# *City of Ceres*
# *Environmental Checklist Form*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1.** | **Project Title:** | Ceres Gateway Center. The Proposed project includes a Specific Site Plan Review, Vesting Tentative Parcel Map, and Variance to allow for the development of a commercial/retail development on 13.65+/- acres located at 2812 and 2942 East Service Road. It will be a commercial development with multiple buildings, including a gas station and hotel. Application Numbers – 19-20 VTPM, 19-21 SPSP and 19-22 VAR. |
| **2.** | **Lead Agency Name and Address:** | City of Ceres<br>2220 Magnolia Street<br>Ceres, CA 95307 |
| **3.** | **Contact Person and Phone Number:** | Mr. Tom Westbrook, Director of Community Development,<br>(209) 538-5778 |
| **4.** | **Project Location:** | 2812 and 2942 E. Service Road, Ceres, CA 95307 (All structures have been removed from this property) |
| **5.** | **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** | Ceres Gateway Center, LLC<br>Genesis Family Enterprises Inc<br>Mr. Daniel Ogden<br>1535 J Street, Suite A<br>Modesto, California 95354 |
| **6.** | **General Plan Designation:** | Regional Commercial (RC) |
| **7.** | **Zoning:** | Regional Commercial (RC) (Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan) |

**8. Description of the Project:**

Project Background;

In May 2008, the City of Ceres approved Conditional Use Permit No. 07-14 and Vesting Tentative Parcel Map No. 07-13 that allowed for the development of two (2) three-story hotels, restaurant/retail space, and a gas station on the project site. As part of this approval, the City certified a Mitigated Negative Declaration per Resolution No. PC 08-17. The land use entitlements granted for the project site by the City have since expired. As such, the analysis contained in this Initial Study is based on the Proposed Project as defined below. The Proposed Project as defined below represents a new "Project" located on the same project site for which the above-mentioned Conditional Use Permit and Vesting Tentative Parcel Map were approved, by the Ceres Planning Commission on May 19, 2008.

However, to the extent feasible, the environmental analysis contained in the Mitigated Negative Declaration mentioned above is included and/or referenced in this Initial Study in accordance with Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for Conditional Use Permit No. 07-14 and Vesting Tentative Parcel Map No. 07-13 can be reviewed at the City of Ceres Community Development

Department, 2220 Magnolia Street, Ceres, CA 95307. It should be noted, the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for that project has no bearing on the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for this new project, but is only mentioned here so that reviewers are aware that a project had formally been approved on this site.

Project Summary;

The Proposed Project includes a Specific Site Plan Review, Vesting Tentative Parcel Map, and Variance to allow for the development of a commercial/retail development on 13.65+/- acres located at 2812 and 2942 East Service Road. The Assessor's Parcel numbers associated with the site are 041-013-008, and 041-013-009. Figure 1 – Vicinity Map, provides an illustration of the Proposed Project's location.

The Proposed Project site currently has a land use designation of Regional Commercial (RC) under the City of Ceres General Plan 2035, adopted May 14, 2018. In addition, the Subject Property is currently zoned Regional Commercial (RC) under the Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan (MRCSP), adopted September 25, 1995.

The Proposed Project includes a Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide an approximate 13.65-acre site consisting of 4 legal parcels, into eight (8) parcels and a remainder parcel to facilitate the development of a regional/mixed use shopping center. Refer to Figure 5, Tentative Parcel Map, for an illustration of the proposed Tentative Parcel Map.

The Proposed Project will connect to the existing sewer and water infrastructure supplied by the City of Ceres which is located in Mitchell and Service Roads. Storm drainage will be provided via the installation of an on-site French Drain system. Access to the project site is provided via Mitchell Road and Service Road. The Proposed Project will also feature frontage improvements to Service and Mitchell Roads. The proposed Variance is to allow for an eighty-five (85) foot tall Freestanding Pylon sign, which exceeds the height requirements of the City's Sign Ordinance (Chapter 18.42 of the City's Zoning Ordinance).

The Proposed Project also includes project specific Design Guidelines, which are intended to provide an architectural design theme which will allow individual retailers/operators the ability to highlight their own brand, while allowing for aesthetic consistency between the buildings developed as part of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project also includes a Master Sign Program to provide the guidelines necessary to achieve a visually coordinated, balanced and appealing sign environment.

In addition, it is important to note that as development occurs, minor revisions to the Proposed Project, such as building placement and/or relocation within the project site may occur based on the site-specific users/tenants and/or commercial retail market. This Initial Study assumes such minor revisions may occur. However, as long as City standards, such as required setbacks, lot coverage, and off-street parking requirements are met, and the minor revisions comply with the adopted Design Guidelines, further environmental analysis in accordance with CEQA for said minor revisions is not required.

Utilities

Domestic water will be provided to the Proposed Project via connecting to an existing twenty-four (24) inch water line located in Service Road and a ten (10) inch water line located in Mitchell Road. On site distribution will be through a series of ten (10) inch and eight (8) inch water lines throughout the project.

Sanitary sewer services will be provided to the Proposed Project via connecting to an existing twelve (12) inch sanitary sewer line in Service Road and Mitchell Road. Each parcel will connect to an eight (8) inch sanitary sewer line that will connect to main lines in Service Road and Mitchell Road.

Stormwater drainage will be provided to the Proposed Project via a series of underground French drains throughout the project site. The intent with this design is to ensure stormwater generated by the Proposed Project development is retained onsite.

Figure 3 – Site Plan provides an illustration of the Proposed Project's Site Plan.

Phasing;

Ceres Gateway Center is proposed to be developed in two (2) phases. The proposed development contemplated in each phase is described below:

*PHASE ONE*

Phase One consists of the development of Parcels 1 through 8 as illustrated on Figure 3. Table 8-1, below, depicts the development proposed in Phase One. In addition, Figure 4 illustrates the proposed Phase One development.

**Table 8-1 – Phase One Land Use Matrix**

| Parcel | Parcel Size (Acres = ac) | Land Use | Square Feet | FAR (Floor Area Ratio) | Off-Street Parking | User |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0.91 ac | Restaurant (Drive-Thru) | 4,529 | 0.11 | 46 | Not Applicable |
| 2 | 1.11 ac | Restaurant (Drive-Thru) | 2,418 | 0.05 | 42 | Not Applicable |
| 3 | 1.20 ac | Restaurant (Drive-Thru) | 3,974 | 0.08 | 43 | In and Out Burger |
| 4 | 1.85 ac | Retail/Restaurant/Coffee Shop (Drive-Thru) | 11,142 | 0.14 | 71 | Starbucks Coffee (Shops 2A) |
| 5 | 0.62 ac | Restaurant (Drive-Thru) | 2,600 | 0.10 | 29 | Panda Express |
| 6 | 1.07 ac | Retail/Restaurant (Drive-Thru) | 4,000 | 0.09 | 46 | Not Applicable |
| 7 | 1.60 ac | Gas Station/Convenience Store/Car Wash | 6,437 | 0.09 | 30 | Not Applicable |
| 8 | 0.07 ac. | Freestanding Pylon Sign | N/A | N/A | N/A | Not Applicable |
| **Total** | **8.43 ac** | | **35,100** | **0.09** | **307** | |

Phase One also consists of associated on and off site improvements including the following: Mitchell and Service Roads frontage improvements (sidewalks, landscaping, etc.), parking, landscape improvements, connection between Mitchell Road entrance/exit and Service Road entrance/exit), signage, and water, sewer, and storm drainage infrastructure. On-site parking provided in Phase One consists of a total of 307 parking spaces.

Figure 4 – Phase One Site Plan illustrates the proposed development contained within Phase One.

*PHASE TWO*

Phase Two consists of the development of Parcels 9 through 12 as illustrated on Figure 3. Table 8-2, below, depicts the development proposed in Phase Two.

**Table 8-2 – Phase Two Land Use Matrix**

| Parcel | Parcel Size (Acres = ac) | Land Use | Square Feet | FAR (Floor Area Ratio) | Off-Street Parking | User |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 2.14 ac | Hotel (80 Rooms) | 64,000 | 0.69 | 110 | Not Applicable |
| 10 | 0.95 ac | Retail | 7,500 | 0.18 | 43 | Not Applicable |
| 11 | 0.75 ac | Retail | 7,800 | 0.24 | 44 | Not Applicable |
| 12 | 1.38 ac | Retail | 11,400 | 0.19 | 56 | Not Applicable |
| **Total** | **5.22 ac** | | **90,700** | **0.40** | **253** | |

As noted above in Table 8-2, Phase Two consists primarily of a proposed hotel development and retail development. At this time, the proposed hotel is designed to accommodate a four (4) story eighty (80) room hotel. The utilities installed as part of Phase One will be designed to accommodate Phase Two, including the Proposed Project's Stormwater French Drain system. In addition, on-site improvements will include parking, landscaping, etc. On-site parking will be provided via 253 parking spaces. Figure 3 illustrates the proposed development in Phase 2.

**9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:** The zoning and the existing developments on and in the vicinity of the Proposed Project development are summarized below.

| | EXISTING LAND USE | ZONING | CERES GENERAL PLAN |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Project Site** | Vacant lands | RC, Regional Commercial | RC, Regional Commercial |
| **North** | Vacant lands | RC, Regional Commercial | RC, Regional Commercial |
| **South** | State Highway 99 | RC, Regional Commercial | RC, Regional Commercial |
| **East** | Existing Commercial Development and Vacant and Disturbed lands | RC, Regional Commercial | RC, Regional Commercial |
| **West** | State Highway 99 | Not in City Limits | RC, Regional Commercial |

The Proposed Project consists of four legal parcels/lots totaling approximately 13.65-acre site located at the corner of Mitchell Road and Service Road, adjacent to State Route 99. The project site is vacant and undeveloped and with no frontage improvements (i.e. curb, gutter, and sidewalk). The project area is surrounded by vacant and undisturbed land to the north, existing commercial development and vacant land to the east, and State Route 99 to the south and west. Figure 1, Vicinity Map, provides an illustration of the location of the Proposed Project. Figure 2, Site Photographs, provide photographic illustrations of the current project site conditions.

**10. Other public agencies which approval is required:** (e.g. permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.

