
SECTION 2: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 - Project Location

The site of the proposed project is located within the incorporated limits of the City of Wasco approximately eight miles west of State Route (SR) 99 on SR-46 (Paso Robles Highway) in north-central Kern County (Exhibit 2-1). East to west regional access to both the City of Wasco and the project vicinity is from SR-46, while SR-99 provides regional access from the north and south. The primary local access to the project site is from SR-46, which is located south of the project site. The proposed project is located on approximately 17 acres adjacent to and west of future Central Avenue and immediately south of future Margalo Street (Exhibit 2-2).

2.1.1 - Site Conditions

The project site comprises approximately 17 acres of the 112-acre Wasco Center (Exhibit 2-3). The 17-acre site is located on the west side of Central Avenue, has relatively flat terrain, and currently contains walnut orchards. The land use approved for the 17-acre site as part of the Wasco Center is a large box retail, more specifically, the proposed project site is zoned Commercial Retail (C-R) and has a land use designation “Community Retail Commercial”. The site includes an approved, but not yet constructed, 158,000 square foot (sq ft) “Large Box Retail” structure.

2.1.2 - Surrounding Conditions

The 17-acre project site is currently surrounded by agricultural uses to the north, east, south, and west. Fallow agricultural land and a retention basin comprise the land north of the project site, while walnut and almond orchards are located east, south, and west of the property. Although the surrounding area is disturbed due to historical agriculture use, no urban development or structures presently occur directly adjacent to the site in any direction. Commercial land uses occur south of the project site beyond SR-46, specifically the commercial shopping center at the southeast corner of the intersection of SR-46 and Central Avenue. These commercial uses are designated as Commercial Retail Commercial. The nearest existing residential uses to the project site occur 0.25 of a mile southeast of the project site between the existing Kmart and Bettis Avenue along Central Avenue and a single family home located approximately 0.25 of a mile southwest of the project site on the south side of SR-46. The residential uses southeast of the project site are designated as Medium Density Residential and the residential use located southwest of the project site is designated as Community Retail Commercial. Existing residential uses also occur approximately 0.3 of a mile east of the project site and west of Palm Avenue, although agricultural land separates those residential uses from the project site. These residential uses are designated as Low Density Residential. Furthermore, the property located north of the project site and currently fallow agricultural land contains a farm outbuilding and is designated as Low Density Residential.

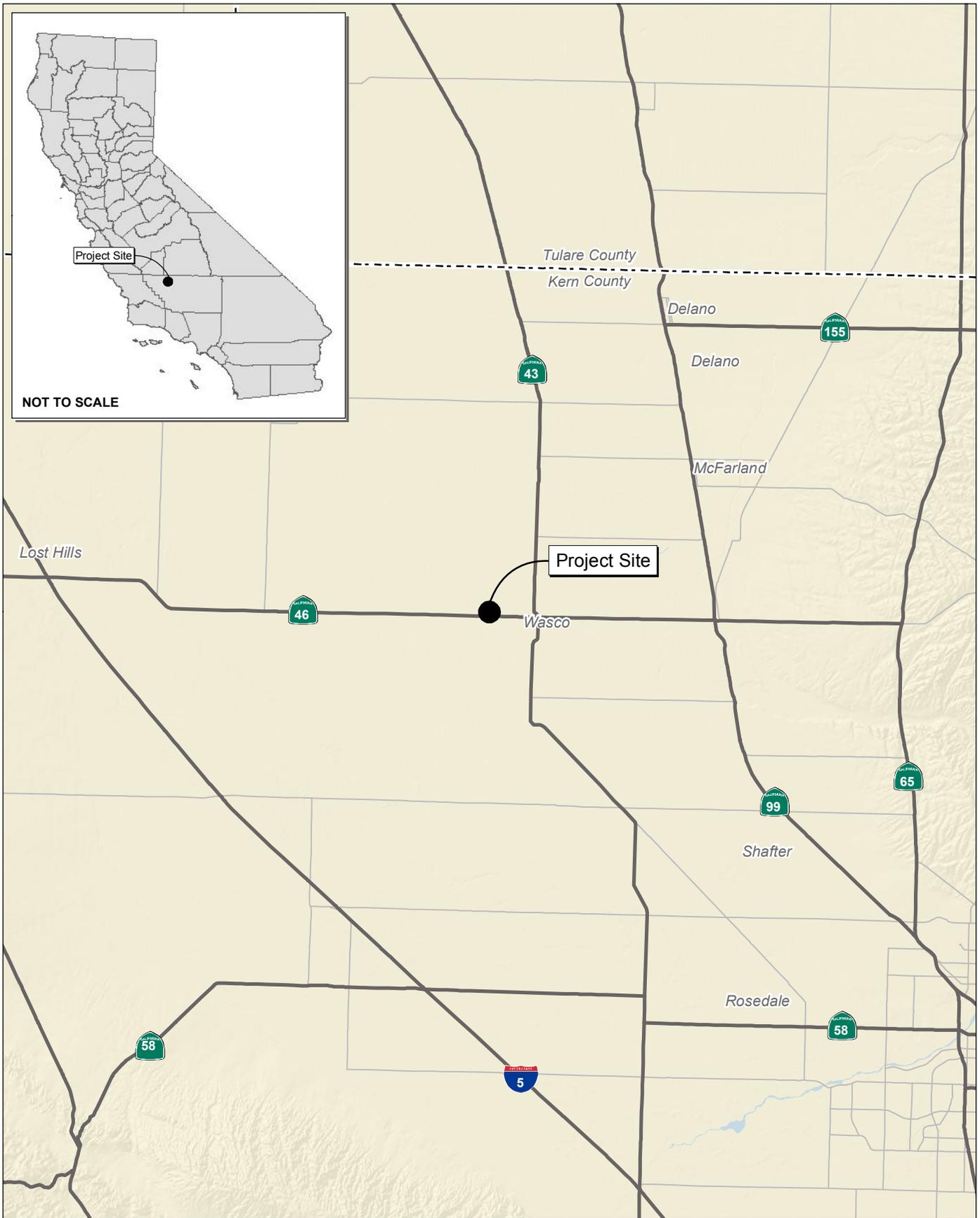
The approved, but not yet constructed, 112-acre Wasco Center that encompasses the project site contains 98.6 acres of commercial retail. These 98.6 acres include 273,000 square feet of large box retail, 105,000 sq ft of shopping center, 75,000 sq ft of movie theater, 67,500 sq ft of restaurants, 206,000 sq ft of community retail, 11,900 sq ft of recreation, and a 100-room hotel. The Wasco Center includes 14 acres approved for 123 units of high density residential located on parcels east, southeast, and west of the project site (Exhibit 2-4).

