

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Date: October 13, 2014

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Interested Parties

From: Keith Boggs
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Stanislaus County
1010 10th Street, Sixth Floor
Modesto, CA 95354
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Subject: **Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Crows Landing Industrial Business Park Project**

Stanislaus County will serve as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Crows Landing Industrial Business Park (CLIBP). The proposed project includes the adoption of a Specific Plan and zoning change to support the reuse of the former Crows Landing Air Facility and development of the CLIBP in western Stanislaus County. CLIBP development would include on- and off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements, the development of a general aviation airport on a former military runway, and amendments to the Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). All of these proposed actions are collectively referred to as the “proposed project.” Comments on the NOP must be received by **5 p.m. on November 13, 2014.**

A lead agency must prepare a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform all responsible, trustee agencies, and the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research of the forthcoming EIR. The NOP must provide sufficient information about a proposed project and its potential environmental impacts to allow agencies and individuals to formulate a meaningful response to the scope and content of the forthcoming EIR and provide environmental information and input pertaining to each agency’s statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Another purpose of the NOP is to solicit input on alternatives that should be considered during EIR preparation.

Two public scoping meetings will be held during the NOP public review period to allow agencies and the public to ask questions or provide comments on the content of the forthcoming EIR.

Scoping Meetings: Proposed Crows Landing Industrial Business Park Project	
Thursday, October 23, 2014 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Crows Landing Fire Station 22012 G Street Crows Landing, CA 95313	Thursday, October 30, 2014 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. City of Patterson, Council Chambers 1 Plaza Patterson, CA 95363

Comments are invited from interested parties by 5 p.m. on November 13, 2014. Written comments or questions concerning the EIR must be directed to the County's Planning and Community Development Department at the following address:

Rachel Wyse, Associate Planner
Stanislaus County Planning & Community Development
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354
(wyser@stancounty.com)

All comments must include the commenter's full name and address for staff to respond appropriately. Agencies that will use the EIR when considering permits or other discretionary approvals for the proposed project should provide the County with the name of a contact person.

The project location, description, and the potential environmental resources and issues that will be addressed in the EIR are presented in the following pages. Pursuant to California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15063(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the County did not prepare an Initial Study to determine whether the proposed project may have a significant effect on the physical environment, because it determined that an EIR will be required for the proposed project.

The proposed CLIBP is a new project that is being proposed by Stanislaus County. Two previous projects have been proposed on the project site: the "West Park Specific Plan" (2008) and the "West Park Logistics Center" (2011). Both projects were proposed by private entities, and neither is active. The CLIBP project is a new project proposed by Stanislaus County that remains entirely within the boundaries of the approximately 1,532-acre former Crows Landing Naval Auxiliary Air Station with only off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements proposed to support the proposed project.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed CLIBP or "project" would be constructed within the boundaries of the former National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Crows Landing Air Facility. The approximately 1,532-acre project site is located in an unincorporated area of western Stanislaus County that is within 2 miles of Interstate 5 (I-5) and south of the Patterson city limits and its Urban Services Boundary/Sphere of Influence. The project site is bounded by Marshall Road to the north, Fink Road to the south, Bell Road to the east, and Davis Road to the west (Exhibit 1).

The project site is generally surrounded by agricultural land uses, with some rural residential land uses and the community of Crows Landing to the southeast. The Delta-Mendota Canal runs through the project site in a northwest-southeast direction. The California Aqueduct flows in a north-south direction just west of the site and outside of the project boundary. Regional access to the project site would be provided by I-5 and SR 33, with local access provided by West Marshall Road at the site's northern boundary and Ike Crow Road at its eastern boundary. Regional access traveling to and from I-5 would use Fink Road.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND

The former Naval Auxiliary Air Station, Crows Landing was commissioned in 1943 and was used intermittently by various branches of the military for more than five decades. In 1994, NASA assumed operation of the facility as part of the U.S. Department of Defense's Base Closure and Realignment process. Public Law (PL) 106-82, enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1999, allowed NASA to convey the approximately 1,532-acre property to Stanislaus County following environmental remediation. The terms of the conveyance allow NASA to "retain the

right to use the property for aviation activities, without consideration and on other terms and conditions mutually acceptable to NASA and Stanislaus County” (PL 106-82).

