A-Z Travel Center

(City of Chowchilla, CA)

INITIAL STUDY

CUP 23-0003

April 2025

Prepared for
City of Chowchilla
Community & Economic Development Department
130 S 2nd Street
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1 INTRODUCTION

Precision Civil Engineering, Inc. (PCE) has prepared this Initial Study (IS) on behalf of the City of Chowchilla (City) to address the environmental effects of the proposed A-Z Travel Center (Project). This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code *Section 21000 et. seq*. The City of Chowchilla is the Lead Agency for this proposed Project. The site and the proposed Project are described in detail in SECTION 2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM.

1.1 Regulatory Information

An Initial Study (IS) is a document prepared by a lead agency to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. In accordance with California Code of Regulations Title 14 (Chapter 3, *Section 15000, et seq.*), also known as the CEQA Guidelines, *Section 15064 (a)(1)* states that an environmental impact report (EIR) must be prepared if there is substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the proposed Project under review may have a significant effect on the environment and should be further analyzed to determine mitigation measures or project alternatives that might avoid or reduce project impacts to less than significant levels.

A negative declaration (ND) may be prepared instead if the lead agency finds that there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. An ND is a written statement describing the reasons why a proposed Project, not otherwise exempt from CEQA, would not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, why it would not require the preparation of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines *Section 15371*). According to CEQA Guidelines *Section 15070*, a ND or mitigated ND shall be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when either:

a. The IS shows there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed Project may have a significant effect on the environment, or

b. The IS identified potentially significant effects, but:

> *1. Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by or agreed to by the applicant before the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study is released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur is prepared, and*
>
> *2. There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed Project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.*

1.2 Document Format

This IS contains four (4) chapters plus appendices. SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION provides bases of the IS/MND's regulatory information and an overview of the Project. SECTION 2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM provides a detailed description of Project components. SECTION 3 DETERMINATION identifies the environmental factors potentially affected based on the analyses contained in this Initial Study, and includes the Lead Agency's determination based upon those analyses. SECTION 4 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS presents the CEQA checklist and environmental analyses for all impact areas and the mandatory findings of significance. A brief discussion of the reasons why the Project impact is anticipated to be potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation incorporated, less than significant, or why no impacts are expected is included. The Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum, Biological Resource Assessment, Cultural Resource Assessment, Environmental Noise Assessment, and Transportation Impact Study are provided as Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C, Appendix D, and Appendix E respectively, at the end of this document.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

This section describes the components of the proposed Project in more detail, including project location, project objectives, and required project approvals.

2.1 Project Title

A-Z Travel Center (Conditional Use Permit No. 23-0003)

2.2 Lead Agency Name and Address

City of Chowchilla
130 S 2nd Street
Chowchilla, CA 93610

2.3 Contact Person and Phone Number

Lead Agency Contact
Ethan Davis
City of Chowchilla
Community & Economic Development
(559) 665-8615
chowchillaplanning@qkinc.com

Applicant
Attn: Jasbir Singh
JRS Petro, Inc.
(510) 690-7674
YashBIZ5@gmail.com

2.4 Study Prepared By

Precision Civil Engineering
1234 O Street
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 449-4500

2.5 Project Location

The Project site is in the jurisdiction of the City of Chowchilla, Madera County, California. The site is located north of State Route (SR) 99 between Montgomery Lake Way and Fig Tree Road (Figure 2-1), consisting of five (5) parcels that is approximately 15.24 acres. The site is identified by the Madera County Assessor as Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 014-020-043-000, 014-020-044-000, 014-020-045-000, 014-020-046-000, 014-020-047-000. Figure 2-2 shows the aerial image of the Project site. The Project site is a portion of Section 29, Township 9 South, Range 16 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

Figure 2-1 Regional Location

Figure 2-2 Aerial Imagery

2.6 Latitude and Longitude

The centroid of the Project site is 37.12328257010439, -120.2461099175336.

2.7 General Plan Designation

The Project site has a City of Chowchilla General Plan (General Plan) land use designation of SC-H – Service Commercial - Highway (Figure 2-3). According to the General Plan, the SC-H land use designation allows *"freeway (travel) oriented businesses, businesses which have both retail and service components, and other businesses which can be located in a commercial area and not create a nuisance or interfere with normal commercial activities."* The permitted floor area ratio (FAR) range is 0.15 to 0.60 with a target of 0.20 FAR.

2.8 Zoning

The Project site is in the C-H – Highway Commercial zoning district (Figure 2-4).

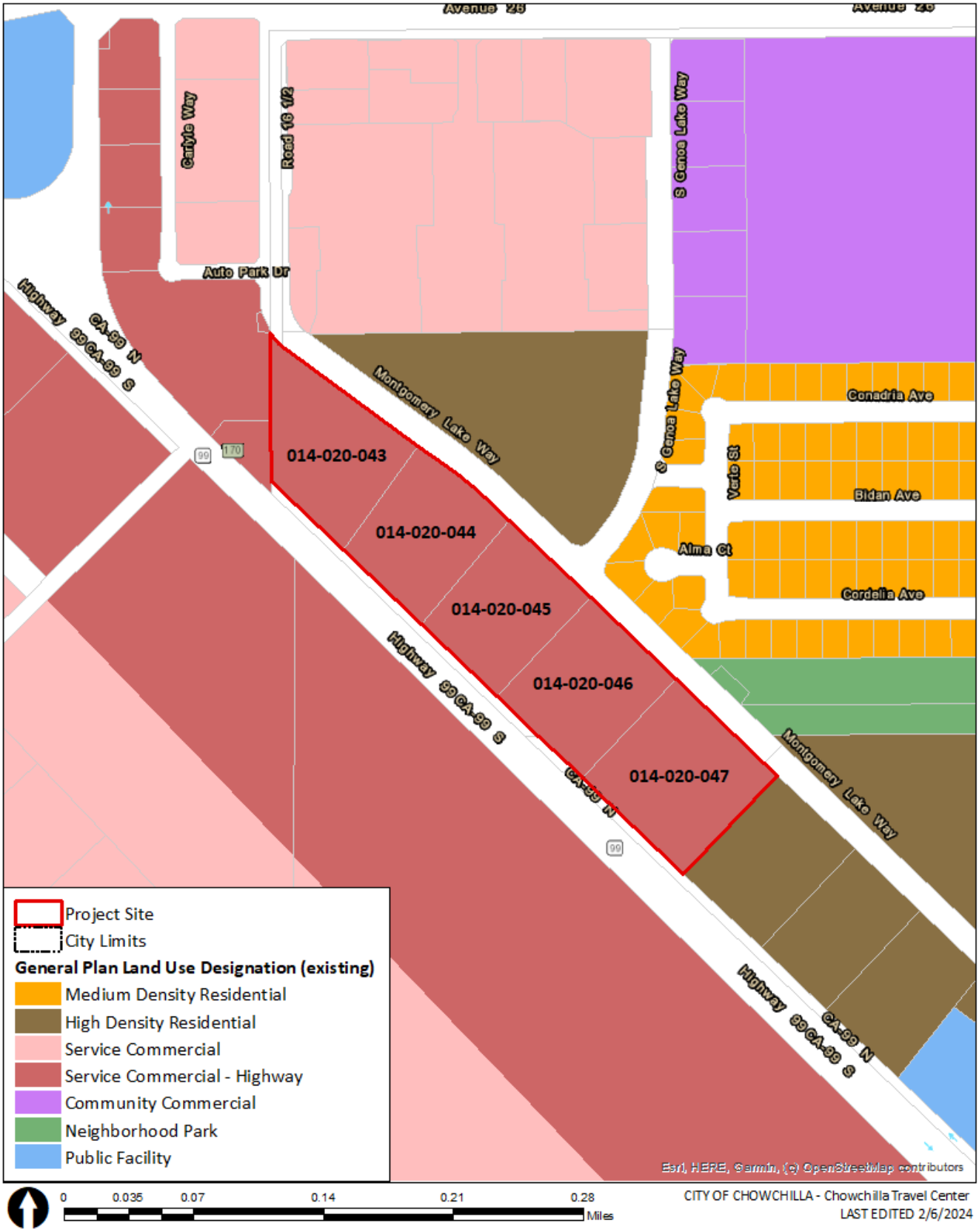

Figure 2-3 General Plan Land Use Designation

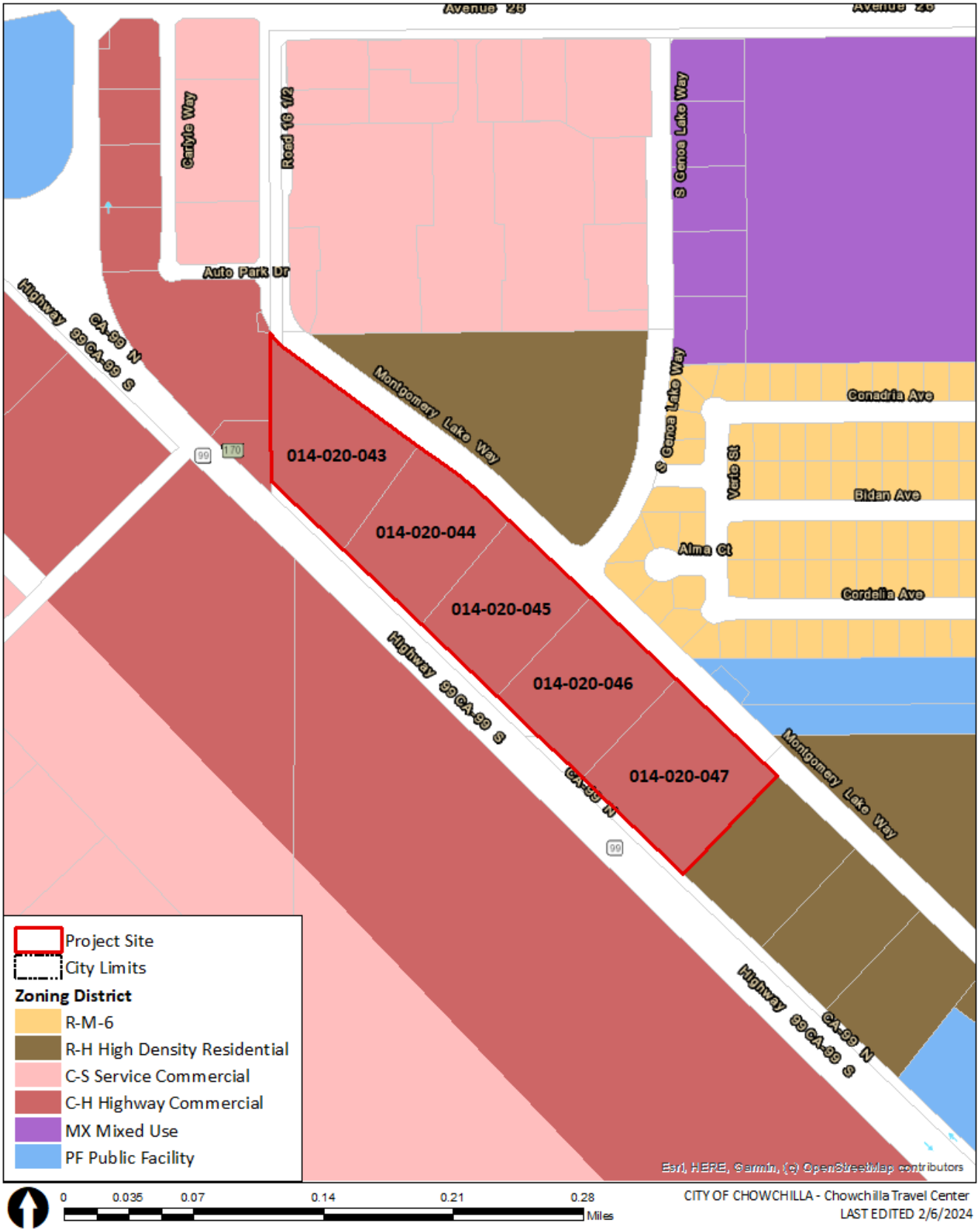

Figure 2-4 Zoning Map

2.9 Description of Project

Jasbir Singh (Applicant) proposes Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 23-0003 pertaining to five (5) parcels (APNs 014-020-043-000, 014-020-044-000, 014-020-045-000, 014-020-046-000, and 014-020-047-000) that total approximately 15.24 acres located north of State Route (SR) 99 between Montgomery Lake Way and Fig Tree Road.

CUP No. 23-0003 would facilitate the development of a maintenance shop, convenience store/restaurant, fuel pumps, two (2) quick-service restaurants with drive thru, and a 3-story hotel, as detailed below. The development would also include related on/off-site improvements (e.g., roadways, sidewalks, landscaping, open space, parking).

- APN 014-020-43: Proposes two (2) quick-service restaurants (2800-sf. each) with drive thru and a 82-room, 3-story hotel with a total of 140 parking stalls.
- APN 014-020-44 and 014-020-045: Proposes a 12,800-sf. convenience store and restaurant, a 10,896-sf car fuel canopy with 28 fuel pumps, a 6,350-sf semi-truck fuel canopy with 13 semi-truck fueling stations, with a total of 136 parking stalls.
- APN 014-020-46 and 014-020-047: Proposes a 18,560-sf. truck maintenance shop with 46 on-site parking. An additional 17 parking stalls for truck maintenance and 77 parking stalls for long term truck parking totals to 140 parking stalls.

2.10 Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

Project Setting

The Project site is currently vacant with no structures. The site contains existing improvements, including curb, gutter, sidewalks, and streetlights on its eastern boundary, along Montgomery Lake Way (i.e., Road 16 ½). Montgomery Lake Way, a two-lane, southeast-northwest local road with a left turn lane, forms the eastern site boundary. State Route (SR) 99, a four-lane highway, forms the western site boundary. An aerial image of the Project site is shown in Figure 2-2. The site is generally flat and does not contain any geologic formations. The existing biotic conditions and resources of the site can be defined primarily as ruderal and herbaceous vegetation with heavy alternation due to discing and grading. There is a line of palm trees along State Route (SR) 99. No shrubs, or water features are present on the site.

Surrounding Land Uses

The Project site is generally surrounded by commercial use (north), residential use (east), and vacant land (east, west, south). As referenced in Table 2-1, properties to the north, east, and west are planned and zoned for commercial uses and properties to the east and south are planned and zoned for residential uses.

Table 2-1 Existing Uses, General Plan Designations, and Zone Districts of Surrounding Properties

Direction from the Project Site	Existing Land Use	Planned Land Use	Zone District
North	Commercial (car dealer)	Service Commercial – Highway	C-H – Highway Commercial
South	Vacant	High Density Residential	R-H – High Density Residential
East	Vacant, Single-Family Dwellings	High Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Neighborhood Park, Service Commercial	R-H – High Density Residential, R-M-6 – Medium Density Residential, P-F – Public Facility, C-S – Service Commercial
West	vacant	Service Commercial – Highway	C-H – Highway Commercial

2.11 Site Preparation

Site preparation would include typical grading activities and minor excavation for installation of utility infrastructure for conveyance of water, sewer, stormwater, and irrigation. Demolition will be restricted to areas with newly proposed driveway approachs. Building, grading, encroachment, and site utilities permits would be subject to review and approval by the appropriate agency and/or department to ensure compliance with applicable codes and regulations.

2.12 Project Construction and Phasing

The Project is proposed to be phased over two (2) phases. Phase 1 construction is limited to APNs 014-020-047, 014-020-046, 014-020-045, and 014-020-044 which includes the 18,560-sf truck maintenance shop with 46 on-site parking stalls, 17 parking stalls for truck maintenance, 77 parking stalls for long term truck parking, the 12,800-sf convenience store and restaurant, the 10,896-sf car fuel canopy with 28 fuel pumps, the 6,350-sf semi-truck fuel canopy with 13 semi-truck fueling stations, and 136 parking stalls across all four (4) APNs. Phase 2 construction is limited to APN 014-020-043 which includes the two 2,800-sf quick service restaurants with drive-thrus, and an 82-room 3-story hotel with 140 parking stalls. Construction is expected to begin in June 2024 and conclude in June 2026, with operations beginning in 2026. The projected dates may change, depending upon review and approval of the entitlement and building permits.

2.13 Project Components

This section describes the overall components of the Project, such as the proposed buildings, landscaping, vehicle and pedestrian circulation, and utilities.

Site Layout and Elevations

As shown in Figure 2-5, the Project proposes a 18,560 square-foot (sf.) maintenance shop on APNs 014-020-046 and -047, a 12,800 sf. convenience store/restaurant, 10,896 sf. fuel canopy for cars, and 6,350 sf. fuel canopy for trucks on APNs 014-020-044 and -045, and two (2) 2,800 sf. quick-service restaurant with drive thru and a 3-story hotel with 82 rooms on APN 014-020-043. Associated improvements and land cover, including asphalt, concrete, and landscaping areas are also proposed, as shown in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2 Proposed Land Cover

Proposed Use	Maintenance Shop	Convenience Store/ Restaurant, Gas Station	Drive Thru Quick-Service Restaurant, Hotel
APN	014-020-046, -047	014-020-044, -045	014-020-043
Parcel Size (acre)	6.54	5.55	3.15
Building Area (sf.)	18,560	30,046	5,600 + 3-story hotel
Asphalt Pavement Area (sf.)	225,382	171,950	71,592
Concrete Walk Area (sf.)	4,616	29,288	13,053
Landscape Area (sf.)	34,244 (12%)	27,720 (11.5%)	35,832 (30%)
Parking Stalls			
Parking Required	53	56	128
Standard	44	106	132
Van Accessible	1	2	4
Standard Accessible	1	2	4
Truck Maintenance Parking	17	0	0
Truck Stop Parking	77	0	0
EV Charging Stations	0	26	0
Total Parking Stalls	**140**	**136**	**144**

Building and Site Design Features

The Project would be built in accordance with all mandatory indoor water use requirements as outlined in the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 11, Section 5.303 – Indoor Water Use and verified through the building permit process. As a nonresidential development that contains plumbing fixtures and fittings, the Project shall comply with water-conserving measures for water closets, urinals, showerheads, faucets, and fountains. The Project would be required to install low flow plumbing fixtures with flow rates that comply with requirements. In addition, as a nonresidential development, the Project would be required to install submeters (separate submeters are required for buildings in excess of 50,000 sf.) to measure water usage of individual tenants in accordance with the California Plumbing Code.

The Project would also be built in accordance with all mandatory outdoor water use requirements as outlined in the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 11, Section 5.304 – Outdoor Water Use and verified through the building permit process. As a nonresidential development that contains landscaping including trees, shrubs, ground cover/annual plants, and/or lawn, the Project shall comply with the updated Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) (California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Chapter 2.7, Division 2), as implemented and enforced through the building permit process.

Site Circulation and Parking

The site would be accessible via four (4) points of ingress/egress on Montgomery Lake Way. Existing 5-foot public sidewalks are located along the east boundary of the site along Montgomery Lake Way, connecting to existing sidewalks to the adjacent property to the north. Internal circulation of the site would include 30-foot drive aisles for automobiles, minimum 40-foot drive aisles for trucks, and internal sidewalks compliant with California Building Code and City of Chowchilla standards.

The Project proposes a total of 420 parking stalls, including 312 standard open parking stalls, 7 van accessible parking stalls, 7 standard accessible parking stalls, as well as 17 parking stalls for truck maintenance and 77 parking stalls for long-term truck parking. Table 2-2 provides a breakdown of parking stalls provided in each parcel. Of the 237 required parking stalls, 10% of stalls, or 24 stalls, would be required to be “EV capable” in accordance with the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 11.

Open Space and Landscaping

Proposed open space and landscaping is depicted in Figure 2-5. The Project includes a total of 97,796 square feet of common open space throughout the site, as described in Table 2-2. Existing palm trees along SR 99 are proposed to remain. Impervious areas, including asphalt and concrete pavement areas are estimated to be a total of 515,881 square feet.

Public Services and Utilities

The Project site is within city limits and thus, would be required to connect to water, wastewater, and stormwater services. Natural gas, electricity, telecommunications, and solid waste services are provided by private companies. In addition, the Project would be subject to fees for the construction, acquisition, and improvements for public services including but not limited to fire protection services, police protection services, and schools.

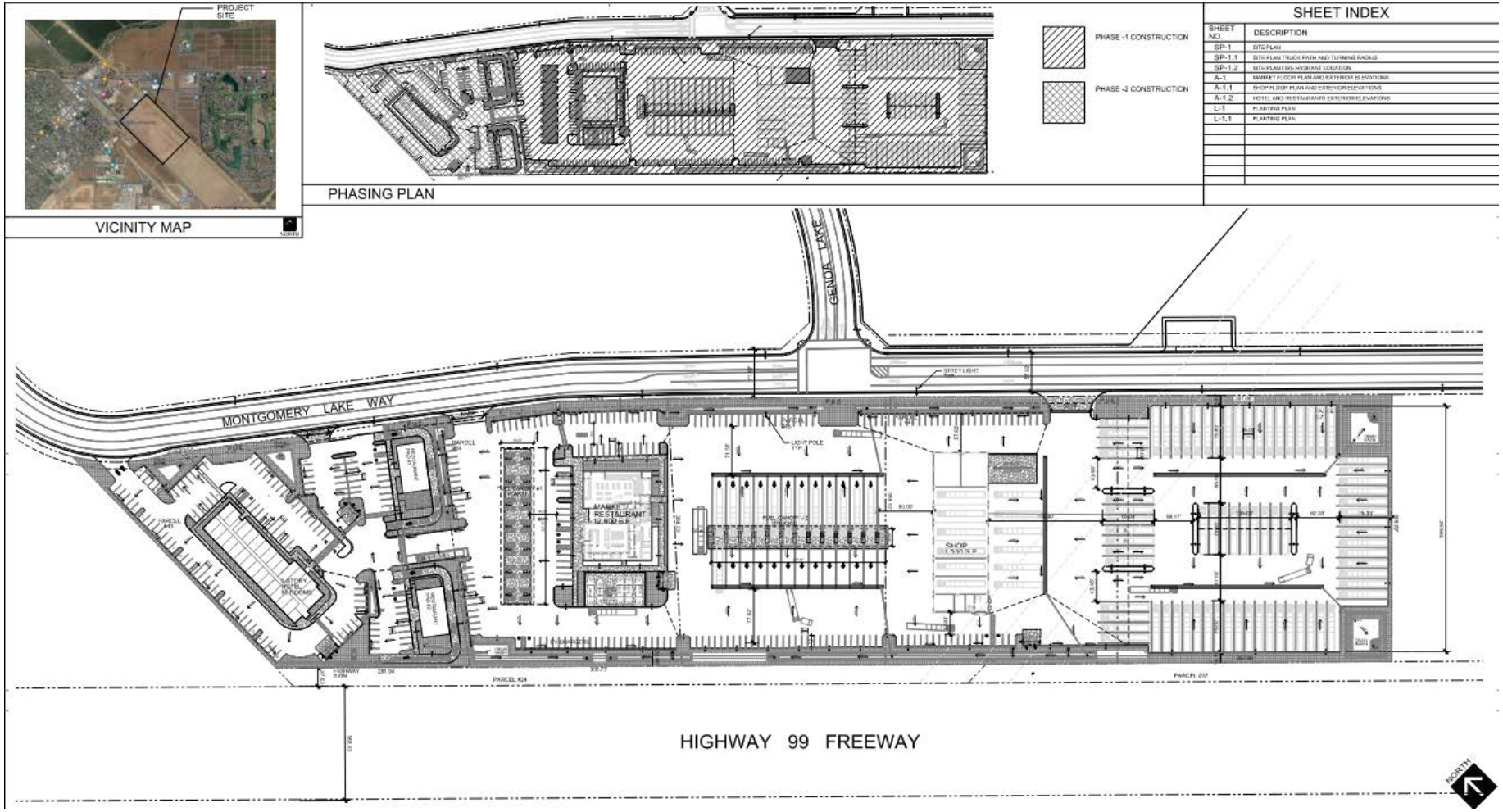

Figure 2-5 Site Plan

2.14 Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

The City of Chowchilla requires the following review, permits, and/or approvals. Other approvals may be required as identified through the entitlement review and approval process.

- *Conditional Use Permit*
- *Environmental Review*

In addition, other agencies may have the authority to issue permits prior to implementation of the Project including San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and California Regional Water Quality Control Board.

2.15 Consultation with California Native American Tribes

The State requires lead agencies to consider the potential effects of proposed projects and consult with California Native American tribes during the local planning process for the purpose of protecting Traditional Tribal Cultural Resources through the CEQA Guidelines. Pursuant to PRC *Section 21080.3.1*, the lead agency shall begin consultation with the California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographical area of the proposed project. Such significant cultural resources are either sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a tribe which is either on or eligible for inclusion in the California Historic Register or local historic register, or, the lead agency, at its discretion, and support by substantial evidence, choose to treat the resources as a Tribal Cultural Resources (PRC *Section 21074(a)(1-2)*). According to the most recent census data, California is home to 109 currently recognized Indian tribes.

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 PRC *Section 21083.3.2*.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per PRC *Section 5097.96* and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that PRC *Section 21082.3(c)* contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

A consultation list of tribes with traditional lands or cultural places located within Madera County was requested and received from the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on June 6, 2024. The listed tribes include the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, Northern Valley Yokut/Ohlone Tribe, Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, Tule River Indian Tribe, and Wuksachi Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band.

The City of Chowchilla conducted formal tribal consultation pursuant to AB 52 (Chapter 532, Statutes 2014) on June 24, 2024. Letters were sent to the Dumna Wo-Wah Tribal Government, North Fork Mono Tribe, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, North Valley Yokuts Tribe, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, and the Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band. Consultation for AB 52 ended on July 24, 2024. No responses were received.

3 DETERMINATION

3.1 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 and Soils
- ☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- ☐ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- ☐ Hydrology and Water Quality
- ☐ Land Use Planning
- ☐ Mineral Resources
- ☐ Noise
- ☐ Population and Housing
- ☐ Public Services
- ☐ Recreation
- ☐ Transportation
- ☒ Tribal and Cultural Resources
- ☐ Utilities and Service Systems
- ☐ Wildfire

For purposes of this Initial Study, the following answers have the corresponding meanings:

"No Impact" means the specific impact category does not apply to the project, or that the record sufficiently demonstrates that project specific factors or general standards applicable to the project will result in no impact for the threshold under consideration.

"Less Than Significant Impact" means there is an impact related to the threshold under consideration, but that impact is less than significant.

"Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation" means there is a potentially significant impact related to the threshold under consideration, however, with the mitigation incorporated into the project, the impact is less than significant. For purposes of this Initial Study "mitigation incorporated into the project" means mitigation originally described in the GP PEIR and applied to an individual project, as well as mitigation developed specifically for an individual project.

"Potentially Significant Impact" means there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant related to the threshold under consideration.

3.2 Determination

The environmental analysis contained in this Initial Study is tiered from Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) SCH No. 2009022007 prepared for the 2040 General Plan and the Rancho Calera Specific Plan (formerly Greenhills Lakes Specific Plan) (EIR). A copy of the EIR may be reviewed in the City of Chowchilla, Community and Economic Development Department as noted above (See Lead Agency).

Pursuant to Public Resources Code *Section 21094* and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines *Section 15168(d)*, this Project has been evaluated with respect to each item on the attached environmental checklist to determine whether this project may cause any additional significant effect on the environment which was not previously examined in the EIR.

This completed environmental impact checklist form and its associated narrative reflect applicable comments of responsible and trustee agencies and research and analysis conducted to examine the interrelationship between

the proposed project and the physical environment. The information contained in the Project application and its related environmental assessment application, responses to requests for comment, checklist, initial study narrative, and any attachments thereto, combine to form a record indicating that an initial study has been completed in compliance with the State CEQA Guidelines and the CEQA.

All new development activities and many non-physical projects contribute directly or indirectly toward cumulative impacts on the physical environment. It has been determined that the incremental effect contributed by this Project toward cumulative impacts is not considered substantial or significant in itself, and/or that cumulative impacts accruing from this project may be mitigated to less than significant with application of feasible mitigation measures.

Based upon the evaluation guided by the environmental checklist form, it was determined that there may be impacts from the Project that are additional to those identified in the Chowchilla General Plan PEIR that are related to Air Quality, Biology, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, and Tribal Cultural Resources. The completed environmental checklist form indicates whether an impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, less than significant, or no impact beyond that which has already been analyzed in the PEIR.

For some categories of potential impacts, the checklist may indicate that a specific adverse environmental effect has been identified which is of sufficient magnitude to be of concern. Such an effect may be inherent in the nature and magnitude of the Project or may be related to the design and characteristics of the individual project. Most effects so rated are not sufficient in themselves to require the preparation of an EIR and have been mitigated to the extent feasible. However, analysis included in this Initial Study has indicated there may be air quality impacts. Both the EIR Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and the Project-specific Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program will be imposed on this Project.

The Initial Study has concluded that the Project may result in any adverse effects relating to Air Quality, Biology, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, and Tribal Cultural Resources which fall within the "Mandatory Findings of Significance" contained in *Section 15065* of the CEQA Guidelines. Therefore, an EIR will be prepared to further analyze air quality impacts.

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

☐ 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 (EIR) 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 EIR 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.

Approved By:

Rod Pruett, City Administrator
City of Chowchilla

Date

4 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

4.1 AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, **would the project:**		Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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 out-croppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c)	In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality 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	

4.1.1 Environmental Setting

Generally, aesthetics may include scenic vistas and scenic resources (e.g. trees, rock outcroppings, historic buildings, and highways). Chowchilla's visual features predominately include urbanized and agricultural land uses.

California Scenic Highway Program

The California Scenic Highway Program was established in 1963 with the purpose of protecting and enhancing the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors, through special conservation treatment. A highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view. There are no officially designated or eligible State Scenic Highways in Chowchilla or within 10 miles of Chowchilla. [1]

[1] Caltrans. California State Scenic Highway System Map. Accessed on April 18, 2024, https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa

City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan

The General Plan Land Use Element identified designated West Robertson Boulevard (SR 233) from SR 99 to SR 152 as a "Scenic Corridor", which ends at SR 99 approximately 600 feet west of the Project site. The General Plan does not identify or designate scenic resources or scenic vistas.

The General Plan has established objectives and policies related to aesthetics which are identified as follows:

Policy LU 7.2 Appropriate buffers or other effective measures shall be included in development plans to ensure that conflicts such as noise, odor, light and glare, dust, or other potentially significant adverse environmental conditions are minimized.

> *Implementation Measure LU 7.2.A Project proponents adjacent to existing industrial, agricultural and open space uses or land use designation shall be required to provide the City with a full and complete written discussion that addresses the project's impact on the viability of the adjacent use. These discussions shall include noise, hazardous materials, City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan Page LU-57 emergency response and evacuation, air quality, odors, light and glare, traffic, public services and aesthetics.*
>
> *Implementation Measure LU 12.1.A New industrial development proposed near existing or planned residential land uses shall be required to provide the City with a full and complete written discussion that addresses the project's impact on the viability of the existing or proposed residential land uses. Major regional recreation facilities that may include large buildings, grandstands, out-door venues and associated commercial operations supporting the activities shall prepare master plans. The discussion shall include noise, hazardous materials, emergency response and evacuation, air quality, odors, light and glare, traffic and circulation, and aesthetics.*

Policy OS 7.1 Arterials and major collector streets, where feasible, should be designed to include landscaping along the edges and medians to enhance these street systems as aesthetic open space corridors.

> *Implementation Measure OS 7.1.A The City shall develop design guidelines and standards for the construction of landscaping and improvement of arterial and major collector streets which are to be landscaped.*

Policy OS 7.2 Provide open space and landscape improvements along the Highway 99 and Highway 152 right-of-way to present an attractive entry to the City of Chowchilla.

> *Implementation Measure OS 7.2.A Along Highways 99 and 152, buffer areas may be designated as open space or require property owners to landscape buffers along these routes. This land should be either acquired by the City or development conditions attached to the land which requires improvements and maintenance of the open space area.*
>
> *Implementation Measure OS 7.2.B Interchanges between state highways, and interchanges between State highways and City streets or roads shall be appropriately landscaped to standards established by the City.*

4.1.2 Impact Assessment

Except as provided in PRC Section 21099, would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No Impact. The Project site is vacant and surrounded by urban development. The site is not adjacent to scenic corridors identified in the General Plan. In addition, the site is not near State-designated scenic highways and does

not contain any historic buildings or places of contemporary historical significance according to the General Plan. As a result, the Project would not adversely affect scenic vistas and no impact would occur because of the Project.

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

No Impact. According to the California State Scenic Highway Program, there are no officially designated State Scenic Highways within or in the vicinity of Chowchilla. As such, the proposed Project would not damage scenic resources, including trees, rock out-croppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway and no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. The Project site is in an urbanized area surrounded by commercial and residential uses. Although the site is currently vacant, development of the Project ste would not have a significantly different character from the surrounding area, which is similarly developed with commercial uses such as a car dealer and grocery store. Further, the proposed use is subject to compliance with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, which will ensure the minimization of any visual impact by upholding the visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. The Project would be subject to compliance with applicable policies and regulations that govern scenic quality including but not limited to the General Plan, Chowchilla Municipal Code (CMC), and California Building Code (CBC). Compliance would ensure that development of the site would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur because of the Project.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Generally, lighting impacts are associated with artificial lighting in evening hours either through interior lighting from windows or exterior lighting (e.g., street lighting, parking lot lighting, landscape lighting, cars, and trucks). Development of the Project site would incrementally increase the amount of light from streetlights, exterior lighting, and vehicular headlights. Such sources could create adverse effects on day or nighttime views in the area.

