



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

Date: April 30, 2025

To: Distribution List (See Attachment A)

From: Teresa McDonald, Associate Planner
Planning and Community Development

Subject: USE PERMIT APPLICATION PLN2022-0097 - PERNSTEINER AND SONS
FABRICATION, INC.

Comment Period: April 30, 2025 – June 4, 2025

Respond By: June 4, 2025

Public Hearing Date: Not yet scheduled. A separate notice will be sent to you when a hearing is scheduled.

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

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

Applicant: Jesse Pernsteiner, Pernsteiner and Sons Fabrication, Inc.

Project Location: 712 West Harding Road, between S Walnut Road and Lander Avenue, in the Turlock area.

APN: 044-045-010

Williamson Act Contract: N/A

General Plan: Agriculture

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

Project Description: Request to permit a agricultural equipment repair business on a 19.40± acre parcel in the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district.

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



USE PERMIT APPLICATION PLN2022-0097 - PERNSTEINER AND SONS FABRICATION, INC.

Attachment A

Distribution List

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

**STANISLAUS COUNTY
CEQA REFERRAL RESPONSE FORM**

TO: Stanislaus County Planning & Community Development
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354

FROM: _____

SUBJECT: USE PERMIT APPLICATION PLN2022-0097 - PERNSTEINER AND SONS
FABRICATION, INC.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Response prepared by:

Name Title Date



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

CEQA INITIAL STUDY

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

1. **Project title:** Use Permit Application No. PLN2022-0097 – Pernsteiner and Sons Fabrication, Inc.
2. **Lead agency name and address:** Stanislaus County
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354
3. **Contact person and phone number:** Teresa McDonald, Associate Planner
(209) 525-6330
4. **Project location:** 712 West Harding Road, between S Walnut Road and Lander Avenue, in the Turlock area (APN: 044-045-010)
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:** Jesse Pernsteiner, Pernsteiner and Sons Fabrication, Inc.
712 West Harding Road
Turlock, CA 95380
6. **General Plan designation:** Agriculture
7. **Zoning:** General Agriculture (A-2-40)
8. **Description of project:**

Request to permit an agricultural equipment repair business operating on a 19.40± acre parcel in the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district. The equipment repair business will utilize an existing 6,600 square-foot agricultural storage building to make repairs to equipment consisting of a mix of agricultural equipment including tractors, mowers, discs, spreaders, shakers, pickers, and elevators. The facility welds and fabricates parts as needed. Also, machines necessary parts including shafts, hydraulic cylinders, and pins. Approximately 80% of the work is completed on-site and 20% is done on the customer's property. The service area consists of Stanislaus and Merced Counties. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with three employees on a maximum shift (one shift per-day), an estimated two daily customers (either picking up or dropping off equipment), one truck trip for the delivery of supplies per-week, and one truck trip for gas delivery every other week. The project site will include a total of nine graveled parking spaces for passenger vehicles, and a graveled area surrounding the developed footprint, which will also serve as a staging area for equipment that is awaiting repair or parts. The balance of the property will remain in production agriculture. Stormwater will be required to be maintained on-site and is currently proposed to be handled via overland drainage. No construction is proposed; however, building permits will be required for multiple unrelated accessory structures constructed without a permit and the tenant improvements to the 6,600 square-foot building that were completed without a building permit. The project is also improved with a 2,624± square-foot single-family dwelling, and multiple barns and accessory structures. The site is served by a private well and septic system. Access to County-maintained West Harding Road is provided via an existing 16-foot-wide asphalt driveway.
9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:** Irrigated orchards, row crops, and scattered ranchettes in all directions.
10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):** Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, Department of Environmental Resources, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, California Department of Conservation.
11. **Attachments:** None.

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 & 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

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)
On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

Signature on file
Prepared by Teresa McDonald, Associate Planner

April 30, 2025
Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, “Earlier Analyses,” may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration.

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

- a) **Earlier Analysis Used.** Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) **Impacts Adequately Addressed.** Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) **Mitigation Measures.** For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). References to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
 - 7) **Supporting Information Sources:** A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
 - 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
 - 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) the significant criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

ISSUES

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

Discussion: The site is currently improved with a 6,600± square-foot agricultural storage building, which the business will operate out of, a 2,624± square-foot single-family dwelling, and multiple barns and accessory structures. The only scenic designation in the County is along I-5, which is not near the project site. The site itself is not considered to be a scenic resource or a unique vista. The project will not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings. Standard conditions of approval will be added to this project to address glare from any on-site lighting. A condition of approval will be added to the project requiring a building permit for the tenant improvements to the shop building completed without a building permit, to be obtained from the Stanislaus County Building Permits Division prior to operation. No adverse impacts to the existing visual character of the site or its surroundings are anticipated.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?			X	
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?			X	
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?			X	
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?			X	
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?			X	

Discussion: The project site is not enrolled in a Williamson Act contract and is classified as “Farmland of Statewide Importance,” by the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) Web Soil Survey indicates that the property is 100% Hilmar loamy sand 0 to 1 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 68). The California Revised Storie Index is a rating system based on soil properties that dictate the potential for soils to be used for irrigated agricultural production in California. This rating system grades soils with an index rating, areas of 68 as good. Currently, the project site has been planted in row crops and previous to that, it was planted in orchard.

The project site receives irrigated water from the Turlock Irrigation District (TID) and is within the service boundaries of the District. The project was referred to the District; which responded with no comment.

The project site has a General Plan designation of Agriculture and is zoned General Agriculture (A-2-40). Within the A-2 zoning district, the County has determined that certain uses related to agricultural production are “necessary for a healthy agricultural economy.” The County agricultural service operations by obtaining a Tier Two Use Permit if specific criteria can be met and if specific findings can be made. Those findings include that the establishment, as proposed, will not be substantially detrimental to, or in conflict with, the agricultural use of other property in the vicinity; that the use is necessary and desirable for such establishment to be located within the agricultural area as opposed to areas zoned for commercial

or industrial usage; and that it will not create a concentration of commercial and industrial uses in the vicinity. In addition, the Planning Commission must find that the establishment, maintenance, and operation of the proposed use is consistent with the General Plan and will not be detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the use and that it will not be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County. The project proposes to utilize an existing 6,600 square-foot agricultural storage building as a shop to operate a agricultural equipment repair business. The equipment repair business will utilize the shop building to make repairs to equipment consisting of a mix of agricultural equipment consisting of tractors, mowers, discs, spreaders, shakers, pickers, and elevators. The facility welds and fabricates parts as needed, and also machines necessary parts including shafts, hydraulic cylinders, and pins. Approximately 80% of the work is completed on-site and 20% is done at the customer's property. The service area consists of Stanislaus and Merced County. The proposed hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with three employees on a maximum shift (one shift per-day), an estimated two daily customers, one truck trip for the delivery of supplies per-week, and one truck trip for gas delivery every other week. The request is not expected to create a concentration of commercial and industrial uses in the vicinity or perpetuate any significant conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or impact agricultural operations.

The surrounding area is comprised of agricultural parcels planted in orchards or row crops, and ranchettes, in all directions; The city of Turlock is located approximately 0.5 miles to the north and Merced County located approximately 0.6 miles to the south. The nearest parcels enrolled in a Williamson Act Contract are parcels which abut the project site to the east, west, south, and north across West Harding Road.

