

Wal-Mart Distribution Center

Environmental Impact Report

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

July 27, 2006

Introductions

- ▶ City Staff Members
- ▶ Applicant Representatives
- ▶ Environmental Consultants (EDAW)

Purpose of Scoping Meeting

- ▶ Describe project as proposed to City and as will be considered in EIR
- ▶ Present EIR process
- ▶ Identify environmental issues proposed to be studied in the EIR
- ▶ Public and public agencies: identify any additional environmental issues that should be addressed in EIR

What Scoping Meeting IS NOT

- ▶ A public hearing or forum on the merits of the project
- ▶ No Planning Commission or City Council members present to hear testimony
- ▶ A forum to answer questions about the project or its potential environmental impacts

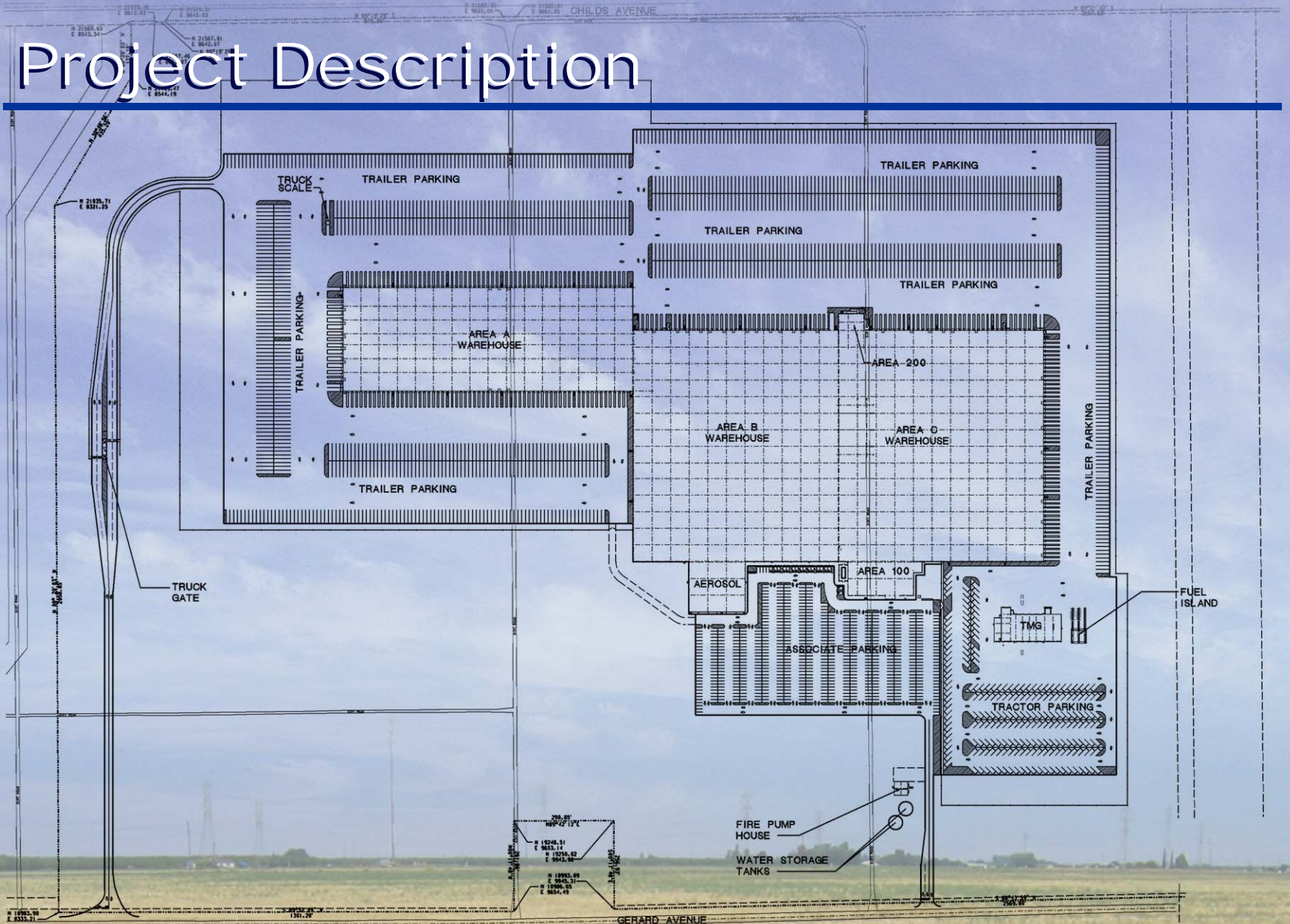
Ground Rules for Meeting

- ▶ Each speaker will come to the podium to speak so comments can be recorded
- ▶ Each speaker will sign-in
- ▶ Each speaker will have 3-5 minutes to speak depending on the number of speakers

Ground Rules (Continued)

- ▶ No need to re-state comments already raised
- ▶ Limit your comments to environmental issues (traffic, noise, air quality, etc.)
- ▶ Comment forms are available if you do not want to offer verbal comments
- ▶ Please return comment cards by August 11, 2006
- ▶ Be respectful of all views

Project Description



CEQA Process

- ▶ Project application submitted and determined by City to be 'complete'
- ▶ Determination by City staff regarding appropriate environmental review document
 - ◆ No significant impacts- Negative declaration
 - ◆ Significant impacts that can be mitigated- Mitigated negative declaration
 - ◆ Significant impacts that may be unavoidable- EIR is required.
- ▶ Project determination: EIR required. First steps:
 - ◆ Circulation of notice that EIR will be prepared (Notice of Preparation or NOP)
 - ◆ This scoping meeting

CEQA Process (Continued)

- ▶ What is an EIR?
 - ◆ Describes the proposed project