As mentioned above, the Project would introduce new light sources into the area, including temporary light and glare resulting from construction activities that could adversely affect day or nighttime views. Although construction activities are anticipated to occur primarily during daylight hours, it is possible that some activities could occur during dusk or early evening hours (pursuant to the General Plan Noise Element Policy N 4.6, construction activities are allowed between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM). Construction during these time periods could result in light and glare from construction vehicles or equipment. However, construction would be temporary in nature, and once completed, any light and glare from these activities would cease to occur.

Regarding operations, the Project includes lighting fixtures to provide interior lighting, lamps, outdoor lighting for safety purposes, etc. Lighting design would be required to comply with the CMC, which contains specific, enforceable requirements and/or restrictions intended to prevent light and glare impacts. Specifically, *Section 18.50.150* provides standards for the installation and use of outdoor lighting fixtures to prevent flash and glare on neighboring properties as well as roadways to prevent hazards from passing traffic. The lighting design guide covers

outdoor spaces including regulations for mounted luminaires (i.e., high efficacy, motion sensor controlled, time clocks, energy management control systems, etc.). As such, conditions imposed on the Project by the City, in addition to Title 24 requirements, would reduce light and glare impacts to a less than significant impact.

4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farm-land), 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

4.2.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located within the city limits and is designated and zoned for commercial uses. The Project site is generally surrounded by commercial use, residential use, and vacant land. The Project site is currently vacant with improvements including curb, gutter, sidewalks, and streetlights on its eastern boundary, along Montgomery Lake Way (i.e., Road 16 ½). Lastly, the Project site does not contain any agricultural or forestry resources such as agricultural land, forest land, or timberland.

Farmland Monitoring and Mapping Program

The California Department of Conservation manages the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) that provides maps and data for analyzing land use impacts to farmland. The FMMP produces the Important Farmland Finder as a resource map that shows quality (soils) and land use information. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status, in addition to many other physical and chemical characteristics. The highest quality land is called "Prime Farmland" which is defined by the FMMP as *"farmland with the best combination of physical*

and chemical features able to sustain long term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date. [2] Maps are updated every two years. According to the FMMP, California Important Farmland Finder, the Project site is classified as "Vacant or Disturbed Land." [3] Lands adjacent to the Project site are not classified as farmlands.

California Land Conservation Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (i.e., the Williamson Act) allows local governments to enter contracts with private landowners to restrict parcels of land agricultural or open space uses. In return, property tax assessments of the restricted parcels are lower than full market value. The minimum length of a Williamson Act contract is 10 years and automatically renews upon its anniversary date; as such, the contract length is essentially indefinite. The Project site is not under a Williamson Act Contract.

City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan

The Chowchilla General Plan Land Use Element identified land to be reserved for agricultural uses. These areas are generally beyond the city's Planning Area but within the city's Sphere of Influence (SOI). No forestry uses are designated within the General Plan. The General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element [4] established policies to encourage the continued use of agricultural resources within the City, as listed below.

Objective OS 8 *Protect agricultural lands and other open spaces used for the managed production of resources from premature urban development by guiding urban development toward vacant or under-used land within the urbanized area and direct new growth toward land adjacent to the urbanized area.*

> ***Policy OS 8.1*** *Existing agricultural areas in the Planning Area shall be retained in agricultural use until the time that such areas are needed for logical urban expansion.*
>
> ***Policy OS 8.2*** *Encourage the use of landscaped open space as a buffer between potentially noncompatible land uses.*
>
> ***Policy OS 8.3*** *Land designated Agricultural in the Planning Area may be converted to urban uses if the following findings are made:*
>
> *a. Conversion to urban use will not be detrimental to the long term agricultural use of neighboring properties.*
> *b. No other land within the Planning Area is readily available for urban development of the quality and intensity proposed by a development proposal.*
> *c. The extension of major infrastructure through the land is necessary for the efficient cost effective implementation of the City's General Plan.*
> *d. That the proposal is consistent with Land Use policies regarding conversion of Agricultural lands.*

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[2] California Department of Conservation. Important Farmland Categories. Accessed on April 18, 2024, https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Important-Farmland-Categories.aspx
[3] California Department of Conservation. (2018). California Important Farmland Finder. Accessed on April 18, 2024, https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/
[4] City of Chowchilla. City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element. Accessed on April 18, 2024, https://www.cityofchowchilla.org/DocumentCenter/View/3360/Open-Space-and-Conservation-Element

Objective OS 9 Preserve agricultural lands in recognition of their economic, historic and open space benefits and their importance to the character of the City of Chowchilla and to the Central Valley.

> *Policy OS 9.1 Identify land for the encouragement and retention of agricultural use outside the City's Sphere of Influence boundary based on the historic use, soil suitability, agricultural significance and prevailing parcel sizes of the land.*
>
> *Policy OS 9.2 Establish an agriculture conservation program for the preservation of valuable agricultural land outside the City's Sphere of Influence from urban development through the use of appropriate development regulations and /or financial incentives.*
>
> *Policy OS 9.3 Coordinate programs to preserve agricultural lands with other public, private and nonprofit organizations where feasible.*

Additionally, Land Use Element includes the following objective and policies related to agricultural lands.

Objective LU 17 Resist the premature conversion of agricultural lands to urban uses.

> *Policy LU 17.2 The City supports the Madera County General Plan objectives and policies which protect agricultural lands by:*
>
> *1. Maintaining large parcel sizes and preventing the development of incompatible urban uses;*
>
> *2. Specifically maintaining large parcels adjacent to urban areas prior to conversion to urban uses; and*
>
> *3. Preventing the division of parcels less than ten acres in size within the City's General Plan Planning Area.*
>
> *Policy LU 17.6 Urban development shall only occur within the City. Any urban development requiring basic City services shall occur within the incorporated City and within the Planning Area, subject to findings that the development is not a premature use of agricultural land.*
>
> *Policy LU 17.7 Land designated on the Land Use Map as "Urban Reserve" and in agricultural production should not be converted to urban uses until all the following findings are made:*
>
> *1. The subject land is in the Secondary Planning Area and a master plan has been prepared acceptable to the City and that there is a compelling reason why adequate growth within the Planning Area can not accommodate the planned growth in the City, or the growth is reasonably necessary to serve the needs of the HSR Heavy Maintenance Facility, extension of major road facilities that provide improved access to the State system, or another major jobs producing industry.*
>
> *2. That the development of the land will contribute to the establishment of a stable urban limit and represents contiguous urban development;*
>
> *3. The land is needed to fill next ten year's projected growth;*
>
> *4. More than 50 percent of the land designated in the City for urban uses has been developed or is under a tentative map;*
>
> *5. The land is necessary to maintain 150% of projected urban need; and*
>
> *6. Annexation would not otherwise create substantial infrastructure limitations.*

4.2.2 Impact Assessment

Would the 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?

No Impact. According to the FMMP, the Project site is designated as "Vacant or Disturbed Land." As such, the Project site is not located on lands designated as "Prime Farmland," "Unique Farmland," or "Farmland of Statewide Importance." Therefore, the Project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use and no impact would occur.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. The Project site is not zoned for agricultural use and is not subject to a Williamson Act land use contract. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract and no impact 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))?

No Impact. The Project site and surrounding area does contain forest land or timberland, pursuant to PRC 4526 or GC 51104(g), respectively. Further, the Project site would not cause the rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. As a result, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production and no impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The Project site does not contain forest land and is not designated or zoned for forest land or forest uses. Development of the Project site would therefore not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. As a result, no impact 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?

No impact. The Project site is not under cultivation nor does it contain agricultural or forestry uses or resources. As noted previously, the site is designated and zoned for commercial uses and. The properties in the immediate vicinity of the Project site also do not contain agricultural or forestry uses or resources. According to the FMMP, California Important Farmland Finder, the Project site and the properties in its immediate vicinity are not classified as farmlands. Therefore, future development of the Project site with commercial development would be generally consistent with the existing environment of the surrounding, urbanized, and non-agricultural or forestry uses. As a result, the Project would not involve other changes in the existing environment that could result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impact would occur because of the Project.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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 leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

4.3.1 Environmental Setting

The Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum was prepared by Johnson Johson and Miller Air Quality Consulting Services (dated February 6, 2024, revised September 10, 2024) to evaluate whether the estimated criteria air pollutant, ozone precursor, toxic air contaminant (TAC), and/or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated from construction and/or operation of the proposed A-Z Truck Center Project would cause significant impacts to air resources in the Project area. The respective analyses were conducted within the context of CEQA.

The methodology follows the Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI) prepared by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) for the quantification of emissions and evaluation of potential impacts to air resources and the SJVAPCD's Guidance for Valley Land-Use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under the California Environmental Quality Act. The modeling parameters, assumptions, findings report, and appendices are provided in Appendix A. Results are incorporated herein.

Air quality impacts are both local and regional. Regional and local air quality is impacted by topography, dominant airflows, atmospheric inversions, location, and season. The project is located in Chowchilla, within Madera County. The project site and Madera County are in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (Air Basin or SJV Air Basin), which experiences some of the most challenging environmental conditions for air quality in the nation. The following section describes these conditions as they pertain to the Air Basin. The information in this section is primarily from the SJVAPCD's GAMAQI.

Topography

The topography of a region is important for air quality because mountains can block airflow that would help disperse pollutants and can channel air from upwind areas that transports pollutants to downwind areas. The SJVAPCD covers the entirety of the SJV Air Basin. The Air Basin is generally shaped like a bowl. It is open in the north and is surrounded by mountain ranges on all other sides. The Sierra Nevada mountains are along the eastern boundary

(8,000 to 14,000 feet in elevation), the Coast Ranges are along the western boundary (3,000 feet in elevation), and the Tehachapi Mountains are along the southern boundary (6,000 to 8,000 feet in elevation).

Climate

The climate is important for air quality because of differences in the atmosphere's ability to trap pollutants close to the ground, which creates adverse air quality; inversely, the atmosphere's ability to rapidly disperse pollutants over a wide area prevents high concentrations from accumulating under different climatic conditions. The SJV Air Basin has an "inland Mediterranean" climate and is characterized by long, hot, dry summers and short, foggy winters. Sunlight can be a catalyst in the formation of some air pollutants (such as ozone); the SJV Air Basin averages over 260 sunny days per year.

Inversion layers are significant in determining pollutant concentrations. Concentration levels can be related to the amount of mixing space below the inversion. Temperature inversions that occur on the summer days are usually encountered 2,000 to 2,500 feet above the valley floor. In winter months, overnight inversions occur 500 to 1,500 feet above the valley floor.

Dominant airflows provide the driving mechanism for transport and dispersion of air pollution. The mountains surrounding the SJV Air Basin form natural horizontal barriers to the dispersion of air contaminants. The wind generally flows south-southeast through the valley, through the Tehachapi Pass and into the Mojave Desert Air Basin portion of Kern County. As the wind moves through the SJV Air Basin, it mixes with the air pollution generated locally, generally transporting air pollutants from the north to the south in the summer and in a reverse flow in the winter.

The winds and unstable air conditions experienced during the passage of winter storms result in periods of low pollutant concentrations and excellent visibility. Between winter storms, high pressure and light winds allow cold moist air to pool on the San Joaquin Valley floor. This creates strong, low-level temperature inversions and very stable air conditions, which can lead to Tule fog. Wintertime conditions favorable to fog formation are also conditions favorable to high concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}.

Criteria Air Pollutants

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) establishes the framework for modern air pollution control. The FCAA, enacted in 1970 and amended in 1990, directs the U.S. EPA to establish ambient air quality standards. These standards are divided into primary and secondary standards. The primary standards are set to protect human health, and the secondary standards are set to protect environmental values, such as plant and animal life. The FCAA requires the EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for the six criteria air pollutants. These pollutants include particulate matter (PM), ground-level ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides, and lead.

Toxic Air Contaminants

A toxic air contaminant (TAC) is an air pollutant not included in the California Ambient Air Quality Standards, but TACs are considered hazardous to human health. Toxic air contaminants are defined by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as those pollutants that, "may cause or contribute to an increase in deaths or in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health."

The health effects associated with TACs are generally assessed locally rather than regionally. Toxic air contaminants can cause long-term health effects such as cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, asthma, bronchitis, or genetic damage; TACs can also cause short-term acute effects such as eye watering, respiratory irritation, running nose, throat pain, and headaches. For evaluation purposes, TACs are separated into carcinogens and

noncarcinogens. Carcinogens are assumed to have no safe threshold below which health impacts would not occur, and the cancer risk is expressed as excess cancer cases per one million exposed individuals (typically over a lifetime of exposure).

TACs of concern assessed in this analysis include asbestos, DPM, and benzene.

Sensitive Receptors

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollution than others due to the types of population groups or activities involved. Heightened sensitivity may be caused by health problems, proximity to the emissions source, and/or duration of exposure to air pollutants. Children, pregnant women, the elderly, and those with existing health problems are especially vulnerable to the effects of air pollution. Accordingly, land uses that are typically considered to be sensitive receptors include residences, schools, childcare centers, playgrounds, retirement homes, convalescent homes, hospitals, and medical clinics.

Air Quality Standards

The Clean Air Act requires states to develop a general plan to attain and maintain the standards in all areas of the country and a specific plan to attain the standards for each area designated nonattainment. These plans, known as State Implementation Plans or SIPs, are developed by state and local air quality management agencies and submitted to EPA for approval.

The SIP for the State of California is administered by the CARB, which has overall responsibility for statewide air quality maintenance and air pollution prevention. California's SIP incorporates individual federal attainment plans for each regional air district. SIPs are prepared by the regional air district and sent to CARB to be approved and incorporated into the California SIP. Federal attainment plans include the technical foundation for understanding air quality (e.g., emission inventories and air quality monitoring), control measures and strategies, and enforcement mechanisms.

The CARB also administers the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for the 10 air pollutants designated in the California Clean Air Act. The 10 state air pollutants include the six federal criteria pollutant standards listed above as well as visibility-reducing particulates, hydrogen sulfide, sulfates, and vinyl chloride. The federal and state ambient air quality standards are summarized in **Error! Reference source not found.**.

Table 4-1 California and National Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	National Standards	
		Concentration	Primary	Secondary
Ozone	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m^3)	—	Same as Primary Standard
	8 Hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m^3)	0.070ppm (137 µg/m^3)	
Respirable Particulate Matter	24 Hour	50 µg/m^3	150 µg/m3	Same as Primary Standard
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m^3	—	
Fine Particulate Matter	24 Hour	—	35 µg/m^3	Same as Primary Standard
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m^3	12 µg/m^3	
Carbon Monoxide	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m^3)	35 ppm (40 mg/m^3)	—
	8 Hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	9 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	—
	8 Hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m^3)	—	—

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	National Standards	
		Concentration	Primary	Secondary
Nitrogen Dioxide	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m^3)	100 ppb (188 µg/m^3)	—
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m^3)	0.053 ppm (100 µg/m^3)	Same as Primary Standard
Sulfur Dioxide	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m^3)	75 ppb (196 µg/m^3)	—
	3 Hour	—	—	0.5 ppm (1300 µg/m^3)
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m^3)	0.14 ppm (for certain areas)	—
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	—	0.030 ppm (for certain areas)	—
Lead	30-Day Average	1.5 µg/m^3	—	—
	Calendar Quarter	—	1.5 µg/m^3	Same as Primary Standard
	Rolling 3-Month Average	—	0.15 µg/m^3	
Visibility-Reducing Particles	8 Hour	See Footnote 1	No National Standards	
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m^3		
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m^3)		
Vinyl Chloride	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m^3)		

Notes:
1 - In 1989, the CARB converted both the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard and the Lake Tahoe 30-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which are "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" and "extinction of 0.07 per kilometer" for the statewide and Lake Tahoe Air Basin standards, respectively.
µg/m3 =micrograms per cubic meter
CARB = California Air Resources Board
mg/m3 = milligrams per cubic meter
ppm = parts per million
Source: California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2017. Air Quality Standards. Website: https://www.baaqmd.gov/about-air-quality/research-and-data/air-quality-standards-and-attainment-status. Accessed October 10, 2023.

Federal and state air quality laws require identification of areas not meeting the ambient air quality standards. These areas must develop regional air quality plans to eventually attain the standards. The SJV Air Basin is designated nonattainment for ozone, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$.

Thresholds of Significance

Project-level Thresholds

The CEQA Guidelines define a significant effect on the environment as *"a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment."* To determine if a project would have a significant impact on air quality, the type, level, and impact of emissions generated by the proposed project must be evaluated.

This analysis uses the air quality significance thresholds contained in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. A significant impact would occur if the proposed Project would:

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 under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

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

The City of Chowchilla has not established specific CEQA significance thresholds for air quality resources. Where available guidance provided by the applicable air district can be used to make significance determinations for the CEQA questions listed above. While the final determination of whether a project is significant is within the purview of the Lead Agency pursuant to Section 15064(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, the SJVAPCD recommends that its quantitative air pollution thresholds be used to determine the significance of project emissions in accordance with the Appendix G requirements. If a Lead Agency finds that a project has the potential to exceed these air pollution thresholds, according to the SJVAPCD, the project should be considered to have significant air quality impacts.

Air pollutant emissions have regional effects and localized effects. This analysis assesses the regional effects of the project's criteria pollutant emissions in comparison to SJVAPCD thresholds of significance for short-term construction activities and long-term operation of the project. Localized emissions from project construction and operation are also assessed using concentration-based thresholds that determine if the project would result in a localized exceedance of any ambient air quality standards or would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to an existing exceedance.

The primary pollutants of concern during project construction and operation are ROG, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. The SJVAPCD GAMAQI adopted in 2015 contains thresholds for ROG and NO_X; SO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$.

Ozone is a secondary pollutant that can be formed miles away from the source of emissions through reactions of ROG and NO_X emissions in the presence of sunlight. Therefore, ROG and NO_x are termed ozone precursors. The SJVAB often exceeds the state and national ozone standards. Therefore, if the project emits a substantial quantity of ozone precursors, the project may contribute to an exceedance of the ozone standard. The SJVAB also exceeds air quality standards for PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$; therefore, substantial project emissions may contribute to an exceedance for these pollutants.

The SJVAPCD has adopted significance thresholds for construction-related and operational emissions. These thresholds will be identified and addressed in the appropriate section of this document.

Project construction would involve the use of diesel-fueled vehicles and equipment that emit DPM, which is considered a TAC. Once operational, some diesel-fueled vehicles would access the project site. The following project-specific health risk significance thresholds are applied in this analysis:

- *Maximum Incremental Cancer Risk: >=20 in 1 million.*
- *Hazard Index (Project increment) >=1.0.*

Fugitive Dust

Construction

Fugitive dust would be generated from site grading and other earth-moving activities. Most of this fugitive dust would remain localized and would be deposited near the project site. However, the potential for impacts from fugitive dust exists unless control measures are implemented to reduce the emissions from the project site. Therefore, adherence to Regulation VIII would be required during construction of the proposed project. Regulation VIII would require fugitive dust control measures that are consistent with best management practices (BMPs)

established by the SJVAPCD to reduce the proposed project's construction-generated fugitive dust impacts to a less than significant level.

The SJVAPCD (SJVAPCD or District) adopted Regulation VIII in 1993 and its most recent amendments became effective on October 1, 2004. This is a basic summary of the regulation's requirements as they apply to construction sites. These regulations affect all workers at a regulated construction site, including everyone from the landowner to the subcontractors. Violations of Regulation VIII are subject to enforcement action including fines.

Visible Dust Emissions may not exceed 20 percent opacity during periods when soil is being disturbed by equipment or by wind at any time. Visible Dust Emissions opacity of 20 percent means dust that would obstruct an observer's view of an object by 20 percent. District inspectors are state certified to evaluate visible emissions. Dust control may be achieved by applying water before/during earthwork and onto unpaved traffic areas, phasing work to limit dust, and setting up wind fences to limit windblown dust.

Soil Stabilization is required at regulated construction sites after normal working hours and on weekends and holidays. This requirement also applies to inactive construction areas such as phased projects where disturbed land is left unattended. Applying water to form a visible crust on the soil and restricting vehicle access are often effective for short-term stabilization of disturbed surface areas. Long-term methods including applying dust suppressants and establishing vegetative cover.

Carryout and Trackout occur when materials from emptied or loaded vehicles falls onto a paved surface or shoulder of a public road or when materials adhere to vehicle tires and are deposited onto a paved surface or shoulder of a public road. Should either occur, the material must be cleaned up at least daily, and immediately if it extends more than 50 feet from the exit point onto a paved road. The appropriate clean-up methods require the complete removal and cleanup of mud and dirt from the paved surface and shoulder. Using a blower device or dry sweeping with any mechanical device other than a PM10-efficient street sweeper is a violation. Larger construction sites, or sites with a high amount of traffic on one or more days, must prevent carryout and trackout from occurring by installing gravel pads, grizzlies, wheel washers, paved interior roads, or a combination thereof at each exit point from the site. In many cases, cleaning up trackout with water is also prohibited as it may lead to plugged storm drains. Prevention is the best method.

Unpaved Access and Haul Roads, as well as unpaved vehicle and equipment traffic areas at construction sites must have dust control. Speed limit signs limiting vehicle speed to 15 mph or less at construction sites must be posted every 500 feet on uncontrolled and unpaved roads.

Storage Piles and Bulk Materials have handling, storage, and transportation requirements that include applying water when handling materials, wetting or covering stored materials, and installing wind barriers to limit visible dust emissions. Also, limiting vehicle speeds, loading haul trucks with a freeboard of six inches or greater along with applying water to the top of the load, and covering the cargo compartments are effective measures for reducing visible dust emissions and carryout from vehicles transporting bulk materials.

Dust Control Plans identify the dust sources and describe the dust control measures that will be implemented before, during, and after any dust generating activity for the duration of the project. Owners or operators are required to submit plans to the SJVAPCD at least 30 days prior to commencing the work for the following:

- *Residential developments of ten or more acres of disturbed surface area.*
- *Non-residential developments of five or more acres of disturbed surface area.*
- *The relocation of more than 2,500 cubic yards per day of materials on at least three days.*

Operations may not commence until the SJAVPCD has approved the Dust Control Plan. A copy of the plan must be on site and available to workers and District employees. All work on the site is subject to the requirements of the approved dust control plan. A failure to abide by the plan by anyone on site may be subject to enforcement action.

Record Keeping is required to document compliance with the rules and must be kept for each day any dust control measure is used. The SJVAPCD has developed record forms for water application, street sweeping, and "permanent" controls such as applying long term dust palliatives, vegetation, ground cover materials, paving, or other durable materials. Records must be kept for one year after the end of dust generating activities (Title V sources must keep records for five years).

Exemptions exist for several activities. Those occurring above 3,000 feet in elevation are exempt from all Regulation VIII requirements. Further, Rule 8021 – Construction, Demolition, Excavation, Extraction, and Other Earthmoving Activities exempts the following construction and earthmoving activities:

- *Blasting activities permitted by California Division of Industrial Safety.*
- *Maintenance or remodeling of existing buildings provided the addition is less than 50% of the size of the existing building or less than 10,000 square feet (due to asbestos concerns, contact the SJVAPCD at least two weeks ahead of time).*
- *Additions to single family dwellings.*
- *The disking of weeds and vegetation for fire prevention on sites smaller than ½ acre.*
- *Spreading of daily landfill cover to preserve public health and safety and to comply with California Integrated Waste Management Board requirements.*

Nuisances are prohibited at all times because District Rule 4102 – Nuisance applies to all construction sources of fugitive dust, whether or not they are exempt from Regulation VIII. It is important to monitor dust-generating activities and implement appropriate dust control measures to limit the public's exposure to fugitive dust.

4.3.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

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

Potentially Significant Impact. The CEQA Guidelines indicate that a significant impact would occur if the project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. The GAMAQI indicates that projects that do not exceed SJVAPCD regional criteria pollutant emissions quantitative thresholds would not conflict with or obstruct the applicable air quality plan (AQP). An additional criterion regarding the project's implementation of control measures was assessed to provide further evidence of the project's consistency with current AQPs. This document proposes the following criteria for determining project consistency with the current AQPs:

1. *Will the Project result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations, or delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the AQPs? This measure is determined by comparison to the regional thresholds identified by the District for Regional Air Pollutants.*
2. *Will the Project comply with applicable control measures in the AQPs? The primary control measures applicable to development Projects include Regulation VIII—Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions and Rule 9510 Indirect Source Review.*

Contribution to Air Quality Violations

A measure for determining if the project is consistent with the air quality plans is if the project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations, cause or contribute to new violations, or delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the air quality plans. Regional air quality impacts and attainment of standards are the result of the cumulative impacts of all emission sources within the air basin. Individual projects are generally not large enough to contribute measurably to an existing violation of air quality standards. Therefore, the cumulative impact of the project is based on its cumulative contribution. Because of the region's nonattainment status for ozone, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10}—if project-generated emissions of either of the ozone precursor pollutants (ROG and NO_X), PM_{10}, or $PM_{2.5}$ would exceed the SJVAPCD's significance thresholds—then the project would be considered to contribute to violations of the applicable standards and conflict with the attainment plans.

As shown in Table 4-2 under criteria b) below, the project's construction regional emissions would not exceed SJVAPCD's regional criteria pollutant emissions quantitative thresholds. However, emissions of ROG and NO_X associated with the operation of the project would exceed the SJVAPCD's regional significance thresholds and may continue to exceed the applicable thresholds after incorporation of enforceable and feasible mitigation that would reduce the impact. Therefore, the proposed project would not be considered consistent with the air quality plan based on this criterion.

Compliance with Applicable Control Measures

SJVAPCD's AQPs contain a number of control measures, which are enforceable requirements through the adoption of rules and regulations. A description of rules and regulations that apply to this Project is provided below.

> **SJVAPCD Rule 9510—Indirect Source Review (ISR)** is a control measure in the 2006 PM_{10} Plan that requires NO_X and PM_{10} emission reductions from development Projects in the San Joaquin Valley. The NO_X emission reductions help reduce the secondary formation of PM_{10} in the atmosphere (primarily ammonium nitrate and ammonium sulfate) and also reduce the formation of ozone. Reductions in directly emitted PM_{10} reduce particles such as dust, soot, and aerosols. Rule 9510 is also a control measure in the 2016 Plan for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard. Developers of Projects subject to Rule 9510 must reduce emissions occurring during construction and operational phases through on-site measures or pay off-site mitigation fees. The proposed Project would be subject to Rule 9510.
>
> **Regulation VIII—Fugitive PM_{10} Prohibitions** is a control measure that is one main strategies from the 2006 PM_{10} for reducing the PM_{10} emissions that are part of fugitive dust. Residential Projects over 10 acres and non-residential Projects over 5 acres are required to file a Dust Control Plan (DCP) containing dust control practices sufficient to comply with Regulation VIII. The Project will be required to comply with Regulation VIII and would implement dust control measures during the construction period.
>
> **Rule 2201—New and Modified Stationary Source Review Rule** requires the review of new and modified Stationary Sources of air pollution and to provide mechanisms including emission trade-offs by which Authorities to Construct such sources may be granted, without interfering with the attainment or maintenance of Ambient Air Quality Standards. Components of the Project may be required to obtain permits and abide by associated regulations set forth by Rule 2201.

Other control measures that apply to the project are Rule 4641—Cutback, Slow Cure, and Emulsified Asphalt, Paving and Maintenance Operation that requires reductions in VOC emissions during paving and Rule 4601—Architectural Coatings that limits the VOC content of all types of paints and coatings sold in the San Joaquin Valley. These

measures apply at the point of sale of the asphalt and the coatings, so project compliance is ensured without additional mitigation measures.

The project would comply with all applicable SJVAPCD rules and regulations. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality attainment plan under this criterion.

As described above, the proposed project's construction emissions would not exceed SJVAPCD's regional criteria pollutant emissions quantitative thresholds. Furthermore, the proposed project would comply with all applicable SJVAPCD rules and regulations. However, emissions of ROG and NOX associated with the operation of the project would exceed the SJVAPCD's regional significance thresholds and may continue to exceed the applicable thresholds after incorporation of enforceable and feasible mitigation. As such, the project has the potential to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan after the incorporation of mitigation. This represents a significant and unavoidable impact.

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?

Potentially Significant Impact. To result in a less than significant impact, the following criteria must be true:

1. *Regional analysis: emissions of nonattainment pollutants must be below the SJVAPCD's regional significance thresholds. This is an approach recommended by the District in its GAMAQI.*
2. *Summary of Projections: the Project must be consistent with current air quality attainment plans including control measures and regulations. This is an approach consistent with Section 15130(b) of the CEQA Guidelines.*
3. *Cumulative health impacts: the Project must result in less than significant cumulative health effects from the nonattainment pollutants. This approach correlates the significance of the regional analysis with health effects, consistent with the court decision, Bakersfield Citizens for Local Control v. City of Bakersfield (2004) 124 Cal.App.4th 1184, 1219-20.*

Regional Emissions

Air pollutant emissions have both regional and localized effects. This analysis assesses the regional effects of the project's criteria pollutant emissions in comparison to SJVAPCD thresholds of significance for short-term construction activities and long-term operation of the project. Localized emissions from project construction and operation are assessed under criteria c)—Sensitive Receptors using concentration-based thresholds that determine if the project would result in a localized exceedance of any ambient air quality standards or would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to an existing exceedance.

The primary pollutants of concern during project construction and operation are ROG, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. The SJVAPCD GAMAQI adopted in 2015 contains thresholds for CO, NO_X, ROG, SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$.

Ozone is a secondary pollutant that can be formed miles from the source of emissions, through reactions of ROG and NO_X emissions in the presence of sunlight. Therefore, ROG and NO_X are termed ozone precursors. The Air Basin often exceeds the state and national ozone standards. Therefore, if the project emits a substantial quantity of ozone precursors, the project may contribute to an exceedance of the ozone standard. The Air Basin also exceeds air quality standards for PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$; therefore, substantial project emissions may contribute to an exceedance for these pollutants. The SJVAPCD's annual emission significance thresholds used for the project define the substantial contribution for both operational and construction emissions as follows:

- *100 tons per year CO*
- *10 tons per year NO_X*
- *10 tons per year ROG*
- *27 tons per year SO_X*
- *15 tons per year PM_{10}*
- *15 tons per year $PM_{2.5}$*

The project does not contain sources that would produce substantial quantities of SO_2 emissions during construction and operation. Modeling conducted for the project show that SO_2 emissions are well below the SJVAPCD GAMAQI thresholds, as shown in the modeling results contained in Attachment A. No further discussion of SO_2 is required.

Construction Emissions

Construction activities associated with development of the proposed project would include site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coatings. Emissions from construction-related activities are generally short-term in duration but may still cause adverse air quality impacts. During construction, fugitive dust would be generated from earth-moving activities. Exhaust emissions would also be generated from off-road construction equipment and construction-related vehicle trips. Emissions associated with construction of the proposed project are discussed below.

Table 4-2 provides the construction emissions estimate for the proposed project. Please refer to the Modeling Parameters and Assumptions section of this technical memorandum for details regarding assumptions used to estimate construction emissions. The duration of construction activity and associated equipment represent a reasonable approximation of the expected construction fleet as required pursuant to CEQA guidelines.

Table 4-2 Construction Regional Air Pollutant Annual Emissions (Unmitigated)

	Air Pollutants (ton/year)				
Construction Year	ROG	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Project Construction (2024)	0.19	1.54	1.59	0.24	0.13
Project Construction (2025)	0.20	1.59	2.08	0.18	0.08
Project Construction (2026)	0.56	0.48	0.65	0.06	0.02
Total Project Construction Emissions (tons over the entire construction duration)	**0.95**	**3.61**	**4.32**	**0.48**	**0.23**
Significance Threshold (tons/year)	**10**	**10**	**100**	**15**	**15**
Exceeds Significance Threshold?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes: PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions are from the mitigated output to reflect compliance with Regulation VIII—Fugitive PM_{10} Prohibitions.
NO_X = oxides of nitrogen
PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter
ROG = reactive organic gases

As shown in Table 4-2, estimated emissions from construction of project are below the SJVAPCD significance thresholds. Therefore, the regional construction emissions would be less than significant on a project basis.

Operational Emissions: *Operational Emissions (Regional)—Non-Permitted*

As previously discussed, the pollutants of concern include ROG, NO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. Emissions were assessed for full buildout operations in the 2026 operational year. The 2026 operational year was chosen as it would be the earliest year the project is anticipated to become operational. Emissions were estimated for full project buildout in the earliest operational year, thus generating the full amount of expected operational activity. The SJVAPCD Criteria

Air Pollutant Significance thresholds were used to determine impacts. Operational annual emissions are shown in Table 4-3 below.

Table 4-3 Operational Annual Emissions for Full Buildout (Unmitigated)

Emissions Source	Tons per Year				
	ROG	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Area	0.88	0.01	0.76	<0.01	<0.01
Energy Consumption	0.02	0.34	0.28	0.03	0.03
Mobile (On-road Vehicles)	9.35	20.53	52.35	10.76	2.91
Total Project Annual Emissions	**10.25**	**20.88**	**53.39**	**10.79**	**2.94**
Thresholds of Significance	**10**	**10**	**100**	**15**	**15**
Exceeds Significance Threshold?	**Yes**	**Yes**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes:
NO_X = oxides of nitrogen
$PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter
PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter
ROG = reactive organic gases

As shown in Table 4-3, operational emissions of NO_X and PM_{10} would exceed the applicable SJVAPCD thresholds of significance. Operations of the project would generate air pollutant emissions that would have the potential to exceed the SJVAPCD's regional significance thresholds for ROG and NO_X at full buildout.

