

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: State Clearinghouse
State Responsible Agencies
Other Public Agencies
Interested Organizations
General Public

From: City of Merced
Planning and Permitting Division
678 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

Project Title: Merced Wal-Mart Regional Distribution Center

Project Applicant: Wal-Mart Corporation

The City of Merced will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. An Initial Study has not been prepared. Instead, the attached document, entitled Project Information, has been prepared in order to provide important information about the project and its probable environmental impacts.

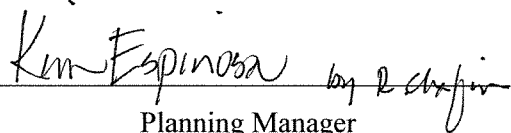
Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice, no later than Friday, August 11, 2006.

Please send your response by U.S. Mail, FAX, or e-mail to Kim Espinosa, Planning Manager at the address shown below. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Kim Espinosa, Planning Manager
City of Merced Planning and Permitting
678 West 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340
Tele: (209) 385-6858
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E-mail: espinosak@cityofmerced.org

Two environmental scoping meetings, one for the general public and one for public agencies, will be conducted on Thursday, July 27, 2006. The agency meeting will begin at 2:30 p.m. and the general public meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. Both meetings will be conducted in the City Council Chambers of the Merced Civic Center, 678 West 18th Street, Merced.

Date: July 7, 2006

Signature: 

Title: Planning Manager

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

3 PROJECT INFORMATION

3.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed project, a Wal-Mart regional distribution center, consists of a warehouse and distribution center and support facilities, located on 230 acres in the city of Merced. The support facilities include offices, a cafeteria, a fire pump house, and aerosol storage (all located within the warehouse building), as well as a truck gate, a truck maintenance garage, a truck fueling station, and parking. The underlying purpose of the project is storage and distribution of non-grocery goods to Wal-Mart retail stores located throughout the region. There are no outdoor recreational facilities, open space, retail commercial, or residential uses proposed as part of the project.

3.2 REGIONAL LOCATION

The project site is located at the southeast end of the city of Merced in eastern Merced County in the San Joaquin Valley. Merced is approximately 118 miles south of Sacramento and 130 miles east of San Francisco.

3.3 PROJECT LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The approximately 230-acre project site is bounded on the north by Childs Avenue, on the East by Tower Road and on the South by Gerard Avenue. Kibby Road, which heads north from this area, terminates at Childs Avenue at the north end of the project site. The future Campus Parkway is approximately 975 feet west of the project site. The site is approximately three miles southeast of downtown Merced and two miles east of State Route 99 (SR 99). Campus Parkway, which is planned to commence construction in March 2007 and be complete by November 2007, would provide access between the site and SR 99 via the new Mission Avenue interchange with SR 99; the interchange is currently under construction and planned to be operational by September 2007. The proposed site plan is illustrated in Exhibit 3-1. The project location is illustrated in Exhibit 3-2. The vicinity of the project is shown in a map in Exhibit 3-3 and in an aerial photo in Exhibit 3-4.

The City of Merced General Plan designates the site for “Manufacturing Industrial” uses and the zoning map designates the site as part of a “Heavy Industrial District”. City and County General Plan land use designations are shown in Exhibit 3-5, and City zoning districts are shown in Figure 3-6.

The site consists of two parcels, Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APNs) 061-250-035 and 061-290-047. The site is located in the northern half of Section 34 and the northern half of Section 35, Township 7 South, Range 14 East, Mt. Diablo Base and Meridian.

The land is generally flat but gently slopes to the west and ranges from 185 to 190 feet above mean sea level (msl). The site contains no structures or improvements, except for an irrigation water well. The western one-third

of the site contains a walnut orchard, and the eastern two-thirds consist of agricultural fields. The northern, southern, and part of the northeastern boundary of the fields contain irrigation ditches, which connect to the Wilson Substation (approximately one mile north of the site) along State Route 140 (SR 140). Overhead power lines run through the eastern portion of the site. The area containing these power lines will remain as an easement, and all site development will take place on the approximately 80 percent of the project site located west of this easement. Relocation of the power lines is not proposed as part of this project. The site includes right-of-way for the extension of Kibby Road between Childs Avenue and Gerard Avenue. This section of right-of-way is proposed to be abandoned to allow project uses as part of site development.

The project parcel is bounded by agricultural fields and a few rural residential dwellings across Tower Road to the east and Gerard Avenue to the south. The land east of Tower Road is designated as “Agriculture” in the Merced General Plan, and land to the north, west and south is designated as “Manufacturing Industrial”. Undeveloped open lands and commercial lands are located to the north. To the west is another orchard. Also to the west is a Merced Irrigation District (MID) canal.