Currently, there are no paved north-south streets between Palm Avenue and Magnolia Avenue north of and connecting to SR-46. Immediately adjacent to and east of the 17-acre Walmart site, the approved Wasco Center includes plans for the extension of Central Avenue as a four-lane roadway between SR-46 and the future alignment of Margalo Street. East of Central Avenue is an approved 64-unit high-density residential use. South of the Walmart site and north of SR-46 is an approved 13,500 sq ft restaurant. West of the Walmart site is an approved 105,000 sq ft shopping center, along with another approved 13,500 sq ft restaurant along SR-46. The remaining portions of the approved Wasco Center extend west to Magnolia Avenue and east to Palm Avenue.

2.2 - The Project's Technical, Economic, and Environmental Characteristics

2.2.1 - Store Characteristics

Upon completion, the proposed Wasco Center Walmart would encompass a total of approximately 170,000 sq ft. There are 92,747 sq ft that are proposed to be devoted to general merchandise sales, while 3,469 sq ft would be dedicated to seasonal and indoor garden sales. Stockroom and receiving areas would encompass 13,272 sq ft with a loading/unloading dock adjacent to this area. Retail tenant areas would comprise 5,141 sq ft and ancillary areas (i.e., offices, break-room, storage) would encompass 10,586 sq ft. In addition to general merchandise, the proposed Walmart will offer grocery products, including dry goods, dairy, produce, meats, deli, and bakery. There are 24,995 sq ft that are proposed to be devoted to grocery sales, with an additional 9,298 sq ft dedicated to grocery support that will include a drive-thru pharmacy adjacent to the grocery support area. The proposed Walmart would also include a 5,762 sq ft outdoor garden center. Tire and Lube Express facility that engages in routine servicing and preventative maintenance of vehicles is also proposed. The Tire and Lube Express facility would consist of a 3,422 sq ft service and support area, as well as a 1,308 retail sales area. The Walmart building includes truck doors and loading facilities that are proposed to be accessible at any time during the 24-hour operating period. The Walmart store will operate 24 hours per day, although the tire and lube facility, outdoor garden center, and drive-thru pharmacy will likely operate less than 24 hours.



Source: Census 2000 Data, The CaSIL, MBA GIS 2010.