Buffer and Setback Guidelines are applicable to new or expanding uses approved in or adjacent to the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district and are required to be designed to physically avoid conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. General Plan Amendment No. 2011-01 – Revised Agricultural Buffers was approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 20, 2011, to modify County requirements for buffers on agricultural projects. As this is a Tier Two use, if not considered people-intensive by the Planning Commission, the project is not subject to agricultural buffers. The operation will consist of a maximum of three employees on a maximum shift (one shift per-day), an estimated two daily customers, and one truck trip per-week. Operations will primarily be conducted within the 6,600 square-foot agricultural storage building. The project was referred to the Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner, and no comments have been received to date. Therefore, staff believes the project can be considered low people-intensive, thus not subject to the County's Agricultural Buffer requirements.

Based on the specific features and design of this project, it does not appear this project will impact the long-term productive agricultural capability of surrounding contracted lands in the A-2 zoning district. The balance of the property will remain in agricultural production. There is no indication this project will result in the removal of adjacent contracted land from agricultural use. No forest lands exist in Stanislaus County. The project will have less than significant impacts to Agriculture and Forest Resources.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey; California State Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program - Stanislaus County Farmland 2022; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance (Title 22); Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

d) Result in other emissions (such as those odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			X	
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Discussion: The proposed project is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) and, therefore, falls under the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). In conjunction with the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG), the SJVAPCD is responsible for formulating and implementing air pollution control strategies. The SJVAPCD’s most recent air quality plans are the 2007 PM10 (respirable particulate matter) Maintenance Plan, the 2008 PM2.5 (fine particulate matter) Plan, and the 2007 Ozone Plan. These plans establish a comprehensive air pollution control program leading to the attainment of state and federal air quality standards in the SJVAB, which has been classified as “extreme non-attainment” for ozone, “attainment” for respirable particulate matter (PM-10), and “non-attainment” for PM 2.5, as defined by the Federal Clean Air Act.

The primary source of air pollutants generated by this project would be classified as being generated from "mobile" sources. Mobile sources would generally include dust from roads, farming, and automobile exhausts. Mobile sources are generally regulated by the Air Resources Board of the California EPA which sets emissions for vehicles and acts on issues regarding cleaner burning fuels and alternative fuel technologies. As such, the SJVAPCD has addressed most criteria air pollutants through basin wide programs and policies to prevent cumulative deterioration of air quality within the Basin. The project will not substantially increase traffic in the area and, thereby, impact air quality. The facility operates Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with three employees on a maximum shift (one shift per-day), an estimated two daily customers, one truck trip for the delivery of supplies per-week, and one truck trip for gas delivery every other week. The project was referred to SJVAPCD, and no response has been received to date. However, the SJVAPCD’s Small Project Analysis Level (SPAL) guidance identifies thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions, which are based on the SJCAPCD’s New Source Review (NSR) offset requirements for stationary sources. The SJVAPCD has pre-qualified emissions and determined a size below, which is reasonable to conclude that a project would not exceed applicable thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants. Any project falling below the thresholds identified by the SJVAPCD are deemed to have a less-than significant impact on air quality due to criteria pollutant emissions. The SJVAPCD’s threshold of significance for industrial projects is identified as 1,506 additional trips per-day. As stated previously, the project currently generates five daily vehicle-trips (from employees and customers) and up to two truck-trips per week. As this is below the SJVAPCD’s threshold of significance, no significant impacts to air quality are anticipated.

Construction activities associated with new development can temporarily increase localized PM10, PM2.5, volatile organic compound (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NOX), sulfur oxides (SOX), and carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations a project’s vicinity. The primary source of construction-related CO, SOX, VOC, and NOX emission is gasoline and diesel-powered, heavy-duty mobile construction equipment. Primary sources of PM10 and PM2.5 emissions are generally clearing and demolition activities, grading operations, construction vehicle traffic on unpaved ground, and wind blowing over exposed surfaces. While no construction is proposed, a building permit for unpermitted tenant improvements to the agricultural storage building will need to be obtained.

Potential impacts to air quality from the proposed project are also evaluated by Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The calculation of VMT is the number of cars/trucks multiplied by the distance traveled by each car/truck. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), defines VMT as the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. A technical advisory on evaluating transportation impacts in CEQA published by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in December of 2018 clarified the definition of automobiles as referring to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. While heavy trucks are not considered in the definition of automobiles for which VMT is calculated for, heavy-duty truck VMT could be included for modeling convenience. According to the same OPR technical advisory, many local agencies have developed a screening threshold of VMT to indicate when detailed analysis is needed. Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per-day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact. As daily vehicle and truck trips are seven, impacts to VMT are expected to be less than significant.

For these reasons, potential impacts on local and regional air quality are anticipated to be less than significant, falling below SJVAPCD thresholds, as a result of the nature of the proposed project and project’s operation after construction. Implementation of the proposed project would fall below the SJVAPCD significance thresholds for both short-term construction and long-term operational emissions, as discussed below. Because construction and operation of the project would not exceed the SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the proposed project would not increase the frequency or severity of existing air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the air plans. Additionally, the proposed

project would be consistent with the applicable air quality plans, nor would it conflict with applicable regional plans or policies adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over the project, thus it would be considered to have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District - Regulation VIII Fugitive Dust/PM-10 Synopsis; www.valleyair.org; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Small Project Analysis Level (SPAL) Guidance dated November 13, 2020; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: The project is located within the Turlock Quad of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). There are eight animal species which are state or federally listed, threatened, or identified as species of special concern or a candidate of special concern within this quad. These species include the California tiger salamander - central California DPS, Swainsons hawk, tricolored blackbird, least Bells vireo, steelhead - Central Valley DPS, Crotch's bumble bee, Northern California legless lizard, and coast horned lizard. There are no reported sightings of any of the aforementioned species on the project site, however, according to the CNDDB, a Northern California legless lizard and Crotch's bumble bee were observed in 1926 and 1953, respectively, in the Turlock vicinity approximately 1.25± miles northeast of the project.

An Early Consultation was referred to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and no response has been received to date.

There is a very low likelihood that these species are present on the project site as it has already been disturbed for agricultural purposes and developed with various residential and agricultural structures. It does not appear this project will result in impacts to endangered species or habitats, locally designated species, or wildlife dispersal or mitigation corridors.

There are no known sensitive or protected species or natural communities located on the site. Therefore, the project is considered to be less than significant.

Mitigation: None.

References: California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Natural Diversity Database Quad Species List; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: This project was not referred to the tribes listed with the NAHC as the request does not include a General Plan Amendment. It does not appear this project will result in significant impacts to any archaeological or cultural resources. The existing facility is fully developed with multiple structures, well, and septic system. While no construction is proposed, a condition of approval will be placed on the project, requiring that any new construction activities be halted if any resources are found, until appropriate agencies are contacted, and an archaeological survey is completed.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

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

Energy consuming equipment and processes include construction equipment, trucks, and the employee and customer vehicles. As discussed in Section III – *Air Quality*, these activities would not significantly increase Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), as the number of vehicle or truck trips are not expected to increase as part of the request. The facility operates Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with three employees on a maximum shift (one shift per-day), an estimated two daily customers, one truck trip for the delivery of supplies per-week, and one truck trip for gas delivery every other week. Additionally, the trucks are the main consumers of energy associated with this project but will be subject to

applicable Air District regulations, including rules and regulations that increase energy efficiency for trucks. Consequently, emissions would be minimal. Therefore, consumption of energy resources would be less than significant without mitigation for the proposed project.