3.4 REQUIRED APPROVALS

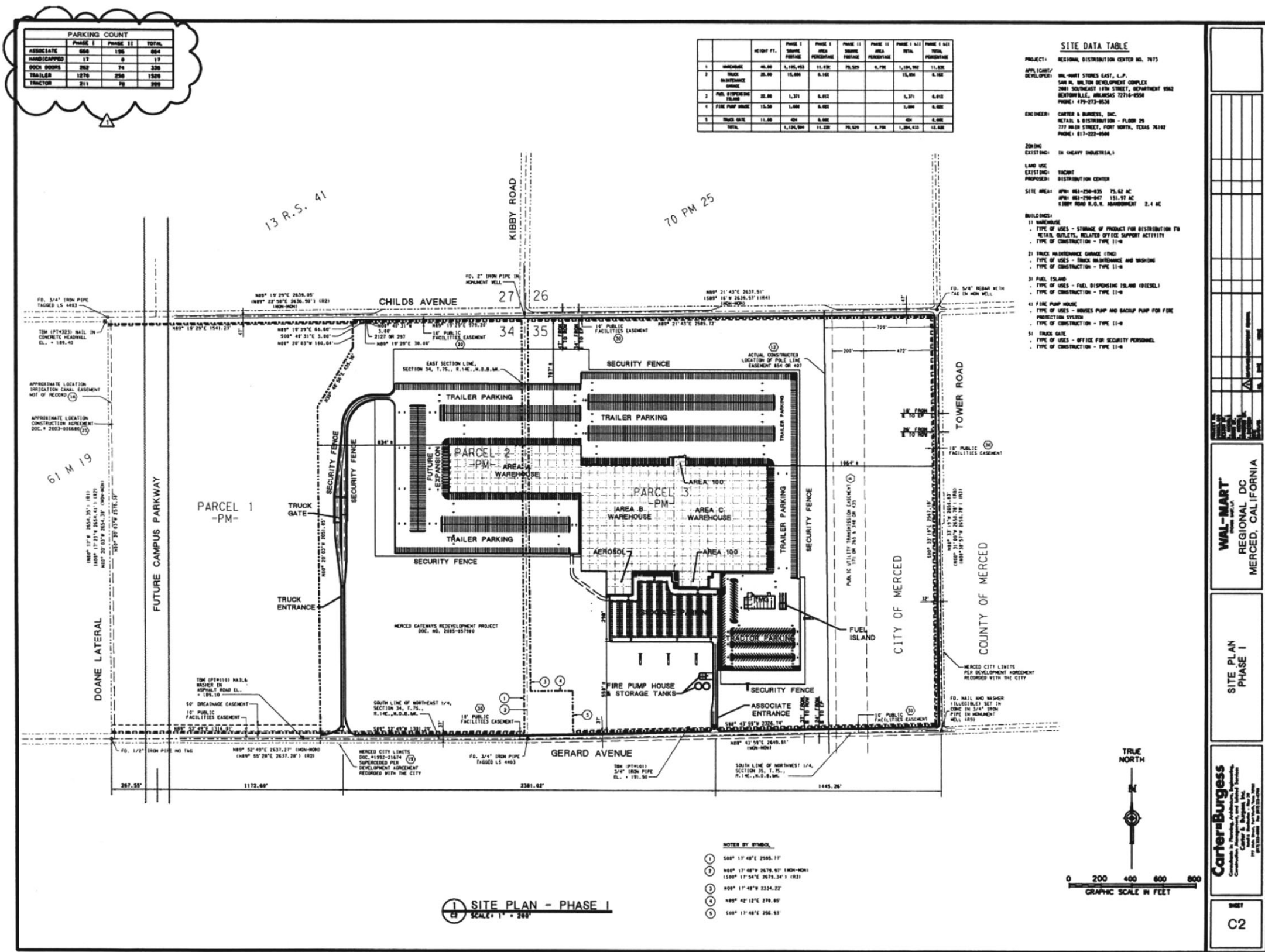
Required approvals by the City of Merced include Site Plan Approval and a General Plan Amendment (GPA). Zoning districts are shown in Exhibit 3-6. The discretionary permits required for this proposed project consist of the following:

- ▶ General Plan Amendment (For Kibby Road abandonment only)
- ▶ Site Plan Approval
- ▶ Street Abandonment (Kibby Road)