- Rule 9510 Compliance – San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
- Encroachment Permits – Caltrans, District 10

**Figure 1 - VICINITY MAP**


N

**Figure 2 – SITE PHOTOGRAPHS**

N.W. Property Line Looking West along Service

West Property Line Looking South

West Property Line Looking East

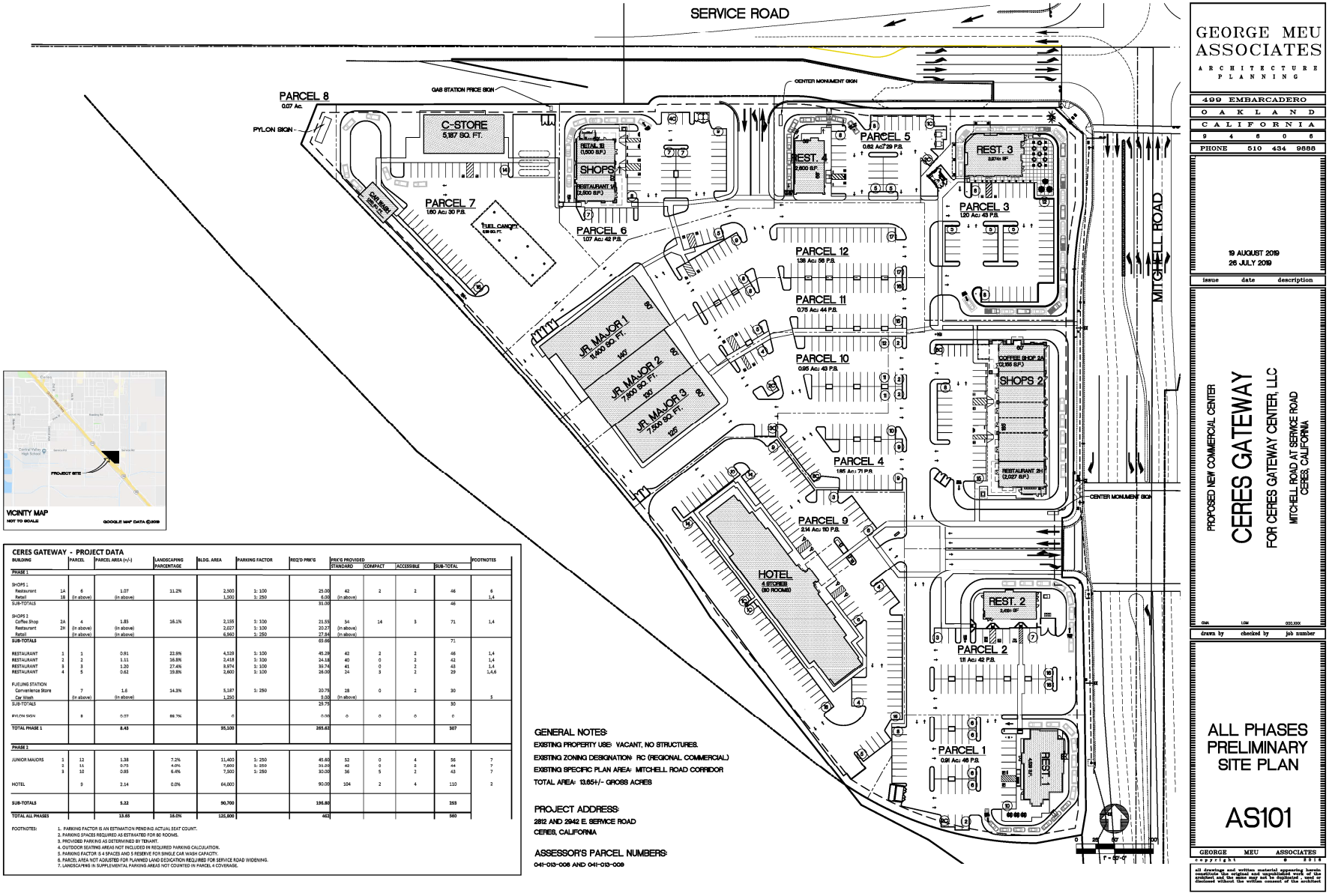
West Property Line Looking Northwest

West Property Line Looking East

West Property Line Looking Northwest

West Property Line Overlooking Property Site

# Figure 3 – SITE PLAN

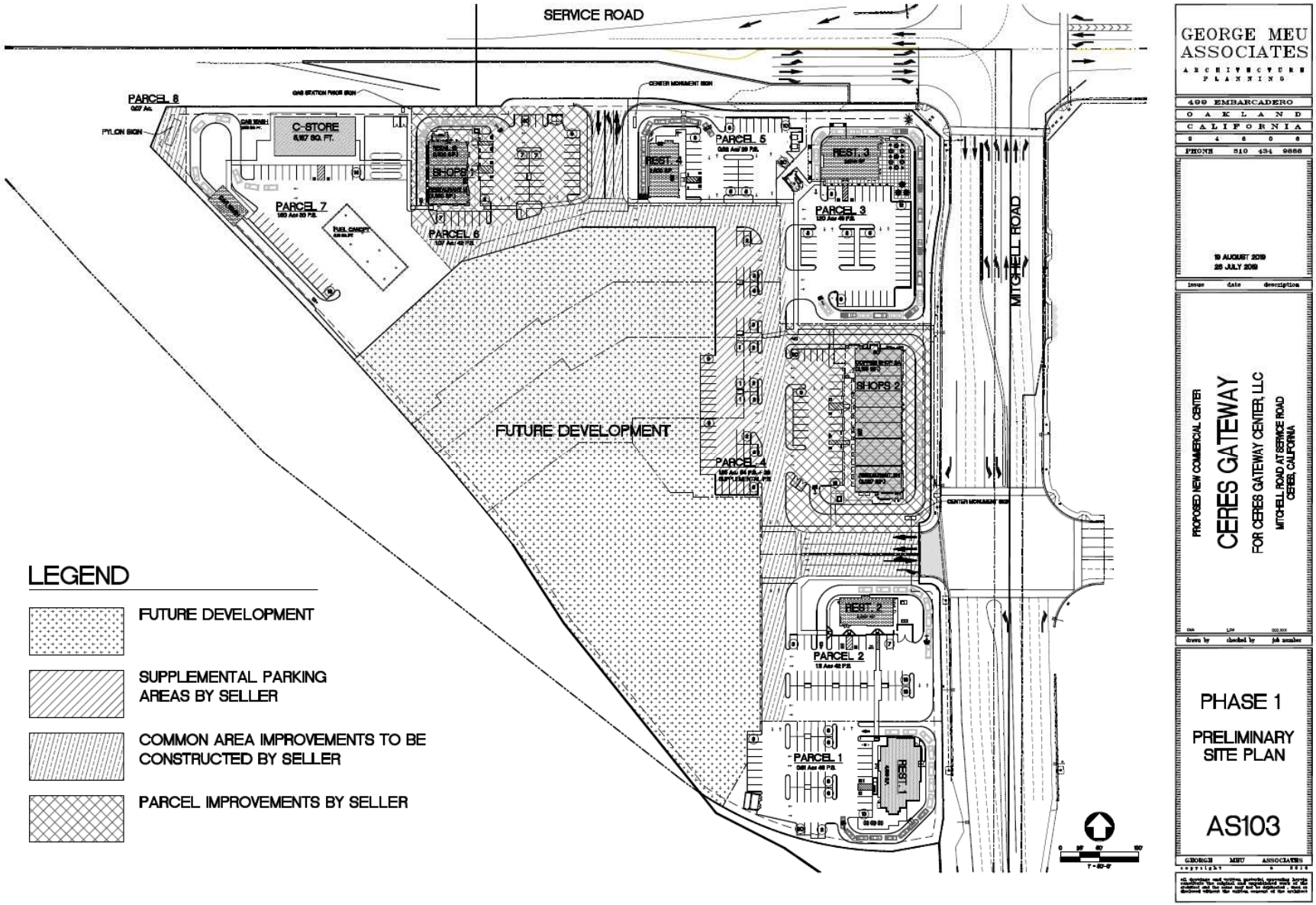



**CERES GATEWAY - PROJECT DATA**

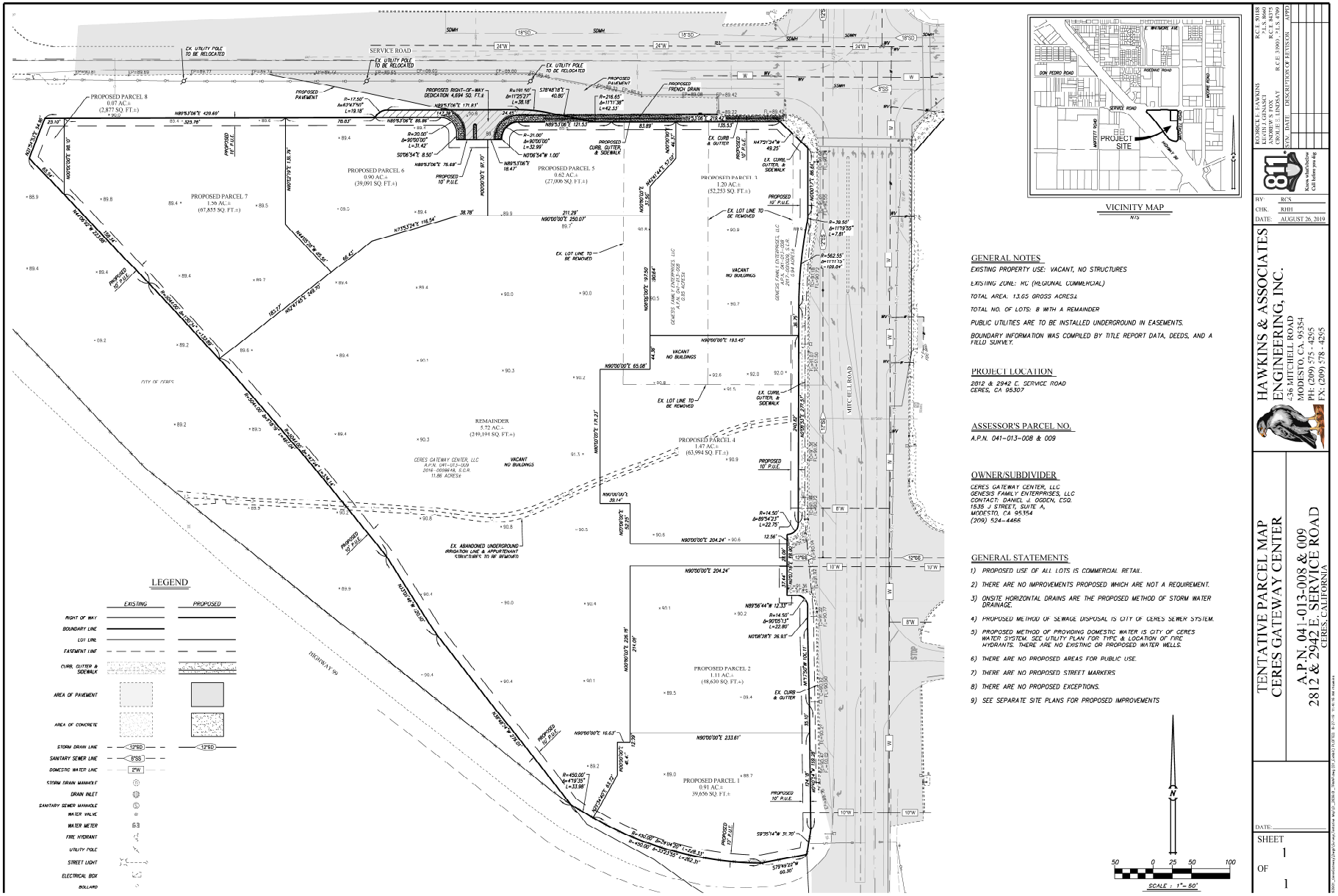
| BUILDING | | PARCEL | PARCEL AREA (+/-) | LANDSCAPING PARCENTAGE | BLDG. AREA | PARKING FACTOR | REQ'D PRK'G | PRK'G PROVIDED STANDARD | COMPACT | ACCESSIBLE | SUB-TOTAL | FOOTNOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PHASE 1** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SHOPS 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Restaurant | 1A | 6 | 1.07 | 11.2% | 2,500 | 1: 100 | 25.00 | 42 | 2 | 2 | 46 | 6 |
| Retail | 1B | (in above) | (in above) | | 1,500 | 1: 250 | 6.00 | (in above) | | | | 1,4 |
| SUB-TOTALS | | | | | | | 31.00 | | | | 46 | |
| SHOPS 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Coffee Shop | 2A | 4 | 1.85 | 16.1% | 2,155 | 1: 100 | 21.55 | 54 | 14 | 3 | 71 | 1,4 |
| Restaurant | 2H | (in above) | (in above) | | 2,027 | 1: 100 | 20.27 | (in above) | | | | |
| Retail | | (in above) | (in above) | | 6,960 | 1: 250 | 27.84 | (in above) | | | | |
| **SUB-TOTALS** | | | | | | | 69.66 | | | | 71 | |
| RESTAURANT | 1 | 1 | 0.91 | 22.9% | 4,529 | 1: 100 | 45.29 | 42 | 2 | 2 | 46 | 1,4 |
| RESTAURANT | 2 | 2 | 1.11 | 16.8% | 2,418 | 1: 100 | 24.18 | 40 | 0 | 2 | 42 | 1,4 |
| RESTAURANT | 3 | 3 | 1.20 | 27.4% | 3,674 | 1: 100 | 36.74 | 41 | 0 | 2 | 43 | 1,4 |
| RESTAURANT | 4 | 5 | 0.62 | 19.8% | 2,600 | 1: 100 | 26.00 | 24 | 3 | 2 | 29 | 1,4,6 |
| FUELING STATION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Convenience Store | | 7 | 1.6 | 14.3% | 5,187 | 1: 250 | 20.75 | 28 | 0 | 2 | 30 | |
| Car Wash | | (in above) | (in above) | | 1,250 | | 5.00 | (in above) | | | | 5 |
| SUB-TOTALS | | | | | | | 23.75 | | | | 30 | |
| PYLON SIGN | | 8 | 0.07 | 86.7% | 0 | | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| **TOTAL PHASE 1** | | | **8.43** | | **35,100** | | **265.42** | | | | **307** | |
| **PHASE 2** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| JUNIOR MAJORS | 1 | 12 | 1.38 | 7.2% | 11,400 | 1: 250 | 45.60 | 52 | 0 | 4 | 56 | 7 |
| | 2 | 11 | 0.75 | 4.0% | 7,600 | 1: 250 | 31.20 | 42 | 0 | 2 | 44 | 7 |
| | 3 | 10 | 0.95 | 6.4% | 7,500 | 1: 250 | 30.00 | 36 | 5 | 2 | 43 | 7 |
| HOTEL | | 9 | 2.14 | 0.0% | 64,000 | | 90.00 | 104 | 2 | 4 | 110 | 2 |
| **SUB-TOTALS** | | | **5.22** | | **90,700** | | **196.80** | | | | **253** | |
| **TOTAL ALL PHASES** | | | **13.65** | **16.0%** | **125,800** | | **462** | | | | **560** | |