Under a 1992 Memorandum of Understanding between NASA and the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Navy remains responsible for site cleanup activities, with input from the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. To date, approximately 1,355 acres have been transferred to the County. Of the remaining approximately 176 acres, about 95 acres have undergone soil and groundwater remediation and were determined to be clean in accordance with industrial standards. Groundwater remediation on about 81 acres of the former military site is ongoing.

Unemployment rates throughout the Central Valley, and Stanislaus County in particular, have historically exceeded unemployment rates throughout the State of California and much of the nation. The County envisions the new CLIBP as a regional employment center that capitalizes on regional infrastructure assets, such as I-5, the nearby ports of Stockton and Oakland, synergistic opportunities associated with nearby logistics and industrial sites in the City of Patterson and other locations, and the reuse of former military infrastructure.

The County has considered the reuse of the former Crows Landing military facility for more than a decade, but the economic downturn of 2008 brought many development efforts to a halt. Based on the recent resurgence in the need for industrial sites—and especially the need for sites that can support development parcels greater than 1 million square feet of buildable area—Stanislaus County has determined that the time is ripe for reuse of the former Crows Landing military site. The combination of available land for large parcel development, nearby transportation infrastructure, regional connections to the I-5 corridor and San Francisco Bay area, and an available locally based workforce provide the County and the development community with a unique opportunity for creative and profitable investment.

PROPOSED SITE DEVELOPMENT

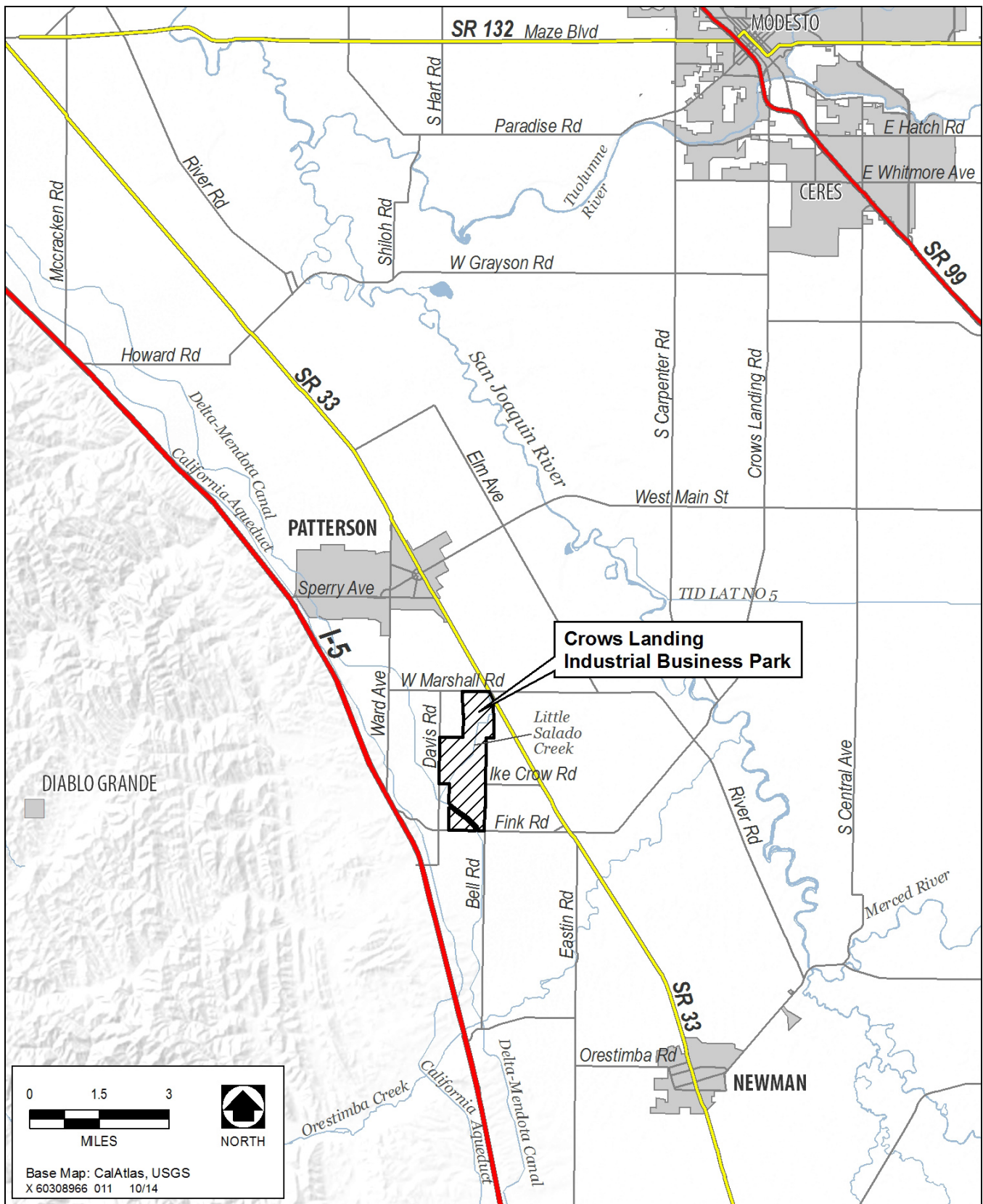
The County anticipates that development of the CLIBP at the former Crows Landing military site would require more than 30 years to reach full buildout, and the needs associated with parcel development will continue to evolve. Therefore, the proposed CLIBP does not offer specific parcels for development, but areas that can be sized based on the individual needs of site tenants and developers. The proposed CLIBP Specific Plan, which will be appended to the EIR, will provide objectives, goals, and policies for the approximately 1,532-acre site that will further the County’s vision for the property. The Specific Plan would allow proposed tenants to develop parcels that are suitable for their diverse and unique needs.