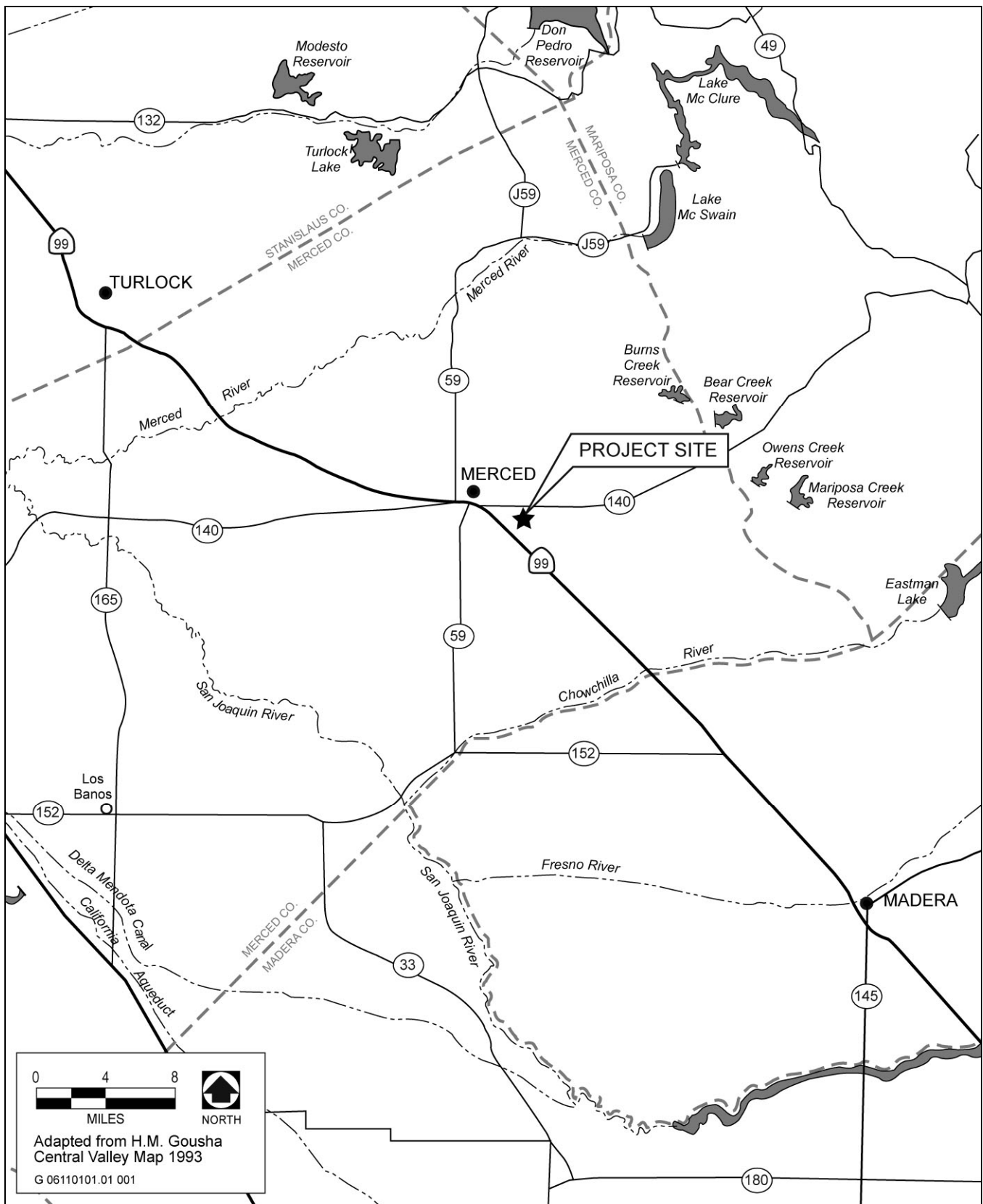
3.5 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The project site is within the city limits of Merced. Land immediately to the south, north, and west of the site is also within the city limits of Merced. Land immediately to the east is in unincorporated Merced County, but is within the City’s sphere of influence. As described above, the project site is designated “Manufacturing Industrial” in the Merced General Plan and “Heavy Industrial District” (I-H) in the zoning ordinance. The site has historically been used for agriculture.

Wal-Mart Corporation supplies the majority of its goods to its retail stores through regional distribution centers. A number of Wal-Mart stores are located throughout the central San Joaquin Valley. Presently, the closest distribution centers are located in Red Bluff and Apple Valley, both of which are in California and located 250 miles and 306 miles, respectively, from Merced. This results in high transportation costs, including fuel consumption.

