



A.V. unveils program to certify industrial land

Town designates 80 acres as virtually shovel-ready for development

By Mitch Deacon
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APPLE VALLEY – In an effort to promote industrial development, the town of Apple Valley is offering to certify land as "virtually shovel-ready."

Officials this month announced certification of 80 acres recently purchased by Watson Land Co., which is actively pursuing tenants for large build-to-suit industrial facilities.

Site certification eliminates obstacles to development on properties in the North Apple Valley Industrial Specific Plan area, which includes 5,100 acres surrounding the airport that have been pre-zoned for industrial projects.

"The town of Apple Valley is taking the lead to streamline the development process," said Ken Henderson, director of economic and community development for Apple Valley.

The specific plan outlines design standards and permitted uses that are eligible for fast-track administrative approval, allowing developers to avoid lengthy hearings before the Planning Commission and Town Council.

For properties within the specific plan area that meet the site certification program requirements of extensive environmental review, adequate provision of infrastructure, approved land-use criteria and entitlements, projects could proceed from submittal to construction within 120 days.

McCallum Sweeney Consulting compiled the comprehensive list of minimum criteria for evaluating prospective properties for site certification.

"Achieving certification under the guidelines of the program is a rigorous process," said Mark Sweeney, a principal with MSC, in a written statement.

The site certification program is part of a growing trend toward municipal policies designed to satisfy demand for shovel-ready and risk-free property that can be developed quickly, Sweeney said.

"A certified site provides an ideal location for a company trying to quickly locate and build a facility to serve today's markets," he added.