PROJECT PHASING

The County assumes that the proposed project would be developed in three, 10-year phases or an overall 30-year timeframe, and it would provide backbone on- and off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements to meet the needs associated with each phase (see Exhibit 2). The three project phases are summarized below.

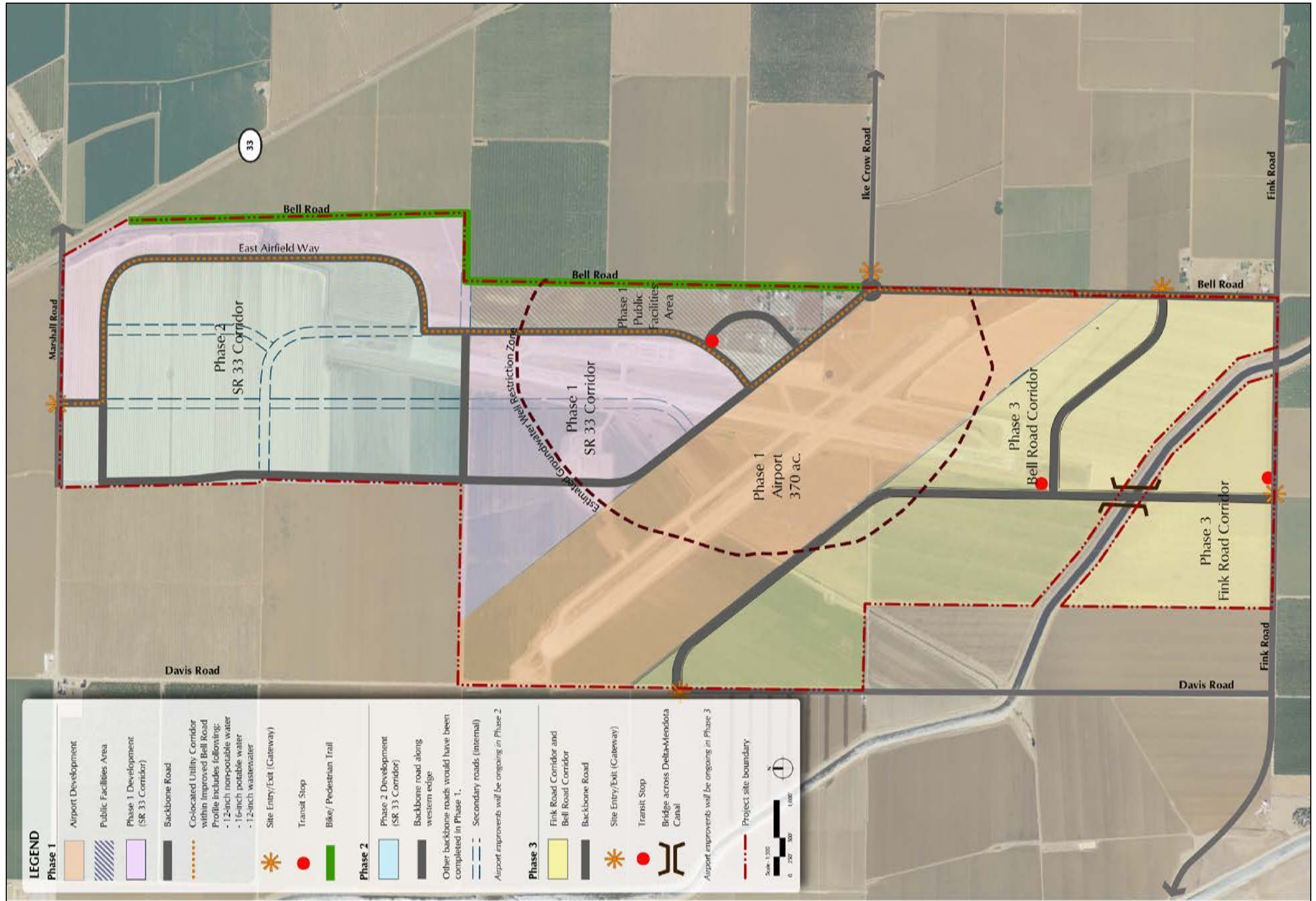
PHASE 1: INITIAL SITE DEVELOPMENT (2016 TO 2025)

As shown on Exhibit 2, the County anticipates that Phase 1 development (2016 to 2025) would be associated with revitalizing/converting former military Runway 11-29 to a general aviation (GA) airport and promoting the reuse of the SR 33 Corridor and Public Facilities areas northeast of the proposed airport. This phase would include on- and off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements, and public facilities (e.g., pedestrian and bicycle routes, park area, transit)



Source: AECOM 2014

Exhibit 1. Regional Location



Source: AECOM 2014.

Exhibit 2. Conceptual Land Use Plan

PHASE 2: ONGOING AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS AND SR 33 CORRIDOR BUILD OUT (2026 TO 2035)

Additional facilities in the SR 33 Corridor would be developed north of the airport during Phase 2, along with improvements to the airport. Additional infrastructure and roadway improvements would be provided to support anticipated Phase 2 development.

PHASE 3: FINK ROAD AND BELL ROAD CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT (2036 TO 2045)

The final phase of CLIBP development would occur south of the Crows Landing Airport, in two discrete areas identified as the Fink Road Corridor and the Bell Road Corridor, which are separated by the Delta-Mendota Canal and its associated setbacks. Regional access to these areas would be provided by I-5, with local access provided by the portion of Fink Road west of Bell Road.

While these are anticipated timeframes for each of the Phases, the Specific Plan will provide flexibility for development following the completion of necessary infrastructure and mitigation.

COUNTY DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS

Discretionary actions to be considered by Stanislaus County that are related to the proposed project include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ A General Plan amendment and rezone of the project site to adopt the CLIBP Specific Plan
- ▶ Adoption of the Crows Landing Airport Layout Plan (ALP)
- ▶ Amendment of the Countywide ALUCP to include the proposed Crows Landing Airport

The proposed project will be supported by the EIR analysis, which will address the proposed backbone infrastructure, airport development through 2045 as defined in the ALP, and revisions to the county-wide ALUCP. The EIR analysis will rely upon the data presented in the proposed infrastructure and transportation plans that are being prepared to support land use types, densities, and intensities identified in the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan will identify the types of future projects that would be implemented under a PD land use designation.

