



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

DATE: March 14, 2022

TO: Development Services and Capital Projects, Attn: William M. Kettler, Division Manager
Development Services and Capital Projects, Attn: Chris Motta, Principal Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects, Current Planning, Attn: David Randall, Senior Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects, Policy Planning, ALCC, Attn: Mohammad Khorsand
Development Services and Capital Projects, Zoning & Permit Review, Attn: Daniel Gutierrez/ James Anders
Development Services and Capital Projects, Site Plan Review, Attn: Hector Luna
Development Services and Capital Projects, Building & Safety/Plan Check, Attn: Dan Mather, Chief Building Inspector
Development Engineering, Attn: Laurie Kennedy, Grading/Mapping
Road Maintenance and Operations, Attn: Martin Querin/Wendy Nakagawa/Nadia Lopez
Design Division, Transportation Planning, Attn: Mohammad Alimi/Brian Spaunhurst/Gloria Hensley
Resources Division/Special Districts, Attn: Amina Flores-Becker, Chris Bump
Water and Natural Resources Division, Attn: Glenn Allen, Division Manager/Roy Jimenez
Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division, Attn: Kevin Tsuda/Deep Sidhu/Steven Rhodes
Agricultural Commissioner, Attn: Melissa Cregan
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, San Joaquin Valley Division, Attn: Matthew Nelson
CA Regional Water Quality Control Board, Attn: centralvalleyfresno@waterboards.ca.gov
Fresno County Sheriffs Department, Attn: Captain Mark Padilla, Captain Ryan Hushaw, Lt. Brent Stalker, Lt. Ron Hayes, Lt. Robert Salazar, Lt. Kathy Curtice
CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Attn: R4CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov
California Department of Transportation, District 6, Attn: David Padilla, Branch Chief
Dumna Wo Wah Tribal Government, Attn: Robert Ledger, Tribal Chairperson
Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, Attn: Heather Airey, THPO/Cultural Resources Director
Table Mountain Rancheria, Attn: Leanne Walker-Grant, Tribal Chairperson
Robert Pennell, Cultural Resources Director/Kim Taylor, Sara Barnett, Cultural Resources Department
Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe, Attn: Shana Powers, Cultural Director
San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (PIC-CEQA Division), Attn: PIC Supervisor
Fresno County Fire Protection District, Attn: FKU-prevention-planning@fire.ca.gov
Westlands Water District, Attn: Jose Gutierrez/Russ Freeman
Central Delta-Mendota GSA, Attn: Amy Montgomery
Tranquillity Irrigation District, Attn: Liz Reeves, Secretary Treasurer

FROM: Jeremy Shaw, Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects Division

SUBJECT: Classified Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Application No. 3720 and Initial Study No. 8133

APPLICANT: Westside Farmers Cooperative Gins, Inc.

DUE DATE: March 28, 2022

The Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division has prepared an Initial Study for Classified Conditional Use Permit No.3720, proposing to the development and operation of an almond hulling/shelling facility within existing buildings previously used as part of a cotton gin operation, on a 21.41-acre parcel, along with an adjacent 43.83-acre and 94.40-acre parcel for temporary product storage, in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District.

The project site is located on the south side of W. Clayton Avenue 1,000 feet west of S. Tuolumne Avenue, and approximately 2.30 miles west-southwest of the unincorporated community of Tranquillity (APNs 028-041-16S,028-041-62S,028-081-53S) (28285 W. Clayton Avenue, Tranquillity) (SUP. DIST. 1).

We would appreciate your comments by **March 28, 2022**. Any comments received after this date may not be used.

If you do not have comments, please provide a “NO COMMENT” response to our office by the above deadline (e-mail is also acceptable; see email address below).

Please address any correspondence or questions related to environmental and/or policy/design issues to me, Jeremy Shaw, Planner, Development Services and Capital Projects Division, Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, 2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor, Fresno, CA 93721, or call (559) 600-4207, or email jshaw@FresnoCountyCA.gov.

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Activity Code (Internal Review):2381



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. Project title:

Initial Study No. 8133 /Classified Conditional Use Permit Application No.3720

2. Lead agency name and address:

Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning
Development Services and Capital Projects Division
2220 Tulare Street, 6th Floor
Fresno, CA 93721-2104

3. Contact person and phone number:

Jeremy Shaw
(559) 600-4207.

4. Project location:

The project site is located on the south side of W. Clayton Avenue 1,000 feet west of S. Tuolumne Avenue, and approximately 2.30 miles west-southwest of the unincorporated community of Tranquillity (APNs 028-041-16S,028-041-62S,028-081-53S) (28285 W. Clayton Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1).

5. Project sponsor's name and address:

Westside Cooperative Gins, Inc
8587 S. Contra Costa Road
Tranquillity, CA 93668

6. General Plan designation:

Agriculture.

7. Zoning:

AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District.

8. Description of project: (Describe the whole action involved, including, but not limited to, later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

Allow the development and operation of an almond hulling/shelling facility within existing buildings previously used as part of a cotton gin operation, on a 21.41-acre parcel, along with an adjacent 43.83-acre and 94.40-acre parcel for temporary product storage, in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District

9. Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:

The project site is located within an area of agricultural production and sparse residential development.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that

includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 52, Native American Tribal Governments Per Assembly Bill 52 (AB52), participating California Native American Tribes were notified on September 27, 2021, of the project and given the opportunity to enter into consultation with the County regarding the proposal. One of the Tribes, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut responded to the notice by email on October 7, 2021, with a request to be notified of any discovery of cultural resources during project ground disturbance, but expressed no concerns generally with the project.

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.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

DETERMINATION OF REQUIRED ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment. **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 the Mitigation Measures described on the attached sheet have been added to the project. **A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.**
- I find the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required
- I find that as a result of the proposed project, no new effects could occur, or new Mitigation Measures would be required that have not been addressed within the scope of a previous Environmental Impact Report.

PERFORMED BY:



Jeremy Shaw, Planner

Date: 3-10-22

REVIEWED BY:



David Randall, Senior Planner

Date: 3.10.22

**INITIAL STUDY
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM
(Initial Study No. 8133 and
Unclassified Conditional Use Permit
Application No. 3720)**

The following checklist is used to determine if the proposed project could potentially have a significant effect on the environment. Explanations and information regarding each question follow the checklist.

1 = No Impact

2 = Less Than Significant Impact

3 = Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

4 = Potentially Significant Impact

I. AESTHETICS

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

- 1 a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- 1 b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
- 1 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 a 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?
- 3 d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- 2 a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- 1 b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?
- 1 c) Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production?
- 1 d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- 2 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?

III. AIR QUALITY

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

- 1 a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan?
- 1 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?
- 1 c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
- 2 d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 2 a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 1 b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 1 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?
- 1 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?
- 1 e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- 1 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?

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 3 a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?
- 3 b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?
- 3 c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

- 1 a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?
- 1 b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

- a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - 2 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?
 - 2 ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?
 - 2 iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
 - 2 iv) Landslides?
- 1 b) Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?
- 1 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?
- 1 d) Be located on expansive soil as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?
- 1 e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?
- 1 f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

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

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- 1 a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- 1 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?
- 1 c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
- 1 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, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?
- 1 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, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?
- 1 f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- 1 g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- 1 a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?
- 2 b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?
- 1 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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?
 - 1 i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site;
 - 1 ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site;
 - 1 iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
 - 1 iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?
- 1 d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?
- 1 e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- 1 a) Physically divide an established community?
- 1 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?

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 1 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?
- 1 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?

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

- 1 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?
- 1 b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?
- 1 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, exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- 1 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)?

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

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- 1 a) 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:
 - 1 i) Fire protection?
 - 1 ii) Police protection?
 - 1 iii) Schools?
 - 1 iv) Parks?
 - 1 v) Other public facilities?

XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

- 1 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?
- 1 b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

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

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 3 a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
 - 3 i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or
 - 3 ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set

forth 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.)

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- 1 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?
- 1 b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?
- 1 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?
- 2 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?
- 2 e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

XX. WILDFIRE

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

- 1 a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- 1 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?
- 1 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?
- 1 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?

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- 3 a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?
- 2 b) 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.)
- 3 c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Documents Referenced:

This Initial Study is referenced by the documents listed below. These documents are available for public review at the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division, 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Fresno, California (corner of M & Tulare Streets).

Fresno County General Plan, Policy Document and Final EIR, dated October 3, 2000

Fresno County General Plan Background Report, dated October 3, 2000

Fresno County Zoning Ordinance

Important Farmland 2016 Map, California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resources Protection, 2018.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Analysis (AQIA) for the proposed Western Agricultural Processors Association (WAPA) almond hulling/shelling operation; prepared by Trinity Consultants., dated June 23, 2021.

VMT analysis, prepared by QK dated January 4, 2022.

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County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- APPLICANT: Westside Farmers Cooperative Gins, Inc.
- APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study No. 8133 and Classified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3720
- DESCRIPTION: Allow the development and operation of an almond hulling/shelling facility within existing buildings previously used as part of a cotton gin operation, on a 21.41-acre parcel, along with an adjacent 43.83-acre and 94.40-acre parcel for temporary product storage, in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District
- LOCATION: The project site is located on the south side of W. Clayton Avenue 1,000 feet west of S. Tuolumne Avenue, and approximately 2.30 miles west-southwest of the unincorporated community of Tranquillity (APNs 028-041-16S, 028-041-62S, 028-081-53S) (28285 W. Clayton Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1).

I. AESTHETICS

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

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- B. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to use existing buildings, no new construction is proposed that would affect viewsheds from surrounding property. No scenic vistas or other scenic resources were identified in the analysis. The project site is not located in the vicinity of a designated State scenic highway.

- 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 points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There are no identifiable, publicly accessible viewpoints. The visual character of the area will be unchanged by the proposed project, as the project entails the use of existing buildings and structures associated with the former cotton ginning operation.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The project does include the installation of new outdoor lighting on all sides of the main office building and on the huller building; the new lighting is not anticipated to have an adverse effect on adjacent property; however, the following Mitigation Measure has been included to reduce any impacts from new or existing outdoor lighting to a less than significant level.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *All outdoor lighting shall be hooded and directed away from adjacent properties and public streets.*

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- A. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Of the three parcels associated with this project, the 21.41-acre parcel, APN No. 028-041-16S is improved with several buildings and structures which were formerly used as part of a cotton ginning operation, and which will be converted to use as an almond

hulling and processing facility. The property contains land designated as Urban and Built-Up, according to the 2016 Fresno County Important Farmlands Map. Urban and Built-Up Land is defined as being occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to 1.5 acres, or 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. In this case APN 028-041-16S The other two parcels contain agricultural land designated as predominately Vacant, Disturbed land, or Grazing land. There is no land contained by any of the three subject parcels which is designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Unique Farmland contained within the subject parcels, thus no land so designated will be converted because of the project.

B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Two the three parcels associated with the project, APN 028-041-62S (43.83-acres), and 028-081-53S (94.40) which may also be used for almond hulling/shelling product storage are both enrolled in the Williamson Act Program under Contract No. 2597 and Contract No. 169 respectively . As the two parcels do not contain an active agricultural operation, they no longer qualify to remain in contract and were required to record Notices of Non-Renewal of their respective contracts. Those notices were recorded on December 3, 2021. As no development is proposed for these two parcels of land, and in consideration of the Williamson Act contracts being non-renewed, there will not be conflicts with the Williamson Act. The land will remain available for agricultural operations. There are no changes proposed to the zoning or land use designation of the parcels.

C. Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production?

D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The land associated with the project does not contain forest land, timberland or land zoned for Timberland Production, nor will it result in the loss or conversion of forest land.

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 forestland to non-forest use?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The subject parcels do not contain any Farmland of the classification listed under subsection A above, or forestland. Therefore, the project will not result in the conversion of either Farmland or forestland.

III. AIR QUALITY

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

- A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project was reviewed by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. The Air District did not express any concerns that the project would result in adverse impacts to air quality. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted a Scoping Plan, most recently updated in December 2017, to achieve the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals set by California Assembly Bill (AB 32) and Senate Bill (SB 32). Based on the results of An Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis (Air Quality Analysis) prepared for the project by Trinity Consultants, dated June 23, 2021, the project will not conflict or obstruct implementation of any 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's, Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI), dated March 19, 2015; Criteria pollutants as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are reactive organic gases (ROG), ozone, particulate matter (PM), carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, and lead. These criteria pollutants are regulated by the EPA guidelines which set permissible levels. According to the conclusions of the Air Quality Analysis by Trinity Consultants, neither short term project construction nor project operation would result in exceedance of any Air District established thresholds of significance for Criterial Pollutants.

- C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

According to publicly available internet based aerial imagery, there are approximately eight (8) residential dwellings within three-quarter miles of the project site, three of which are located within 750 feet of the project site, and one of those is a caretakers residence located approximately 375 feet ,on one of the subject parcels 028-041-62S, westerly adjacent to where the proposed hulling and shelling operations will take place.

Sensitive receptors are defined by in the GAMAQI as people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants. Residential dwellings, along with schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes. Hospitals, and other similar facilities are considered potential sensitive receptor locations. Because the project is located in an area of generally sparse residential development and large farming operations, consisting of vineyards, field crops and confined animal feedlot operations, where airborne fugitive dust, and application of agricultural chemicals are anticipated to occur regularly. However, according to the applicant's submitted operational statement the majority of the proposed operation will take place indoors therefore airborne dust generated by that part of the project would be minimal, fugitive dust will mostly be limited to that which is generated by truck traffic to and from the site and from the use of vehicles and non-road equipment on the site. General Plan Policy OS-G.14 requires that all access roads, driveways, and parking areas serving new commercial and industrial development to be constructed with materials that minimize particulate emissions and are appropriate to the scale and intensity of the use. The project site in this case is comprised of several buildings which were part of a former cotton ginning operation, and most of the area surrounding the buildings is concrete paved including the driveway on to Clayton Avenue.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

A portion of the 21.41-acre parcel was formerly operated as a cotton gin, and is predominately surrounded by agricultural land. According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) there were recorded occurrences of the burrowing owl in 2006 approximately three-quarter miles southwest of the project site, and occurrences of the state threatened Swainson's hawk approximately 3.5 miles northeast of the project site in 2011. The burrowing owl is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). The project site itself is within the range and predicted habitat area of the Burrowing Owl with a high habitat suitability rating based on the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHR) information system and predictive model for California's Wildlife. The project site is also within the range and predicted habitat area of the state threatened Swainson's Hawk, with a medium to high habitat suitability rating. Since the project does not propose any extensive ground disturbance or construction of any new buildings, only the interior remodel of a portion of an existing building to be converted to office use, and the potential storage of agricultural product separated during the hulling/shelling operation, the project is unlikely to result in adverse effects to any identified candidate, sensitive or special status species due to habitat modification.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

A search of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Natural Diversity Database, BIOS mapping application indicated that the project site is within the predicted habitat area of the mountain plover, and the burrowing owl, both of which are designated and species of special concern and are also protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Additionally, the CNNDDDB indicated that there have been recorded occurrences of both the mountain plover and burrowing owl within three quarter miles of the project site. However, the project does not propose any ground disturbance which would inadvertently cause impacts to the mountain plover or burrowing owl habitat.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No federally protected wetlands were identified in the analysis. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) there may be an intermittent stream running through the project site, however no wetland features were identified by the NWI mapper, on any of the three subject parcels.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not propose the construction of any new buildings or other structures that would physically interfere with the movement of any native wildlife species. No established wildlife corridors or nursery sites were identified in the vicinity of the project site.