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Exhibit 2-1 Regional Location Map

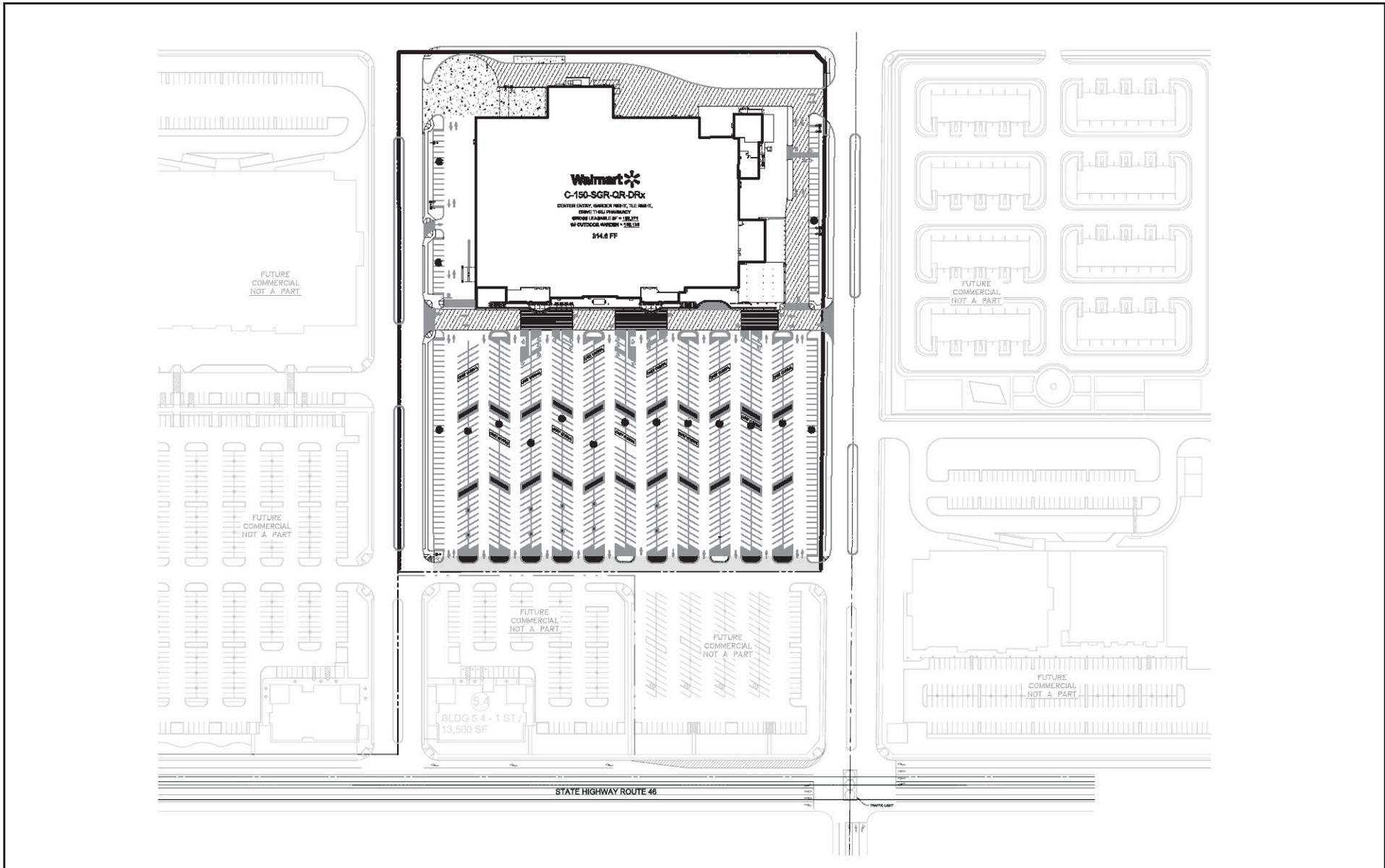
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Source: Kern County NAIP, 2009. MBA GIS Data, 2010.



Exhibit 2-2 Local Vicinity Map Aerial Base



Source: eda design professionals, March 2011.