The project is subject to SJVAPCD Rule 9510—Indirect Source Review. The application of the SJVAPCD Rule 9510 would contribute to reducing NO_X and PM_{10}, the two pollutants targeted by Rule 9510—Indirect Source Review. In addition, compliance with SJVAPCD Rule 9410 would contribute to reducing mobile source emissions from employee vehicle trips, if applicable to any future tenants. Even after compliance with SJVAPCD Rule 9510, NO_X and ROG emissions would continue to exceed the applicable thresholds.

Mitigation Measures (MM) AIR-2a to AIR-2g are recommended to reduce long-term operational emissions of NO_X and ROG. Although the measures recommended in MM AIR-2a to AIR-2g would help reduce operational emissions, the emission reductions associated with each measure cannot be accurately determined because of a lack of sufficient information about how the project would operate and to what extent the measures would affect those activities. Specifically, the majority of the emissions are from mobile sources, which include customer and visitor passenger vehicles and trucks. As such, the primary source of emissions for the project would not be controllable by the applicant or future tenants. Therefore, even with the implementation of mitigation measures, the project's long-term operational ROG and NO_X emissions may continue to exceed SJVAPCD's regional threshold of significance and operational ROG and NO_X emissions would be considered a potentially significant impact.

Operational Emissions: *Operational Emissions (Regional)—Permitted*

The SJVAPCD GAMAQI recommends assessing the emissions from permitted sources of emissions separate from non-permitted sources. The SJVAPCD's permitting process ensures that emissions of criteria pollutants from permitted equipment and activities at stationary sources are reduced or mitigated to below the SJVAPCD's thresholds of significance. SJVAPCD implementation of New Source Review (NSR) ensures that there is no net increase in emissions above specified thresholds from new and modified Stationary Sources subject to the rule for

all nonattainment pollutants and their precursors. Permitted sources emitting more than the NSR Offset Thresholds for any criteria pollutant must, in general, offset all emission increases in excess of the thresholds.

Permitted sources will be required to comply with SJVAPCD BACT requirements. Compliance with regulations would ensure that the project's stationary sources would not exceed SJVAPCD thresholds of significance; therefore, the project's estimated permitted emissions would be less than significant.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Potentially Significant Impact. Emissions occurring at or near the project have the potential to create a localized impact that could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Sensitive receptors are considered land uses or other types of population groups that are more sensitive to air pollution than others due to their exposure. Sensitive population groups include children, the elderly, the acutely and chronically ill, and those with cardio-respiratory diseases. The SJVAPCD considers a sensitive receptor to be a location that houses or attracts children, the elderly, people with illnesses, or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Examples of sensitive receptors include hospitals, residences, convalescent facilities, and schools.

The closest existing sensitive receptors (to the site area) are single-family homes located east/northeast of the center of the project site, the closest of which is within 200 feet from the project boundary. Other residences include homes east of Fig Tree Road (the closest of which are approximately 1,003 feet east of the project site), followed by a large tract of homes surrounding a golf course.

The nearest school is Ronald Reagan Elementary School located 2,323 feet (0.44 miles) north of the project. Chowchilla High School is 0.95 mile southwest of the project site. All other schools in Chowchilla are over one mile away from the project site. The nearest daycare facility is Little Peeps Daycare 3,484 feet (0.66 miles) from the project site; all other daycares in Chowchilla are over one (1) mile away from the project site.

There are no hospitals in Chowchilla, however there are a few healthcare facilities. The closest healthcare facility to the project site is Chowchilla Healthcare 1,848 feet (0.35 miles) west of the Jobsite. The closest senior assisted living facility to the project site is Golden Years, 1.33 miles away. A description of the land uses surrounding the project site is provided below.

- North - Directly 0.5 miles north of the project is Fig Tree Plaza, which includes several businesses including: SaveMart grocery store, Mountain Mike's Pizza, Little Caesar's Pizza, and Orchard's Bar and Grill. There are several other businesses within ¼-mile North of the project site including: Best Western Hotel, Pedro's Place Mexican Grill, Taco Bell, and Taco El Grullense. Ronald Reagan Elementary School is 0.45 mile north of the project site and Cornerstone Community Church is just over ¼-mile north of the project site.
- East - Bordering the project site to the east is developed farmland and a residential subdivision with three (3) east-west streets and two (2) north-south streets. Within ¼-mile east of the project site is a large residential subdivision surrounding Pleasant Run Golf Course. There are also a few businesses including: Lakes RV & Golf Center, Sand Trap Bar & Grill, Prime Skate Boutique, and H2O Solar Cleaning Company.
- South - Highway 99 runs diagonally along the border of the project site to the southwest, followed by developed farmland. Chowchilla High School is just under a mile further southwest of the project site, followed by residential neighborhoods and the most developed portions of the City of Chowchilla.
- West - Steve's Chevrolet of Chowchilla borders the northwest edge of the project site to the west. Highway 99 runs the length of the project site diagonally to the southwest, followed by developed farmland. Pacific Auto Center is 0.10 mile west, across Highway 99. There is a Holiday Inn 0.22 mile directly west, followed by a McDonalds restaurant (0.32 mile), and Arena RV Park (0.37 mile). The City of Chowchilla Corporation

Yard is just over 1 mile west, and Days Inn is 0.67 mile west. The main City of Chowchilla and residences starts just over ½-mile west of the project site.

Localized Impacts

Emissions occurring at or near the project have the potential to create a localized impact also referred to as an air pollutant hotspot. Localized emissions are considered significant if when combined with background emissions, they would result in exceedance of any health-based air quality standard. In locations that already exceed standards for these pollutants, significance is based on a significant impact level (SIL) that represents the amount that is considered a cumulatively considerable contribution to an existing violation of an air quality standard. The pollutants of concern for localized impact in the SJVAB are NO_2, SO_X, and CO.

The SJVAPCD has provided guidance for screening localized impacts in the GAMAQI that establishes a screening threshold of 100 pounds per day of any criteria pollutant. If a project exceeds 100 pounds per day of any criteria pollutant, then ambient air quality modeling would be necessary. If the project does not exceed 100 pounds per day of any criteria pollutant, then it can be assumed that it would not cause a violation of an ambient air quality standard.

Construction: Localized Concentrations of PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, CO, and NO_X

Local construction impacts would be short-term in nature lasting only during the duration of construction. As shown in Table 4-4 below, on-site construction emissions would be less than 100 pounds per day for each of the criteria pollutants. To present a conservative estimate, on-site emissions for on-road construction vehicles were included in the localized analysis. Based on the SJVAPCD's guidance, the construction emissions would not cause an ambient air quality standard violation.

Table 4-4 Localized Concentrations of PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, CO, and NO_X for Construction

Daily Maximum	On-site Emissions (pounds per day)				
	ROG	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Daily Maximum (2024)	3.74	36.10	33.23	9.46	5.43
Daily Maximum (2025)	1.50	10.97	14.55	0.66	0.43
Daily Maximum (2026)	36.21	10.37	14.39	0.61	0.38
Entire Project Construction Duration (2024-2026)					
Maximum Daily On-site Emissions	**36.21**	**36.10**	**33.23**	**9.46**	**5.43**
Significance Thresholds	**—**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Exceed Significance Thresholds?	**—**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Note: Overlap of construction activities is based on the construction schedule.
Source of Thresholds: San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). 2015. Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts. February 19. Website: https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/FINAL-DRAFT-GAMAQI.PDF . Accessed January 2024.

Operation: Localized Concentrations of PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, CO, and NO_X

Localized impacts could occur in areas with a single large source of emissions—such as a power plant—or at locations with multiple sources concentrated in a small area, such as a distribution center. As a truck travel center project with gasoline and diesel fueling pumps, the proposed project would attract vehicle trips (both heavy-duty truck and passenger vehicles) and would emit air pollutants that have the potential to create a localized impact. The maximum daily operational emissions would occur at project buildout, which was assumed to occur in 2026 for the purposes of providing a conservative estimate of emissions. Operational emissions include those generated on-site by area sources such as consumer products, and landscape maintenance, energy use from natural gas

combustion, and motor vehicles operation at the project site. To assess localized air impacts, motor vehicle emissions were estimated for on-site and localized operations using an adjusted trip length of 0.5 mile.

Table 4-5 below summarizes the results from the operational modeling of on-site emissions for the project. As shown in Table 4-5, the proposed project would exceed the SJVAPCD 100-pound-per-day screening threshold for CO but would not exceed other operational screening thresholds for each of the criteria pollutants. Therefore, based on the SJVAPCD's guidance, the operational emissions would not cause an ambient air quality standard violation for NO_X, PM_{10}, or $PM_{2.5}$. Further analysis is needed to determine whether would be significant for CO, which is provided below.

As shown in Table 4-5, the majority of CO emissions would be from mobile sources, such as passenger vehicles driven by customer and employees to access the project site and visiting heavy-duty trucks. Localized high levels of CO are associated with traffic congestion and idling or slow-moving vehicles. A CO hotspot represents a condition wherein high concentrations of CO may be produced by motor vehicles accessing a congested traffic intersection under heavy traffic volume conditions. It has long been recognized that CO exceedances are caused by vehicular emissions, primarily when idling at intersections. Accordingly, vehicle emissions standards have become increasingly more stringent to help remedy this impact.

Table 4-5 Localized Concentrations of PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, CO, and NO_X for Operations

Source	On-site Emissions (pounds per day)				
	ROG	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Area	5.50	< 0.01	< 0.01	0.02	0.01
Energy Consumption	0.10	1.85	1.56	0.14	0.14
Mobile (On-road Vehicles)	51.45	58.65	174.19	6.41	1.78
Daily Total	**57.05**	**60.50**	**175.75**	**6.57**	**1.93**
Screening Thresholds	**—**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Exceed Screening Thresholds?	**—**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**No**

Source of Thresholds: San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). 2015. Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts. February 19. Website: https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/FINAL-DRAFT-GAMAQI.PDF . Accessed January 2024.

The analysis prepared for CO attainment in the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB) by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has been used to assist in evaluating potential for CO exceedances in other air basins. Although the SoCAB and the SCAQMD would not be the applicable air basin or air district for the project, applying this guidance is appropriate in this analysis because CO exceedances are caused by idling vehicles and regardless of air district. For example, any project-generated vehicles trips would result in idling of passenger vehicles or trucks at the project site and on adjacent roadways that could lead to a CO exceedance. The CO hotspot analysis contained in the SCAQMD 1992 CO Plan is used to determine potential CO hotspot impacts from the proposed project, because by using the 1992 CO Plan as a worst-case scenario, the proposed project can measure CO impacts against intersections that experienced significantly more vehicle traffic than adjacent to the proposed project. The 1992 CO Plan is used a worst-case scenario because it included a CO hot spot analysis for four busy intersections in Los Angeles at the peak morning and afternoon time periods. The intersections evaluated included Long Beach Boulevard and Imperial Highway (Lynwood); Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue (Westwood); Sunset Boulevard and Highland Avenue (Hollywood); and La Cienega Boulevard and Century Boulevard (Inglewood). The busiest intersection evaluated was that at Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue, which has a daily traffic volume of approximately 100,000 vehicles per day. Subsequently the CO Plan determined that no CO hotspot would occur even with 100,000 vehicles per day at this one intersection.

The traffic volumes near the project site, with project trips, are provided in the project-specific traffic impact analysis. The project-specific transportation impact study reported the number of average daily trips for the travel center project: 14,214 average daily automobile trips and 2,704 heavy-duty truck trips. The traffic volumes at intersections in the study area around the project are lower than what was analyzed in the 1992 CO Plan. Therefore, none of the intersections near the project site would have peak-hour traffic volumes exceeding those at the intersections modeled in the 1992 CO Plan, nor would there be any reason unique to the local meteorology to conclude that this intersection would yield higher CO concentrations if modeled in detail because the project site is not located in an area where air flow would be severely restricted, such as a tunnel or canyon. In conclusion, the addition of the proposed project's daily trips would not generate a CO hotspot at local intersections and operational CO impact would be less than significant.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Construction

Project construction would involve the use of diesel-fueled vehicles and equipment that emit DPM, which is considered a TAC. The SJVAPCD's current threshold of significance for TAC emissions is an increase in cancer risk for the maximally exposed individual of 20 in a million (formerly 10 in a million).

A project-level assessment was conducted of the potential community health risk and health hazard impacts on surrounding sensitive receptors resulting from the emissions of TACs during construction. A summary of the assessment is provided below, while the detailed assessment is provided in Attachment B in Appendix A.

Construction activity using diesel-powered equipment emits DPM, a known carcinogen. Diesel particulate matter includes exhaust PM_{10} and exhaust $PM_{2.5}$. A 10-year research program demonstrated that DPM from diesel-fueled engines is a human carcinogen and that chronic (long-term) inhalation exposure to DPM poses a chronic health risk. Health risks from TACs are a function of both concentration and duration of exposure. Construction diesel emissions are temporary, affecting an area for a period of weeks or months. Additionally, construction-related sources are mobile and transient in nature.

The health risk assessment evaluated DPM (represented as exhaust PM_{10}) emissions generated during construction of the proposed project and the related health risk impacts for sensitive receptors located within approximately 1,000 feet of the project boundary.

The project site is located within 1,000 feet of existing sensitive receptors that could be exposed to diesel emission exhaust during the construction period. To estimate the potential cancer risk associated with construction of the proposed project from equipment exhaust (including DPM), a dispersion model was used to translate an emission rate from the source location to concentrations at the receptor locations of interest (i.e., receptors at nearby residences). A maximally exposed receptor (MER) was determined for construction and through the use of the dispersion modeling. A graphical representation of the inputs used in the dispersion modeling, including the locations of modeled receptor locations, is included as part of Attachment B.

Table 4-6 presents a summary of the proposed project's construction cancer risk and chronic non-cancer hazard impacts at the MER from project construction prior to the application of any equipment mitigation.

Table 4-6 Health Risks from Unmitigated Project Construction

Scenario	Health Impact Metric	Carcinogenic Inhalation Health Risk in One Million	Chronic Inhalation Hazard Index
Risks and Hazards from Project Construction to the Off-site MER [1]			
Unmitigated Project Construction	Risks and Hazards at the MER	10.54	0.006

Scenario	Health Impact Metric	Carcinogenic Inhalation Health Risk in One Million	Chronic Inhalation Hazard Index
	Applicable Threshold of Significance	20	1
	Exceeds Individual Source Threshold?	No	No

Notes: MER = Maximally Exposed Receptor
[1] The MER was determined to be an existing residence located east of the project site at 37°07'22.6"N 120°14'38.7"W (Receptor # 251). It should be noted that this site appears to be vacant in Google Earth images (aerial views from 2021 and street views from 2015); however, this subdivision was mostly built out at the time the analysis was conducted in early 2024.

As shown in Table 4-6, estimated health risks from elevated DPM concentrations during construction of the proposed project would not exceed the applicable health risk significance thresholds in any scenario analyzed. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact on nearby sensitive receptors from TACs during the construction period.

Operations

Gasoline Station (Benzene)

Out of the toxic compounds emitted from gasoline stations, benzene, ethylbenzene, and naphthalene have cancer toxicity values. However, benzene is the TAC which drives the risk, accounting for 85 percent of cancer risk from gasoline vapors. Furthermore, benzene constitutes more than three to four times the weight of gasoline than ethylbenzene and naphthalene, respectively. Therefore, ethylbenzene and naphthalene have not been modeled and are instead considered significant in the case that benzene emissions are significant. Additionally, there are substances emitted from gasoline stations, such as toluene and xylene which possess acute adverse health effects (though not cancer risk). However, it is not until the benzene concentrations are more than two orders of magnitude above 10 in one million that the emissions of toluene and xylene begin to cause adverse health effects. Therefore, toluene and xylene emissions have not been modeled and are instead considered significant in the case that benzene concentrations are identified at two orders of magnitude above 10 in one million cancer risk.

Emissions sources in the model include proposed on-site fuel storage tanks and fuel dispensers. The proposed project contemplates aboveground fuel storage tanks and fourteen (14) gasoline fueling stations (28 gasoline vehicle fueling positions). In addition, the project includes 13 diesel fueling pumps (12 heavy-duty truck fueling positions). The specific processes associated with fuel storage tanks and gasoline fuel dispensers that emit air toxics include loading, breathing, refueling, and spillage, as described below:

- Loading – Emissions occur when a fuel tanker truck unloads gasoline into the storage tanks. The storage tank vapors, displaced during loading, are emitted through its vent pipe. (A required pressure/vacuum valve installed on the tank vent pipe significantly reduces these emissions.)
- Breathing – Emissions occur through the storage tank vent pipe as a result of temperature and pressure changes in the tank vapor space.
- Refueling – Emissions occur during motor vehicle refueling when gasoline vapors escape through the vehicle/nozzle interface.
- Spillage – Emissions occur from evaporating gasoline that spills during vehicle refueling.

Loading and breathing emissions exit the underground storage tank vent pipe and are thus treated as a point source. The height and diameter of the vent are assumed to be 3.66 meters and 0.05 meters, respectively. Refueling and spillage emissions are modeled as volume sources with a vertical dimension of 5 meters to correspond to the height of the canopy. For refueling, the release height is assumed to be 1 meter to approximate the height of a

vehicle fuel tank inlet, whereas spillage emissions are assumed to be released at ground level since nearly all the gasoline from spillage reaches the ground.

The model was run to obtain the peak 24-hour and annual average concentration in micrograms per cubic meter [µg/m^3] at nearby sensitive receptors. The chronic and carcinogenic health risk calculations are based on the standardized equations contained in the U.S. EPA Human Health Evaluation Manual and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) Guidance Manual. Results of the health risk analysis from operations of the proposed gasoline station are summarized in Table 4-7.

Table 4-7 Summary of the Health Impacts Risk Impacts (Operational DPM Emissions)

Exposure Scenario	Maximum Cancer Risk (Risk per Million)	Chronic Non-Cancer Hazard Index	Acute Non-Cancer Hazard from Maximum Hourly Exposure
70-Year Exposure at the MER	1.22	0.005	0.009
Applicable Threshold of Significance	**20**	**1**	**1**
Exceeds Individual Source Threshold?	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes: MER = Maximally Exposed Receptor

As shown in Table 4-7, the project would not exceed the applicable cancer risk or chronic risk threshold levels. In addition, these health risk values from the generation of benzene were added to the project's health risk metrics from construction and operational DPM to determine total health risks during operations and a total combined value from project construction and operations (see below).

Operational DPM

The proposed project would primarily generate automobile trips associated with employees, customers, and visitors traveling to and from the project site. In addition, the diesel fueling pumps, truck parking, and other truck amenities would attract heavy-duty truck trips. As described in the traffic study prepared for the proposed project, the A-Z Truck Center project is expected to generate 14,214 average daily automobile trips and 2,704 heavy-duty truck trips.

DPM emissions were estimated for the project-generated truck trips using EMFAC 2021 to assess the project's potential to generate elevated levels of TACs from project heavy-duty truck trips. Sources include the following from project-generated heavy-duty diesel-fueled trucks: on-site idling (including TRUs [Transport Refrigeration Units]), on-site heavy-duty truck travel (assessed at 5-15 mph), and localized off-site truck travel (assessed at 10-25 mph). Detailed assumptions are provided in Attachment B. AERMOD and HARP2 were then used to estimate health risks. The results of the operational HRA from project-generated sources of DPM during operations are summarized below, while the complete assessment is included as part of Attachment B in Appendix A.

Table 4-8 Summary of the Health Impacts Risk Impacts (Operational DPM Emissions)

Exposure Scenario	Maximum Cancer Risk (Risk per Million)	Chronic Non-Cancer Hazard Index
70-Year Exposure at the MER	40.74	0.008
Applicable Threshold of Significance	**20**	**1**
Exceeds Individual Source Threshold in Any Scenario?	**Yes**	**No**

Notes: MER = Maximally Exposed Receptor
Operational DPM MER Location: 37°07'22.6"N 120°14'38.7"W (Receptor # 251)

As shown in Table 4-8, the project's generation of DPM during operations would exceed the applicable cancer risk threshold. In addition, these health risk values were added to the project's health risk metrics from the generation of benzene to determine total health risks during operations and a total combined value from project construction and operations (see below). Required mitigation to reduce health risk impacts from the project's generation of DPM is discussed below, under the combined health risk scenario discussion.

Combined Health Risk Metrics

Health risk metrics are shown for the MER for each TAC, which presents a conservative estimate of overall health risk metrics when combined. The complete emission estimate calculations, AERMOD data, and HARP2 calculations are included in Attachment B of this memorandum.

As shown in Table 4-9, the project calculated health metrics from the proposed project's operational emissions would not exceed the non-cancer hazard index significance threshold or acute non-cancer hazard at the MER. However, the cancer risks from the project's operations would exceed the applicable threshold under both the 70-year scenario starting in the third trimester and in the combined construction plus operations scenario. Mitigation measures MM AIR-2a through MM AIR-2d identified under Impact AIR-2 are aimed to reduce emissions from heavy-duty trucks and would also reduce DPM; therefore, these mitigation measures are also required to reduce localized impacts from DPM.

Table 4-9 Summary of the Health Impacts from Operations of the Proposed Gasoline Station (70-year Exposure Scenario)

Exposure Scenario	Maximum Cancer Risk (Risk per Million)	Chronic Non-Cancer Hazard Index	Acute Non-Cancer Hazard from Maximum Hourly Exposure
70-Year Exposure at the MER from Benzene	1.22	0.005	0.009
70-Year Exposure at the MER from DPM	40.74	0.008	0.000
Total Exposure from Project Operations (70-Year Exposure Scenario starting at the 3rd Trimester)	**41.96**	**0.013**	**0.009**
Total Exposure from Project Construction[1] and Operations[2]	**38.96**	**0.015**	**0.009**
Applicable Threshold of Significance	**20**	**1**	**1**
Exceeds Individual Source Threshold in Any Scenario?	**Yes**	**No**	**No**

Notes: MER = Maximally Exposed Receptor
MER Location: 37°07'22.6"N 120°14'38.7"W (Receptor # 251)
[1] See Table 4-6 for a summary of estimated health risk metrics from project construction.
[2] Health risks from operational DPM for the combined total is calculated starting at age 2, after the completion of construction (cancer risk from operational DPM for 68 years under this scenario is 27.46 per million).

As most of the heavy-duty trucks visiting the project site would not be controllable by the applicant or future tenants, the project may continue to exceed the applicable threshold of significance for cancer risk. Therefore, the project's potential to expose sensitive receptors to elevated levels of DPM would be considered potentially significant and the impacts will be analyzed in the EIR.

Valley Fever

Valley fever, or coccidioidomycosis, is an infection caused by inhalation of the spores of the fungus, *Coccidioides immitis* (*C. immitis*). The spores live in soil and can live for an extended time in harsh environmental conditions. Activities or conditions that increase the amount of fugitive dust contribute to greater exposure, and they include dust storms, grading, and recreational off-road activities.

The San Joaquin Valley is considered an endemic area for Valley fever. The San Joaquin Valley is considered an endemic area for Valley fever. During 2000–2018, a total of 65,438 coccidioidomycosis cases were reported in California; median statewide annual incidence was 7.9 per 100,000 population and varied by region from 1.1 in Northern and Eastern California to 90.6 in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, with the largest increase (15-fold) occurring in the Northern San Joaquin Valley. Incidence has been consistently high in six counties in the Southern San Joaquin Valley (Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Tulare, and Merced counties) and Central Coast (San Luis Obispo County) regions. California experienced 7,393 new probable or confirmed cases of Valley fever onset in 2022. A total of 56 onset Valley fever cases were reported in Madera County in 2022 and 66 in 2023

The distribution of *C. immitis* within endemic areas is not uniform and growth sites are commonly small (a few tens of meters) and widely scattered. Known sites appear to have some ecological factors in common suggesting that certain physical, chemical, and biological conditions are more favorable for *C. immitis* growth. Avoidance, when possible, of sites favorable for the occurrence of *C. immitis* is a prudent risk management strategy. Listed below are ecologic factors and sites favorable for the occurrence of *C. immitis*:

- Rodent burrows (often a favorable site for C. immitis, perhaps because temperatures are more moderate and humidity higher than on the ground surface)
- Old (prehistoric) Indian campsites near fire pits
- Areas with sparse vegetation and alkaline soils
- Areas with high salinity soils
- Areas adjacent to arroyos (where residual moisture may be available)
- Packrat middens
- Upper 30 centimeters of the soil horizon, especially in virgin undisturbed soils
- Sandy, well-aerated soil with relatively high water-holding capacities

Sites within endemic areas less favorable for the occurrence of *C. immitis* include:

- Cultivated fields
- Heavily vegetated areas (e.g., grassy lawns)
- Higher elevations (above 7,000 feet)
- Areas where commercial fertilizers (e.g., ammonium sulfate) have been applied
- Areas that are continually wet
- Paved (asphalt or concrete) or oiled areas
- Soils containing abundant microorganisms
- Heavily urbanized areas where there is little undisturbed virgin soil.

The Project is situated on a site previously disturbed that does not provide a suitable habitat for spores. Specifically, the Project site has been previously disturbed and is sparsely covered with shrubbery. Therefore, development of the proposed Project would have a lower probability of the site having *C. immitis* growth sites than if the site had been previously undisturbed.

Although conditions are not favorable, construction activities could generate fugitive dust that contain *C. immitis* spores. The project will minimize the generation of fugitive dust during construction activities by complying with SJVAPCD's Regulation VIII. Therefore, this regulation, combined with the relatively low probability of the presence of *C. immitis* spores would reduce Valley fever impacts to less than significant.

During operations, dust emissions are anticipated to be relatively small because most of the project area where operational activities would occur would be occupied by the proposed buildings, landscaping, and pavement associated with the proposed A-Z Truck Center development; it is anticipated that all internal travel areas would be paved. This condition would lessen the possibility of the Project from providing habitat suitable for *C. immitis* spores and for generating fugitive dust that may contribute to Valley fever exposure. Impacts would be less than significant.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos

Review of the map of areas where naturally occurring asbestos in California are likely to occur found no such areas in the immediate project area. Therefore, development of the project is not anticipated to expose receptors to naturally occurring asbestos. Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact Analysis Summary

In summary, the Project would not result in a significant impact from localized criteria pollutants. The project is not a significant source of TAC emissions during construction when construction is considered without project operations. The Project is not in an area with suitable habitat for Valley fever spores and is not in an area known to have naturally occurring asbestos. The Project would be a significant source of TAC emissions from its generation of DPM emissions, primarily from heavy-duty trucks during operations. The project may continue to exceed the applicable cancer risk threshold, even after incorporation of feasible and enforceable mitigation that would reduce the impact. Therefore, the project's potential to expose sensitive receptors to elevated levels of DPM would be considered potentially significant impact and the effects will be analyzed further in the EIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Two situations create a potential for odor impact. The first occurs when a new odor source is located near an existing sensitive receptor. The second occurs when a new sensitive receptor locates near an existing source of odor. According to the *CBIA v. BAAQMD* ruling, impacts of existing sources of odors on the project are not subject to CEQA review. Therefore, the analysis to determine if the project would locate new sensitive receptors near an existing source of odor is not used to determine significance for this impact.

Odor impacts on residential areas and other sensitive receptors, such as hospitals, day-care centers, schools, etc. warrant the closest scrutiny, but consideration should also be given to other land uses where people may congregate, such as recreational facilities, worksites, and commercial areas.

Although the project site is within approximately 200 feet from the nearest sensitive receptor, the project is not expected to be a significant source of odors. The screening levels for these land use types are shown in

Table 4-10.

Table 4-10 Screening Levels for Potential Odor Sources

Odor Generator	Screening Distance
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	2 miles
Sanitary Landfill	1 mile
Transfer Station	1 mile
Composting Facility	1 mile
Petroleum Refinery	2 miles
Asphalt Batch Plant	1 mile
Chemical Manufacturing	1 mile
Fiberglass Manufacturing	1 mile
Painting/Coating Operations (e.g., auto body shop)	1 mile
Food Processing Facility	1 mile
Feed Lot/Dairy	1 mile
Rendering Plant	1 mile
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	2 miles

Source of Thresholds: San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). 2015. Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts. February 19. Website: https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/FINAL-DRAFT-GAMAQI.PDF . Accessed October 11, 2023.

The occurrence and severity of odor impacts depend on numerous factors, including the nature, frequency, and intensity of the source; wind speed and direction; and the presence of sensitive receptors. Although offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm, they still can be very unpleasant, leading to considerable distress and often generating citizen complaints to local governments and regulatory agencies. Project operations would not be anticipated to produce odorous emissions, as the project would not be considered an odor generator based on the land uses shown in

Table 4-10. Construction activities associated with the proposed project could result in short-term odorous emissions from diesel exhaust associated with construction equipment. However, these emissions would be intermittent and would dissipate rapidly from the source. In addition, this diesel-powered equipment would only be present onsite temporarily during construction activities. The temporary and intermittent nature of construction activities would decrease the likelihood of the odors concentrating in a single area or lingering for any notable period of time. As such, these odors would likely not be noticeable for extended periods of time beyond the project's site boundaries. Therefore, construction would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people from use of diesel-powered equipment. As there would not be conditions under which the project would have the potential to expose a substantial number of people to odors emitted from construction or operations of the project, and the impact would be less than significant.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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 US 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 provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.				X

4.4.1 Environmental Setting

A Biological Resource Assessment was conducted by Argonaut Ecological Consulting, Inc. (dated September 12, 2023, revised September 4, 2024) and is provided in Appendix B. The assessment includes assessing the types of current habitats and sensitive species associated with the habitats. The biological evaluation methods include performing site reconnaissance, reviewing public and commercial databases, historical and current aerial photographs, and other published information and data. The following environmental setting summarizes information from the Biological Resource Assessment.

Methodology

Data and Literature Review

Documents and sources of information used to prepare this evaluation include the following:

- *Aerial photography (Google Earth®, Bing®, and historic aerials).*
- *California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Natural Diversity Chowchilla and Berenda Quadrangles.*
- *EcoAtles 2023.*
- *U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Fresno County (Soils mapper).*
- *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetland Inventory Map.*
- *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) query, July 28, 2023.*
- *U.S. Geological Survey, Historical Topographic Map, Chowchilla and Berenda Quadrangles, 1924, University of Texas, Austin, Perry-Castañeda Map Collection*

Aerial Photography and Wetland Mapping

Historical aerial photographs dating back to the 1980s of the Project site were reviewed to identify site features and determine land-use changes over time. Also reviewed were wetland mapping and aerial photographs to determine if the Project site recently supported wetlands.

Field Investigation

A site investigation was performed on August 30, 2023. The entire Project site was reviewed, and all habitat features were mapped. Soils, vegetation, and drainage patterns within the Project site a were inspected to determine the habitat present and suitability for species of concern. The site was walked using transects to provide full coverage.

Physical Resources

Climate

The Project site climate is typical of the central San Joaquin Valley, with long, hot, dry summers and cool, mild winters. In the winter, rainfall averages approximately 9.99 inches per year, falling mainly between November and April (Western Regional Climate Center, 2004). During 2021 total rainfall, the Madera region had 11.37 inches from September 2022 – June 2023.

Topography, Drainage, and Soils

Topography and Drainage: The Project site lies within the Central Valley and is 250 feet (msl). The elevation has remained roughly the same since the early 1900s. The Project site naturally slopes toward the south-southwest. The Project site is between Berenda Slough to the south and Ash Slough to the north.

Soils: The site has one soil type: Madera fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes. The soil is not considered hydric soil. Hydric soil sometimes indicates periodic inundation and may indicate the potential presence of wetlands.

Habitat

There are several California habitat classification systems. Most classification systems describe natural communities without established classifications for developed or agricultural habitats. CALVEG is a USDA Forest Service product providing a comprehensive spatial dataset of existing vegetation cover over California. The data were created using a combination of automated systematic procedures, remote sensing classification, photo editing, and field-based observations. Analyses are based "on a crosswalk of the CALVEG classifications to the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHR)." Calveg lists the site as "Agriculture/Non-Native/Ruderal."

Waters/Wetland

According to the National Wetland Inventory Map, no drainages, streams, creeks, or wetlands are in the Project site. The entire Project site was walked to look for any evidence of potential wetlands/waters habitat, and wetland, waters, or any other aquatic habitat (either perennial or seasonal) is present. There are no seasonal wetlands within the Project site or other waters of the U.S./waters of the State.

Special Status Species

A query of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and the USFWS IPaC was performed to determine which special status species could be present within the Project site. No critical habitat exists for any species within or near the Project site. The Project site is not within any Critical Habitat for any listed species.

Birds: The CNDDB and the IPaC include several bird species that have the potential to be present within or near the Project site, including migratory birds. However, there are large trees along the Caltrans right of way, including palm trees, therefore there is some potential suitable raptor nesting habitat adjacent to the Project site. The biological survey was performed on the last day of the nesting season. Therefore potential nesting habitat cannot be ruled out, especially given nesting could occur in the future.

Plants: The CNDDB and IPaC identify numerous special status plant species. Most plants are species associated with natural habitat (Valley grassland, cismontane, cenepode scrub) or within wetlands and require alkaline soils. No suitable habitat exists for any of these species within or immediately adjacent to the Project site.

Conclusion

The Biological Resource Assessment identified the following conclusions and recommended mitigation measures to avoid any potential impacts to special status species.

