Moreno Valley is at the crossroads—It can choose to follow its General Plan that calls for high-end homes, shopping centers, businesses and services, or it can become a massive warehouse district with the horrendous truck traffic, deadly diesel pollution, and loss of health and quality of life.

You don’t have to guess what the impacts will be — just go to Mira Loma.

The decision lies with YOU!

WLC—Moreno Valley’s Worst Nightmare

“As someone that lives near the world’s largest warehouse district in Mira Loma, we know what the impacts are,” said Penny Newman, Executive Director of the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice.

That knowledge comes the hard way. Not from reading glossy reports that paint a rosy picture and make empty promises of jobs, but from actually living in it,” said Newman.

The impacts are real! They are severe! And they change the community’s quality of life forever! “Once the warehouses take over, there’s no turning back.”

“We’ve seen trucks on our residential streets that get stuck, drive up over our curbs and into our yards where our children play”, said Rosa Vielmas an organizer with CCAEJ.

This is not the type of development Moreno Valley families want or need.

If left to Iddo Benzeevi and his followers on the City Council your future will be set. Speak up! Demand that your voices be heard!
A few years ago when warehousing became popular in the Riverside County, some could claim ignorance to the health impacts. But not any more. With all we know about the disastrous affects of diesel pollution why would anyone bring a major diesel source into your backyards?

The plan for the World Logistics Center (WLC) calls for more than 41 million square-feet of industrial buildings—equivalent to more than 700 regulation football fields.

While touting the use of the highest “environmental standards” like green buildings with LEED certification, Mr Benzeevi bypasses the severe impacts. Energy efficiency and “green buildings” is not the only measurement of environmental stewardship. While green buildings are commendable, it does not come near balancing out the impacts to air quality, health and traffic congestion. In fact making buildings “green” benefits the warehouse developers and users through reduced utility bills rather than benefitting the community in any way. It’s not the buildings in and of themselves that pose the problems—but the thousands of diesel spewing trucks each of those buildings attract. One truck produces more pollution that 200 cars. The estimates in the Environmental Impact Report says more than 14,682 truck trips per day. Some estimates have placed the number as high as 24,000 per day. Everyone knows how bad the traffic is along Highway 60 now! What do you think it will be with these additional heavy duty trucks?

We know the jobs in the warehousing industry are few and low paying; we know the public costs for wear and tear on our streets and roads are very high; and we know the city’s financial payback is low in comparison to other land uses—so why push this horrendous project? Clearly, Iddo Benzeevi must be making money—but do we seriously make public decisions based on the whims and greed of one man?

Pollution in the Inland Valleys

Southern California is known for its sunny hot days and cool coastal breezes. The Inland Valleys are known for its majestic mountains surrounding the vast heavily populated valleys. The combination of the two creates unique conditions that are disastrous for residents of the Inland Valley.

As the on-shore coastal breezes bring cooled air onto land it blows easterly bringing whatever pollutants it encounters with it. The pollutants created by the industrial operations of refineries, manufacturing and at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are blown east into the Inland Valleys and are trapped by the mountain ranges—compounding the pollution levels to horrendous levels.

When these compounds reach the Inland areas they are trapped by the bowl created by the mountains. Local sources from railyards, intermodal facilities, and diesel spewing trucks delivering to massive warehouses and distribution centers in the area compound the deadly situation even more. The result is a heavy burden of pollution smothering the area, especially those at the fence line of these operations.

Another characteristic of particulate pollution is that health risk is determined by proximity to the source. The closer one is to the diesel source the greater the health risk. In the South Coast Air Basin mobile sources like trucks and trains cause 90% of cancer risk to residents, 70% of which is from diesel exhaust.
Dirty Deadly Diesel

The draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the WLC acknowledges “significant cancer risk increases from diesel exhaust associated directly with the project. Up to 100 cases per million ADDITIONAL cancer cases just from this project. That is on top of the already high cancer risk we face in the Inland Valleys. The excessive cancer risk extends along Highway 60 as far as Interstate 15. Moreno Valley residents who don’t already have an elevated cancer risk are guaranteed to after the World Logistics Center goes in. But cancer isn’t the only concern from diesel.