- E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No adopted habitat conservation plans, or natural community conservation plans applicable to the area of the project were identified in the analysis.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- C. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

This proposal was routed to the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) for a historical and archaeological records search. The SSJVIC noted that there were no available records indicating that the project area had been surveyed by a qualified cultural resources consultant, and that given the known archaeological sensitivity of the region, prehistoric or historic cultural resources may be present within the project site; and, that current site conditions would appear to allow for adequate survey of potential surface or sub-surface cultural resources. No recommendation was made for an archaeological survey to be undertaken, only that the age of the existing cotton gin structures be evaluated by an architectural historian to determine historical significance if any. Because the project does not propose any new ground disturbance or construction of new buildings, no additional historical or archaeological studies were required. However, to address the possibility of the discovery of previously unknown surface or subsurface cultural/historical resources, the following Mitigation Measure has been included.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, all work shall be halted in the area of the find. An Archeologist shall be called to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations. If human remains are unearthed during ground disturbing activities, no further disturbance is to occur until the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition. All normal evidence procedures shall be followed by photos, reports, video, and etc. If such remains are determined to be Native American, the Sheriff-Coroner must notify the Native American Commission within 24 hours.*

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

- A. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation; or

- B. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Construction and operation of the proposed project will commit nonrenewable resources in the form of fossil fuels, including liquified petroleum (LP) gas and single use plastics, also oil based, in the form of polyethylene plastic sheeting needed for covering field run product, and to act as a sealant barrier during fumigation, as part of the operation. The project will use approximately two-million square feet of 6-millimeter polyethylene sheeting. The proposed operation is anticipated to generate a relatively low number of new traffic trips during the approximately five month long almond processing season, including truck trips, and during construction of the office. The consumption of diesel fuel and gasoline is not anticipated to be wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary. According to the applicant's submitted operational statement, the polyethylene plastic sheeting will be recycled after use.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

- A. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
1. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?
 2. Strong seismic ground shaking?
 3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
 4. Landslides?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

According to Figure 9-5 (Probabilistic Seismic Hazards (10% probability in 50 years) of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR) is in an area of the County designated as having a 20-40 percent peak horizontal ground acceleration (PGA) uniform soft-rock site condition, given a 10 percent probability in 50 years of strong seismic activity. All buildings and structures proposed for use with the project are existing and must meet all applicable requirements of the current California building standards code which include seismic design requirements based on particular seismic zones, as identified on Figure 9-4 (California Building Code Seismic Zones) FCGPBR. The project site is located in seismic zone 3 Uniform Building Code. According to Chapter 9 of the FCGPBR, liquefaction can occur during seismic activity when ground acceleration approaches 0.3g or 30 percent of the force of gravity, in sandy soil with relative densities typical of the San Joaquin alluvial deposits. Liquefaction occurs when soil is temporarily transformed to a fluid form during intense and prolonged ground

shaking. Areas most prone to liquefaction are those which are water saturated, where the water table is less than 30 feet below ground, and where the soil is sandy with low to medium density. Most of Fresno County is in an area of relatively low seismic activity, certain fault systems near the eastern and western boundaries of the County have the potential to produce high magnitude earthquakes in other parts of the County, which could cause moderate intensity ground shaking, especially in valley areas.

- B. Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not in area identified as being at increased risk of erosion, according to Figure 7-4 (Erosion Hazards in Western Fresno County) of the FCGPBR. According to Figure 9-6 (Landslide Hazards and Areas of Subsidence) of the FCGPBR, the project site is not in an area identified as being at increased risk from landslide, however it is in an area of deep subsidence. Subsidence occurs when a large portion of land is displaced vertically, usually due to the withdrawal of groundwater, oil or natural gas. Although subsidence can affect large areas, especially when caused by groundwater withdrawal, certain areas of Fresno County have experienced substantial subsidence in the past half century, including in Western Fresno County where the project is located. However, subsidence is not anticipated to occur as a result of the project causing ground instability at the project site.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to Figure 7-1 (Expansive Soils) of the FCGPBR, the project site is not in an area identified as having soils exhibiting moderately high to high expansion potential, general shown as being along the eastern side of the Fresno Slough, in Western Fresno County. The project site is located approximately 3.6 miles west southwest of the Fresno Slough.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will utilize the existing septic system to serve domestic uses for the proposed almond hulling operation.

- F. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No paleontological resources were identified in the analysis. Because there is little to no ground disturbance proposed, no impacts to any previously unknown paleontological resources or unique geologic resources is anticipated.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- A. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
- B. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The conclusions of the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis discussed under Section III A. and B, are based in part on information derived from the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) version 2016.3.2, using a default construction equipment list for the proposed project type and development intensity; and on the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's (SJVAPCD) Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI, 2015). The Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas analysis completed by Trinity Consultants, dated June 23, 2021, concluded that construction related GHG emissions would total approximately 157.67 metric tons of CO₂e (carbon dioxide equivalent) during the anticipated 18-month construction schedule; and operational GHG emissions, mostly from mobile sources, would total approximately 500.37 metric tons of CO₂e per year for the life of the project. The potential impacts of GHG emissions generated by a project were evaluated in terms of whether the addition of project GHG emissions is consistent with the State's GHG reduction goals of achieving 1990 emissions levels by 2020 established by Assembly Bill (AB) 32, and on an individual project level, a 29 percent reduction from baseline GHG emissions, or what would otherwise occur as a result of the project in 2020 given 2005 standards and technology; which goal was further refined to 21.7 percent, established by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Scoping Plan. Senate Bill (SB32) established GHG reduction goal of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The project's GHG emissions were determined to be approximately 29.4 percent below 2005 baseline emissions, therefore impacts from the project on GHG emissions were determined to be less than significant.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- B. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not propose the routine transport, or disposal of hazardous materials, therefore no significant risk to the public would occur due to an accidental release of such materials. The site will have two above ground diesel fuel storage tanks with containment basins, and a propane storage tank to supply diesel powered loading equipment and propane powered forklifts. Other materials such as lubricants will be stored inside. Because the project will store hazardous materials on site, it is subject to compliance with California Health and Safety Code, and the applicant/operator will be required to submit a Hazardous Materials Business Plan to the Fresno County Department of Public Health.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The nearest existing schools to the project site are Tranquillity Elementary and Tranquillity High School located approximately 2.5 miles east northeast.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to a review of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), NEPAassist mapping tool, the project site is not located on or in the vicinity of a site, included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTC). A search of the DTC EnviroStor database indicated that there are no hazardous materials sites located within one mile of the project.

- 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, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located with an airport land use plan area or within two miles of a public or private airport.

- F. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site has paved access from a public road, and the project does not propose any alteration of the access such that it would interfere emergency equipment or apparatus access to the site.

- G. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in an area of the County at increased risk from wildland fire.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not propose any waste or wastewater discharge, and is not anticipated to violate any water quality standards, or waste discharge requirements. The project will be subject to all applicable regulatory waste discharge requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to consume approximately 350,000 gallons of surface water for domestic use during the operating season August 1 to December 31, or 2,300 gallons per day for the five-month period; and 150,000 gallons or 700 gallons per day during the non-operating season January 1 to July 31, for a total domestic use of 500,000 gallons annually, which will be provided by the Tranquillity Irrigation District. The project was reviewed by the Central Delta-Mendota Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and the Water and Natural Resources Division of the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, which did not express any concerns about the project resulting in any adverse impacts to groundwater sustainability in the basin. Water use for fugitive dust control is estimated to be approximately 5,000 gallons per day for the operating

season, and 500 gallons per day for the non-operating season, for a total of 735,000 gallons annually. The almond hulling and shelling operation uses no process water.

- 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:

1. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?
2. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site?
3. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not propose a substantial amount of grading or addition of impervious surface, that would alter the existing drainage pattern of the subject parcels, resulting in substantial erosion, increased runoff, or alteration of flood flows.

- D. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject parcels are not located within a flood hazard area as identified by FEMA FIRM Panel 2025H, the project is located within Zone X, which is an area of minimal flood hazard. Additionally, the subject parcels are not located in a coastal area where the risk of tsunami and seiche exist. The project is located in a Dam Failure Flood Inundation Area, according to Figure 9-8 (Dam Failure Flood Inundation Areas) of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR)

- E. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is located within the Central Delta-Mendota Subbasin, and under the jurisdiction of the Central Delta-Mendota Region Multi-Agency Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA). The agency reviewed the proposal and did not express any concerns related to adverse impacts to groundwater sustainability because of the project.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- A. Physically divide an established community; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project has no features which would physically divide an established community, or conflict with any land use plan.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not located within any of the areas of mineral resources identified by Figures 7-7(Mineral Resource Locations), 7-8 (Principal Mineral Producing Locations 1997-1998), or 7-9 (Generalized Mineral Resource Zone Classifications), of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR).

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

- A. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies; or
- B. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Project operations, including truck and vehicle traffic, and operation of on-site equipment has the potential to generate an increase in ambient noise levels, and ground borne vibration in the immediate area of the proposed operation. The applicant's submitted operational statement indicates that the almond hulling/shelling operation

produce approximately 85 decibels at 200 feet from the hulling/shelling building based on noise level testing at other sites. The Fresno County Ordinance Code, Chapter 8.40 – Noise Ordinance provides that the daytime noise level as measured from any affected single-family or multi-family residence, school, hospital, church or public library shall not exceed 70 decibels or 65 decibels at night; however, there are no sensitive receptors within 200 feet of the project site therefore, noise generated by project operation is unlikely to result in adverse impacts to receptors in the vicinity.

- 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; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip, within two miles of a public airport, or within the boundary of an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The nearest airport to the project site is San Joaquin Airport, located approximately 5.0 miles southeast of the project site.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

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)?; or
- B. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to induce substantial population growth in the area, and no new homes or other related businesses are proposed. The project will use existing roads and other infrastructure. No displacement of existing housing or people is anticipated.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- A. 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 following public services:

1. Fire protection;
2. Police protection;
2. Schools;
4. Parks; or
5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not propose and will not require the provision of any new or physically altered government facilities.

XVI. RECREATION

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; or
- B. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No increased use of existing parks in the area of the project is anticipated with this proposal.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will result in an increase in traffic trips in the vicinity of the project site, however, such increase is not anticipated to result in substantial adverse impacts to County roads, or conflict with any General Plan Transportation policies. According to information provided in the applicant's submitted operational statement and a Vehicle Miles Travelled Memorandum (VMT) prepared for the project by QK, dated January 4, 2022, the majority (approximately 70 percent) of new trips added by the project will consist of truck trips involving the movement of agricultural products, and byproducts.

Both seasonal and nonseasonal employee trips are anticipated to add approximately 11 daily trips, and less than one average daily customer trip during the year.

- B. Be in conflict or be inconsistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (2018), the California Natural Resources Agency certified the OPR's proposal that Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) be adopted as the most appropriate metric for evaluating a project's transportation impacts. The object of evaluating VMT is to further the goal of reducing per capita VMT statewide. The OPR in its guidance, provides that a project which generates fewer than 110 trips per day, and absent any evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or would be inconsistent with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), can be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact.

According to the VMT memorandum prepared for the project by QK, dated January 4, 2022, the proposed operation will add approximately 70 average daily trips, including employee and customer vehicle trips during the operating season, between approximately August 1 – December 31. No inconsistencies with the Technical Evaluation of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Quantification for the Fresno Council Of Government's SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategy (January 2015) were identified; therefore, the project will not conflict with this plan, and given the number of average daily trips projected, the project will have a less than significant impact on vehicle miles travelled.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION
INCORPORATED:

The project does not propose any changes to the existing access to County roads. Access to the almond processing site will be via an existing paved driveway off W. Clayton Avenue. No new points of access are proposed, and any work proposed within the County right-of-way will require an encroachment permit from the County. Additionally, construction activities for the project will be subject to review and approval of a Traffic Management Plan by the Department of Public Works and Planning.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *Prior to issuance of development permits, a Traffic Management Plan, prepared by a licensed Traffic Engineer, shall be submitted to the Design Division of the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning (Design Division), for review and approval. Construction of the proposed new Almond Hulling/Shelling*

facility shall be in substantial conformance with the Traffic Management Plan, as approved by the Design Division.

D. Result in inadequate emergency access?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site takes access via an existing approximately 85-foot-wide asphalt paved driveway off of W. Clayton Avenue; no changes to existing site access are proposed therefore no impacts to emergency access are anticipated.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

1. 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
2. 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.)

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

No evidence of the existence of Tribal Cultural Resources was identified in the analysis, and none of the Tribes who had previously requested notification of projects in the area, under the provisions of AB 52 expressed interest in consultation on the project; however, the following Mitigation Measure has been included to address the potential for discovery of previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resources during project related ground disturbing activity.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, all work shall be halted in the area of the find. An Archeologist shall be called to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations. If human remains are unearthed during ground disturbing activities, no further disturbance is to occur until the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and*

disposition. All normal evidence procedures shall be followed by photos, reports, video, and etc. If such remains are determined to be Native American, the Sheriff-Coroner must notify the Native American Commission within 24 hours.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not propose any new construction of stormwater drainage facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, water supply, or other utilities. The project was reviewed by the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, which commented that the proposed facility would be served by an existing permitted water system, and that the project does not meet the definition of a new public water system, and would not require a permit.

- B. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will receive surface water from the Tranquillity Irrigation District which is a permitted public water system. The Irrigation District reviewed the project and did not express any concerns with the project's proposed water use. The project was also reviewed by the Water and Natural Resources Division of the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, which did not express a water supply concerns with the project.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will utilize the two existing on-site septic systems. No concerns related to septic capacity were expressed by any reviewing agencies or departments.

- 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; or

- E. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to produce solid waste quantities in excess of State or local standards, or which would exceed the capacity of local infrastructure, or impair attainment of any solid waste reduction goals. The project will be required to comply with all applicable solid waste regulations, and management and reduction statutes.

XX. WILDFIRE

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

- A. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects; or
- 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; or
- 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; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not located in an area at increased risk from wildfire, nor in a State Responsibility Area. The project will be required to comply with all applicable requirements of the current Fire Code and Building Code.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- A. Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION
INCORPORATED:

The project would not have significant impacts on fish or wildlife, or any plant community. Although no historic, cultural or tribal cultural resources were identified on or in the vicinity of the project site, mitigation has been included to address the possibility of previously unknown historical, cultural or tribal cultural resources being unearthed by project related ground disturbance.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *See Mitigation Measures under Sections V and XVIII.*

- B. 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)?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

No cumulatively considerable impacts were identified in the analysis. The project proposed a value-added agricultural operation on a site historically used for a similar purpose, in an area characterized by large commercial agricultural operations.