- The Project site was in orchard production until around 1998; after that, it was either dry land farms or put into dry land farming. The Project site appears to be routinely disked and/or mowed.
- There are no suitable nesting trees for tree-nesting raptors within the Project site. However, there is suitable nesting habitat along the Caltrans right-of-way and within the vicinity of the Project site.
- No suitable habitat exists for special-status species, other than raptors and migratory birds, within or near the Project site.

4.4.2 Impact Assessment

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 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Potentially Significant. The Project site is currently vacant and undeveloped, with no existing structures or improvements. The existing biotic site conditions and resources of the Project site can be defined primarily as ruderal and is disturbed due to annual discing. There is herbaceous vegetation throughout the Project site. There is a line of palm trees along State Route (SR) 99. No shrubs, or water features present on the site.

According to the Biological Resource Assessment, no suitable habitat exists *for special*-status species, other than raptors and migratory birds, within or near the Project site. Although no nests are found during the field investigation on August 30, 2023, there is suitable nesting habitat (i.e., mature trees) along the Caltrans right-of-way and within the vicinity of the Project site. Therefore, the project may have a potentially significant impact on special-status species and the effects will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. According to the Biological Resource Assessment, there are no known riparian habitats or other sensitive natural communities identified on the Project site or within the immediate vicinity of the Project. In addition, the site does not contain any water features that would provide habitat for riparian species. Further, the site consists of ruderal, non-native vegetation. For these reasons, it can be determined that the Project site does not provide any riparian or sensitive natural community habitat and thus, no impact would occur because of the Project.

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?

No Impact. Based on the search of the NWI, the Project site does not contain any federally protected wetlands. As a result, it can be determined that the Project site would not result in any impact on state or federally protected wetlands and no impact would occur because of the Project.

d) Would the project 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?

Less than Significant Impact. Wildlife movement corridors are linear habitats that function to connect two (2) or more areas of significant wildlife habitat. These corridors may function on a local level as links between small habitat patches (e.g., streams in urban settings) or may provide critical connections between regionally significant habitats (e.g., deer movement corridors).

Wildlife corridors typically include vegetation and topography that facilitate the movements of wild animals from one area of suitable habitat to another, in order to fulfill foraging, breeding, and territorial needs. These corridors often provide cover and protection from predators that may be lacking in surrounding habitats. Wildlife corridors generally include riparian zones and similar linear expanses of contiguous habitat.

According to the Biological Resource Assessment, the habitat value of the Project site for wildlife is limited, and the site does not contain suitable habitat that could support wildlife species in nesting, breeding, foraging, or escaping from predators. There is no evidence that the plant communities (non-native herbaceous land cover) present in the area support wildlife movement corridors or wildlife nursery sites. The Project site and its surroundings are

heavily impacted by human activity (disking, residential and commercial uses, vehicular traffic, etc.) so overall use by wildlife is likely low. Due to these conditions, it can be determined that the Project would not interfere with wildlife movement and a less than significant impact would result from the Project.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No Impact. CMC *Chapter 12.16 —Trees and Shrubs* establishes standards and regulations related to the planting, maintenance, and removal of trees and shrubs in public space. CMC *Chapter 18.48 – Heritage Preservation* protects any resource that could be designated as a heritage in the City, including trees and natural objects. There is a line of palm trees along State Route (SR) 99. The Project does not affect or remove these existing trees. As such, the Project would have no impact.

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?

No Impact. The Project site is within the PG&E San Joaquin Valley Operation and Maintenance Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The HCP covers PG&E's routine operations and maintenance activities and minor new construction, on any PG&E gas and electrical transmission and distribution facilities, easements, private access routes, or lands owned by PG&E. The Project would not conflict or interfere with HCP. The City, County, and Regional Planning Agency do not have any other adopted or approved plans for habitat or natural community conservation. For these reasons, the Project would have no impact.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	X			
b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	X			
c)	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	X			

4.5.1 Environmental Setting

A Cultural Resource Assessment was conducted by Peak & Associates, Inc. (dated June 19, 2023) and is provided in Appendix C. The assessment includes regulatory context, cultural setting, record search, and a field survey conducted on June 16, 2023. The assessment concluded that there will be no impact on important cultural resources from implementation of the Project. A summary of the record search, field survey, and recommendations are provided below.

California Historical Resource Information System Record Search

A record search was conducted for the Project site and surrounding area (0.5-mile radius) at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) on May 30, 2023 (Records Search File No. 23-174). A portion of the Project site and surrounding area had been surveyed by Napton in 1989 (Report #MA-00304). There are no historical resources recorded in the Project site; however, a historical structure located north of Avenue 26 within the 0.5-radius was recorded as P-20-003120.

Field Assessment

Michael Lawson completed a field survey of the Project site on June 16, 2023. Lawson checked for any evidence of prehistoric or historic period resources.

The survey area is a narrow strip of flat field directly adjacent to State Route 99, northbound side, with a frontage road on the NE boundary that provides access to new subdivisions and open lots. A chain link fence separates the survey area from the freeway, and another fence runs along the northern border with a car dealership.

The survey area is flat, with a slight drainage swale running along the freeway-side. Mature palm trees grow in a line twenty feet northeast of the freeway fencing, along the length of the parcel. Whether or not the survey area has been shaped or graded as part of freeway construction is not obvious. The entire parcel beginning 8’ northeast of the palms has been plowed for fire prevention, including the acreage adjacent to and southwest of the southwest end of the parcel.

Soil was determined to be a light brown silty loam with little stone inclusion. Micro particles of the silt contain granitic elements. Soil color and constituents are uniform throughout the survey area. Aside from the landscaped southwest portion of the parcel with palm trees and low ground cover in between, most of the volunteer vegetation has been mechanically removed or tilled in. Due to plowing, soil visibility was excellent in most of the acreage. In the remaining strip of landscaped area next to Highway 99, ground visibility was good.

Parallel transects no more than ten meters apart were walked to conduct a general survey, which was adequate due to lack of sensitivity for possible resources. No artifacts or features, Native American or historical in nature were discovered during the survey.

Recommendations

There is always a possibility that a site may exist in the project and be obscured by vegetation, siltation, or historic activities, leaving no surface evidence. If artifacts, exotic rock, shell, or bone are uncovered during the construction, work should stop in that area immediately. A qualified archeologist should be contacted to examine and evaluate the deposit and consult with the appropriate Native American groups.

AB 52 Tribal Consultation

The City of Chowchilla conducted formal tribal consultation pursuant to AB 52 (Chapter 532, Statutes 2014) on June 24, 2024. Letters were sent to the Dumna Wo-Wah Tribal Government, North Fork Mono Tribe, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, North Valley Yokuts Tribe, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, and the Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band. Consultation for AB 52 ended on July 24, 2024. No responses were received.

City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan

The General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element established goals, policies, and implementation measures to preserve the cultural resources of the City, as listed below.

Objective OS 14 *To promote the City of Chowchilla's cultural resources as a means to enhance the City's identity as an important center of the Central Valley history.*

> ***Policy OS 14.1*** *Promote the preservation of cultural resources to ensure that citizens of Chowchilla have an opportunity to understand and appreciate the City's unique heritage.*
>
> ***Policy OS 14.2*** *Promote neighborhood / City identity and the role of historic preservation in community enhancement.*
>
> ***Policy OS 14.3*** *Promote an understanding of the significance of the City's cultural resources, the criteria for historic designation, historic design review processes, building permit requirements, and methods for rehabilitating and preserving historic buildings, sites and landscapes.*

Objective OS 15 *Identify, preserve and enhance archaeological, cultural and historical resources.*

> ***Policy OS 15.1*** *Require archaeological studies by a certified archeologist / historian in areas determined by the City or by a state or federal agency to have potential archeological or historical significance prior to approval of development and redevelopment projects.*
>
> > ***Implementation Measure OS 15.1. A*** *Prior to project approval, the City of Chowchilla shall require the project applicant to have a qualified professional archeologist / historian conduct the following activities: 1) a record research at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center at California State University, Bakersfield and other appropriate historical repositories to determine the extent*

of previously recorded sites and surveys within the project area; 2) a field survey to locate, map and record prehistoric and historic resources; and 3) prepare a cultural resource inventory and evaluation reports meeting California Office of Historic Preservation Standards to document the results of the record search and field survey, and to provide significance evaluations and management recommendations for any identified historical resources with the project area.

Implementation Measure OS 15.1. B In the event that archaeological resources are discovered during ground disturbance activities, the City shall require that grading and construction work within 100 feet of the find shall be suspended until significance of the features can be determined by a qualified professional archaeologist. The City will require that qualified archeologist make recommendations for measures necessary to protect the find, or to undertake data recovery, excavation, analysis, and curation of archaeological materials, as appropriate.

Policy OS 15.2 Protect sites of archaeological significance and ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal cultural resources protection and management laws in its planning and project review process.

Implementation Measure OS 15.2.A The City of Chowchilla shall restrict the circulation of archeological resource location information to prevent potential site vandalism.

Objective OS 16 To continue an active program of identifying, designating, protecting and enhancing the City's cultural and historical resources.

Policy OS 16.1 Promote the preservation and restoration of historical sites and structures within the City of Chowchilla of local, regional, state or national significance.

Implementation Measure OS 16.1. A The City of Chowchilla shall actively pursue a comprehensive program of documenting historic buildings, structures, districts, sites, objects, landscape and natural resources.

Implementation Measure OS 16.1. B The City of Chowchilla shall maintain a current database of cultural resources and use that database as a primary informational resource for protecting cultural resources.

Implementation Measure OS 16.1. C The City of Chowchilla shall continually update the identification of registered cultural resources and cultural resources eligible for listing in local, state, and national registers.

4.5.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

a) ***Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?***

Potentially Significant Impact. Based on the CHRIS Records Search conducted on May 30, 2023 and the field survey conducted on June 16, 2023, there are no known local, state, or federal designated historical resources pursuant to *Section 15064.5* on the Project site. While there is no evidence that historical resources exist on the Project site, there is some possibility that hidden and buried resources may exist with no surface evidence that may be impacted by future physical development. Therefore, the project may have a potentially significant impact on historical resources and the effects will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Potentially Significant Impact. Based on the CHRIS Records Search conducted on May 30, 2023 and the field survey conducted on June 16, 2023, there are no known archeological resources pursuant to *Section 15064.5* on the Project site. While there is no evidence that archeological resources exist, there is some possibility that existing structures qualify as historical resources or hidden and buried resources may exist with no surface evidence that may be impacted by future physical development. Therefore, the project may have a potentially significant impact on archeological resources and the effects will be analyzed further in the EIR.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Potentially Significant Impact. There is no evidence that human remains exist on the Project site. Nevertheless, there is some possibility that a non-visible buried site may exist and may be uncovered during ground disturbing construction activities which would constitute a significant impact. If any human remains are discovered during construction, then the Project would be subject to CCR *Section 15064.5(e)*, PRC *Section 5097.98*, and California Health and Safety Code *Section 7050.5*. Regulations contained in these sections address and protect human burial remains. However, the Project may have a potentially significant impact on undisturbed human remains and the effects will be analyzed further in the EIR.

4.6 ENERGY

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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	

4.6.1 Environmental Setting

The Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum was prepared by Johnson Johson and Miller Air Quality Consulting Services (dated February 6, 2024) to evaluate whether energy generated from construction and/or operation of the proposed A-Z Truck Center Project would cause significant impacts to air resources in the Project area. The respective analyses were conducted within the context of CEQA.

The proposed project would be served with electricity provided by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). In 2020, approximately 85 percent of the electricity PG&E supplied was from GHG-free sources including nuclear, large hydroelectric, and eligible renewable sources of energy.

The energy requirements for the proposed Project were determined using the construction and operational estimates generated from the Air Quality Analysis. The calculation worksheets for diesel fuel consumption rates for off-road construction equipment, gasoline and diesel fuel consumption rates for on-road vehicles during construction and operations are provided in Attachment C in Appendix A. The modeling parameters, assumptions, findings report, and appendices are provided in Appendix A. Results are incorporated herein.

Modeling Results

Short-Term Construction: Off-Road Equipment

The proposed project is anticipated to begin construction in June of 2024 and last approximately 24 months. Table 4-11 provides estimates of the project's construction fuel consumption from off-road construction equipment for the entire project, categorized by construction activity.

Table 4-11 Construction Off-Road Fuel Consumption

Project Component	Construction Activity	Fuel Consumption (gallons)
A-Z Truck Center Project Construction	Site Preparation	1,277
	Grading	4,620
	Paving	710
	Building Construction	16,190
	Architectural Coating	82
Total from Project Construction		**22,879**

As shown in Table 4-11, off-road construction equipment usage associated with the proposed project would be estimated to consume approximately 22,879 gallons of diesel fuel over the entire construction period. There are no unusual project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of the state. Therefore, it is expected that construction fuel consumption associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than at other construction sites in the region.

Short-Term Construction: On-Road Vehicles

On-road vehicles for construction workers, vendors, and haulers would require fuel for travel to and from the site during construction. Table 4-12 provides an estimate of the total on-road vehicle fuel usage during construction.

Table 4-12 Construction On-Road Fuel Consumption

Project Component	Construction Activity	Total Annual Fuel Consumption (gallons)
A-Z Truck Center Project Construction	Site Preparation	240
	Grading	1,143
	Paving	461
	Building Construction	28,959
	Architectural Coating	466
Total from Project Construction		**31,269**

As shown in Table 4-12, construction trips are estimated to consume approximately 31,269 gallons of gasoline and diesel fuel combined. There are no unusual project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of the City of Chowchilla or the larger Madera County area. Therefore, it is expected that construction fuel consumption associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than at other construction sites in the region.

Long-Term Operations: Transportation Energy Demand

Table 4-13 provides an estimate of the daily and annual fuel consumed by vehicles traveling to and from the proposed project. These estimates were derived using the same assumptions used in the operational air quality analysis for the proposed project.

Table 4-13 Long-Term Operational Vehicle Fuel Consumption

Vehicle Type	Percent of Vehicle Trips	Daily VMT	Annual VMT	Average Fuel Economy (miles/ gallon)[1]	Total Daily Fuel Consumption (gallons)	Total Annual Fuel Consumption (gallons)
Passenger Cars (LDA)	16.16	12,944	4,724,456	30.44	425.2	155,213
Light Trucks and Medium Duty Vehicles (LDT1, LDT2, MDV)	52.91	42,377	15,467,497	22.67	1869.3	682,288
Light-Heavy to Medium-Heavy Diesel Trucks (LHD1, LHD2, and MHDT)	7.31	5,854	2,136,688	11.62	503.9	183,936

Vehicle Type	Percent of Vehicle Trips	Daily VMT	Annual VMT	Average Fuel Economy (miles/ gallon)[1]	Total Daily Fuel Consumption (gallons)	Total Annual Fuel Consumption (gallons)
Heavy-Heavy Diesel Trucks (HHDT)	22.59	18,090	6,602,860	6.26	2888.6	1,054,324
Motorcycles (MCY)	0.04	28	10,361	40.54	0.7	256
Other (OBUS, UBUS, SBUS, MH)	1.00	801	292,348	7.43	107.8	39,344
Total	**100.0**	**80,094**	**29,234,210**	—	**5,796**	**2,115,361**

Notes: Percent of Vehicle Trips and VMT based on values in the project-specific CalEEMod output files.
"Other" consists of buses and motor homes.
VMT = vehicle miles traveled

As shown above, daily vehicular fuel consumption is estimated to be 5,796 gallons of gasoline and diesel fuel combined. Annual consumption is estimated at 2,115,361 gallons, with HHD trucks accounting for 1,054,324 gallons of the total (see Attachment C).

In terms of land use planning decisions, the proposed project would constitute development within an established community and would not be opening a new geographical area for development such that it would draw mostly new trips or substantially lengthen existing trips. In addition, the vehicle fleet mix would be typical of other Truck Center businesses in the region. For these reasons, it would be expected that vehicular fuel consumption associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than for any other similar land use activities in the region.

Long-Term Operations: Building Energy Demand

As shown in Table 4-14 and Table 4-15, the proposed project is estimated to demand 2,580,433 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity and 6,901,686 kilo-British Thermal Units (kBTU) of natural gas, respectively, on an annual basis. The proposed project would be built according to code and would be subject to the latest building standards in effect at the time that building permits are issued.

Table 4-14 Long-Term Electricity Usage

Land Use	Total Electricity Demand (kWh/year)
Hotel	878,400
Fast Food Restaurant w/o Drive Thru	250,225
Convenience Market (24 hour)	750,833
Automobile Care Center	244,876
Parking Lot	410,777
Unenclosed Parking Structure	45,322
Other Non-Asphalt Surfaces	0
Other Asphalt Surfaces	0
Total Project	**2,580,433**

Notes: kWh = kilowatt hour
The estimates above represent total estimated electricity consumption on an annual basis from operations of the proposed project.

Table 4-15 Long-Term Natural Gas Usage

Land Use	Total Natural Gas Demand (kBTU/year)
Hotel	4,928,827
Fast Food Restaurant w/o Drive Thru	700,189
Convenience Market (24 hour)	427,001
Automobile Care Center	845,669
Parking Lot	0
Unenclosed Parking Structure	0
Other Non-Asphalt Surfaces	0
Other Asphalt Surfaces	0
Total Project	**6,901,686**
Notes: DU = Dwelling Units; kBTU = 1,000 British Thermal Units	

4.6.2 Impact Assessment

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?

Less than Significant Impact. This impact addresses the energy consumption from both the short-term construction and long-term operations are discussed separately below.

Construction Energy Demand

As summarized in Table 4-11 and Table 4-12, the proposed project would require 22,879 gallons of diesel fuel for construction off-road equipment and 31,269 gallons of gasoline and diesel for on-road vehicles during construction. There are no unusual project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of the state. Therefore, it is expected that construction fuel consumption associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than at other construction sites in the region, and as such, impacts would be less than significant.

Long-Term Energy Demand: Building Energy Demand

Buildings and infrastructure constructed pursuant to the proposed project would comply with the versions of CCR Titles 20 and 24, including California Green Building Standards (CALGreen), that are applicable at the time that building permits are issued. The proposed project is estimated to demand 2,580,433 kWh of electricity per year and 6,901,686 kBTU of natural gas per year (see Table 4-14 and Table 4-15). This would represent an increase in demand for electricity and natural gas compared to existing conditions, as the project site is currently undeveloped.

It would be expected that building energy consumption associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than for any other similar buildings in the region. Current state regulatory requirements for new building construction contained in the CALGreen and Title 24 standards would increase

energy efficiency and reduce energy demand in comparison to existing commercial/non-residential structures, and therefore would reduce actual environmental effects associated with energy use from the proposed project. Additionally, the CALGreen and Title 24 standards have increased efficiency standards through each update. The proposed project would be built in accordance with regulations in effect at the time building permits are issues and would generate on-site renewable energy from inclusion of solar panels at a later date.

Therefore, while the proposed project would result in increased electricity demand, the electricity would be consumed more efficiently and would be typical of other truck center projects. If buildout of the project is delayed, compliance with future building code standards would result in increased energy efficiency.

Based on the above information, the proposed project would not result in the inefficient or wasteful consumption of electricity or natural gas, and impacts would be less than significant.

Long-Term Energy Demand: Transportation Energy Demands

The daily vehicular fuel consumption is estimated to be 5,796 gallons of gasoline and diesel fuel combined. Annual consumption is estimated at 2,115,361 gallons (see Table 4-13). The proposed project would constitute development within an established community and would not be opening a new geographical area for development such that it would draw mostly new trips or substantially lengthen existing trips. The proposed project would be well-positioned to accommodate an existing population and anticipated growth in the City of Chowchilla. The project is located adjacent to existing Highway 99, Montgomery Lake Way and Genoa Lake Way. In addition, vehicles accessing the project site would be typical of other business uses in the region. For these reasons, it would be expected that vehicular fuel consumption associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than for any other similar land use activities in the region, and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The City's General Plan includes strategies to promote energy efficiency in development in the City of Chowchilla. These General Plan policies require City action and are not applicable at the individual project level. However, the proposed project would not impede or conflict with any of the energy strategies outlined in the General Plan due to compliance with all local rules and regulations. The proposed project would comply with the versions of CCR Titles 20 and 24, including CALGreen, that are applicable at the time that building permits are issued and with all applicable City measures Part 11, Chapter 4 and 5, of the State's Title 24 energy efficiency standards establishes mandatory measures for residential and nonresidential buildings. Examples of these mandatory measure include solar, electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, bicycle parking, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, and material conservation and resource efficiency. The proposed project would be required to comply with mandatory measures; specifically, the project would comply with mandatory measures for non-residential development. Where applicable, the project would comply with more stringent local regulations. In addition, the proposed project would constitute development within an established community and would not be opening a new geographical area for development such that it would draw mostly new trips, or substantially lengthen existing trips. The proposed project would be well positioned to accommodate existing population. The project is located at the southwestern edge of the City of Chowchilla. The area to the east, southeast and northeast of the project site are primarily residences, with most of the City of Chowchilla over one (1) mile to the northeast. The rest of the project is surrounded by farmland with a few scattered rural residences. The project would provide connectivity within the project site and to adjacent uses. Compliance with these aforementioned mandatory measures and project design features would ensure that the proposed project would

not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing energy use or increasing the use of renewable energy. Therefore, operational energy efficiency and renewable energy standards consistency impacts would be less than significant.

For the above reasons, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.

4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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 risks to life or property?				X

e)	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater 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			

4.7.1 Environmental Setting

Chowchilla is located within the San Joaquin Valley which is part of the Great Valley Geomorphic Providence that is bounded to the east by the Sierra Nevada Mountain range, to the west by the Coastal Range, and to the south by the Tehachapi mountains. Chowchilla has infrequent and low historic seismic activity. In addition, the city has no known active earthquake faults (i.e., faults showing activity within the last 11,000 years) and is not in any Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones. [5] [6]

No known geologic active or potentially active faults or instability are found in the City or the General Plan Planning Area. Earthquakes from nearby faults would most likely generate ground motion of shaking, but there is no history of this causing damage in the area. Compliance with the California Building Code (CBC) would be sufficient to prevent significant damage during seismic events.

Faulting

There are no known active faults in the city. No Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault zoning has been established for the city. According to the General Plan, there are four (4) fault zones in the surrounding region, including the San Andreas Fault (approximately 75 miles west), Origalita Fault (approximately 42 miles northwest), and Owens Valley Faults (approximately 109 miles east), and White Wolf Fault (approximately 141 miles southeast), delineated under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act that could potentially pose seismic activity within the General Plan Planning Area.

Ground Shaking

Based on the location of the City and the proximity to nearby active or potentially active faults, the entire City could experience ground shaking during an earthquake of one of several faults. The National Geophysical Data Center (NGDC) lists the results of ground shake events on their database. For Chowchilla, the maximum ground shaking intensities, with Modified Mercalli (MM) intensity range from minor (MM III) to moderate (MM VI) since 1926. MM VI is associated with damage to some heavy furniture moved, and a few instances of fallen plaster with only slight damage.

Liquefaction

[5] According to the California Department of Conservation, *"An active fault, for the purposes of the Alquist-Priolo Act, is one that has ruptured in the last 11,000 years."*

[6] California Department of Conservation. "CGS Seismic Hazard Program: Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zones." Accessed on January 25, 2024, https://gis.data.ca.gov/maps/ee92a5f9f4ee4ec5aa731d3245ed9f53/explore?location=37.213952%2C-117.946341%2C7.19

Liquefaction occurs when ground shaking causes water-saturated soils to become fluid and lose strength. This can result in loss of foundation support, failures due to lateral spreading, and settlements of affected soils after an earthquake when excess pore water pressures are dissipated. Conditions necessary for liquefaction are saturated, loose, cohesion less, granular fine-grained soils. According to the General Plan, the potential for liquefaction within the City is limited to the areas paralleling the two (2) watercourses traverse the Planning Area – Ash and Berenda Sloughs.

Erosion

Soil erosion and loss of topsoil can be caused by natural factors, such as wind and flowing water, and human activity. Wind and flowing water are the primary agents of erosion in the San Joaquin Valley.

Ground Subsidence

Ground subsidence is the settling or sinking of surface soil deposits with little or no horizontal motion. Soils with high silt or clay content are subject to subsidence. Land subsidence can also occur when the groundwater table is depleted.

Subsurface Soils

A search of the Web Soil Survey by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates that the following soils comprise the Project site. [7]

> ***MaA:*** *Madera fine sandy loam, deep, 0 to 3 percent slopes, moderately well drained, high runoff, with no potential of flooding and ponding. The depth to water table is more than 80 inches. The MaA soils account for 100% of the Project site.*

California Building Code

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 is assigned to the California Building Standards Commission, which, by law, is responsible for coordinating all building standards. The California Building Code incorporates by reference the International Building Code with necessary California amendments. About one-third of the text within the California Building Standards Code has been tailored for California earthquake conditions. Construction within the City of Chowchilla is governed by the seismic safety standards of *Chapter 15.06.060 – Seismic Zoning Requirements* of the Code. These standards are applicable to all new buildings and are required to provide the necessary safety from earthquake related effected emanating from fault activity.

City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan

The General Plan Public Safety Element established goals, policies, and implementation measures related to Geology and Soils of the City, as listed below:

Objective PS 1 *Minimize risks of potential property damage and personal injury posed by geologic or seismic activity.*

> ***Policy PS 1.1*** *Areas within the 2040 General Plan Planning Area know to be subject to geologic or seismic instability (e.g., liquefaction, slumping) shall be designated as Open Space to prohibit development and avoid creating a potential public safety hazard.*

[7] United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. "Web Soil Survey." Accessed on April 19, 2024, https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx

Implementation Measure PS 1.1.A *The City of Chowchilla shall rely on the most current and comprehensive geologic hazard mapping available to assist in identifying and designating areas of known or questionable geologic and seismic hazard conditions Open Space on the 2040 General Plan Land Use Diagram, as well as for evaluating potential geologic or seismic hazards associated with new and redevelopment projects.*

Policy PS 1.2 *Geologic and engineering studies are required for all new and redevelopment projects where known or questionable geological or seismic hazard conditions exist.*

Implementation Measure PS 1.2.A *Where questionable geological or seismic conditions exist, the City of Chowchilla shall require geologic and soils studies to identify potential hazards and, if applicable, measures to mitigate identified hazards as part of the approval process for all new or redevelopment projects prior to issuing grading permits.*

Policy PS 1.3 *Geologic and engineering studies are required for all public and critical facility projects (e.g., school, hospital, utility substation, water storage reservoir, wastewater treatment facility, public safety building, bridges and overpasses).*

Implementation Measure PS 1.3.A *All new and redevelopment projects, utilities, public or critical facility projects that required geologic and engineering studies shall be designed, sited and constructed in a manner that mitigates the risks of potential property damage and personal injury associated with the specific geologic and / or seismic conditions identified in the project geologic and engineering studies to minim shall identify shall be constructed in a manner that mitigates site specific geotechnical challenges and minimizes the risk to the public from seismic hazards.*

Policy PS 1.4 *Ensure new and redevelopment projects comply with adopted seismic and geotechnical requirements of the Uniform Building Code.*

Implementation Measure PS 1.4.A *The City of Chowchilla shall continue to incorporate appropriate earthquake prevention standards, as they become available, into the City uniform building codes and require all new structures be engineered to meet seismic safety code standards.*

4.7.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

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.

No Impact. There are no known active earthquake faults in Chowchilla, inclusive of the Project site, nor is Chowchilla within an Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zone as established by the Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Act. Thus, the Project would not cause rupture of a known earthquake fault and therefore, would have no impact.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than Significant Impact. Chowchilla, inclusive of the Project site, is in an area that is traditionally characterized by relatively low seismic activity. Future development would be required to comply with current seismic protection

standards in the CBC which would significantly limit potential damage to structures and thereby reduce potential impacts including the risk of loss, injury, or death. Compliance with the CBC would ensure a less than significant impact.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than Significant Impact. There are no known active earthquake faults in Chowchilla and Chowchilla has historically been subject to low to moderate ground shaking. The Project site is in an area with low susceptibility to liquefaction with no known geologic hazards or unstable soil conditions. Due to the distance from an active fault, there is low potential for ground rupture. Further, the Project site is primarily made up of fine sandy loam soils that are well drained, which are less susceptible to liquefaction than silt or sands. In addition, development would be required to comply with CBC, the city's grading and drainage standards, and specific requirements that address liquefaction. For these reasons, the Project does not have any aspect that could result in seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction and a less than significant impact would occur because of the Project.

iv. Landslides?

No Impact. The topography of the annexation boundary and Project site is relatively flat with stable, native soils, and the site is not in the immediate vicinity of rivers or creeks that would be more susceptible to landslides. Therefore, no impact would occur because of the Project.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Soil erosion and loss of topsoil can be caused by natural factors, such as wind and flowing water, and human activity. Construction of the Project site would require typical site preparation activities such as grading and trenching which may result in the potential for short-term soil disturbance or erosion impacts. Construction would also involve the use of water that may cause further soil disturbance. Such impacts would be addressed through compliance with regulations set by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Namely, the SWRCB requires sites larger than one (1) acre to comply with the General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. The General Permit Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ requires the development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) by a certified Qualified SWPPP Developer (QSD) prior to the start of construction activities. The SWPPP estimates the sediment risk associated with construction activities and includes best management practices (BMP) to control erosion. BMPs specific to erosion control cover erosion, sediment, tracking, and waste management controls. Implementation of the SWPPP minimizes the potential for the Project to result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. In addition, development of the Project site would comply with CMC Chap*ter 15.60 Floodplain Management* and *Chapter 18.52 Landscape Standards* to control soil erosion and erosion potential during Project operations. With these provisions in place, impacts to soil and topsoil by the Project would be considered 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 landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

Less than Significant Impact. Ground subsidence is the settling or sinking of surface soil deposits with little or no horizontal motion. Soils with high silt or clay content are subject to subsidence. Subsidence typically occurs in areas with groundwater withdrawal or oil or natural gas extraction. The site is not within an identified CalGEM oil/gas field. The topography of the site is relatively flat with stable, native soils and no apparent unique or significant landforms. Furthermore, the Project site is in an area of low significance for seismic activity due to its distance from faults. Such factors minimize the potential for other geologic hazards such as landslides, lateral spreading,

subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Therefore, any development on the native, stable soils is unlikely to become unstable and result in geologic hazards. In addition, the Project would be required to comply with current seismic protection standards in the CBC which would significantly limit potential seismic-related hazards such as landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Compliance with the CBC would ensure a less than significant impact.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

No Impact. The Project site is relatively flat with native soils of fine sandy loam, which is not expansive. Sandy loam soils are not classified as expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code and would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. Thus, no impact would occur because of the Project.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

No Impact. The Project site is within City Limits and will connect to the city's wastewater services. Thus, no permanent septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be installed, and no impact would occur.

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

Potentially Significant Impact. There are no known paleontological resources or unique geological features known to the City in the Project site. Nevertheless, there is some possibility that a non-visible, buried resource site, or feature may exist and may be uncovered during ground disturbing construction activities which would constitute a significant impact. As such, the Project may have a potentially significant impact on a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature and the effects will be further analyzed in the EIR.

4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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	

4.8.1 Environmental Setting

The Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum was prepared by Johnson Johson and Miller Air Quality Consulting Services (dated February 6, 2024) to evaluate whether the estimated criteria air pollutant, ozone precursor, toxic air contaminant (TAC), and/or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated from construction and/or operation of the proposed A-Z Truck Center Project would cause significant impacts to air resources in the Project area. The respective analyses were conducted within the context of CEQA.

The methodology follows the Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI) prepared by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) for the quantification of emissions and evaluation of potential impacts to air resources and the SJVAPCD's Guidance for Valley Land-Use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under the California Environmental Quality Act. The modeling parameters, assumptions, findings report, and appendices are provided in Appendix A. Results are incorporated herein.

Greenhouse gases and climate change are cumulative global issues. The CARB and EPA regulate GHG emissions within the State of California and the U.S., respectively. Meanwhile, the CARB has the primary regulatory responsibility within California for GHG emissions. Local agencies can also adopt policies for GHG emission reduction.

Many chemical compounds in the Earth's atmosphere act as GHGs as they absorb and emit radiation within the thermal infrared range. When radiation from the sun reaches the Earth's surface, some of it is reflected into the atmosphere as infrared radiation (heat). Greenhouse gases absorb this infrared radiation and trap the heat in the atmosphere. Over time, the amount of energy from the sun to the Earth's surface should be approximately equal to the amount of energy radiated back into space, leaving the temperature of the earth's surface roughly constant. Many gases exhibit these "greenhouse" properties. Some of them occur in nature (water vapor, carbon dioxide [CO_2], methane [CH_4], and nitrous oxide [N_2O]), while others are exclusively human made (like gases used for aerosols).

The principal climate change gases resulting from human activity that enter and accumulate in the atmosphere are listed below.

Carbon Dioxide: Carbon dioxide enters the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal), solid waste, trees and wood products, and chemical reactions (e.g., the manufacture of cement). Carbon

dioxide is also removed from the atmosphere (or "sequestered") when it is absorbed by plants as part of the biological carbon cycle.

Methane: Methane is emitted during the production and transport of coal, natural gas, and oil. Methane emissions also result from livestock and agricultural practices and the decay of organic waste in municipal solid waste landfills.

Nitrous Oxide: Nitrous oxide is emitted during agricultural and industrial activities, as well as during combustion of fossil fuels and solid waste.

