



Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting for the Lake Creek Logistics Center

Date: February 7, 2024

To: State Agencies, Responsible Agencies, Local and Public Agencies, and Interested Parties

From/Lead Agency: Town of Apple Valley, Planning Department
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Project Applicant: Lake Creek Industrial
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Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting for the Lake Creek Logistics Center

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to notify agencies and interested parties that the Town of Apple Valley (Town), as lead agency, is commencing preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the Lake Creek Logistics Center Project (Project).

The Town is requesting input from interested individuals, organizations, and agencies regarding the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be included in the upcoming EIR. In accordance with CEQA, the Town requests that agencies provide comments on the environmental issues related to the statutory responsibilities of their particular agency. This NOP contains a description of the Project, its location, and a preliminary determination of the environmental resource topics to be addressed in the EIR.

Project Location and Setting

The Project is bounded by Gustine Street to the north, Central Road to the east, Corwin Road to the south, and the Apple Valley Airport to the west (Project site). Refer to Figure 1, *Regional Map* and Figure 2, *Project Vicinity*. The Project site is comprised of five parcels that total approximately 226.75 gross acres in size (Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 0463-373-01, -03, -04, -05, -06). Gustine Street is an unimproved dirt road but planned as an industrial road with a 66' right-of-way (ROW). Central Road is currently developed as a two-lane street without curb, gutter, or sidewalk but is designated as a Major Divided Arterial (128' ROW). Corwin Road is currently paved without curb, gutter, or sidewalk but planned as industrial road with a 66' ROW. Fernandez Avenue and Somis Avenue are undeveloped local streets that run through the site in a north-south direction. The property has remained undeveloped since at least 1952.

Existing General Plan and NAVISP Land Use Designations, Zoning

The Project site is located within the North Apple Valley Industrial Specific Plan (NAVISP). The entire Project site is designated as "Specific Plan" in the General Plan Land Use Map and as "SP" Specific Plan on the Town's Zoning Map. Four of the five parcels are designated as I-SP "Specific Plan- Industrial" on the NAVISP Land Use Plan, with the southeasterly parcel (APN 0463-373-06) currently designated as C-G, "General Commercial". The NAVISP I-SP designation is intended to support the development of a broad range of clean, well planned, industrial, quasi-industrial

and supporting commercial uses. Uses generating excessive noise or other environmental impacts are not permitted in the I-SP district.

Surrounding properties to the north, west and south are also located within the NAVISP and designated I-A, "Airport Industrial" and I-SP, Specific Plan- Industrial. Properties to the east are within San Bernardino County and designated as "Apple Valley-Rural Living". Surrounding uses include undeveloped land to the north, undeveloped land and single-family residences to the east, undeveloped land and an Apple Valley Airport runway to the south, and undeveloped land and the Apple Valley Airport to the west.

Project Description

The Project proposes three (3) industrial warehouse and distribution buildings totaling approximately 3,480,736 square feet (sf) on three parcels. Refer to Figure 3, *Master Site Plan*. The Project would provide approximately 548 dock doors, 3,032 automobile parking stalls and 1,565 trailer parking stalls. The Project proposes changing the current NAVISP designation of the southeasterly parcel from C-G to I-SP to align this parcel with the rest of the Project site and to best facilitate the intended use mix. Refer to Figure 4, *Specific Plan Amendment Exhibit*. All uses are to be conducted within enclosed structures. Outdoor storage may be permitted, if completely screened from view.

The Project would include construction of the half-width plus 18-24 feet of the full street classifications of Central Road, Gustine Road and Corwin Road, as well as standard curb, gutter, and sidewalk, on the Project site frontages. A proposed tentative map would result in the abandonment of Fernandez and Somis Avenues through the site, transitioning to interior property lines, and replacing those future roadways with a 30-foot-wide public utilities easement to be dedicated to the Town. Fernandez and Somis Avenues are not designated roadways in the City's General Plan or NAVISP; therefore, no other entitlements or approvals are required for the abandonment of these roadways.

A 10' wide sewer easement would be dedicated to the Town and would extend westerly from the terminus of Corwin Road. The Project will propose one of two off-site sewer route options to provide sewer services to the site. The primary option would be to extend the sewer line as jack and bore construction under the adjacent Apple Valley Airport runway, connecting to an existing sewer main located west of the airport. This option would require the granting of an easement from the San Bernardino County Department of Airports. A back up option would be to construct an on-site sewer lift station and provide a connection within the public right-of-way leading to an existing 15-inch sewer main located at Waalew and Camanche Roads. The proposed Project would also provide on-site sewer as well as on and off-site water, electricity, and gas infrastructure.

