areas of the County and no active mining operations exist within the project or nearby. Soils within the Mesquite Lake project are not known to possess any unique mineral value not typical of other similar lands throughout the irrigated portion of the County. The MEIR evaluated impacts to mineral resources within the Specific Plan area and found that with implementation of the Specific Plan, impacts to mineral resources would not occur.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a) and b) Consistent with the MEIR, No Impact. The Project site has not been evaluated by the California Department of Conservation for potential mineral resources onsite (DOC 2022d). However, as noted previously, the MEIR evaluated impacts to mineral resources within the Specific Plan area, including the Project site, and found that no impacts to mineral resources would occur.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

III. ***NOISE*** ***Would the project result in:***

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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR included a discussion of resources that were found to have environmental effects found not to be significant per CEQA Guidelines Section 15128. The MEIR summarized that in general, there are few existing and no planned residential uses surrounding the Specific Plan area, and therefore, there would be no incompatibility between industrial noises and residences. The MEIR noted that for all zones within the Specific Plan, that industrial uses are allowed, provided that such facilities do not emit fumes, odor, dust, smoke, or gas beyond the confines of the property line within which their activity occurs, or produce significant levels of noise or vibration beyond the perimeter of the site. The MEIR concluded that the Specific Plan does not propose residential uses and only a few single family residences exist within or adjacent to the Specific Plan that could be potentially affected by noise of future industrial uses or traffic generated by the project, and therefore significant impacts would not occur.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:
A Noise Analysis was prepared by LDN , as provided in Appendix F. The analysis looked at ambient noise levels, and then evaluated both construction and operational impacts associated with the Project as discussed below. Based on the applicable noise regulations, the Project would have a significant noise impact if it would:

- Result in exposures of sensitive receptor during construction to the short-term noise levels (in Table 11 below)
- During Project operations, result in an increase of 5 dBA CNEL or greater

Construction Noise
Noise levels resulting from proposed construction activities were obtained from reports prepared by the FTA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), satellite imagery from the site, and field data. Most of the project construction would be located within the western half of the project site approximately 0.5-miles or more away from the nearest sensitive receivers to the east. However, portions of the site construction would be as close as 0.25-miles. Construction noise levels were calculated at 0.25-miles from the nearest sensitive receiver. As shown on Table 10, construction noise levels would attenuate from 93 dBA at 50 feet from the source to 65 dBA at the closest residential receptor due to geometric spreading of sound energy. Therefore, all calculated noise levels would fall within the normally acceptable range of the guidance set forth in the County of Imperial General Plan Noise Element.

Table 10: Construction Noise Levels

Sensitive Receptor	**Source Level @ 50-Feet (dBA)**	**Approximate Distance to Residential Receptor**	**Noise Reduction Due to Distance (dBA)**	**Resultant Noise Level at Sensitive Receptor (dBA)**
Residence	93	0.25-miles east	-28	65
		County of Imperial Threshold		75
		IMPACT?		**NO**

Operational Noise
Primary noise sources at the railroad facility would include the transloading of commodities; water treatment, storage, and distribution; a grain elevator; the hay and grain export and container depot; and the fuel blending and transloading area and fueling station. The nearest sensitive

property line to the operational noise sources, by distance and orientation, is the existing single-family home located approximately 0.25 mile east of the Project site. All other property lines are located further away, allowing a less restrictive noise standard or a higher noise level.

Water Treatment
The Project will include a water treatment, storage and distribution system that will satisfy potable water and fire water requirements. The system will receive water from the IID Dahlia Lateral 8 canal located along the southerly boundary of the Project. The treatment, storage and pump elements of the system will be located on an approximately 2-acre lot. The water treatment, storage and distribution system will likely be developed in phases with an initial phase having a storage capacity of approximately 180,000 gallons and a built-out storage capacity of up to 1.5 million gallons. Conversely, during initial site operations and prior to the need for a public water system, the Project may truck-in purified/potable water.A 1.5-million-gallon tank would be approximately 50 feet tall and approximately 100 feet in diameter. The Project would also have a raw water service connection to IID Dahlia Lateral 8 for industrial/process water.

The proposed water pump would generate a noise level of 45 dBA at 15 feet from the access hatch. The proposed transformer has an unshielded noise rating of less than 51 dBA at 5 feet (National Electric Manufactures Association (NEMA)). Tested outdoor sound levels were provided by the manufacturer/supplier of a typical generator. The noise ratings provided indicate the generator will produce reduced noise levels of 75 dBA during weekly engine exercise and during normal operation when measured at 23-feet in all directions with the manufacturer's sound enclosure. Due to the noise level of the backup generator, the pump system and transformer would not cumulatively add to the overall noise levels. Therefore, the primary source of noise from the water treatment facility would be the backup generator.

As shown in Table 11, the noise levels would be below the 45 dBA Leq thresholds at the nearest single-family property line located an average of 3,300 feet to the east of the water treatment facility. Therefore, the water treatment facility activities follow the County's noise standards and no mitigation or impacts are anticipated.

Table 11: Water Treatment Noise Levels

Source	Noise Level @ 23 Feet (dBA)	Quantity[1]	Cumulative Noise Level (dBA)	Average Distance to Nearest Property Line (Feet)	Noise Reduction due to distance (dBA)	Resultant Noise Level @ Property Line (dBA)
Generator	75	1	75.0	3,300	-43.1	31.9
[1] Source: Project Site Plan						

Transloading
The primary source of noise from the transloading operations will be from trucks loading and unloading to and from the loop tracks that tie into the adjacent Union Pacific Railroad ROW. Transloading of goods will be associated with operations at the grain elevators, fuel blending, hay and grain export, produce/food export, and general commodities.

As shown in Table 12, trucks operating for a full hour on site at the same time the noise levels would be below the 45 dBA Leq thresholds at the nearest single-family property line located an average of 2,800 feet to the east of the transloading areas. Therefore, the truck activities follow the County's noise standards, and no mitigation or impacts are anticipated.

Table 12: Transloading Noise Levels

Source	Noise Level @ 23 Feet (dBA)	Quantity[1]	Cumulative Noise Level (dBA)	Average Distance to Nearest Property Line (Feet)	Noise Reduction due to distance (dBA)	Resultant Noise Level @ Property Line (dBA)
Trucks	59.2	16	71.2	2,800	-41.7	29.5
[1] Source: Project Site Plan						

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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) Consistent with the MEIR; Less Than Significant Impact. The Project does not propose residential uses and only a few single-family residences exist within or adjacent to the Project site that could be potentially affected by noise of future industrial

uses or traffic generated by the Project. As discussed above, the Project would be consistent with the General Plan and would not exceed thresholds for either construction or operation related impacts. The Project would not result in a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels and therefore impacts would be less than significant.

b Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

b) Consistent with the MEIR; Less Than Significant Impact. While Imperial County has not yet adopted vibration criteria, the United States Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides criteria for acceptable levels of groundborne vibration for various types of special buildings that are sensitive to vibration. The FTA has determined vibration levels that would cause annoyance to a substantial number of people and potential damage to building structures. The FTA criterion for vibration induced structural damage is 0.20 in/sec for the peak particle velocity (PPV). Project construction activities would result in PPV levels below the FTA's criteria for vibration induced structural damage. The FTA criterion for infrequent vibration induced annoyance is 80 Vibration Velocity (VdB) for residential uses. Construction activities would generate levels of vibration that would not exceed the FTA criteria for nuisance for nearby residential uses. There are no vibration-sensitive uses located adjacent to the proposed construction. The nearest residential use is located over 0.25-miles from any construction activities. Table 13 lists the average vibration levels that could be experienced at adjacent land uses from the temporary construction activities at 100-feet. Project construction activities are located a minimum of 0.25-miles away, therefore, would not result in vibration induced structural damage or vibration induced annoyance to adjacent land uses. Vibration impacts would be less than significant.

Table 13: Vibration Levels from Construction Activities

Equipment	Approximate Velocity Level at 25 Feet (VdB)	Approximate RMS Velocity at 25 Feet (in/sec)	Approximate Velocity Level at 100 Feet (VdB)	Approximate RMS Velocity at 100 Feet (in/sec)
Small bulldozer	58	0.003	40.0	0.0004
Jackhammer	79	0.035	61.0	0.0044
Loaded trucks	86	0.076	68.0	0.0095
Large bulldozer	87	0.089	69.0	0.0111
		FTA Criteria	80	0.2
		Significant Impact?	**No**	**No**
[1] PPV at Distance D = PPVref x $(25/D)^{1.5}$				

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? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

c) Consistent with the MEIR; No Impact. The nearest airport to the Project is the Imperial County Airport which is approximately 3.4 miles to the southwest (Google 2023). Because the Project is not located near an airport or within an airport zone of influence, the Project would not expose people in the Project area to excessive noise levels. Therefore, no impact would occur.