 - ◆ Informs the public, agencies and decision makers of potential environmental effects
 - ◆ Identifies mitigation measures and alternatives that could reduce significant adverse effects
 - ◆ Identifies significant effects that cannot be mitigated or avoided

CEQA Process (Continued)

▶ Prepare DEIR

- ◆ Research, including contacts with public agencies
- ◆ Conduct site reconnaissance
- ◆ For each subject area section
 - Identify potential impacts
 - Identify feasible mitigation measures
 - Characterize impact after mitigation
- ◆ Analyze cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and significant unavoidable environmental changes
- ◆ Determine alternatives that can attain basic objectives while reducing impacts where feasible
- ◆ NOP/scoping comments help determine scope of DEIR

CEQA Process (Continued)

- ▶ Public review of Draft EIR (45 days)
- ▶ Final EIR
 - ◆ Response to public review comments on environmental issues
 - ◆ Technical changes to EIR, if needed
- ▶ Decision maker consideration of EIR and project
 - ◆ Planning Commission
 - ◆ City Council

CEQA Process (Continued)

- ▶ EIR Certification
- ▶ Action to approve, deny, approve as modified
- ▶ Mitigation monitoring occurs to ensure mitigation measures are implemented
- ▶ EIR and Project consideration:
 - ◆ EIR is informational
 - ◆ EIR certification ≠ project approval
 - ◆ Presence of significant impacts does not require project denial (statement of overriding considerations)

CEQA Process (Continued)

- ▶ Scoping Period – July 7 through August 7, 2006
 - ◆ NOP and Project Information document
 - ◆ Description of proposed project
 - ◆ Description of probable environmental effects
- ▶ Scoping requirements
 - ◆ Public agency invitation required by CEQA
 - ◆ Expanded by City to include public

CEQA Process (Continued)

- ▶ Purposes of Scoping Process
 - ◆ Inform public and agencies
 - ◆ Receive public and agency input
 - ◆ Aid in the identification of effects to analyze
 - ◆ Aid in the identification of alternatives
 - ◆ Help identify assessment methods

