Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

Application for Conditional Use Permit
C&R Realty / 12 Lot Residential on Pierson

Prepared for:

City of Desert Hot Springs
65950 Pierson Boulevard
Desert Hot Springs, California 92240

Prepared by:

MSA Consulting, Inc.
34200 Bob Hope Drive
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

Desert Hot Springs Planning Department
Patricia Villagomez
Associate Planner
City of Desert Hot Springs
65950 Pierson Boulevard
Desert Hot Springs, California 92240
760-329-6411

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CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Authority

The City of Desert Hot Springs (City) is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and is responsible for carrying out, authorizing, or approving actions that have the potential to adversely affect the environment. The project will require certain discretionary approvals by the City and other governmental agencies. Therefore, the project is subject to environmental review requirements under CEQA.

CEQA requires that the public agency analyze and acknowledge the environmental consequences of their discretionary actions and consider alternatives and mitigation measures that could avoid or reduce significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed project.

The project proposes the development of a vacant, 3.62-acre property north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road. The project proposes 12, single family residential units and associated improvements. Each residential lot will vary in sizes ranging from 0.207 acres to 0.293 acres. Associated improvements include paved drive aisles, pedestrian walking paths, retention areas, and landscaped features. Development of the residential community will likely occur over the course of two years, depending on market demand. These homes will be sold market rate.

The land use and zone for the project site is Residential Low Density / Specific Plan Overlay (R-L/SP). R-L/SP Districts are intended to promote the development of low density, single-family detached residential units with a minimum average lot size of 9,000 square feet. These lands allow 0 to 5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and serve to buffer more dense residential development from estate residential uses. The Specific Plan Overlay requires the development of a Specific Plan of Land Use on parcels or groups of parcels of 40 acres or more. The Specific Plan provide detailed design and analysis of large scale and/or complex projects indicating the distribution, location, and intensity of the proposed land uses. Due to the size and single use of the proposed property, the project is not required to submit a specific plan.

In addition to this environmental document, the project will submit a Tentative Tract Map as a part of the entitlement process. Each of the submitted documents will be reviewed by the City of Desert Hot Springs.

This Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resource Code Section 21000 et.seq. The City of Desert Hot Springs will serve as the lead agency pursuant to CEQA.

1.2 Determination

This Initial Study determined that development of the proposed 12 Lot Residential Development would not have a significant impact on the environment, with the implementation of mitigation measures. A Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed.

1.3 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Authority to Prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration

This Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (DMND) has been prepared by the City of Desert Hot Springs as lead agency and is in conformance with Section 15070, Subsection (a), of the State of California Guidelines for Implementation of the CEQA. The purpose of the DMND and the Initial Study Checklist was to determine whether there were potentially significant impacts associated with the development of C&R Realty's 12-Lot Residential Community.

1.4 Public Review Process

In accordance with CEQA, a good faith effort has been made during the preparation of this DMND to contact affected agencies, organizations and persons who may have an interest in this project. The MND has been sent to the Riverside County Clerk, responsible agencies, and advertised in The Desert Star Weekly.

CHAPTER TWO – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Vicinity

The project is located on 3.62 acres of vacant land located north of Pierson Boulevard, in the City of Desert Hot Springs, California.