Building 1: Parcels 0463-373-04 and -06 (approximately 76.60 gross acres) would be merged to form Parcel 1, measuring 76.36 net acres. Parcel 1 would be developed with an approximate 1,238,320-sf warehouse building that includes 20,000 sf of office space and 1,218,320 sf of warehouse space for floor air ratio (FAR) of 0.37. The code would require 1,249 parking stalls, and a total of 1,775 stalls would be provided: 196 dock doors, 1,017 standard automobile parking stalls, 20 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standard parking stalls, 4 ADA Van parking stalls, 92 Electric Vehicle (EV) ready parking stalls, and 446 trailer parking stalls. The building would be setback approximately 406'-2" from Gustine Road, 245'-7" from Central Road, 446'-1" from Corwin Road, and 225'-10" from the westerly interior property line. It would include a 115'-7" landscape setback from Central Road that slope approximately 18' down from Central Road to the edge of the truck court. The building would have a maximum height of 51'-0".

Building 2: Parcels 0463-373-03 and -05 (approximately 80.08 gross acres) would be merged to form Parcel 2, measuring 80.08 net acres. Parcel 2 would be developed with a 1,238,320-sf warehouse building that includes 20,000 sf of office space and 1,218,320 sf of warehouse space, for a FAR of 0.36. The code would require 1,249 parking stalls, and a total of 1,943 stalls would be provided: 196 dock doors, 1,075 standard automobile parking stalls, 20 ADA standard parking stalls, 4 ADA van parking stalls, 105 EV ready parking stalls, and 543 trailer parking stalls. The building would be setback approximately 423'-4" from Gustine Road, 444' from Corwin Road, 189'-1" from the eastern property line, and 333'- 5" from the western property line. The building would have a maximum height of 51'-0".

Building 3: Parcel 3 (APN 0463-373-01) (approximately 70.07 gross/68.46 net acres) would be developed with a 1,004,096-sf warehouse building that includes 20,000 sf of office space and 984,096 sf of warehouse space, for a FAR of 0.34. The code would require 1,015 parking stalls, and 1,427 would be provided: 156 dock doors, 607 standard automobile parking stalls, 20 ADA parking stalls, 4 ADA van parking stalls, 64 EV ready parking stalls, and 576 trailer

parking stalls. The building would be setback approximately 849' from Gustine Road, 315'-8" from Corwin Road, 145'-7" from the eastern property line, and 102'-6" from the western property line. The building would have a maximum height of 51'-0".

Currently, there are no identified tenants for the proposed buildings. Intended occupants for the proposed Project include distribution firms seeking an Inland Empire location from which to service their client base. Since the tenants are unknown, hours of operation and employee count would vary, but is assumed for planning purposes to operate 24/7. Office workers would likely have typical shifts of Monday through Friday, 8:00AM to 5:00PM, while warehouse staff would work in day, evening, and night shifts. Specific hours of operation would be identified during the tenant improvement process.

The Project consists of the following requested approvals and land use entitlements:

- Tentative Parcel Map No. 20659 to merge parcels 0463-363-03 and -05 to form Parcel 2 and merge parcels 0463-373-04 and -06 to form Parcel 3;
- Site Plan Review 2022-003 to develop three industrial buildings totaling approximately 3.48 million square feet on a 227-acre site located at the northwest corner of Central Road and Corwin Road in the North Apple Valley Industrial Specific Plan (I-SP). (APNs: 0463-373-01, 03, 04, 05, & 06);
- Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) 2023-001, to change the southeasterly parcel's NAVISP Land Use Plan designation from C-G to I-SP;
- Development Agreement (DA) is proposed between the Project Applicant and the Town of Apple Valley to provide long-term vested right to develop industrial buildings on the Project site and to provide community benefits to the Town.

Potential Environmental Impacts

The Town of Apple Valley has determined that an EIR will be prepared for the Project based on its potential to cause environmental effects. Pursuant to Section 15063(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, where a lead agency determines that an EIR will clearly be required for a project, an Initial Study is not required. Accordingly, an Initial Study will not be prepared for this Project. The Town has determined that the Project would have no impacts or less than significant impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources, mineral resources, population and housing, recreation, and wildfire.

- **Agriculture and Forestry Resources:** According to the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program, the Project site is designated as grazing land¹. The Project site is not located within lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. In addition, the Project site is not zoned for agricultural use or timberland production. No impact would occur.
- **Mineral Resources:** According to the City's General Plan, the Project site is not within an area that has been identified to contain mineral resources². Additionally, the Project site is not zoned for mineral resource extraction operations. No impact would occur.
- **Population and Housing:** The property has remained undeveloped since at least 1952 and no residential uses are proposed as part of the Project. The Project site is within the NAVISP. Four of the five parcels are zoned I-SP and the southeast parcel (APN 0463-373-06) is zoned C-G. Surrounding properties to the north, west and south are also located within the NAVISP and zoned I-A and I-SP. The properties to the east are within San Bernardino County and zoned Apple Valley/Rural Living. The Project would result in the development of 3 industrial warehouse and distribution buildings totaling approximately 3,480,736 sf in an area intended for industrial uses based on the existing land use designation and zoning.

¹ <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp>

² <https://www.applevalley.org/home/showpublisheddocument/4893/635611242901270000>

Construction of the Project would not require the construction of replacement housing and would not displace any existing housing or residents. The Project does not propose the development of residential uses and would not directly increase the resident population; however, the Project would create jobs and increase employment in the Town of Apple Valley. The Project would create short-term jobs during the construction phase which would be filled by workers who, for the most part, would already reside in the local area; therefore, construction of the Project would not generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in population within the Project area.