FOOTNOTES:
1. PARKING FACTOR IS AN ESTIMATION PENDING ACTUAL SEAT COUNT.
2. PARKING SPACES REQUIRED AS ESTIMATED FOR 90 ROOMS.
3. PROVIDED PARKING AS DETERMINED BY TENANT.
4. OUTDOOR SEATING AREAS NOT INCLUDED IN REQUIRED PARKING CALCULATION.
5. PARKING FACTOR IS 4 SPACES AND 5 RESERVE FOR SINGLE CAR WASH CAPACITY.
6. PARCEL AREA NOT ADJUSTED FOR PLANNED LAND DEDICATION REQUIRED FOR SERVICE ROAD WIDENING.
7. LANDSCAPING IN SUPPLEMENTAL PARKING AREAS NOT COUNTED IN PARCEL 4 COVERAGE.

## Figure 4 – PHASE ONE SITE PLAN



# Figure 5 – TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP



**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Aesthetics | ☐ Agricultural and Forestry Resources | ☒ Air Quality |
| ☐ Biological Resources | ☒ Cultural Resources | ☐ Energy |
| ☐ Geology / Soils | ☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions | ☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials |
| ☒ Hydrology / Water Quality | ☐ Land Use / Planning | ☐ Mineral Resources |
| ☒ Noise | ☐ Population / Housing | ☐ Public Services |
| ☐ Recreation | ☐ Transportation | ☐ Tribal Cultural Resources |
| ☐ Utilities/Services Systems | ☐ Wildfire | ☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance |

**DETERMINATION:** (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On behalf of this initial evaluation:

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

Tom Westbrook, Director of Community Development

October 1, 2019
Date

**EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:**

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the projects outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4. "Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).

   Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). Earlier analyses are discussed in Section XVII at the end of the checklist. For the purposes of this Initial Study, the analysis of the Proposed Project is tiered from the City's General Plan 2035 Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2017052063). In addition, and as noted previously, to the extent feasible, the environmental analysis contained in the Mitigated Negative Declaration mentioned above is included and/or referenced in this Initial Study in accordance with Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for Conditional Use Permit No. 07-14 and Vesting Tentative Parcel Map No. 07-13 can be reviewed at the City of Ceres Community Development Department, 2220 Magnolia Street, Ceres, CA 95307.

   The City's General Plan 2035 Environmental Impact Report is also available for review at the City of Ceres Community Development Department, Planning and Building Division, 2220 Magnolia Street, Ceres, California 95307, or on the City's website: https://www.ci.ceres.ca.us/.

REFERENCES:


- Ceres General Plan 2035 – May 2018
- Ceres General Plan 2035 DRAFT EIR – February 2018
- Ceres General Plan 2035 Final EIR – April 2018
- Ceres Zoning Ordinance, Title 18, Ceres Municipal Code
- Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan – September 1995
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Regulations VIII
- California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), US Fish & Wildlife Service, 2015
- Ceres Sewer Master Plan, 2013
- City of Ceres 2015 Urban Water Master Plan, Dated June 2016
- Stanislaus County Important Farmland Map, 2016, California Department of Conservation-Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
- Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, dated October 6, 2016
- Ceres Gateway Site Plan, dated August 19, 2019
- Ceres Gateway Master Sign Program
- Ceres Gateway Tentative Parcel Map

- Ceres Gateway Geotechnical Report, dated June 6, 2019, prepared by CTE CAL, Inc.
- Ceres Gateway Phase 1/Environmental Site Assessment, dated June 20, 2019, prepared by CTE CAL, Inc.
- Ceres Gateway Project, Trip Generation and Multi-Modal Site Access and Circulation Technical Memorandum, dated September 3, 2019, prepared by Fehr and Peers, Inc.

| **I. AESTHETICS** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the project: | | | | |
| *a)* Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| *b)* Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a 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 point**). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| *d)* Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

*a,b)* *No Impact.* Based on a review of the project site and the City's General Plan 2035, the project site has a relatively flat topography with no scenic vistas. It is expected the project will have no impact to scenic vistas or scenic resources such as tree, rock outcroppings or historic buildings. The project site is located within the City of Ceres and is not located on or near a state scenic highway. Based on a review of the California Department of Transportation website (http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/schwy.htm), the nearest state scenic highway is Interstate 5, which runs approximately 28.1 miles (North/South) in Stanislaus County from the Merced County line to the San Joaquin County line. The Proposed Project is not located on or adjacent to Interstate 5, and therefore will have no impact to a state scenic highway. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

*c,d)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* The Proposed Project will create new sources of light and glare that may affect day or nighttime views within the area. In addition, the Proposed Project includes an eighty-five (85) foot height freestanding pylon sign adjacent to State Route 99, located on the northwestern corner of the project site. However, the development of the Proposed Project will require the Project Proponent to install lighting such that it does not direct glare or adversely affect surrounding properties and roadways. Furthermore, this type of sign, both in design and height, is common along the region's State Route 99 corridor. As a standard Condition of Approval, the Project Proponent will be required to adhere to Caltrans lighting requirements, such as brightness, glare, etc.) for the proposed freestanding pylon sign on the north western corner of the project site. It is anticipated the Proposed Project will not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings, as the development will be consistent with the surrounding land uses.

The Proposed Project is located on the corner of Service Road and Michell Road, adjacent to State Route 99. This area is transitioning from vacant and undeveloped land to urban uses. There are no vantage points within or adjacent to the project site that would provide for public views of the site or its surroundings. Furthermore, the Proposed Project is consistent with the Regional Commercial (RC) Zoning District as it relates to the development standards and land use. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

| **II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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; forest carbon measurement methodology provided 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Comments:**

a) *Less Than Significant Impact.* Based on a review of the City's General Plan 2035 Environmental Impact Report (EIR), specifically Figure 3.2-1 – Agricultural Resources, the Proposed Project site is located on lands considered to be "Vacant or Disturbed" and is not located on lands considered to be Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

b-e) *No Impact.* As noted previously in this Initial Study, the Proposed Project site is zoned Regional Commercial (RC) per the adopted Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan. The Proposed Project site does not contain a Williamson Act Contract, does not contain forest land or timberland. The Proposed Project consists of converting lands considered by the City's General Plan 2035 EIR to be "vacant and or disturbed land; therefore, it will not result in the conversion of farmland to a non-agricultural use. In addition, the project site does not currently consist of an active agricultural use. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

| III. **AIR QUALITY** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Where applicable, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting substantial number of people? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Setting:**

The Proposed Project is located in Stanislaus County, which is a portion of the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). Air quality management under the federal and state Clean Air Acts is the responsibility of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD).

The federal and state governments adopted ambient air quality standards (AAQS) for the primary air pollutants of concern, known as “criteria” air pollutants. Air quality is managed by the SJVAPCD to attain these standards. Primary standards are established to protect the public health; secondary standards are established to protect the public welfare. The attainment statuses of the SJVAB for Stanislaus County with respect to AAQS are shown in the following table.

The SJVAB is considered non-attainment for ozone and particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5), because the AAQS for the pollutants are sometimes exceeded. The SJVAB is Attainment/Unclassified for carbon monoxide, but select areas, non-including the City of Ceres, are required to abide by adopted carbon monoxide maintenance plans.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) through the Air Toxics Program is responsible for the identification and control of exposure to air toxics, and notification of people that are subject to significant air toxic exposure. A principal air toxic is diesel particulate matter, which is a component of diesel engine exhaust.

**San Joaquin Valley Air Basin**

The Proposed Project is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB), which includes all of Stanislaus County. The SJVAB covers approximately 25,000 square miles, including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties, and the Valley portion of Kern County. The SJVAB consists of continuous inter-mountain valley approximately 250 miles long and averaging 80 miles wide. The region’s topographic features restrict air movement through and out of the air basin. The SJVAB is highly susceptible to pollutants accumulation over time. The table below shows the attainment status of the SJVAB for the CAAQS and NAAQs.

**SJVAB Attainment Status[1]**

| Pollutant | Designation/Classification | |
|---|---|---|
| Ozone - One hour | No Federal Standard | Nonattainment/Severe |
| Ozone - Eight hour | Nonattainment/Extreme | Nonattainment |
| $PM_{10}$ | Attainment | Nonattainment |
| $PM_{2.5}$ | Nonattainment | Nonattainment |
| Carbon Monoxide | Attainment/Unclassified | Attainment/Unclassified |
| Nitrogen Dioxide | Attainment/Unclassified | Attainment |
| Sulfur Dioxide | Attainment/Unclassified | Attainment |
| Lead (Particulate) | No Designation/Classification | Attainment |
| Hydrogen Sulfide | No Federal Standard | Unclassified |
| Sulfates | No Federal Standard | Attainment |
| Visibility Reducing Particles | No Federal Standard | Unclassified |
| Vinyl Chloride | No Federal Standard | Attainment |

**Air Quality Thresholds**

The SJVAPCD *Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts*, dated March 19, 2015, is used to evaluate air quality. The table below presents the Thresholds of Significance for construction-related and operational criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions. These thresholds represent the levels at which a project's individual emission of criteria air pollutants or precursors would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the Basin's existing air quality conditions. For the purposes of this analysis, the proposed project would result in a significant impact if construction or operational emissions would exceed the thresholds as shown below:

**SJVAPCD Air Quality Significance Thresholds**

| Pollutant/Precursor | Construction Emissions (tpy) | Operational Emissions (tpy) |
|---|---|---|
| CO | 100 | 100 |
| $NO_x$ | 10 | 10 |
| ROG | 10 | 10 |
| SOx | 27 | 27 |
| $PM_{10}$ | 15 | 15 |
| $PM_{2.5}$ | 15 | 15 |

Notes: tpy = tons per year; $NO_x$ = oxides of nitrogen; $PM_{2.5}$ = fine particulate matter with an aerodynamic resistance of 2.5 micrometers or less; $PM_{10}$ = respirable particulate matter with an aerodynamic resistance of 10 micrometers of less; ROG = reactive organic gases.