Fluorinated Gases: Hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorinated chemicals, and sulfur hexafluoride are synthetic, powerful climate-change gases that are emitted from a variety of industrial processes. Fluorinated gases are often used as substitutes for ozone-depleting substances (i.e., chlorofluorocarbons, hydrochlorofluorocarbons, and halons). These gases are typically emitted in smaller quantities, but because they are potent climate-change gases, they are sometimes referred to as high global warming potential gases.

Emissions Inventories and Trends

According to the CARB's recent GHG inventory for the State, released 2021, California produced 418.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MMTCO_2e$) in 2019. The major source of GHGs in California is transportation, contributing approximately 39.7 percent of the state's total GHG emissions in 2019. This puts total emissions at 12.8 $MMTCO_2e$ below the 2020 target of 431 million metric tons. California statewide GHG emissions dropped below the 2020 GHG limit in 2016 and have remained below the 2020 GHG limit since then.

Potential Environmental Impacts

For California, climate change in the form of warming has the potential to incur and exacerbate environmental impacts, including but not limited to changes to precipitation and runoff patterns, increased agricultural demand for water, inundation of low-lying coastal areas by sea-level rise, and increased incidents and severity of wildfire events. Cooling of the climate may have the opposite effects. Although certain environmental effects are widely accepted to be a potential hazard to certain locations, such as rising sea level for low-lying coastal areas, it is currently infeasible to predict all environmental effects of climate change on any one location.

Emissions of GHGs contributing to global climate change are attributable in large part to human activities associated with the industrial and manufacturing, utility, transportation, residential, and agricultural sectors. Therefore, the cumulative global emissions of GHGs contributing to global climate change can be attributed to every nation, region, and city, and virtually every individual on Earth. A project's GHG emissions are at a micro-scale relative to global emissions but could result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to a significant cumulative macro-scale impact.

Regulatory Requirements

California has adopted statewide legislation addressing various aspects of climate change and GHG emissions mitigation. Much of this legislation establishes a broad framework for the state's long-term GHG reduction and climate change adaptation program. The governor has also issued several executive orders (EOs) related to the state's evolving climate change policy. Of particular importance are AB 32 and SB 32, which outline the state's GHG reduction goals of achieving 1990 emissions levels by 2020 and a 40 percent reduction below 1990 emissions levels by 2030.

In the absence of federal regulations, control of GHGs is generally regulated at the state level and is typically approached by setting emission reduction targets for existing sources of GHGs, setting policies to promote renewable energy and increase energy efficiency, and developing statewide action plans.

CEQA Guidelines

The CEQA Guidelines define a significant effect on the environment as "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment." To determine if a project would have a significant impact on GHGs, the type, level, and impact of emissions generated by the project must be evaluated.

The following GHG significance thresholds are contained in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, which were amendments adopted into the Guidelines on March 18, 2010, pursuant to SB 97. A significant impact would occur if the project would:

- Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
- Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

Thresholds of Significance

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

The SJVAPCD's Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA presents a tiered approach to analyzing project significance with respect to GHG emissions. Project GHG emissions are considered less than significant if they can meet any of the following conditions, evaluated in the order presented:

- Project is exempt from CEQA requirements;
- Project complies with an approved GHG emission reduction plan or GHG mitigation program;
- Project implements Best Performance Standards (BPS); or
- Project demonstrates that specific GHG emissions would be reduced or mitigated by at least 29 percent compared to Business-as-Usual (BAU), including GHG emission reductions achieved since the 2002-2004 baseline period.

Project-level Thresholds

Section 15064.4(b) of the CEQA Guidelines' amendments for GHG emissions states that a lead agency may take into account the following three considerations in assessing the significance of impacts from GHG emissions.

- Consideration #1: The extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting.
- Consideration #2: Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project.
- Consideration #3: The extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. Such regulations or requirements must be adopted by the relevant public agency through a public review process and must include specific requirements that reduce or mitigate the project's incremental contribution of GHG emissions. If there is substantial evidence that the possible effects of a particular project are still

cumulatively considerable notwithstanding compliance with the adopted regulations or requirements, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared for the project.

Newhall Ranch

In the California Supreme Court decision in the *Center for Biological Diversity et al. vs. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Newhall Land and Farming Company* (62 Cal.4th 204 [2015], and known as the Newhall Ranch decision), the Supreme Court was concerned that new development may need to reduce GHG emissions more than existing development to demonstrate it is meeting its fair share of reductions. New development does do more than its fair share through compliance with enhanced regulations, particularly with respect to motor vehicles, energy efficiency, and electricity generation. If no additional reductions are required from an individual project beyond that achieved by regulations, then the amount needed to reach the 2020 target is the amount of GHG emissions a project must reduce to comply with Statewide goals.

The State's regulatory program implementing the 2008 Scoping Plan is now fully mature. All regulations envisioned in the Scoping Plan have been adopted by the responsible agencies and the effectiveness of those regulations have been estimated by the agencies during the adoption process and then are tracked to verify their effectiveness after implementation. The Governor Brown, in the introduction to Executive Order B-30-15, states "California is on track to meet or exceed the current target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, as established in the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32)." The progress was evident in emission inventories prepared by CARB, which showed that the State inventory dropped below 1990 levels for the first time in 2016. The State projects that it will meet the 2020 target and achieve continued progress towards meeting the 2017 Scoping Plan target for 2030. CARB adopted the 2022 Scoping Plan on December 16, 2022 that addresses long-term GHG goals set forth by AB 1279. The 2022 Scoping Plan outlines the State's pathway to achieve carbon neutrality and an 85 percent reduction in 1990 emissions goal by 2045. In the 2022 Scoping Plan, CARB advocates for compliance with a local GHG reduction strategy consistent with CEQA Guidelines *Section 15183.5*.

GHG Threshold Applied in the Analysis

The City of Chowchilla has not adopted a GHG reduction plan. In addition, the City has not completed the GHG inventory, benchmarking, or goal-setting process required to identify a reduction target and take advantage of the streamlining provisions contained in the CEQA Guidelines amendments adopted for SB 97 and clarifications provided in the CEQA Guidelines amendments adopted on December 28, 2018. In the absence of an adopted numeric GHG emissions threshold consistent with the State's 2030 target, the project's GHG emissions impact determination is based on the extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. The project's GHG emissions are provided for informational purposes only.

4.8.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project may contribute to climate change impacts through its contribution of GHGs. The proposed project would generate a variety of GHGs during construction and operations, including several defined by AB 32, such as CO2, CH4, and N2O from the exhaust of equipment during construction and on-road vehicle trips during construction and operations.

In the absence of an adopted numeric GHG emissions threshold consistent with the State's 2030 target, the project's GHG emissions impact determination is based on the extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. The project's GHG emissions are provided for informational purposes only.

Construction Emissions

Construction emissions would be generated from the exhaust of construction equipment, material delivery trips, haul truck trips, and worker commuter trips. Detailed construction assumptions are provided in Modeling Parameters and Assumptions section of this technical memorandum. Construction-generated GHGs were quantified and are disclosed in Attachment A. $MTCO_2e$ emissions during construction of the project are summarized below in Table 4-16.

Table 4-16 Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Project Construction (2024-2026)	$MTCO_2e$ per Year
Site Preparation (2024)	37
Grading (2024)	136
Paving (2024)	25
Building Construction (2024-2026)	772
Architectural Coating (2026)	7
Total Construction $MTCO_2e$	**977**
Emissions Amortized Over 30 Years[1]	**32.6**

Notes: $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent

[1] Construction GHG emissions are amortized over the 30-year lifetime of the project.

During the construction of the proposed project, approximately 977 $MTCO_2e$ would be emitted. Neither the City of Chowchilla nor the SJVAPCD have an adopted threshold of significance for construction related GHG emissions. Because impacts from construction activities occur over a relatively short-term period, they contribute a relatively small portion of the overall lifetime project GHG emissions. In addition, GHG emission reduction measures for construction equipment are relatively limited. Therefore, a standard practice is to amortize construction emissions over the anticipated lifetime of a project so that GHG reduction measures will address construction GHG emissions as part of the operational GHG reduction strategies. However, emissions were quantified for informational purposes only. The total emissions generated during construction were amortized based on the life of the development (30 years) and added to the operational emissions to determine the total emissions from the project, as shown below.

Operational Emissions

Operational or long-term emissions occur over the life of the project. The operational emissions for the proposed project are shown in Table 15. Sources for operational emissions include the following:

- Motor Vehicles: These emissions refer to GHG emissions contained in the exhaust from the cars and trucks that would travel to and from the project site. As described in the traffic study prepared for the proposed project, the A-Z Truck Center project is expected to generate 14,214 average daily automobile trips and 2,704 heavy-duty truck trips.
- Natural Gas: These emissions refer to the GHG emissions that occur when natural gas is burned on the project site. Natural gas uses could include heating water, space heating, dryers, stoves, or other uses.

- Indirect Electricity: These emissions refer to those generated by off-site power plants to supply electricity required for the project.
- Water Transport: These emissions refer to those generated by the electricity required to transport and treat the water to be used on the project site.
- Waste: These emissions refer to the GHG emissions produced by decomposing waste generated by the project.

Detailed modeling results and more information regarding assumptions used to estimate emissions are provided in Attachment A in Appendix A. Operational emissions are shown in Table 4-17.

Table 4-17 Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions for Project Buildout

Source Category	Project Total Buildout Year (MTCO2e/year)
Area	3
Energy Consumption	608
Mobile (On-road Vehicles)	16,716
Water Usage	12
Solid Waste Generation	73
Refrigerants	1,185
Amortized Construction Emissions	33
Total	**18,630**

Notes: MTCO2e = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent

As previously noted, the project's estimated emissions were estimated for disclosure purposes. However, significance for GHG emissions is analyzed by assessing the project's compliance with Consideration No. 3 regarding consistency with adopted plans to reduce GHG emissions. As discussed in detail below, the project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted to reduce the emissions of GHGs. As such, the project's generation of GHG emissions would not result in a significant impact on the environment.

Impact Analysis (Project's Compliance with Consideration No. 3 Regarding Consistency with Adopted Plans to Reduce GHG Emissions)

The following analysis evaluates the project's compliance with Consideration No. 3 regarding consistency with adopted plans to reduce GHG emissions. As discussed above, the City of Chowchilla has not adopted a GHG reduction plan. In addition, the City has not completed the GHG inventory, benchmarking, or goal-setting process required to identify a reduction target and take advantage of the streamlining provisions contained in the CEQA Guidelines amendments adopted for SB 97 and clarifications provided in the CEQA Guidelines. The SJVAPCD has adopted a Climate Action Plan, but it does not contain measures that are applicable to the project. Therefore, the SJVAPCD Climate Action Plan cannot be applied to the project. Since no other local or regional Climate Action Plan is in place, the project is assessed for its consistency with CARB's adopted 2008, 2017, and 2022 Scoping Plans.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Estimation Summary and Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis

Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis

The following analysis assesses the proposed project's compliance with Consideration No. 3 regarding consistency with adopted plans to reduce GHG emissions. The proposed project is assessed for its consistency with CARB's adopted Scoping Plans. This would be achieved with an assessment of the proposed project's compliance with

Scoping Plan measures contained in the 2017 Scoping Plan Update and addressing the project's consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan.

Consistency with SB 32

The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update (2017 Scoping Plan) includes the strategy that the State intends to pursue to achieve the 2030 targets of Executive Order S-3-05 and SB 32. The 2017 Scoping Plan includes the following summary of its overall strategy for reaching the 2030 target:

- SB 350
    - Achieve 50 percent Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) by 2030.
    - Doubling of energy efficiency savings by 2030.
- Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS)
    - Increased stringency (reducing carbon intensity 18 percent by 2030, up from 10 percent in 2020).
- Mobile Source Strategy (Cleaner Technology and Fuels Scenario)
    - Maintaining existing GHG standards for light- and heavy-duty vehicles.
    - Put 4.2 million zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) on the roads.
    - Increase ZEV buses, delivery and other trucks.
- Sustainable Freight Action Plan
    - Improve freight system efficiency.
    - Maximize use of near-zero emission vehicles and equipment powered by renewable energy.
    - Deploy over 100,000 zero-emission trucks and equipment by 2030.
- Short-Lived Climate Pollutant (SLCP) Reduction Strategy
    - Reduce emissions of methane and hydrofluorocarbons 40 percent below 2013 levels by 2030.
    - Reduce emissions of black carbon 50 percent below 2013 levels by 2030.
- SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategies
    - Increased stringency of 2035 targets.
- Post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program
    - Declining caps, continued linkage with Québec, and linkage to Ontario, Canada.
    - CARB will look for opportunities to strengthen the program to support more air quality co-benefits, including specific program design elements. In Fall 2016, CARB staff described potential future amendments including reducing the offset usage limit, redesigning the allocation strategy to reduce free allocation to support increased technology and energy investment at covered entities and reducing allocation if the covered entity increases criteria or toxics emissions over some baseline.
- By 2018, develop Integrated Natural and Working Lands Action Plan to secure California's land base as a net carbon sink.

Table 4-18 provides an analysis of the Project's consistency with the 2017 Scoping Plan Update measures.

Table 4-18 Consistency with SB 32 2017 Scoping Plan Update

Scoping Plan Measure	Project Consistency
SB 350 50% Renewable Mandate. Utilities subject to the legislation will be required to increase their renewable energy mix from 33% in 2020 to 50% in 2030. This has been increased to 60%.	**Consistent**: The project will purchase electricity from a utility subject to the SB 350 Renewable Mandate SB 100 Renewable Mandate. SB 100 revised the Renewable Portfolio Standard goals to achieve the 50 percent renewable resources target by December 31, 2026, and to achieve a 60 percent target by December 31, 2030. The specific provider for the City of Chowchilla and the proposed project is Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E).
SB 350 Double Building Energy Efficiency by 2030. This is equivalent to a 20 percent reduction from 2014 building energy usage compared to current projected 2030 levels.	**Not Applicable**. This measure applies to existing buildings. New structures are required to comply with Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards that are expected to increase in stringency over time.
Low Carbon Fuel Standard. This measure requires fuel providers to meet an 18 percent reduction in carbon content by 2030.	**Consistent**. Vehicles accessing the project site will use fuel containing lower carbon content as the fuel standard is implemented.
Mobile Source Strategy (Cleaner Technology and Fuels Scenario). Vehicle manufacturers will be required to meet existing regulations mandated by the LEV III and Heavy-Duty Vehicle programs. The strategy includes a goal of having 4.2 million ZEVs on the road by 2030 and increasing numbers of ZEV trucks and buses.	**Consistent**. The project consists of a Truck Center development including: fuel, repairs, food and parking. The project would not engage in vehicle manufacturing; however, vehicles would access the project site during project operations. Future project customers and other visitors can be expected to purchase increasing numbers of more fuel efficient and zero emission cars and trucks each year. Visiting truck trips will be made by increasing numbers of ZEV trucks as fleets turnover across the state.
Sustainable Freight Action Plan. The plan's target is to improve freight system efficiency 25 percent by increasing the value of goods and services produced from the freight sector, relative to the amount of carbon that it produces by 2030. This would be achieved by deploying over 100,000 freight vehicles and equipment capable of zero emission operation and maximize near-zero emission freight vehicles and equipment powered by renewable energy by 2030.	**Not Applicable**. The measure applies to owners and operators of trucks and freight operations. Although the truck center project would attract heavy-duty truck trips, the vast majority of the trucks visiting the project site would not be owned or controlled by the project applicant or future project tenants. However, deliveries and truck customers that would travel to the future A-Z Truck Center development are expected to be made by increasing number of ZEV trucks.
Short-Lived Climate Pollutant (SLCP) Reduction Strategy. The strategy requires the reduction of SLCPs by 40 percent from 2013 levels by 2030 and the reduction of black carbon by 50 percent from 2013 levels by 2030.	**Consistent.** Sources of black carbon are already regulated by the CARB and air district criteria pollutant and toxic regulations that control fine particulate emissions from diesel engines and other combustion sources.
SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategies. Requires Regional Transportation Plans to include a sustainable community's strategy for reduction of per capita vehicle miles traveled.	**Not Applicable**. The project does not consist of a proposed regional transportation plan; therefore, this measure is not applicable to the proposed project.
Post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program. The Post 2020 Cap-and-Trade Program continues the existing program for another 10 years. The Cap-and-Trade Program applies to large industrial sources such as power plants, refineries, and cement manufacturers.	**Consistent.** The post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program indirectly affects people who use the products and services produced by the regulated industrial sources when increased cost of products or services (such as electricity and fuel) are transferred to the consumers. The

Scoping Plan Measure	Project Consistency
	Cap-and-Trade Program covers the GHG emissions associated with electricity consumed in California, whether generated in-state or imported. Accordingly, GHG emissions associated with CEQA projects' electricity usage are covered by the Cap-and-Trade Program. The Cap-and-Trade Program also covers fuel suppliers (natural gas and propane fuel providers and transportation fuel providers) to address emissions from such fuels and from combustion of other fossil fuels not directly covered at large sources in the program's first compliance period.
Natural and Working Lands Action Plan. The CARB is working in coordination with several other agencies at the federal, state, and local levels, stakeholders, and with the public, to develop measures as outlined in the Scoping Plan Update and the governor's Executive Order B-30-15 to reduce GHG emissions and to cultivate net carbon sequestration potential for California's natural and working land.	**Not Applicable**. The project consists of a Truck Center facility development with fuel, repairs, food and parking. The Truck Center will not be considered as natural or working lands.

Source: California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2017. The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update. January 20. Website: https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/2030sp_pp_final.pdf . Accessed October 2023.

Consistency Regarding GHG Reduction Goals for 2050 under Executive Order S-3-05 and GHG Reduction Goals for 2045 under the 2022 Scoping Plan

Regarding goals for 2050 under Executive Order S-3-05, at this time it is not possible to quantify the emissions savings from future regulatory measures with any level of certainty, as they have not yet been developed; nevertheless, it can be anticipated that operation of the project would comply with whatever measures are enacted that state lawmakers decide would lead to an 80 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2050. In its 2008 Scoping Plan, CARB acknowledged that the "measures needed to meet the 2050 are too far in the future to define in detail." In the First Scoping Plan Update; however, CARB generally described the type of activities required to achieve the 2050 target: "energy demand reduction through efficiency and activity changes; large scale electrification of on-road vehicles, buildings, and industrial machinery; decarbonizing electricity and fuel supplies; and rapid market penetration of efficiency and clean energy technologies that requires significant efforts to deploy and scale markets for the cleanest technologies immediately." The 2017 Scoping Plan provides an intermediate target that is intended to achieve reasonable progress toward the 2050 target. In addition, the 2022 Scoping Plan outlines objectives, regulations, planning efforts, and investments in clean technologies and infrastructure that outlines how the State can achieve carbon-neutrality by 2045.

Accordingly, taking into account the proposed project's emissions, project design features, and the progress being made by the State towards reducing emissions in key sectors such as transportation, industry, and electricity, the project would be consistent with State GHG Plans and would further the State's goals of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, carbon neutral by 2045, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, and does not obstruct their attainment. Impacts would be less than significant.

Taking into account the proposed project's design features and the progress being made by the State towards reducing emissions in key sectors such as transportation, industry, and electricity, the proposed project would be consistent with State and local GHG Plans would not obstruct their attainment. The proposed project's GHG impacts would be less than significant.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less than Significant Impact. The analysis contained above under criteria a) evaluates whether the project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted to reduce the emissions of GHGs. As discussed under criteria a) above, the project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of agency to reduce. As such, project impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIAL

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

4.9.1 Environmental Setting

For the purposes of this section, the term “hazardous materials” refers to "injurious substances," which include flammable liquids and gases, poisons, corrosives, explosives, oxidizers, radioactive materials, and medical supplies and waste. These materials are either generated or used in various commercial and industrial activities. Hazardous wastes are injurious substances that have been or will be disposed of. Potential hazards arise from the transport of hazardous materials, including leakage and accidents involving transporting vehicles. There also are hazards

associated with the use and storage of these materials and waste. Hazardous materials are grouped into the following four categories based on their properties:

- Toxic: causes human health effect
- Ignitable: has the ability to burn
- Corrosive: causes severe burns or damage to materials
- Reactive: causes explosions or generates toxic gases

"Hazardous wastes" are defined in California Public Safety Code *Section 25141(b)* as wastes that: "…because of their quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, [may either] cause or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness or pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed." Hazardous waste is any hazardous material that is discarded, abandoned, or slated to be recycled. If improperly handled, hazardous materials and hazardous waste can result in public health hazards if released into the soil or groundwater or through airborne releases in vapors, fumes, or dust. Soil and groundwater having concentrations of hazardous constituents higher than specific regulatory levels must be handled and disposed of as hazardous waste when excavated or pumped from an aquifer. The California Code of Regulations, Title 22, *Sections 66261.20-24* contains technical descriptions of toxic characteristics that could cause soil or groundwater to be classified as hazardous waste.

Hazardous waste generators may include industries, businesses, public and private institutions, and households. Federal, state, and local agencies maintain comprehensive databases that identify the location of facilities using large quantities of hazardous materials, as well as facilities generating hazardous waste. Some of these facilities use certain classes of hazardous materials that require risk management plans to protect surrounding land uses. The release of hazardous materials would be subject to existing federal, State, and local regulations and is similar to the transport, use, and disposal of hazard materials.

Regulatory Setting

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) was established in 1991 to protect the environment. CalEPA oversees the Unified Program through Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs), which consolidates six (6) environmental programs to ensure the handling of hazardous waste and materials in California. The local CUPA in Merced County, Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health (MCDEH), is responsible for administering the following six (6) CUPA programs:

- *Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP)*
- *California Accidental Release Program (CalARP)*
- *Underground Storage Tank Program (UST)*
- *Aboveground Storage Tank Program (APSA)*
- *Hazardous Waste Generator Program*
- *Tiered Permitting Program*

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is another agency in California that regulates hazardous waste, conducts inspections, provide emergency response for hazardous materials-related emergencies, protect water resources from contamination, removing wastes, etc. DTSC acts under the authority of Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and California Public Safety Code. The DTSC implements the California Code of Regulations

(CCR) Title 22 Division 4.5 to manage hazardous waste. Government Code *Section 65962.5* requires that DTSC shall compile and update at least annually a list of:

> *(1) All hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Public Safety Code ("HSC").*
>
> *(2) All land designated as hazardous waste property or border zone property pursuant to Article 11 (commencing with Section 25220) of Chapter 6.5 of Division 20 of the Public Safety Code.*
>
> *(3) All information received by the Department of Toxic Substances Control pursuant to Section 25242 of the Public Safety Code on hazardous waste disposal on public land.*
>
> *(4) All sites listed pursuant to Section 25356 of the Public Safety Code.*
>
> *(5) All sites included in the Abandoned Site Assessment Program.*

This list of hazardous waste sites in California, referred to as the Cortese List, is then distributed to each city and county. According to the CCR Title 22, soil excavated from a site containing hazardous materials is considered hazardous waste, and remediation actions should be performed accordingly. Cleanup requirements are determined case-by-case by the jurisdiction.

Record Search

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) [8], California Department of Toxic Substance Control's EnviroStor database [9] , and the State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker database [10] include hazardous release and contamination sites. A search of each database was conducted on April 19, 2024. The searches revealed no hazardous material release sites on the Project site or within the Project vicinity.

City of Chowchilla General Plan

The General Plan contains objectives, policies and Implementation measures relevant the reduction of hazards and hazardous material. These objectives, policies and Implementation measures are outlined in the Land Use Element, Open Space and Conservation Element, and Public Safety Element.

Policy LU 24.3 *Work with the Chowchilla Unified School District to minimize environmental hazards in and around educational facilities.*

Policy OS 22.1 *Residential development projects and projects categorized as sensitive receptors shall be located an adequate distance from existing and potential sources of toxic emissions such as freeways, major arterials, industrial sites, and hazardous material locations. "Adequate distance" will be based on site-specific conditions, on the types and amounts of potential toxic emissions, and other factors.*

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[8] United States Environmental Protection Agency. Superfund National Priorities List. Accessed April 19, 2024, https://epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=33cebcdfdd1b4c3a8b51d416956c41f1

[9] California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Envirostor. Accessed April 19, 2024, https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/

[10] California State Water Resources Control Board. GeoTracker. Accessed April 19, 2024, https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/

Policy PS 1.1 Areas within the 2040 General Plan Planning Area know to be subject to geologic or seismic instability (e.g., liquefaction, slumping) shall be designated as Open Space to prohibit development and avoid creating a potential public safety hazard.

> *Implementation Measure PS 1.1.A The City of Chowchilla shall rely on the most current and comprehensive geologic hazard mapping available to assist in identifying and designating areas of known or questionable geologic and seismic hazard conditions Open Space on the 2040 General Plan Land Use Diagram, as well as for evaluating potential geologic or seismic hazards associated with new and redevelopment projects.*

Policy PS 1.2 Geologic and engineering studies are required for all new and redevelopment projects where known or questionable geological or seismic hazard conditions exist.

> *Implementation Measure PS 1.2.A Where questionable geological or seismic conditions exist, the City of Chowchilla shall require geologic and soils studies to identify potential hazards and, if applicable, measures to mitigate identified hazards as part of the approval process for all new or redevelopment projects prior to issuing grading permits.*

Policy PS 4.1 New and redevelopment projects in a designated moderate fire hazard severity zone shall comply with the Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area Building Standards.

Objective PS 10 Protect the City of Chowchilla and its environment from harmful effects of hazardous materials.

Policy PS 10.1 Residual hazardous waste repositories shall be prohibited in the City of Chowchilla.

Policy PS 10.2 The City of Chowchilla shall require, as appropriate and as a component of the environmental review process, a hazardous materials inventory for project sites, including an assessment of materials and operations for any development applications. Particular attention shall be paid to land that previously contained agricultural uses.

Policy PS 10.3 The City of Chowchilla shall ensure the proponents of new development project address hazardous materials concerns through the preparation of a Phase I or Phase II hazardous materials studies for each identified site as part of the design and environmental review process. Recommendations required to satisfy local, state or federal cleanup standards outlined in the studies shall be implemented as part of the construction phase for each project.

Policy PS 10.4 The City of Chowchilla shall coordinate with Madera County to provide household hazardous waste disposal and recycling services.

Policy PS 10.5 The City of Chowchilla shall use the development review process to ensure compatibility between hazardous material users and surrounding land use.

Policy PS 10.6 The City of Chowchilla shall educate the public as to the types of household hazardous waste and the proper methods of disposal

Policy PS 10.8 The City shall require that hazardous materials are used, stored, transported and disposed of within the City in a safe manner and incompliance with local, state and federal regulations.

Objective PS 13 Protect the community from potential airport and air transportation hazards.

Policy 13.1 Minimize the risk of potential hazards associated with aircraft operations at Chowchilla Municipal Airport.

Policy PS 13.2 When planning for development near the Chowchilla Airport anticipate possible increases in airport activity and expansion of airport facilities and services and the effects these changes may have on public safety.

Policy PS 13.3 Encourage development in the vicinity of the Chowchilla Municipal Airport would not cause land use conflicts, hazards to aviation or hazards to the public and that is in compliance with the Madera County Land Use Compatibility Plan for the Airport.

Policy PS 13.4 Maintain the Protection Overlay Zone for the Chowchilla Municipal Airport, as required for safety for both the present runway configuration.

Policy PS 13.5 Review the Chowchilla Municipal Airport Master Plan periodically to update operational and safety procedures, reflect state and federal mandates, better utilize airport property and recommend land use capacity standards for land surrounding the airport.

Policy PS 13.6 The City of Chowchilla shall maintain an Airport Master Plan for the Chowchilla Municipal Airport.

> *Implementation Measure PS 13.6.A The City of Chowchilla should consider relocating the airport to a new location which will allow expansion and operation without interference from urban encroachment.*
>
> *Implementation Measure PS 13.6.B As necessary, the City shall acquire land to implement the Airport Master Plan by the appropriate governmental agency.*

Policy PS 13.7 Chowchilla shall maintain the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for the environs of the Chowchilla Municipal Airport.

> *Implementation Measure PS 13.7.A The City of Chowchilla shall seek amendment to the ALUC Plan to modernize the requirements and standards for development consistent with recommended guidance from Caltrans.*
>
> *Implementation Measure PS 13.7.B The Land Use Element of the Chowchilla General Plan and the Chowchilla Zoning Ordinance shall be used to restrict potentially hazardous land uses from being established within Airport Safety Zones A and B1 of the Chowchilla Municipal Airport.*

Policy PS 13.8 Minimize the risk of potential hazards associated with aircraft operations at the Chowchilla Municipal Airport through the adoption and implementation of the Airport Protection Overlay Zone and by implementing the Madera County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Policy PS 13.9 Ensure development within airport influence areas is consistent with the Airport Protection Overlay Zone development standards and the Madera County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

4.9.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would consist of commercial development, including a maintenance shop, convenience store/restaurant, fuel pumps, two (2) quick-service restaurants with drive thru, and a 3-story hotel. Potential impacts related to hazardous materials could arise from either construction or operations, both of which are discussed below. Based on this analysis, the Project would have a less than significant impact.

Construction

Construction activities for the Project site would include typical site preparation, grading, paving, trenching and architectural coating, all of which would require the transportation of building materials and equipment. Demolition

would not be required because there are no existing structures. Generally, hazardous materials associated with construction include motor oil, gasoline, diesel, dust palliative, and solvents, acids, pressure impregnated wood, pesticides, herbicides, fugitive dust, and stormwater runoff.

Because the Project site is vacant and undeveloped, potential hazardous materials associated with construction could result from the use of fuels and lubricants for construction equipment (i.e., motor oil, gasoline and diesel), in addition to grading and drainage activities (i.e., fugitive dust and stormwater runoff). The Project is subject to a SJVAPCD Authority to Construct Permit, in addition to SJVAPCD Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM_{10} Prohibitions), which requires the approval of a Dust Control Plan prior to construction. In addition, the Project's grading and drainage plans are subject to City approval and would determine the limits of grading and disturbance. Compliance with these regulations would limit visible dust and ensure that disturbed surfaces or soils remain stable.

Workers would be trained to properly identify and handle all hazardous materials, and hazardous waste would either be recycled or disposed of at a permitted and licensed treatment and/or disposal facility. All hazardous waste shipped off-site for recycling or disposal would be transported by a licensed and permitted hazardous waste hauler and disposed of at an approved location.

During construction, nonhazardous construction debris would be generated and disposed of in local landfills pursuant to applicable laws and regulations. Sanitary waste would be managed using portable toilets located at a reasonably accessible on-site location. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations would ensure that construction of the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Overall, the relatively limited use and small quantities of typical hazardous materials, and subsequent transport and disposal of such materials, during construction would be controlled through compliance with applicable laws and regulations pursuant to a comprehensive regulatory framework administered by the DTSC and other relevant public agencies.

Operations

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) oversees the Statewide implementation of the Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP), which aims to prevent or minimize harm to public health and safety, and the environment from the release or threatened release of hazardous material. The minimum reporting quantities for hazardous materials is 55 gallons for liquids, 500 pounds for solids, or 200 cubic feet for compress gas. If a business handles hazardous materials at or in excess of the minimum thresholds, a HMBP is required to be prepared and approved by the State and local jurisdictions. The project tenants/operator will be required to submit information to the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS), Madera County Department of Public Health, and the City regarding the use and storage of hazardous materials. The proposed fueling station and maintenance shop would be subject to the HMBP requirements if they handle hazardous materials in excess of minimum reporting quantities. Therefore, if the facility does handle hazardous materials and/or hazardous waste, compliance with the HMBP as approved by the County would reduce any impacts to less than significant.

The type of hazardous materials that would be associated with Project's convenience store, restaurants, and hotel operations are those typical of commercial uses such as cleaning supplies and HVAC equipment. Some appliances and electronics used or stored within buildings may contain hazardous components (e.g., refrigerants, oils, etc.); however, these hazardous components are regulated by the EPA under the Toxic Substances Control Act and Clean Air Act and transport of such components are regulated by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Hazardous Materials Safety as implemented in California by CCR Title 13, California Building Code, and Uniform Fire

Code, as adopted by the City. Through compliance with regulations, appliances and electronics associated with the Project are not expected to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

In addition, stormwater runoff resulting from the anticipated buildout of the Project would be managed by the City in compliance with the regulatory requirements pursuant to NPDES General Permit Requirements (See Section 4.7). This includes runoff consisting of any hazardous materials, including fuels and lubricants used for construction equipment. In addition, the quality of stormwater runoff would be maintained by design components specific to the Project including but not limited to the required preparation of a SWPPP and the City's approval of the Project's grading and drainage plans. Together, compliance with the aforementioned plans, policies, and regulatory requirements in addition to Project design components, would reduce potential impacts related to stormwater quality.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. As described under criterion a) above, it is not anticipated that the Project itself will involve any construction that would require routine transport, use, or disposal of significant amounts of hazardous materials and therefore is not anticipated to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the release of hazardous materials. While potential impacts could occur through construction-related transport and disposal of hazardous materials, such impacts would be short-term and temporary and would be reduced to less than significant levels through compliance with local, state, and federal regulations in addition to standard equipment operating practices.

Operations of the fueling station and maintenance shop, if involve the handling of hazardous materials in excess of minimum reporting quantities, would be subject to the provision of the HMBP approved by the State to ensure safe storage and use of such materials. The transportation of hazardous materials is strictly regulated by various state and federal agencies including the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA), DTSC, US EPA, and US DOT. The hazardous materials onsite would be stored in compliance with state and federal requirements. With the exercise of normal safety practices, the Project would not create substantial hazards to the public or environment. In the event of a hazardous material leak or spill, the Chowchilla Volunteer Fire Department would respond first to manage the emergency, and other applicable agencies would respond shortly thereafter. Depending upon the type and extent of the leak or spill, remediation action would be taken.