- C. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings either directly or indirectly?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION
INCORPORATED:

No environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings. Impacts to air quality, water quality, noise, and hazards and hazardous materials were found to be less than significant or have no impact. However, to address the potential for traffic hazards created by construction traffic to and from the project site, and from the introduction of new outdoor lighting sources, mitigation has been included requiring the project proponent to submit for approval and adhere to a traffic management plan, and that all outdoor lighting at the project site be hooded and direct away from adjacent property and the public road right-of-way.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *See Mitigation Measures under Section I and Section XVII.*

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Based upon the Initial Study prepared for Classified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3720 , staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

It has been determined that there would be no impacts to Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Wildfire.

Potential impacts related to Air Quality, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Energy, Biological Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Utilities and Service Systems, have been determined to be less than significant.

Potential impacts relating to Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, Transportation and Tribal Cultural Resources have determined to be less than significant with compliance with the included Mitigation Measures.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review upon request, at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and "M" Street, Fresno, California.

JS

G:\4360Devs&Pln\PROJSEC\PROJDOCS\CUP\3700-3799\3720\IS CEQA\CUP 3720 Initial Study Writeup.docx

File original and one copy with: Fresno County Clerk 2221 Kern Street Fresno, California 93721		Space Below For County Clerk Only. CLK-2046.00 E04-73 R00-00	
Agency File No: IS 8133	LOCAL AGENCY PROPOSED DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION		County Clerk File No: E-
Responsible Agency (Name): Fresno County	Address (Street and P.O. Box): 2220 Tulare St. Sixth Floor	City: Fresno	Zip Code: 93721
Agency Contact Person (Name and Title): Jeremy Shaw, Planner	Area Code: 559	Telephone Number: 600-4207	Extension: N/A
Project Applicant/Sponsor (Name): Westside Farmers Cooperative Gins, Inc.	Project Title: CUP 3720/ IS 8133		
Project Description: Allow the development and operation of an almond hulling/shelling facility within existing buildings previously used as part of a cotton gin operation, on a 21.41-acre parcel, along with an adjacent 43.83-acre, and 94.40-acre parcel, for temporary product storage, in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District			
Justification for Negative Declaration: Based upon the Initial Study prepared for Classified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3720 , staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. It has been determined that there would be no impacts to Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Wildfire. Potential impacts related to Air Quality, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Energy, Biological Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Utilities and Service Systems, have been determined to be less than significant. Potential impacts relating to Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, Transportation and Tribal Cultural Resources have determined to be less than significant with compliance with the included Mitigation Measures.			
FINDING: The proposed project will not have a significant impact on the environment.			
Newspaper and Date of Publication: Fresno Business Journal – March 14, 2022		Review Date Deadline: Planning Commission – April 28, 2022	
Date:	Type or Print Signature: David Randall Senior Planner	Submitted by (Signature): Jeremy Shaw Planner	

State 15083, 15085

County Clerk File No.: _____

**LOCAL AGENCY
DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

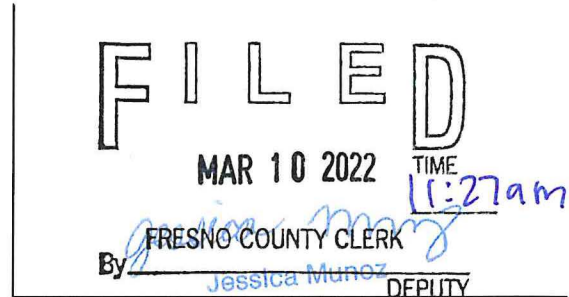


E20221000053

County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION



For County Clerk's Stamp

Notice is hereby given that the County of Fresno has prepared Initial Study (IS) No. 8133 pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act for the following proposed project:

INITIAL STUDY NO. 8133 and **CLASSIFIED CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. 3720** filed by **WESTSIDE FARMERS COOPERATIVE GINS, INC.**, proposing to allow the development and operation of an almond hulling/shelling facility within existing buildings previously used as part of a cotton gin operation, on a 21.41-acre parcel, along with an adjacent 43.83-acre and 94.40-acre parcel for temporary product storage, in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The project site is located on the south side of W. Clayton Avenue approximately 1,000 feet west of S. Tuolumne Avenue, and approximately 2.30 miles west-southwest of the unincorporated community of Tranquillity (APNs 028-041-16S, 028-041-62S, 028-081-53S) (28285 W. Clayton Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1).

Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for Initial Study No. 8133, and take action on Classified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3720 with Findings and Conditions.

(hereafter, the "Proposed Project")

The County of Fresno has determined that it is appropriate to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project. The purpose of this Notice is to (1) provide notice of the availability of IS No. 8133 and the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, and request written comments thereon; and (2) provide notice of the public hearing regarding the Proposed Project.

Public Comment Period

The County of Fresno will receive written comments on the Proposed Project and Mitigated Negative Declaration from March 14, 2022 through April 12, 2022.

E202210000053

Email written comments to jshaw@fresnocountyca.gov, or mail comments to:

Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning
Development Services and Capital Projects Division
Attn: Jeremy Shaw
2220 Tulare Street, Suite A
Fresno, CA 93721

IS No. 8133 and the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration may be viewed at the above address Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (except holidays), or at www.co.fresno.ca.us/initialstudies. An electronic copy of the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project may be obtained from Jeremy Shaw at the addresses above.

Public Hearing

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider approving the Proposed Project and the Mitigated Negative Declaration on April 28, 2022, 2022, at 8:45 a.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, in Room 301, Hall of Records, 2281 Tulare Street, Fresno, California 93721. Interested persons are invited to appear at the hearing and comment on the Proposed Project and draft Mitigated Negative Declaration.

For questions, please call Jeremy Shaw (559) 600-4207.

Published: March 14, 2022.

Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613
For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

SCH #

Project Title: Initial Study No. 8133 & Classified Conditional Use Permit No. 3720

Lead Agency: Fresno County Contact Person: Jeremy Shaw
Mailing Address: 2220 Tulare Street, 6th Floor Phone: (559) 600-4207
City: Fresno Zip: 93721 County: Fresno

Project Location: County: Fresno City/Nearest Community: Tranquillity
Cross Streets: W. Clayton Ave. & S. Tuolumne Ave. Zip Code: 93668
Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds): ... Total Acres: 159.64
Assessor's Parcel No.: 028-041-16S,62S & 028-081-53S Section: 11, 14 Twp.: 15S Range: 15S Base: MDBM
Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: N/A Waterways: San Luis Drain
Airports: N/A Railways: N/A Schools: Tranquillity Elementary

Document Type:

- CEQA: [] NOP [] Draft EIR NEPA: [] NOI Other: [] Joint Document
[] Early Cons [] Supplement/Subsequent EIR [] EA [] Final Document
[] Neg Dec (Prior SCH No.) [] Draft EIS [] Other:
[X] Mit Neg Dec Other:

Local Action Type:

- [] General Plan Update [] Specific Plan [] Rezone [] Annexation
[] General Plan Amendment [] Master Plan [] Prezone [] Redevelopment
[] General Plan Element [] Planned Unit Development [X] Use Permit [] Coastal Permit
[] Community Plan [] Site Plan [] Land Division (Subdivision, etc.) [] Other:

Development Type:

- [] Residential: Units Acres
[] Office: Sq.ft. Acres Employees
[X] Commercial: Sq.ft. 21,500 Acres 21.41 Employees 25
[] Industrial: Sq.ft. Acres Employees
[] Educational:
[] Recreational:
[] Water Facilities: Type MGD
[] Transportation: Type
[] Mining: Mineral
[] Power: Type MW
[] Waste Treatment: Type MGD
[] Hazardous Waste: Type
[] Other: Agricultural processing

Project Issues Discussed in Document:

- [X] Aesthetic/Visual [] Fiscal [X] Recreation/Parks [X] Vegetation
[X] Agricultural Land [X] Flood Plain/Flooding [] Schools/Universities [X] Water Quality
[X] Air Quality [X] Forest Land/Fire Hazard [X] Septic Systems [X] Water Supply/Groundwater
[X] Archeological/Historical [X] Geologic/Seismic [X] Sewer Capacity [X] Wetland/Riparian
[X] Biological Resources [X] Minerals [X] Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading [X] Growth Inducement
[] Coastal Zone [X] Noise [X] Solid Waste [X] Land Use
[X] Drainage/Absorption [X] Population/Housing Balance [X] Toxic/Hazardous [X] Cumulative Effects
[] Economic/Jobs [X] Public Services/Facilities [X] Traffic/Circulation [] Other:

Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:

Commercial (inactive)and Vacant Agricultural Land/ AE-20/ Agriculture

Project Description: (please use a separate page if necessary)
Allow the development and operation of an almond hulling/shelling facility within existing buildings previously used as part of a cotton gin operation, on a 21.41-acre parcel, along with an adjacent 43.83-acre, and 94.40-acre parcel, for temporary product storage, in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District

Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with an "X".
If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation
<input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction
<input type="checkbox"/> California Emergency Management Agency	<input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District #6	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB #5
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resources Recycling and Recovery, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy	<input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm.
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board	<input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission
<input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants
<input type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region #4	<input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of	
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of	Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development	Other: _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission	

Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)

Starting Date March 14, 2022 Ending Date April 12, 2022

Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):

Consulting Firm: <u>Bob Lange (Representative)</u>	Applicant: <u>Westside Farmers Cooperative Gins, Inc.</u>
Address: <u>3289 W. Montana Ave.</u>	Address: <u>8587 S. Contra Costa Road</u>
City/State/Zip: <u>Clovis, CA 93619</u>	City/State/Zip: <u>Tranquillity, CA 93668</u>
Contact: <u>bob51algin@gmail.com</u>	Phone: <u>(559) 698-7221</u>
Phone: <u>(559) 250-7995</u>	

Signature of Lead Agency Representative: _____

Date: 3-10-22

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

DATE: September 7, 2021

TO: Development Services and Capital Projects, Attn: William M. Kettler, Division Manager
Development Services and Capital Projects, Attn: Chris Motta, Principal Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects, Current Planning, Attn: David Randall, Senior Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects, Policy Planning, ALCC, Attn: Mohammad Khorsand
Development Services and Capital Projects, Zoning & Permit Review, Attn: Daniel Gutierrez/ James Anders
Development Services and Capital Projects, Site Plan Review, Attn: Hector Luna
Development Services and Capital Projects, Building & Safety/Plan Check, Attn: Dan Mather, Chief Building Inspector
Development Engineering, Attn: Laurie Kennedy, Grading/Mapping
Road Maintenance and Operations, Attn: Martin Querin/Wendy Nakagawa/Nadia Lopez
Design Division, Transportation Planning, Attn: Mohammad Alimi/Dale Siemer/Brian Spaunhurst/Gloria Hensley
Resources Division/Special Districts, Attn: Amina Flores-Becker, Chris Bump
Geological and Natural Resources Division, Attn: Glenn Allen, Division Manager, Jimenez
ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING
Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division, Attn: Kevin Tsuda/Deep Sidhu/Steven Rhodes
Agricultural Commissioner, Attn: Melissa Cregan
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, San Joaquin Valley Division, Attn: Matthew Nelson
CA Regional Water Quality Control Board, Attn: Dale Harvey
Fresno County Sheriffs Department, Attn: Captain Mark Padilla, Captain Ryan Hushaw, Lt. Brent Stalker, Lt. Ron Hayes, Lt. Robert Salazar, Lt. Kathy Curtice
CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Attn: Craig Bailey, Environmental Scientist
California Department of Transportation, District 6, Attn: David Padilla, Branch Chief
Dumna Wo Wah Tribal Government, Attn: Robert Ledger, Tribal Chairperson
Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, Attn: Heather Airey, THPO/Cultural Resources Director
Table Mountain Rancheria, Attn: Leanne Walker-Grant, Tribal Chairperson
Robert Pennell, Cultural Resources Director/Kim Taylor, Sara Barnett, Cultural Resources Department
Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe, Attn: Shana Powers, Cultural Director
San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (PIC-CEQA Division), Attn: PIC Supervisor
Fresno County Fire Protection District, Attn: Jim McDougald, Division Chief,
Westlands Water District, Attn: Jose Gutierrez/Russ Freeman
Central Delta-Mendota GSA, Attn: Amy Montgomery
Tranquillity Irrigation District, Attn: Liz Reeves, Secretary Treasurer
Fresno Slough Water District, Attn: Liz Reeves

FROM: Jeremy Shaw, Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects Division

SUBJECT: ~~Un~~classified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3720 and Initial Study Application
No. 8133

APPLICANT: Westside Farmers Cooperative Gins, Inc.

DUE DATE: September 20, 2021

The Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division is reviewing the subject application proposing to allow the development and operation of an almond hulling/shelling facility within existing buildings previously used as part of a cotton gin operation, on a 21.41-acre parcel, with material storage to be located on a separate 43.83-acre, and a 94.40-acre parcel, (total 159.64-acres) in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District (APNs 028-041-16S,028-041-62S,028-081-53S) (28285 W. Clayton Avenue, Tranquillity) (SUP. DIST. 1).

The Department is also reviewing for environmental effects, as mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and for conformity with plans and policies of the County.

Based upon this review, a determination will be made regarding conditions to be imposed on the project, including necessary on-site and off-site improvements.

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING
We wish to receive your comments by September 20, 2021. Any comments received after this date may not be used.

If you do not have comments, please provide a “NO COMMENT” response to our office by the above deadline (e-mail is also acceptable; see email address below).

Please address any correspondence or questions related to environmental and/or policy/design issues to me, Jeremy Shaw, Planner, Development Services and Capital Projects Division, Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, 2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor, Fresno, CA 93721, or call (559) 600-4207, or email jshaw@FresnoCountyCA.gov.

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Activity Code (Internal Review):2381



Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning

Date Received: 8/19/21 CUP 3720 (Application No.)

MAILING ADDRESS: Department of Public Works and Planning Development Services and Capital Projects Division 2220 Tulare St., 6th Floor Fresno, Ca. 93721

LOCATION: Southwest corner of Tulare & "M" Streets, Suite A Street Level Fresno Phone: (559) 600-4497

APPLICATION FOR:

- Pre-Application (Type)
Amendment Application
Amendment to Text
Conditional Use Permit
Variance (Class)/Minor Variance
Site Plan Review/Occupancy Permit
No Shoot/Dog Leash Law Boundary
General Plan Amendment/Specific Plan/SP Amendment
Time Extension for
Director Review and Approval
for 2nd Residence
Determination of Merger
Agreements
ALCC/RLCC
Other

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED USE OR REQUEST:

Allow an almond hulling/shelling facility in the AE-20.

CEQA DOCUMENTATION: Initial Study PER N/A

PLEASE USE FILL-IN FORM OR PRINT IN BLACK INK. Answer all questions completely. Attach required site plans, forms, statements, and deeds as specified on the Pre-Application Review. Attach Copy of Deed, including Legal Description.