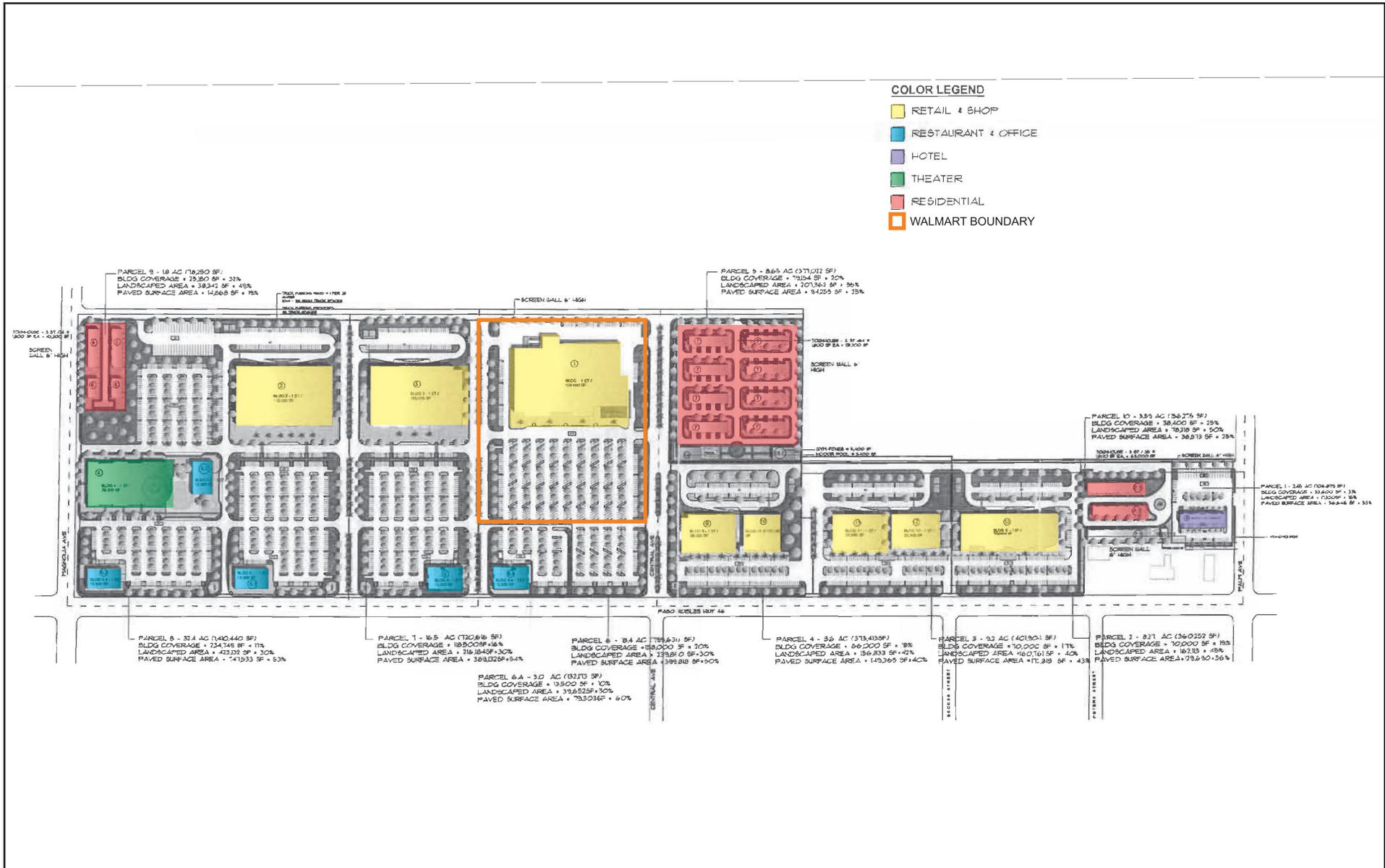


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Exhibit 2-3 Proposed Walmart Site Plan

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Source: Jenkins/Gales & Martinez, Inc.



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Exhibit 2-4 Approved Wasco Center Site Plan

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2.2.2 - Design and Appearance

The proposed project would be a single-story structure and its overall design and appearance would be characterized as contemporary retail architectural design, reflecting current design elements. Specific design features of the building would incorporate the required elements of the City of Wasco's Design Standards. Varying architectural features, canopies, awnings, and accents will be used to provide visual interest and to accentuate the structure's façade. The use of diverse building materials, surfaces, and colors will create a façade that is both visually stimulating and pleasing. Curved and flat roofs at different heights will be incorporated to further create visual interest. Signage used on the exterior of the building would be consistent with other Walmart stores and City requirements. The overall design and appearance of the proposed Walmart structure is similar to the design and appearance of the currently approved large box retail structure on the project site (Exhibit 2-5).

To help unify the structure with its surroundings, earth tone colors and materials will be emphasized when designing and constructing the exterior of the building. A moderate use of contrasting colors, consisting primarily of browns and tans, will be used to add a visually interesting element to the structure's façade. Various neutral tone materials, including split and smooth face masonry, stone veneer, Trespa wall panels, and aluminum accents will be incorporated.

The roofline of the structure will vary, ranging in height to a maximum of 35 feet, 4 inches. This is consistent with the 45-foot height limit outlined in the City's Municipal Code. Parapet walls located along the roofline would serve a dual purpose, accenting the assemblage of curved and flat roofs while screening from view any rooftop equipment. No rooftop equipment would extend beyond the 45-foot height restriction, nor should any equipment be visible from the ground level.

Two primary entrances will serve the store at the southern elevation of the structure—one to serve the general merchandise area, and the other to serve the grocery area. Secondary entrances would be located at the outside garden center and the tire and lube center. Other employee and service entrances will be located at varying points around the structure. The loading dock will be located at the northeast corner of the building. An approximately 10-foot screen wall will be constructed to conceal the loading dock area from view (Exhibit 2-6).

Parking

The City of Wasco Municipal Code outlines parking requirements for various types of uses. The proposed Walmart includes many different uses, and therefore, different parking ratios are required for the various uses within the proposed Walmart. Table 2-1 includes the required number of parking spaces in accordance with the City's Municipal Code.

