AMENDED NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: State Clearinghouse
PO Box 3044/ 1400 Tenth St
Sacramento CA 95814

From: County of Tulare – RMA
5961 S Mooney Blvd
Visalia CA 93277

Date: June 27, 2018

Subject: Amended Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

Project Title: Springville Dollar General

Project Applicant: Embree Asset Group, Inc.

Project Location: The project site is located on the north side of State Route 190 approximately 1 mile southwest of the Springville Urban Development Boundary. The 28.2-acre Project site is located within an unincorporated area of Tulare County. Specifically, the proposed Project is located on APN: 284-540-034 and is within Section 16, Township 21S, Range 29E MDB&M.

Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report of the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency’s statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

A scoping meeting is scheduled for JULY 11, 2018 AT 1:00 P.M. in the Main Conference Room of the Tulare County Resource Management Agency at the address shown above.

Please direct your response to Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner at the address shown above. He may be contacted by e-mail at hguerra@co.tulare.ca.us or by telephone at 559-624-7121.

Please provide us with the name of a contact person in your agency.

Signature: [Signature]
Hector Guerra
Title: Chief Environmental Planner

Signature: [Signature]
Reed Schenke
Title: Director/Environmental Assessment Officer

Date: 6/26/18

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375
PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The proposed Project is located on a 1.34-acre parcel of a former 28.2-acre parcel north of State Route 190 at the intersection with Montgomery Drive, southwest of the unincorporated community of Springville. Specifically, the proposed Project is located on APN: 284-540-034. The site is in Section 16, Township 21 South, Range 29 East, MDB&M. The site is near the base of the low foothills of the Central Sierra Nevada on the eastern edge of the Tulare Basin, where elevations range from 560–885 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD). The coordinates of the Project site are - Latitude: N 36° 00’ 11”, Longitude: W 119° 03’ 51”.

The site is zoned as PD-F-M. The site is bordered by agricultural lands to the north and west, by a U.S. Forest Service Ranger Station to the east, and State Route 190 to the south.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.), the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency (RMA) will be preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate the environmental effects associated with development of a retail store (Project).

This matter encompasses the proposed general planning and development of a 1.34-acre parcel of a former 28.2-acre site for an approximate 7,500 square foot Dollar General retail store.

There is no requirement to change the land use designation as the Project’s purpose and objectives are consistent with the PD-F-M zoning at this site.

The proposal for the site seeks to establish approximate 7,500 square foot Dollar General retail store on a 1.34-acre parcel of a 28.2-acre parcel in the PD-F-M (Planned Development – Foothill Combining – Special Mobilehome) zone. The applicant proposes to operate seven (7) days per week, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., with 8 – 12 employees in two shifts. The parking lot will provide 30 parking stalls (two of which will be ADA compliant). A monument sign will be utilized (rather than a typical Dollar General pylon sign) and will be located on the west side of the entrance driveway. A trash/recycling enclosure will be located at the rear of the property. Landscaping will be water efficient and detention basins will be landscaped with trees and native grasses. Exterior lighting will be installed such that lighting will be directed away from public roadways and adjacent properties.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING

The proposed Project will be located on the north side of State Route 190 at the intersection with Montgomery Drive, southwest of the unincorporated community of Springville.

Site – PD-F-M: the site is currently vacant and is utilized as grazing land.

North – PD-F-M: foothill rangeland and rural residential.

East – PD-F-M: USFS Springville office
West – PD-F-M: foothill grazing

South – PD-F-M: River Island Subdivision and golf course.

Zoning and Land Use:

If you require additional information related to this notice, please contact:

Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner
hguerra@co.tulare.ca.us or at (559) 624-7121

Potential Approvals Required:

The following agencies may have jurisdiction over elements of the proposed Project:

California Air Resources Board
California Department of Conservation
Caltrans District #6
Department of Fish & Wildlife Region #4
Department of Forestry & Fire Protection
Native American Heritage Commission
Regional Water Quality Control Board #5 (attn: Doug Patterson)
San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
Existing Zoning Map for
PSR 15-006

Owner: Barjona S. Meek
Address: 18104 Road 320,
City, State, ZIP: Springville, CA 93265
Applicant: Gregory O. Black
Agent: N/A
Supervisoral District: 5
Assessors Parcel: 284-540-034

[Map of existing zoning with highlighted site]
POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIR will evaluate, among other things, the probable direct and cumulative environmental impacts associated with construction, expansion, and continued operation of the Dollar General retail store. Mitigation measures will be recommended, where feasible, to mitigate potentially significant impacts. The following issues are proposed for analysis in the EIR:

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:

☐ Aesthetics ☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources ☐ Air Quality
☒ Biological Resources ☒ Cultural Resources ☒ Geology/Soils
☐ Greenhouse Gases ☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials ☒ Hydrology/Water Quality
☒ Land Use/Planning ☐ Mineral Resources ☐ Noise
☐ Population/Housing ☐ Public Services ☐ Recreation
☐ Transportation/Traffic ☐ Utilities / Service Systems ☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

Aesthetic/Visual Resources

The proposed Project site is located within the Tule River Development Corridor in the Foothill Growth Management Plan (FGMP) area of Tulare County. The EIR will provide an assessment of Project impacts to visual resources, as well as lighting and glare impacts. To address such impacts, a detailed landscaping plan will be part of the Draft EIR.