IV. *POPULATION AND HOUSING* *Would the project:*

a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and business) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR noted that the Specific Plan does not propose residential uses and very few single-family residences are known to exist within the Specific Plan Area. In addition, the Specific Plan is primarily zoned for agricultural and industrial use and is not designated for residential development on the County General Plan. The Specific Plan could induce population growth through new employment opportunities; however, with the chronically high unemployment rate in the County, a population increase would not be required to meet the labor needs of projects within the Specific Plan. The MEIR concluded that with implementation of the Specific Plan, significant impacts to population and housing would not occur.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and business) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact. Similar to the MEIR, the Project does not propose residential uses and it is unlikely that the Proposed Project would induce substantial population growth. Also similar to the MEIR, the Project could induce population growth through new employment opportunities. The Project is expected to employ approximately 400 construction workers over the course of build-out, with as many as 200 workers on-site daily during construction once structures and buildings go vertical. Once operational, approximately 56 full-time employees are expected each day of the week during Project operations to cover all of the Project elements, with approximately 2 shifts per day (5am to 1pm and 11am to 7pm). However, as noted in the MEIR, there is a chronically high unemployment rate in the County. This high unemployment rate still exists today, with the current unemployment rate at 16.0 percent in September 2022 (EDD 2022). It is expected that a majority of the projected employment opportunities would be met via the local employment pool, which would not result in an increase in population.

Additionally, one of the overall goals for the Specific Plan is to support economic development within Imperial County and allow for heavy industrial development in an area that is away from urban conflicts and its cities through job creation in the employment sectors of manufacturing, fabrication, processing, wholesaling, transportation, and energy resource development; and create and preserve an area where a full range of industrial uses with moderate to high nuisance characteristics may locate. The proposed Project would help realize this goal within the Specific Plan area by creating job opportunities. Therefore, population growth impacts would be less than significant.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

b) **Consistent with the MEIR, No Impact.** As discussed in the 2006 MEIR, no residential uses and very few single-family residences are known to exist within the Project site (County 2006). No housing units would be removed as part of the Project, and no persons would require replacement housing. Therefore, no impact to housing requiring the construction of replacement housing would occur.

V. *PUBLIC SERVICES*

a) Would the project result in 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:				
1) Fire Protection?	☐	☒	☐	☐
2) Police Protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
3) Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐
4) Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
5) Other Public Facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR discussed the impacts of the Specific Plan with regards to public services in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the MEIR. At the time of the preparation of the MEIR, the area generally lacked public services and utilities necessary to support the proposed project. The Specific Plan describes the need for a fire station in the southerly portion of the project area, which might also be suitable for use by County Sheriff personnel. The MEIR does state, however, that the lack of an adequate water delivery system for fire suppression is a significant impact that cannot be fully mitigated until a comprehensive program for installation of a system to deliver water to individual properties at pressure suitable for firefighting has been prepared and implemented. Nonetheless, the MEIR included mitigation measures to lessen significant impacts. The measures relevant to the proposed Project are as follows:

Mitigation Measure 4.7.7: The County Fire Chief shall monitor development of the Specific Plan to determine the need for construction and operation of an on-site fire station. This is expected to require dedication of an approximate 2- to 3-acre site within the Specific Plan to be used for the purpose of developing future emergency service facilities including possibly a combined police/fire station as needed. This facility shall be constructed and become operational at such time as required by the County Fire Chief.

Mitigation Measure 4.7.8: Prior to approval of a final map, grading plan, or building permit for any phase or unit of development within the Specific Plan, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that a determination has been made by the County Fire Department that an adequate system for delivery of an adequate supply of water for fire suppression, and other required equipment, alarms, and water connections, is to be provided to serve the project.

Mitigation Measure 4.7.9: Prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for any building within any phase or unit of development within the Specific Plan, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that the fire suppression system required by Mitigation Measure 4.7.8 has been installed to the County Fire Department's satisfaction and is operational.

Law enforcement services rely primarily on tax revenues and mitigation fees as provided in Municipal Code Section 4.36.070 et seq. The MEIR states that these revenue sources would offset the incremental increase in service caused by development of the Specific Plan.

The requirements for emergency medical response to the Specific Plan area would not be expected to be a significant impact. No residential uses are permitted within the Specific Plan other than caretaker/security residences and the handling of hazardous materials would be conducted in compliance with County and State regulations. In addition, businesses and manufacturing processes would be conducted in compliance with California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) requirements and procedures enforced by the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health for workplace safety. Schools, Parks, and Other Public Facilities were not analyzed in the MEIR.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a) Would the project result in 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:
1) Fire Protection? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

1) Inconsistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant with Mitigation. Fire Protection services are provided by the Imperial County Fire Department, which also provides emergency medical responses. The nearest fire station to the Proposed Project is Station 1, approximately 3.8 miles south of the Project site and approximately 12 minutes south of the Project site. Although the 2006 MEIR stated that the lack of an adequate water delivery system for fire suppression was a significant impact that could not be fully mitigated until a comprehensive program for installation of a system to deliver water to individual properties at pressure suitable for firefighting has been prepared and implemented, a centralized water treatment, storage and distribution system would be installed to provide fire water to the Project area. Water for fire protection would be purchased from IID and stored in an above ground storage tank in accordance with County Fire Department standards. The system will be designed in accordance with federal, state, and local fire codes, occupational health and safety regulations and other jurisdictional codes, requirements, and standard practices. The Project site would also include hydrants for fire suppression. Additionally, similar to the MEIR, the Project would implement mitigation measure 4.7.7 and 4.7.8, which will require the County Fire Chief evaluate the Project development to ensure adequate operation of fire emergency services and supply of water. Additionally, mitigation measure 4.7.9, requires that the prior to occupancy the fire suppression system be installed and operational.

Furthermore, completion of the Proposed Project would include payment of development fees that would support the fire department and other County services. With implementation of the above mitigation, and the project design features, impacts would be less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

2) Police Protection? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

2) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact. Police services are provided by the Imperial County Sheriff Department, which would provide patrol units and emergency response to the Project site. The nearest Sheriff Station is located just over 5.5 miles northeast of the Project site. Law enforcement services primarily rely on tax revenue and mitigation fees, per Municipal Code Section 4.36.070 et seq. These revenue sources would offset the incremental increase in service that could be caused by Project development. The Project would also be subject to development fees that would support County services. Impacts would be less than significant.

3) Schools? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

3) Less Than Significant Impact. As previously described in Section IV, Population and Housing, it is expected that a majority of the projected employment opportunities would be met via the local employment pool, which would not result in an increase in population. The Project would not directly result in an increase in population and therefore, new students. Impacts would be less than significant.

4) Parks? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

4) Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Section IV Population and Housing, the Project does not propose residential uses and it is unlikely that the Proposed Project would induce substantial population growth that would use parks. Furthermore, there are no parks or recreational areas within or in the vicinity of the Project site. Impacts would therefore be less than significant.

5) Other Public Facilities? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

5) Consistent with the MEIR, Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project is expected to pull from the local employment pool and not encourage relocation of workers from other locations. Similar to the MEIR, the proposed Project would not contain residential uses, and the handling of hazardous materials would be conducted in compliance with County and State regulations. Therefore, impacts on emergency services are expected to be less than significant. No other various public facilities are expected to be required or expanded to support the Project due to the use of employees within the Imperial Valley region. Additionally, the Proposed Project would be required to pay development fees that would support various County services. Impacts would be less than significant.