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: South side of Clayton Ave. between S. Toulumne and S. San Mateo Ave.

Street address: 28285 West Clayton Ave, Tringolity CA 93668

APN: 028-031-165 Parcel size: Section(s)-Twp/Rg: S11,14-T15 S/R15 E

ADDITIONAL PARCELS: 028-031-165 028-031-166 028-031-167 028-031-168 028-031-169 028-031-170 028-031-171 028-031-172 028-031-173 028-031-174 028-031-175 028-031-176 028-031-177 028-031-178 028-031-179 028-031-180 028-031-181 028-031-182 028-031-183 028-031-184 028-031-185 028-031-186 028-031-187 028-031-188 028-031-189 028-031-190 028-031-191 028-031-192 028-031-193 028-031-194 028-031-195 028-031-196 028-031-197 028-031-198 028-031-199 028-031-200

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

I, Robert H. Lange (signature), declare that I am the owner, or authorized representative of the owner, of the above described property and that the application and attached documents are in all respects true and correct to the best of my knowledge. The foregoing declaration is made under penalty of perjury.

WEAVER COOPERATIVE SONS INC, 28285 W Clayton, Tringolity CA 93668 (Owner/Address/City/Zip/Phone)

SAME AS ABOVE (Applicant/Address/City/Zip/Phone)

Robert H. Lange 6285 H. Mountain, Stanislaus 93619 259-7995 (Representative/Address/City/Zip/Phone)

CONTACT EMAIL:

OFFICE USE ONLY (PRINT FORM ON GREEN PAPER)

Application Type / No.: CUP 3720 Fee: \$4,569.00
Application Type / No.: Application Type / No.: Pre-App fee credit Fee: \$-247.00
Application Type / No.: Application Type / No.: PER/Initial Study No.: 15 8133 Fee: \$3,901.00
Ag Department Review: Fee: \$ 93.00
Health Department Review: Fee: \$ 992.00
Received By: J.S. Invoice No.: 215886 TOTAL: \$9,308.00

UTILITIES AVAILABLE:

WATER: Yes [] / No [x] Agency: Well
SEWER: Yes [] / No [x] Agency: Septic

STAFF DETERMINATION: This permit is sought under Ordinance Section:

Sect-Twp/Rg: - T - S/R - E

Related Application(s):

APN # - - -

Zone District:

APN # - - -

Parcel Size:

APN # - - -

APN # - - -

over.....



Development Services
and
Capital Projects
Division

EMAIL TO:

BOB LANGE
BOB51ALGIN@
GMAIL.COM

Pre-Application Review

Department of Public Works and Planning

NUMBER: 20-108883
APPLICANT: BOB LANGE
PHONE: (559) 250-7995

PROPERTY LOCATION: 28285 W. CLAYTON, TRANQUILLITY, California, 93668, USA
APN: 028-041-16S, 028-041-62S, & 028-081-53S ALCC: No Yes # [62S-2597] & [53S-169] VIOLATION NO. N/A
CNEL: No X Yes (level) LOW WATER: No X Yes WITHIN 1/2 MILE OF CITY: No X Yes
ZONE DISTRICT: AE-20; SRA: No X Yes HOMESITE DECLARATION REQ'D.: No X Yes
LOT STATUS:

Zoning: (X) Conforms; (X) Legal Non-Conforming lot; () Deed Review Req'd (see Form #236)
Merger: May be subject to merger: No X Yes ZM# Initiated In process

Map Act: () Lot of Rec. Map; (53S) On '72 rolls; (X) Other [16S-PERMIT HISTORY][62S-TPM/W6141]; () Deeds Req'd (see Form #236)
SCHOOL FEES: No Yes X DISTRICT: Golden Plains Trustee Area 2, West Hills CC Trustee Area 6 PERMIT JACKET: No Yes X

FMFCD FEE AREA: (X) Outside () District No.: FLOOD PRONE: No Yes FEMA FLOOD ZONE: A
PROPOSAL: CUP TO ALLOW AN ALMOND HULLING/SHELLING FACILITY WITH RELATED IMPROVEMENTS ON
3 APNs [028-041-16S, 028-041-62S, & 028-081-53S] APPROXIMATELY 159.64 ACRES IN THE AE-20 [EXCLUSIVE
AGRICULTURE, 20-ACRE MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE] ZONE DISTRICT.

COMMENTS: The parcels are Subject to a Williamson Act Contract and Clearance from Policy Planning is Required.
ORD. SECTION(S): 816.3-A BY: O. Ramirez DATE: 10/27/2020

GENERAL PLAN POLICIES:

LAND USE DESIGNATION: Agriculture () GPA:
COMMUNITY PLAN: () JAA:
REGIONAL PLAN: (X) CUP: 4,569 u
SPECIFIC PLAN: () DRA:
SPECIAL POLICIES: () VA:
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE: () JAT:
ANNEX:

PROCEDURES AND FEES:

() MINOR VA:
(X) HD: 4992.20
(X) AG COMM: 93.00
() ALCC:
(X) IS/PER*: \$ 3,901.00
() Viol. (35%):

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

COMMENTS:
Filing Fee:
Pre-Application Fee: - \$247.00
Total County Filing Fee: \$ 9,308.00

FILING REQUIREMENTS:

- Land Use Applications and Fees
- This Pre-Application Review form
- Copy of Deed / Legal Description
- Photographs
- Letter Verifying Deed Review
- IS Application and Fees* * Upon review of project materials, an Initial Study (IS) with fees may be required.
- Site Plans - 4 copies (folded to 8.5"x11") + 1 - 8.5"x11" reduction
- Floor Plan & Elevations - 4 copies (folded to 8.5"x11") + 1 - 8.5"x11" reduction
- Project Description / Operational Statement (Typed)
- Statement of Variance Findings
- Statement of Intended Use (ALCC)
- Dependency Relationship Statement
- Resolution/Letter of Release from City of

OTHER FILING FEES:

- Archaeological Inventory Fee: \$75 at time of filing
(Separate check to Southern San Joaquin Valley Info. Center)
- CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW): (\$50) (\$50+\$2,406.75)
(Separate check to Fresno County Clerk for pass-thru to CDFW.
Must be paid prior to IS closure and prior to setting hearing date.)

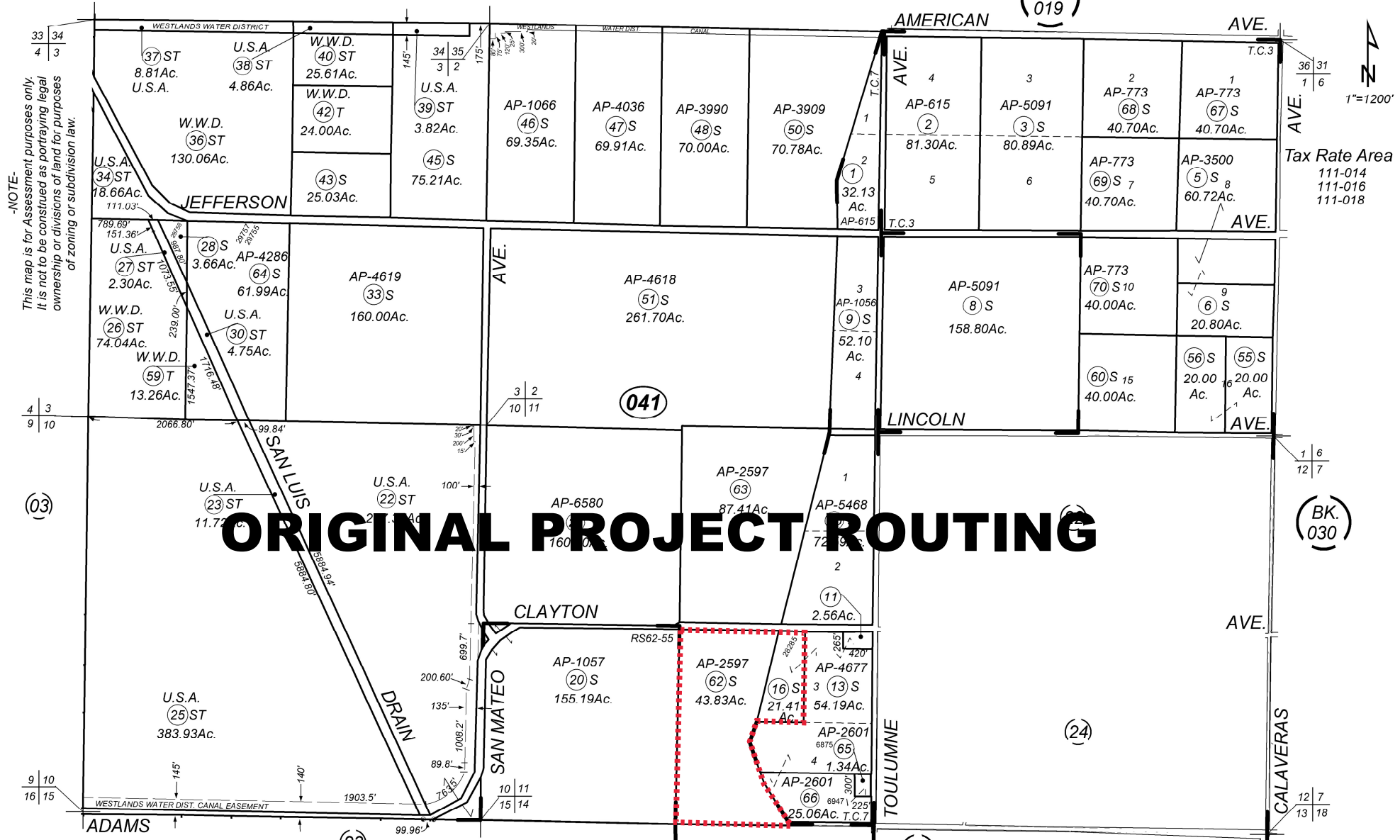
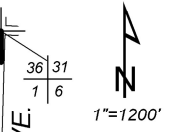
BY: JEREMY SHAW DATE: 11-2-20
PHONE NUMBER: (559) 600-4207

- NOTE: THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS MAY ALSO APPLY:
- COVENANT
 - MAP CERTIFICATE
 - PARCEL MAP
 - FINAL MAP
 - FMFCD FEES
 - ALUC or ALCC
 - SITE PLAN REVIEW
 - BUILDING PLANS
 - BUILDING PERMITS
 - WASTE FACILITIES PERMIT
 - SCHOOL FEES
 - OTHER (see reverse side)

PLU # 113 Fee: \$247.00
Note: This fee will apply to the application fee
if the application is submitted within six (6)
months of the date on this receipt.

OVER.....

(BK. 019)



ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

-NOTE-
This map is for Assessment purposes only.
It is not to be construed as portraying legal
ownership or divisions of land for purposes
of zoning or subdivision law.

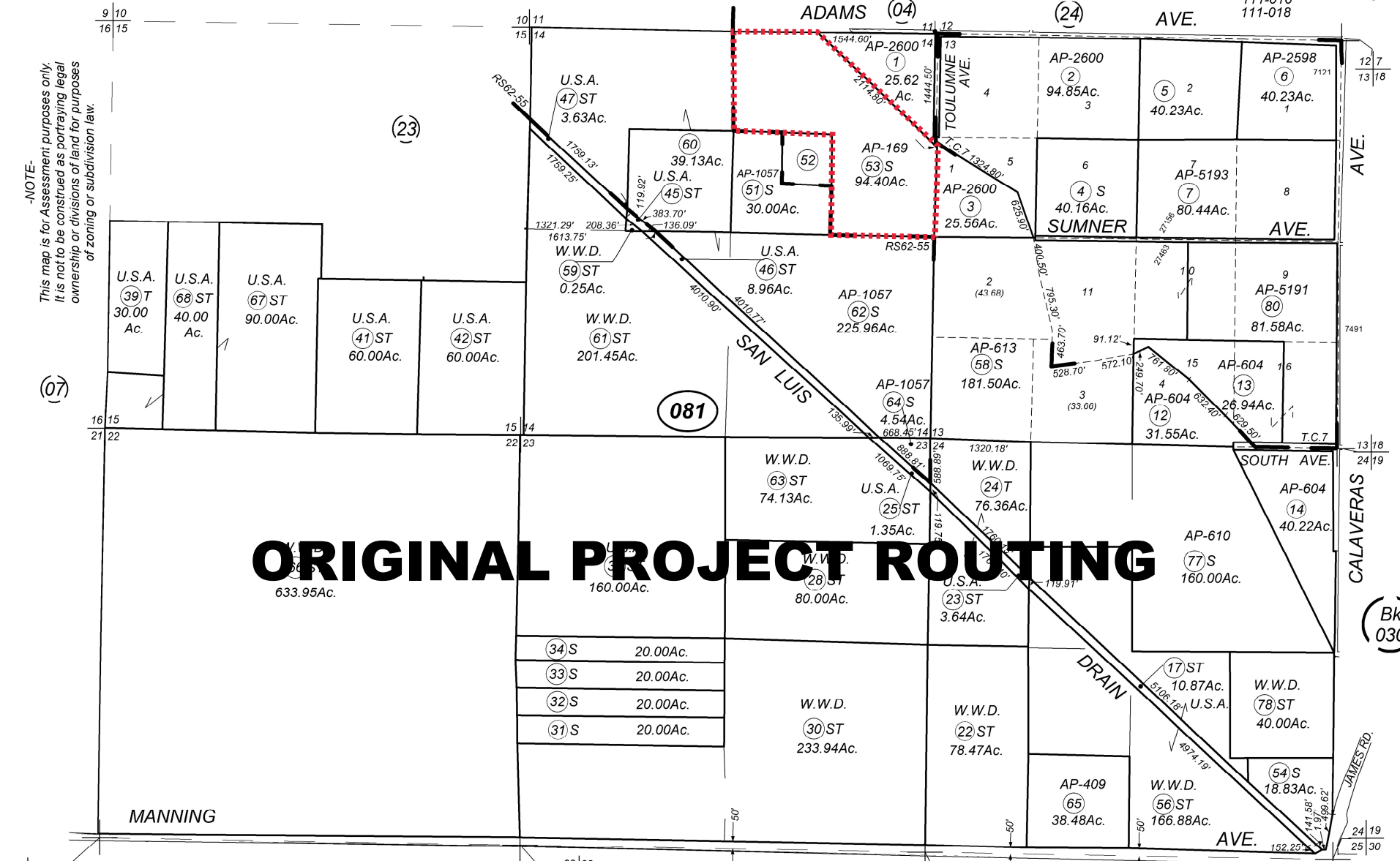
Tax Rate Area
111-014
111-016
111-018

Agricultural Preserve (23)
Tranquillity Colony Sub. No. 3 - R.S. Bk. 4, Pg. 24
Tranquillity Colony Sub. No. 7 - R.S. Bk. 5, Pg. 50

Record of Survey - Bk. 62, Pg. 55
Note - Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Ellipses
Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Circles

(08) Assessor's Map Bk. 28-Pg. 04
County of Fresno, Calif.