Agriculture Resources

The Project would not conflict with existing zoning for agriculture uses, or a Williamson Act contract. The 1.3-acre Project site is vacant grazing land and is zoned PD-F-M (Planned Development – Foothill Combining – Special Mobilehome). The site is not within an agricultural preserve and is not under a Williamson Act Contract. The Project is compatible with existing land use designations and zoning. A thorough environmental assessment will address impacts to agricultural resources though none are anticipated to occur as a result of this Project.

Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The EIR will describe regional and local air quality in the vicinity of the proposed Project site and evaluate impacts to air quality associated with the construction, expansion, and operation of the Project. An air quality study will be prepared to establish baseline, project, and cumulative impacts. The proposed Project’s estimated air emissions will be compared to emissions thresholds of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SVAPCD). The EIR will describe existing air quality conditions within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin and will evaluate
the proposed Project's potential air quality impacts. Potential air quality emissions impacts include odor, dust, pathogens, and construction related activities. The EIR will also include a discussion of greenhouse gas emissions and the proposed Project's contribution to potential cumulative impacts on global climate.

**Biological Resources**

The proposed Project site has been identified as being adjacent to, or possible habitat for, plant communities, botanical and wildlife resources that could be impacted by development of the Project site. A biological resource impact analysis was prepared by consultants' H.T. Harvey & Associates in August 2016 to determine potential impacts on biological resources and to identify potential mitigation measures, where applicable. The proposed Project site had a biological reconnaissance performed. The results from this reconnaissance will be analyzed as part of the CEQA process and potential impacts will be addressed in the EIR.

**Cultural Resources**

A Cultural Resources Assessment (CRA) was prepared by Sierra Valley Cultural Planning (SVCP) in March 2016 to determine potential impacts on cultural resources and to identify potential mitigation measures. The Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), a Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File Search will be conducted, and Tribal Consultation for CEQA will be conducted according to the law (i.e., AB 52) The proposed Project’s potential to affect cultural resources will be analyzed in the EIR.

**Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources,**

A Geotechnical Engineering Investigation report was prepared by SALEM Engineering Group, Inc., in September 2015. Initial construction, buildout, and operation of the proposed Project facilities on the project site could result in impacts related to geotechnical hazards, including seismicity of the area, potential for liquefaction and subsidence, potential for soil erosion, soil stability characteristics, and shrink/swell potential of site soils, as applicable. According to the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR, there are no known potential mineral resources. It is currently unknown whether the proposed Project site soils have the potential to contain paleontological resources. If such resources exist on the site, construction, expansion, and continued operational activities could result in potentially significant impacts. The EIR for the proposed Project will evaluate potential site-specific impacts related to geology, soils, mineral resources, and paleontological resources.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

There are no known hazards and hazardous materials located within the proposed Project site, nor is the proposed Project site located on a Cortese List site. The EIR will evaluate the potential for the proposed Project to result in, or be affected by, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials.
Hydrology, Water Quality, and Water Supply

Domestic water for the Project site will be provided by the Del Oro Water Company, River Island District. A “Will Serve” Letter has been provided by Del Oro Water Company (DOWC) which demonstrates that DOWC has sufficient capacity to provide water to the proposed Project. Also, in response to a ruling (Civil Ruling/Petition for Writ of Mandate (CEQA action)) by the Superior Court of California – County of Tulare, (issued on February 23, 2018 Springville Citizens for Responsible Growth v. County of Tulare, et al., case number VCU268116), the Draft EIR must address “…the sufficiency and quality of water supplying the project.”

Per the Tulare County GIS, on-site soil is San Joaquin Loam, which has severe septic tank absorption. Treatment of wastewater on the Project site will be achieved via an engineered septic disposal system. The disposal system shall be designed by a licensed professional knowledgeable and experienced in the field of sewage disposal system and design. The Project engineering and design features in compliance with California Building Code and Waste Discharge Requirements will ensure the proper preventative measures will be taken to eliminate any adverse impacts from the use of individual septic systems. Furthermore, conditions of approval by the Tulare County Environmental Health Services Division (EHSD) (e.g., specifications and engineering data for the septic disposal system shall be reviewed and approved by the EHSD prior to the release of building permits), will be implemented to reduce potential impacts from wastewater treatment.

The EIR will evaluate the potential for the proposed Project to result in, or be affected by, impacts to hydrological resources and water supply/quality.