Total Project Area: 3.62 acres

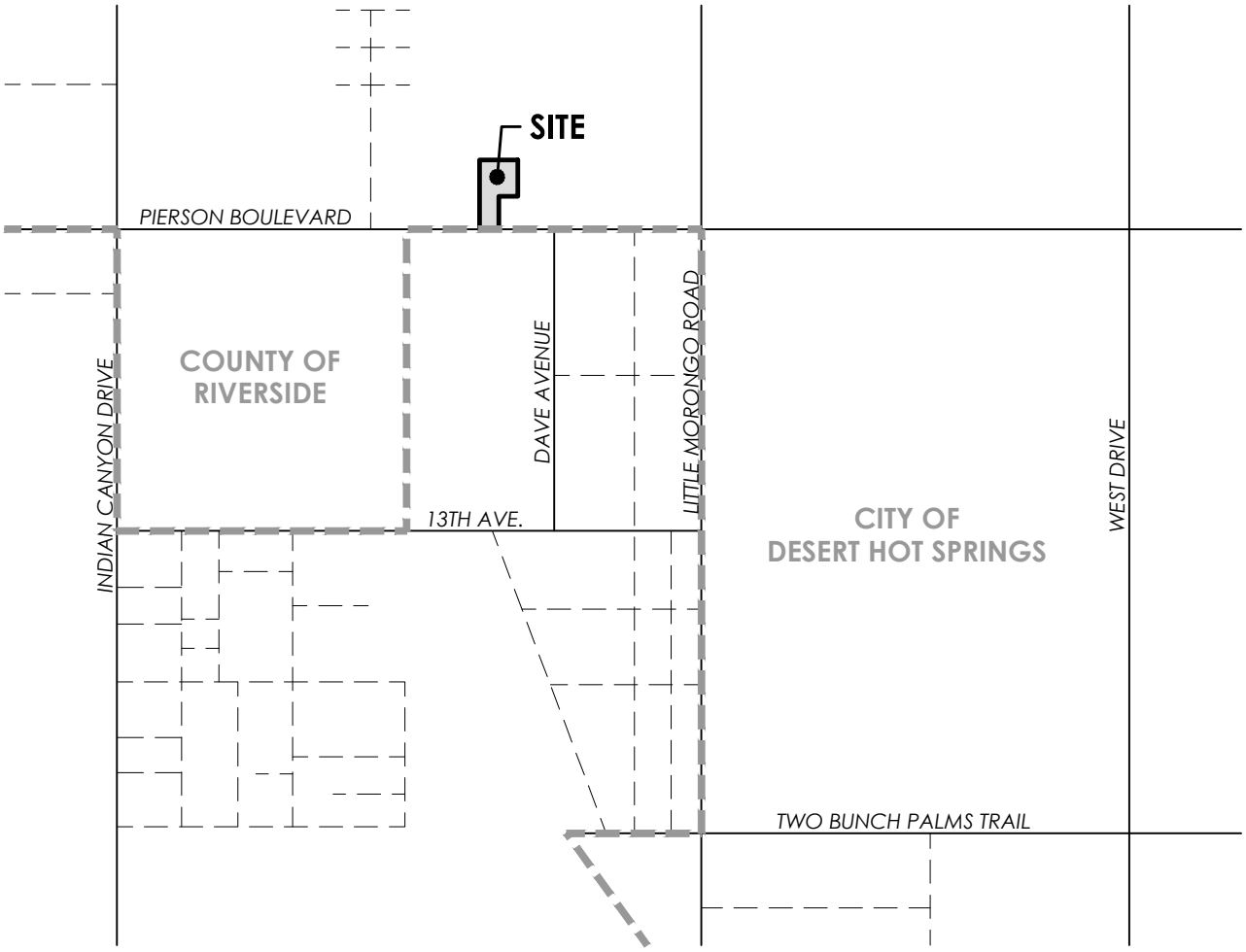
Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 664-130-003

Section, Township & Range Description or reference:
A subdivision of a portion of the West Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 26, Township 2 South, Range 4 East, San Bernardino Base and Meridian.

The 3.62-acre site consists of vacant land and is located north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road, in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The project site has been previously cleared of native vegetation and graded. Inactivity of the project property has allowed some vegetation to grow back. The site contains slight to moderate amounts of typical desert vegetation (scrub brush and low-lying plants). Topographically, the site drains to the south.

The paved roadway, Pierson Boulevard, defines the project's southern boundary, enhanced with curb and gutter improvements along the project's frontage. Pierson Boulevard's centerline delineates the City of Desert Hot Springs's boundary from an unincorporated portion of Riverside County. Palm View Estates (single family residential neighborhood) lies west of the project, vacant desert land (Big Morongo Wash corridor) lies north and west, and Elk's Lodge lies southeast. The Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan's (CVMSHCP) Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area delineates the project's northern boundary and approximately 325 feet of the project's eastern boundary. The entire site is within Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood zone AO, and subject to two distinguished flooding conditions, based on the project's adjacency to the Morongo Wash Channel, to the east. A majority of the site is subject to flood depths of 2 feet, at a velocity of 6 feet per second, while the northeast corner of the site is subject to flood depths of 3 feet at a velocity of 8 feet per second.