VI. *RECREATION: Would the project:*

a)	Would the project increase the use of the existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b)	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR included a discussion of resources that were found to have environmental effects found not to be significant per CEQA Guidelines Section 15128. The MEIR summarized that recreation sites within the Specific Plan Area would be limited to fallow farmlands that are periodically flooded during duck hunting season to be used by hunting clubs. However, implementation of the Specific Plan was not found to prevent the continued use of these lands during duck hunting season. Furthermore, it was noted that there are other adequate sites that may be used should these properties be converted for industrial use. Any future planned industrial uses would not require the expansion or construction of new recreational areas in other areas of the County. No parks or recreation areas were located within the vicinity of the Project site.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a) Would the project increase the use of the existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

a) Consistent with the MEIR; No Impact. The Project proposes construction and operation of an industrial park, logistics centers for food and commodity imports and exports, and rail loop and ladder tracks to connect to the existing UPPR, and a fueling station. The Proposed Project would include an approximately 3-acre public park facility in honor of veterans that will be located east of and adjacent to the existing Memory Gardens Cemetery. The existing Memory Gardens Cemetery property lines will be adjusted for inclusion and the park and cemetery will be fenced-ff from rest of the Project site. Access to the park (and cemetery) will be via the existing and historical access from SR 86. The proposed park will include memorial improvements, restrooms, hardscaped walkways and playground equipment.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

The nearest existing park to the Proposed Project is Evans Park located approximately 3 miles south from the Proposed Project, driving distance. Increase uses of existing neighborhood and regional parks are typically a result of increased neighborhood populations that come with new residential development. The Proposed Project would result in a temporary increase in population with the presence of construction workers. However, their presence would be temporary once the Project is completed and in operation. The Proposed Project would not involve development of new residences that would introduce new permanent populations to the area. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks that could result in accelerated deterioration. Implementation of the Project would be consistent with the MEIR and would not result in any new impacts not previously analyzed. No impact would occur.

b)	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

b) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project includes a recreational facility (park) to the area. The proposed park will be installed within the existing cemetery property. Permitted uses within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan includes parks and other recreational activities. Parks are permitted in MLI-1. Parks are also permitted in public, semi-public and institutional areas. The MEIR noted that any future development within the Specific Plan Area would not result in significant impacts to recreation as there were no designated recreational areas within the immediate vicinity of the Specific Plan Area. The Project would not include the removal or impact of existing recreational facilities that would require expansion of such facilities. Implementation of the Project would be consistent with the MEIR and would not result in any new impacts not previously analyzed. Impacts therefore are less than significant.

VII. *TRANSPORTATION* *Would the project:*

a)	Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☒	☒	☐
b)	Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with the CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☒	☒	☐
c)	Substantially increases hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d)	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR included a Traffic Impacts Analysis (TIA) prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan, Engineers (LLG). The TIA evaluated existing traffic, traffic with full build out of the Specific Plan (2010), and cumulative impacts (2025), which included full build out of the Specific Plan, and off-site planned and approved developments.

The MEIR noted that the volume from Specific Plan buildout would impact existing roads in the area which are generally not currently improved to adequately accommodate the volume of traffic. The level of traffic generation from full buildout of the Specific Plan would result in significant on- and offsite impacts. The MEIR included the following mitigation measures:

Mitigation Measure 4.10.1: Signalize the SR 86/Keystone intersection, provide a dedicated eastbound left-turn lane, and provide dedicated westbound left-turn, through, and right-turn lanes with an overlap phase. The existing southbound left-turn lane and northbound right-turn lane shall be lengthened.

Mitigation Measure 4.10.2: Signalize the SR 86/Harris Road intersection and provide dedicated left-turn lanes at all four approaches (i.e., northbound, southbound, eastbound, westbound).

Mitigation Measure 4.10.3: Provide dedicated eastbound and westbound left-turn, through and right-turn lanes at the SR 86/Worthington Road intersection; and provide a dedicated right-turn lane in the northbound direction and a shared through/right-turn lane in the southbound direction.

Mitigation Measure 4.10.4: Signalize the Dogwood Road/Keystone Road intersection and provide dedicated left-turn lanes at each approach (i.e., northbound, southbound, eastbound, westbound).

Mitigation Measure 4.10.5: Signalize the Dogwood Road/Harris Road intersection and provide dedicated left-turn lanes at each approach (i.e., northbound, southbound, eastbound, westbound).

Mitigation Measure 4.10.6: Signalize the Dogwood Road/Worthington Road intersection and provide dedicated left-turn lanes at each approach (i.e., northbound, southbound, eastbound, westbound).

Mitigation Measure 4.10.7: Provide a dedicated eastbound right-turn lane with an overlap phase and dual northbound left-turn lanes at the SR 111/Keystone Road intersection. The addition of a second northbound left-turn lane will require widening Keystone Road between SR 111 and Old Highway 111 to accommodate the additional lane of traffic.

Mitigation Measure 4.10.8: Signalize the SR 111/Harris Road intersection and provide dedicated dual left-turn lanes and a right-turn lane for northbound traffic and a dedicated southbound right turn lane. A 4-foot shoulder shall be provided adjacent to the right turn lanes. The Harris Road intersections with Old Highway 111 and with the east side frontage road shall be realigned to provide increased separation from SR 111 to the satisfaction of Caltrans and the County Engineer.

Mitigation Measure 4.10.9: Widen Dogwood Road to four lanes (i.e., two lanes in each direction) from Keystone Road to Harris Road and from Harris Road to Worthington Road.

Mitigation Measures for Long Term Traffic/Circulation Impacts:
Mitigation Measure 4.10.10: Future street intersections or proposed project driveways on Keystone Road, Harris Road, and Dogwood Road shall be evaluated for signalization or other driveway intersection controls. Projected traffic volumes on these roads will require that streets and driveways be signalized and configured with dual inbound and outbound left-turn lanes, and dedicated right-turn lanes. If a signal is not provided, access shall be limited to right-turn only on Dogwood Road. Inbound left turns at the project driveways may be allowed on Keystone Road and Harris Road without signals, but outbound left-turns shall be prohibited at unsignalized intersections.

Mitigation Measure 4.10.11: If access rights to SR 86 exist or are allowed by Caltrans, proposed streets or private driveways shall be limited to right-turn only and dedicated northbound right-turn lanes shall be provided at all such intersections.

Mitigation Measure 4.10.12: All improvements to State-owned road segments and intersections shall provide operations at LOS C or better.

Mitigation Measure 4.10.13: All future development, including improvement to existing uses, shall contribute its fair share of the cost for improving off-site road segments and intersections significantly impacted by the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan. All fair share contributions on State-owned facilities shall be calculated using Caltrans' Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies.

The MEIR only evaluated level of service (LOS) as the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) threshold was not added to the Appendix G CEQA thresholds until 2018, and analysis of VMT was not required until July 1, 2020.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:
Linscott, Law and Greenspan, Engineers (LLG) prepared a Transportation Impact Analysis, which included a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Local Mobility Analysis (LMA) to assess the impacts to the street system as a result of the Green Valley Logistics Center Project, located in Imperial County (Appendix G).

Project Access

Access to the site will be provided via two driveways to SR 86. The north driveway will accommodate right-turn only egress and the south driveway will accommodate right-turn only ingress.

As a Project feature, the Project will require inbound and outbound heavy trucks to adhere to the following designated truck routes. The designated truck routes are intended to restrict heavy vehicles from turning across multiple lanes of oncoming traffic at unsignalized intersections on SR 111. The truck route requirements will be included as a Condition of Approval and will be enforced through on-site signage, off-site signage as appropriate, and in contracts with outside trucking agencies.

- When leaving the site, heavy trucks heading to the south / east via SR 111 will be required to make a right-turn out of the site onto SR 86, a right-turn from SR 86 to Keystone Road, a right-turn from Keystone Road to Dogwood Road, a left-turn from Dogwood Road onto Worthington Road, and a right-turn at the signalized intersection of Worthington Road and SR 111.

- Inbound trucks coming from the south / east via SR 111 will be required to make a left-turn at the signalized intersection of Worthington Road and SR 111, a right-turn onto Dogwood Road from Worthington Road, a left-turn onto Harris Road from Dogwood Road, a right-turn onto SR 86 from Harris Road, and a right-turn into the site.

Project Traffic

Project trips consist of vehicular trips on the street system, which begin or end at the Project site and are generated by the proposed development. Trip generation estimates for the Project are based on information provided by the applicant. The site will be developed incrementally over time and therefore the Project's initial trips will be significantly less than the Project buildout traffic volumes analyzed in this traffic report.

The traffic generated by the Project will consist of several unique trip types as described below.
Project traffic generation was calculated for each trip type as shown in Table 14. As seen in Table 14, the Project is calculated to generate a total of 979 ADT, with 42 inbound / 31 outbound trips during the AM peak hour, and 31 inbound / 42 outbound trips during the PM peak hour. The volumes include a passenger car equivalence factor (PCE), as discussed below.

- **Employee Trips:** At Project buildout, a total of 56 on-site employees are expected each day. The majority of the employees are expected to drive alone in their own vehicle (i.e., not carpool). 9% of the on-site employees (5 employees total) were assumed to carpool based on data provided in the Imperial County Transportation Commission Regional Active Transportation Plan. A trip rate of 2.1 ADT per worker vehicle was assumed to account for the trips to and from the Project site as well as the occasional mid-workday errand. Based on the location of the site, the provision of on-site services, and the nature of the Project, mid-workday trips are expected to be sporadic.