As a result, the Project would not be expected to cause the release of hazardous materials into the environment and thus, a less than significant impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The closest school, Ronald Reagan Elementary School, is located approximately 0.5 mile southwest of the Project site. Since the school is located over a quarter mile away, there is no impact.

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?

No Impact. According to EnviroStor and GeoTracker, the Project is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code *Section 65962.5*. Therefore, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public of the environment and there would be no impact.

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 for people residing or working in the project area?

Less than Significant Impact. The nearest public or public use airport is the Chowchilla Municipal Airport located approximately 0.5-mile south of the Project site. The Chowchilla Municipal Airport is owned and operated by the City of Chowchilla and has a single 3,253-foot northwest/southeast runway designated Runway 12-30.

The applicable airport land use plan for the Chowchilla Municipal Airport is the Madera Countywide Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) adopted in 2015.[11] According to the ALUCP, the Project site is located within the airport influence area (AIA) of the Chowchilla Municipal Airport, within the C2 – Primary Traffic Pattern Zone. Because the site is within the AIA, it is subject to established airport compatibility measures within the ALUCP to ensure that Projects would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the area. Regarding land use and intensity, local retail, eating/drinking establishments, fueling facilities, short-term lodging, and auto repair shops are conditionally to normally compatible. Table 4-19 shows the compatibility land use and intensity criteria for the C2 zone.

Table 4-19 ALUCP Basic Compatibility Criteria

Intensity Criteria	C2 Zone
Maximum Statewide Average Intensity (people/acre)	300
Maximum Single-Acre Intensity (people/acre)	1,200
Open Land Requirement	15%
Land Use Category	**Compatibility**
Local Retail (≤300 people per building): community/neighborhood shopping centers, grocery stores	Normally Compatible
Eating/Drinking Establishments: restaurants, bars, fast-food dining	Conditional; average intensity limit: 0.41 FAR
Fueling Facilities: gas stations, trucking and other transportation fueling facilities	Conditional; average intensity limit 1.38 FAR
Short-Term Lodging (≤30 nights, except conference/assembly facilities): hotels, motels, other transient lodging	Conditional; average intensity limit: 1.38 FAR
Light Industrial, Low Intensity: machine shops, wood products, auto repair	Normally Compatible

According to the ALUCP, the Project would be generally compatible and thereby would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the area. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The City of Chowchilla has established emergency preparedness procedures and adopted an "Emergency Plan", located in *Section 2.28* of the Chowchilla Municipal Code. The Emergency Plan is to provide protection to residents and assist with coordination in the event of a disaster within the City. In addition, the City of Chowchilla and the County of Madera cooperate in the Multi-Hazard Functional Plan to establish a

[11] County of Madera. https://www.madera.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2015-ALUCP.pdf

coordinated emergency response plan in case of catastrophic disaster. The Project would not involve any new or altered infrastructure associated with evacuation, emergency response, and emergency access routes within the City of Chowchilla or County of Madera. Construction may require lane closure; however, these activities would be short-term and access through Montgomery Lake Way would be maintained through standard traffic control. Following construction, this roadway would continue to provide access to the site. Furthermore, the Project would be subject to compliance with applicable standards for on-site emergency access including turn radii and fire access. Therefore, through this compliance, the Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan and 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?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site is located in an urbanized area surrounded by mostly urban uses. In addition, the site is not identified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) to be in a Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ). [12] Additionally, the Project site is not located within a wildland-urban interface area and has not previously experienced wildfire. The area surrounding the Project site is mostly commercial, with some vacant and undeveloped land that is highly disturbed due to regular discing. As such, the Project site is surrounded either by urban development or by managed land that does not contain steep terrain or unmanaged open space areas that could be prone to wildfires. See also Section 3.16, Wildfire, of this Initial Study for additional detail in this regard.

Development of the site would result in the construction of structures and installation of infrastructure that would be reviewed and conditioned by the City for compliance with all applicable standards, specifications, and codes. In addition, any structure occupied by humans would be required to be constructed in adherence to the Wildland Urban Interface Codes and Standards of the CBC Chapter 7A, including but not limited to requirements regarding ignition-resistant construction, defensible space, emergency vehicle access, water supply, and fire sprinklers. Compliance with such regulations would ensure that the Project meets standards to help prevent loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. For these reasons, the Project would have a less than significant impact.

[12] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. LRA Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps. Accessed on August 26, 2024, https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/fire-hazard-severity-zones/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps

4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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 a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;			X	
	ii. Substantially increase the rate or 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	

4.10.1 Environmental Setting

The Project would be developed within city limits and thus would be connected to the city's water and stormwater services. The city's water and stormwater services are described as follows.

Water

The City's Public Works Department Water Division is responsible for the city's wells, distribution lines, water meters, and back-flow prevention systems. The 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), adopted October 2021 analyzes data to ensure adequate urban water supplies for the future, promotes water conservation policies and programs, and provides mechanisms for response during water drought conditions. According to the 2020 UWMP, in 2020 the City had a service population of 19,039. Approximately 832 million gallons (MG) of total water demand was delivered through 4,026 water services connections. Of those connections, 91% (or 3,676) were for residential uses, while the remaining connections were for commercial, industrial, landscape, and agricultural uses. The UWMP Projected a service population of 69,239 residents by 2045 by using the City's 2040 General Plan forecast of 5.3% annual population growth and a projected 3,027 MG of total water demand to serve this population grown.[13]

Pursuant to the 2020 UWMP, the City receives its entire water supply through pumping groundwater facilities using City facilities and does not purchase water from any other source. The Chowchilla Subbasin (Groundwater Basin No. 5-22.05), one of 15 basins within the San Joaquin Valley Basin, has a surface area of 159 acres. There are four public agencies (Chowchilla Water District, Clayton Water District, El Nido Irrigation District, and New Stone Water District) and one private agency (California Water Service Company) that are located within the Chowchilla Subbasin. The Chowchilla Subbasin levels and storage are measured annually by the Department of Water Resources (DWR and cooperators. According to Bulletin 118, a technical publication on groundwater in California through the Department of Water Resources, the water capacity of the Chowchilla Subbasin is estimated to be 8 million acre-feet.[14]

The City's water supply provided through groundwater comes through seven wells, which provide 3,532 MG based on 100% of the current well capacity. As mentioned above, 832 MG was delivered through City service connections, indicating the water supply (3,532 MG) far exceeded the water demand (832 MG).

Table 4-20 shows the projected water supply and demand for forecasted population growth. In each year, the water supply exceeds water demands assuming normal year conditions through the year 2045. [15]

Table 4-20 Normal Year Water Supply and Demand

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Water Supply Totals (in MG)	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532
Water Demand Totals (in MG)	1,077	1,395	1,806	2,338	3,027
Difference (in MG)	2,455	2,137	1,726	1,194	505

The City of Chowchilla manages the water system and water use in order to reduce or eliminate over drafting the groundwater supply. The City is within the Chowchilla Water District (CWD) which implements the Groundwater

[13] City of Chowchilla Final 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. Accessed February 8, 2024. https://www.cityofchowchilla.org/DocumentCenter/View/2543/2020-Final-Chowchilla-2020-UWMP-w-Apps

[14] California's Groundwater Bulletin 118. San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin, Chowchilla Subbbasin. Accessed February 8, 2024. https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Bulletin-118/Files/2003-Basin-Descriptions/5_022_05_ChowchillaSubbasin.pdf

[15] City of Chowchilla Final 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. Accessed February 8, 2024. https://www.cityofchowchilla.org/DocumentCenter/View/2543/2020-Final-Chowchilla-2020-UWMP-w-Apps

Management Plan for the City. In addition, the City's 2040 General Plan includes the following goals and policies in its Public Facilities and Services Element to promote water conservation as applicable to the Project, as listed below.

Objective PF 2. New development shall pay fees as necessary to meet all identified costs associated with new development, including but not limited to public facilities and services where a nexus can be shown qualitatively and/or quantitatively.

Objective PF 4. *Provide an adequate system of supply and distribution of quality water to support the General Plan level of development.*

> ***Policy PF 4.2.*** *The City shall condition approval of new development projects on the availability of adequate water supply and infrastructure to serve the new development.*
> ***Policy PF 4.5.*** *The City shall extend water service to new areas based on its ability to meet domestic and fire flow needs of the area.*
>
> ***Policy PF 4.8.*** *New development of public facilities and services shall include water conservation features and drought resistant landscaping.*

Stormwater

The City's Public Works Department Storm Water Division is responsible for overseeing the maintenance of the city's storm drain system, drainage ditches, reservoirs, pump stations, and related facilities and ensures effective control and proper disposal of stormwater run-off. The City's stormwater system is maintained and operated through a storm run-off plan and program that adheres to State and Federal regulations.

The City's 2040 General Plan includes the following goals and policies in its Public Facilities and Services Element to ensure adequate drainage facilities, as listed below.

Objective PF 6*. Provide a stormwater drainage system that serves the General Plan level of development in a planned and orderly manner.*

> ***Policy PF 6.1.*** *The City shall condition approval of development projects on the provision of adequate storm drainage improvements.*
>
> ***Policy PF 6.2.*** *The City shall require the extension of storm drains to new areas in accordance with the phasing of a storm drainage master plan.*
>
> > ***Implementation Measure PF 6.2.A.*** *Prepare an updated Master Storm Drainage Plan to support General Plan and Phasing Area Concept Plan land uses, including proposed drainage facilities and estimated costs.*
>
> ***Policy PF 6.3.*** *Detention basins should be considered for multiple use (recreation, parking, etc.), particularly larger basins, providing that the basic detention function is not lost or impaired, and maintenance and liability issues can be satisfactorily resolved.*

Objective PF 7. *Maintain storm drainage facilities to preserve their function and capacity.*

> ***Policy PF 7.2.*** *Continue to require new development to discharge storm water runoff at volumes no greater than the capacity of any portion of the existing downstream system by utilizing detention or retention or other approved methods, unless the project is providing drainage pursuant to an adopted drainage plan.*
>
> > ***Implementation Measure PF 7.2. A.*** *Consolidate policies, programs, and standards for flood control and storm drainage in a Storm Drainage ordinance.*

Policy PF 7.3. *When necessary, require new development to prepare hydrologic studies to assess storm runoff effects on the local drainage system and, if warranted, require new development to provide adequate drainage facilities and to mitigate increases in storm water flows and / or volume to avoid cumulative increases in downstream flows.*

Implementation Measure PF 7.3.A. *Development projects requiring disposal of stormwater into Ash Slough, Berenda Slough, or Chowchilla River shall provide a hydrological assessment of a project's potential effects on the local and regional storm drainage systems, so that the City can determine appropriate mitigation to ensure that system capacity and peak flow restrictions are not exceeded.*

Policy PF 7.4. *New and redevelopment projects shall prepare and provide to the City appropriate drainage studies that assess project storm runoff affects on the City storm drain system, as well as provide appropriate storm drainage facilities to ensure an increase risk of on- or off-site flooding does not result from project implementation.*

Policy PF 7.5. *All drainage improvements shall comply with the City of Chowchilla Public Works Construction Standards.*

4.10.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

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

Less than Significant Impact. Because the Project site is greater than one (1) acre in size, the developer is required to prepare a SWPPP in compliance with the General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity (i.e., General Permit Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ) (See also Section 4.7(b)). The SWPPP estimates the sediment risk associated with construction activities and includes best management practices (BMP) to control erosion. BMPs specific to erosion control cover erosion, sediment, tracking, and waste management controls. Implementation of the SWPPP minimizes the potential for the Project to result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. These provisions minimize the potential for the Project to violate any waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality. Further, runoff resulting from the Project would be managed in compliance with the approved grading and drainage plans. Thus, compliance with existing regulations including the General Construction Permit, BMPs, and CMC in addition to approved plans would reduce potential impacts related to water quality and waste discharge to less than significant levels.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The City's long-term water resource planning for existing and future demand is addressed in the City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). [16] This plan is intended to serve as a tool for planning and phasing the construction of future domestic water supply infrastructure for the Projected buildout of the City of Chowchilla, in accordance with the General Plan.

[16] City of Chowchilla (2021). 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. Accessed February 8, 2024, https://Cityofchowchilla.org/DocumentCenter/View/2543/2020-Final-Chowchilla-2020-UWMP-w-Apps

According to the UWMP, the City uses groundwater wells as the sole source of supply; the City does not use any other water sources including surface water, storm water, recycled water, or desalinated water. As such, groundwater should be viewed as a sustainable resource. The Chowchilla Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), adopted in 2020 and last revised in 2023, has a goal to achieve sustainable groundwater management on a long-term average basis by increasing recharge and/or reducing groundwater pumping, while avoiding undesirable results. [17] The implementation of the GSP is expected to improve the long-term water supply reliability for the City. Along with the adoption of the UWMP and GSP, the City adopted its Water Shortage Contingency Plan, which consists of four (4) levels to allow the City to reduce its water demand in addition to several restrictions and prohibitions on end users.

Projected water use for each sector is included in Table 4-21. Commercial water uses account for approximately 21.3% of potable water used Citywide.

Table 4-21 Projected Potable Water Demand by Sector, 2025 – 2040

Use Type	Water Use by Volume (MG)			
	2025	2030	2035	2040
Residential	803	1039	1344	1741
Commercial	229	297	384	497
Industrial	1	2	2	3
Other	44	57	76	97
Total	**1,077**	**1,395**	**1,806**	**2,338**

Source: *City of Chowchilla, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, 2021*

According to the UWMP, the Project site is located within the City's current service area. The Project has been reviewed by the City and is required to connect to the available water facilities and install water meter box(es) for service. A Water Connection Fee, including Service Connection Fee, Water Capacity Fees, and Water Meter Fee, would be charged for the installation of new water services and meters to serve the property. Water services would be read and billed monthly on a volume-of use basis.

Potable water demands for the Project were estimated using the City's Land Use Based Water Demand Factors for Commercial uses. Water demand for the Project was estimated at 120 gal/day/1,000 sf and an estimated 106,286 total square feet of floor area (56,286 sf as described in Table 2-2 plus an assumed 50,000 sf for the proposed 3-story hotel). Based on these assumptions and estimates, the Project is expected to consume 12,754.32 gallons per day.

The UWMP addresses the sufficiency of the groundwater supplies for existing and planned future uses. The UWMP uses the General Plan land use designations to analyze future water demand. According to the UWMP, the projected water demand for the City, based on a population of 69,239 and a per capita water demand of 120 gpcd, would be 3,207 MG. The 2020 UWMP anticipates, assuming pumped water remains the same, the total supply of water to be 3,532 MG. Although the projected water supply may change, the water supply projected in the UWMP would be more than the buildout demand. The Project would not result in changes to the General Plan land use designations and future development resulting from Project implementation would be like that included in the

[17] Madera County Water and Natural Resources Department. (2023). Chowchilla Subbasin GSP. Accessed February 8, 2024, https://www.maderacountywater.com/chowchilla-subbasin/

General Plan. Therefore, impacts on groundwater supplies would not be beyond those analyzed in the General Plan PEIR. Impacts would be less than significant.

Furthermore, adherence to connection requirements and recommendations pursuant to the City's water conservation efforts (e.g., compliance with California Plumbing Code, efficient appliances, efficient landscaping, etc.) should not negatively impact water supply or impede water management. In particular, the Project would be built accordance with all mandatory outdoor water use requirements as outlined in the applicable California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 11, *Section 5.304 – Outdoor Water Use* and verified through the building permit process. As an industrial development that would contain landscaping, the Project shall comply with the updated Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) (California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Chapter 2.7, Division 2), as implemented and enforced through the building permit process. Under the revised MWELO irrigation efficiency guidelines, the proposed Project's landscaping would require recycled water, or utilize low water demand landscaping, which would minimize the potential impacts of runoff from irrigation. Therefore, through compliance, the potential for the Project to substantially decrease groundwater supplies is limited and impacts would be less than significant.

Overall, the Project would not generate significantly greater water demand than planned for within the General Plan. As a result, it can be presumed that the existing and planned water distribution system and supplies should be adequate to serve the Project, and the Project would thereby not decrease groundwater supplies, interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, or impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. In addition, adherence to connection requirements and recommendations pursuant to the City's water supply planning efforts (i.e., compliance with California Plumbing Code, efficient appliances, efficient landscaping, etc.) should not negatively impact the City's water provision. For these reasons, a less than significant impact would occur as a result of the Project.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. Erosion is a natural process in which soil is moved from place to place by wind or from flowing water. The effects of erosion within the Project site can be accelerated by ground-disturbing activities associated with development. Siltation is the settling of sediment to the bed of a stream or lake which increases the turbidity of water. Turbid water can have harmful effects to aquatic life by clogging fish gills, reducing spawning habitat, and suppressing aquatic vegetation growth.

Soil erosion and loss of topsoil can be caused by natural factors, such as wind and flowing water, and human activity. Bare soils, common within agricultural land, are more susceptible to erosion than an already developed urban land, thus it is not expected that erosion could occur on-site. Development of the Project site would require typical site preparation activities such as grading and trenching which may result in the potential for short-term soil disturbance or erosion impacts. Soil disturbance during construction is largely caused by the use of water. Excessive soil erosion could cause damage to existing structures and roadways.

The likelihood of erosion occurring during construction would be reduced through site grading and surfacing, which would be subject to review and approval by the City for compliance with applicable standards. Development of the Project site would be required to comply with the Project's SWPPP, construction-related erosion controls and BMPs would be implemented to reduce potential impacts related to erosion and siltation. These BMPs would include, but are not limited to, covering and/or binding soil surfaces to prevent soil from being detached and transported by

water or wind, and the use of barriers such as straw bales and sandbags to control sediment. Together, the controls and BMPs are intended to limit soil transportation and erosion. As such, the likelihood of erosion would be further reduced through compliance with regulations including the General Construction Permit, BMPs, and approved grading and drainage plans as described under criterion a). With these provisions in place, the impact on soil and topsoil by the Project would be considered less than significant.

ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Less than Significant Impact. Development of the site would result in an increase in the amount of impervious surface, which could increase the volume of runoff. The post-construction impervious area is estimated to be 515,881 sq ft. As previously discussed, development of the site would require compliance with the SWPPP, approved grading and drainage plan, and implementation of BMPs that would control and direct runoff. Compliance would ensure that construction impacts related to the alteration of the site's natural hydrology and the potential increase in runoff that would result in flooding on- or off-site would be less than significant.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. Development of the site would disturb the site's vegetation and soil and temporarily alter the natural hydrology of the site. However, compliance with the SWPPP, approved grading and drainage plan, and implementation of BMPs that would control, and direct runoff would reduce construction impacts related to alteration of the site's natural hydrology and the potential increase in runoff or polluted runoff in excess of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Therefore, construction would not result in the creation or contribution of additional sources of runoff or polluted runoff in exceedance of the existing or planned stormwater drainage systems and impacts would be less than significant.

Regarding operational impacts, development of the site would result in an increase in the impervious surface area which would increase runoff from the site. However, compliance with the approved grading and drainage plan would reduce the potential for the Project to cause substantial additional polluted runoff or runoff in excess of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. As a result, a less than significant impact would occur.

iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?

Less than Significant Impact. Although the construction of the proposed Project would increase impervious surfaces, the Project would be required to maintain the site's drainage pattern through Project-specific grading and drainage plans that would be reviewed and approved by the City prior to the issuance of building permits. Through compliance, the potential for the Project to impede or redirect flood flows would be minimized or eliminated and a less than significant impact would occur.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site is designated as Zone X on the most recent Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) No. 06039CO900E, dated September 26, 2008. Zone X is a flood hazard area with a 0.2 percent annual chance of flood hazard and one (1) precent annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one (1) square mile. In addition, the City, inclusive of the Project site, has historically been subject to low to moderate ground shaking and has a relatively low probability of shaking. Furthermore, there are no large inland bodies of water near the Project site, a condition that precludes the possibility of seiche inundation. The Project site is more than 100 miles from the Pacific Ocean and therefore is not susceptible to

tsunami inundation. According to the Department of Water Resources Dam Breach Inundation Map, the Project is not in the inundation boundary. [18] Therefore, as a low-risk area, the Project would have a less than significant impact as it relates to the risk release of pollutants due to Project inundations.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Chowchilla Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency and is therefore subject to the Chowchilla Groundwater Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan adopted in 2020 and last revised in 2023. As described under criterion (b) above, the Project would not decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. In addition, the GSP anticipates that implementation of the GSP will reinforce the General Plan's goals related to water quality and groundwater management, in addition to the groundwater quality monitoring and remediation described therein. Therefore, based on compliance with such plans, it can be determined that the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of water quality control plans or sustainable groundwater management plans. For these reasons, a less than significant impact would occur because of the Project.

[18] Department of Water Resources. California Dam Breach Inundation Maps. Accessed August 26, 2024, https://fmds.water.ca.gov/maps/damim/

4.11 LAND USE PLANNING

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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	

4.11.1 Environmental Setting

The Project proposes a commercial development, including a maintenance shop, convenience store/restaurant, fuel pumps, two (2) quick-service restaurants with drive thru, and a 3-story hotel. The proposed uses are permitted within the planned land use designation and zoning.

4.11.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

Less than Significant Impact. The physical division of an already established community typically refers to construction of a linear feature, such as an interstate highway, railroad tracks, or the removal of a means of access that would impact mobility within an existing community and an outlying area. The proposed Project would consist of development of commercial uses with parking and related improvements. The Project site is currently undeveloped. The development of the proposed Project would not involve the construction of any type of linear feature that would impair mobility with an existing community, nor would it remove a means of access in a manner that would impede travel or otherwise constitute the division of an established community. Rather, the proposed Project would be designed in accordance with relevant General Plan policies and other standards and requirements, which would help ensure a cohesive, integrated site and circulation plan, and compatibility with nearby uses. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project proposes to construct a commercial development, including a maintenance shop, convenience store/restaurant, fuel pumps, two (2) quick-service restaurants with drive thru, and a 3-story hotel with the approval of a Conditional Use Permit. As such, the Project is consistent with the City's General Plan and Municipal Code. Through the entitlement process, the Project is reviewed for compliance with applicable regulations inclusive of those adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects. Overall, the entitlement process would ensure that the Project complies with the General Plan, CMC, and any other applicable policies. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact.

4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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

4.12.1 Environmental Setting

For the purposes of CEQA, mineral resources are land areas or deposits deemed significant by the California Department of Conservation (DOC). Mineral resources include oil, natural gas, and metallic and nonmetallic deposits, including aggregate resources. The California Geological Survey (CGS) classifies and designates areas within California that contain or potentially contain significant mineral resources. Lands are classified into Aggregate and Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs), which identify known or inferred significant mineral resources.

The City of Chowchilla, inclusive of the Project site, is classified as MRZ-1, meaning areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence. Additionally, Chowchilla is not located within a State designated production consumption region. The nearest State designated production-consumption region is the Fresno Production-Consumption Region that extends into the southern portion of Madera County along the San Joaquin River. The California Geological Survey's Special Report 158 and Open-File Report 99-02 provide the results of a classification of aggregate resources within the Fresno Production-Consumption Region.

In addition, the City of Chowchilla, inclusive of the Project site, is not within a CalGEM-recognized oilfield and there are no oil and gas wells on site. [19]

City of Chowchilla General Plan

Mineral Resources are addressed in the Open Space and Conservation Element section entitled Mineral Resources; however, no objectives or policies are provided.

4.12.2 Impact Assessment

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?

[19] California Department of Conservation. Well Finder. Accessed on August 26, 2024, https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/doggr/wellfinder/

No Impact. There are no identified mineral deposits of significance or active mine operations on the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not 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. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. There are no identified mineral deposits of significance or active mine operations on the Project site. As a result, the Project would not 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. Further, the site is not delineated in the General Plan, a Specific Plan, or other land use plan as a locally important mineral resource recovery site, thus it would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.13 NOISE

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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

4.13.1 Environmental Setting

An Environmental Noise Assessment of the Project was conducted by WJV Acoustics, Inc. (WJVA). The Environmental Noise Assessment was prepared to determine if significant noise impacts would be produced by the Project and to describe mitigation measures for noise if significant impacts are determined. The full report (dated April 16, 2024) is provided in Appendix D. A summary of the Acoustical Analysis is provided below.

City of Chowchilla Noise Level Standards

For transportation noise sources (e.g., traffic and railway noise), the City of Chowchilla General Plan Noise Element establishes noise level criteria in terms of the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) metric. The CNEL is the time-weighted energy average noise level for a 24-hour day, with a 4.77 dB penalty added to noise levels occurring during the evening hours (7:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.) and a 10 dB penalty added to noise levels occurring during the nighttime hours (10:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m.). The CNEL represents cumulative exposure to noise over an extended period of time and is therefore calculated based upon annual average conditions.

For residential land uses, the Noise Element establishes a land use compatibility criterion of 60 dB CNEL as "Normally Acceptable" and a noise exposure level of 60-65 dB CNEL as "Conditionally Acceptable". For some multi-family residential land uses, a noise exposure of up to 70 dB CNEL is considered "Conditionally Acceptable". While not explicitly stated in the General Plan, outdoor noise level standards are typically applied to outdoor activity areas. Outdoor activity areas generally include backyards of single-family residences, individual patios or decks of multi-family developments and common outdoor recreation areas of multi-family developments (pool areas, picnic areas, playgrounds, etc.). The intent of the exterior noise level requirement is to provide an acceptable noise environment for outdoor activities and recreation.

The Noise Element also requires that interior noise levels attributable to exterior noise sources not exceed 45 dB CNEL. The intent of the interior noise level standard is to provide an acceptable noise environment for indoor communication and sleep.

Table 4-22 provides the land use compatibility guidelines (noise level standards) for transportation noise sources.

Table 4-22 Transportation Noise / Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Exterior Noise Levels

Land Use	Exterior Noise Exposure (dBA CNEL)			
	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Single Family Home, Duplex, Triplex, Mobile Home	< 60	60 – 65	65 – 70	> 70
Fourplex, Apartment, Condominium, Townhome	< 60	60 – 70	70 – 75	> 75
Mixed Use, Infill Residential	< 65	65 – 75	75 – 80	> 80
Commercial – Motel, Hotel, Transient Lodging	< 65	65 – 75	75 – 80	> 80
School, Library, Church, Hospital, Nursing Home	< 60	60 – 70	70 – 80	> 80
Auditorium, Concert Hall, Amphitheater	-	< 65	-	> 65
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sport	-	< 70	-	> 70
Playgrounds, Park	< 70	70 – 75	-	> 75
Golf Course, Water Recreation, Cemetery	< 70	-	70 – 80	> 80
Office Building, Business, Commercial, Retail	< 65	65 – 75	> 75	-
Freeway Adjacent Commercial, Office and Industrial Uses	< 65	65 – 80	> 80	-
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utility, Agriculture	< 70	70 – 80	> 80	-

Normally Acceptable *= Specific land use is satisfactory, based on the assumption that any building is of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.*

Conditionally Acceptable *= New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice.*

Normally Unacceptable *= New construction or development should be generally discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.*

Clearly Unacceptable *= New construction or development is not to be undertaken, unless it can be demonstrated that noise reduction requirements can be employed to reduce noise impacts to an acceptable level. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.*

Table 4-23 provides the land use compatibility guidelines for non-transportation (stationary) noise sources.

Table 4-23 Stationary Noise / Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Exterior Noise Levels

Land Use	Exterior Noise Exposure (dBA L_{eq} / L_{50})					
	Normally Acceptable		Conditionally Acceptable		Unacceptable	
	Daytime	Nighttime	Daytime	Nighttime	Daytime	Nighttime
Single Family Home, Duplex, Triplex, Mobile Home	< 55	< 45	55 – 60	45 – 50	> 60	> 50
Fourplex, Apartment, Condominium, Townhome	< 55	< 50	55 – 65	50 – 55	> 65	> 55
Mixed Use, Infill Residential	< 60	< 50	60 – 70	50 – 60	> 70	> 60
Commercial – Motel, Hotel, Transient Lodging	< 65	< 50	65 – 70	50 – 60	> 70	> 60
School, Library, Church, Hospital, Nursing Home	< 60	< 50	60 – 65	50 – 55	> 60	> 55
Auditorium, Concert Hall, Amphitheater	-	-	< 65	< 60	-	-
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sport	-	-	< 75	< 70	-	-
Playgrounds, Park	< 65	< 50	65 – 70	< 60	-	-

Golf Course, Water Recreation, Cemetery	< 55	< 50	55 – 60	50 – 55	> 60	> 55
Office Building, Business, Commercial, Retail	< 65	< 55	65 – 70	55 – 60	> 70	> 60
Freeway Adjacent Commercial, Office and Industrial Uses	< 65	< 60	65 – 70	60 – 65	> 70	> 65
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utility, Agriculture	< 65	< 60	65 – 70	60 – 65	> 70	> 65

Normally Acceptable *= Specific land use is satisfactory, based on the assumption that any building is of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.*

Conditionally Acceptable *= New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice. With the exception of industrial, manufacturing, utility and agricultural uses, the analysis shall identify attenuation required to maintain an indoor level of ≤ 45 dBA.*

Unacceptable *= New construction or development should not be undertaken, unless it can be demonstrated that noise reduction requirements can be employed to reduce noise impacts to an acceptable level. With the exception of industrial, manufacturing, utility and agricultural uses, the Analysis shall identify attenuation required to maintain an indoor level of ≤ 45 dBA.*

Construction Noise and Vibration

The City of Chowchilla General Plan provides guidance in regards to noise associated with construction activities and limits allowable hours of construction. The General Plan Noise Element states the following:

Policy N 4.6*: The City of Chowchilla shall limit construction activities to the hours of 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Saturday. No construction shall occur on Sundays or national holidays without a permit from the City.*

> ***Implementation Measure N 4.6. A*** *For all temporary construction, demolition or maintenance noise and other necessary short-term noise events, the stationary noise standards in Policy N 4.1 (Table II above), may be exceeded within the receiving land use by:*
>
> - *5 dBA for a cumulative period of no more than fifteen (15) minutes in any hour.*
> - *10 dBA for a cumulative period of no more than five (5) minutes in any hour.*
> - *15 dBA for a cumulative period of no more than one (1) minute in any given hour.*
> - *In order to allow for temporary construction, demolition or maintenance noise and other necessary short-term noise events, the stationary noise standards in Policy N 4.1 above, shall not be exceeded within the receiving land use by more than 15 dBA any period of time.*

The City of Chowchilla does not have regulations that define acceptable levels of vibration. One of the most recent references suggesting vibration guidelines is the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual. The Manual provides guidance for determining annoyance potential criteria and damage potential threshold criteria. These criteria are provided below in Table 4-24 and

Table 4-25, and are presented in terms of peak particle velocity (PPV) in inches per second (in/sec).

Table 4-24 Guideline Vibration Annoyance Potential Criteria

Human Response	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
	Translent Sources	Continuous/Frequent Intermittent Sources
Barely Perceptible	0.04	0.01
Distinctly Perceptible	0.25	0.04
Strongly Perceptible	0.9	0.1

Severe	2.0	0.4

Source: Caltrans

Table 4-25 Guideline Vibration Damage Potential Threshold Criteria

Structure and Condition	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
	Transient Sources	Continuous/Frequent Intermittent Sources
Extremely fragile, historic buildings, ancient monuments	0.12	0.08
Fragile buildings	0.2	0.1
Historic and some old buildings	0.5	0.25
Older residential structures	0.5	0.3
New residential structures	1.0	0.5
Modern industrial/commercial buildings	2.0	0.5

Source: Caltrans

Background Noise Level Measurements / Project Site Noise Exposure

The predominant source of noise exposure at the project site is vehicle traffic on SR 99. Additional sources of noise include traffic on Montgomery Lake Way as well as occasional aircraft overflights.

WJVA conducted short-term (15-minute) ambient noise levels measurements at two locations (ST-1 and ST-2) within the project site on November 30, 2023. Site ST-1 was located near Montgomery Lake Way and site ST-2 was located near the project site's property line adjacent to SR 99. Noise associated with traffic on SR 99 was the predominant source of noise at both ambient noise measurement sites. The short-term site noise measurement data included energy average (Leq) maximum (Lmax). Table III summarizes short-term noise measurement results at both ambient noise measurement sites.

Table 4-26 Summary of Short-term Noise Measurement Data

Site	Time	A-Weighted Decibels, dBA	
ST-1	2:15 pm	55.3	61.4
ST-2	2:40 pm	65.6	76.8

FHWA Traffic Noise Model

WJVA utilized the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-108) to quantify overall project site traffic noise exposure, associated with vehicles on SR 99. The FHWA Model is a standard analytical method used for roadway traffic noise calculations. The model is based upon reference energy emission levels for automobiles, medium trucks (2 axles) and heavy trucks (3 or more axles), with consideration given to vehicle volume, speed, roadway configuration, distance to the receiver, and the acoustical characteristics of the site. The FHWA Model was developed to predict hourly Leq values for free-flowing traffic conditions and is generally considered to be accurate within ±1.5 dB. To predict Ldn values, it is necessary to determine the hourly distribution of traffic for a typical day and adjust the traffic volume input data to yield an equivalent hourly traffic volume.