Source: SJVAPCD, Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts, March 19, 2015

[1] San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, 2019a. Ambient Air Quality Standards & Valley Attainment Status. http://www.valleyair.org/aqinfo/attainment.htm. Accessed July 2019

**Comments:**

a) *Less Than Significant Impact.* The San Joaquin Valley is in non-attainment status for PM-10 and other airborne pollutants. The development of this project and the proposed parcel map will not obstruct implementation of an air quality plan. Furthermore, this project will be subject to Rule 9510, which is the Indirect Source Review and the project will either have to incorporate approved San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District measures to reduce expected pollution or pay fees based on the expected pollution that might be generated. Additionally, during the construction phase of this project, the developer will be required to adhere to Rule 8021 which regulates construction activities, including earthmoving. Because the Proposed Project will be required to comply with the standards of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

b) *Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.* The San Joaquin Valley Region is a "non-attainment" area for state particulate matter (PM10) and ozone standards, and the Federal ozone standard. During grading and construction activities, it is anticipated that the project's primary contribution to air quality emissions would be particulate matter, which may result as a potentially significant impact. The applicant will be required to comply with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (PM10) regulations.

Construction of the project would involve site preparation, grading, excavation, building construction, and other construction-related activities that have the potential to generate air pollutant emissions. Temporary construction emissions from these activities were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) version 2016.3.2. The data and output collected through CalEEMod is provided in Appendix A. The temporary construction emissions and long-term operational emissions for the proposed project are discussed below. As discussed above, the Proposed Project would be developed in two (2) phases. The first phase includes the development of 35,100 square feet of commercial uses, including five (5) drive-through restaurants. The second phase includes development of a 64,000 square foot hotel, as well as additional commercial uses, with a total square footage (including the proposed hotel) of 90,700 square feet. At full build-out, the proposed project will consist of a variety of multi-tenant commercial retail/restaurants, fast-food restaurants, and a four (4) story eighty (80) room hotel. The overall site acreage is 13.65 and includes 125,800 square feet of commercial uses. For the purposes of determining air quality impacts as a result of the Proposed Project, the analysis will include development of Phase 1 and the overall project (Phase 1 and 2). For the purposes of this air quality analysis, the CalEEMod includes development of Phase 1 and 2 (Overall Build-Out).

**Construction Emissions**

Construction of the Proposed Project would generate temporary criteria pollutant emissions primarily due to the operation of construction equipment and truck trips. Site preparation and grading typically generate the greatest amount of emissions due to the use of grading equipment and soil hauling.

As shown in the table below, construction emissions will not exceed the SJVAPCD threshold of 100 tons per year of CO, 10 tons per year of $NO_X$ and ROG, 27 tons per year of $SO_X$, and 15 tons per year of $PM_{2.5}$ and $PM_{10}$. Complete results from the CalEEMod and assumptions are included in Appendix A.

**Construction Emissions (tpy)**

| Pollutant/Precursor | Maximum Construction Emissions (tpy) | SJVAPCD Significance Threshold | Significant Impact? |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO | 2.2881 | 100 | No |
| $NO_x$ | 2.9265 | 10 | No |
| ROG | 1.0198 | 10 | No |
| SOx | 4.45 | 27 | No |
| $PM_{10}$ | 0.4161 | 15 | No |
| $PM_{2.5}$ | 0.2529 | 15 | No |

As shown above, the maximum construction emissions associated with the project are projected to be less than the applicable thresholds, SJVAPCD requires projects to adhere to District Rules and Regulations.

Long-term emissions associated with project operation, as shown in the table below, would include emissions from vehicle trips (mobile sources), natural gas, and electricity use (energy sources), and landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products and architectural coating associated with on-site development (area sources). Estimated emissions calculated for the proposed project.

**Operational Emissions (tpy)**

| Pollutant/Precursor | Maximum Operational Emissions (tpy) | SJVAPCD Significance Threshold | Significant Impact? |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO | 31.3234 | 100 | No |
| $NO_x$ | 37.2057 | 10 | Yes |
| ROG | 5.0179 | 10 | No |
| SOx | 0.1090 | 27 | No |
| $PM_{10}$ | 5.3936 | 15 | No |
| $PM_{2.5}$ | 1.5361 | 15 | No |

As shown above, the maximum operational emissions in almost all pollutant/precursor categories are projected be less than the applicable thresholds established by SJVAPCD. However, the maximum operational emissions for Nitrogen Dioxide ($NO_x$) exceeds the SJVAPCD Significance Threshold of 10 tons per year.

As stated in the City's General Plan 2030, build-out of the General Plan 2035 would exceed the SJVAPCD's significance threshold for VOC, $NO_x$, CO, $PM_{10}$, and $PM_{2.5}$. This was identified as a Significant and Unavoidable Impact in the City's General Plan 2035 Environmental Impact Report (EIR). As a result of this impact determination in the City's General Plan 2030 EIR, the City adopted Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations in accordance with Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Proposed Project is consistent with, and implements, the policies of the City's General Plan 2035. Therefore, the previous analysis conducted in the General Plan 2035 EIR is considered to be adequate as it relates to impacts associated with exceeding the SJVAPCD's thresholds. The City's Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations, dated April 25, 2018, concluded "No mitigation is available beyond measures identified in the SJVAPCD air quality plans, SIP, CARB motor vehicle standards, SJVPACD regulations for stationary sources and architectural coatings, Title 24 energy efficiency standards, and principles and actions in the proposed General Plan that would partially reduce impacts. The impact is found to be

significant and unavoidable under 14 CCR Section 15091(a)(3). Because the City adopted a Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations for this impact, no further analysis is required in accordance with 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines.

In order to mitigate for $NO_x$, the proposed project will be subject to the rules and regulations of the SJVAPCD and adhere to City General Plan Policies as it relates to Air Quality, consistent with the findings of the City's General Plan 2035 EIR.

Additionally, implementation of the following mitigation measure during the construction phase of the Proposed Project will reduce potential air quality impacts to **Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**

Mitigation Measures

**MM III-1:** The Proposed Proponent shall implement the following dust control measures:

- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily.
- Water or cover stockpiles of debris, soil, sand or other materials that can be blown by the wind.
- Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard.
- Suspend excavation and grading activity when winds exceed 15 mph.
- Install a construction entrance, to contain dirt and debris onsite.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to issuance of a grading permit for the project and implemented during construction activities.

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Ceres Public Works Department & Engineering Services Department.

**MM III-2:** The Proposed Project shall comply with all applicable San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District rules and regulations. The applicant shall contact the SJVAPCD prior to submitting a building permit. Compliance with District Rule 9510 shall be demonstrated to the Planning Division prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to issuance of a grading permit for the project and implemented during construction activities.

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Ceres Planning Division.

Implementation of the above **Mitigation Measure** will reduce air quality impacts to a **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**.

c) *Less Than Significant Impact.* The Ceres General Plan 2035, adopted in 2018, identifies air quality impacts to sensitive receptors such as residences. However, the Proposed Project is consistent with the development expected to occur within the area and analyzed as part of the Ceres General Plan 2035 Final Environmental Impact Report, certified May 2018. Construction activities of the project will be temporary and the traffic resulting from the project is not expected to create substantial pollutant concentrations. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

d) *No Impact.* It is anticipated that the Proposed Project will not create any odors that would be considered objectionable to a substantial number of people on either a short-term or long-term basis. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

| **IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native residents or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Comments:**

*a,b)* *Less than Significant.* The Proposed Project site does not contain any known species that would be a candidate, sensitive, or special status species, nor does it contain habitat for such species. According to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 EIR, the project site is identified as "Annual Grassland" and is described as open grasslands composed primarily of annual grasses and forbs, with some perennial grass species found in moist, lightly grazed, or relic prairie areas. Many wildlife species use Annual Grasslands for foraging, but some require special habitat features such as cliffs, caves, ponds, or habitats with woody plants for breeding, resting and escape cover. As previously discussed, the project site is relatively flat with no special habitat features such as cliffs, caves, ponds, etc. Construction of the project improvements for the site are located approximately 2.29 ± miles south of the river and is not expected to harbor any special status species, nor have any sensitive natural communities. This property at various points in the last few decades had been farmed with various agricultural crops, and subsequently, was disked and worked to support those crops. Furthermore, the proposed project will be required to adhere to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 Policies related to protection of biological resources. The Proposed Project will have **Less than Significant Impact**.

*c)* *No Impact.* The U.S Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates discharges of dredged or fill materials into waters of the United States. These waters include wetlands and non-wetland bodies of water that meet specific criteria, including a direct or indirect connection to interstate commerce. The USACE regulatory

jurisdiction pursuant to Section 4040 of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) is founded on a connection, or nexus between the body in question and interstate commerce. This connection may be direct (through a tributary system linking a stream channel with traditional navigable waters used in interstate or foreign commerce) or indirect (through a nexus identified in the USACE regulations). The USACE typically regulates as non-wetland water of the United States any body of water displaying an ordinary high-water mark (OHWM). In order to be considered a jurisdictional wetland under Section 404 an area must possess three wetland characteristics: hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology. Each characteristic has a specific set of mandatory wetland criteria that must be satisfied in order for that particular wetland characteristic to be met. The Proposed Project site does not possess any of the three wetland characteristics; and therefore, is not designated as a federally protected wetland as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

*d)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* There are no ponds or streams and there is no habitat for migratory fish located within, or in close proximity to the Proposed Project Site. The closet body of water to the Proposed Project site is the Tuolumne River, which is located approximately 2.29 ± miles north of the site. Additionally, the Proposed Project will not impede the movement of wildlife within a migratory corridor, as the site is not a suitable habitat for such movements. According to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 EIR, the California Essential Connectivity (CEHC) does not identify any Natural Landscape Blocks or Essential Connectivity Areas in the Planning Area. However, undeveloped areas in the western, eastern and southern portions of the Planning Area may serve as wildlife corridors for comment and special-status species. The project site is located in the southern portion of the City, adjacent to urban development. Although it is unlikely, compliance with City of Ceres General Plan 2035 Policies would reduce the potential impact to wildlife movement and migratory wildlife corridors. As such, the Proposed Project will have **Less Than Significant Impact**.