  To estimate the peak hour employee trips, two-shifts per day (5AM to 1PM, and 11AM to 7 PM) was assumed. Employees working either of these shifts would avoid the 7AM to 9AM morning commuter peak hour and the 4PM to 6PM afternoon commuter peak hour. Nevertheless, in order to provide a conservative analysis, 10% of the total employee ADT were assumed to enter the site (traveling inbound) during the AM peak, and 10% of the total employee ADT were assumed to exit the site (traveling outbound) during the PM peak.

- **Heavy-Duty Truck Trips:** At Project buildout, a total of 218 heavy-duty trucks are expected to access the site each day (53 grain elevator trucks, 33 fuel trucks, 41 railed-in products export trucks, and 91 trucking only trucks). Heavy-duty trucks are assumed to access the site consistently between the hours of 5AM and 7PM (approximately 16 heavy vehicles per hour for 14-hours). A Passenger Car Equivalence (PCE) of 2.0 was applied to account for the diminished performance characteristics of heavy trucks in traffic flow (as compared to passenger vehicles) based on data contained in the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM).

Table 14: Project Trip Generation

Number and Type of Trips		Daily Trips		AM Peak Hour (w/PCE)			PM Peak Hour (w/PCE)[d]		
	ADT[a]	PCE[b]	PCE Adjusted ADT	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Phase 1									
20 Worker Vehicles	42	1.0	42	4	0	4	0	4	4
48 Grain Elevator Trucks	96	2.0	192	7	7	14	7	7	14
24 Fuel trucks	48	2.0	96	3	3	6	3	3	6
8 Railed-in Products Export Trucks	16	2.0	32	1	1	2	1	1	2
20 Trucking Only Trucks	40	2.0	80	3	3	6	3	3	6
Phase 1 Subtotal	**242**	**-**	**442**	**18**	**14**	**32**	**14**	**18**	**32**
Phase 2									
31 Worker Vehicles[c]	65	1.0	65	7	0	7	0	7	7
5 Grain Elevator Trucks	10	2.0	20	1	1	2	1	1	2

Number and Type of Trips		Daily Trips		AM Peak Hour (w/PCE)			PM Peak Hour (w/PCE)[d]		
	ADT[a]	PCE[b]	PCE Adjusted ADT	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
9 Fuel trucks	18	2.0	36	1	1	2	1	1	2
33 Railed-in Products Export Trucks	66	2.0	132	5	5	10	5	5	10
71 Trucking Only Trucks	142	2.0	284	10	10	20	10	10	20
Phase 2 Subtotal	**301**	**-**	**537**	**24**	**17**	**41**	**17**	**24**	**41**
Total Trips:	**543**	**-**	**979**	**42**	**31**	**73**	**31**	**42**	**73**

Footnotes:

a. Average Daily Trips

b. Passenger Car Equivalents. Based on the *Highway Capacity Manual,* a Passenger Car Equivalent (PCE) factor of 2.0 was applied to the Project's heavy-truck trips.

c. A total of 56 on-site employees are expected each day at Project buildout. Based on data provided in the *Imperial County Transportation Commission Regional Active Transportation Plan,* February 2022, 9% of the on-site employees (5 people total) were assumed to carpool with other employees. A trip rate of 2.1 ADT per worker vehicle was assumed to account for the trips to and from the Project site as well as the occasional mid-workday errand. Based on the location of the site, the provision of on-site services, and the nature of the Project, mid-workday trips are expected to be very sporadic.

d. Heavy-duty trucks are assumed to access the site consistently between the hours of 5AM and 7PM (approximately 16 heavy vehicles per hour for 14-hours at Project buildout).

Capacity Analysis

The following section presents the analysis of the study area intersections under Opening Year conditions. As noted previously, the site will be developed incrementally over time and therefore the Project's Opening Year trips will be significantly less than the Project buildout traffic volumes analyzed in this traffic report.

Opening Year with Project Conditions

Table 15 summarizes the Opening Year with Project intersection operations. As shown in Table 15, the study intersections are calculated to continue to operate acceptably at LOS C or better, with the exception of the following:

▪ Harris Road / SR-86 is calculated to continue to operate at LOS D during the AM and PM peak hours. A substantial effect is not calculated at this intersection since the Project-related increase in delay does not exceed the substantial effect threshold maximum of 2.0 seconds.

▪ Harris Road / SR-111 is calculated to continue to operate at LOS E during the AM and LOS F during the PM peak hours. A substantial effect is not calculated at this intersection since the Project-related increase in delay does not exceed the substantial effect threshold maximum of 2.0 seconds.

▪ Worthington Road / SR-86 is calculated to continue to operate at LOS D during the AM and PM peak hours. A substantial effect is not calculated at this intersection since the Project related increase in delay does not exceed the substantial effect threshold maximum of 2.0 seconds.

Table 15: Opening Year Intersection Operations

Intersection	Control Type	Movement/ Approach	Peak Hour	Opening Year		Opening Year + Project		Δe
				Delay[a]	LOS[b]	Delay[a]	LOS[b]	
1. Keystone Road / SR 86	Signal	Overall	AM	17.6	B	18.2	B	0.6
			PM	18.7	B	19.2	B	0.5
2. Keystone Road / Dogwood Rd	AWSC[d]	Overall	AM PM	9.1 11.4	A B	9.3 11.9	A B	0.2 0.5
3. Keystone Road / SR 111	Signal	Overall	AM	15.2	B	15.6	B	0.4
			PM	14.8	B	14.9	B	0.1
4. SR 86 / N. Project Drivewaye	MSSC[c]	Worst-Case	AM PM	- -	- -	10.5 10.4	B B	- -
5. SR 86 / S. Project Drivewaye	MSSC[c]	Worst-Case	AM PM	- -	- -	0.0 0.0	A A	- -
6. Harris Road / SR 86	MSSC[c]	Worst-Case	AM	**31.3**	**D**	**31.5**	**D**	**0.2**
			PM	**33.4**	**D**	**33.4**	**D**	**0.0**
7. Harris Road / Dogwood Road	MSSC[c]	Worst-Case	AM PM	13.5 14.4	B B	14.8 15.8	B C	1.3 1.4
8. Harris Road / SR 111	MSSC[c]	Worst-Case	AM	**43.1**	**E**	**44.0**	**E**	**0.9**
			PM	**50.3**	**F**	**50.3**	**F**	**0.0**
9. Worthington Road / SR 86	Signal	Overall	AM	**44.5**	**D**	**44.5**	**D**	**0.0**
			PM	**48.9**	**D**	**49.4**	**D**	**0.5**
10. Worthington Road / Dogwood Road	AWSC[d]	Overall	AM PM	13.7 12.4	B B	14.2 12.6	B B	0.5 0.2
11. Worthington Road / SR 111	Signal	Overall	AM PM	19.7 12.2	B B	19.7 13.0	B B	0.0 0.8

VMT Assessment

Heavy Vehicles

Per OPR guidelines, "vehicle miles traveled" refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. Here the term "automobile" refers to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. VMT does not include trips from heavy trucks. Therefore, the trips generated by the Project's heavy-duty trucks are excluded from VMT analysis.

Employee Passenger Vehicles

The Project's employee passenger vehicles are calculated to generate 107 ADT, as shown in Table 14. Therefore, the employee component of the Project can be considered a "small project", assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact per OPR guidelines.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

Local Mobility Analysis
The Project is not calculated to substantially affect any of the study intersections, and therefore no off-site improvements are required. It should be noted that the results presented in this study are dependent on Project related heavy truck trips adhering to the Project's truck route requirements summarized below:

As a Project feature, the Project will require inbound and outbound heavy trucks to adhere to the following designated truck routes. The designated truck routes are intended to restrict heavy vehicles from turning across multiple lanes of oncoming traffic at unsignalized intersections on. The truck route requirements will be included as a Condition of Approval and will be enforced through on-site signage, off-site signage as appropriate, and in contracts with outside trucking agencies.

▪When leaving the site, heavy trucks heading to the south / east via SR 111 will be required to make a right-turn out of the site onto SR 86, a right-turn from SR 86 to Keystone Road, a right-turn from Keystone Road to Dogwood Road, a left-turn from Dogwood Road onto Worthington Road, and a right-turn at the signalized intersection of Worthington Road and SR 111.