Table 2-1: Required Parking Spaces for the Proposed Walmart

Proposed Use per Figure A-1.1 Department Plan	Gross Square Footage	Equivalent Use per Code (Table 17-5)	Parking Requirement per Code (Table 17-5)	Parking Spaces Required for Proposed Use ¹
General Merchandise Sales Area	92,747	Retail, General	1 parking space/300 square feet of gross floor area	310
Seasonal/Indoor Garden Sales Area	3,469	Retail, Nurseries	1 parking space/250 square feet of indoor display area ²	14
Grocery Sales and Support Areas	34,293	Food Store - Retail Food Market	1 parking space/300 square feet of gross floor area	115
Tire and Lube Express	4,730	Auto Repair Shop	1 parking space/500 square feet of gross floor area	10
Retail Tenant Area	5,141	Restaurants - sit down and fast food ³	1 parking space/100 square feet of gross floor area	52
Stockroom/Receiving Area	13,272	Storage and Warehousing (Indoor)	1 parking space/1,000 square feet of gross floor area	14
Ancillary Area (includes cart storage and general office space)	10,586	Offices, including all public and professional offices ⁴	1 parking space/250 square feet of gross floor area, with a minimum of 4 parking spaces	43
Outdoor Center Area	5,762	Retail, Nurseries	1 parking space/2,000 square feet of outdoor display area ²	3
TOTAL	170,000		TOTAL	561
Notes:				
1 Parking spaces calculated to include required spaces for whole numbers plus any fraction thereof.				
2 Used gross floor area for calculation.				
3 Assumed all unidentified tenant space to be occupied by fast food establishments to account for worst-case scenario.				
4 Calculated all designated ancillary areas for office space to account for worst-case scenario.				
Source: City of Wasco, Sara Allinder, March 16, 2011.				

As shown above, the required parking spaces for the proposed Walmart is 561 spaces. The proposed project includes 767 parking spaces which exceeds the required parking spaces by 206 parking spaces.



Approved Facade Elevation



Front Elevation

Proposed Facade Elevation

Source:



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1. Front - South Elevation



Partial Floor Plan



2. Rear - North Elevation



3. Left - West Elevation



4. Right - East Elevation



Key Plan

Source: Perkowitz + Ruth Architects, March 2010.



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Exhibit 2-6
Exterior Elevations

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Landscaping

All trees, plants, and other landscaping will be consistent in theme, while also being diverse enough to create an aesthetically interesting visual environment. In accordance with the City of Wasco Municipal Code, landscaped islands of a minimum of 8 sq ft will be established in the parking areas at a maximum separation of ten parking spaces. In addition, the City requires that trees be planted at a 1:3 ratio of trees to parking spaces, exceeding current industry standards.

Landscaping will be irrigated in a manner that focuses on water conservation, with properly designed and installed low-volume irrigation being employed throughout. Since the proposed project's landscaped areas will exceed 2500 sq ft, the project must comply with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance found within California Building Standards Division's Green Building Standard Code. Landscaping and irrigation plans will be submitted along with the building plans to ensure compliance with the City's Municipal Code (Exhibit 2-7).

Lighting

Implementation of the proposed project includes twenty-five 42-foot high luminaires with 1,000-watt metal halide bulbs located throughout the parking areas and along the parcel's perimeter. Light emanating from these luminaires will meet Walmart and City of Wasco requirements for safety while also remaining vigilant of surrounding sensitive uses. In addition, wall fixtures with 75- to 100-watt metal halide bulbs will be mounted to the structure's exterior at a height of 10 feet, providing light for safety and aesthetic reasons. All lighting would be directed downward, shielded, or recessed. Lighting impacts are addressed in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, of this ~~Draft~~ [Final](#) SEIR.

Stormwater Drainage System

The proposed project includes a stormwater drainage system that collects surface runoff from the project parcel and conveys the water to a 120,000 cubic foot underground retention basin located on the southern portion of the site (Exhibit 2-8). Urban pollutants and other contaminants and debris within the surface runoff will be conveyed to this onsite retention basin.