The location of the project site is shown below in Exhibits 1 and 2.



NORTH

N.T.S.

MSA CONSULTING, INC.
> PLANNING > CIVIL ENGINEERING > LAND SURVEYING
34200 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
760.320.9811 **msaconsultinginc.com**

VICINITY MAP

C&R REALTY
INITIAL STUDY

EXHIBIT
1

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760.320.9811 **msaconsultinginc.com**

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

C&R REALTY
INITIAL STUDY

EXHIBIT
2

2.2 Project Description

The project proposes the development of a 12-lot residential community on approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The project will include 12 single family residential units and associated improvements such as paved pedestrian sidewalks and drive aisles, and landscape enhancements. The proposed residential lots will range from 0.207 acres to 0.293 acres.

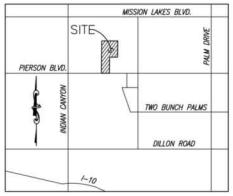
Vehicular access into the project property will occur from one location on Pierson Boulevard. The street will end at the northern portion of the site, in a cul-de-sac, providing access to each residential lot. A vehicular entrance currently exists on Pierson Boulevard, providing access to the existing east-lying facility, Elk's Lodge. Elk's Lodge is a community center for members of Elk's. Per project design, the existing driveway entrance is proposed to move approximately 30 feet west and will provide access to both the project site and Elk's Lodge. The new driveway will be complemented by an improved project frontage along Pierson Boulevard, which will include a paved pedestrian sidewalk and landscaping. Landscaped areas are proposed throughout the project site to enhance building frontages and Pierson Boulevard frontage, and pedestrian pathways. The proposed street frontage, buildings and landscaping will be reviewed by the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Underground retention chambers are proposed along the internal paved road. The City of Desert Hot Springs set conditions that projects shall retain the 100-year storm event of 24-hour duration and shall completely drain any open retention basins within 72 hours. Per the City requirements, the project will retain 100 percent of runoff.

Currently, the project site's boundaries are delineated by solid block wall to the west, and chain-link fencing to the north and east. A 6-foot-high block wall is proposed along the perimeter of the project to ensure project privacy and security.

In addition to this Environmental Initial Study, the project's entitlements also include the submittal of a Tentative Tract Map. Approval of these entitlements will render the project in full compliance with City regulations.

The Project Site Plan is shown below in Exhibit 3.



VICINITY MAP
N.T.S.

IN THE CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS, COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

TENTATIVE TRACT MAP No. 37793

BEING A SUDIVISION OF A PORTION OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 26, TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH, RANGE 4 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN.

OWNER

C & R REALTY
GINO CRISCIONE
1168 TWIN CANYON LANE
DIAMOND BAR, CA. 91765
TEL: (949) 584-7145

ZONING CLASSIFICATION
EXISTING ZONING: R-MH/SP

UTILITIES

TIME WARNER CABLE MEDIA
73061 FRED WARING DR.
PALM DESERT, CA 92260
(760) 834-2360

CPV SENTINEL, LLC
PO BOX 1328
DESERT HOT SPRINGS, CA 92240
(760) 288-7900

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY
211 N. SUNRISE WAY
PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262
(760) 327-3343

MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT
66-575 SECOND STREET
DESERT HOT SPRINGS, CA 92240
(760) 329-6448