▪Inbound trucks coming from the south / east via SR 111 will be required to make a left-turn at the signalized intersection of Worthington Road and SR 111, a right-turn onto Dogwood Road from Worthington Road, a left-turn onto Harris Road from Dogwood Road, a right-turn onto SR 86 from Harris Road, and a right-turn into the site.

In order to minimize potential impacts to local roadways, the following mitigation measure should be implemented prior to issuance of a grading permit:

TRA-1: The Applicant will be required to participate in the Traffic Impact Fee Program approved by Imperial County on December 23, 2008 (County Ordinance No. 1445).

a)	Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b)	Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with the CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☒	☐	☐

a) and b) As discussed above, the Project's employee passenger vehicles are calculated to generate 107 ADT, which is under the threshold of 110 ADT per the OPR Guidelines. Therefore, the employee component of the Project can be considered a "small project", assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact.

Although the impact is determined to be less than significant, the Proposed Project will be required to implement mitigation measure TRA-1, which ensures compliance with the County's Traffic Impact Fee Program.

c)	Substantially increases hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

c) Consistent with the MEIR; Less Than Significant. Impacts associated with Project conditions would result in an impact at Worthington Road / SR 86 intersection, Harris Road / SR 111, and Harris Road / SR 86, where the worst-case minor street left turn movement is calculated to operate at LOS E during the AM peak hour and LOS F during the PM peak hour. In order to avoid the potential impacts at these intersections, the following Project design features will be implemented:

- When leaving the site, heavy trucks heading to the south / east via SR 111 will be required to make a right-turn out of the site onto SR 86, a right-turn from SR 86 to Keystone Road, a right-turn from Keystone Road to Dogwood Road, a left-turn from Dogwood Road onto Worthington Road, and a right-turn at the signalized intersection of Worthington Road and SR 111.

- Inbound trucks coming from the south / east via SR 111 will be required to make a left-turn at the signalized intersection of Worthington Road and SR 111, a right-turn onto Dogwood Road from Worthington Road, a left-turn onto Harris Road from Dogwood Road, a right-turn onto SR 86 from Harris Road, and a right-turn into the site.

Implementation of the above project design features will result in less than significant impacts associated with roadway design.

Additionally, the Proposed Project will be required to implement mitigation measure TRA-1, which ensures compliance with the County's Traffic Impact Fee Program. Impacts would remain less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

d) Consistent with the MEIR; Less than Significant Impact. Temporary or single-lane closure of some roadways may occur during the transport of oversized equipment or construction activities. Road closures would be coordinated with County Public Works, the County Sheriff, and ICFD prior to closure, and would be scheduled to occur during off-peak commute hours. The Project's construction and operational activities would be in compliance with the Imperial County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) and would not physically interfere with the execution of the policies and procedures in these plans (County 2015b; 2021a). Access roads may be additionally compacted to 90 percent or greater, as required, to support construction and emergency vehicles. Certain access roads may also require the use of aggregate to meet emergency access requirements. Therefore, the Project would not result in inadequate emergency access and impacts would be less than significant.

VIII. *TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES*

a) Would the project 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:				
(i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as define in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
(ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth is 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.	☐	☒	☐	☐

California Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) was enacted in 2014 (Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014) and became effective within CEQA on January 1, 2015. Per California Public Resources Code § 21080.3.1 lead agencies are required to notify formally requesting tribes of proposed projects located within their traditional use area. Pursuant to Government Codes §65352.3 and §65352.4 SB 18 requires local governments to consult with California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of avoiding, protecting, and/or mitigating impacts to cultural places when creating or amending General Plans, Specific Plans and Community Plans. The principal objective of SB 18 is to preserve and protect cultural places of California Native Americans. SB 18 is unique in that it requires local governments to involve California Native Americans in early stages of land use planning, extends to both public and private lands, and includes both federally recognized and non-federally recognized tribes.

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

Since AB 52 and SB 18 were not enacted at the time the MEIR was approved. The MEIR states that development within the Specific Plan would have the potential to impact Late Prehistoric archaeological materials in areas associated with lower elevation recessional shorelines of Lake Cahuilla; which include the Project site.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

On August 12, 2022, Chambers Group requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) records search from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The purpose of the request is to determine if any sacred lands or other resources have been recorded within the Project site or adjacent areas. The results of the SLF search, provided by the NAHC on October 18, 2022, were positive, indicated the area could contain Tribal Cultural Resources.

SB 18 letters are required to be sent to all Tribes listed on the NAHC list. AB 52 letters are required to be sent Tribes who request to consult with the County. SB 18 letters were sent to the following Tribes and AB 52 letters were also sent to the bolded Tribes. All letters were sent on August 29, 2022, with one late SB 18 letter being sent on October 18, 2022. Responses for SB 18 were due by November 28, 2022 and January 16, 2023 respectively, and AB 52 responses were due by September 28, 2022.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

- Augustine Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians
- Barona Group of the Capitan Grande
- **Campo Band of Diegueño Mission Indians**
- Chemehuevi Reservation
- Cocopah Indian Tribe
- Colorado River Indian Tribe
- Ewiiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians
- Ewiiaapaayp Tribal Office
- Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel
- Inaja-Cosmit Band of Indians
- Inter-Tribal Cultural Resource Protection Council
- Jamul Indian Village
- Kwaaymii Laguna Band of Mission Indians
- La Posta Band of Diegueño Mission Indians
- Manzanita Band of Kumeyaay Nation
- Mesa Grande Band of Diegueño Mission Indians
- NAHC
- **Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation**
- San Pasqual Band of Diegueno Mission Indians
- Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation
- Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
- **Torres-Martinez Indian Tribe**
- Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians

As of January 17, 2023, the Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation was the only Tribe to respond, noting that they have no comments on the Project.

a) Would the project 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:				
(ii) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as define in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
(iii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth is 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.	☐	☒	☐	☐

a) ii) and iii) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** As discussed above, SB 18 and AB 52 consultation were conducted by the County, and the Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation, responded noting that they had no concerns on the Project. No other Tribes responded during the consultation process. Nonetheless, a Cultural Resources Site visit was conducted by Chambers Group. Chambers Group concluded that while surface manifestations of cultural resources were not observed during the previous cultural resources study in support of the MEIR, and the current site visit, it should be noted that the landscape has been under historic-period use and settlement. This historic utilization may have resulted in unrecognized buried features such as footings and foundations or refuse area such as trash pits or outhouses. Similarly, ethnographic data and historic-period maps indicate that Native American groups such as the Kamia occupied and utilized major and minor drainages within the Salton Basin, as is documented on the 1856 General Land Office map, which depicted an "Indian Village" in the northeast quarter of Section 36 (Township 14S, Range 14E). The understanding that the area is important to Native American groups is further supported by the positive NAHC SLF records search results. However, the Project would implement MEIR Mitigation Measures 4.6.1 and 4.6.2, the former of which notes that if any unanticipated discovery of potential cultural resources are encountered during the Project, that proper protocols would be implemented. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts would remain less than significant.

IX. *UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS* *Would the project:*

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project	☐	☒	☐	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**
from existing and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

The MEIR evaluated public services and utilities for the entire specific plan area. The MEIR evaluated impacts to electrical service, water service, drainage systems, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, other facilities including natural gas and telecommunications, and other essential services which included police, fire and emergency which are evaluated further in Section V Public Services.

The MEIR concluded that there would be adequate services and infrastructure for solid waste, natural gas and telecommunication facilities. Additionally, development within the specific plan area was expected to result in an increase in recycling and a net reduction in solid waste disposal and energy use in the County. The MEIR concluded that fully accomplishing the land use objectives would not be possible until a public agency was able to establish, accomplish and operate the necessary infrastructures within the specific plan area. The MEIR provided general mitigation for public services and utilities as follows:

Mitigation Measure 4.9.1: The County of Imperial and its Departments shall review all final maps, grading plans, building permits, use permits, and other applications for development of property within the Specific Plan and shall determine whether adequate public service improvements are provided or planned to accomplish the long-term land use objectives of the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan. While individual development may be allowed to proceed, the County shall determine the need for appropriate fair-share contributions, by fee or facility construction, to be required of any applicant. In addition, the County may require development agreements from project applicants to ensure participation in the formation and funding of a CFD or other public agency to accomplish the construction and operation of the required infrastructure improvements identified in the Specific Plan. When deemed necessary by the County, further development shall be denied pending establishment of a CFD or other public agency.