*e)* *No Impact.* Beyond the policies listed in the City's General Plan 2035, the City does not yet have any ordinances for tree preservation. The Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan (MRCSP) does have a policy to preserve existing significant trees but the Proposed Project site does not contain any trees requiring removal. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact.**

*f)* *No Impact.* There is no local adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan or state habitat conservation plan that affects this site. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

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

**Comments:**

*a-c)* *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.* The City of Ceres General Plan 2035 Background Report provides a list of buildings and structures that have some level of historic significance to Ceres, none of which are located on the project site. Additionally, archaeological resources are typically found along waterways and since the project site is approximately 2.29 ± miles south of the Tuolumne River, the project site is not expected to have any human remains and is located in an area that is surrounded by existing residential and commercial development. However, although it is highly unlikely, the potential does exist for subsurface archaeological artifacts or unique paleontological resources to be uncovered during grading operations and construction. As such, the Mitigation Measure below has been incorporated into the Proposed Project to reduce any potentially significant impacts to a level of **Less Than Significant.**

Mitigation Measure

**MMV-1:** If any prehistoric, archaeological, paleontological, or historic artifacts, or other indications of archaeological resources are found once the project's construction is underway, all work in the immediate vicinity must stop and the City shall be immediately notified. The developer shall be required to retain the services of an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in prehistoric or historical archaeology, as appropriate, to evaluate the finds and recommend appropriate mitigation measures.

Timing/Implementation: As a condition of project approval and implemented during construction activities.

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Ceres Planning Division, Public Works Department & Engineering Services Department.

Implementation of the above **Mitigation Measure** will reduce the impacts associated with the Proposed project in relation to archaeological, prehistoric, and paleontological resources to **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

| VI. **ENERGY** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

*a, b) Less Than Significant Impact.* The Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Building, as specified in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (Title 24), was established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. Title 24 is updated approximately every three (3) years, and the 2016 Title 24 went into effect on January 1, 2017.

The California Green Buildings Standards Code (CALGreen) establishes mandatory green building standards for buildings in California. CALGreen was developed to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from buildings, promote environmentally responsible and healthier places to live and work, reduce energy and water consumption, and response to state environmental directives. The most recent update to CALGreen went into effect on January 1, 2017 and covers five (5) categories: planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material and resource efficiency, and indoor environmental quality.

The anticipated construction schedule assumes that the project would be built over a period of approximately one (1) year. The project would require site preparation, grading, paving, architectural coating, building shell, and trenching. The site is vacant and does not require any demolition of existing structures. Implementation of applicable General Plan policies and existing regulations and programs would also reduce energy waste from construction. Therefore, the proposed project would not consume energy in a manner that is wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary.

The total daily trips for the project, as discussed in Chapter XVII: *Transportation*, is 7,473 trips. Using the U.S. EPA fuel economy estimates (22.0 mpg), the proposed project would result in a consumption of approximately 164,406 gallons of gasoline per year.

According to the CalEEMod analysis for the proposed project, the project would result in a net increase in electricity usage of approximately 1,430,603.6 kWh per year and natural gas usage of approximately 4,695,840 kBtu per year. As discussed, annual gasoline consumption as a result of the project would have a net increase of approximately 164,406 gallons.

The energy use increase is likely overstated because the estimates for energy do not take into account the efficiency measures incorporated into the project. The Proposed Project would be built to the most recent CALGreen requirements, which includes insulation and design provisions to minimize wasteful energy consumption, and Title 24 energy efficiency standards, which would ensure the energy efficiency of the overall project. Additionally, Turlock Irrigation District (TID) would provide electricity to the Proposed Project from some renewable sources including hydroelectric facilities, geothermal, solar panels and wind turbines. Though the Proposed Project does not include on-site renewable energy resources, the proposed project would be built to achieve minimum requirements per CALGreen standards. In addition, the Proposed Project is required to adhere to City General Plan 2035 Policies.

Such General Plan Policies include, but are not limited to, the following:

3.A.4 Reduce Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT). Support statewide efforts to reduce vehicle miles of travel (VMT) from existing and new development by encouraging infill and mixed-use development, providing a multi-modal transportation network, and incorporating transportation and parking demand management measures into new development by design.

3.D.3 Electric Vehicle Parking. Incorporate electric vehicle charging stations into new multifamily, commercial, and industrial development and site renovations.

3.D.5 Priority Parking. Where required, reserved employee carpool, bicycle, and electric vehicle parking should be provided in premium areas close to building entrances.

3.E.1 Flexible Transit Service. Plan and implement additional transit services that are timely, cost-effective, and responsive to growth patterns and existing and future transit demand.

3.F.3 New Development. Require developers to finance and install pedestrian pathways, bikeways, and multi-purpose paths within new development, as appropriate.

3.F.4 Right-of-Way. Require new development to provide adequate rights-of-way to accommodate bikeways where identified on the bikeways map and as specified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and to contribute to the development of planned bikeways.

3.F.5 On-Site Bicycle Facilities. Require new multi-family residential, commercial and industrial developments to provide bicycle facilities, including bicycle parking. For employment locations with more than 50 employees, other amenities may be required, including showers and changing facilities.

5.E.1 Green Building Code. Continue to implement and enforce the California Green Building Code to promote energy efficient building design and construction.

5.E.2 LEED Certification. Encourage new development to participate in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification program for the design, operation, and construction of high-performance energy efficient buildings.

5.E.4 Energy Efficient Design. Reduce the need for artificial temperature control and lighting by establishing standards to encourage the following:

- Passive cooling measures in new and existing development; and
- Design that incorporates windows that open to the outside in all habitable rooms to maximize the use of daylight and promote ventilation.
- Passive cooling measures may include the use of shade structures, shade trees and other vegetation, textured building materials and insulation, natural ventilation, and other strategies that rely on natural processes and minimize energy use.

5.E.5 Energy Efficient Lighting. Establish standards to improve energy efficiency related to outdoor lighting by limiting unnecessary fixtures and minimize energy use.

Based on the General Plan 2035 Policies, measures required by CALGreen, and LEED certification, the Proposed Project will comply with state energy standards and would not obstruct implementation of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

| VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known Fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| f) 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| g) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in the California Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| h) 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| i) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

*a)* *Less Than Significant Impact*. According to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035, some faults do exist in the eastern portion of Stanislaus County and west of Interstate 5 in the Diablo Range, but no faults exist within the City's Planning Area.

This is further confirmed in the Geotechnical Investigation, dated June 6, 2019, prepared by CTE Cal, Inc. Page 13 of this report states, "Based on our site reconnaissance, evidence from our explorations, and a review of appropriate geologic literature, it is our opinion that the site is not located on any know fault traces (http://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=regulatorymaps).

The site does not lie within a State of California – "Fault-Rupture Hazard Zone" (DMG, 2000) and State of California- "Seismic Hazard Zone" mapping is currently not planned for the site / vicinity (http://gmw.consrv.ca.gov/shmp/html/pdf_maps_no.html ). The City of Ceres is located in the central portion of Stanislaus County and was not identified as a risk to these faults, which are located in the eastern and western portions of the County. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact.**

*b)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* According to the Geotechnical Investigation, page 13 states, "The potential for fault rupture or damage from fault displacement or fault movement directly below the site or near to the site is considered to be low. However, the site is located within an area where shaking from earthquake generated ground motion waves should be considered likely." Although there are no active earthquake faults on the subject site, the site could be subject to some ground shaking from regional faults which can result in damage to buildings. However, due to the absence of active faults in the City's Planning Area, the risk of the breaking of the ground along a fault during an earthquake is very low. Excavation, earthwork, and activities associated with the installation of physical improvements may have the potential to create unstable geologic conditions. All earthwork will only be allowed consistent with City Specifications, and the project will be constructed to meet all requirements of the current California Building Code (including Seismic sections), which have been adopted to protect the general welfare and public safety. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact.**

*c)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* According to the Geotechnical Investigation prepared for the Proposed Project, soil conditions within the project site are consistent with alluvial fan deposits, comprised of loose and medium density silty sands. Page 12 of the Geotechnical Investigation concluded that the potential for liquefaction created as a result of seismic related ground failure at the project is relatively low. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact.**

*d,e)* *No Impact.* The site is relatively flat with limited variable topography, which suggests that the potential for landslides, soil erosion or the loss of topsoil is very low to remote possibility. Therefore, it is anticipated that the development of the property, including associated site improvements with the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

f) *Less Than Significant Impact.* The Proposed Project site is not located on a geologic unit or soil that is considered 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. Construction of the improvements associated with the project will be required to meet applicable requirements of the current California Building Code, based upon the appropriate seismic standards with the conformation based on the required soils analysis. In addition, the standard conditions of project approval will require that a qualified professional geotechnical engineer perform on-site monitoring of all grading and excavation activities on the project site. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

*g)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* The Geotechnical Investigation prepared for the Proposed Project determined that site soils are non-expansive and the potential for post-construction shrinkage and swelling and not considered a risk. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

*h)* *No Impact*. The Proposed Project will be required to connect to the City of Ceres wastewater system. Therefore, this will eliminate the need for any alternative wastewater treatment disposal to be developed with this project. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

*i)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* As discussed in Section VI: Cultural Resources, the likelihood of directly or indirectly disturbing paleontological resources or site or unique geological feature is low. However, the Mitigation Measure MMV-1 is included to ensure that if paleontological resources are discovered, the proper procedure and notification is followed. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

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

**Setting**

*California Global Warming Solutions Act*
Under the California Global Warming Solutions Act, also known as Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Air Resources Board (CARB) established statewide GHG emissions cap for 2020, adopted mandatory reporting cards for significant sources of GHG, and adopted a comprehensive plan, known as the Climate Change Scoping Plan, identifying how emission reductions would be achieved from significant GHG sources.

In 2016, Senate Bill 32 (SB 32) was signed into law, amending the California Global Warming Solutions Act. SB32, and accompanying Executive Order B-30-15, require CARB to ensure that statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 40 percent below the 1990 level by 2030. CARB updated its Climate Change Scoping Plan in December of 2017 to express the 2030 statewide target in terms of million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MMTCO_2e$). Based on the emissions reductions directed by SB 32, the annual 2030 statewide target emissions level for California is 260 $MMTOCO_2e$.

*Sustainable Communities Strategy and Climate Protection Act*
Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), known as the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Climate Protection Act, was signed into law in September 2008. SB 375 builds upon AB 32 by requiring CARB to develop regional GH reduction targets for automobile and light truck sectors for 2020 and 2035, as compared to 2005 emissions levels. Regional metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) will be responsible for preparing a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) with their regional transportation plans (RTPs).

*StanCOG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy*
The goal of the SCS is to establish a development plan for the region, which, after considering transportation measures and policies, will achieve, if feasible, the GHG reduction targets. If an SCS is unable to achieve the GHG reduction target, an MPO must prepare an alternative planning strategy demonstrating how the GHG reduction target would be achieved through alternative development patterns, infrastructure, or additional transportation measures or policies. Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG) adopted its own RTP/SCS in 2018. The SCS lays out how the region will reduce per capita emissions from passenger vehicles 26 percent by 2020 and 22 percent by 2035 based on a 2005 baseline.

*San Joaquin Valley Climate Change Action Plan*
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) released the San Joaquin Valley Climate Change Action Plan in December 2009. The Climate Change Action Plan set goals and policies to address reductions in GHGs and improvement to regional air quality. The plan also includes Best Performance Standards (BPS), which are mitigation measures intended to accomplish GHG reductions. BPS include building design elements that reduce energy consumption, project designs that promote pedestrian access, and land use planning decisions that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

*Ceres Buildings and Construction Ordinance*
The City of Ceres Municipal Code includes the following regulation that would reduce GHG emissions from future development:

- Green Building Regulations (Chapter 15.14)
- Water Efficient Landscape Guidelines and Standards for new development (Various Chapters)
- California Building Code Regulations (Chapter 15.02)
- Material Effects Performance Standards for Smoke, Fumes, Gases, Dust, Particulate Matter, etc. (Chapter 18.38)

a) *Less Than Significant Impact.* The development of the Proposed Project has the potential to generate greenhouse gas emissions resulting from transportation sources (i.e. cars) normally accustomed from such development, directly or indirectly, thereby potentially impacting the environment in the surrounding area.