SCHOOL DISTRICT:
PALM SPRINGS UNIFIED
980 EAST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA 92262

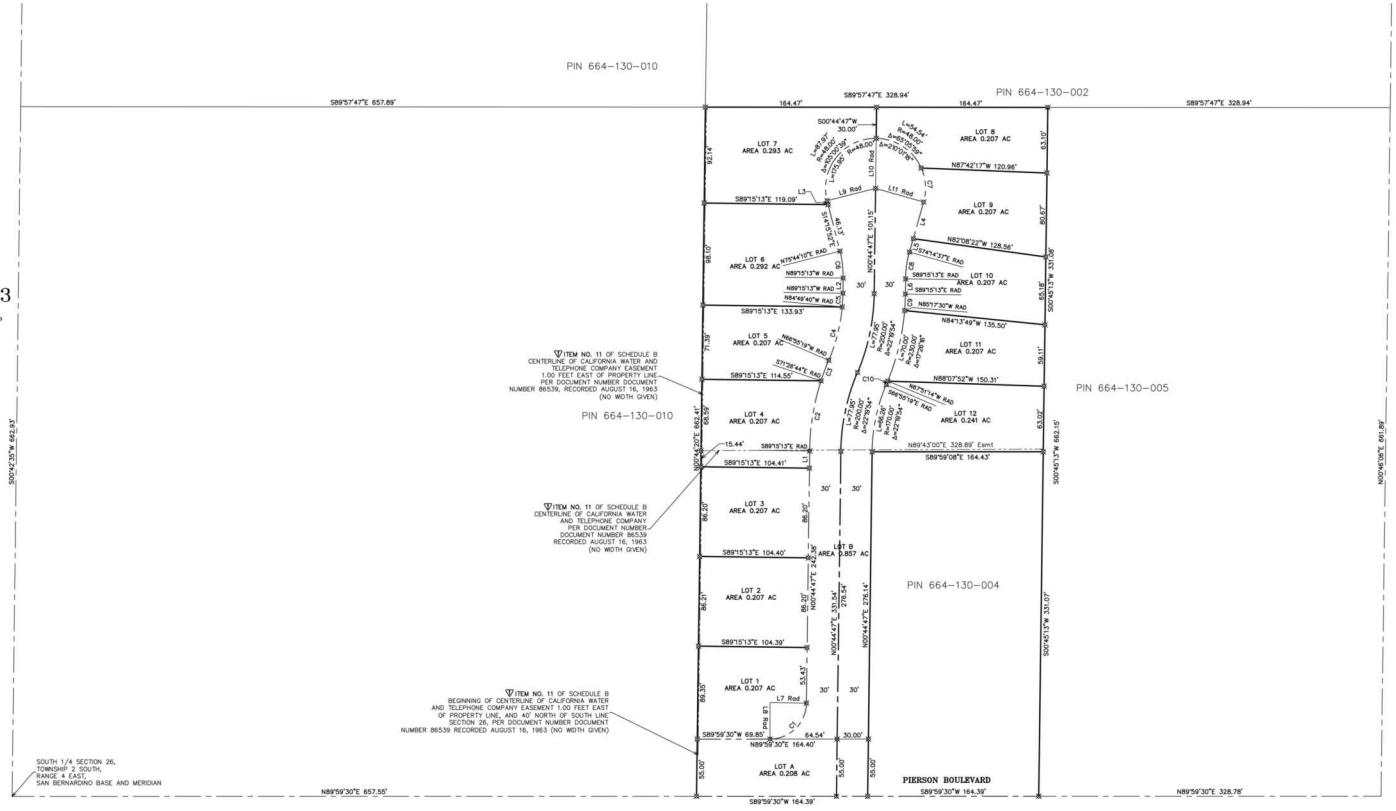
DESERT VALLEY DISPOSAL, INC.
4690 E. MESQUITE AVENUE
PALM SPRINGS, CA 92263
(760) 329-5030