While no construction is proposed, building permits will be required for any unpermitted structures and/or tenant improvements, which are subject to the mandatory planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resources efficiency, and environmental quality measures of the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11). Conditions of approval will be added to the project requiring building permits for all unpermitted construction, to be obtained from the Stanislaus County Building Permits Division prior to issuance of a business license. The project site is served by the Turlock Irrigation District (TID) for electricity. TID was provided an Early Consultation referral and responded with no comment.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Turlock Irrigation District (TID), dated October 1, 2024; CEQA Guidelines; Title 16 of County Code; CA Building Code; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance (Title 21); Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?			X	
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?			X	
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?			X	
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	

Discussion: The California Revised Storie Index is a rating system based on soil properties that dictate the potential for soils to be used for irrigated agricultural production in California. The United States Department of Agriculture Natural

Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) Web Soil Survey indicates that the property is 100% Hilmar loamy sand 0 to 1 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 68). While no construction is proposed, existing unpermitted structures will require building permits to be obtained. As contained in Chapter 5 of the General Plan Support Documentation, the areas of the County subject to significant geologic hazard are located in the Diablo Range, west of Interstate 5; however, as per the California Building Code, all of Stanislaus County is located within a geologic hazard zone (Seismic Design Category D, E, or F) and a soils test may be required at the time of the building permit application. Results from the soils test will determine if unstable or expansive soils are present. If such soils are present, special engineering of the structure will be required to compensate for the soil deficiency. Existing structures are required to comply with building standards appropriate to withstand shaking for the area in which they are constructed. An Early Consultation referral response received from the Department of Public Works did not provide any comments related to soils or drainage. Storm water is proposed to be managed on-site by overland discharge. The proposed project does not include any new water or wastewater facilities; however, restrooms were installed in the existing 6,600 square-foot agricultural storage building the business is operating out of without a permit. A building permit for the unpermitted restrooms will be required and will require the approval of the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) through the building permit process, which also takes soil type into consideration within the specific design requirements. DER responded to the Early Consultation with comments requiring that a site plan be submitted that includes the location, layout, and design of all-existing and proposed OWTS and expansion area, that any new building requiring OTWS are designed according to type and/or maximum occupancy of the proposed structure to the estimated waste/sewage design flow rate, that all applicable County Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards and required setbacks are to be met, and if building changes to commercial, the existing or proposed septic system must be replaced or upgraded to a new sewage disposal system that complies with the requirements of Measure X. Conditions of approval regarding these standards will be applied to the project.

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

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated March 28, 2025; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, dated December 12, 2024; Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: The principal Greenhouse Gasses (GHGs) are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), and water vapor (H₂O). CO₂ is the reference gas for climate change because it is the predominant greenhouse gas emitted. To account for the varying warming potential of different GHGs, GHG emissions are often quantified and reported as CO₂ equivalents (CO₂e). In 2006, California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill [AB] No. 32), which requires the California Air Resources Board (ARB) design and implement emission limits, regulations, and other measures, such that feasible and cost-effective statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. Two additional bills, SB 350 and SB32, were passed in 2015 further amending the states Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) for electrical generation and amending the reduction targets to 40% of 1990 levels by 2030.

The proposed hours of operation for the agricultural equipment repair business are Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with three employees on a maximum shift (one shift per-day), an estimated two daily customers, one truck trip for the delivery of supplies per-week, and one truck trip for gas delivery every other week. The project site will include a

total of nine graveled parking spaces for passenger vehicles, and a graveled area surrounding the developed footprint, which will also serve as a staging area for equipment that is awaiting repair or parts. No goods will be manufactured or sold on-site. The balance of the property will remain in production agriculture. Stormwater will be required to be maintained on-site and is currently proposed to be handled via overland drainage. No construction is proposed; however, building permits will be required for accessory structures constructed without a permit and the tenant improvements to the 6,600 square-foot building that were completed without a building permit.

The short-term emissions of GHGs during construction, primarily composed of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O, would be the result of fuel combustion by construction equipment and motor vehicles. The other primary GHGs (HFCs, PFCs, and SF₆) are typically associated with specific industrial sources and are not expected to be emitted by future construction at this project site. As no new construction is proposed, emissions associated with construction would be minimal. Furthermore, all construction activities would occur in compliance with all SJVAPCD regulations; therefore, construction emissions would be less than significant without mitigation. Additionally, the construction of any future proposed buildings is subject to the mandatory planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resources efficiency, and environmental quality measures of the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11). Construction activities associated with this project are considered to be less than significant as they are temporary in nature and are subject to meeting San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) standards for air quality control.

Potential impacts to air quality from the proposed project are also evaluated by Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The calculation of VMT is the number of cars/trucks multiplied by the distance traveled by each car/truck. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), defines VMT as the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. A technical advisory on evaluating transportation impacts in CEQA published by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in December of 2018 clarified the definition of automobiles as referring to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. While heavy trucks are not considered in the definition of automobiles for which VMT is calculated for, heavy-duty truck VMT could be included for modeling convenience. According to the same OPR technical advisory, many local agencies have developed a screening threshold of VMT to indicate when detailed analysis is needed. Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per-day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact. Accordingly, impacts to VMT are expected to be less than significant.

The project was referred to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, however, no response has been received to date.

Based on project details, GHG emissions are considered to be less than significant for the project.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	

<p>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?</p>			<p>X</p>	
<p>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?</p>			<p>X</p>	
<p>f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?</p>			<p>X</p>	
<p>g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?</p>			<p>X</p>	

Discussion: The project does not interfere with the Stanislaus County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, which identifies risks posed by disasters and identifies ways to minimize damage from those disasters. The County Department of Environmental Resources (DER) is responsible for overseeing hazardous materials. This project was referred to the Department of Environmental Resources – Hazardous Materials Division, which responded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment but did request standard conditions of approval be added to the project, requiring the applicant contact DER for any appropriate permitting requirements for hazardous materials and/or wastes and that the applicant complete a Phase I study, and if necessary, Phase II study prior to the issuance of any grading permit. The proposed use is not recognized as a generator and/or consumer of hazardous materials, therefore no significant impacts associated with hazards or hazardous materials are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project.

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

Buffer and Setback Guidelines are applicable to new or expanding uses approved in or adjacent to the General Agriculture (A-2) zoning district and are required to be designed to physically avoid conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. General Plan Amendment No. 2011-01 – *Revised Agricultural Buffers* was approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 20, 2011, to modify County requirements for buffers on agricultural projects. As this is a Tier Two use it would be considered a low people-intensive, thus project will not be to agricultural buffers. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with three employees on a maximum shift (one shift per-day), an estimated two daily customers, one truck trip for the delivery of supplies per-week, and one truck trip for gas delivery every other week. The project was referred to the Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner, and no comments have been received to date.

The project site is not listed on the EnviroStor database managed by the CA Department of Toxic Substances Control. The Turlock Airpark, which is a private airstrip, is located approximately 0.62 miles to the northeast.

The site is located in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) for fire protection and is served by the Turlock Rural Fire Protection District. The project was referred to the District, and no comments have been received to date.

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

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, Hazardous Materials Division, dated October 8, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			X	
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;			X	
ii) substantially increase the rate of amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site.			X	
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or			X	
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?			X	
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?			X	

Discussion: Areas subject to flooding have been identified in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA). The project site is located in FEMA Flood Zone X, which includes areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplains. The project proposes to handle stormwater drainage via overland. An Early Consultation referral response received from the Department of Public Works indicated that a grading, drainage, and erosion and sediment control plan for the project will be required, subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications. Storm water is proposed to be managed on-site by overland discharge and no new structures are proposed. Building permits for unpermitted accessory structures and a tenant improvement to the 6,600 square-foot agricultural storage building will be required which will be reviewed as part of the building permit review process.