*Construction*
The Proposed Project will result in temporary increase in GHG emissions associated with construction activities including operation of construction equipment and emissions from construction workers' personal vehicles traveling to and from the project site. Construction related GHG emissions vary depending on the level of activity, length of the construction period, specific construction operations, types of equipment, and number of personnel. Because construction would be temporary and would not result in a permanent increase in emissions, the Proposed Project will not interfere with the implementation of AB 32 in 2020 or SB 32 in 2030.

*Operation*
Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(b), the determination of whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment calls for careful judgement on the part of the lead agency and must be based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data.

b) *Less Than Significant Impact.* The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District has guidelines known as Best Performance Standards, which is a list of greenhouse gas emissions from a greenhouse gas emissions source, and can be utilized to address impacts per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). For project such as the proposed commercial development and parcel map, Best Performance Standards focus on measures that improve energy efficiency and those that reduce vehicle miles traveled. It is expected that the developer will be able to incorporate these standards into the proposed project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a less than significant level. In addition, the proposed project is consistent with the measured and General Plan policies detailed below:

*General Plan Policies*
5.E.1 Green Building Code. Continue to implement and enforce the California Green Building Code to promote energy efficient building design and construction.

5.E.2 LEED Certification. Encourage new development to participate in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification program for the design, operation, and construction of high-performance energy efficient buildings.

5.E.4 Energy Efficient Design. Reduce the need for artificial temperature control and lighting by establishing standards to encourage the following:

- Passive cooling measures in new and existing development; and
- Design that incorporates windows that open to the outside in all habitable rooms to maximize the use of daylight and promote ventilation.
- Passive cooling measure may include the use of shade structures, shade trees and other vegetation, textured building materials and insulation, natural ventilation, and other strategies that rely on natural processes and minimize energy use.

5.E.5 Energy Efficient Lighting. Establish standards to improve energy efficiency related to outdoor lighting by limiting unnecessary fixtures and utilizing low-energy fixtures.

5.E.6 Greenhouse Gas Monitoring. Monitor GHG emissions in the city and systematically evaluate the progress of GHG reduction measures, adjusting policies as necessary to ensure compliance with State standards.

5.E.8 Renewable Energy. Encourage the use of renewable energy sources in the community, such as geothermal, solar, hydroelectric, and wind power.

5.E.9 Zero-Emission Vehicle Travel. Support the use of zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) in the community through measures such as ensuring the availability of infrastructure such as electric vehicle charging stations and dedicated parking.

Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

| IX. **HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handles hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

*a,b)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* The Proposed Project is to subdivide the property into eight (8) parcels and a remainder parcel to facilitate the development of commercial buildings for retail use. Once developed, this commercial project will not involve the routine transport of hazardous materials, nor is it anticipated to release any hazardous materials under accident conditions as none are expected to be present. During the construction phase of the project, the site may have some fuels and materials that could be considered hazardous, but these are temporary and would only be on-site during the construction of the project.

During demolition, excavation and loading operation, there is the potential that particulate matter that is generated during on-site operations could become airborne during periods of high winds. The threat from inhalation of dust (and potential odor and organic vapors) during site operations would be substantially reduced by implementation of odor and dust suppression measures required by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, which would include the wetting of surface soil, covering exposed soil with plastic sheeting during periods of heavy rain, wind, and inactivity, and ceasing grading during periods of significant wind activity.

Further, the Phase One Environment Site Assessment, dated June 20, 2019, performed by CTE Inc. concluded that based on the site, history, site reconnaissance, aerial photography, topography, and EDR Report, there are no significant issues indicated that rise in the level of conditions necessary to constitute a

potential Recognized Environmental Condition to the Site. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less than Significant Impact.**

c) *Less Than Significant Impact.* The proposed project is located: 0.6 miles from Whitmore Charter High School and Lucas Elementary School and 1.0 miles from Don Pedro School, 1.1 miles from Central Valley High School, 1.3 miles from Walt Hanline Elementary School, and 1.4 miles from Joel J. Hidahl Elementary School. As stated above, during the construction phase of the project the site may have some fuels and materials that could be considered hazardous, but these are temporary and will only be on-site during the construction phase of the project. Further, dust suppression measures are required by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, which would include the wetting of surface soil, covering exposed soil with plastic sheeting during periods of heavy rain, wind and inactivity, and ceasing grading during periods of significant wind activity. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less than Significant Impact**.

*d)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* A review of the website https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/ concluded that the Proposed Project site is not listed on a hazardous materials site compiled in accordance with Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. Further a Phase One Environmental Assessment, dated June 20, 2019, was performed by CTE Inc., concluded, "In CTE's opinion, based on the site history, site reconnaissance, aerial photography, topography, and EDR Report, there are no significant issues indicated that rise to the level of conditions necessary to constitute a potential Recognized Environmental Condition to the Site. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **Less Than Significant Impact**.

*e)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* Based on a review of the Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP, dated October 6, 2016, the Proposed Project is located within the "Airport Influence Area" of the Modesto City-County Airport. Policy 3.5.3 of the ALUCP requires real estate disclosures for existing and future residences within the "Airport Influence Area." This Policy does not apply to commercial development. Therefore, the Proposed Project is not required to comply with Policy 3.5.3. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

f) *Less Than Significant Impact.* The City has an Emergency Operations Plan which addresses earthquake, fire, technological disaster, toxic spills, flooding and dam failure related emergencies and included response from fire/rescue and law enforcement personnel. The project site is located 1.15 +/- southeast of the City of Ceres Fire Station #1. The design of the project is such that it will not physically interfere with emergency vehicles accessing and exiting the site. It is anticipated that the development of this project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact** on the implementation of the City's Emergency Operations Plan.

*g)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* The project site is within a developing urban environment and is adjacent to existing commercial development to the east and State Route 99 to the west. Vacant, undeveloped and partially developed commercial properties are to the north and east. The project site is vacant and undeveloped. Development of the site into a commercial retail center would reduce the likelihood of wildland fires. In addition, vacant land adjacent to the project site is required to maintain and clear debris and overgrown vegetation. As such, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

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

**Comments:**

a-c,i-iv) *Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation*. The Proposed Project site drains the Turlock Lake Sub basin, which is a part of the San Joaquin River Basin, which covers 15,800 square miles including all Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta watershed south of the Sacramento River. The Proposed Project Site is in the watershed of Turlock Lake, which is managed by the Turlock Irrigation District. The Tuolumne River flows along the northern portion of the sub basin between the cities of Ceres and Modesto along its path from the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the San Joaquin River. There are no other natural watercourses in the Proposed Project Area.

The Proposed Project site is in the San Joaquin Valley groundwater sub basin, the Turlock Sub basin. The Turlock Sub basin is bounded by the Tuolumne River to the north, the Merced River to the south, and the San Joaquin River on the west. The Sub basin stores approximately 50 million acre-feet of groundwater, and is relatively isolated from other sub basins. Discharges from the sub basin occur from well pumping groundwater seepage to the Tuolumne, Merced, and San Joaquin rivers; discharges from subsurface agricultural drains; and water use by riparian vegetation. Groundwater from the sub basin is used to supply both agricultural and urban water demand. In addition to the City of Ceres four agricultural water districts and nine communities withdraw water from the Turlock Sub basin. The majority of groundwater recharge in the sub basin results from agricultural and landscape irrigation, which was

estimated to account for 393,000 acre-feet per year (afy) of recharge in 2008. Approximately 375,000 afy (or 72 percent of total recharge) include precipitation, percolation from the Tuolumne and Merced Rivers, leakage from Turlock Lake, underflow from the Sierra Nevada foothills, and upward seepage from deep geological fractures. Between 1997 and 2006, total recharge for the subbasin was calculated to be approximately 520,000 afy.

The construction of the site improvements (i.e. construction of parking area and the buildings) will reduce absorption rates and increase surface water runoff. Final drainage designs will be required to comply with City Standards and will be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer. Any increased runoff shall be mitigated as required by the Engineering Services Department. The perimeter of the development will also be required to be protected against surface runoff from adjacent properties in a manner acceptable to the Engineering Division.

The project requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and compliance with Best Management Practices (BMPs) during the construction and operation of the project. The project shall be designed to incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) design parameters, as well as include a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent feasible.

Mitigation Measure

**MM IX-1** As a required condition of project approval, the applicant shall be required to submit a Best Management Practices (BMP) program for review and approval by the City Engineer. The BMP program shall consist of, but not be limited to, the following measures during all phases of project construction:

- Gathering of all construction and other debris on a daily basis and placing it in a dumpster or other container which is emptied or removed on a weekly or as needed basis. When appropriate, use of tarps on the ground to collect fallen debris or splatters that could contribute to storm water pollution runoff.

- Removal of all dirt, gravel, rubbish, refuse, and green waste from the street pavement and storm drains adjoining the site. Limitation of construction access routes onto the site and placement of gravel on them, and if necessary, washing the wheels of vehicles prior to leaving the project site. Not driving vehicles and equipment off paved or graveled roads during wet weather. “Broom sweep” of the street pavement adjoining the project site on a daily basis. Scraping of caked-on mud and dirt from these areas before sweeping.

- Installation of filter materials (such as sandbags, filter fabric, etc.) at the storm drain inlet nearest the downstream side of the project site in order to retain any debris or dirt flowing in the storm drain system. Filter materials will also be placed around each jobsite. Maintaining and/or replacing filter materials to ensure effectiveness and to prevent street flooding.

- Creating a contained and covered area on the site for the storage of bags, cement, paints, oils, fertilizers, pesticides, or other materials used on the site that have the potential of being discharged into the storm drain system through being windblown or in the event of a material spill.

- Never cleaning machinery, equipment, tools, brushes, or rinsing containers into a street, gutter, or storm drain.

- Ensuring that concrete/gunite supply trucks of concrete/plaster operations do not discharge wash water into street, gutters, or storm drains.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to issuance of any grading permit or building permit.

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Ceres Public Works Department & Engineering Division.

Implementation of the above **Mitigation Measure** will reduce potential pollution impacts to the storm drainage system to a **Less Than Significant** level.