Diesel engines emit a complex mixture of air pollutants, composed of gaseous and solid material. The visible emissions in diesel exhaust are known as particulate matter or PM.

Diesel engines also contribute to California's fine particulate matter (PM2.5) air quality problems. Those most vulnerable are children whose lungs are still developing and the elderly who may have other serious health problems. A 2010 report written by Calif. Air Resources Board (CARB) and peer reviewed by the EPA, estimated that fine particulate pollution (PM$_{2.5}$) causes 9,200 premature deaths in California each year.

Particulate pollution is categorized into three main sizes. PM$_{10}$ measure up to 10 microns in diameter and appears as black dust or soot. PM$_{2.5}$ measure 2.5 microns or smaller in diameter and PM0.1 (ultra fines) make up more than 90% of diesel particulates. The smaller the size the greater the health risk. Ultra fine particles are not regulated by law and are not considered in the EIR being conducted by WLC.

Breathing diesel exhaust isn’t just unpleasant – it is hazardous to your health. In fact, health research indicates that the portion of the exhaust you can’t see maybe the most dangerous of all. Asthma attacks, respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease, neurological illness, and even premature death—all of these are among the most serious public health problems linked to emissions from the nation’s fleet of diesel vehicles. Diesel exhaust has been found to cause and exacerbate the effects of asthma, lead to premature death due to effects on the heart and cardiovascular systems, and cause birth defects, including increased heart defects, low birth weight, and preterm babies. Children are more likely than adults to be affected by outdoor air pollution because they tend to spend more time outdoors and have higher respiration rates.
The Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice is a non profit environmental justice education and advocacy organization with a 35 year history of assisting communities fight back for clean, healthy communities. Since 1997, CCAEJ has been at the forefront in educating residents on the impacts of diesel pollution and community impacts of the Goods Movement Industry. Our work led to the California Air Resources Board’s Land Use Guidelines recommending a 1000 foot buffer between diesel sources and sensitive receptors and the development of Riverside County’s Good Neighbor Guidelines for Warehouses and Distribution Centers. CCAEJ sits on the Steering Committee of the Moving Forward Nationwide Network, a network of communities impacted by ports and logistics and has worked with and presented before the White House Interagency Working Group on Inland Ports and Global Trade. CCAEJ recently won a major settlement in Mira Loma in partnership with California Attorney General Kamala Harris. In describing the settlement, the Attorney General stated, it’s a “model for local governments, developers and communities” trying to balance the need for industrial development with residents’ right to breathe clean air.” CCAEJ knows there’s a right place and way to develop our communities and the WLC is not it.

Warehousing has been sold to local decision makers as the “door to upward mobility”, bringing “good paying jobs to unskilled and uneducated populations”. That promise has proven to be more wishful thinking than reality.

Jobs in warehousing and distribution centers have proven to produce remarkably few jobs per square feet of land consumed – 1/4,000 sq ft. The recently built Sketchers Warehouse promised 2500 new jobs to the community of Moreno Valley but produced only 500 which were employees transferred from their old Ontario facility. It’s reported that only 1 new job employing a Moreno Valley resident was created.

Even with the few jobs created they are not “good” jobs. Under the drive to lower costs, increase speed of delivery and increase profits, warehouse jobs have become the new sweatshops. Some workers in Mira Loma report working 72 hour shifts and only getting paid when they are loading or unloading —not for any other work they perform.

Even the claim of energy efficiency are at the expense of their workers. Most warehouses use little energy because they don’t heat or air condition the warehouse areas in which their employees toil — only the offices of the managers receive that perk. In the hot summer days of So Cal the temperatures in the buildings and containers reach upwards of 110 degrees, resulting in many workers suffering from heat exhaustion.

Warehouse jobs are outsourced to temp agencies, paid at minimum wage levels, creating massive wage violations, dangerous working conditions, and exploitive management practices. They include:

- confusing “piece rate” pay schemes where workers are only paid for unloading and loading containers, not for other work they perform;
- for working lengthy hours with no overtime pay;
- for illegal and falsified pay records;
- and for hazardous workplace conditions (especially excessive heat, pressure for speed, and unstable storage stacking).