The project is already in operation and does not include any water or wastewater facilities. However, if any future new wells are to be constructed on-site, they will be subject to review under the County’s Well Permitting Program, which will determine whether a new well will require environmental review. DER responded to the Early Consultation with comments stating that the existing well may become a public water system as defined in California Health and Safety Code 116275 (e). Should the project become a public water system, it will be subject to SB1263 and a water supply permit cannot be granted without concurrence from the State Water Boards following review of an application for water supply permit and associated technical report. Prior to issuance of a building permit or business license, the property owner shall certify to DER that either the property use does not or will not constitute a public water system, or submit an application for water supply permit and associated technical report to the State Water Boards. DER also provided comments requiring that a site plan be submitted that includes the location, layout, and design of all-existing and proposed OWTS and expansion area, that any new building requiring OTWS are designed according to type and/or maximum occupancy of the proposed structure to the estimated waste/sewage design flow rate, that all applicable County Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards and required setbacks are to be met, and if building changes to commercial, the existing or proposed septic system must be replaced or upgraded to a new sewage disposal system that complies with the requirements of Measure X. These

comments will be applied as conditions of approval. The groundwater resources division of DER responded to the referral with no comment, stating that the project will be de minimus.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was passed in 2014 with the goal of ensuring the long-term sustainable management of California’s groundwater resources. SGMA requires agencies throughout California to meet certain requirements including forming Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA), developing Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP), and achieving balanced groundwater levels within 20 years. The site is located in the West Turlock Subbasin GSA, which together with the East Turlock Subbasin GSA, cover the Turlock Subbasin. The GSAs adopted the Turlock Subbasin GSP at a January 6, 2022, public hearing. The GSAs developed the GSP to comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014 and achieve long-term sustainability of the Turlock Subbasin. While California’s Department of Water Resources DWR has through the end of 2024 to review the plan, the GSAs are preparing for GSP implementation. The project was referred to the GSA and no response has been received to date. The project was referred to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and while no response has been received to date, the developer will be required to contact RWQCB to determine which permits/standards must be met prior to construction as a condition of approval.

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

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Turlock Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP); Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated March 28, 2025; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, dated December 12, 2024; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, Groundwater Resources Division, dated October 7, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: This is a request to permit an an agricultural equipment repair business to operate within a 6,600± square-foot agricultural accessory storage building on a 19.40± acre parcel in the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district. Currently, the project site has been planted in row crops and previous to that, it was planted in orchard.

The County allows commercial composting operations, by obtaining a Tier Two Use Permit if specific criteria can be met and if specific findings can be made. Those findings include that the establishment, as proposed, will not be substantially detrimental to, or in conflict with, the agricultural use of other properties in the vicinity; that the use is necessary and desirable for such establishment to be located within the agricultural area as opposed to areas zoned for commercial or industrial usage; and that it will not create a concentration of commercial and industrial uses in the vicinity. To be considered a Tier Two use, the proposed use is required to be found related to agricultural production and necessary for a healthy agricultural economy. In addition, the Planning Commission must find that the establishment, maintenance, and operation of the proposed use is consistent with the General Plan and will not be detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the use and that it will not be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County. The applicant has submitted a project description indicating their client base consists of customers in Stanislaus and Merced County. The operation will consist of a maximum of three people on a single shift with an estimated two customers per-day.

The project itself relates to production agriculture as the business make repairs to equipment consisting of a mix of agricultural equipment consisting of tractors, mowers, discs, spreaders, shakers, pickers, and elevators. The facility welds and fabricates parts as needed. Also, machines necessary parts including shafts, hydraulic cylinders, and pins.

Approximately 80% of the work is completed on-site and 20% is done on the customer’s property. The following non-agricultural commercial or industrial uses within the vicinity of the project site include: a truck parking operation 0.41 miles southwest of the project site on S Walnut Road; truck parking operations 0.51 and 0.57 miles northeast of the project site on Lander and E Greenway Avenue, respectively; and the Turlock Airpark 0.62 miles to the northeast. The proposed project will not displace any existing on-site farming operations.

As Discussed in Section II – *Agricultural and Forest Resources*, Buffer and Setback Guidelines are applicable to new or expanding uses approved in or adjacent to the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district, and are required to be designed to physically avoid conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. As the facility will have three employees and expects two customers on-site per-day, staff believes the project can be considered low people-intensive, thus not subject to the County’s Agricultural Buffer requirements.

With the application of conditions of approval, there is no indication that, under the circumstances of this particular case, the proposed operation will be detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the use or that it will be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County.

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

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

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

Mitigation: None.

References: Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: The Stanislaus County General Plan identifies noise levels up to 75 dB Ldn (or CNEL) as the normally acceptable level of noise for agricultural uses. The Stanislaus County General Plan identifies noise levels for residential or other noise-sensitive land uses of up to 55 hourly Leq, dBA and 75 Lmax, dBA from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and 45 hourly Leq, dBA and 65 Lmax, dBA from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Pure tone noises, such as music, shall be reduced by five dBA; however, when ambient noise levels exceed the standards, the standards shall be increased to the ambient noise levels. The closest off-site sensitive receptor to the project site is a single-family dwelling located on the adjacent parcel to the west, approximately .10 miles from the agricultural storage building the business operates within. Noise impacts associated with on-site activities and traffic are not anticipated to exceed the normally acceptable level of noise. The operation of the business will be conducted within the storage building, with the exception of outdoor storage for the staging of equipment. Use of any fabrication equipment will be limited to indoor use during allowable hours of operation. The site itself is impacted by noise generated by vehicular traffic on West Harding Road and neighboring agricultural operations. The Turlock Airpark, which is a private airstrip, is located approximately 0.62 miles to the northeast.

The site is not located within an airport land use plan. Noise impacts associated with the proposed project are considered to be less than significant.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County Noise Control Ordinance (Title 10); Stanislaus County General Plan, Chapter IV – Noise Element; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

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

Mitigation: None.

References: Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: The County has adopted Public Facilities Fees, as well as Fire Facility Fees on behalf of the appropriate fire district, to address impacts to public services. School Districts also have their own adopted fees. All facility fees are required to be paid at the time of building permit issuance.

The project site is served by Turlock Irrigation District (TID) for electrical and irrigation service. The project was referred to TID which responded with no comment.

Storm water is proposed to be managed on-site by utilizing overland discharge. An Early Consultation referral response received from the Department of Public Works which did not have comments related to public services.

This project was circulated to the Turlock Rural Fire Protection District, Chatom Union School District, and Stanislaus County Sheriff during the Early Consultation referral period and no concerns were identified with regard to public services.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Turlock Irrigation District (TID), dated October 1, 2024; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated May 28, 2025; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XVI. RECREATION --	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			X	
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			X	

Discussion: This project will not increase demands for recreational facilities, as such impacts typically are associated with residential development.

Mitigation: None.

References: Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: The project proposes to allow an agricultural equipment repair business to operate within an existing 6,600± square-foot agricultural storage building on a 19.40± acre parcel. Approximately 80% of the work is completed on-site and 20% is done on the customer’s property. The service area consists of Stanislaus and Merced County. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with three employees on a maximum shift (one shift per-day), an estimated two daily customers, one truck trip for the delivery of supplies per-week, and one truck trip for gas delivery every other week. Access to County-maintained West Harding Road is provided via an existing 16-foot-wide asphalt driveway.

It is not anticipated that the project would substantially affect the level of service on West Harding Road. The project was referred to the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, which has requested conditions of approval to require an encroachment permit for any work done in the right-of-way, restrictions on loading, parking, unloading within the County right-of-way, restrictions on landscaping in the right-of-way, and the requirement for an Irrevocable offer of dedication for the for West Harding Road. The developer will be required to install or pay for the installation of any signs and/or markings, if warranted. Conditions of Approval reflecting Public Works’ requests and requirements will be added to the project.

Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines establishes specific considerations for evaluating a project’s transportation impacts. The CEQA Guidelines identify vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which is the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project, as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. A technical advisory on evaluating clarified the definition of automobiles as referring to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. While heavy trucks are not considered in the definition of automobiles for which VMT is calculated for, heavy duty truck VMT could be included for modeling convenience. According to the same technical advisory from OPR, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per-day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact. As discussed in Section III – *Air Quality*, the applicant anticipates a total of five daily vehicle-trips (from employees and customers) and up to two truck-trips per week. The VMT increase associated with the proposed project is less-than significant as the number of vehicle trips will not exceed 110 per-day.

The project is located within the Turlock Rural Fire Protection District. The project was referred to the District which has not responded to date.

All development on-site will be required to pay applicable County public facility fees (PFF) fees, which will be utilized for maintenance and traffic congestion improvements to all County roadways.

The proposed project is not anticipated to conflict with any transportation program, plan, ordinance, or policy. Transportation impacts associated with the project are considered to be less than significant.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Governor’s Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory, December 2018; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated March 28, 2025; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: It does not appear that this project will result in significant impacts to any archaeological or cultural resources. The parcel is improved with a 2,624± square-foot single-family dwelling, and multiple barns and accessory structures, as well as a 6,600± agricultural accessory building that will serve the proposed. In accordance with SB 18 and AB 52, this project was not referred to the tribes listed with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as the project is not a General Plan Amendment and no tribes have requested consultation or project referral noticing. While no new construction is proposed, a condition of approval regarding the discovery of cultural resources during future construction will be added to the project.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?			X	
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			X	
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?			X	
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

Discussion: Limitations on providing services have not been identified. No new wells or septic systems are proposed as part of this request. However, restrooms have been added to the existing agricultural storage building the business operates out of without a permit. A building permit will be required for the improvements, which will be reviewed by the Department of Environmental Resources (DER). The project was referred to DER which responded with comments stating that the existing well may become a public water system as defined in California Health and Safety Code 116275 (e). Should the project become a public water system, it will be subject to SB1263 and a water supply permit cannot be granted without concurrence from the State Water Boards following review of an application for water supply permit and associated technical report. Prior to issuance of a building permit or business license, the property owner shall certify to DER that either the property use does not or will not constitute a public water system, or submit an application for water supply permit and associated technical report to the State Water Boards. DER also provided comments requiring that a site plan be submitted that includes the location, layout, and design of all-existing and proposed OWTS and expansion area, that any new building requiring OTWS are designed according to type and/or maximum occupancy of the proposed structure to the estimated waste/sewage design flow rate, that all applicable County Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards and required setbacks are to be met, and if building changes to commercial, the existing or proposed septic system must be replaced or upgraded to a new sewage disposal system that complies with the requirements of Measure X. These comments will be applied as conditions of approval. The groundwater resources division of DER responded to the referral with no comment, stating that the project will be de minimus.

The project site receives irrigation water from the Turlock Irrigation District. The was referred to the District; which responded with no comment.

The project was referred to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and while no response has been received to date, a condition of approval will be added to the project requiring the applicant comply with this request prior to issuance of a building permit.

The project proposes to handle stormwater drainage overland. The project was referred to the Stanislaus Department of Public Works which did not respond with comments regarding drainage.

The project was also referred to PG&E and AT&T and no response has been received to date. The project is not anticipated to have a significant impact to utilities and service systems.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated March 28, 2025; Referral response from the Turlock Irrigation District (TID), dated October 1, 2024; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, dated December 12, 2024; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, Groundwater Resources Division, dated October 7, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

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

Discussion: The Stanislaus County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies risks posed by disasters and identifies ways to minimize damage from those disasters. The terrain of the site is relatively flat, and the site has access to a County-maintained Road, West Harding Road. The site is located in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) for fire protection and is served by the Turlock Rural Fire Protection District. The project was referred to the District, and no comments have been received to date. California Building and Fire Code establishes minimum standards for the protection of life and property by increasing the ability of a building to resist intrusion of flame and burning embers. Building permits for the multiple unpermitted unrelated accessory structures and the tenant improvements to the 6,600 agricultural storage building will be required as conditions of approval for the project and will be reviewed by the County’s Building Permits Division and Fire Prevention Bureau to ensure all State of California Building and Fire Code requirements are met prior to issuance of a building permit.

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

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	

<p>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.)</p>			X	
<p>c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?</p>			X	

Discussion: The 19.40-acre project site is designated Agriculture by the Stanislaus County General Plan land use diagrams and zoned General Agriculture (A-2-40) and is classified as “Farmland of Statewide Importance”, by the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The proposed project will not convert any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use as the use is related to agriculture.

The project itself relates to production agriculture as the business make repairs to equipment consisting of a mix of agricultural equipment consisting of tractors, mowers, discs, spreaders, shakers, pickers, and elevators. The facility welds and fabricates parts as needed, and also machines necessary parts including shafts, hydraulic cylinders, and pins. Approximately 80% of the work is completed on-site and 20% is done on the customer’s property. The following non-agricultural commercial or industrial uses within the vicinity of the project site include: a truck parking operation 0.41 miles southwest of the project site on S Walnut Road; truck parking operations 0.51 and 0.57 miles northeast of the project site on Lander and E Greenway Avenue, respectively; and the Turlock Airpark 0.62 miles to the northeast. Any development of the surrounding area would be subject to the permitted uses of the applicable zoning district, or would require additional land use entitlements and environmental review. The nearest parcels enrolled in a Williamson Act Contract are parcels which abut the project site to the west and north across West Harding Road. During project review, this application was referred to the Department of Conservation (DOC) for review and input and no response has been received to date. The request is not expected to create a concentration of commercial and industrial uses in the vicinity or perpetuate any significant conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or impact agricultural operations. The project as proposed is considered a Tier Two use under the A-2 Zoning Ordinance subject to a Use Permit.

The proposed project will generate a low amount of vehicle trips with a total of up to 10 one-way vehicle trips for employees and customers per-day and four one-way truck trips for deliveries to the business. As this is below the threshold of significance for vehicle and heavy truck trips as discussed in Section XVII - *Transportation*, no significant impacts to transportation from the vehicle and truck trips are anticipated.

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

Mitigation: None.

References: Initial Study; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.






¹ Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹ adopted in August 23, 2016, as amended. **Housing Element** adopted on April 5, 2016.