Electrical Services

Electrical power to the specific plan area is supplied by IID Energy from its local power generating resources and as a member of the Southern California Public Power Authority that brings electrical power from Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada to serve its member agencies. The MEIR concluded that adequate electrical services could be provided by IID on site with the following mitigation:

Mitigation Measure 4.9.2: Prior to issuance of any building permit for any new building within the project, the building permit applicant shall provide evidence from IID Energy that adequate electrical service exists for the project or that required new facilities would be available prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the building.

Water Service

Water is provided by IID from the Colorado River via the All-American Canal. The specific plan area is served from the Rose Canal, which bisects the specific plan area west of Dogwood Road and also via laterals from the Central Main Canal west of SR 86 and the Redwood Canal east of SR 111. The specific plan area is not within the service area of any water treatment plant, the nearest being the City of Imperial plant approximately 3 miles to the southwest. Raw water from IID can also be used for many industrial processes. The Specific Plan estimated that industrial uses typically require 1,250 to 2,500 gallons per day (GPD) per acre and noted requirements under SB 610. The MEIR concluded that water treatment, storage, pumping, and distribution systems would need to be developed throughout the specific plan area, not only to supply water to future businesses but also to ensure that water is available at sufficient pressure for firefighting requirements. The MEIR included the following mitigation:

Mitigation Measure 4.9.3: Prior to issuance of any building permit for any new building within the project, the building permit applicant shall provide evidence from IID that water service exists for the project, including for irrigation of landscape areas and dust control, and shall provide facilities for on-site treatment of raw water or for storage and distribution of delivered filtered water for hand washing and other sanitary requirements. All facilities required for adequate water service shall be installed and in working order prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the building. Mitigation Measure 4.9.1 shall also be implemented to ensure to ensure participation in the formation and funding of a CFD or other public agency to accomplish the construction and operation of the required infrastructure improvements identified in the Specific Plan.

Drainage Systems

The MEIR noted that existing IID drainage systems in the project area do not have sufficient capacity for stormwater drainage and retention

basins will need to be developed or be available for use by all Mesquite Lake non-agricultural projects. The MEIR offered the following mitigation to ensure impacts would remain less than significant:

Mitigation Measure 4.9.4: Prior to issuance of any building permit for any new building within the project, the building permit applicant shall provide evidence satisfactory to the Planning and Development Services Director that an adequate stormwater retention system exists for the project or that required new facilities will be available prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the building. All new or expanded stormwater retention facilities shall be designed and constructed in accordance with a hydrology report prepared by a registered civil engineer and approved by the County Engineer, Planning and Development Services Director, and IID as adequate to accommodate stormwater runoff and disposal. Mitigation Measure 4.9.1 shall also be implemented to ensure participation in the formation and funding of a CFD or other public agency to accomplish the construction and operation of the required infrastructure improvements identified in the Specific Plan.

Wastewater Treatment

No wastewater treatment is available in the project area; the nearest treatment plant is in the City of Imperial approximately 1.8 miles to the south, which would require a pump station and force main, as well as an agreement from the city of Imperial to provide service to the project. Another alternative would be a future gravity line via Dogwood Road to Brawley approximately 4 miles to the north, which would also require an agreement with the City of Brawley. Evaporation ponds for industrial process water may also be required for some uses. The MEIR offered the following mitigation to ensure impacts would remain less than significant:

Mitigation Measure 4.9.5: Prior to issuance of any building permit for any new building within the project, the building permit applicant shall provide evidence that an adequate system for wastewater disposal and, if required, for industrial process water evaporation, exists for the project or will be constructed and available for use upon completion of the building. All facilities required for adequate wastewater disposal and process water evaporation shall be installed and in working order prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the building. Mitigation Measure 4.9.1 shall also be implemented to ensure participation in the formation and funding of a CFD or other public agency to accomplish the construction and operation of the required infrastructure improvements identified in the Specific Plan.

Solid Waste Disposal

The MEIR found that there are adequate services and infrastructure for solid waste disposal. The Allied Imperial Landfill accepts Class III (municipal) waste at its facility located approximately 1 mile south of the project on SR 111. Class II (special) waste is accepted at the Desert Valley Company disposal facility and storage site located northwest of Westmorland. A Class III (hazardous) waste facility is operated by Clean Harbors at a site west of Westmorland. Recycling facilities are limited to privately owned and operated drop-off centers.

In addition to regulation of facilities that handle hazardous materials, the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) established procedures to implement the requirements of the California Public Resources Code for solid waste facilities. This would include a solid waste transfer or processing station, composting facility, transformation facility, and disposal facility. The following mitigation measures were included in the MEIR to ensure impacts remain less than significant.

Mitigation Measure 4.9.6: Prior to approval of final maps for each phase or unit of development within the specific plan area, a waste management plan shall be prepared in accordance with the County's Integrated Waste Management Plan and approved by the Planning and Development Services Director and the County Engineer. The plan shall include, but shall not be limited to, an assessment of the type and quantity of waste materials expected to enter the waste stream; source and separation techniques and on-site storage of separated materials; methods of transport and destination of waste materials; and, where economically feasible, implementation of buy-recycled programs.

Solid waste management measures were also discussed under the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section in the MEIR summarized below:

Mitigation Measure 4.7.6: For any project determined by the Planning and Development Services Director to require County Environmental Health and Safey / Local Enforcement Agency (EHS/LEA) approval under procedures established by the CIWMB, and prior to approval of a final map, grading plan, or building permit for any for such project, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Planning and Development Services Director that (1) a determination has been made by the County EHS/LEA on the need for project approval under procedures established by the CIWMB for compliance with the California Public Resources Code for solid waste facilities including a solid waste transfer or processing station, composting facility, transformation facility, and/or disposal facility; and if applicable to the project, (2) the property has been designated on the County NDFE and all local, state, and federal requirements for operation of a solid waste facility have been satisfied, including the requirement for issuance of a Solid Waste Facilities Permit by the LEA and in compliance with the County's Integrated Waste Management Plan.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a)	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☒	☐	☐

a) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The Proposed Project would require new

connections for utilities to conduct their operations. The MEIR identified that there are existing services and infrastructure that would be able to support future development such as electric, water, solid waste, natural gas and telecommunications. Section E of the Project Summary discusses the proposed uses and sources of the utilities on the Project site.

Mitigation measure 4.9.1 would be required to be implemented by the Project to ensure all public service improvements can be adequately provided by all utility providers. A discussion of each utility and service system is detailed below:

Water

The proposed Project would require 180 AFY of water or a net decrease of 450 AFY when compared to the Project area's historical annual water consumption. The proposed Project would receive water from IID directly to an on-site water treatment facility, and would treat the water for uses throughout the Project site. Alternatively, the proposed Project may use smaller non-public water treatment systems to cover on-site operational scenarios of less than 25 employees. Similar to other Projects in the MEIR, the Project would be required to implement mitigation measure 4.9.3, which requires that prior to issuance of a building permit, that the applicant shall provide evidence from IID that water service exists for the project for all needs on site. As described in Threshold b below, the Proposed Project would construct a water treatment facility on site, however the construction of this facility would not result in a significant impact. With implementation of mitigation measure 4.9.3, impacts would be less than significant.

Wastewater Treatment

The Proposed Project will result in an increase in wastewater generation however, as described further in Threshold c below, septic systems and leach fields would be utilized by each individual part of the Project on site. The septic systems would be developed in accordance with the State and County standards and would be designed to meet capacity.

Stormwater

The introduction of new impervious surfaces to the Project would affect the amount of water absorption through the soils. However, the Project would implement mitigation measures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 which would ensure that the amount and quality of stormwater would remain as unchanged as possible. The entire Project site would drain into a stormwater retention basin located on the northern portion of the Project site that is approximately 20 acres. This basin connects and would drain into the IID Newside Drain Number 1-A after upgrading the site's historical connection to said IID drain. The retention basin will be designed to meet SWRCB requirements and will include an appropriate mosquito abatement per County guidelines if the retention basin does fully discharge in less than 72 hours.

The Project would be required to implement mitigation measure 4.9.4 which would require that an adequate stormwater retention system exists for the project or that required new facilities will be available prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the building.

Additionally, compliance with Specific Plan Mitigation Measure 4.2.3, Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, as described in Section X Hydrology and Water Quality, would require that a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan be implemented during construction.

.

Electric Power

Electrical services will be provided from an existing distribution level voltage facility from IID near the cemetery, UPPR, Harris Road and/or self-generated with solar panels. If solar panels are used, they would be installed on the roofs of buildings and would interconnect by way of a bi-directional meter that would also serve as the metering element for power purchased from IID. The solar panels would be used solely for Project operations. The solar panels could utilize a battery energy storage element that would require approval from the County Planning Department, prior to installation. The Proposed Project would utilize approximately 2,892,422 kWH. The Project would be required to implement mitigation measure 4.9.2, which would require that the Project provide evidence that electrical services can be adequately provided prior to issuance of a building permit, if services are required through IID.