The EIR will identify the site-specific environmental opportunities, constraints, and mitigation measures and performance standards that would apply to subsequent site development and provide potential developers with site-specific data to consider or tier from when proposing subsequent projects on the project site.

Following certification of the EIR and adoption of the ALUCP, the County will submit a permit application to the Caltrans Division of Aeronautics to operate a public-use general aviation Airport on the former Crows Land Air Facility and submit the proposed ALUCP revisions to the County's Airport Land Use Commission.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Stanislaus County has reviewed the proposed project and determined an EIR will be prepared to address all environmental issue areas listed in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. Accordingly, the environmental issues described below will be evaluated in the EIR. In addition to anticipated environmental issues, information regarding the probable environmental effects of the proposed project is provided below as required by State CEQA Guidelines CCR Section 15082(a)(1)(C).

The EIR analysis will focus on examining the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project and identifying the measures that can be implemented to minimize or avoid such impacts. The EIR will also evaluate growth-inducing and cumulative effects, when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

On the basis of preliminary evaluations, Stanislaus County has determined that the proposed project could have the following potentially significant environmentally significant effects:

Aesthetics. The EIR will describe the potential visibility of the proposed project from surrounding land uses and view sheds. It also will describe the changes in visual character and potential effect on scenic resources that would result from the conversion of the project site from a former military facility and agricultural land to industrial park development. An assessment of the proposed project's lighting and potential glare will be provided.

Agriculture Resources. The EIR will evaluate the project-related conversion of agricultural land to other uses and will identify any indirect impacts on surrounding agricultural lands, such as potential land use conflicts and the proposed project's potential to induce future conversion of surrounding agricultural land to other uses. The EIR will address the proposed project's contribution to cumulative loss of agricultural lands in the region.

Air Quality. The EIR will describe regional and local air quality in the project vicinity and evaluate the potential air quality effects of the proposed project during construction (temporary, short-term) and operation (long-term). The proposed project's estimate air emissions will be modeled and compared to emission thresholds of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. The potential effects of proposed aviation uses will be considered using appropriate models and criteria set forth by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The EIR will evaluate whether the proposed project could cause a cumulatively considerable net change in emissions for any criterion air pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment status. The EIR will also address exposure to toxic air emissions, and will evaluate exposure to potential sources of odor.

Biological Resources. The EIR will describe the existing biological resources at the project site, including Little Salado Creek, and will evaluate the proposed project's effects on those biological resources. The EIR will also address biological resource effects of proposed on- and off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources. The EIR will include a cultural and paleontological resource impact assessment for the proposed project. The EIR will describe the existing cultural and paleontological resources on the project site and affected off-site areas and will evaluate the proposed project's impacts on these resources, including the potential to affect potential undiscovered resources. The EIR will also include a Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) search of the Sacred Lands File and consultation with the list of suitable tribal representatives and individuals that may have an interest in the proposed project, as provided by NAHC.

Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources. The EIR will evaluate seismic conditions in the local area, the presence of existing fault lines and effects on development, the potential for erosion of site soils, soil stability, and expansive characteristics of site soils, and the potential loss of availability of any economically valuable mineral deposits.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The EIR will evaluate the proposed project's contribution to global climate change by calculating the existing average and 1990 California emission levels of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e) as referenced in Assembly Bill 32 (the California Climate Solutions Act of 2006), and other indicators and will compare them against those associated with implementation of the proposed project. The focus of the chapter will be a calculation of the proposed project's generation of greenhouse gases and an assessment of whether the net change in such will constitute a substantial contribution to the significant adverse cumulative impact of global climate change.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials. The EIR will summarize the results of hazardous materials assessments performed for the former military facility and will evaluate the operational characteristics of the proposed project to determine potential impacts related to use of hazardous material and emergency response plans. The EIR will also address safety issues specifically related to the proposed general aviation airport and industrial operations. The EIR will address the potential that a significant hazard to the public may be created from proposed wastewater treatment solutions and through the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, as well as reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the

environment. Seismic hazards will be addressed as part of the geology evaluation. Flooding hazards will be addressed as part of the hydrology evaluation.