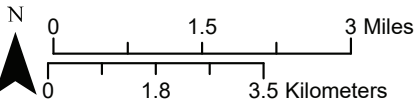
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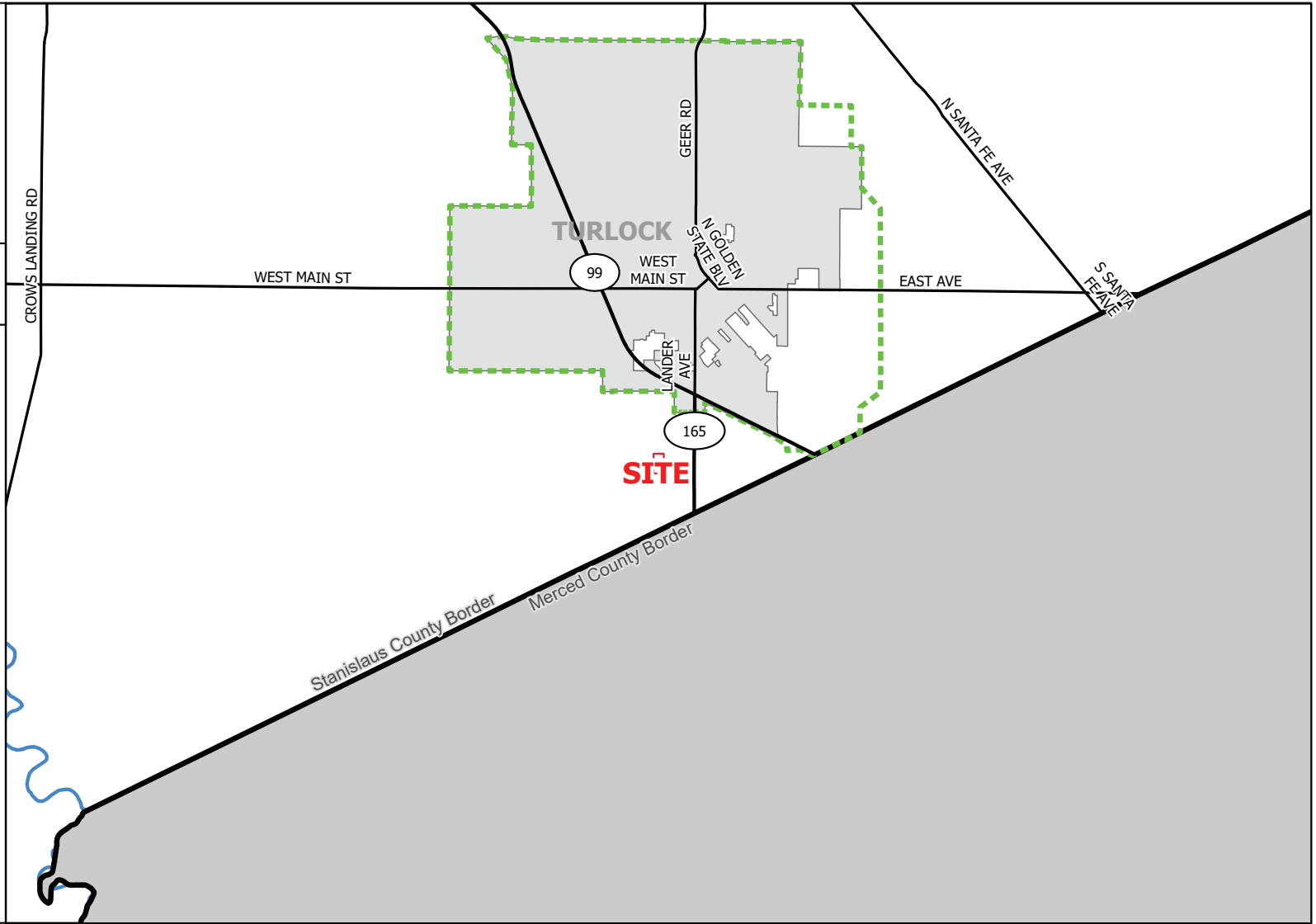
AREA MAP

LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Sphere of Influence
-  Highway
-  Major Road
-  River



Source: Planning Department GIS Date Exported: 9/24/2024









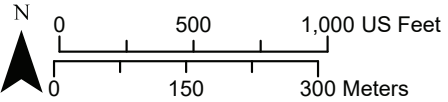
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GENERAL PLAN MAP

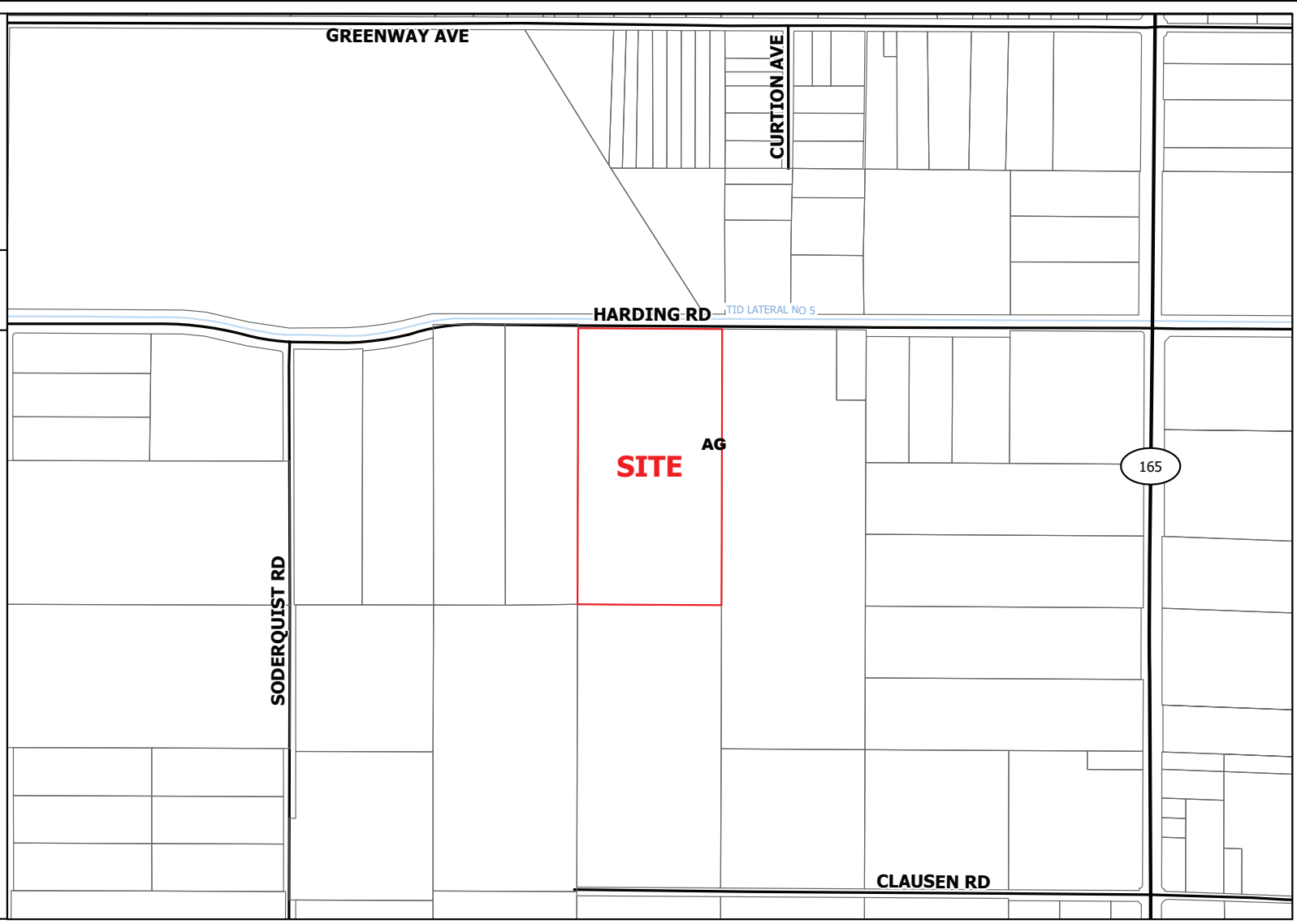
LEGEND

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



Source: Planning Department GIS

Date Exported: 9/24/2024



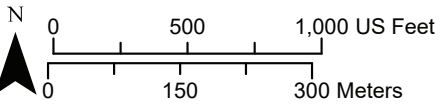
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ZONING MAP

LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Parcel
-  Highway
-  Street
-  Canal
-  General AG 10 Acre
-  General AG 40 Acre
-  Planned Development



Source: Planning Department GIS Date Exported: 9/24/2024




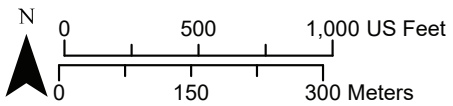
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2023 AERIAL AREA MAP

LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Parcel
-  Highway
-  Street
-  Canal



Source: Planning Department GIS Date Exported: 9/24/2024







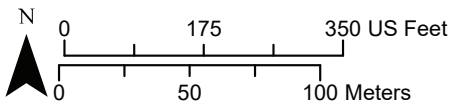
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2023 AERIAL SITE MAP

LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Parcel
-  Street
-  Canal



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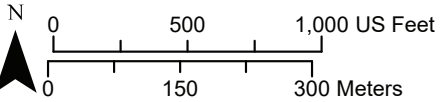
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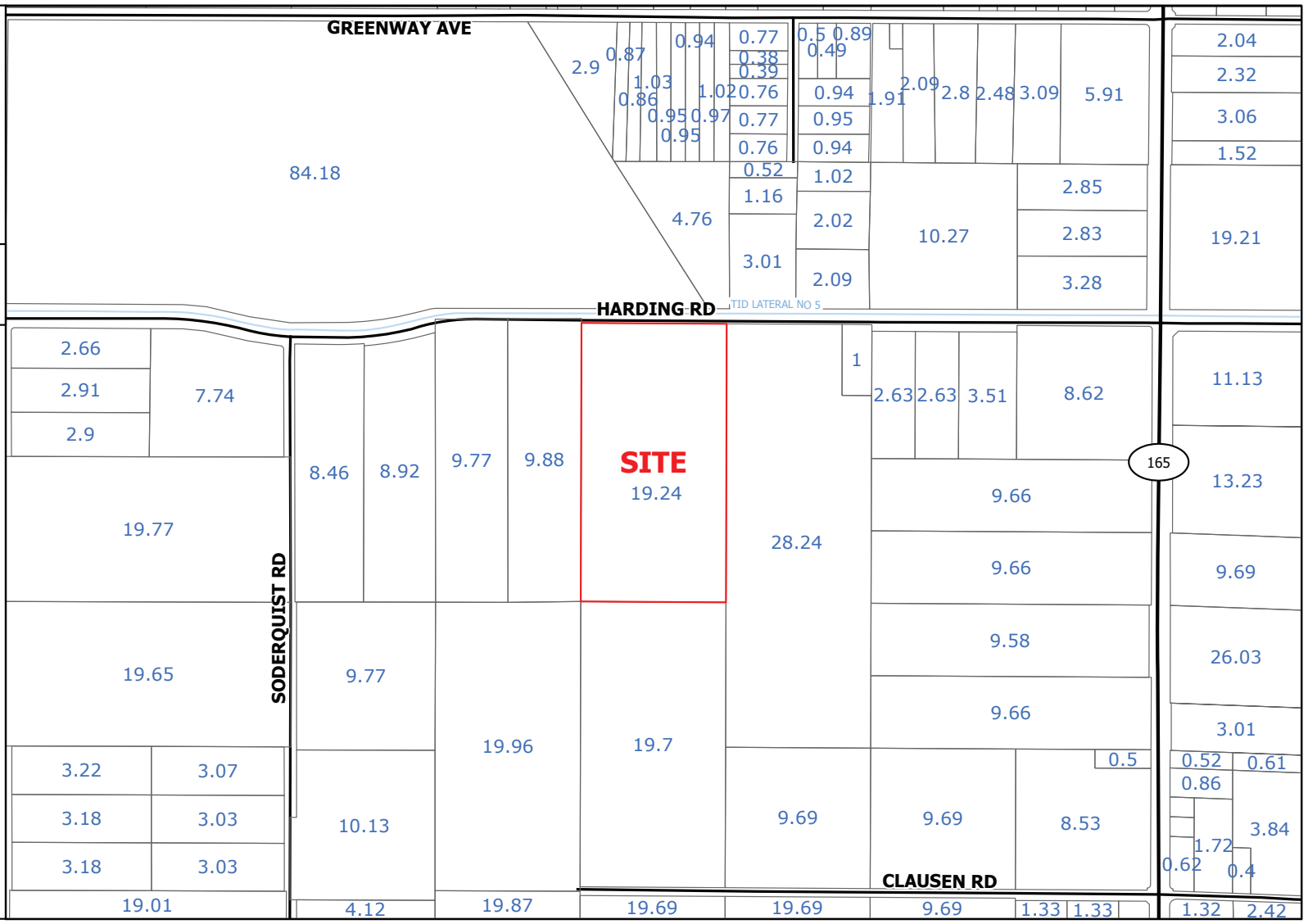
ACREAGE MAP