Natural Gas

Natural gas will be serviced by SoCal Gas' existing pipeline that will be extended to the Project site.. The Proposed Project would require approximately 3,631,469 thousand British Thermal Units (kBTU) of natural gas to operate at full build-out. While natural gas wasn't specifically analyzed in the MEIR previously, general mitigation measure 4.9.1 would ensure that all public utilities would be evaluated for ability to be supplied prior to project construction.

Telecommunication

Cellular coverage would likely be provided by telecom and internet service would likely be provided by Spectrum. Both providers have coverage for the area and since the area was a planned development, have likely planned build out of the site into existing and future capacity.

The Proposed Project will utilize the same utility providers that are used by the existing facilities around the Project site. The mitigation measures discussed in the MEIR and discussed above (measures 4.9.1 to 4.9.6 and 4.7.6) would be implemented by the Proposed Project to ensure that the utility providers confirm and work with the Applicant to determine where the utilities shall be connected and that adequate services are available for the Project site. Implementation of the Project would be consistent with the MEIR and would not result in any new impacts not previously analyzed. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? b)	☐	☒	☐	☐

The Project will include a water treatment, storage and distribution system that will satisfy potable water and fire water requirements. The system will receive water from the IID Dahlia Lateral 8 canal located along the southerly boundary of the Project. The treatment, storage and pump elements of the system will be located on anthe approximately 2-acre lot in the Project. The distribution element of the system will be a looped pressurized water line located within the Project roadway that will provide access to water for all Project parcels. The water treatment, storage and distribution system will likely be developed in phases with an initial phase having a storage capacity of approximately 180,000 gallons and a built-out storage capacity of up to 1.5 million gallons. Conversely, during initial site operations and prior to the need for a public water system, the applicant may truck-in purified/potable. A 1.5 million gallon tank would be approximately 50 feet tall and approximately 100 feet in diameter.

Water for the restrooms, fire water and water for operations would be provided from the overall project's centralized water treatment and distribution system

Table 16: Proposed Water Use

Use	**Acre-Feet Per Year (AFY)**
Existing	
Agricultural Operations	630*
Total	630
Proposed	
Existing Cemetery and Memorial Area	50
Grain Elevator System	20
Hay and Grain Export and Container Depot	30
Produce / Food Export	25
Fuel Blending / Transloading	15
Fueling Station Including CNG	10
General Commodities: Transloading/Warehouse	30
Total	180
Net Decrease	450

* Based on a water use factor of 5.25 acre-feet per acre per year.

Similar to other Projects in the MEIR, the Project would be required to implement mitigation measure 4.9.3, which requires that prior to issuance of a building permit, that the applicant shall provide evidence from IID that water service exists for the project for all needs on site. As described in Threshold b below, the Proposed Project would construct a water treatment facility on site, however the construction of this facility would not result in a significant impact. With implementation of mitigation measure 4.9.3, impacts would be less than significant.

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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

c) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant with Mitigation. As previously mentioned, according to the MEIR, there is no wastewater treatment available within the specific plan area. The nearest treatment plant is located in the City of Imperial which would require a pump station and force main, and an agreement from the City to provide service to the Proposed Project.

The Project will include septic systems with leach fields for the different elements of the logistics center, which would result in

up to nine separate septic systems. The septic systems and leach fields would be required to be constructed with State and County standards.

Additionally, the Project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure 4.9.5 which would require that prior to issuance of any building permit for any new building, the building permit applicant shall provide evidence of an adequate system for wastewater disposal. With implementation of the aforementioned mitigation, impacts would remain less than significant.

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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☒	☐	☐

d and e) Consistent with the MEIR, Less than Significant with Mitigation. Solid wastes would be generated during construction and operation of the Proposed Project. These wastes would include discarded materials and packaging such as scrap metal, concrete, rubble, plaster, wood, paper material and potentially hazardous materials (which are discussed in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section).

All municipal waste would be sent to Allied Imperial Landfill which is owned and operated by Republic Services, Inc. and is located approximately 4 miles southeast of the Project site (Google 2023). While there is not significant information available for the landfill, in 2011 the permitted area of the landfill increased from 170 acres to 337 acres and waste tonnage limits increase from 1,135 to 1,700 tons per day and estimated closure date changed from 2012 to 2040 (CalRecycle 2011).

All special waste would be sent to the Desert Valley Company Monofill and all hazardous waste would be sent to the Clean Harbors Facility. Desert Valley Company Monofill is expected to reach capacity by 2025. However, they have proposed to expand the facility by adding new waste storage cells and associated facilities. Daily volumes of waste are not expected to change (at 750 tons per day). Expansion would increase the capacity by 2.6 million cubic yards thereby extending its operations to 2080 (County 2021). The Clean Harbors facility is one of three Class I hazardous wastes treatment, storage and disposal facility in California. It has a design capacity of 5 million cubic yards and receives and annual capacity of 440,000 cubic yards (Clean Harbors 2023).

According to CalRecycle's estimated solid waste generation rates, industrial sectors can generate a range of 8.93 pounds to 41.64 pounds of waste per employee per day (CalRecycle 2023a). With an estimate of 56 employees, this would equate to approximately 2,331 pounds per day or 1.2 tons per day (41.64 pounds per employee). Analyzing a worst case scenario, this amount would represent a minimal increase in the daily throughput at each facility which would represent approximately 438 tons per year.

Per CalGreen Construction Waste Management requirements, projects are required to recycle and/or salvage for reuse a minimum of 65% of the nonhazardous construction and demolition wastes or meet local construction and demolition waste, whichever is more stringent (CalRecycle 2023b). The Proposed Project is also required to comply with SB 1383 that establishes emission reduction goals by reducing the amount of organic material disposed in landfills. The Project would directly help with meeting SB 1383 with construction and operation of the proposed Project.

As described in the MEIR (Mitigation Measures 4.7.6 and 4.9.6), prior to final approval of the final maps for development within the specific plan area, a waste management plan shall be implemented to comply with the County's Integrated Waste Management Plan to be approved by Planning and Development Services. This should include types and quantity of waste materials that are expected to enter the waste stream. This would ensure that an adequate plan is in place, and that the Project is consistent with the County's requirements. Therefore, implementation of the Project would be consistent with the MEIR and would not result in any new impacts not previously analyzed. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

X. *WILDFIRE*

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:

a)	Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**
spread of a wildfire?				
c) Require the installation or 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of Impacts Identified in the MEIR:

In 2018, the Office of Planning and Research updated the CEQA Guidelines to include Wildfire as a resource area to the Appendix G checklist. The section aimed to answer wildfire related questions indicating whether a project was located in or near a state responsibility area or on lands that are classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. During the preparation of the MEIR, wildfire impacts were not part of the analysis as it was not a resource area required for discussion. Any fire-related discussions were limited to hazardous materials, public services, fire suppression, and emergency services with the County Fire Department.

Impacts Related to the Proposed Project:

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Require the installation or 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a), b) and d) Less than Significant Impact. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) provides a Fire Hazards Severity Zone Viewer (FHSZ) to provide a visual reference to locate fire hazards areas in California. The maps were developed utilizing science and field-tested models that assign a hazard score based on factors that influence fire likelihood and behavior. Factors include but are not limited to fire history, existing and potential fuel (natural vegetation), predicted flame length, embers, terrain, and typical fire weather in the area.

The Project site is not located within a FHSZ area. Most of the moderate to very high fire hazard areas are located to the north adjacent to the Salton Sea near Salton City, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and the Cleveland National Forest. There are no areas within the immediate vicinity of the Project site that are designated as areas that have potential for wildland fires. Additionally, the Project site and surrounding area is generally flat and would not result in downstream flooding, landslides or exacerbate wildfire risks or result in result in post-fire slope instability.