Sustainability Features

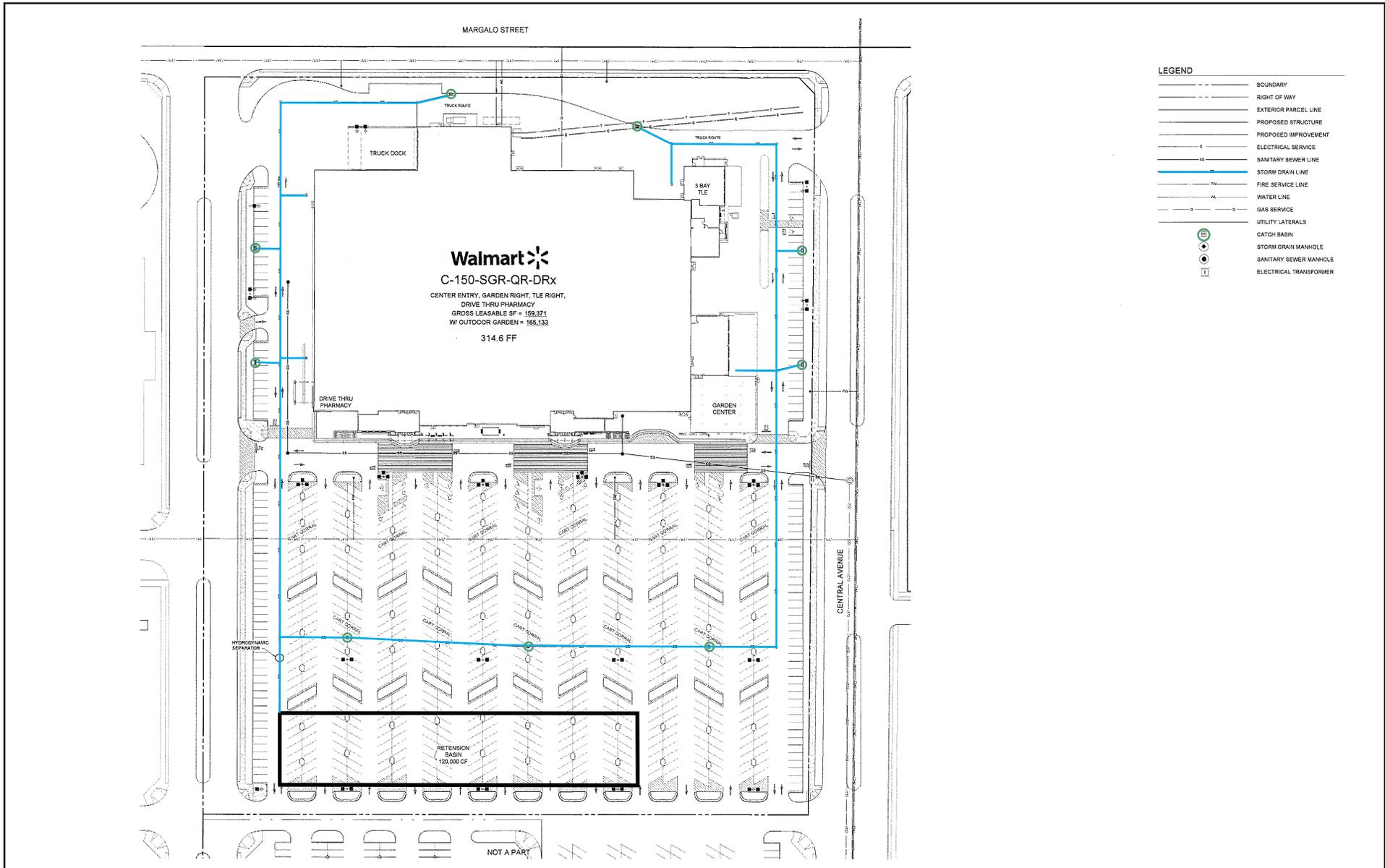
Based upon the Planning Application submitted to the City of Wasco, the proposed project would incorporate a collection of sustainability features that would reduce its demand for resources, use of hazardous materials, and production of waste. This would be accomplished by designing the structure to a building efficiency rating equivalent to or greater than Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations - California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings. These sustainability features are standard design features included in the Walmart store prototype. The proposed sustainability features include energy efficiency, water conservation, non-toxic materials, and water reduction, as described below.

Energy Efficiency

- Lighting
 - The store will use T-8 fluorescent lamps and electronic ballasts for the sales areas, light emitting diodes (LEDs) for exterior building signage and refrigerated food cases, occupancy sensors in most non-sales areas, and a daylight harvesting system that automatically dims or turns off the store lights during periods of higher natural daylight.
- Central Energy Management System
 - Walmart employs a centralized energy management system (EMS) to monitor and control the heating, air condition, refrigeration, and lighting systems for all stores from Walmart's corporate headquarters. The EMS enables Walmart to constantly monitor and control the expanded store's energy usage, analyze refrigeration temperatures, observe heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) and lighting performance, and adjust system levels from a central location.
- HVAC
 - The store will use one of the industry's most efficient HVAC units available.
- Dehumidification
 - The store will use a dehumidifying system that allows the structure to operate at a higher temperature, use less energy, and allow the refrigeration system to operate more efficiently.
- White Roofs
 - The store will use a white membrane roof instead of the typical darker colored roof materials employed in commercial construction. The white membrane roof's higher reflectivity helps reduce building energy consumption and reduces the heat island effect, as compared to buildings utilizing darker roofing colors.
- Refrigeration
 - Walmart uses non ozone-depleting refrigerants. It uses R407a for the refrigeration equipment. For air conditioning, Walmart has converted to R410a refrigerant.
 - Refrigeration equipment is typically roof-mounted close to the refrigerated cases. This reduces the amount of copper refrigerant piping, insulation, potential for leaks, and refrigerant charge needed.
- Heat Reclamation
 - The store will use reclaimed waste heat from the onsite refrigeration equipment to supply approximately seventy percent of the hot water needs for the store.