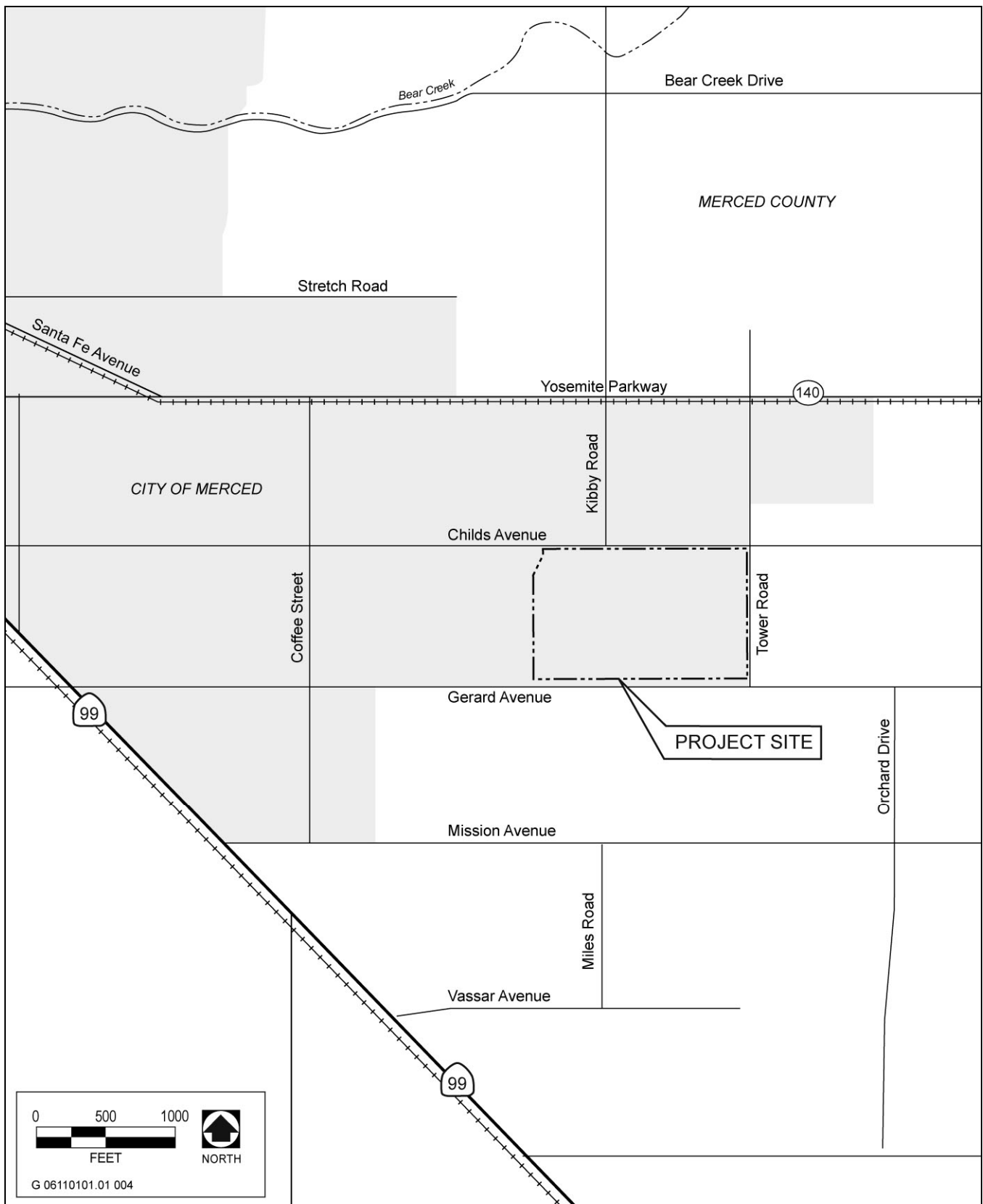


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Regional Location Map

Exhibit 3-2



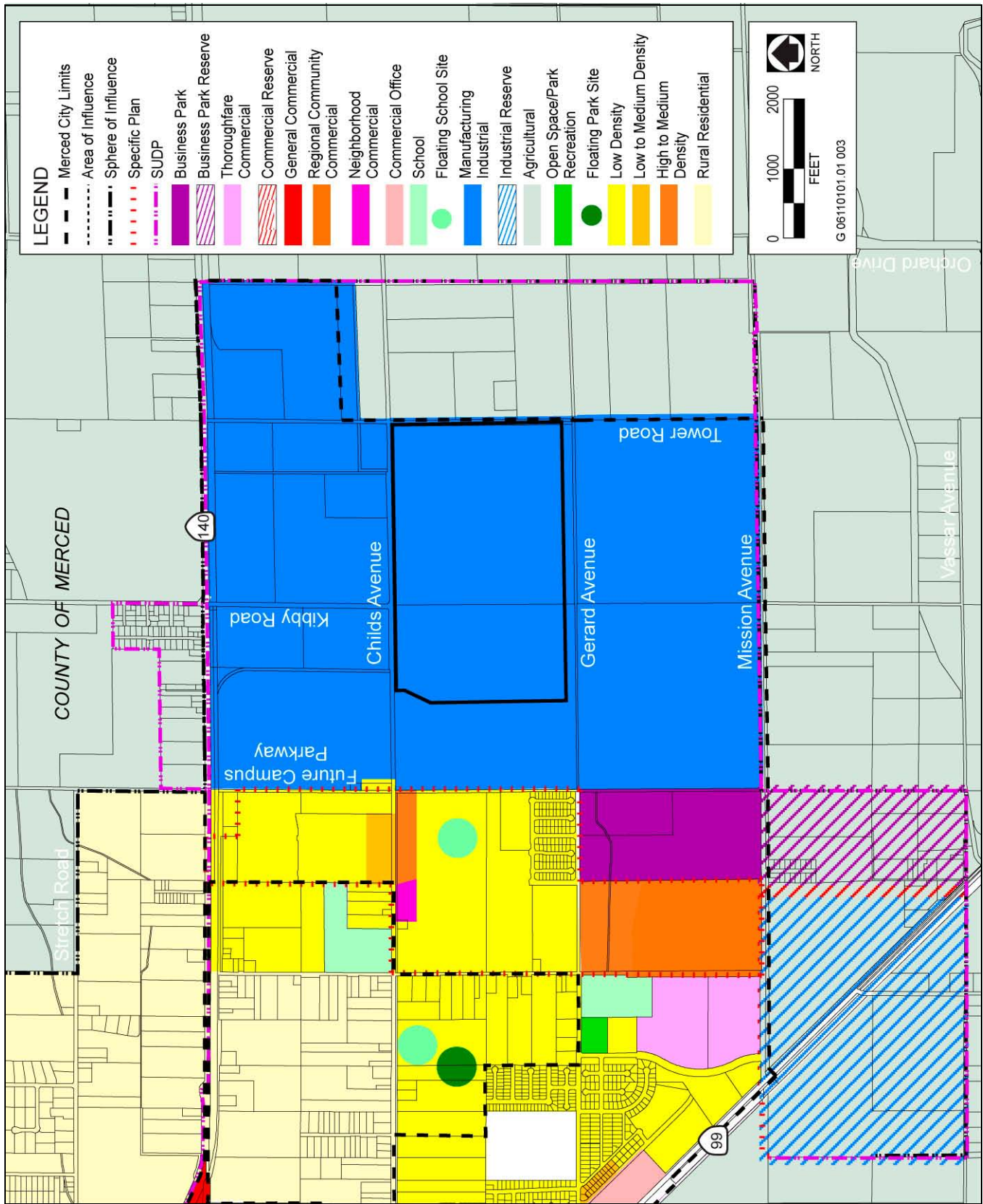
Local Vicinity Map

Exhibit 3-3



Aerial Photo of Project Vicinity

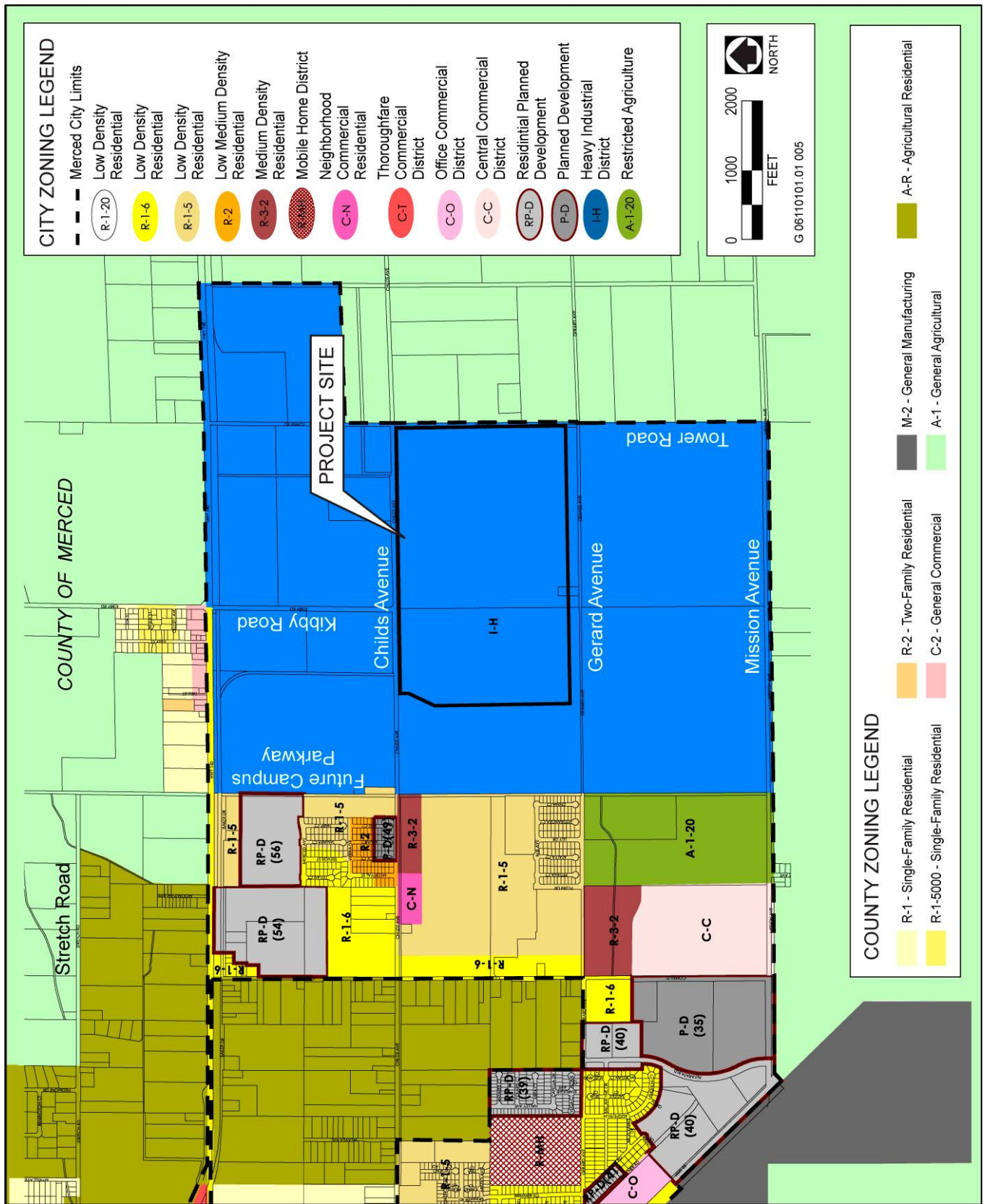
Exhibit 3-4



Source: Merced County Association of Governments 2004

General Plan Designations

Exhibit 3-5



Zoning Designations

Exhibit 3-6

The project applicants conducted an extensive siting study that resulted in selection of the site for the proposed project. This site was selected for multiple reasons, including the following: The site's industrial zoning and proximity to other industrial uses; Merced's strategic location among the Central Valley's large urban centers and smaller urban and rural markets; the site's sufficient size to convey the needed building and parking space; the site's proximity to SR 99; the site's access via sufficient local roads to SR 99; the site's location allowing access to SR 99 and other highways without drivers having to drive semi-trucks through residential neighborhoods; the ability to construct sufficient access points on arterial roads adjacent to the site; and the location's proximity to the labor pool of Merced.

This EIR will "tier off" of the Merced General Plan EIR, which was adopted in 1997. The 1997 update of the Merced General Plan was the update at which the General Plan designation of Manufacturing Industrial was designated for the eastern portion (east of the Kibby Road right-of-way). The western portion (west of Kibby Road right-of-way) was designated for Industrial use at least as far back as the 1981 City General Plan.

The site is owned by Wal-Mart. The most recent owner of the site before the Wal-Mart Corporation was Lyons Investments, a California Limited Partnership.

3.6 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the proposed project include the following from the City of Merced and from the applicant:

3.6.1 CITY OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To develop the industrially zoned area in the City with permitted industrial uses.
- ▶ To locate industrial projects in areas with good access to major highway transportation links, and provide opportunities for buffers between industrial and non-industrially-related uses.
- ▶ To encourage development of industrial projects that will create jobs, including full-time, non-seasonal employment opportunities for local residents.
- ▶ To encourage development of projects that will contribute towards improving roadways adjacent to the proposed development site.
- ▶ To ensure that industrial areas are developed in an attractive manner.