Discussion of Potential Impacts

- ▶ Visual Resource and Nighttime Lighting
 - ◆ Effects of light
 - Streets
 - Nearby residences
 - ◆ Visual effect of project
 - Effect on views
 - Conformance to City design guidance

Potential Impacts (Continued)

- ▶ Agriculture
 - ◆ Existing agricultural resources
 - On-site
 - In site vicinity
 - ◆ Effects of converting land from agriculture to project
 - Soils
 - Effects on potential conversion of surrounding land

Potential Impacts (Continued)

- ▶ Air Quality
 - ◆ Construction
 - Dust
 - Exhaust
 - ◆ Operational
 - Semi trucks
 - Employee vehicles
 - ◆ Cumulative

Potential Impacts (Continued)

- ▶ Biological Resources
 - ◆ Effect on canals and drainage ditches
 - ◆ Removal of vegetative habitat
 - ◆ Ag habitat on site- Swainson's hawk habitat?
 - ◆ Analyze site for wetlands

Potential Impacts (Continued)

- ▶ Cultural and Scientific Resources
 - ◆ Ground disturbance could reveal resources
 - Historic
 - Prehistoric
 - ◆ Possible paleontological resources

Potential Impacts (Continued)

- ▶ Geology and Soils
 - ◆ High potential for soil expansion
 - ◆ Earthquake potential
 - ◆ Moderate liquefaction potential
 - ◆ Erosion effects of construction earth-moving
 - ◆ Effect of loosened soil on canal

Potential Impacts (Continued)

- ▶ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
 - ◆ Possibility of pesticides in soil
 - ◆ Potential impacts of well if not removed/filled
 - ◆ Electric power line hazards
 - ◆ Potential hazards associated with project
 - Tanks
 - Storage of household chemicals

Potential Impacts (Continued)

- ▶ Surface Hydrology and Water Quality
 - ◆ Impervious surfaces added to site
 - Storm water runoff patterns
 - Storm water volume
 - ◆ Project effects on surface water or groundwater
 - Construction
 - Underground storage tanks could leak
 - Other operational pollution

Potential Impacts (Continued)

▶ Land Use

- ◆ Consistency with environmental goals in General Plan
- ◆ Consistency with environmental goals in other relevant plans

▶ Noise

- ◆ Construction noise
- ◆ Operational noise
 - Trucks
 - Employee vehicles
 - Routine operations, i.e., landscape maintenance, HVAC, fork lifts, etc.

Potential Impacts (Continued)

- ▶ Population and Housing
 - ◆ Employment created by project
 - Jobs/housing balance
 - ◆ Compare project to what General Plan anticipates for this site, per land use designations
- ▶ Public Services and Facilities
 - ◆ Effect of Project and its employment on each public service and utility
 - ◆ Energy conservation practices

Potential Impacts (Continued)

▶ Traffic

- ◆ Effect on nearby streets, collectors, highways
- ◆ Timing of project vs. timing of new SR 99/Mission Avenue interchange
- ◆ Impacts of abandoning Kibby Road designation through site
- ◆ Safety effects
 - Nearby schools
 - Residential areas

▶ Economic Blight

- ◆ Blight will not be addressed- no retail store is part of project

How Do I Participate?

- ▶ Present your views today; two meetings
 - ◆ Agency Meeting
 - ◆ Public Meeting
- ▶ Provide written comments on environmental issues to:

Kim Espinosa, Planning Manager
City of Merced Planning and Permitting
678 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340
Phone (209) 385-6858
FAX (209) 725-8775
Email: planningweb@cityofmerced.org
- ▶ Review and comment on the Draft EIR – anticipated to be released in Fall 2006 (notice of availability)
- ▶ Present your views at the public hearings on the EIR and project (date and time will be announced)

Thank you
for your participation!