Hydrology, Drainage, and Water Quality. The EIR will evaluate the proposed project's effect on hydrology, drainage, and water quality characteristics of the local aquifer, including water supply, groundwater recharge, alteration of drainage patterns, erosion, stormwater discharges, wastewater management, and flooding.

Land Use and Planning. The EIR will evaluate the proposed changes to on-site conditions in terms of consistency with all adopted applicable plans, such as the Stanislaus County General Plan, the Stanislaus County ALUCP, the Regional Transportation Plan, and other relevant adopted plans.

Noise. The EIR will describe the noise effects associated with the construction and operation of the proposed project (including traffic and airport operations) and will compare these effects to applicable noise thresholds. It will also address the noise/land use compatibility of the proposed project with existing and future expected noise levels, including noise generated by use of the proposed general aviation airport and traffic noise generated at nearby roadways and freeways. The EIR will also include a vibration analysis to determine the compatibility of proposed on-site land uses.

Population, Employment, and Housing. The EIR will present existing population, housing, and employment figures for Stanislaus County and the projected changes in these variables as a result of overall regional development. The analysis will include a review of adopted County goals and policies; potential changes in population, housing, and employment characteristics resulting from the proposed project; and the potential for secondary environmental impacts from those changes. The EIR will address the proposed project's effect on regional jobs/housing ratios and population demographics.

Public Services. The EIR will evaluate the potential for adverse physical effects on the physical environment related to construction of new governmental facilities required to provide public services such as fire and law enforcement protection, schools, and solid waste, and the proposed project's effect on the availability of public resources to communities in the project's vicinity.

Recreation. The EIR will analyze the proposed project's potential to increase the use of or substantially degrade existing local and regional parks. It will also evaluate the proposed project's consistency with applicable adopted plans and policies for parks and open space.

Traffic and Circulation. The EIR will evaluate the proposed project's impacts on local and regional transportation facilities, including appropriate freeway segments and ramps. The evaluation will be based on a transportation analysis that will evaluate local intersections, roadway segments, merge/diverge/weave, project-related vehicle trips, proposed site circulation and access, local transit operations, and the surrounding roadway network. The EIR will identify triggers for transportation improvements. The traffic and circulation section also will analyze effects on public transit, as well as public transit needs and alternative modes of transportation.

Utilities and Service Systems. The EIR will evaluate the potable water, recycled water, source water for groundwater recharge (if applicable), wastewater treatment/conveyance/discharge systems and stormwater conveyance/treatment/discharge systems proposed as part of the project. The EIR will analyze the potential impacts resulting from provision of new on-site utilities, including water treatment and conveyance, wastewater treatment/conveyance/discharge systems, stormwater conveyance/treatment/discharge systems, electricity and natural gas services, and communications.

ALTERNATIVES

Consistent with the requirements of CCR Section 15126.6, the EIR will examine a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project. The alternatives must be feasible to attain most of the objectives of the proposed project while avoiding or substantially lessening at least one of the significant environmental effects of

the proposed project. One of the purposes of the NOP is to solicit input from interested agencies and the public regarding potential alternatives to the proposed project. Therefore, the alternative examined in the EIR will include a project development alternative that considers input from the public scoping process, as well as a No Project Alternative as required by State CEQA Guidelines CCR Section 15126.6.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The County plans to prepare a Draft EIR, which will involve additional planning project analysis, and to release the Draft EIR for public and agency comment in the spring of 2015. Following the release of the Draft EIR, the County will hold public meeting(s) during the 45-day comment period. This will allow the public and interested agencies to learn more about the significant environmental effects of the proposed project. The County will receive comments on the Draft EIR from agencies and the public during the 45-day comment period. The County will then provide written responses to comments on environmental issues, and text changes to the Draft EIR as necessary, in the Final EIR. The Final EIR will be published, and the County Board of Supervisors will consider the Final EIR (including the Draft EIR and responses to comments) for certification prior to approving the proposed project. This matter will likely be presented to the Board in fall 2015.