3.6.2 APPLICANT OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To develop a project consistent with the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.
- ▶ To develop a distribution/warehouse facility near other industrial uses.
- ▶ To construct and operate a distribution/warehouse facility in Merced County to take advantage of the strategic location between large urban centers and smaller urban and rural markets throughout the Central Valley in California.
- ▶ To construct a distribution/warehouse facility on a site sufficiently large (a minimum of 230 acres) to allow necessary building space and parking for trucks and employees.
- ▶ To construct a distribution/warehouse facility with sufficient space (approximately 1.2 million square feet) to allow operational efficiency and adequate distribution of goods to stores in a broad geographic area in California.
- ▶ To locate a distribution/warehouse facility with access to a regional roadway network including interstate, state and regional roads.
- ▶ To locate a distribution/warehouse facility in an area well served by major local thoroughfares in order to minimize truck traffic traveling through residential neighborhoods.
- ▶ To develop a site plan with access points on main thoroughfares in order to minimize traffic impacts on residential streets.
- ▶ To provide sufficient parking for trucks and employees in order to minimize impacts to the surrounding area.
- ▶ To take advantage of an existing labor pool living in the Merced area.

The alternatives analysis in Section 4.0 of this EIR uses the project objectives as its starting point. As required by CEQA, this EIR is required to analyze only those alternatives that can feasibly attain most of the project objectives.

3.7 PROJECT ELEMENTS

3.7.1 BUILDINGS AND OPERATIONS

The primary building on the site is the approximately 1.1 million square foot regional distribution warehouse. The warehouse is primarily a materials handling operation. The facility would not handle groceries, such as fruit, vegetables, dairy products, bakery goods, and meat. There would also be warehouse support space to house

administrative offices, the data processing center, and a cafeteria. Other internal office/support areas for administrative uses include an electric forklift battery charging/maintenance area and an aerosol product storage area. There would be approximately 37,000 square feet of office/support areas within the warehouse. An emergency generator would be located outside, near the warehouse. The generator would have an approximately 500-gallon aboveground diesel fuel tank.

The proposed site plan (Exhibit 3-1) includes the warehouse with related administrative and support functions, truck maintenance, fueling, fire pump house, truck gate and aerosol storage (located within the warehouse). All buildings would be single-story and constructed of pre-engineered steel components with metal panels. Maximum building height is proposed to be 40 feet above the finished floor level. On three sides of the building the finished floor would be four feet above finished grade. The main office floor would be at finished grade level.

The 17,000-square foot truck maintenance building would be used for routine maintenance of tractor/trailers serving the facility. The building would include a wash bay for trucks and trailers, service bays, break rooms, offices, storage rooms and restrooms. The truck maintenance equipment includes underground storage tanks near the building as follows: new oil storage tank (6,000 gallon capacity) and waste oil storage tank (2,500-gallon capacity). Additionally, a fuel dispensing station with two 20,000-gallon diesel fuel underground storage tanks is proposed for trucks using the distribution center.

The 1,600-square foot fire pump house will house the primary and stand-by fire pumps serving the building fire sprinkler systems and site fire hydrants. The primary fire pump is electric motor-driven and the stand-by pump is diesel engine-driven. There will be an aboveground diesel fuel storage tank located inside the fire pump house for the stand-by pump with a capacity of approximately 500 gallons. Adjacent to the fire pump house will be two 300,000-gallon steel aboveground water storage tanks. The tanks would be directly connected to the fire pumps to serve as their water source.

The truck gate would be located on the truck driveway serving the site and would contain workspace for two security officers as well as a storage closet and a restroom. This would involve approximately 500 square feet of building floor space.

3.7.2 LANDSCAPING AND LIGHTING

Site lighting would consist of pole-mounted metal halide lamps located approximately 45 feet above the ground surface. The lighting is designed so that light does not cross the property boundaries except possibly at roadway intersections. The lighting is designed for an average lighting level of 0.5 foot candles and has not been designed based on a uniformity ratio. To design based on a uniformity ratio would require more lamps than would be provided for the site. Landscaping would be provided for the public road improvements, as required by local

ordinance. Onsite landscaping would be minimal, and is not planned to be provided within any of the proposed parking areas. There would be security fencing surrounding the buildings, parking areas, and driveways.

3.7.3 ROADWAYS AND PARKING

The site would be served via two driveways connected to Gerard Avenue. One driveway is dedicated to employee traffic and the other driveway is dedicated to tractor/trailer traffic. The tractor/trailer driveway and parking area would be secured by the truck gate and by a 6-foot high chain link fence with 3 strands of barbwire. The site would have approximately 650 (initial) and 850 (ultimate) employee parking spaces, 1300 (initial) and 1600 (ultimate) tractor/trailer parking spaces, 200 (initial) and 300 (ultimate) tractor/trailer parking spaces, and 300 dock doors. There would be approximately 70 acres of pavement, in addition to the area covered by buildings.

3.7.4 PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES

The City of Merced provides wastewater, water, storm drainage, solid waste disposal, street maintenance, fire service, and police service to the project site. Either Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) or Merced Irrigation District (MID) can provide electricity to the site. PG&E would provide natural gas service. AT&T (formerly SBC) would provide telephone service to the site, and Comcast would provide cable television service. The project site is within the Weaver Union Elementary School District (Grades K-8) and the Merced Union High School District (Grades 9-12), although because it includes no residential uses, neither of these districts would directly serve the proposed project.

The site would be served by a series of storm water management detention ponds. These ponds and associated drainage control structures are designed to accommodate impervious area storm water runoff such that system discharge flow rates would be equal to or less than pre-development flow rates for equivalent events.