Water Conservation

- The store will use high-efficiency sinks, toilets, and urinals in its restrooms to drastically reduce the amount of water used per use.



Source: eda Design Professionals, May 2010.



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Exhibit 2-8 Storm Drain System Plan

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Non-Toxic Materials

- The store will use exposed concrete floors, reducing the need for most chemical cleaners, wax strippers, and propane powered buffing.
- The store will use a non-toxic and biodegradable plant based oil extracted from renewable resource as a concrete release agent.
- The store will use low volatile organic compound paint (VOC) for the structure's exterior and interior field paint coatings.

Waste Reduction

- The store will be constructed using cement mixes that include 15 to 20 percent fly ash or 25 to 30 percent slag, both industrial byproducts.
- Paint products required for the project will be purchased in 55-gallon drums and 275-gallon totes, reducing the number of one and five gallon buckets needed.
- The store will be constructed using steel containing 90-98 percent recycled structural steel.
- Plastic baseboards and shelving will be composed of recycled plastic.
- The store's tire and lube center will use an oil filter crusher to harvest maximum oil for recycling and to minimize the potential for spills.
- Walmart employs a Construction and Demolition (C&D) program at the project site in order to capture and recycle as much excess and discarded materials during the construction process as possible.

Employment

According to the project applicant's Planning Application, the proposed project will create approximately 300 permanent positions. Most of these positions would be a combination of full- and part-time entry-level positions.

Security Measures

Similar to those measures employed at other Walmart stores, the following security measures would be implemented as part of the proposed project:

- Conduct a risk analysis of the area to evaluate the current security needs for the store and implement a security plan based upon this analysis.
- Installation of closed-circuit camera systems inside and outside the store.
- Implementation of routine patrols of the parking areas to assist customers, ensure safety, and take action to identify and prevent any suspicious activity.
- Conduct plainclothes patrols inside the store to ensure safety and security.

- Operation of a Risk Control Team, a team of associates responsible and trained to identify and correct safety and security issues within the store.
- Provide adequate lighting in the parking areas that would enhance public safety.

2.2.3 - Summary of Project Design Features

The Wasco Center Walmart includes various project design features and those features that are discussed within Section 4 of this ~~Draft~~ [Final](#) SEIR are listed below.

- Lighting for the proposed parking lot consists of 1000-watt metal halide luminaires mounted on twenty-five 42-foot high poles. These parking lot light standards would be mounted in configurations of one, two, and three luminaires per pole.
- The proposed parking lot luminaires will be shielded to ensure that lighting originating from the project site would be limited to a maximum of 0.5 footcandle at a distance of 25 feet beyond the northern and eastern property lines.
- Metal halide luminaires ranging from 75-150 watts will be mounted to the exterior of the proposed structure at a height of 10 feet to provide additional lighting.
- The project will use a secondary loop refrigeration system or use ammonia or carbon dioxide as the refrigerant in the proposed refrigeration system.
- The project will recycle or reuse a minimum of 50 percent of the onsite trees and related debris (measured by weight or volume, but not both).
- Walmart will employ its Construction and Demolition (C&D) program at the project site in order to capture and recycle as much excess and discarded materials during the construction process as possible.
- Paint products required for the Walmart will be purchased in 55-gallon drums and 275-gallon totes, reducing the number of one and five gallon buckets needed.
- The proposed Walmart store will be constructed using cement mixes that include 15 to 20 percent fly ash or 25 to 30 percent slag, both industrial byproducts.
- The proposed Walmart store will be constructed using steel containing 90-98 percent recycled structural steel.
- Plastic baseboards and shelving will be composed of recycled plastic.
- There will be safe pedestrian connections from the Walmart store entrance to the nearest offsite business prior to operation of the proposed Walmart.