-NOTE-
This map is for Assessment purposes only
It is not to be construed as portraying legal
ownership or divisions of land for purposes
of zoning or subdivision law.



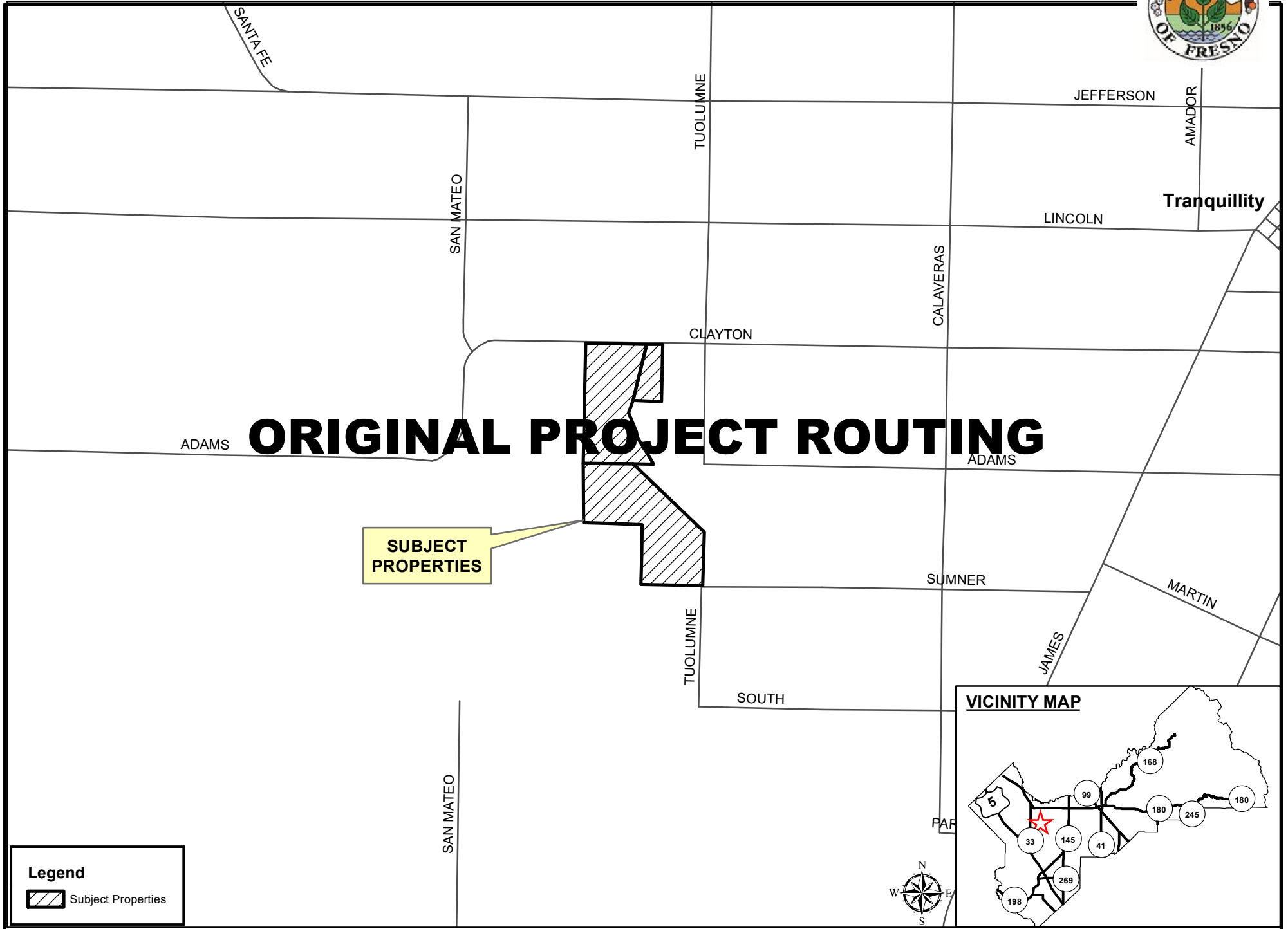
ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

21 | 22
28 | 27
Agricultural Preserve
Tranquillity Colony Subdivision No. 7 - R. S. Bk. 5, Pg. 50
Record of Survey - Bk. 62, Pg. 55

Note - Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Ellipses
Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Circles

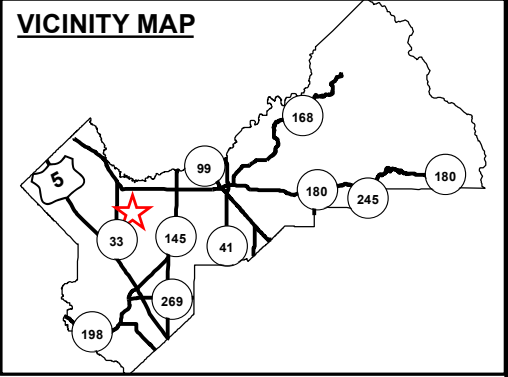
Assessor's Map Bk.028 - Pg.08
County of Fresno, Calif.

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT PROPERTIES

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

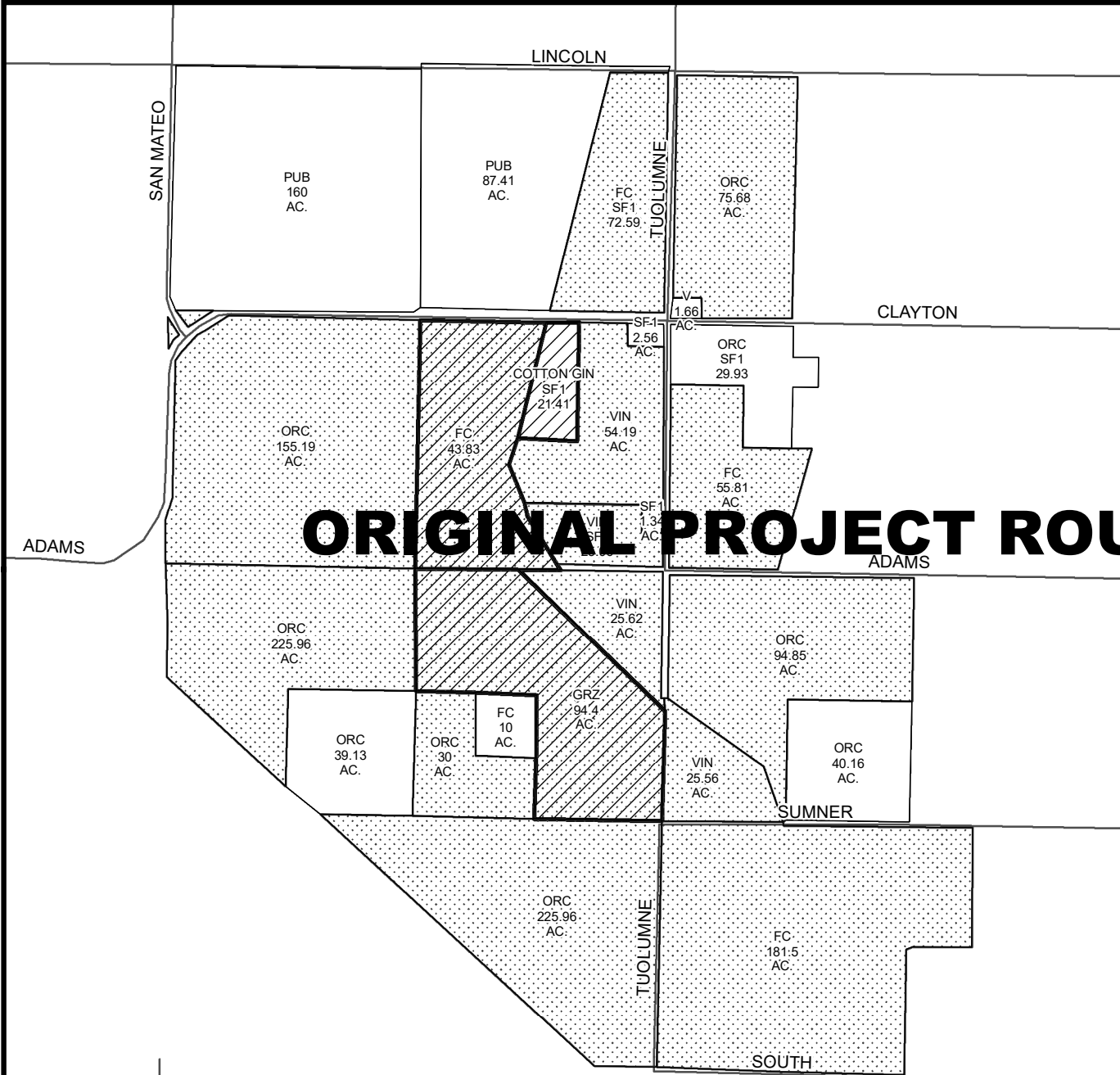


Legend

- Subject Properties



EXISTING LAND USE MAP



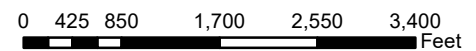
ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

LEGEND

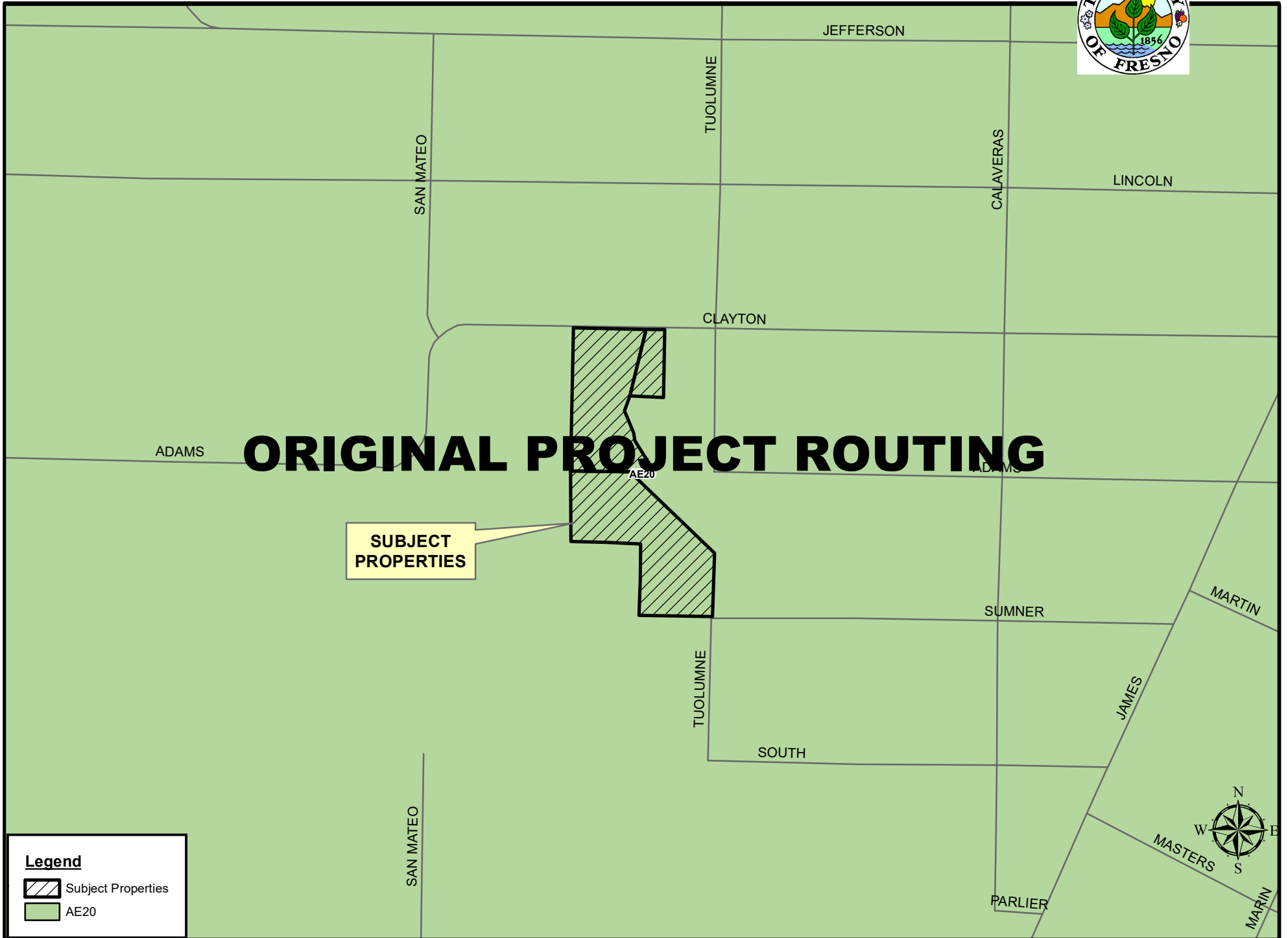
- FC - FIELD CROP
- GRZ - GRAZING
- ORC - ORCHARD
- PUB - PUBLICLY OWNED
- SF# - SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
- V - VACANT
- VIN - VINEYARD

LEGEND:

- Subject Property
- Contract Land



EXISTING ZONING MAP





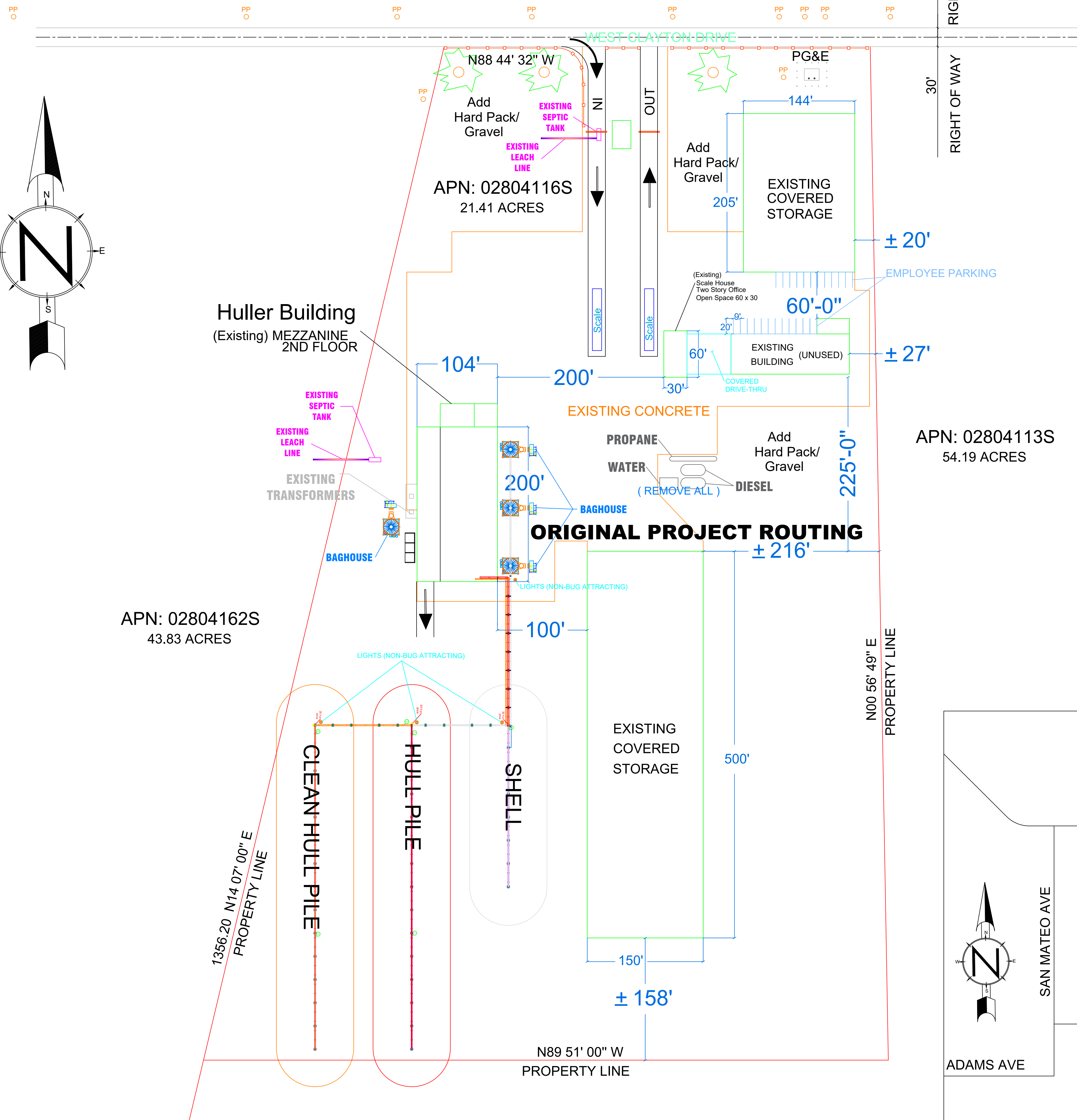
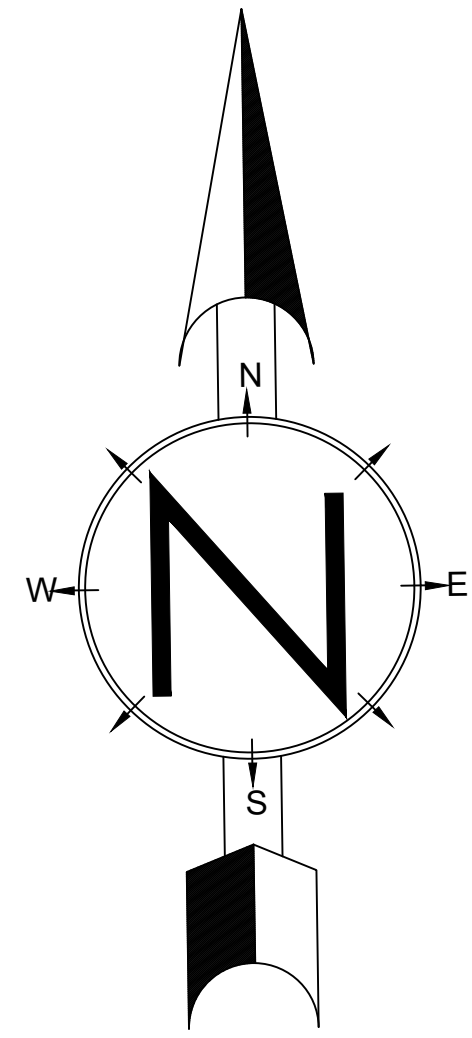
ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

SUBJECT PROPERTIES

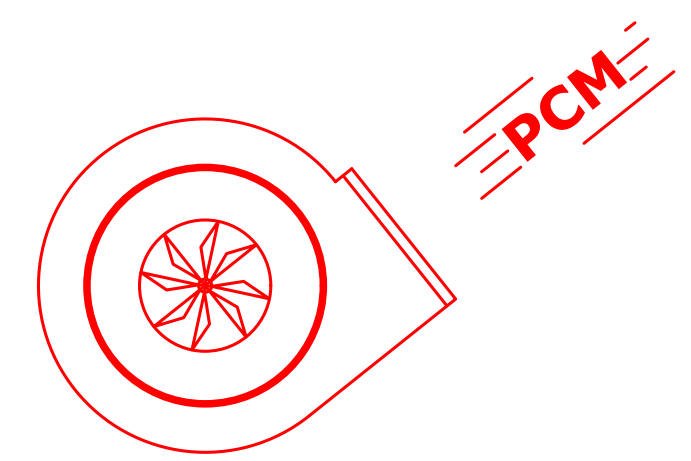
AE20

Legend

-  Subject Properties
-  AE20



PNEUMATIC CONVEYING & MFG.
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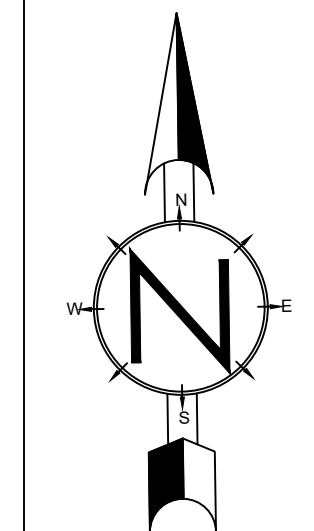
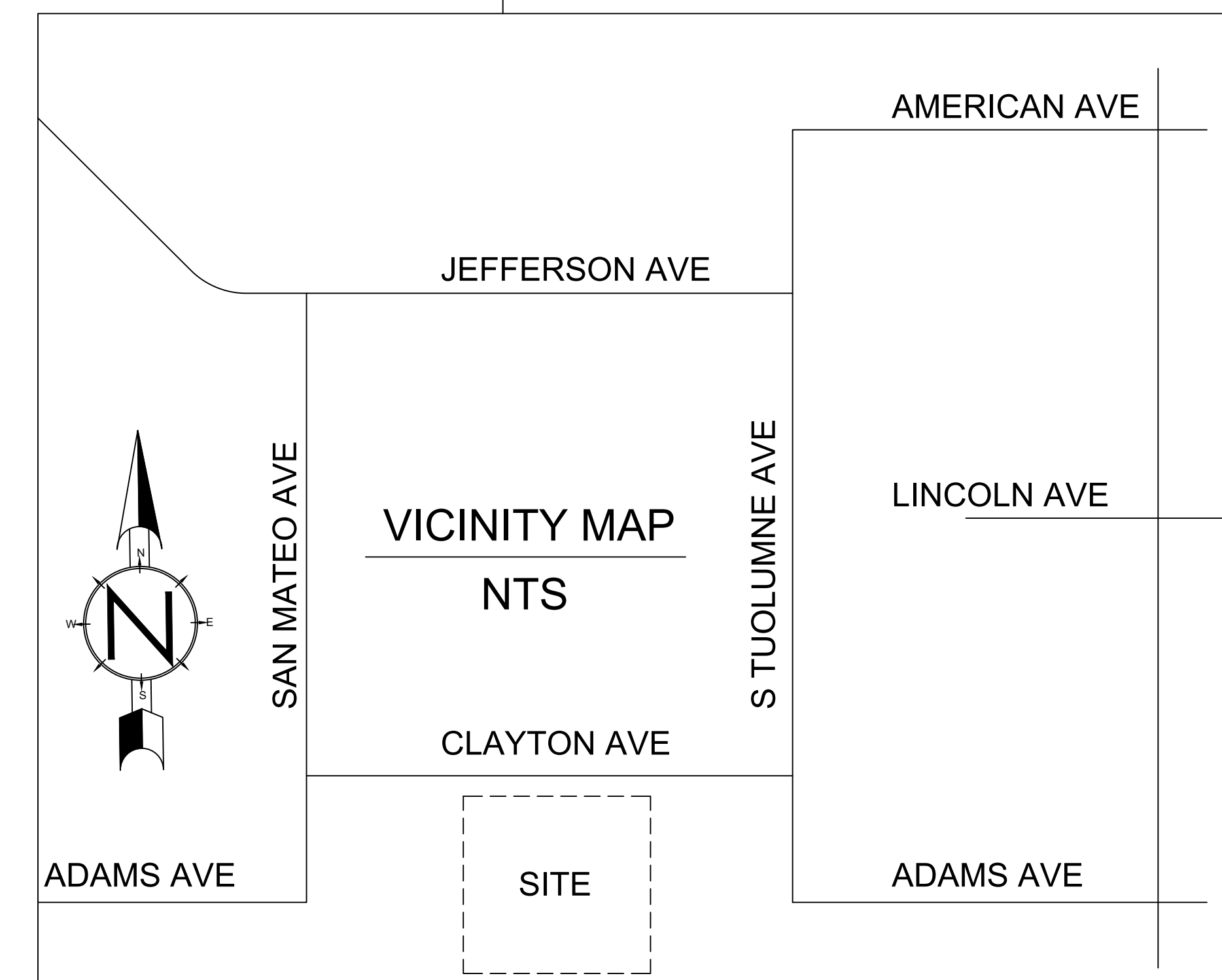
205 Kimball Rd.
P.O. Box 1068
Red Bluff, CA 96080
Cont. Lic.# 535072
Ph. (530) 529-1212
Fax (530) 529-1784

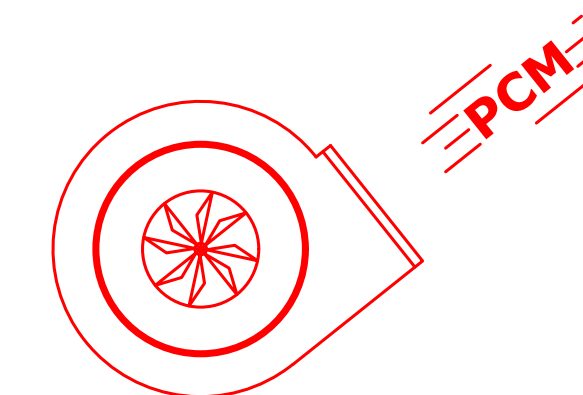
**WESTSIDE FARMERS CO-OP
PLOT PLAN**

JCN:
DATE: 8/11/21
PAINT:
DRAWN BY: TE/BS
DRAWN #:
REQUESTED BY:

THIS DOCUMENT IS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL AND PROPRIETARY, DUPLICATION OR TRANSFER, AND COMMUNICATION TO OTHERS IS PROHIBITED WITHOUT WRITTEN CONSENT OF PNEUMATIC CONVEYING & MFG 2021

SCALE : $\frac{1}{32}'' = 3'$





205 Kimball Rd.
 P.O. Box 1068
 Red Bluff, CA 96080
 Cont. Lic.# 535072
 Ph. (530) 529-1212
 Fax (530) 529-1784

Westside Farmers Co-op
 Almond Hulling & Shelling Facility

JCN:

DATE: 7-23-21

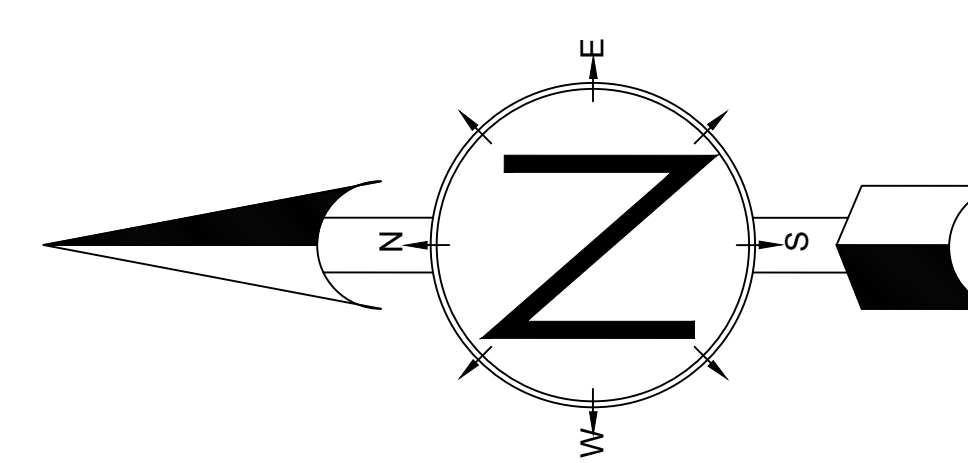
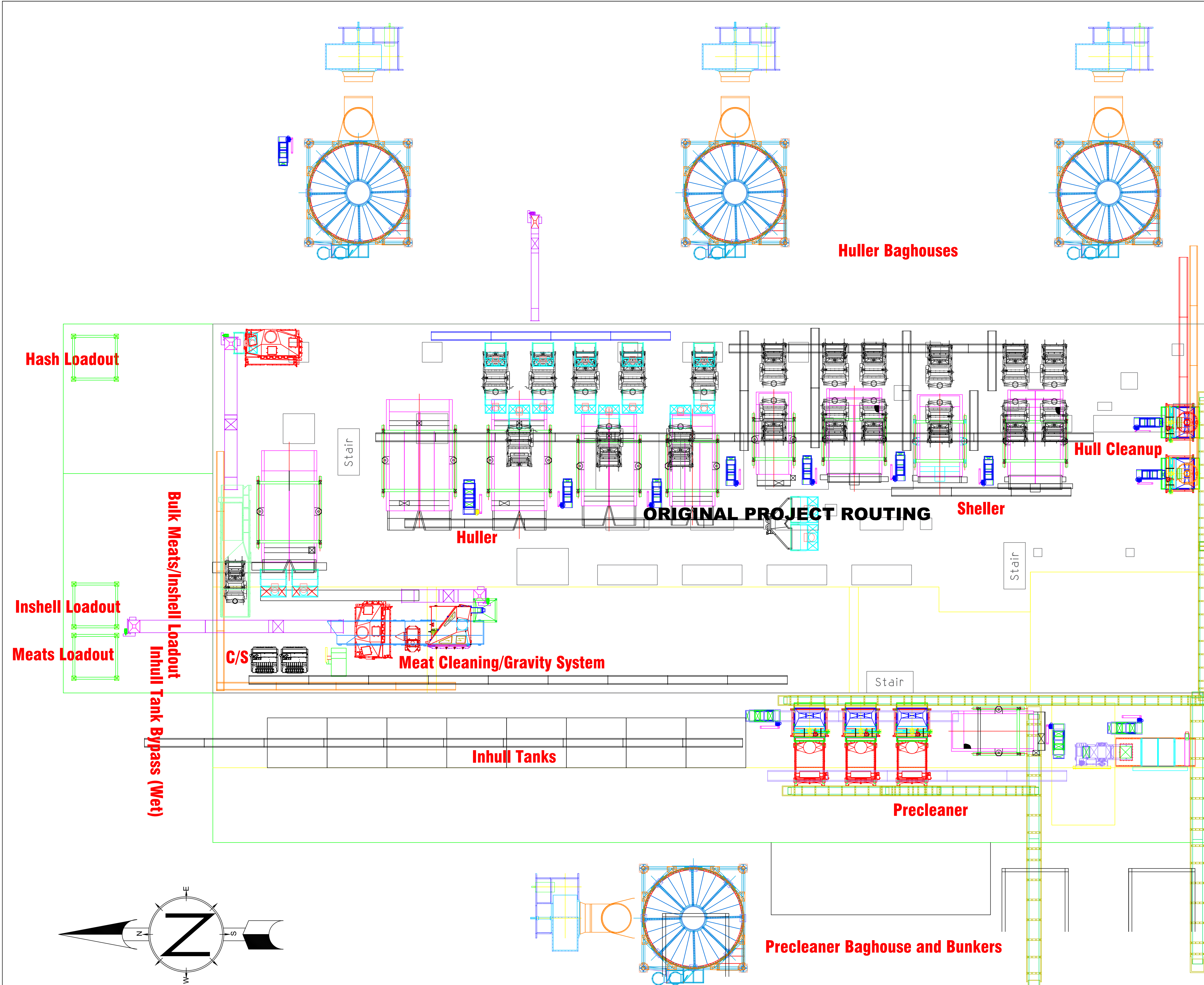
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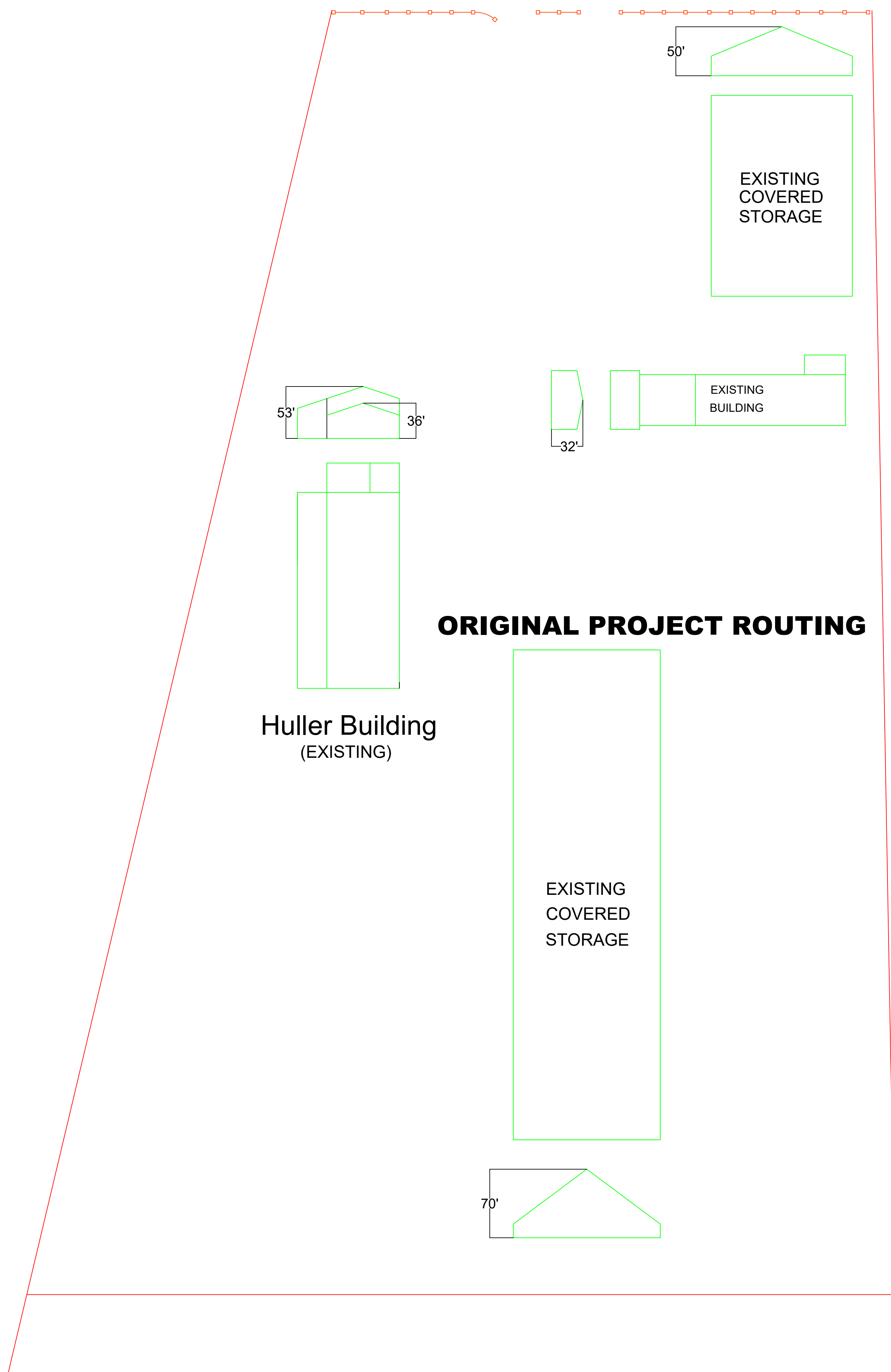
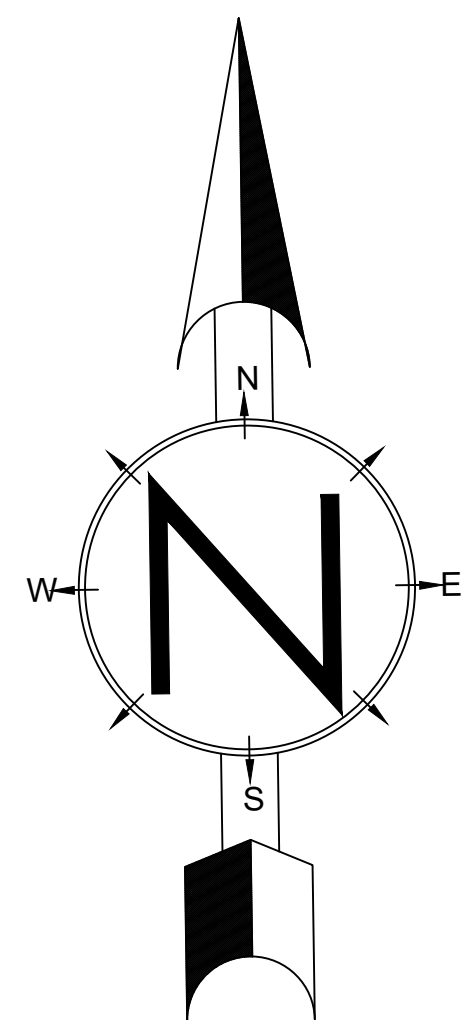
DRAWN BY: BS

FILE NAME: Westside Farmers Coop 7-23-21

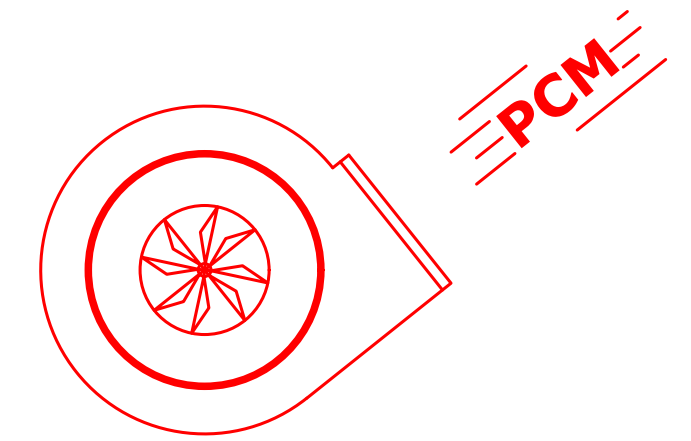
REQUESTED BY:

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 MFG 2021





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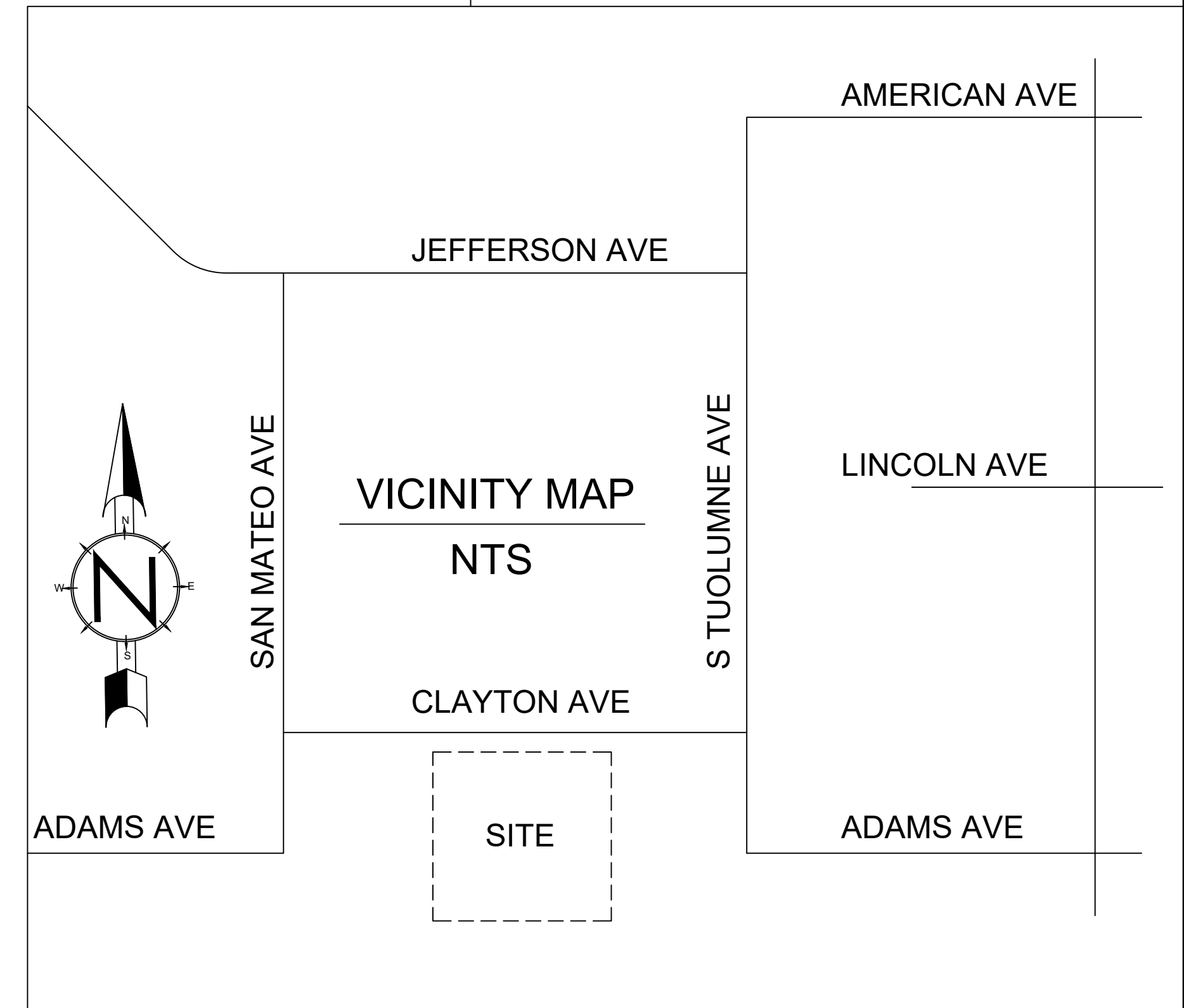
205 Kimball Rd.
P.O. Box 1068
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Ph. (530) 529-1212
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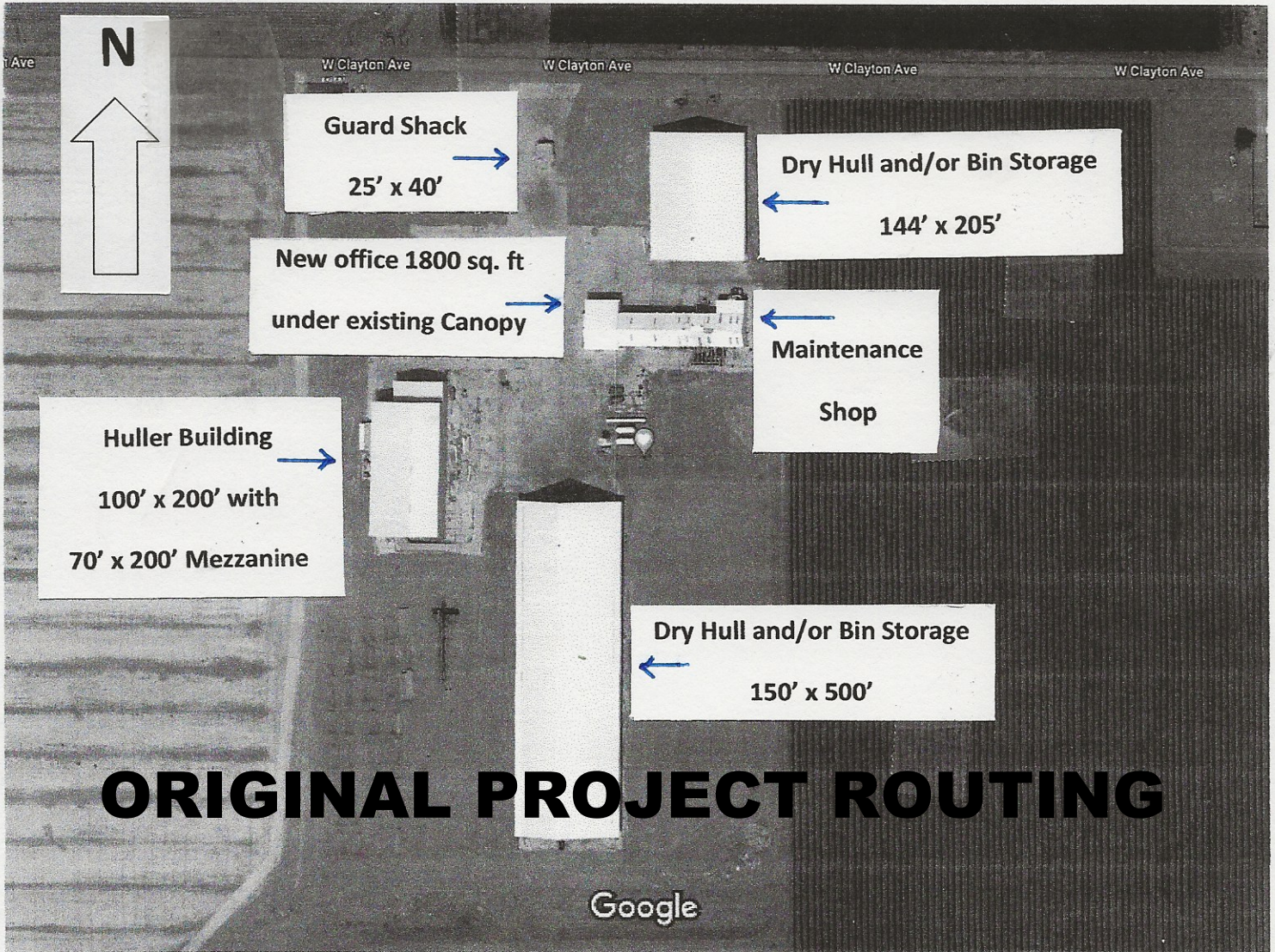
WESTSIDE FARMERS CO-OP
Building Heights

JCN:
DATE: **9/10/21**
PAINT:
DRAWN BY: **TE/BS**
DRAWN #:
REQUESTED BY:

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MFG 2021

PLOT SCALE : 1/8" = 10'





Imagery ©2021 AMBAG, Maxar Technologies, USDA Farm Service Agency, Map data ©2021 100 ft

Site Map

28285 W. Clayton Ave

Tranquility CA




ORIGINAL 70' ROUTING

53'

36'

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING



A photograph of a large industrial building with a white corrugated metal container in front of it. The text "ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING" is overlaid in the center. The building has a gabled roof and a light-colored exterior. A tall light fixture is mounted on the roof. The foreground is a paved area with some cracks. In the background, there are other industrial structures and a clear sky.