3.7.5 EMPLOYMENT

The facility would become fully operational approximately three years after opening. Once fully operational, the facility would employ approximately 1200 employees. The facility would operate 24 hours per day continuously throughout the year.

Based on the proportions of employees in different positions and shifts at an analogous Wal-Mart Distribution Center in Apple Valley in San Bernardino County, the following estimates were made based on the assumption that the project would employ approximately 1200 employees. Table 3-1 shows the number of employees total by department and title. Table 3-2 shows the number of employees on each shift.

Table 3-1 Employees by Title and Division	
Title/Division	Number of Employees
Drivers in Transportation	150
Associates in Transportation	64
Associates in Other Departments	986
Total Employees	1200

Table 3-2 Number of Employees by Shift	
Shift	Number of Employees
Tuesday-Friday 5:30 AM-4:00 PM	359
Tuesday-Friday 4:00 PM-2:30 AM	255
Tuesday-Friday 9:00 PM-7:30 AM	19
Saturday-Monday 5:30 AM-4:00 PM, plus another designated six-hour day	282
Saturday-Monday 4:00 PM-2:30 AM, plus another designated six-hour day	272
Saturday-Monday 9:00 AM-2:30 AM, plus another designated six-hour day	13
Total Employees	1200

3.7.6 CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Construction is proposed to start in Spring 2007 and is planned to take 12 months for completion.

3.8 PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

3.8.1 VISUAL RESOURCES AND NIGHTTIME LIGHTING

The largely undeveloped project site is readily visible from adjoining roadways, including Childs, Tower, and Gerard roads. It would also be visible from the proposed Campus Parkway. Development would result in a significant change in the appearance of the site, from views of orchards and agricultural fields to views of warehouse buildings, parking lots, and vehicles. Due to the development of buildings on the site, some vantage points through the site with its existing open fields may no longer provide views through the site. According to the conceptual plans, the maximum building height would be 40 feet above the finished floor level. On three sides of the building the finished floor would be four feet above finished grade. The main office floor would be at finished grade level. The large expanses of wall area would result in building elevations that are readily visible from beyond the site. In addition, building-mounted and pole-mounted lights are proposed to accommodate the 24-hour per day operating schedule.

The EIR will evaluate the extent of visibility of the proposed project from surrounding, sensitive, public viewpoints. Potential impacts resulting from light and glare emanating from the proposed facilities will be assessed qualitatively.

The EIR will analyze the project with respect to how it would comply with existing and proposed design guidance of the City, with a focus on general urban design issues such as land use transitions, and issues of bulk, height, setbacks, etc. The EIR will discuss these issues in the context of whether the proposal conforms to the context in which it is located.

3.8.2 AGRICULTURE

The project would convert land historically used for agriculture to industrial use; this land is designated for urban use (Manufacturing Industrial) by the City of Merced General Plan and is zoned for urban uses (Heavy Industrial) by the Zoning Ordinance. Land adjacent to the site to the north, west, and south is also designated for urban uses, but is presently in agricultural use. Existing agricultural resources on the project site and in the surrounding vicinity will be analyzed in the EIR, including the types of farming activities and description of on-site soils that are suitable for farming activities based on the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Implementation of the project would result in the direct conversion of agricultural land and former orchard to non-agricultural uses. The analysis will focus on impacts associated with the conversion of Farmland, and the potential for the project to conflict with or induce conversion of other area agricultural uses. The presence of the proposed project has the potential to facilitate the conversion of nearby agricultural lands to non-agricultural use due to the land use incompatibility factors that arise between adjacent urban and agricultural uses. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

3.8.3 AIR QUALITY

The majority of the ground surface of the site will be disturbed during site development activities. The project will result in dust and exhaust emissions during the construction phase, and long-term use of the project will result in vehicle emissions by tractor/trailers and project employees. Moreover, both short-term (construction) and long-term (operational) air quality emissions will contribute to cumulative air quality impacts already present in the San Joaquin valley. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

3.8.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

As noted above, the majority of the site will be graded during site development activities. This will result in the removal of grasses, shrubs, and trees, thus displacing various animals that may live on the site. A segment of a canal managed by MID is located to the west of the site and drainage ditches are located on some of the site's edges. The site is not expected to provide suitable habitat for any special-status plant species, but a determinant-

level biological analysis will be required to ascertain the presence or potential occurrence of special-status animal species. Agricultural land in this region of Merced County can provide important foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk, a species which is known to nest in the project area, and is potential habitat for burrowing owl. There are no Waters of the U.S. on the property, but the potential for wetlands that provide habitat for special-status species will be analyzed in the EIR.

3.8.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Based on preliminary research, no cultural resources have been found on site, but as is the case throughout much of central California, ground disturbance could reveal the presence of undiscovered historic and prehistoric resources on the site. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

3.8.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Near surface soils exhibit a high potential for expansion. The potential for at least one major earthquake within the project's lifetime is high. Liquefaction potential is expected to be moderate on parts of the site. Moisture movement may affect concrete slabs used for the buildings without appropriate mitigation. Significant quantities of earth are proposed to be moved to develop the site. This creates a potential for erosion-related effects. Particular attention will be given to the potential for air- or water-borne earth that is disturbed during the site development process to enter the nearby Merced Irrigation District canal or local drainage ditches and to be transported to other water bodies. Paleontology resources are known to occur in the Central Valley and may be present at the project site. These issues will be addressed in the EIR.