Noise level measurements and concurrent traffic counts were conducted by WJVA staff within the project site at two locations on November 30, 2023. The purpose of the measurements was to evaluate the accuracy of the FHWA Model in describing traffic noise exposure within the project site. The above-described short-term ambient noise measurement sites were also utilized as traffic noise measurement calibration sites. ST-1 was located at a setback distance of approximately 485 feet from the centerline of SR 99 and ST-2 was located at a setback distance of approximately 190 feet from the centerline of SR 99. The speed limit was assumed to be 65 mph (miles per hour).

Noise measurements were conducted in terms of the equivalent energy sound level (Leq). Measured Leq values were compared to Leq values calculated (predicted) by the FHWA Model using as inputs the traffic volumes, truck mix and vehicle speed observed during the noise measurements. The results of the comparison are shown in Table 4-27.

Table 4-27 Comparison of Measured and Predicted (FHWA Model) Noise Levels

	CA State Route 99	
	ST-1	ST-2
Measurement Start Time	2:15 pm	2:40 pm
Observed # Autos/Hr.	1,968	2,148
Observed # Medium Trucks/Hr.	240	276
Observed # Heavy Trucks/Hr.	708	540
Observed Speed (MPH)	65	65
Distance, ft. (from center of roadway)	485	190
Leq, dBA (Measured)	55.3	65.6
Leq, dBA (Predicted)	65.8	71.3
Difference between Predicted and Measured Leq, dBA	**10.5**	**5.5**

Note: FHWA "soft" site assumed for calculations.

From Table 4-27 it may be determined that the traffic noise levels predicted by the FHWA Model were approximately 11 dB lower at site ST-1 and approximately 6 dB lower and site ST-2, for the conditions observed at the time of the noise measurements for SR 99. The overprediction of the model is a result of ground and atmospheric absorption that occurs at higher setback distances such as those at the two measurement sites. An offset to the noise model based upon these calibration measurements is warranted for the project site.

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) data and the percentages of trucks for SR 99 in the project vicinity was obtained from Caltrans. The day/night distribution of traffic was estimated by WJVA, based upon previous studies conducted in the project vicinity since project-specific data were not available from government sources. A speed limit of 65 mph was assumed for the roadway. Table 4-28 summarizes annual average traffic data used to model noise exposure within the project site.

Table 4-28 Traffic Noise Modeling Assumptions

Annual Avenue Daily Traffic (AADT)	49,000
Day/Evening/Night Split (%)	78/7/15
Assumed Vehicle Speed (mph)	65
% Medium Trucks (% AADT)	6
% Heavy Trucks (% AADT)	19

Source: MCTC

Using data from Table 4-28, the FHWA Model, annual average traffic noise exposure was calculated within the project site. Table 4-29 provides the noise exposure levels for Washington Road for future 2046 traffic conditions, at the closest proposed residential setbacks from the roadway.

Table 4-29 Modeled Traffic Noise Levels, Washing Road, dB, CNEL

ST-1	57 dB CNEL
ST-2	68 dB CNEL

Source: Caltrans

Reference to Table 4-29 indicates that overall project site noise exposure would likely be in the range of approximately 55 to 70 dB CNEL, depending on proximity to SR 99. The project would include a noise-sensitive land use (hotel) located approximately 210 feet from the centerline of SR 99. At this location project site traffic noise exposure would be approximately 68 dB CNEL.

4.13.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

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 in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?

Less than Significant Impact.

Traffic Noise Impacts

WJVA utilized the FHWA Traffic Noise Model to quantify expected project-related increases in traffic noise exposure at representative noise-sensitive receptor locations in the project vicinity. Traffic noise exposure levels for Existing, Existing Plus Project, 2046 Cumulative and 2046 Cumulative Plus Project traffic conditions were calculated based upon the FHWA Model and traffic volumes provided by VRPA Technologies, Inc. The day/evening/night distribution of traffic and the percentages of trucks on the roadways used for modeling were obtained from previous studies WJVA has conducted along similar roadways. The Noise modeling assumptions used to calculate project traffic noise are provided as Appendix C in Appendix A.

Project-related significant impacts would occur if an increase in traffic noise associated with the project would result in noise levels exceeding the City's applicable noise level standards at the location(s) of sensitive receptors. For the purpose of this analysis a significant impact is also assumed to occur if traffic noise levels were to increase by 3 dB at sensitive receptor locations where noise levels already exceed the City's applicable noise level standards (without the project), as 3 dB generally represents the threshold of perception in change for the human ear. This analysis of project traffic noise focuses on residential land uses, as they represent the most restrictive noise level criteria by land use type provided in the General Plan.

This analysis of project traffic noise focuses on potential impacts to residential land uses, as they represent the most restrictive noise level criteria by land use type provided in the General Plan. The City's exterior noise level standard for residential land uses is 60 dB CNEL. The majority of roadway segments analyzed in the project traffic assessment did not include any noise-sensitive land uses.

Traffic noise was modeled at two (2) receptor locations (R-1 and R-2). The two modeled receptors are located at roadway setback distances representative of the sensitive receptors (residences) along each analyzed roadway segment. The residential land uses along these roadways include existing 6-foot CMU block sound walls, which would provide a minimum of 5 dB noise attenuation from traffic sources.

- *R-1: Approximately 75 feet from the centerline of Genoa Lake Way.*
- *R-2: Approximately 75 feet from the centerline of Montgomery Lake Way.*

Table 4-30 provides a comparison of traffic noise levels at the two modeled receptor locations for Existing, Existing Plus Project, 2046 Cumulative and 2046 Cumulative Plus Project traffic conditions. As described in Table 4-30, project-related traffic is not expected to result in noise levels at any sensitive receptors to exceed the City's noise level standard. Therefore, project-related increases in traffic noise exposure are considered to be less than significant.

Table 4-30 Project-related Increases in Traffic Noise, dB, CNEL

Modeled Receptor	Existing	Existing Plus Project	2046 Cumulative	2046 Cumulative Plus Project	Change (Maximum)	Significant Impact?

R-1	47	47	49	49	0	No
R-2	53	53	55	58	+3	No

On-Site Operational Noise Impacts

The project would include a variety of commercial retail land uses, including hotel, convenience store, restaurants (including drive-thru quick service), fuel service retail, truck maintenance shop and truck parking. The exact tenants of the multi-use retail development were not known at the time this analysis was prepared. A wide variety of noise sources can be associated with commercial retail land uses. The noise levels produced by such sources can also be highly variable and could potentially impact existing off-site and proposed on-site sensitive receptors. Typical examples of stationary noise sources associated with such land uses include:

- HVAC/Mechanical equipment
- Truck deliveries
- Parking lot activities (closing of car doors and trunks, stereos, alarms etc.)
- Drive Thru operations
- Pneumatic Tools (Truck Maintenance Shop)

Mechanical Equipment

It is assumed that the project would include roof-mounted HVAC units on the proposed buildings. The heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) requirements for the buildings would likely require the use of multiple packaged roof-top units. For the purpose of noise and aesthetics, roof-mounted HVAC units are typically shielded by means of a roof parapet. WJVA has conducted reference noise level measurements at numerous commercial and retail buildings with roof-mounted HVAC units, and associated noise levels typically range between approximately 45-50 dB at a distance of 50 feet from the building façade.

For this project, the closest residential land uses to any potential roof-mounted HVAC equipment would be located at a minimum setback distance of 250 feet. Taking into account the standard rate of noise attenuation with increased distance from a point source (-6 dB/doubling of distance), noise levels associated with the operation of roof-mounted HVAC units would be approximately 31-36 dB at the closest sensitive receptor property line. Such levels do not exceed any City of Chowchilla noise level standard or exceed existing (without project) ambient noise levels.

Truck Movements

At the time of this analysis, a specific truck access route (or routes) had not been designated. However, trucks would access the project site via access points along Montgomery Lake Way. It is assumed that truck deliveries would occur at various times and locations throughout the overall project area. Precise details on truck deliveries were not known at the time of this analysis.

WJVA has conducted measurements of the noise levels produced by slowly moving trucks for a number of studies. Such truck movements would be expected to produce noise levels in the range of 65 to 71 dBA at a distance of 100 feet. The range in measured truck noise levels is due to differences in the size of trucks, their speed of movement and whether they have refrigeration units in operation during the pass-by.

Truck movements within the project site would be located at distances of 150 feet or greater from existing noise-sensitive land uses (residences adjacent to Montgomery Lake Way). At such distances, noise levels associated with

truck movements would produce maximum noise levels in the range of approximately 62 to 68 dB or less. The City of Chowchilla does not provide maximum (Lmax) noise level standards applicable for stationary (non-transportation) noise sources but rather provides stationary noise standards in terms of the hourly energy average (Leq/L50). Because truck deliveries are periodic and transient, noise associated with on-site truck deliveries would not be expected to exceed the City of Chowchilla exterior noise standards for non-transportation sources. It should be noted, truck and vehicle movements not occurring on public roadway are considered to be stationary noise sources.

Parking Lot Activities

Noise due to traffic in parking lots is typically limited by low speeds and is not usually considered to be significant. Human activity in parking lots that can produce noise includes voices, stereo systems and the opening and closing of car doors and trunk lids. Such activities can occur at any time. The noise levels associated with these activities cannot be precisely defined due to variables such as the number of parking movements, time of day and other factors. It is typical for a passing car in a parking lot to produce a maximum noise level of 60 to 65 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, which is comparable to the level of a raised voice.

For this project, parking would be dispersed throughout the overall project area. The closest proposed parking areas would be located at least 150 feet from the closest existing residential property lines. At this distance, maximum (Lmax) parking lot vehicle movements would be expected to be approximately 50 to 55 dB. Such levels would not exceed any of the City's applicable noise levels standards or exceed existing ambient noise levels at the closest residential land uses. Due to existing elevated ambient noise levels at the closest sensitive receptor locations (residential land uses north of the project site), noise levels associated with parking lot activities would generally not be audible over existing (without project) noise levels.

Drive Through Retail

The proposed project would include two retail areas that would likely include drive-through operations. While the exact tenants and type of retail stores were not known at this time, it is assumed that amplified speech would be incorporated into drive-through operations.

In order to assess potential project noise levels associated with drive-thru operations, WJVA utilized reference noise levels measured at a Wendy's drive-through restaurant located on South Mooney Boulevard in Visalia. Measurements were conducted during the early afternoon using the previously described noise monitoring equipment.

The microphone used by customers to order food and the loudspeaker used by employees to confirm orders are both integrated into a menu board that is located a few feet from the drive-through lane at the approximate height of a typical car window. Vehicles would enter the drive-through lane from the west and then turn to the north along the east side of the restaurant.

Reference noise measurements were obtained at a distance of approximately 40 feet from the menu board containing the microphone/loudspeaker system at an angle of about 45° toward the rear of the vehicle being served. This provided a worst-case exposure to sound from the loudspeaker system since the vehicle was not located directly between the loudspeaker and measurement location. Cars were lined up in the access lane during the noise measurement period indicating that the drive-through lane was operating at or near a peak level of activity.

Each ordering cycle was observed to take approximately 60 seconds including vehicle movements. A typical ordering cycle included 5-10 seconds of loudspeaker use with typical maximum noise levels in the range of 60-62 dBA at the 40 foot-reference location. Vehicles moving through the drive-thru lane produced noise levels in the range of 55-60 dBA at the same distance. Vehicles parked at the ordering position (between the menu board and measurement site) were observed to provide significant acoustic shielding during the ordering sequence. The effects of such shielding are reflected by the noise measurement data. Noise levels were measured to approximately 60 dB Leq/L50 at the measurement site, and included noise from all sources, including the loudspeaker, vehicle movements and HVAC equipment.

The closest noise-sensitive receptors (residential land uses) to the proposed retail drive-through operations are located approximately 700 feet from the drive-through restaurants. Potential drive-through noise levels at the locations of the closest residential land uses were calculated based upon the above-described reference noise measurement data and the normal rate of sound attenuation over distance for a "point" noise source (6 dB/doubling of distance). At the setback distance of the closest residential land uses to any proposed drive-thru operations, noise levels associated with drive thru retail operations would be expected to produce noise levels of approximately 35-37 dB Lmax and approximately 37 dB Leq/L50. Such levels would not exceed any daytime or nighttime City of Chowchilla noise level standards.

Truck Maintenance Shop

The project would include a truck repair and maintenance facility, to be located within the project site, approximately 250 feet from the closest sensitive receptor (residential land use). The hours of operation for the truck maintenance shop were not known at the time this analysis was prepared. In order to asses potential noise levels associated with the truck repair facility, WJVA reviewed noise levels measured at an existing truck repair facility, obtained during a previous project.

WJVA previously conducted noise level measurements at an existing truck repair facility, located at 2120 S. Union Avenue, in Bakersfield. The reference noise level measurements were conducted on June 14, 2017. Sources of noise associated with truck repair operations are generally limited to air compressors and pneumatic tools. WJVA conducted noise level measurements of multiple pneumatic tools, while in operation. The loudest tool measured was a pneumatic impact wrench, used to remove and replace lug nuts for tire removal. Noise levels associated with the impact wrench were measured to be approximately 80 dB at a distance of 25 feet. Additionally, noise levels associated with a shop air compressor were measured to be approximately 72 dB at a distance of 20 feet.

These measured noise levels would be in the range of approximately 50-58 dB at the closest residential land uses to the truck maintenance shop. It is assumed that the majority of truck repairs would occur indoors, within the shop bays, which would result in significantly lower noise levels at the closest residential land uses. Additionally, the residential land uses have an existing sound wall which would reduce noise levels within individual backyards. As such, noise levels associated with the truck maintenance shop would not be expected to exceed any City of Chowchilla noise level standards at any nearby residential land uses.

Construction Noise Impacts

Construction noise would occur at various locations within and near the project site through the build-out period. The distance from the closest residences to the project site is approximately 150 feet. Table VIII provides typical construction-related noise levels at distances of 100 feet, 200 feet, and 300 feet.

Table 4-31 Typical Construction Equipment

Type of Equipment	100 ft.	200 ft.	300 ft.

Concrete Saw	84	78	74
Crane	75	69	65
Excavator	75	69	65
Front End Loader	73	67	63
Jackhammer	83	77	73
Paver	71	65	61
Pneumatic Tools	79	73	69
Dozer	76	70	66
Rollers	74	68	64
Trucks	80	72	70
Pumps	74	68	64
Scrapers	81	75	71
Portable Generators	74	68	74
Backhoe	80	74	70
Grader	80	74	70

Source: FHWA Noise Control for Buildings and Manufacturing Plants, Bolt,, Beranek & Newman, 1987

Construction noise is not considered to have a significant impact if construction is limited to the daytime hours and construction equipment is adequately maintained and muffled. Extraordinary noise-producing activities (e.g., pile driving) are not anticipated. Construction noise impacts could result in annoyance or sleep disruption for nearby residents if nighttime operations were to occur or if equipment is not properly muffled or maintained. The City of Chowchilla states that construction activities must be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. As such, construction noise impacts would have a less than significant impact under current standards.

Noise Impacts on Proposed Project (Noise-Sensitive Land Uses)

The proposed project would include a 95-room, four-story hotel, to be located in the northern portion of the project site. Transient lodging (hotels and motels) is considered to be a noise-sensitive land use as defined by the City's General Plan Noise Element. The Noise Element establishes an exterior noise level standard of 65 dB CNEL as "normally acceptable" and an exterior noise level of up to 75 dB CNEL as "conditionally acceptable". The exterior noise level standards for transient lodging are typically applied to outdoor common use areas, such as pools, common courtyards and designated picnic or BBQ areas.

An interior noise level standard 45 dB CNEL is assumed for the proposed hotel. This is consistent with Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. The intent of the interior noise level guideline is to provide an acceptable noise environment for indoor communication and sleep.

Based upon the project site noise exposure calculated and described above, the exterior noise exposure in the vicinity of the proposed hotel location would be approximately 68 dB CNEL. The project site plan does not currently indicate the location(s) of any outdoor activity areas such as an outdoor pool or other outdoor common use area. The exterior noise exposure at the hotel location is considered "conditionally acceptable" by the City of Chowchilla.

The City of Chowchilla interior noise level standard applicable to the project is 45 dB CNEL. The worst-case noise exposure at the exterior facades of the hotel would be approximately 68 dB CNEL. This means that the proposed residential construction must be capable of providing a minimum outdoor-to-indoor noise level reduction (NLR) of approximately 23 dB (68-45=23).

A specific analysis of interior noise levels was not performed. However, it may be assumed that construction methods complying with current building code requirements will reduce exterior noise levels by at least 25 dB if

windows and doors are closed. This will be sufficient for compliance with the assumed 45 dB CNEL interior standard at all proposed hotel units.

To summarize, traffic, operational, and construction noise impacts are less than significant under compliance with City standards and regulations.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The dominant sources of man-made vibration are sonic booms, blasting, pile driving, pavement breaking, demolition, diesel locomotives, and rail-car coupling. None of these activities are anticipated to occur with construction or operation of the proposed project. Typical vibration levels at distances of 100 feet and 300 feet are summarized by Table 4-32. These levels would not be expected to exceed any significant threshold levels for annoyance or damage, as provided above in Table 4-24 and Table 4-25.

Table 4-32 Typical Vibration Levels During Construction

Equipment	PPV (in/sec)	
	At 100 feet	At 300 feet
Bulldozer (Large)	0.011	0.006
Bulldozer (Small)	0.0004	0.00019
Loaded Truck	0.01	0.005
Jackhammer	0.005	0.002
Vibratory Roller	0.03	0.013
Caisson Drilling	0.01	0.006

Source: Caltrans

After full build out of the project, it is not expected that ongoing operational activities will result in any vibration impacts at nearby sensitive uses. Activities involved in trash bin collection could result in minor on-site vibrations as the bin is placed back onto the ground. Such vibrations would not be expected to be felt at the closest off-site sensitive uses. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact.

c) 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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The proposed Project site is located within two (2) miles of the Chowchilla Municipal Airport (approximately 0.5 miles). According to the Madera Countywide Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, the Project site is not within the 65 dB CNEL or 60 dB CNEL noise contour. As such, there would be no noise-compatibility concerns for the project. As such, the Project would have no impact.

4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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

4.14.1 Environmental Setting

CEQA Guidelines *Section 15126.2(d)* requires that a CEQA document discuss the ways in which the proposed Project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. The CEQA Guidelines provide an example of a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant that may allow for more construction within the service area. The CEQA Guidelines also note that the evaluation of growth inducement should consider the characteristics of a project that may encourage or facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment. Direct and Indirect Growth Inducement consists of activities that directly facilitate population growth, such as construction of new dwelling units. A key consideration in evaluating growth inducement is whether the activity in question constitutes "planned growth."

City of Chowchilla General Plan

The General Plan targets the development of 23,425 additional dwelling units within the 2040 Growth Area. With an average household size of 3.36, the planned residential uses are expected to hold a total of 78,708 people at full buildout of the city's Planning Area.

U.S. Census Bureau

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of Chowchilla is 18,738 with an average household size of 3.36 in 2022. [20] Additionally, according to the US Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Chowchilla has an unemployment rate of 10.1%. [21]

4.14.2 Impact Assessment

[20] U.S. Census Bureau. 2023. QuickFacts: Chowchilla city, California. Accessed on May 6, 2024, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/chowchillacitycalifornia,US/PST045222

[21] U.S. Census Bureau. 2022. *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03.* Accessed on August 26, 2024, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP03?q=unemployment&g=160XX00US0613294

Would the project:

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)?*

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site is planned for growth in development of commercial uses. The proposed Project is consistent with the existing SC-H land use designation and HC zoning district and would not require extension of roads or utilities beyond the site, except for improvements to Montgomery Lake Way (i.e., Road 16 ½) along the site's frontage including curb, gutter, sidewalk, and streetlight. In addition, the Project does not represent a significant change in the surrounding area as it will develop vacant and undeveloped property with a use that is compatible with the planned and existing land uses within the area. The full buildout of the site could generate approximately 40 employees, increasing the number of employees citywide from 5,675 to 5,715. Therefore, while the Project would generate new employment opportunities, it would not be at a level that could induce population growth and would instead assist the City with alleviating its unemployment rate. For these reasons, the Project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth directly or indirectly and would therefore have a less than significant impact.

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

No Impact. The Project site is currently vacant with no structures. The site does not contain any existing housing or residential uses. Since the site does not provide housing, future development of the Project site would not result in the physical displacement of people or housing. No impact would occur because of the Project.

4.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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:				
i. Fire protection?			X	
ii. Police protection?			X	
iii. Schools?				X
iv. Parks?				X
v. Other public facilities?				X

4.15.1 Environmental Setting

Public Services provided within Chowchilla City limits are described as follows.

Fire Protection Services

Fire protection services in the city are provided by the City of Chowchilla Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD). CVFD is a volunteer unit with a paid full-time Fire Chief. CVFD operates from one fire station located at 240 North 1st Street, Chowchilla, CA 93610. Fire dispatch for CVFD is handled through the City of Chowchilla Police Department (CPD). CVFD aims to maintain a ratio of 2.8 firefighters per 1,000 population. The City's acceptable standard for responding to an emergency service call is five (5) minutes. Most of the City's present development lies within a five-minute emergency response time service area from the CVFD fire station.

CVFD and Madera County have a mutual aid agreement to provide joint response to provide for fire prevention and suppression services within the City and the County's unincorporated areas. Madera County Fire Department Station 2 is located at 122 Trinity Avenue, Chowchilla. Other County Fire Department stations may also respond to a fire depending on the location and ability to commit equipment in support. Fire dispatch for Madera County Fire Department is handled by Cal Fire.

Police Protection Services

Law enforcement services within the city are provided by the Chowchilla Police Department (CPD). The Police Department currently operates from the headquarters located at 122 Trinity Ave, Chowchilla, CA 93610. The City's desired ratio of sworn officers per 1,000 population is 1.5 and to maintain an emergency response time of five (5) minutes or less for all priority calls. According to the General Plan, CPD facilities are undersized for the number of police officers, dispatch employees, prisoner holding, and records retention requirements. The City is evaluating

alternatives for the expansion or relocation of police facilities for additional space and improved response times. The Police Department reviews all projects to ensure that building and site designs consider utilization of crime prevention features and techniques.

Schools

Educational services within the Project area are primarily served by the Chowchilla Elementary School District (CESD) and the Chowchilla Union High School District (CUHSD). Public school facilities included permanent and interim school facilities, land for permanent and interim school facilities, and District-wide support facilities (i.e. administration offices, food service, transportation services, warehousing and storage, etc.). Funding for schools and school facilities impacts is outlined in Education Code *Section 17620* and Government Code *Section 65995 et. seq.*, which governs the amount of fees that can be levied against new development. These fees are used to construct new or expanded school facilities. Payment of fees authorized by the statute is deemed "full and complete mitigation."

Parks and Recreation

Park and Recreational facilities are overseen by the Chowchilla Recreation Division. The City of Chowchilla presently operates and maintains 4 parks, including 2 neighborhood parks and 2 community parks, totaling 30.6 acres. According to the Chowchilla General Plan, the City's park standard is a minimum of 5 parkland acres per 1,000 population, broken down to 3 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents and 2 acres of community parkland per 1,000 residents. Table 4-33 lists the City's parkland standards. To mitigate any impacts to park and recreational facilities, the Chowchilla Municipal Code established parkland dedication requirements and in-lieu fees for development projects.

Table 4-33 Parkland Standards

Park Type	Acres Per 1,000 Persons	Acres Per Park	Service Area
Neighborhood Park	3.0	3 to 9 acres	½ mile radius
Community Park	2.0	10 to 50 acres	2 miles radius

City of Chowchilla General Plan

The General Plan Public Safety Element established goals, policies, and implementation measures related to fire prevention and law enforcement, as listed below.

Objective PS 4 *Minimize risks of potential property damage and personal injury from wildland fires.*

> ***Policy PS 4.1*** *New and redevelopment projects in a designated moderate fire hazard severity zone shall comply with the Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area Building Standards.*
>
> ***Policy PS 4.2*** *New and redevelopment projects in which the elimination of a wildland fire hazard would require the significant removal of, or damage to, established trees and other riparian vegetation associated with Ash Slough or Berenda Slough shall not be permitted.*

Objective PS 5 *Protect property in urbanized areas from fire hazards.*

> ***Policy PS 5.1*** *Ensure that new fire stations, personnel and equipment are provided to sufficiently meet the needs of the City as it grows in size and population.*
>
> > ***Implementation Measure PS 5.1.A*** *The City of Chowchilla shall endeavor to meet / maintain a response time of five (5) minutes for all areas within the City Limits.*

Implementation Measure PS 5.1.B The City of Chowchilla shall endeavor to meet and maintain a ratio of 2.8 fire personnel per 1,000 population.

Implementation Measure PS 5.1.C The City of Chowchilla shall integrate fire safety considerations in the planning review and approval process.

Implementation Measure PS 5.1.D The City of Chowchilla shall acquire land and construct additional fire stations to maintain acceptable response times throughout the 2040 General Plan Planning Area.

Implementation Measure PS 5.1.D Fire stations and facilities shall be considered consistent with all land use designations in the General Plan and all zoning districts. The station's architectural design and landscape of new fire stations shall be complementary with surrounding land uses.

Policy PS 5.2 New and redevelopment projects shall mitigate fire hazards related to urban development or patterns of urban development as they are identified.

Implementation Measure PS 5.2.A The City of Chowchilla shall analyze the additional service demands for fire services and, as necessary, require new development to provide funding to meet the cost of expanding the service.

Implementation Measure PS 5.2.B The City of Chowchilla shall require property owners to remove fire hazards, structures, materials and debris as directed by the Fire Department.

Policy PS 5.3 Ensure that potential fire impacts are adequately addressed through the environmental review process and appropriate mitigation is imposed.

Implementation Measure PS 5.3.A The City of Chowchilla development review and approval process shall continue to involve the Chowchilla Volunteer Fire Department.

Implementation Measure PS 5.3.B The City of Chowchilla's development review process shall ensure no residential, commercial or industrial land use project is constructed without adequate fire services, personnel, equipment available.

Policy PS 5.5 The City of Chowchilla shall continue to cooperate with the Madera County Fire Department in the provision of fire protection services through a mutual aid agreement.

Policy PS 5.6 The City of Chowchilla shall require that new development provide adequate access for emergency vehicles, particularly firefighting equipment, as well as provide evacuation routes, where applicable.

Policy PS 5.7 The City of Chowchilla shall ensure adequate fire flow requirements are maintained throughout the City.

Objective PS 6 Provide high quality emergency services to protect life and property in the City of Chowchilla.

Policy PS 6.1 Provide for efficient and cost effective fire and emergency medical service to minimize potential injury, loss or destruction to persons or property.

Implementation Measure PS 6.1.B Potential fire hazards shall be identified in project review and shall be mitigated to an acceptable level.

Implementation Measure PS 6.1.C To the extent feasible, the City of Chowchilla shall maintain Fire Marshall inspection services to ensure that new and remodel construction complies with Uniform Fire Code requirements, and that commercial and industrial buildings are meeting minimum fire prevention and safety requirements.

Objective PS 7 Provide high-quality police services to all residents and businesses in the City of Chowchilla.

Policy PS 7.1 Provide staff and financial resources to ensure adequate and equitable distribution of police services

Policy PS 7.2 Promote community order by preventing criminal activity, enforcing laws, and meeting community police service demands.

Policy PS 7.4 Endeavor to provide minimum response time of five minutes on all priority calls.

Objective PS 8 To provide protection to the public through adequate police staffing and related resources, effective law enforcement and the incorporation of crime prevention features in new development.

Policy PS 8.1 The City of Chowchilla shall maintain an average response time of five minutes or less for priority calls.

Policy PS 8.2 The City of Chowchilla shall maintain a minimum ratio of 1.5 sworn officers per 1,000 population.

Policy PS 8.3 The City of Chowchilla shall promote public safety programs, including neighborhood watch, child identification and fingerprinting and other public education efforts.

Policy PS 8.4 The City of Chowchilla shall promote the use of building and site design features as a means for crime prevention and reduction.

Implementation Measure PS 8.4.A The City of Chowchilla development review and approval process shall continue to involve the Chowchilla Police Department.

4.15.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

a) ***Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the 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:***

   i. ***Fire protection?***

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project site is within City limits and would be served by the Chowchilla Volunteer Fire Department, as well as the Madera County Fire Department Station No. 2. The CVFD station is approximately 1.0 miles northwest of the Project site. Madera County Fire Department Station 2 is approximately 1.0 miles west of the Project site. The Project's proximity to existing stations would allow for adequate service ratios, response times, and other performance objectives for fire protection services.

The Project would be required to comply with standard requirements including the CMC, CBC, and Uniform Fire Code, including provision of onsite fire hydrants and extinguishers. In addition, the proposed buildings would be required to be equipped with sprinklers and adequate fire access will be provided. Proposed interior streets are required to provide appropriate widths and turning radii to safely accommodate emergency response and the transport of emergency/public safety vehicles. The Project would also be designed to meet requirements regarding water flow, water storage requirements, hydrant spacing, infrastructure sizing, and emergency access. Further, the Project would be subject to the Fire Facilities Fee for construction and acquisition costs for improvements to fire department facilities. For these reasons, it can be determined that the Project can be served by existing facilities and would not result in the need for new or altered facilities and as a result, a less than significant impact would occur.

ii. Police protection?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would be served by the Chowchilla Police Department. The Project site is approximately 1.0 miles east of the City Police Department. The Project is subject to the Police Facilities Fee for construction and acquisition costs for improvements to police protection services and facilities. For these reasons, it can be determined that the Project can be served by existing facilities and would not result in the need for new or altered facilities and as a result, a less than significant impact would occur.

iii. Schools?

No Impact. The Project proposes commercial uses and would not result in a net increase in the area population. Thus, because of the nature of the Project and the characteristics of the area (i.e., commercial and residential), there would be no increased demand for existing schools and the Project would thereby not result in adverse physical impacts or the need for altered or new facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur as a result of the Project.

iv. Parks?

No Impact. Park and recreational facilities are typically impacted by an increase in use from proposed residential development. The Project proposes commercial use and would not result in a net increase in the area population. Thus, because of the nature of the Project and the characteristics of the area (i.e., commercial and residential), there would be no increased demand for existing neighborhood and regional parks, or other associated with the Project and the Project would thereby not result in adverse physical impacts or the need for altered or new facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur as a result of the Project.

v. Other public facilities?

No Impact. As previously discussed, the Project would not result in an increase in residents that would require other public services such as libraries or post offices. Thus, the Project would not result in the need for new or altered facilities to provide other public services and no impact would occur as a result of the Project.

4.16 RECREATION

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	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

4.16.1 Environmental Setting

See Section 4.15.

4.16.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

a) 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?

No Impact. Park and recreational facilities are typically impacted by an increase in use from proposed residential development. The Project proposes commercial uses and would not result in a net increase in the area population. Thus, because of the nature of the Project and the characteristics of the area (i.e., commercial and residential), there would be no increased demand for existing neighborhood and regional parks, or other recreational facilities associated with the Project and the Project would thereby not result in physical deterioration of recreational facilities. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact. The Project proposes commercial uses that do not include recreational facilities or require the construction of or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur as a result of the Project.

4.17 TRANSPORTATION

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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)	Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 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	

4.17.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is currently vacant with no structures. The site contains existing improvements, including curb, gutter, sidewalks, and streetlights on its eastern boundary, along Montgomery Lake Way (i.e., Road 16 ½). Montgomery Lake Way, a two-lane, southeast-northwest local road with a left turn lane, forms the eastern site boundary. State Route (SR) 99, a four-lane highway, forms the western site boundary.

City of Chowchilla CEQA Transportation Impact Study Guidelines

The City of Chowchilla adopted CEQA Transportation Impact Study (TIS) Guidelines in 2022. The CEQA TIS Guidelines provide direction to county staff, consultants, and project applicants regarding the methodologies and thresholds to be used for VMT analysis within the City of Chowchilla. Basic principles for conducting VMT analysis are obtained from OPR's Technical Advisory revisions have been made to reflect local characteristics.

The TIS Guidelines contain screening criteria whereby projects that meet at least one of the criteria would not require a detailed VMT analysis. These criteria are summarized as follows.

- *Small Projects: Projects that generate less than 1,166 trips per day can be presumed to have a less than significant impact without doing any additional analysis.*
- *Local-Serving Retail and Similar Land Uses: local-serving retail uses are presumed to have a less than significant impact on VMT since they tend to attract vehicle trips from adjacent areas that would have otherwise been made to more distant retail locations.*

In addition, the TIS Guidelines lists the following significance thresholds for land development projects.