- There will be a minimum of one short-term bicycle rack space per 20 vehicle spaces. There will be long-term bicycle storage for employees at the ratio of one long-term bicycle storage space per 20 employee parking spaces.
- The store will use T-8 fluorescent lamps and electronic ballasts for the sales areas, light emitting diodes (LEDs) for exterior building signage and refrigerated food cases, occupancy sensors in most non-sales areas, and a daylight harvesting system that automatically dims or turns off the store lights during periods of higher natural daylight.
- Walmart employs a centralized energy management system (EMS) to monitor and control the heating, air condition, refrigeration, and lighting systems for all stores from Walmart's corporate headquarters. The EMS enables Walmart to constantly monitor and control the expanded store's energy usage, analyze refrigeration temperatures, observe heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) and lighting performance, and adjust system levels from a central location.
- The proposed Walmart store will use one of the industry's most efficient HVAC units available.
- The proposed Walmart store will use a dehumidifying system that allows the structure to operate at a higher temperature, use less energy, and allow the refrigeration system to operate more efficiently.
- The proposed Walmart store will use a white membrane roof instead of the typical darker colored roof materials employed in commercial construction. The white membrane roof's higher reflectivity helps reduce building energy consumption and reduces the heat island effect, as compared to buildings utilizing darker roofing colors.
- The roof will be sufficiently kept clean to maintain its ability to reflect light.
- The proposed Walmart will use Energy Star refrigerators.
- The proposed Walmart store will use high-efficiency sinks, toilets, and urinals in its restrooms to drastically reduce the amount of water used per use.
- Walmart landscaping will use only drought tolerant plants (trees, shrubs, vines, groundcover); project landscaping shall have a plant factor range between zero and 0.5 (as defined in the California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance).
- The proposed Walmart store will use reclaimed waste heat from the onsite refrigeration equipment to supply approximately 70 percent of the hot water needs for the store.
- Refrigeration equipment will be roof-mounted close to the refrigerated cases. This reduces the amount of copper refrigerant piping, insulation, potential for leaks, and refrigerant charge needed.

Project Description

- The proposed Walmart will use a secondary loop refrigeration system or use ammonia or carbon dioxide as the refrigerant in the refrigeration system.
- The proposed Walmart will recycle and store organic waste in sealed bins for composting offsite during operation.
- The project includes an on-site 120,000 cubic foot underground retention basin located in the southern portion of the project site. The retention basin is proposed to accommodate surface runoff generated by a 10-year, 24-hour storm event.
- The project includes the following traffic improvements at the Central Avenue/Highway 46 intersection: (1) eastbound left turn lane, (2) stripe northbound right turn lane as a shared through-right turn, and (3) new north leg as 4-lane divided along Central Avenue between Highway 46 and the future alignment of Margalo Street.

2.3 - Project Objectives

Objectives included in the proposed Wasco Center Walmart project are to:

- Provide the City of Wasco and surrounding region with a retail element that would provide significant benefits in terms of employment opportunities, sales tax revenues, and affordable shopping opportunities.
- Promote economic growth and development that is consistent with the City of Wasco General Plan.
- Provide a combined retail and grocery use that will stimulate development of the approved Wasco Center by motivating retailers to lease the approved, but not yet constructed, structures within the Wasco Center.
- Maximize the amount of sales and property tax revenues collected by the City of Wasco and Kern County to support local and regional agencies and programs.
- Provide the City of Wasco's largest proposed commercial retail district with a nationally recognized anchor to attract consumers and other businesses.
- Reduce vehicle travel by providing residents with a local and inclusive shopping option in the City of Wasco.
- Provide a 24-hour retail use to serve the residents of the City of Wasco and travelers along SR-46.
- Provide a retail use on a site that would require modification of an approved, but not yet constructed, development.

2.4 - Intended Use of this SEIR, Lead Agency, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, and Approvals Needed

This ~~Draft~~ Final SEIR ~~is being~~ was prepared by the City of Wasco to assess the potential environmental impacts that may arise in connection with actions related to implementation of the proposed project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15367, the City of Wasco is the lead agency for the proposed project and has discretionary authority over the project and project approvals. It is the intent of the City to evaluate the project within the framework of this ~~Draft~~ Final SEIR so that ultimate use of the project can be determined without additional environmental documentation. This ~~Draft~~ Final SEIR is intended to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the project as a whole, including all infrastructure improvements and all future development that are required to implement the proposed project.

2.4.1 - Lead Agency Approvals

Various approvals are required by the City of Wasco for implementation of the proposed project. Approvals needed before and during development of the proposed project include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Discretionary Approvals
 - Precise Development Plan
- Ministerial Approvals
 - Building Permit
 - Grading Permit
 - Landscaping and Irrigation Plan

2.4.2 - Responsible and Trustee Agencies

One other agency in addition to the City of Wasco has discretionary approval for a portion of the proposed project and will serve as a Responsible Agency. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15381, a responsible agency is defined as a public agency that proposes to carry out or approve a project, including all public agencies other than the lead agency, which have discretionary approval power over the project. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is a responsible agency and has approval authority of the future widening of SR-46 and the intersection improvements along SR-46.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15386, a trustee agency is defined as a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project that are held in trust for the people of the State of California. The California Department of Fish and Game may serve as a trustee agency for the project because the project has the potential to affect wildlife.