Based on Table II-B of SCAG's Employment Density Report with an employment rate of 1,195 s.f. per employee for warehouse uses in San Bernardino County, the Project would generate approximately 2,912 employees³. According to SCAG's *Connect SoCal*, the Town's employment opportunities are estimated to grow up to 10,000⁴ by 2045. As such, the Project-related increase of approximately 2,912 employees would be accounted for in the Town's employment growth estimate upon General Plan build-out, including the NAVISP. Thus, the Project's employment generation due to Project construction and operation is already accounted for in the City's General Plan. According to the California Department of Finance (DOF) Current Month Unemployment Rate and Labor Force Summary, as of August 2023, the most current data available, the Town had a labor force of 30,200 with an unemployment population of 1,700 (5.8 percent)⁵. As such, the Project's temporary and permanent employment requirements could likely be met by the Town's existing labor force without people needed to relocate into the Project region, and the Project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the Project area, either directly or indirectly, and would not exceed regional or local growth projections. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

- **Recreation:** The Project does not propose any residential uses which would increase the population that would use parks. As discussed above, the Project would develop the Project site in accordance with the underlying General Plan land use designation. Thus, the Project's employment generation due to Project construction and operation is already accounted for in the City's General Plan. The Project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth within the Project area. Therefore, the Project would not directly increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities in the Town. Additionally, because of the proposed industrial use, the Project does not include any recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. No impact would occur.
- **Wildfire:** According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Project site is located within the limits of the Town of Apple Valley outside of the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and is not located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone⁶. The Project would be required to comply with State and local regulations pertaining to emergency access. In addition, the Project site is generally flat and lacks factors that are typically associated with the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. As mentioned, because the site is generally flat, the Project would not 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. The proposed Project would provide on-site and off-site water, sewer, electricity, and gas infrastructure improvements which would be constructed in compliance with regulatory requirements and would not exacerbate fire risk. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Accordingly, no further analysis of these five (5) environmental topics will be provided in the Draft EIR.

The EIR will evaluate 15 environmental topics listed in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines (as implemented by the Town of Apple Valley), listed below.

³ <https://www.mwcog.org/file.aspx?A=QTTITR24POOOUIw5mPNzK8F4d8djdJe4LF9Exj6lXOU%3D>

⁴ https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocial_demographics-and-growth-forecast.pdf?1606001579

⁵ <https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/1fmonth/allsubs.xls>

⁶ <https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008>

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

The EIR will address each of the 15 environmental issues in the following general manner. The existing conditions/environmental setting as it relates specifically to the environmental topic under evaluation will be described to establish a baseline for conducting the environmental analysis. As necessary and appropriate, a description of key terminology and concepts associated with the environmental issue area will be presented, followed by a discussion of any regulatory requirements that may apply. Next, the significance criteria will be listed and will be accompanied by a justification as to the appropriateness of the criteria selected for evaluation. An analysis will then be presented for each significance criteria, and the analysis will provide a clear description and conclusion as to the level of significance of Project impacts, prior to mitigation. The analysis will include a discussion of potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the Project, as well as a discussion of potential growth inducing impacts. For each significant impact identified, feasible and enforceable mitigation measures will be presented. Finally, each chapter in the EIR will provide a conclusion as to the level of significance following implementation of recommended mitigation measures.

Public Scoping Comment Period and Meeting

The Town has established a 30-day public scoping period from February 9, 2024 through March 11, 2024. During the scoping period, the Town's intent is to disseminate Project information to the public and solicit comments from agencies, organizations, and interested parties, including nearby residents and business owners, regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR, including mitigation measures or Project alternatives to reduce potential environmental effects. During this period, the NOP may be accessed electronically at the following website: <https://www.applevalley.org/services/planning-division/environmental>.

During the 30-day public scoping period, the Town will also hold a public scoping meeting on Monday, February 26, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. via virtual meeting participation on Microsoft Teams. Please navigate to this address: <https://bit.ly/3ZbNErF>. The public scoping meeting will provide an additional opportunity to receive and disseminate information, identify potential environmental issues of concern, and discuss the scope of analysis to be included in the EIR. The scoping meeting is not a public hearing, and no decisions on the Project will be made at this meeting. It is an additional opportunity for agencies, organizations, and the public to provide scoping comments regarding environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR. Public agencies, organizations, and any interested parties are encouraged to attend and participate in this meeting.

All scoping comments must be received in writing by 5:00 p.m. on March 8, 2024, which marks the end of the 30-day public scoping period. All written comments should indicate an associated contact person for the agency or organization, if applicable, and reference the Project name in the subject line. Pursuant to CEQA, responsible agencies are requested to indicate their statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project when responding.

Please direct any scoping comments and Project-related questions to:
Rick Hirsch, Consulting Planner, email: rhirsch@interwestgrp.com

Figure 1, *Regional Map*

Figure 2, *Project Vicinity*

Figure 3, *Site Plan*

Figure 4, *Specific Plan Amendment Exhibit*