As previously discussed in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials Section, temporary or single-lane closure of some roadways may occur during the transport of oversized equipment or construction activities. Road closures would be coordinated with County Public Works, the County Sheriff, and ICFD prior to closure, and would be scheduled to occur during off-peak commute hours. The Project's construction and operational activities would be in compliance with the Imperial County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) and would not physically interfere with the execution of the policies and procedures in these plans (County 2015b; 2016b). Therefore, the Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

The Project proposes construction and operation of an industrial park, logistics center for food and commodity imports and exports, and rail loop tracks to connect to the existing UPPR, a fueling station. These uses are permitted with the submittal and approval of Project applications. The Proposed Project does not propose any changes to the EOC or the EOP nor does the construction occur

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**

near the primary and alternate EOCs that could cause a physical impairment to the facilities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

c) Require the installation or 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? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

c) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The Proposed Project is not located with a FHSZ, however, as previously mentioned, a centralized water treatment, storage and distribution system would be installed to provide fire water to the Project area. Water for fire protection would be purchased from IID and stored in an above ground storage tank in accordance with County Fire Department standards. The system will be designed in accordance with federal, state, and local fire codes, occupational health and safety regulations and other jurisdictional codes, requirements, and standard practices. The Project site would also include hydrants for fire suppression. Additionally, as mentioned in Section V Public Services, the Project would implement mitigation measure 4.7.7 and 4.7.8, which will require the County Fire Chief evaluate the Project development to ensure adequate operation of fire emergency services and supply of water. Additionally, mitigation measure 4.7.9, requires that the prior to occupancy the fire suppression system be installed and operational.

Furthermore, completion of the Proposed Project would include payment of development fees that would support the fire department and other County services. With implementation of the above mitigation, and the project design features, impacts would be less than significant.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21083, 21083.05, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21095, and 21151, Public Resources Code; Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino,(1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296; Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors, (1990) 222 Cal.App.3d 1337; Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

Revised 2009- CEQA
Revised 2011- ICPDS
Revised 2016 – ICPDS
Revised 2017 – ICPDS
Revised 2019 – ICPDS

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	No Impact (NI)

SECTION 3
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following are Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

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, eliminate tribal cultural resources or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?**	☐	☒	☐	☐

a) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. Based on the discussions in Section IV Biological Resources, a biological resources survey was complete for the Project site, and with implementation of mitigation, impacts would be less than significant, and the proposed Project would not have the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of fish and wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal.

Lastly, as discussed in Section V, Cultural Resources, a cultural resources survey was complete for the Project, and the Project would not have the potential to substantially adversely affect previously unidentified archaeological resources or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. For the reasons outlined above, the Project would not 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, and therefore the Project would have less than significant impacts.

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.)**	☐	☒	☐	☐

b) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The Project does not have potential impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable. Based on the analysis contained in the above Sections, the proposed Project would not result in any significant and unmitigable impacts in any environmental categories. In all cases, effects associated with the Project would be limited to the existing Project Area/disturbance footprint and either result in no new impacts, less than significant impacts, or less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated. As such, Project impacts are of such a negligible degree that they would not result in a significant contribution to any cumulative impacts. This is largely due to the fact that the impacts from the Specific Plan buildout were already evaluated in the MEIR, and the Project activities would not significantly stray from what was previously analyzed in the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan.

Cumulative impacts could occur if the construction of other projects occurs at the same time as the Proposed Project and in the same geographic scope, such that the effects of similar impacts of multiple projects combine to create greater levels of impact than would occur at the Project-level. The nearest cumulative Project which may contribute to cumulative impacts, is the True North Organics Renewable Energy project, which is located just under 2.5 miles east of the Project site. However, this Project is also located within the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan area, which the area was evaluated as a whole, in the MEIR.

Similar to the Proposed Project, the True North Organics Renewable Energy project is also requesting a Specific Plan Amendment. Therefore, similar to the Proposed Project, the True North Organics Renewable Energy project isn't analyzed fully in the MEIR, but the Specific Plan Amendment will not create impacts that could be cumulatively considerable. Additionally, the approval of either Project would not result in future approvals of any Specific Plan Amendments, or make any Specific Plan Amendments easier to obtain.

All Project impacts were considered to be less than significant with mitigation implemented. Additionally, given that the Project operations would not occur in close proximity to any residences or neighborhood communities, and the fact that Project activities would be short-term, the Project's impacts would not combine with the impacts of other projects to create cumulative construction- and/or operation-related impacts in resource areas such as air quality, noise, and transportation.

c)	**Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**	☐	☒	☐	☐

c) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. Effects to human beings are generally associated with air quality, noise, traffic safety, geology/soils, and hazards/hazardous materials. As discussed in the previous environmental topic areas, the Project would not result in significant impacts to human beings because the Proposed Project would not cause significant impacts to air quality, noise, hazards, and traffic that would impact humans in the area. Implementation of mitigation measures for air quality and hazards/hazardous materials would reduce impacts to less than significant. The impacts to human beings as a result of the Project, would be less than significant with the mitigation incorporated.

IV. PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED

This section identifies those persons who prepared or contributed to preparation of this document. This section is prepared in accordance with Section 15129 of the CEQA Guidelines.

A. COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

- Jim Minnick, Director of Planning & Development Services
- David Black, Project Planner

B. CHAMBERS GROUP

- Thomas Strand, Project Manager
- Eunice Bagwan, Environmental Planner
- Paul Morrissey, Director of Biology
- Lucas Tutschulte, Director of Cultural Resources
- Phillip Carlos, GIS Specialist

C. OTHER AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

GTS

- Rawad Hani, P.E., T.E., Managing Principal

Ldn Consulting, Inc

- Jeremy Louden, Principal

Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers

- John A. Boarman, P.E., Principal

POWER Engineers Inc.

- Charlie Koenig, Project Manager
- Matthew Acker, Visualization Specialist

Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation

- Jill McCormick, M.A., Historic Preservation Officer

V. REFERENCES

California Department of Conservation (DOC)

2022a California Important Farmland Finder. Accessed August 1, 2022. Available online at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/

2022b Williamson Act Status Report 2020-21. Accessed August 1, 2022 at: https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa/Documents/stats_reports/2022%20WA%20Status%20Report.pdf

2022c California Geological Survey, Data Viewer. Accessed October 22, 2202. Available online at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/DataViewer/index.html.

2022d Mineral Land Classification. Accessed August 1, 2022 at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=mlc

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE)

2023 Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer. Accessed January 2023. Available online at: https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

2018 California State Scenic Highway System Map. Updated in 2018. Available online at: https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa.

California Employment Development Department (EDD)

2022 El Centro Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Press Release. Published on October 21, 2022. Available online at: https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/ecen$pds.pdf.

California Recycle (CalRecycle)

2011 Public Notice: Imperial Landfill – Imperial County. Revised Solid Waste Facilities Permit. Available online at: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/PublicNotices/Details/499.

2023a Estimated Solid Waste Generation Rates. Industrial Sector Generation Rates. Available online at: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/wastecharacterization/general/rates.

2023b Estimated Solid Waste Generation Rates. Available online at: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/wastecharacterization/general/rates#Institution.

Clean Harbors

2023 Westmorland Landfill Facility. Available online at: https://www.cleanharbors.com/location/westmorland-landfill-facility.

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

2023 EnviroStor. Accessed January 5, 2023. Available online at: https://dtsc.ca.gov/your-envirostor/.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

2008 Flood Map Service Center, Map 06025C1375C, effective 09/26/2008. Available online at: https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery=imperial%2C%20ca#searchresultsanchor.

Google Earth Pro (Google)

2023 Google Earth Pro Desktop Viewer. Imagery date 3/20/2015; Accessed January 5, 2023. Available for download here: https://www.google.com/earth/versions/.

Imperial County (County)

1993a Imperial County General Plan Final EIR. Available online at: https://www.icpds.com/planning/land-use-documents/general-plan/general-plan-eir.

1993b Imperial County General Plan. Available online at: https://www.icpds.com/planning/land-use-documents/general-plan.

2006 Mesquite Lake Specific Plan. Available online at: https://www.icpds.com/assets/planning/specific-plans/mequite-lake/mesquite-lake-sp.pdf.

2015a Imperial County General Plan Noise Element. October 6, 2015. Available online at: https://www.icpds.com/assets/planning/noise-element-2015.pdf.

2015b Imperial County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. Available online at: https://firedept.imperialcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ICMHMP.pdf

2016a Imperial County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element. March 8, 2016. Available online at: https://www.icpds.com/assets/planning/conservation-open-space-element-2016.pdf.

2016b Imperial County Emergency Operations Plan. Available online at: https://firedept.imperialcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/EmergencyOpPlan.pdf

2021 Desert Valley Company Monofill Expansion Project, Cell 4. Available online at: https://www.icpds.com/assets/GPA18-0004-ZC18-0005-CUP18-0025-DVC-Draft-EIR-.pdf.

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)

2023 GeoTracker. Accessed January 5, 2023. Available online at: https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/.