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING



ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

AUG 19 2021

Operational Statement Checklist (Revised 8/1/21)

1 – Nature of the Operation:

Proposal: Westside Cooperative Gins Inc. proposes to erect/install an almond Hulling/Shelling facility on the existing cotton gin site at 28285 W. Clayton Ave., Tranquility, CA. Almond hulling and shelling is a process of cleaning field run product, separating foreign material; separating hulls from kernel and shell, and separating shell from kernel. The end product may be kernels or “inshell” which is the kernel encased in the shell - similar to peanuts in the shell. The by-products of the operation, hull, shell, bits and pieces of split or broken kernel, (hash), all have a marketable value and will be transported and sold off site. Kernels and inshell will be transported to an Almond Processor for further grading, cleaning, sizing, and packaging.

The existing infrastructure of the site will accommodate an almond hulling/shelling facility within the existing footprint of the ginning facility. Almond product storage prior to, and after processing will be handled on site with temporary field run almond storage prior to processing and temporary almond shell storage after processing. The existing electrical service, water service, ingress and egress will be unchanged from the previous ginning operations. The conversion of the facility will require new office construction (1500 sq. ft.), but it will be constructed within the footprint of an existing building. A reconfiguration of the hulling/shelling equipment will not require a main building expansion of 10,000 +/- square feet as previously proposed.

2 – Operational Time Limits:

The Almond Huller/Sheller will be operated on a seasonal basis beginning with the start of annual almond harvest and continue until all field run product received at the facility has been processed. Normal start date will be on or around August 1st of each year, and depending on crop yield, percentage of crop processed, and operational efficiencies, the conclusion of the seasonal process is expected to be on or around December 31st of each year, for a period of five months. The facility will be operated on a 24/7 basis, (24 hours per day; 7 days per week) for the majority of the processing season, with a lead-in

period at the start of the season, (approximately 7 – 10 days), and a lead-out period at The end of the season, (approximately 7 – 10 days), operating 12 hours per day. All of the actual processing will occur indoors, with outdoor activities being regulated to storage of incoming field run product in stockpiles, fumigation of stockpiles, loading of stockpiles into trailers for processing, and storage and out handling of by-products to be transported off site. Activities on site, based on employee count will be conducted at 60% indoors and 40% outdoors during the operation season; and 80% indoors and 20% outdoors during the non operating season.

3 – Number of Customers or visitors: Seasonal averages will be 1 customer/visitor per day, with a peak of 10 in any single day. Visiting hours will be from 8:00 am to 5: 00 pm.

4 – Number of employees: Seasonal employees will number approximately 25 employees annually which include 6 full time employees during the non-operational period. Work shifts will be 12 hours per shift; two shifts per day, during the operating season and one shift; 8 hours per day, during the non- operating season.

5 – Service and delivery vehicles: Seasonal trips by customers and by visitors is estimated at 210 trips and non-seasonal is estimated at 50 trips. These include customers, vendors, mechanics, sales and service, and fuel trucks. Field run product (inbound loads), will be received at the site by truck and trailer rigs. Based on estimated volume to be processed, approximately 5,200 loads will be delivered. Additionally, approximately 100 loads of empty bins, also by truck and trailer, will be delivered during the course of the season. Outbound truck and trailer loads of shell, hulls, inshell, kernels, hash, and foreign material are estimated at 4,500 loads.

6 – Access to site: All vehicular traffic, entering and exiting the site will be from paved public road, via Clayton Ave. This is a paved approach to the site and is wide enough to accommodate both ingress and egress at the same time.

7 – Parking: Spaces will be provided for employees and customers. Parking will accommodate 10 parking spaces at the office area on concrete parking surfaces and 30

parking spaces near the office for the processing facility on compacted base-rock or asphalt surfaces.

8 – Goods Sold on site: All by- products of the field run commodity delivered to the huller/sheller will be transported and sold off site. Hash is a marketable product containing a saleable amount of edible pieces of broken or split kernels that will be processed further at an offsite facility. The kernels and inshell, the primary marketable products of the process will be transported to an Almond Processor for further cleaning, sorting, sizing, packaging and sale.

9 – Equipment used in process: Product handing and processing equipment is composed of elevators, vibratory conveyors, gravity shakers, de-twiggers, de-stoners, shear rolls, color sorters, aspirators, augers and conveyor belts. (For additional information, please see Process Description at conclusion of checklist).

10 – Supplies or materials used: Supplies required for the processing of the kernel or inshell is normal to other agricultural processing operations. Diesel for loaders and propane for forklifts are considered to be the major agricultural commodity process supplies. The normal machine lubricants such as oil and sanitation supplies. Diesel fuel will be stored onsite in aboveground storage tanks with containment basins. Propane will be stored in approved storage tanks. All other lubricants and supplies will be properly stored inside buildings, within labeled containers according to OSHA and FSMA guidelines. A major supply item used in the storage and fumigation of field run product is 6 mil polyethylene plastic sheeting. This product is a “one time use” supply item and is recycled to various vendors after use. The plastic sheeting is used to cover the “inhull” stock piles while in storage prior to processing. Approximately 75 % of the inbound field run “inhull” product will be covered with plastic sheeting. This “supply item” will provide a protective cover for the field run while in storage and also provide a sealant barrier to allow for fumigation of the field run while covered and in storage. Annual use of this supply item is estimated at 2 million square feet. Storage of the plastic sheeting prior to use is on wooden pallets, in rolls, and it is re-rolled or baled prior to re-cycling after use.

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

11 - The use of the site as an Almond Hulling/Shelling operation will not cause an unsightly appearance. No odors are produced by the process; there will be no stationary reflective surfaces to cause glare, and noise levels are less than 85 decibels at 200 feet from the building, (as tested at other sites). Fugitive dust due to on site traffic will be handled according to SJVAPCD guidelines.

12 – List of solid or liquid wastes: All sewer wastes will be handled by the septic systems. By-products are hull, shell, hash, and foreign material are not considered waste products. All by products will be transported off site in an orderly delivery schedule beginning in September of each year and extending through June of the following year. The hulls are used exclusively for dairy feed. The shell can be used for dairy bedding or mixed in small ratios to enhance fiber in dairy rations. The foreign material; sticks, plant residue, and organic matter, is returned to alkaline soils to be incorporated into the native soil as an amendment.

13 - Water supply at the site is from the Tranquility Irrigation District. Operating season annual domestic use, (toilets, hand wash stations, cleaning), is estimated at 350,000 gallons, (700 gallons per day); non operating season domestic use, estimated at 150,000 gallons, (700 gallons per day). Total domestic use is estimated at 500,000 gallons annually. The Almond Hulling/Shelling process uses no process water. Water used for fugitive dust control for on-site dust generated by operational vehicles is estimated at 5000 gallons per day for the operating season and 500 gallons per day for the non operating season. Annual fugitive dust control water use is estimated at 735,000 per year.

14 – Proposed advertising and signage: Signage for Westside Cooperative Huller will be displayed at the entrance to the property prior to entering the truck scales and on the northern exposure of the main huller building. No advertising will be displayed. The entrance sign will approximate an 8' x 16' size. The sign on the building will approximate an 8'x16' size. Both signs will be in non-obtrusive colors.

15/16 – Existing buildings to be used: The main building (100' x 200') will be used to separate the hull, shell and kernel; (the Huller/Sheller). The 2 existing metal frame buildings (previously cottonseed storage) will be used for dry hull storage and/or empty bin storage. The existing scale office will be used as a guard house. The older gin building will be used as a maintenance shop, and the module bay of the older gin building will house a new 1500 ft. sq. office within the existing footprint.

17 - Outdoor lighting will be installed on all four sides of the main building and on the hull and shell lines for nighttime operations and security. No sound amplification systems are required or will be installed.

18 - Landscaping will be confined to the office area and entrance, shrubbery and landscape bark, while perimeter chain link fencing will be installed along the Clayton Ave. road frontage.

19 – Please see Overview and Narrative attached.

20 – Identify all owners: Contained in cover letter

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

Overview and Narrative

Almond hulling and shelling is a process of cleaning field run product, separating foreign material; separating hulls from kernel and shell, and separating shell from kernel. The end product may be kernels or “inshell” which is the kernel encased in the shell - similar to peanuts in the shell. The by-products of the operation, hull, shell, bits and pieces of split or broken kernel, (hash), all have a marketable value and will be transported and sold off site. Kernels and inshell will be transported to an Almond Processor for further grading, cleaning, sizing, and packaging.

The proposed project will be designed for 60,000,000 (sixty million) kernel pounds annually. The initial few years will not process that amount but - will build to – that goal. The field harvested volume for 60,000,000 kernel pounds will approximate 240,000,000 “field pounds” (120,000 tons), transported to the huller annually by various growers. 60,000,000 kernel pounds will generate 12,000 tons of shell; 54,000 tons of hull; 1200 tons of hash; and 18,000 tons of foreign material.

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

Definitions:

The nature of the hulling/shelling operations follows many agriculture operations and the “nomenclature” or commonly used terms, may be confusing to someone unaccustomed to the common terms used to describe the product and/or processes. The following terms are listed for clarification:

Field Run Almonds = Harvested product from the field containing almond kernels in the shell covered by a hull, and a small percentage of foreign material, (sticks twigs, etc.)

Stock-Piling Yard = Designated areas on site to store field run product prior to processing.

Hulling/ Shelling = Separation of the hull and/or shell from the almond kernel.

Meats = Kernels

In hull = Hull, shell, and kernel still attached together

Inshell = Kernel encased in a shell

Plant Operation

- **Systems;**
 - Receiving and Precleaning
 - Hulling/Shelling
 - Meat Cleanup
 - Gravity Circuit
 - Pee-Wee Circuit
 - By-Product Storage

Process Description

- **Receiving and Precleaning;** Field run almonds are delivered to the facility in belly-dump style trailers where they drive onto a truck scale to be weighed and documented according to grower name, ranch location, and variety into the computer files. The trailer will then be sent to either our outside stock-piling yard or directly into the precleaner. The precleaner will be equipped with an unloading conveyor to feed the precleaner. The precleaning of the almond prior to hulling and shelling is extremely critical for increased efficiency. Four (4) key machines are used in the precleaning process; Stick reel (long sticks), sand screen (dirt/sand), detwigger (small sticks/twigs), and destoner (rocks/stones).
- **Hulling/Shelling;** after the almonds have passed through the precleaning process, they will be stored into large scale bins until further processing. The bins will be tagged according to the grower, ranch location and variety. If the hulling/shelling line is designed without sufficient equipment to shell the proper ranges of almond sizes or varieties excessive meats will be damaged. This plant is designed with eleven (11) stages shell all almond varieties and conditions at high quality. Stage shelling is continuous which allows for increased capacity with less equipment. Incoming inshell/inshell almonds are introduced to the first stage of hard-shell crackers and shear roll units with a clearance setting to gently shell or 'crack' the

largest size almonds of that run with a minimum of meat damage. Hard-shell crackers and shear rolls are used in tandem by the operators to efficiently condition the almond meat from the shell or hull. The shelled product (meats) and unshelled product (inhull/inshell) will discharge from the cracker/shear roll unit onto a sizing screen. The screen is sized to let meats and small foreign material (half-hulls, shell) fall through.

The product that carries over the sizing screen is either inhull or inshell almonds which go automatically to the next stage, #2. The second stage of hard-shell crackers and shear roll units will be adjusted with a clearance setting of the largest almonds that were not shelled in the first stage. The above procedure is continued repeatedly at each stage until every meat is shelled out in that run. The unique feature of the hulling/shelling process is that the operator(s) can control the percentage of meats generated at each stage which determines the processing rate of the line based on the quality of meats produced at each stage.

- **Meat Cleanup;** All of the meats (kernels), accumulated from the hulling and shelling process pass onto scalping screens to remove that 'half-hull' sized pieces of foreign material from meats before they go onto the meat separator deck.

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING

The next screen is the meat separator deck, which has two (2) levels of screening each level is designed to scalp and sift foreign material from meats. The meat product will then go into airlegs as the final step of cleanup before the gravity circuit to reduce foreign material content to 5-8%, depending on variety/condition. The airleg uses a blower fan and top-air aspiration to suspend the meat product in a column of air while lighter product like hull and shell blow out and into the off-fall tank.

- **Gravity Circuit;** the gravity circuit consists of a gravity table(s) that uses a vibrating deck and top air aspiration to make 4-5 sizes of product. A constant flow of incoming product, from the meat cleanup line, onto the gravity table is important for operators to make an effective separation. The first size the gravity table will make is the "rock" cut which includes larger almonds of that run and small stones/pebbles. This specific cut will go directly onto a small destoner to remove those stones/pebbles from large almonds before going into a finishing bin. The second size is good product which will go directly into the finishing bin.

- The third size the 'middling' cut which is determined by the operator to go back onto a secondary gravity table, the pee-wee circuit, or into the finishing bin. The fourth size of product from the gravity table is the pee-wee cut which goes directly to the pee-wee circuit. The fifth and final size is typically foreign material that the operator can send to the floor auger or to the pee-wee circuit.
- **Pee-Wee Circuit;** this circuit is designed only to shell out small (pee-wee) inshell almonds. The pee-wee circuit uses a small cracker and shear roll unit with minimal clearance setting to ensure that all pee-wee inshell will be shelled out. This eliminates the risk of recirculation and makes this huller/sheller plant a complete system.
- All circuits requiring air movement to facilitate the operation of specific equipment within the circuit will be serviced by two or three bag houses designed to handle the air required for operation.
- **By-Product Auger Storage;** All foreign material separated during the hulling, cracking, and gravity and pee-wee circuit will get shelled out of the plant and put into 40'-0" high x 460'-0" long auger storage lines. Multiple storage lines will be installed to separate shell, hull, and hull/shell mix. These by-products will be used as bedding and feed for dairies.

ORIGINAL PROJECT ROUTING



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