*d)* *No Impact.* Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Community-Panel Number 06099C0555E which was updated on September 26, 2008, indicates that only a minor portion of the City of Ceres is within the 100-year flood-plain, which is adjacent to the Tuolumne River. The vast majority of the City is classified Zone X, which are areas determined to be outside 100-year flood-plain. The project site is located approximately 2.29 +/- miles south of the Tuolumne River and is completely within Zone X. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

*e)* *No Impact*. The site is approximately 2.29+/- miles south of the Tuolumne River and is not likely to experience a seiche, tsunami or mudflow. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

| XI. **LAND USE AND PLANNING** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Physically divide an established community? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Comments:**

a) *No Impact.* The Proposed Project is located within the City of Ceres city limits, and consists of the development of vacant, undeveloped land bordered by State Route 99, Service Road, and Mitchell Road. The Proposed Project is consistent with the land use designations of the City's General Plan 2035, Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan, and the City's Zoning Ordinance. The Proposed Project will not divide the City of Ceres, as it generally surrounded by existing and/or future development currently in progress. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

b) *No Impact*. As discussed above, the Proposed Project is consistent with the City's General Plan 2035, Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan, and Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

| XII. **MINERAL RESOURCES** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

*a,b)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* The Proposed Project will not result in the loss of availability of any known mineral resources or resource recovery site as none are identified in the General Plan 2035, General Plan 2035 Background Report and General Plan 2035 EIR. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

| XIII. NOISE | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the project result in: | | | | |
| a) Generation of 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration noise levels? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Comments:**

a) *Less Than Significant Impact.* Currently, the Proposed Project area is vacant and undeveloped. After construction of the Proposed Project, there will be an increase in ambient noise levels form vehicles entering and exiting the project site; however, this increase is insignificant, as the permanent source of noise from this development is not expected to exceed the standards established by the Ceres General Plan 2035. Therefore, the development of the project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact.**

*b)* *Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.* Noise from construction activity has the potential to impact neighboring properties during the construction phase. There is an existing commercial development and three (3) residential properties to the west and an existing church to the north. These developments may be subject to temporary ground bourne vibration noise (i.e. from truck deliveries) during the construction phase of the project. However, all construction activities will be temporary and limited to the hours permitted by the Ceres Municipal Code.

Mitigation Measure

**MM XII-1** As required in the Ceres Standard Conditions of Project Approval, the project's contractor shall be required to limit construction hours from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to construction activities.

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Ceres Planning and Building Division, Public Works & Engineering Services Division.

Implementation of the above **Mitigation Measure** would reduce the impact of temporary noise to **Less Than Significant**.

c) *No Impact.* The Proposed Project is located within the "Airport Influence Area" of the Modesto City-County Airport. However, the project site is not located within any noise contours of the Modesto City-County Airport based on a review of the Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, dated October 6, 2016. The development of this project would not be impacted by any noise associated with aircraft arriving or departing the Modesto City-County Airport. Existing commercial and residential developments within the surrounding area are already subjected to operations at the Modesto City-County Airport, and the Proposed Project will not alter these existing consequences. Interior noise levels for this project will meet the currently adopted

California Building Code standards, and there are no private air strips within the area. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

| XIV. **POPULATION** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through the extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

*a)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* The Proposed Project consists of the development of a commercial shopping center located adjacent to an existing roadway network (i.e. Mitchell and Service Roads). In addition, the Proposed Project is consistent with the City's General Plan 2035 and Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

*b)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* The Proposed Project does not consist of the displacement of existing housing or persons. The project site is vacant and undeveloped. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

| XV. **PUBLIC SERVICES** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service rations, response time or other performance objectives for any of the public services: | | | | |
| a) Fire protection? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Police Protection? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Schools? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) Parks? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| e) Other public facilities? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

*a)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* According to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 EIR, the City of Ceres Fire Department serves an area of fifteen (15) square miles, including about 47,000 residents in the City; 1,200 residents in Stanislaus County south of Ceres city limits in the Ceres Fire Protection District; and 4,000 residents in Stanislaus County north of Ceres city limits in the Industrial Fire Protection District. There are four (4) stations in Ceres, including Fire Station #1, which also houses the Department's administrative headquarters and fire prevention services. The project site is located approximately 1.15± miles southeast of Fire Station #1, which would serve the project site. As of 2016, the Department had a staff of 38.5, including one (1) secretary (half time), one (1) chief, three (3) battalion chiefs, twelve (12) engineers, and nine (9) firefighters. The Department aims for the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA's) national response time standard of responding within nine (9) minutes of a dispatch notification at least 90 percent of the time. During 2015, the average response time for fire and emergency calls was less than five (5) minutes.

The Proposed Project will not have a significant impact to the City of Ceres Fire Departments. The Project applicant/developer will be required to pay necessary Impact Fees which will in turn be used to fund new fire facilities if necessary. According to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 EIR, new development will be required to comply with the existing regulations and General Plan policies and new development is considered a less than significant impact for fire protection. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

*b)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* According to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 EIR, police services are provided by the Ceres Police Department and the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department. Public Safety Facilities, the Police Department is headquartered at 2727 3rd Street Downtown near the Ceres Community Center and Ceres Fire Department, while the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department is located on the western side of the City near other County offices. As of 2016, the Ceres Police Department has fifty-one (51) sworn officers on staff. The service ratio in 2015 was 1.0 officers per 1,000 residents, which was below its goal of 1.3 officers per 1,000 residents. As discussed above, the Proposed Project is located 1.82± miles southeast of the Police Station. The Proposed Project includes development of commercial retail uses, and does not include development of residential uses that would further reduce the ratio of police offices to residents in the City. However, the applicant/development is required to pay Ceres Public Facility

Fees that will be used to fund new police facilities, as necessary. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact** as it relates to Police Services.

*c-e)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* The project site is located within the boundaries of the Ceres Unified School District (CUSD) and the proposed commercial development will not directly create an impact to the CUSD, as no residential units are proposed. The applicant will be required to pay fees for this commercial use to the CUSD prior to the issuance of any building permits and will pay the fee in place when those permits are issued.

Development of this commercial project will place no demand on the City's park system, as no residential units will be constructed. Section 17.34 of the Ceres Municipal Code does not require the payment of in-lieu fees or the dedication of land for commercial development such as the Proposed Project. In addition, the development of this commercial project will not place a significant demand on other public facilities and the project will be required to pay Public Facility Fees. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

| **XVI. RECREATION** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have been an adverse physical effect on the environment? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Comments:**

*a,b)* *No Impact*. The Proposed Project will not place any demand on recreation facilities, as no residential units will be built with the project. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact**.

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

**Comments:**

a, b) *Less than significant Impact*. Implementation of the Proposed Project will generate several new vehicle trips in the area. For evaluating the Proposed Project's impacts to Transportation, the Applicant commissioned the preparation of a *Trip Generation and Multi-Modal Site Access and Circulation Technical Memorandum,* dated September 3, 2019, prepared by Fehr and Peers, Inc. The results of this Technical Memorandum are included in this section of the Initial Study.

Table 1 below represents the estimated trips generated by the Proposed Project for weekday daily, AM and PM peak hour conditions. As shown in the table below, the project would generate approximately 17,056 daily vehicle trips, 1,486 AM peak hour trips (with 758 inbound and 728 outbound), and 1,280 PM peak hour trips (with 649 inbound and 631 outbound). The trips generated by the Proposed Project are based on trip rates from the *Trip Generation Manual 10th Edition* (Institute of Transportation Engineers, 2017).

## Table 1 – Ceres Gateway Project Total Trip Generation Analysis

| Table 1: Ceres Gateway Project Total Trip Generation Analysis | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Land Use (ITE Code) | Quantity (KSF) | Vehicle Trip Rate[1] | | | | | | | Vehicle Trips | | | | | | |
| | | Daily | AM | | | PM | | | Daily | AM | | | PM | | |
| | | Total | In | Out | Total | In | Out | Total | Total | In | Out | Total | In | Out | Total |
| Parcel 1 Restaurant With Drive Thru (934) | 4.529 | 470.95 | 20.50 | 19.69 | 40.19 | 16.99 | 15.68 | 32.67 | 2,133 | 93 | 89 | 182 | 77 | 71 | 148 |
| Parcel 2 Restaurant With Drive Thru (934) | 2.418 | 470.95 | 20.50 | 19.69 | 40.19 | 16.99 | 15.68 | 32.67 | 1,139 | 50 | 47 | 97 | 41 | 38 | 79 |
| Parcel 3 Restaurant With Drive Thru (934) | 3.974 | 470.95 | 20.50 | 19.69 | 40.19 | 16.99 | 15.68 | 32.67 | 1,872 | 81 | 79 | 160 | 68 | 63 | 130 |
| Parcel 4A Coffee Shop With Drive Thru (937) | 2.155 | 820.38 | 45.38 | 43.61 | 88.99 | 21.69 | 21.69 | 43.38 | 1,768 | 98 | 94 | 192 | 47 | 47 | 94 |
| Parcel 4A Restaurant Without Drive Thru (933) | 2.027 | 346.23 | 15.06 | 10.04 | 25.10 | 14.17 | 14.17 | 28.34 | 702 | 31 | 20 | 51 | 29 | 29 | 58 |
| Parcel 4B Retail (820) | 6.960 | 37.75 | 0.58 | 0.36 | 0.94 | 1.83 | 1.98 | 3.81 | 263 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 13 | 14 | 27 |
| Parcel 5 Restaurant With Drive Thru (934) | 2.600 | 470.95 | 20.50 | 19.69 | 40.19 | 16.99 | 15.68 | 32.67 | 1,224 | 53 | 51 | 104 | 44 | 41 | 85 |
| Parcel 6A Restaurant With Drive Thru (934) | 2.500 | 470.95 | 20.50 | 19.69 | 40.19 | 16.99 | 15.68 | 32.67 | 1,177 | 51 | 49 | 100 | 42 | 40 | 82 |
| Parcel 6B Retail (820) | 1.500 | 37.75 | 0.58 | 0.36 | 0.94 | 1.83 | 1.98 | 3.81 | 57 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Parcel 7 Gas Station With Convenience Store and Car Wash (820) | 5.187<br>1.250 | 837.58 | 41.57 | 41.57 | 83.14 | 34.64 | 34.64 | 69.28 | 5,391 | 267 | 267 | 534 | 221 | 221 | 442 |
| Parcel 9 Hotel (312) | 64.000 (80 Rooms) | 4.09 | 0.16 | 0.23 | 0.39 | 0.18 | 0.14 | 0.32 | 322 | 13 | 18 | 31 | 14 | 12 | 26 |
| Parcel 10 Retail (820) | 7.500 | 37.75 | 0.58 | 0.36 | 0.94 | 1.83 | 1.98 | 3.81 | 283 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 14 | 15 | 29 |
| Parcel 11 Retail (820) | 7.800 | 37.75 | 0.58 | 0.36 | 0.94 | 1.83 | 1.98 | 3.81 | 294 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 14 | 16 | 30 |
| Parcel 12 Retail (820) | 11.400 | 37.75 | 0.58 | 0.36 | 0.94 | 1.83 | 1.98 | 3.81 | 430 | 7 | 4 | 11 | 21 | 23 | 44 |
| | | | | | | | | Total Trip Generation | 17,056 | 758 | 728 | 1,486 | 649 | 631 | 1,280 |

Notes:
[1] Trip rates are based on the *Trip Generation Manual 10th Edition* (Institute of Transportation Engineers 2017).
Source: Fehr & Peers, 2019

Fehr and Peers also evaluated the Proposed Project's net trip generation volumes, which includes incorporating a pass by trip reduction factor of twenty-five (25) percent for vehicles already traveling on either Service or Mitchell Roads and decide to stop at the Proposed Project on their way to their destination. These vehicle trips would not be new on either Service Road or Mitchell Road but would only be new turning movements into and out of the project site at either the signalized Mitchell Road / Rohde Road intersection or the right-turn in / right-turn out Service Road / Project Driveway.

Table 2 presents the results of the detailed net new trip generation analysis. The first step was to determine the number of linked trips that would occur between the 122,458 square feet of restaurant, retail, hotel, coffee shop and retail land uses. Based on the mix of land uses, a conservative five (5) percent reduction was applied in which customers would visit two (2) of the land uses on site. For example, a customer gets gas and gets either food or coffee at one (1) of the restaurants with drive thru. Another example is a guest at the hotel goes shopping or eats at one (1) of the restaurants. Subtracting these trips (Row B) results in a total vehicle trips entering and exiting the project driveway on Service Road or Mitchell Road. These trip generation volumes are reflected in Row D of the table below.