Land Use and Planning

The EIR will describe the proposed Project’s potential effects on existing and planned land uses. The Project site is outside of the Urban Development Boundary of Springville and is outside any Urban Area Boundary. The Project site is subject to the Foothill Growth Management Plan (FGMP) component of the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. The FGMP designates the Project site as Foothill Mixed Use, within the Tule River Development Corridor. This designation allows for a mixture of agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Zoning on the Project site is PD-F-M (Planned Development – Foothill Combining – Special Mobilehome). “Commercial Centers” containing stores, shops and businesses featuring the retail sales of commercial goods and services which are designed to meet the day to day needs of local residents are allowed with the issuance of a Special Use Permit. Grocery stores and hardware stores are businesses compatible with the “Neighborhood Commercial Center”. The EIR will provide a discussion of relevant local plans and policies because conflicts could potentially result in environmental impacts.

Noise

The EIR will describe the Project’s existing operational noise levels in addition to noise levels associated with construction and increased operational levels and will compare these levels to
applicable noise thresholds to determine whether the proposed Project would result in a significant noise impact. The EIR will evaluate the potential effects on the proposed Project.

Population and Housing

The EIR will evaluate the Project’s effect on population and housing in the local area based on estimations of Project employment and distribution of the employees by place of residence.

Public Services and Recreation

The EIR will evaluate the proposed Project’s potential to impact fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, and other public facilities.

Transportation/Traffic

A Traffic Evaluation was prepared by consultants Ruettgers & Schuler, Civil Engineers. The EIR will evaluate the Project’s impact on regional and local transportation facilities based on a transportation analysis that will assess both construction-related impacts (heavy truck trips and construction worker trips), as well as operational impacts (employee trips, access, and parking). The roadway to be used as transportation routes to and from the proposed Project site is State Route 190. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) “Transportation Concept Report State Route 190 District 06” indicates that this segment of SR 190 operates at an LOS “C” and is anticipated to do so until year 2035. The EIR will evaluate the potential traffic/transportation impacts as a result of the proposed Project.

Utilities

Treatment of wastewater on the Project site will be achieved via an engineered septic disposal system. The Project will retain all Stormwater on-site through the utilization of two storm water retention basins. The Project will have sufficient water supplies (including fire flow) available to serve the Project from existing entitlements and resources. No new or expanded entitlements are needed. Domestic water will be provided by the Del Oro Water Company, River Island District. As noted earlier, in response to a ruling by the Superior Court of California – County of Tulare (Civil Ruling/Petition for Writ of Mandate (CEQA action); issued on February 23, 2018 Springville Citizens for Responsible Growth v. County of Tulare, et al., case number VCU268116), the Draft EIR must address “...the sufficiency and quality of water supplying the project.” The Project is not served by a wastewater treatment facility. Solid waste disposal services for the Project will be provided by Waste Management, the solid waste disposal company servicing the area. The EIR will analyze the current capacity of the above-mentioned services and the proposed Project’s impact on these systems and the capacity available to support the proposed Project. The EIR will also describe the solid waste facilities that would serve the proposed site.
Mandatory Findings

The EIR will evaluate the proposed Project’s impacts which could substantially degrade the quality of the environment, or impact on sensitive species, or have significant cultural impacts, or impact human beings requiring a mandatory finding of significance.

Cumulative Impacts

The EIR will discuss the incremental contribution of the proposed Project to cumulative effects of other past, current, and planned and reasonably foreseeable Projects in the vicinity. The summary of projects method will be used where applicable. Also, to the extent feasible, the Cumulative Impacts section will quantify the degree of severity of any cumulative impact.

Alternative Evaluated in the EIR

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the EIR will describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed Project that are capable of meeting most of the proposed Project’s objectives, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the proposed Project. The EIR will also identify any alternatives that were considered but rejected by the Lead Agency as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons why. The EIR will also provide an analysis of the No Project Alternative.

Economic, Social, & Growth Inducing Effects

The EIR will evaluate the proposed Project’s potential for growth inducement resulting from expansion or extension of infrastructure improvements, as well as new demand for housing, and goods and services. The effect of primary and secondary increases in employment and economic activity will be discussed. In response to a ruling by the Superior Court of California – County of Tulare (Civil Ruling/Petition for Writ of Mandate (CEQA action); issued on February 23, 2018 Springville Citizens for Responsible Growth v. County of Tulare, et al., case number VCU268116), the Draft EIR must address potential “urban decay”.

Immitigable Impacts

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b), “[w]here there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the Project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.”¹ This analysis should include a description of any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines the Draft EIR will include a discussion regarding impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated to a level of insignificance.

¹ CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2 (b)
OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Interested individuals, groups, and agencies may provide to the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency, Planning Branch, written comments on topics to be addressed in the EIR for the proposed Project. Because of time limits mandated by state law, comments should be provided no later than **July 27, 2018 5:00 p.m.** Agencies that will need to use the EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed Project should provide the name of a staff contact person. Please send all comments to:

Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner  
Tulare County Resource Management Agency  
Planning Branch  
5961 South Mooney Boulevard  
Visalia, CA 93277-9394  
or via e-mail at: HGuerra@co.tulare.ca.us  
or via facsimile: 559-730-2653  
or via phone: 559-624-7121