3.8.7 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A Phase 1 environmental site assessment conducted for the site did not reveal evidence of hazardous materials contamination on or adjacent to the site, but the site does potentially include pesticide residue in the soil from agricultural use. There is a well on site which has a potential for adverse impacts if not removed or filled in a proper manner. These issues and hazards related to the electric power lines on the edge of the site will be addressed by the EIR. Also, on an ongoing basis the project would have one 6,000-gallon new oil tank, one 2,500-gallon waste oil tank, and two 20,000-gallon diesel underground storage tanks and two above-ground 500-gallon diesel storage tanks, as well as a variety of potentially hazardous household chemicals that are stored in the warehouse before being distributed to retail outlets. The potential for these materials to be released to the environment will be evaluated.

3.8.8 SURFACE HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The project would alter the ground surface and drainage patterns of the vast majority of the site. In addition to the area covered by buildings, there would be approximately 70 acres of pavement, for a total of 100 acres of impervious surface area. This increase in impervious surfaces would increase stormwater runoff patterns and volume. Also, it is possible that the construction and operation of the proposed project could adversely affect surface water or groundwater resources and groundwater quality due to the potential for infiltration of project runoff and possible leakage of underground storage tanks in the future. These issues will be analyzed in the EIR.

3.8.9 LAND USE

This proposed project, which is within the City limits of Merced, is proposed on approximately 230 acres of industrially zoned land that is zoned Heavy Industrial District (I-H) by the Zoning Code and designated by the Merced General Plan as Manufacturing Industrial for development of a warehouse and distribution center. The project abuts the unincorporated Merced County to the east. With regard to infrastructure, the proposed project is dependent upon and will utilize an extension of Campus Parkway and upgrades to certain existing roads. Water and wastewater infrastructure is present within adjoining streets and will be extended into the site.

The site adjoins a variety of land use types. The agricultural/residential land to the south is designated Manufacturing Industrial by the Merced General Plan, as are the agricultural lands to the west and partially developed lands to the north. The surrounding parcels within the city limits are zoned I-H. Lands approximately one-quarter of a mile west of the project site have been designated residential by the Merced General Plan; various residential zoning designations have been assigned to these parcels. The City's Sphere of Influence boundary is approximately one-quarter of a mile east of the project site. The unincorporated agricultural land to the east of the site on both sides of the Sphere of Influence boundary is designated A- Agricultural by the Merced County General Plan and is zoned A-1 General Agricultural by the County.

The EIR will examine the potential for land use incompatibilities based on the presence of different land uses.

3.8.10 NOISE

Short-term noise impacts would occur during site development and building construction activities as a result of heavy earthmoving equipment and the use of construction tools. Long-term noise impacts will result from trucks that visit the project and employees' motor vehicles, as well as noise from routine operations, such as HVAC units, and forklifts and landscape maintenance equipment used outside the building. When operational, the project is proposed to be operated 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The potential impacts of all-day, all-night traffic and industrial noise on nearby residences during a typical 24-hour period will also be addressed in the EIR.

3.8.11 POPULATION AND HOUSING

The project would create new employment opportunities, but no new housing units. The project's potential effect on the jobs/housing balance in the area is not known at this time, but will be analyzed as part of this EIR.

Unemployment is relatively high in the area, so the question of whether the project's new jobs would generate significant population increase is not known. This issue will be analyzed in the EIR. The EIR will also compare the amount and type of growth that would occur under the existing Merced General Plan land use designations.

3.8.12 PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

The EIR will analyze whether the development of a warehouse and distribution center employing up to 1200 people may have impacts on the local provision of electricity and natural gas, water, wastewater treatment, fire protection and emergency services, recreation and parks, law enforcement, or other public services and utilities. Energy conservation practices will be addressed. As noted in Section 3.8.9, water and wastewater infrastructure is present within adjoining streets and will be extended into the site. The development of landscaped areas on the site may affect the City's water provision systems and the local supply of groundwater. The EIR will analyze whether this will have any significant affect on public services and infrastructure or plans for expansion of such.

3.8.13 TRAFFIC

The project is expected to accommodate up to 900 tractor/trailer trips per day (450 in and 450 out) and will employ up to 1200 people. The project will directly affect traffic on Campus Parkway, Gerard Avenue, and SR 99, as these will be the project's primary traffic route through the Merced area. The proposed project may also affect levels of traffic on the roads that connect the project area to State Highway 99, which are SR 140, Childs Avenue, and Mission Avenue. Other nearby streets that may be affected by project traffic include Coffee Street, Parsons Avenue, Baker Drive, Tower Road, and Kibby Road.

The project's connection to SR 99 is proposed via Campus Parkway at the new Mission Avenue interchange. Campus Parkway construction is planned to begin in March 2007 and be complete by November 2007. the Mission Avenue interchange is now under construction and slated to become operation in September 2007. The timing of completion of the interchange relative to opening of the proposed project will be assessed. The EIR will analyze potential effects on the roads and intersections described above and the rest of the street system, describing potential impacts with and without the new SR 99/Mission Avenue interchange, which is currently an at-grade intersection. The effect on traffic in the area as a whole upon the abandonment of the Kibby Road right-of-way between Childs Avenue and Gerard Avenue proposed as part of the project will also be addressed in the EIR. Project-related traffic impacts to nearby schools will also be discussed.

3.9 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES THAT WILL NOT BE ADDRESSED

The City has determined that the proposed project does not have the potential to create economic blight in existing developed areas beyond the project site. This determination is based on the fact that the proposed project will not be a retail outlet for goods and will not supply groceries to Wal-Mart retail outlets. Therefore, an analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with blight will not be included in the EIR.