In Row E, a diverted trip reduction factor of 30% was applied for drivers already traveling on State Route 99 and decide to exit the freeway to stop at the Proposed Project on their way to their destination. These vehicle trips would not be new trips to State Route 99. They would be new vehicle trips on either Service

Road or Mitchell Road and new turning movements into and out of the project site at either the signalized Mitchell Road / Rohde Road intersection or the right-turn in/right-turn out Service Road/Project Driveway.

Table 2 (Row F), below, depicts the final results of the Net New Vehicle Trips generated by the Proposed Project for weekday daily, AM and PM peak hour conditions. As shown in the table below, the Proposed Project would generate approximately 7,729 daily vehicle trips, 630 AM peak hour trips (with 321 inbound and 309 outbound), and 600 PM peak hour trips (with 303 inbound and 297 outbound).

**Table 2 – Ceres Gateway Project Net New Trip Generation Analysis**

| Table 2: Ceres Gateway Project Net New Trip Generation Analysis | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ceres Gateway Project | Vehicle Trips | | | | | | |
| | Daily | AM | | | PM | | |
| | Total | In | Out | Total | In | Out | Total |
| A) Total Trip Generation | 17,056 | 758 | 728 | 1,486 | 649 | 631 | 1,280 |
| B) Linked Trips – Customers visit more than one (1) land use (5% Reduction) | -853 | -38 | -36 | -74 | -32 | -32 | -64 |
| C) Total Vehicle Trips Entering and Exiting Project Driveways | 16,203 | 720 | 692 | 1,412 | 617 | 599 | 1,216 |
| D) Pass By Trip Reduction for Fast Food, Coffee and Gas Station Land Uses (Traffic on Service Road and Mitchell Road – 25% Reduction) | -3,852 | -181 | -174 | -355 | -143 | -137 | -280 |
| E) Diverted Trip Reduction for Fast Food, Coffee and Gas Station Land Uses (Traffic on State Route 99 – 30% Reduction) | -4,622 | -218 | -209 | -427 | -171 | -165 | -336 |
| F) Total Net New Trips | 7,729 | 321 | 309 | 630 | 303 | 297 | 600 |

Notes:
[1] Trip reduction (internal, pass-by and diverted) rates are based on the *Trip Generation Manual 10th Edition* (Institute of Transportation Engineers 2017).
Source: Fehr & Peers, 2019

According to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 EIR, Service Road is classified as an Expressway and Mitchell Road is classified as an Arterial. Expressways are defined as limited access, moderate- to high-speed facilities that typically have four (4) to six (6) lanes and generally only intersect with primary collectors, arterials, and expressways. Arterials are defined as roadways intended to accommodate high volumes of traffic within a four- to six-lane cross-section, plus left-turn pockets, and sometimes right-turn pockets. As discussed above, the Proposed Project will contribute to a new signalized intersection at Mitchell Road and Rohde Road to allow for full turning movements into and out of the Proposed Project site. In addition, a right-turn in/right-turn out will be constructed at Service Road / Project Driveway.

The Proposed Project will have an impact on circulation considering the project site is currently undeveloped. However, it is expected that impacts resulting from the project will be minor, and to mitigate this issue to a less than significant level, the developer will be required to incorporate site

improvements related to general project circulation to improve traffic flow at the driveway approaches for the project. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact.**

*c)* *Less Than Significant Impact.* In the above-mentioned Technical Memorandum, Fehr and Peers evaluated the ability for various modes of transportation to adequately access to and from the project site, specifically as it relates to drive aisles for truck deliveries at the loading docks, employee access, hotel guests, garbage disposal truck deliveries to the underground tanks (for potential gas stations), and overall internal site circulation. Based on the analysis contained in the Technical Memorandum, each parcel proposed to be developed for both Phase 1 and the overall Proposed Project provides adequate width in the drive aisles and internal travel lanes for these uses. Furthermore, the Proposed Project's internal site improvements will be installed in accordance with City Standards, which assist in removing any threat of design feature hazards. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

*d)* Less *Than Significant Impact.* The development of the Proposed Project will not result in inadequate emergency access, as design features have been incorporated into the project to improve traffic flow into the site. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

| XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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: | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| (i) Listed or eligible for listing int the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local Register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| (ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by6 substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

a-i&ii) *Less than Significant Impact*. Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) was approved in September 2014 and created a formal role for California Native American tribes by creating a formal consultation process and establishing that a substantial adverse change to a tribal resource has a significant effect on the environment. AB 52 requires a lead agency, prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report for a project, to begin consultation with a California Native American tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency through formal notification of proposed projects in the geographic area that is traditionally affiliated with the tribe, and 2) the California Native American tribe responds, in writing, within 30 days of receipt of the formal notification, and requests the consultation. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the Proposed Project would have a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as there are no known tribal cultural resources located on the site and there are no specific sites identified in the Ceres General Plan 2035 document as having tribal cultural resources. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact.**

| XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

a) *Less Than Significant Impact.* Although the Proposed Project will require the installation of new utility services such as: water, sewer, gas, electrical, and storm drainage, it is not expected that the construction of these improvements would cause significant environmental effects for the site or surrounding area. The Proposed Project will connect to the City's existing water and sanitary sewer system. As part of this connection, the Proposed Project will not be required to increase the size of existing water and sanitary sewer lines in order to serve the Proposed Project.

Further, the Proposed Project will develop and install an on-site storm drainage system via construction of a 'French Drain' system, within the proposed parking areas to capture on-site stormwater. The design and installation of the Proposed Project's storm drainage system will be done in accordance with the City's Standards and Specifications and does not require the construction or expansion of new/existing facilitates. As such, this is expected to be a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

b) *Less Than Significant Impact.* According to the City's General Plan 2035 Environmental Impact Report (EIR), as of 2017, domestic and non-potable water provided by the City of Ceres is derived exclusively from the Turlock Groundwater Subbasin of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin through a series of twelve (12) active wells operated by the City. In addition, the City has constructed two (2) new wells that are not yet equipped. When equipped, these wells will increase the City's groundwater supply by nearly 2.7 million gallons per day (mgd) to a reliable supply of 16.3 mgd. When surface water is available (in about 2020), the City will have an additional 5 mgd of supply for total of 21.3 mgd. According to the General Plan 2035 EIR, the daily demand at buildout of the General Plan is projected to be 10.7 mgd and the maximum daily demand to be 19.3 mgd.

The Proposed Project will connect to the City of Ceres domestic water system. According to the City of Ceres 2015 Urban Water Master Plan and City of Ceres General Plan 2035, the City has sufficient water supplies to serve the Proposed Project and proposed full buildout of the General Plan Area. It is anticipated that the City will continue to maintain sufficient water supplies in the future for the Proposed

Project and future development during multiple dry years. As a result, this is considered to be a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

c) *Less Than Significant Impact.* According to the Wastewater Evaluation, dated February 22, 2017 prepared by West Yost Associates in conjunction with the City of Ceres General Plan Update, the wastewater flow factor for Regional Commercial land uses is 468 gallons per day per acre (gpd/acre). The proposed project includes 13.65± acres of regional commercial uses, including at full build-out (two (2) phases of development), a gas station, hotel, drive-through restaurants, multi-tenant commercial buildings and sit-down restaurants. Based on the flow rate illustrated in the Wastewater Evaluation, the projected wastewater flow for the proposed project is 6,388.2 gpd. As discussed in the General Plan 2035 EIR, the City's existing and planned wastewater collection facilities could treat up to 10.2 million gallons per day (mgd) Average Sanitary Flow (ASF). Build-out of the General Plan, including the proposed project, is projected to result in an ASF of 8.1 mgd. Therefore, the City has adequate capacity to serve the projected wastewater generated by the proposed project. In addition, the General Plan 2035 Includes Policies that reduce the potential impact to wastewater facilities and ensure consistency with the wastewater treatment requirements of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. These policies include the following:

6.E.1 Wastewater Treatment Facility Capacity. Ensure wastewater treatment facility capacity is available to serve planned urban development within Ceres.

6.E.2 Wastewater System Demand Reduction. Promote reduced wastewater system demand through efficient water use by:

- Requiring water-conserving design and equipment in new construction;
- Providing information about water-conserving devices to property owners and residents; and
- Designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration to the extent economically feasible.

6.E.3 On-Site Wastewater Treatment and Disposal. Prohibit new on-site wastewater treatment and disposal facilities within the City's service area, except where such systems are deemed appropriate and will not pose health risks or risks to groundwater, and where soil conditions, percolation qualities, and topography would support the use of such facilities.

6.E.5 Financing Wastewater System Improvements. Finance repairs to existing and new wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal systems and facilities using transparent and fair strategies, such as development impact fees and monthly service charges.

6.E.6 Treated Wastewater. Assess the possibility of utilizing treated wastewater with each update to the City's Sewer System Master Plan and Urban Water Management Plan.

In addition, the proposed project is subject to the payment of the City's Public Facility Fees applicable to water and sewer capital facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

d,e) *Less Than Significant Impact.* The City of Ceres is currently contracted with Bertolotti Disposal for solid waste and recycling collection, bulky item pick-up, and leaf and limb pick-up. Solid waste from the City of Ceres is primarily disposed of at the Fink Road Landfill and the Stanislaus Resource Recovery Facility (SRRF), a waste to energy facility. The Fink Road Landfill has a maximum permitted throughput of 2,400 tons per day. Its maximum permitted capacity is 15 million cubic yards, of which 7.2 million cubic yards remain. According to the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 EIR, the Fink Road landfill and SRRF have capacity to serve the full buildout of the General Plan Area. The construction and operation of the commercial / retail development included in the Proposed Project would not increase the total amount of solid waste from the Proposed Project Site that has already been addressed in the City of Ceres General Plan 2035. The capacity identified in the City of Ceres General Plan 2035 EIR, is more than sufficient to serve the Proposed Project Site because the Fink Road Landfill has adequate capacity for the

construction of the Proposed Project.  Therefore, the Proposed Project will have a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

| **XVI. WILDFIRE** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Comments:**

*a-d)* *No Impact*. The Proposed Project is not located in or near lands that are classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have **No Impact.**

| XVIII. **MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probably future projects)? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Comments:**

a) *Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*. The Proposed Project would allow a commercial development for retail use on the project site and involve earthmoving during the grading and construction of the site. This project site is not expected to have any subterranean archaeological resources or human remains. With the implementation of mitigation measures, the Proposed Project will not degrade the quality of the environment, result in an adverse impact on fish, wildlife, or plant species including special status species, or prehistoric or historic cultural resources. Therefore, this will be **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated**. See **MM III-1 (Air Quality), MM V-1 (Cultural Resources)**.

*b)* *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.* During the construction phase of this project, the site will be graded, which could create particulate matter, in the form of dust that enters the atmosphere. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure **MM III-1,** the construction phase of the project would be required to meet the policies of San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. As such, this impact will be **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated**. See **MM III-1 (Air Quality)**.

c) *Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*. Development of the project has the potential to adversely impact human beings, either directly or indirectly. However, with the implementation of mitigation measures included, these impacts will be effectively mitigated to a less than significant level. As such, this impact will be **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated**. See **MM III-1 (Air Quality), MMV-1 (Cultural Resources), MM VIII-1 (Hydrology and Water Quality), MM XI-1 (Noise)**.

Please direct all agency comments on this Initial Study to:

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