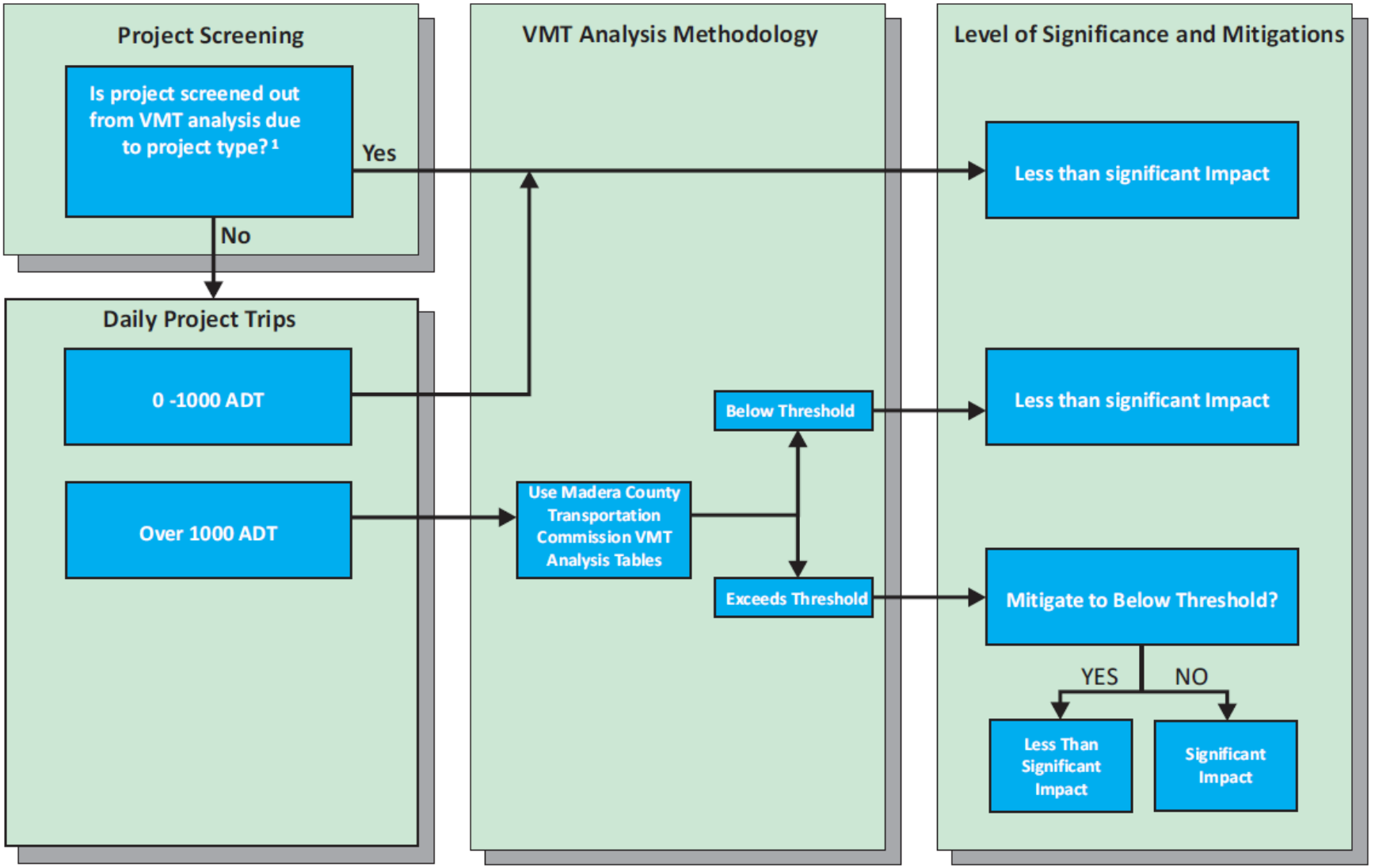
- *Residential Projects: A significant transportation impact occurs if the project VMT per capita equals or exceeds 15% below the regional average (i.e. Madera County average) VMT/capita.*
- *Office Projects: A significant transportation impact occurs if the project VMT per capita equals or exceeds 15% below the regional average (i.e. Madera County average) VMT/employee.*

- *Regional Retail Projects: A significant transportation impact occurs if the project results in a net increase in VMT.*
- *Industrial Projects: A significant transportation impact occurs if the project VMT per capita equals or exceeds the regional average (i.e. Madera County average) VMT/employee.*

Lastly, the TIS Guidelines include a VMT Analysis for Land Development Projects in Chowchilla as shown in

Figure 4-1.

Figure 4-1VMT Analysis for Land Development Projects in Chowchilla



1. VMT impacts presumed to be less than significant for certain projects, including local-serving retail projects, other local-serving projects, and affordable housing projects. See section 3.2

City of Chowchilla General Plan

The General Plan establishes a street classification system to categorize roadways and transportation facilities. [22] The classification system is used for engineering design and traffic operation standards. The following roadway classifications are applicable to the Project site, as defined by the General Plan:

Freeway/Highway: Mobility with no direct land access and access limited to interchanges.

Expressway: Mobility with more frequent access to "arterial" but no direct land access.

Arterial: Mobility with access to "collectors", some "local" streets and major traffic generators.

Collector: Connects "local" streets to "arterials", also provides access to adjacent land uses; balances mobility and access. May be "major" or "minor" collector streets.

Local: Access to adjacent land uses only; no mobility function.

Alley: Access to adjacent land use only, no mobility function.

The General Plan identifies the following objective and policy related to analyzing transportation impacts.

Objective CI 1 *Establish a circulation system that is consistent with the land use patterns of the City.*

> ***Policy CI 1.1*** *Establish a hierarchy of streets and improvement standards to support existing and future transportation needs.*
>
> ***Policy CI 2.1*** *The City shall promote an active policy of consolidating driveways, access points and curb cuts along existing and developed Arterial streets when a zone change to a greater density or intensity, division of property, or new development, or a major remodeling occurs.*
>
> ***Policy CI 3.1*** *The City shall promote an active policy of consolidating driveways, access points and curb cuts along existing developed Collector streets when a zone change to a greater density or intensity, division of property, or new development or a major remodeling occurs.*
>
> ***Policy CI 4.1*** *Discourage through-traffic on Local streets in residential areas.*

Objective CI 5 *Acquire the ultimate right-of-way for streets during the earliest stage of development possible. Where existing right-of-way is substandard, acquire additional right-of-way to satisfy ultimate needs.*

> ***Policy CI 5.1*** *Work with new development to ensure that the fair share of street improvement costs are clearly identified early in the development process and that street development is consistent with the City's Capital Improvement Plan.*

The General Plan identifies the following objectives and policies related to SB 743 and the LOS to VMT transition. According to the General Plan, SB 743 is a performance measure that discourages suburban sprawl, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and encourages smart growth development, complete streets, and multimodal transportation. California's new rules ask developers to project VMT, Vehicle Miles Traveled, created by their projects and, if they reach a certain level, provide for mitigations by taking steps that can include: improving access

[22] City of Chowchilla. (2000). General Plan. Circulation. Accessed January 22, 2024, https://www.cityofchowchilla.org/DocumentCenter/View/3359/Circulation-Element-

to transit and local amenities, incorporating affordable housing, and/or providing incentives to increase transit use. VMT Analysis for Land Development Projects shall utilize the Madera County Transportation Commission VMT resources screening process.

Objective CI 16.1 *Foster a comprehensive network of safe, accessible roads, trails, sidewalks, and pathways that emphasize a Complete Streets approach, while reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and dependence on single-occupancy vehicles.*

> ***Policy CI 16.2*** *Maintain a roadway network that serves not just automobile operations, but also multimodal movement and adjacent land uses.*
>
> ***Policy CI 16.3*** *Foster a more connected system of streets, pedestrian facilities, and bicycle facilities as new development and redevelopment is undertaken, or as opportunities are presented.*
>
> ***Policy CI 16.4*** *Update policies to reflect VMT by Improving intersections operating at less than an A.M. and P.M. peak hour Level of Service "D" conditions by adding appropriate turning lanes to congested approaches, widening intersection approaches, or modifying signal timing at intersections and coordinating with other signals, as appropriate, unless other public health, safety, or welfare factors determine otherwise.*
>
> ***Policy CI 16.5*** *Evaluate new development and redevelopment projects for compliance with adopted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) significance thresholds.*
>
> ***Policy CI 16.6*** *Continue efforts to reduce VMT—such as through pedestrian and bikeway improvements, streetscape design to promote non-vehicle transportation, mixed-use developments, flexibility in parking standards, and transportation demand management—to reduce automobile traffic and GHG emissions, while recognizing that the City has limited control over regional economic and travel patterns that influence VMT.*
>
> ***Policy CI 16.7*** *Identify projects for VMT noting that many projects may be too small to meet the threshold for VMT mitigation such as local serving projects, certain mixed-use projects, affordable and farmworker housing, and some redevelopment projects; and are thus excluded from VMT mitigation.*
>
> ***Policy CI 16.8*** *For proposed large-scale development projects with significant transportation impacts, a survey shall be conducted within one-half mile of the project site to determine any gaps in facilities for walking, bicycling or transit.*
>
> ***Policy CI 16.9*** *Seek to reduce mobile sources of air pollution by creating denser and walkable neighborhoods, and improving bicycle infrastructure, with the goals to reduce the number of miles traveled in cars and improve regional air quality.*
>
> ***Policy CI 16.10*** *The Chowchilla Specific Plan shall be reevaluated for VMT Mitigation to provide for transportation improvements.*

Transportation Impact Study

A Transportation Impact Study was conducted by VRPA Technologies, Inc. (dated April 4, 2024) and is provided in Appendix E. The study assesses exiting traffic conditions of the site and projects future traffic conditions of the site during the opening operational year (2025) and horizon year (2046). Level of service is used as the method for quantifying traffic conditions. The study concludes with recommendations for roadway improvements to maintain traffic conditions.

4.17.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would be required to comply with all project-level requirements implemented by a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. Compliance is further discussed below.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

There are existing pedestrian facilities (i.e., sidewalks) on Montgomery Lake Way. According to the MCTC Active Transportation Plan (ATP), there is an existing Class 2 bike lane along State Route 99. [23] A Class 2 bike lane are standard bike lanes that are enhanced with a striped area between the bicycle lane and vehicular travel lane. The Project would not result in changes to the existing Class 2 facility. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the General Plan and ATP and thereby would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Roadway Facilities

Trip generation was estimated as part of the Transportation Impact Study prepared for the Project (see Appendix E). Project trip generation was determined using trip generation rates from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (11th Edition) for the hotel and restaurants. For the travel center and truck maintenance portions of the Project, trip generation rates were based on the previously approved Madera Travel Center Project EIR (SCH No.2015021058). Due to the expectation that many customers of the travel station will be visiting more than one of the proposed land uses, a 20% reduction was used for internal trips that would be made within the Project site. The trip generation calculations include a total trip generation and external trip generation that reflect this reduction.

The Study provided separate trip generation calculations for autos and trucks, which is further converted to be expressed in passenger car equivalents. The estimated trip generation for the proposed Project is shown in Table 4-34. Development of the Project is estimated to generate approximately 7,541 average daily trips (ADT), with 568 AM peak hour and 604 PM peak hour trips.

[23] Madera County Transportation Commission. (2018). MCTC Active Transportation Plan and Complete Streets Policy Guide. Accessed August 26, 2024, https://www.maderactc.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/transportation/page/2171/mctc_active_transportation_plan_and_complete_streets_policy_guide_r.pdf

Table 4-34 Estimated Trip Generation for the Proposed Project

LAND USE/ ITE LAND USE CODE	QUANTITY	DAILY TRIP ENDS (ADT)		WEEKDAY AM PEAK HOUR					WEEKDAY PM PEAK HOUR				
		RATE	VOLUME	RATE	IN:OUT SPLIT	VOLUME			RATE	IN:OUT SPLIT	VOLUME		
						IN	OUT	TOTAL			IN	OUT	TOTAL
Travel Stop (1)	12,800 s.f.	470.00	6,016	31.00	51:49	202	194	396	39.00	51:49	255	245	500
Truck Maintnenance (1)	20,640 s.f.	7.46	154	0.87	63:37	11	7	18	1.25	43:57	11	15	26
Hotel/310	95 Rooms	6.38	606	0.42	56:44	22	18	40	0.44	59:41	25	17	42
Fast-Food Restaurant with Drive-Through/934	5,600 s.f.	473.35	2,651	45.71	51:49	131	125	256	33.45	52:48	97	90	187
			9,427			367	344	710			388	366	755
Internal Vehicle Trips (20%)			1,885			73	69	142			78	73	151
TOTAL EXTERNAL TRIP GENERATION			7,541			293	275	568			310	293	604

The Project would be required to submit public improvement plans for off-site improvements through the building permit process, for review and approval by the City to ensure improvements would be consistent with adopted standards, specifications, and approved street plans. Through compliance, the Project would result in improvements to the roadway network consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan as shown on the Circulation Diagram and described in the Circulation Element.

Access to the site would be provided by seven (7) points of ingress/egress on Montgomery Lake Way. Internal circulation of the site would include 30-foot drive aisles for automobiles, minimum 40-foot drive aisles for trucks, and internal sidewalks compliant with CBC and City Standards. Turning radii are proposed within the site per City Standards for emergency access and solid waste vehicle access. Results of the analysis show that the Project will contribute to an unacceptable LOS at three (3) of the study intersections in the Horizon Year 2046 with and without Project scenarios. Therefore, this impact will be fully analyzed in the EIR.

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less than Significant Impact. Under Senate Bill 743 (SB743), traffic impacts are related to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). As described in the Environmental Setting, the City adopted CEQA TIS Guidelines in 2022 that contain screening criteria that can be used to screen out qualified projects that meet the adopted criteria from needing to prepare a detailed VMT analysis. The TIS Guidelines state that a project which proposes local-serving retail uses can be presumed to have a less than significant impact without doing any additional analysis. This is because local-serving retail typically reduces trip lengths by providing additional destinations that tend to replace trips to more distant retail locations.

The Technical Advisory typically considers retail development that include stores larger than 50,000 square feet to be regional-serving. The maintenance shop, restaurants, fueling station, and convenience store proposed by the Project is designed specifically for pass-by and local-serving trips, is less than 50,000 square feet in building area, and thus, is not a regional destination. Furthermore, any increase in traffic will be the result of non-destination trips off SR 99, meaning there will be no increase in vehicle trips created as a result of the Project, but rather diverting existing trips. Due to proximity off SR 99, it is not likely to increase the distance that highway travelers would drive for highway commercial amenities such as fuel and convenience stores. The remaining trips would be local serving retail that attracts trips from neighboring areas, which can improve retail destination proximity and shorten trips. The Project would therefore meet the adopted criteria and impacts can be presumed to be less than significant.

Therefore, the Project would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines *Section 15064.3(b)* and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project design does not contain any geometric design features that would create hazards. Implementation of the Project would not require the improvement and expansion of the roadway network serving the Project site. The site would be accessible via seven (7) points of ingress/egress on the northeast boundary of the site along Montgomery Lake Way. An internal turning radius is also proposed per City Standards for fire and solid waste vehicle access. In addition, the Project would be required to submit Improvement Plans through the Building Permit process for review and approval by the City to ensure off-site improvements (i.e., driveway approach) would be consistent with adopted City Standards. Compliance with such standards, specifications, and plans would ensure that any traffic hazards are minimized. Lastly, the Project proposes commercial development of a site that is planned for such use within an area comprising existing and planned commercial uses. Therefore, the Project does not propose an incompatible use because it is consistent with the existing development in the area and is similar in nature to the surrounding uses. As a result, implementation of the Project would result in a less than significant impact related to hazards due to roadway design features or incompatible uses.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project does not involve a change to any emergency response plan. In addition, the Project site is subject to review by the City to ensure adequate site access including emergency access. In the case that Project construction requires lane closures, access through existing roadways would be maintained through standard traffic control and therefore, potential lane closures would not affect emergency evacuation plans. Thus, a less than significant impact would occur because of the Project.

4.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC 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:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC section 5020.1(k), or,	X			
b) 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 PRC section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	X			

4.18.1 Environmental Setting

See Section 4.5.

4.18.2 Impact Assessment

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:

a) 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

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** *As discussed in Section 4.5, the Project site does not contain any property or site features that are eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Sources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k). Nevertheless, there is some possibility that a non-visible, buried site may exist and may be uncovered during ground disturbing construction activities which would constitute a significant impact. As such, the Project may result in a potentially significant impact and the effects will be analyzed further in the EIR.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 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.*

Potentially Significant Impact. The Project site and its resources have not been determined by the City to be significant pursuant to *Section 5024.1*. However, as discussed in Section 4.5, there is some possibility that a non-visible, buried site may exist and may be uncovered during ground disturbing construction activities that could constitute a significant impact. Therefore, the Project may have a potentially significant impact and the effects will be analyzed further in the EIR.

4.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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 effect?			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	

4.19.1 Environmental Setting

The Project is within the city jurisdictional limits and will be connected to water, sewer, stormwater, and wastewater systems provided by the City, and may be subject to service fees. The Project would be served by a private company for the provision of solid waste collection and disposal, and electricity and natural gas, as needed. Each utility system is described below.

Water

Water supply, usage, and services are described in Section 4.10.

Wastewater

The City provides sewage disposal and treatment using a pipeline system made up 37 miles of sewer pipeline, four sewage lift pump stations, and a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) facility. The WWTP is located at 15750 Avenue 24 ½ and handles an average flow of one (1) million gallons per day (MGD). The wastewater treatment

plant (WWTP) is operated by the City's Public Works Department Wastewater Division. Wastewater is disposed into percolation ponds located at the WWTP and does not get discharged into surface bodies of water.

Solid Waste

Solid waste in the City is managed by the Public Works Department Solid Waste division. Solid waste in the City is collected by a private contractor, Mid Valley Disposal, and then transported and disposed of at the Fairmead Landfill located at 21739 Road 19 in Chowchilla, CA. This landfill is contracted and permitted to serve Madera County, which includes the cities of Chowchilla and Madera, through the year 2033 with a maximum permitted daily disposal of 1,100 tons per day or 401,500 tons annually. [24]

Stormwater

Stormwater services are described in Section 4.10.

Natural Gas and Electricity

Major electrical transmission lines run into the city to a substation located on the west side of State Route 99. Electrical and natural gas service is largely provided by PG&E, primarily from fossil fuel and hydroelectric sources. A major natural gas main and crude oil pipeline runs along SR 99. There are 3 offshoots from the mainline in and around Chowchilla that provide gas and electrical service to the local distribution system. Additionally, 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards mandates the installation of photovoltaic (solar PV) systems for all new constructed non-residential buildings, where at least 80% of the total floor area is made up of these types of buildings: office, unleased tenant space, warehouse (note: only uses permitted on the site is listed). As such, a portion of electricity would be provided through the solar PV systems that are installed with new construction.

Chowchilla General Plan

The Chowchilla General Plan Public Facilities and Services Element established goals, policies, and implementation measures related to utilities and service systems, as listed below.

Objective PF 2 *New development shall pay fees as necessary to meet all identified costs associated with new development, including but not limited to public facilities and services where a nexus can be shown qualitatively and/or quantitatively.*

Policy PF 2.1 *New development shall be responsible for the public facilities and service costs attached to each development project which include, but are not limited to, the acquisition of permanent open space, the provision of adequate school facilities, and the provision of streets, street lighting, sidewalks, landscaping, storm drains, and other infrastructure needs, including the preparation of master plans and financing strategies for these systems.*

Policy PF 2.2 *New development shall be responsible for paying a financial contribution to mitigate the effect of the development on the provision of such public services as solid waste disposal, public education, water, drainage, sewer systems, and school facilities.*

> ***Implementation Measure PF 2.2.A*** *During deliberation on proposed projects, the Planning Department shall recommend a finding to the Planning Commission and City Council in their staff report which addresses the*

[24] CalRecycle. Solid Waste Information System. Accessed on August 26, 2024. https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/Site/Summary/1701

adequacy of public facilities and services and the method by which the proposed development is to provide for these public facilities and services as part of the development.

Implementation Measure PF 2.2.B As a material part of approving annexation of any property for residential development into the City and in consideration of the City entering into any annexation and/or development agreement and as a public benefit to the Community, the City shall refer developers to the local school districts in order for the school districts to ensure the availability of adequate school facilities (including permanent schools facilities, interim school facilities, and District-wide support facilities) to house students generated by proposed projects.

Objective PF 5 Ensure provision of sufficient wastewater collection and treatment facilities to support the existing and future development at General Plan build-out.

Policy PF 5.2 Require new development to be responsible for construction of all sewer lines serving such development (including oversizing of sewers); the costs of oversizing shall be borne by the beneficiary of the oversizing.

Policy PF 5.4 The City shall condition the approval of new development projects on the availability of adequate wastewater treatment capacity and infrastructure to serve the new development.

Objective PF 10 Provide adequate public utilities.

Policy PF 10.1 The City shall designate adequate, appropriately located land for utility uses.

Policy PF 10.2 The City shall continue to circulate development proposals to local utility providers, including Pacific Gas and Electric, SBC, local cable television providers, and water districts, for their review and comment and to ensure that they can and will provide service to development.

Policy PF 10.3 The City shall continue to work with local utility providers to allow them adequate time to prepare plans for servicing new planned growth.

Objective PF 11 Provide adequate recycling programs and solid waste disposal capacity.

Policy 11.1 Promote the reduction of the amount of waste disposed of in landfills by: reducing the amount of solid waste generated (waste reduction); reusing as much of the solid waste as possible (recycling); utilizing the energy and nutrient value of the solid waste (waste to energy and composting); and properly disposing of the remaining solid waste (landfill disposal).

Implementation Measure PF 11.1.A The City of Chowchilla shall continue to investigate alternatives and implement source reduction at the household level, and methods of community-wide recycling and composting as ways of reducing waste and increasing the longevity of the Fairmead Sanitary Landfill.

4.19.2 Impact Assessment

Would the project:

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?*

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site would be developed within City limits and thus, the Project would be required to connect to water, stormwater, and wastewater services, and utilize solid waste collection services. The City has reviewed the Project to determine adequate capacity in these systems and ensure compliance with applicable connection requirements. In addition to connections to water, stormwater, solid waste, and wastewater

services, the Project would be served by PG&E for natural gas and electricity and by the appropriate telecommunications provider for the Project site. Therefore, all wet and dry public utilities, facilities, and infrastructure are in place and available to serve the Project site without the need for relocated, new, or expanded facilities. While new utility and service connections would need to be extended to and from the Project site (e.g., sewer, stormwater runoff, electrical), these new connections would not result in a need to modify the larger off-site infrastructure. Therefore, the Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded facilities and as such, and impact would be less than significant.

c) *Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?*

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in detail in Section 4.10, the City's long-term water resource planning is addressed in the City's 2020 UWMP. According to these plans, the city uses groundwater wells as the sole source of supply; the city does not use any other water sources including surface water, storm water, recycled water, or desalinated water. As such, groundwater should be viewed as a sustainable resource. As concluded in Section 4.10, it can be presumed that existing groundwater water supplies should be adequate to serve the Project's anticipated demand.

The UWMP projects normal water year, single dry water year, and five-year consecutive drought period supplies based on historic water allocations, sustainable yields, and utilization of recycled water. Based on these projections, the UWMP found that groundwater supplies remain reliable in all hydrologic conditions. In a single dry year and five-year consecutive drought periods, groundwater supplies will be reduced but the City would still be able to meet all potable demands. Based on these projections, it can be inferred that future development, such as the proposed Project, will not negatively impact the City's ability to provide water assuming adherence to requirements and recommendations from the City's water resources planning efforts.

As further discussed in Section 4.10, adherence to connection requirements and recommendations pursuant to the City's conservation efforts (e.g., compliance with California Plumbing Code, *Section 13.04.210* of the Chowchilla Municipal Code, efficient appliances, efficient landscaping, etc.) should not negatively impact water supply or impede water management. In particular, the proposed Project would be required to be built accordance with all mandatory outdoor water use requirements as outlined in the applicable California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 11, Section 4.304 – Outdoor Water Use and verified through the building permit process. As a commercial development that would contain landscaping pursuant to Chowchilla Municipal Code regulations, future development shall comply with the updated MWELO (California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Chapter 2.7, Division 2), as implemented and enforced through the building permit process. Therefore, through compliance, the potential for the Project to substantially decrease groundwater supplies is limited and impacts would be less than significant.

d) *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?*

Less than Significant Impact. According to the 2020 UWMP, the City owns and operates a citywide wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system. This system is made up of 37 miles of sewer pipeline, four sewage lift pump stations, and a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The WWTP, which provides secondary treatment of municipal wastewater, is permitted to treat 1.8 million gallons per day (MGD), but the average amount of water treated daily at the WWTP is about 0.8 MGD during dry weather conditions and 1.1 MGD during wet weather

conditions. Wastewater is disposed of via percolation ponds located at the WWTP and does not get discharged into a surface body of water. Therefore, the wastewater treatment plan would have the capacity to meet the wastewater generated from full buildout of the site and the Project's impact on wastewater facilities would be less than significant.

e) 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?

Less than Significant Impact. Development of the Project would generate solid waste and recycling. Pursuant to the Chowchilla 2040 General Plan, solid waste is generated at a rate of 13,800 tons annually. A large majority (99%) of solid waste generated was sent to the Fairmead Sanitary Landfill with the remaining 1% being disposed of outside of Madera County. Non-residential uses, such as retail, services, medical, and construction attribute for approximately 75% of waste generation; conversely, residential uses contributed 25% of waste generation.

Solid waste services are subject to the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939), which requires each jurisdiction in California to divert at least 50% of its waste stream away from landfills either through waste reduction, recycling, or other means. The Chowchilla General Plan Public Facilities and Services Element contains *Policy PF 11.1* identified above, which requires the City to promote the reduction of waste disposed to increase the longevity of the Fairmead Sanitary Landfill.

In addition, through the entitlement review process, future development would be required to comply with requirements outlined in the Chowchilla Municipal Code *Chapter. 8.04. - Garbage and Refuse.* Compliance with these requirements would ensure regular collection and recycling of materials based on the capacity of local infrastructure. Through compliance, future development would not 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. For these reasons, the Project would have a less than significant impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As described under criterion d), future development would be required to comply with state and local law which include management and reduction statutes and regulations to ensure that solid waste is handled, transported, and disposed accordingly. Through compliance with local and state law, it can be determined that future development would also comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. As a result, a less than significant impact would occur because of the Project.

4.20 WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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 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?				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

4.20.1 Environmental Setting

According to the General Plan Public Safety Element, the risk of a wildfire is related to a combination of factors. Factors which may influence the potential of a wildfire include the extent and type of vegetation, temperature, humidity, wind, and fuel moisture content. The Central Valley experiences long, dry summers. The major urban / wildland interface areas of moderate fire risk in the City include the Ash Slough and Berenda Slough corridors. The vegetative habitat associated with Ash or Berenda Sloughs can be highly flammable during the warm, dry summer months. Urban development (e.g., residential, commercial land uses) adjacent to these corridors will increase the potential risk of personal injury or property damage from a wildland fire.

The Cal Fire Fire Hazard Sensitivity Scale utilizes three criteria in order to evaluate and designated potential wildland fire hazard zones in the State. The criteria are fuel loading (vegetation), fire weather (winds, temperatures, humidity levels and fuel moisture content) and topography (degree of slope). Cal Fire, pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 4201 – 4204, has mapped fire hazard severity zones in California for both state and local fire agency responsibility areas. According to the fire hazard map applicable to the 2040 General Plan Planning Area, the majority of the 2040 General Plan Planning Areas is not zoned by Cal Fire and is free from major wildland fire hazards. However, there are small, confined areas within the 2040 General Plan Planning Area mapped by Cal Fire as moderate fire hazard severity zones. In general, areas designated as moderate fire hazard severity zones are limited to vegetative habitat associated with the Ash or Berenda Sloughs.

City of Chowchilla General Plan

The General Plan Public Safety Element established goals, policies, and implementation measures related to wildfires, as listed below:

Objective PS 4 *Minimize risks of potential property damage and personal injury from wildland fires.*

Policy PS 4.1 *New and redevelopment projects in a designated moderate fire hazard severity zone shall comply with the Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area Building Standards.*

> ***Implementation Measure PS 4.1.A*** *The City of Chowchilla shall evaluate all new and redevelopment projects located adjacent to Ash or Berenda Sloughs to assess it vulnerability to fire and it potential as source of fire.*

Policy PS 4.2 *New and redevelopment projects in which the elimination of a wildland fire hazard would require the significant removal of, or damage to, established trees and other riparian vegetation associated with Ash Slough or Berenda Slough shall not be permitted*

Objective PS 5 *Protect property in urbanized areas from fire hazards.*

Policy PS 5.2 *New and redevelopment projects shall mitigate fire hazards related to urban development or patterns of urban development as they are identified.*

Policy PS 5.3 *Ensure that potential fire impacts are adequately addressed through the environmental review process and appropriate mitigation is imposed.*

Policy PS 5.10 *The City of Chowchilla shall maintain a weed abatement program to ensure clearing of dry vegetation. Weed abatement activities shall be conducted in a manner consistent with all applicable environmental regulations.*

4.20.2 Impact Assessment

If located in or near state responsibility 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?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would not impair access to the existing roadway network. Construction may require lane closure; however, these activities would be short-term and access would be maintained through standard traffic control. Following construction, this roadway would continue to provide access to the site. Safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian circulation would be provided in addition to adequate access for emergency vehicles. To determine and ensure adequate vehicular and pedestrian circulation and emergency vehicle access, the Project has been reviewed and conditioned by the City for compliance with applicable code and regulations including applicable emergency response and evacuation plans. Therefore, the Project would not substantially impair any emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan and no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. According to Cal Fire, the Project site is located in the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) outside of a fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ), indicating that it is in an area of low fire risk. [25] As an area of local responsibility, the Chowchilla Volunteer Fire Department is responsible for providing fire protection services (See Section 4.15).

The Project site is located on a relatively flat property with a minimal slope and is not in an area that is subject to strong prevailing winds or other factors that would exacerbate wildfire risks. The site is highly disturbed and is not located within a wildland (i.e., wild, uncultivated, and uninhabited land), which precludes the risk of wildfire. Further, the Project site is within an LRA and is not identified by Cal Fire to be in a FHSZ. For these reasons, no impact would occur as a result of this Project.

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?

No Impact. The Project site would be located within City limits. Therefore, all existing and proposed infrastructure such as roads and utilities would be required to be maintained accordingly. As previously discussed, all proposed Project components (including utilities, roadway, buildings, walls, and landscaping) would be located within the boundaries of the Project site and have been reviewed and/or conditioned by the City for compliance with applicable codes and regulations. Through compliance, such infrastructure would not exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment and no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. In general, areas in the City that are designated as moderate fire hazard severity zones are limited to vegetative habitat associated with the Ash or Berenda Sloughs. These areas also have potential for flooding or landslides. Land adjacent to Ash Slough and Berenda Slough is designated by the General Plan as Open Space to minimize public exposure and property damage. The Project site is approximately 0.6 mile south of the Ash Slough and 1 mile north of the Berenda Slough. No rezoning or land use changes for land adjacent to the sloughs are proposed by the Project, nor would the Project result in the physical development of these areas; therefore, no impact would occur.

[25] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. LRA Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps. Accessed on August 27, 2024, https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/fire-hazard-severity-zones/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps

4.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Does the project have the potential to 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, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	X			
b)	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	X			
c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	X			

4.21.1 Impact Assessment

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 an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Potentially Significant Impact. As discussed above, the Project may have a substantial impact on the habitat of a fish or wildlife species identified in the Initial Study. As such, an EIR is being prepared that will focus on impact areas that have the potential to have significant impacts as identified in this Initial Study. As identified above, the Project's potential environmental impacts for the following subject areas will be further analyzed in the EIR: Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Transportation and Tribal Cultural Resources.

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.)

Potentially Significant Impact. CEQA Guidelines *Section 15064(i)* states that a Lead Agency shall consider whether the cumulative impact of a project is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable. The assessment of the significance of the cumulative effects of a project must, therefore, be conducted in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects. Due to the nature of the Project and consistency with environmental policies, incremental contributions to impacts are considered less than cumulatively considerable.

As determined by the Initial Study, there may be potentially significant effects related to Air Quality, Biology, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, and Tribal Cultural Resources which will be addressed in the EIR. Pursuant to CEQA *Section 15063(c)(3)*, an EIR can focus on effects which are determined to be potentially significant impacts in the Initial Study and scope out sections which are determined not to be significant. The City's General Plan used a programmatic EIR approach, or PEIR, that specifically states that it does not assess site-specific impacts, and that future development will be subject to environmental review. As such, an EIR is being prepared that will focus on Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Transportation and Tribal Cultural Resources since all other sections scope out, but project level analysis for each impact area is provided in this initial study.

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

Potentially Significant Impact. Based on the analysis included in the Initial Study, the Project may have potentially significant impacts on Air Quality, and as a result may have direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings. As such, an EIR is being prepared with further analysis on Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Transportation and Tribal Cultural Resources and any potential adverse effects on human beings.

5 REPORT PREPARATION

Names of Persons Who Prepared or Participated in the Initial Study:

Lead Agency		
Lead Agency	City of Chowchilla Community & Economic Development Department (559) 665-8615	Rod Pruett, City Administrator Annalisa Perea, City Planner Jaymie Brauer, QK
Initial Study Consultant		
Initial Study	Precision Civil Engineering 1234 O Street Fresno, CA 93721 (559) 449-4500	Bonique Emerson, AICP, VP of Planning Shin Tu, AICP, Senior Associate Planner Isaiah Medina, Assistant Planner

6 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix A: Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum

Prepared by Johnson Johson and Miller Air Quality Consulting Services, dated February 6, 2024, revised September 10, 2024.

6.2 Appendix B: Biological Resource Assessment

Prepared by Argonaut Ecological Consulting, Inc., dated September 12, 2023, revised September 4, 2024.

6.3 Appendix C: Cultural Resource Assessment

Prepared by Peak & Associates, Inc., dated June 19, 2023.

6.4 Appendix D: Environmental Noise Assessment

Prepared by WJV Acoustics, Inc., dated April 16, 2024.

6.5 Appendix E: Transportation Impact Study

Prepared by VRPA Technologies, Inc., dated April 4, 2024.