LEGEND

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

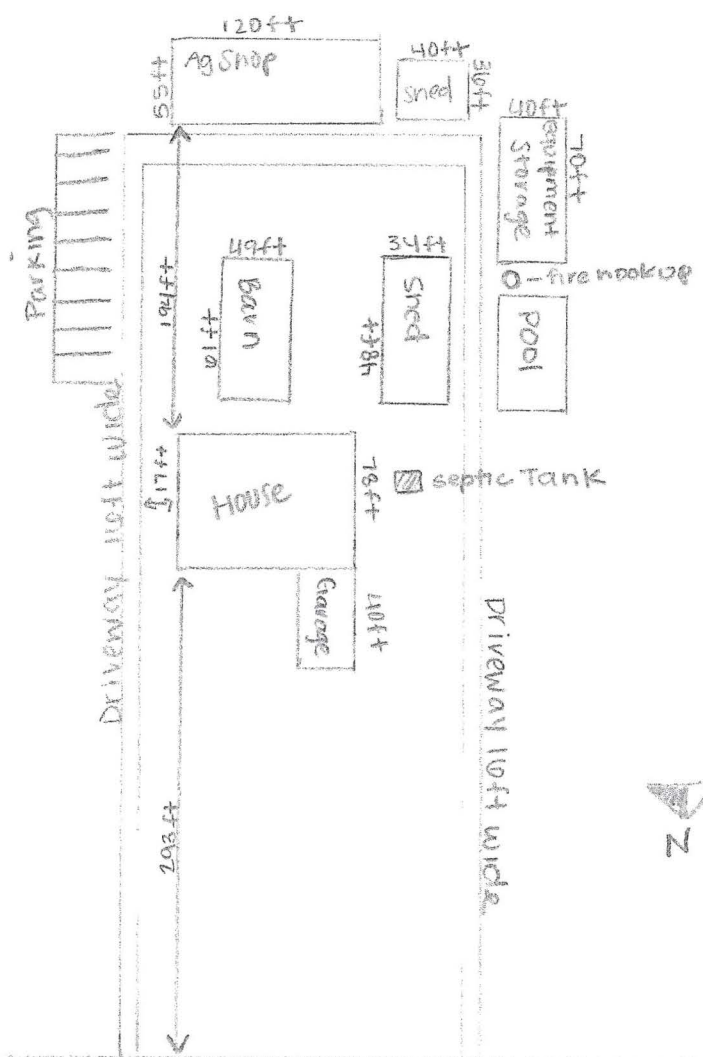


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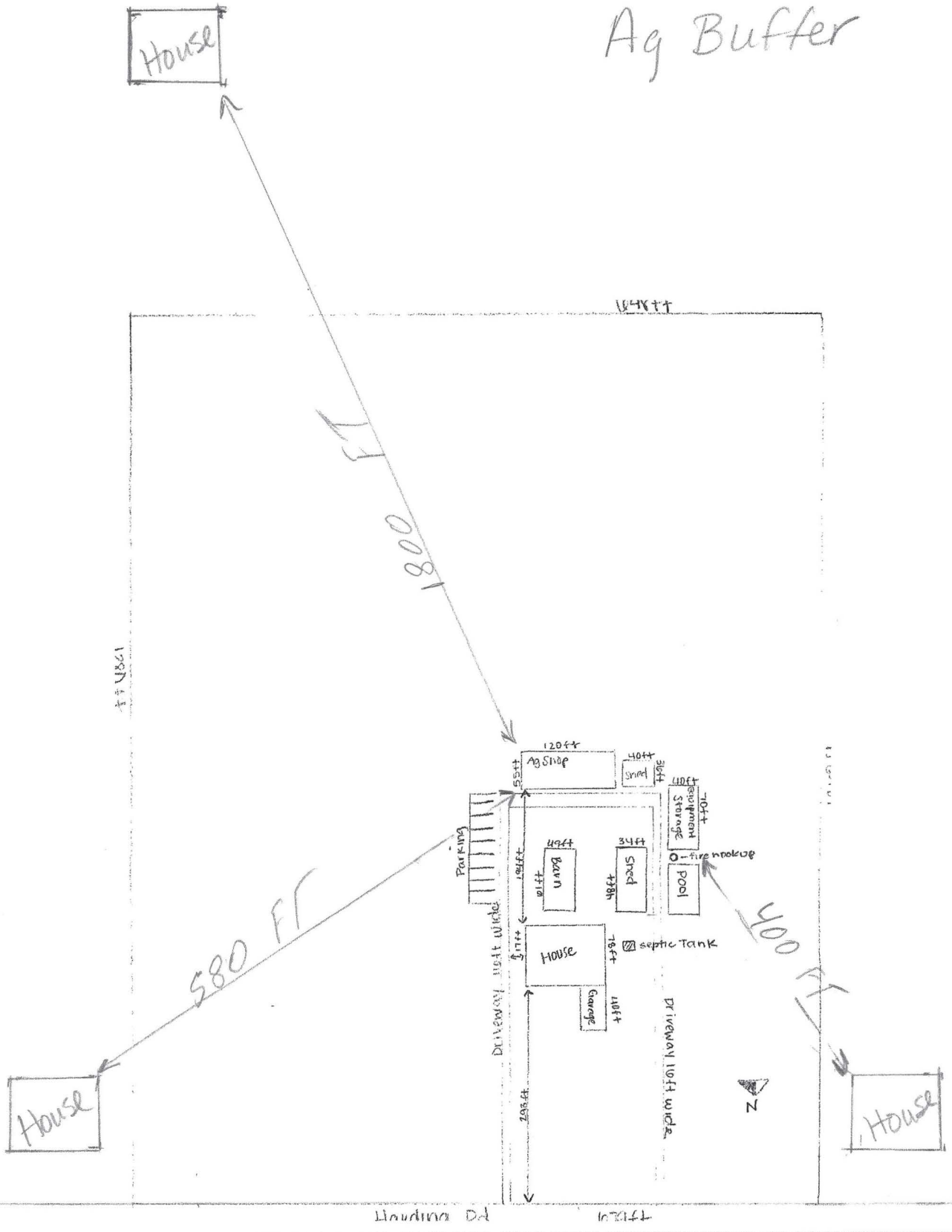
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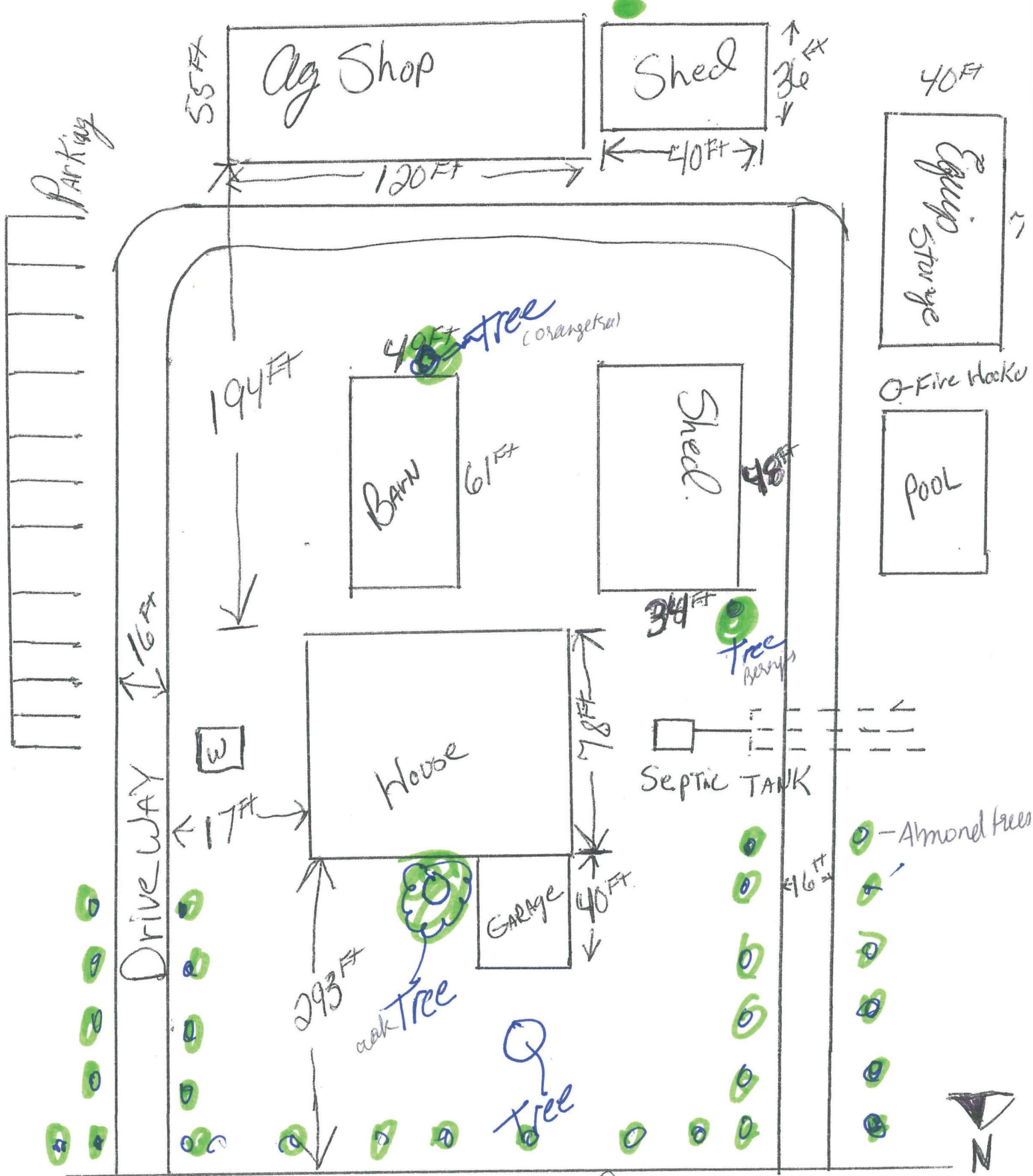


Hawdina Dr

77ft

Ag Buffer





Harding Rd.

(Landscape Plan.)



22 FT

EAST Side

N-E
corner

9 FT

SE
corner
20 Ft

EAST
Side
22 Ft





North
Side

20 FT