SOUTHERN CA. EDISON
36100 CATHEDRAL CANYON
CATHEDRAL CITY, CA 92234
1-800-655-4555

TIME WARNER CABLE
11855 PALM DR.
DESERT HOT SPRINGS, CA 92240

SCHEDULE B EXCEPTIONS

5. WATER RIGHTS, CLAIMS OR TITLE TO WATER, WHETHER OR NOT DISCLOSED BY THE PUBLIC RECORDS. **(UNABLE TO PLOT)**
6. RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC TO ANY PORTION OF THE LAND LYING WITHIN THE AREA COMMONLY KNOWN AS PUBLIC ROADS **(UNABLE TO PLOT)**
7. RESERVATIONS CONTAINED IN THE PATENT FROM: THE UNITED STATE OF AMERICA RECORDING DATE: JANUARY 16, 1933 RECORDING NO.: BOOK 125, PAGE 543 OF PATENTS
8. AN EASEMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF POLES AND ANCHORS AND RIGHTS INCIDENTAL THERETO AS GRANTED IN A DOCUMENT TO SOUTHERN ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY, RECORDED SEPTEMBER 22, 1954 AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 48891, IN DEED BOOK 1633 AND PAGE 10, OF OFFICIAL RECORDS RIVERSIDE COUNTY. **(BLANKET IN NATURE)**
9. ANY FACTS, RIGHTS, INTERESTS OR CLAIMS THAT MAY EXIST OR ARISE BY REASON OF MATTERS, IF ANY, DISCLOSED BY THAT CERTAIN RECORD OF SURVEY FILED IN BOOK 32, PAGE 5 SURVEY.
10. ANY FACTS, RIGHTS, INTERESTS OR CLAIMS THAT MAY EXIST OR ARISE BY REASON OF MATTERS, IF ANY, DISCLOSED BY THAT CERTAIN RECORD OF SURVEY FILED IN BOOK 21, PAGE 29.
11. AN EASEMENT FOR THE PURPOSE(S) SHOWN BELOW AND RIGHTS INCIDENTAL THERETO AS SET FORTH IN A DOCUMENT IN FAVOR OF CALIFORNIA WATER AND TELEPHONE COMPANY, THE RIGHT OF WAY FOR ELECTRICAL AND TELEPHONE LINES, RECORDED AUGUST 16, 1963, DOCUMENT NUMBER 86539, OFFICIAL RECORDS RIVERSIDE COUNTY



AREA APN 664-130-003
(3.75 ACRES)
12 LOTS (2.685 ACRES)
ROAD WAYS TO BE DEDICATED : LOT A (PIERSON AVE) 0.208 AC., LOT B 0.857 AC.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

THE LAND REFERRED TO HEREIN BELOW IS SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND IS DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 26, TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH, RANGE 4 EAST, IN THE CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN.

EXCEPTING THEREFROM THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 26, TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH, RANGE 4 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN.

APN: 664-130-003

CURVE TABLE			
CURVE	LENGTH	RADIUS	DELTA
C1	54.52'	35.00'	89°14'43"
C2	68.49'	230.00'	17°03'42"
C3	21.15'	230.00'	5°16'12"
C4	53.13'	170.00'	17°54'21"
C5	13.13'	170.00'	4°25'33"
C6	26.20'	100.00'	15°00'37"
C7	33.44'	48.00'	39°54'40"
C8	26.20'	100.00'	15°00'37"
C9	15.90'	230.00'	3°57'43"
C10	3.74'	230.00'	0°55'55"

LINE TABLE		
LINE	BEARING	DISTANCE
L1	S0°44'47"W	16.55'
L2	S0°44'47"W	14.53'
L3	S14°15'52"E	3.87'
L4	N15°45'26"E	36.63'
L5	N15°45'26"E	13.33'
L6	N0°44'47"E	14.53'
L7 Rad	N89°15'13"W	35.00'
L8 Rad	N0°00'30"W	35.00'
L9 Rad	S75°44'08"W	48.00'
L10 Rad	N0°44'47"E	48.00'
L11 Rad	S74°14'34"E	48.00'

BENCH MARK.:

SOURCE OF TOPOGRAPHY
AMIR ENGINEERING
160 LURING DRIVE, SUITE A, PALM SPRINGS CA 92262
PH. (760) 318-7424, FAX (760) 318-7410
DONE ON 7/2/2019

CONTACT 811 BEFORE YOU DIG SAFE DIGGING PARTNER

SCALE:	DRAWN BY:	DESIGNED BY:	CHECKED BY:
1"=30'	SJA	AF	AF

AMIR ENGINEERING & SURVEYING INC.
CIVIL ENGINEERS • LAND PLANNERS • SURVEYORS
160 LURING DRIVE, SUITE A
PALM SPRINGS, CA. 92262
PHONE: (760) 318-7424
FAX: (760) 318-7410

PLANS PREPARED FOR: C & R REALTY
GINO CRISCIONE
1168 TWIN CANYON LANE
DIAMOND BAR, CA. 91765
TEL: (949) 584-7145

MARK	REVISIONS	APPROVED:	DATE:

APPROVED BY:
DATE

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
DESERT HOT SPRINGS
TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 37793
A.P.N.: 664-130-003
PIERSON BLVD, DESERT HOT SPRINGS, CALIF.
SECTION 26, T. 2 S., R. 4 E. S.B.B.M.

DRAWING NO.

SHEET 1 OF 1 SHEETS

N.T.S.

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34200 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
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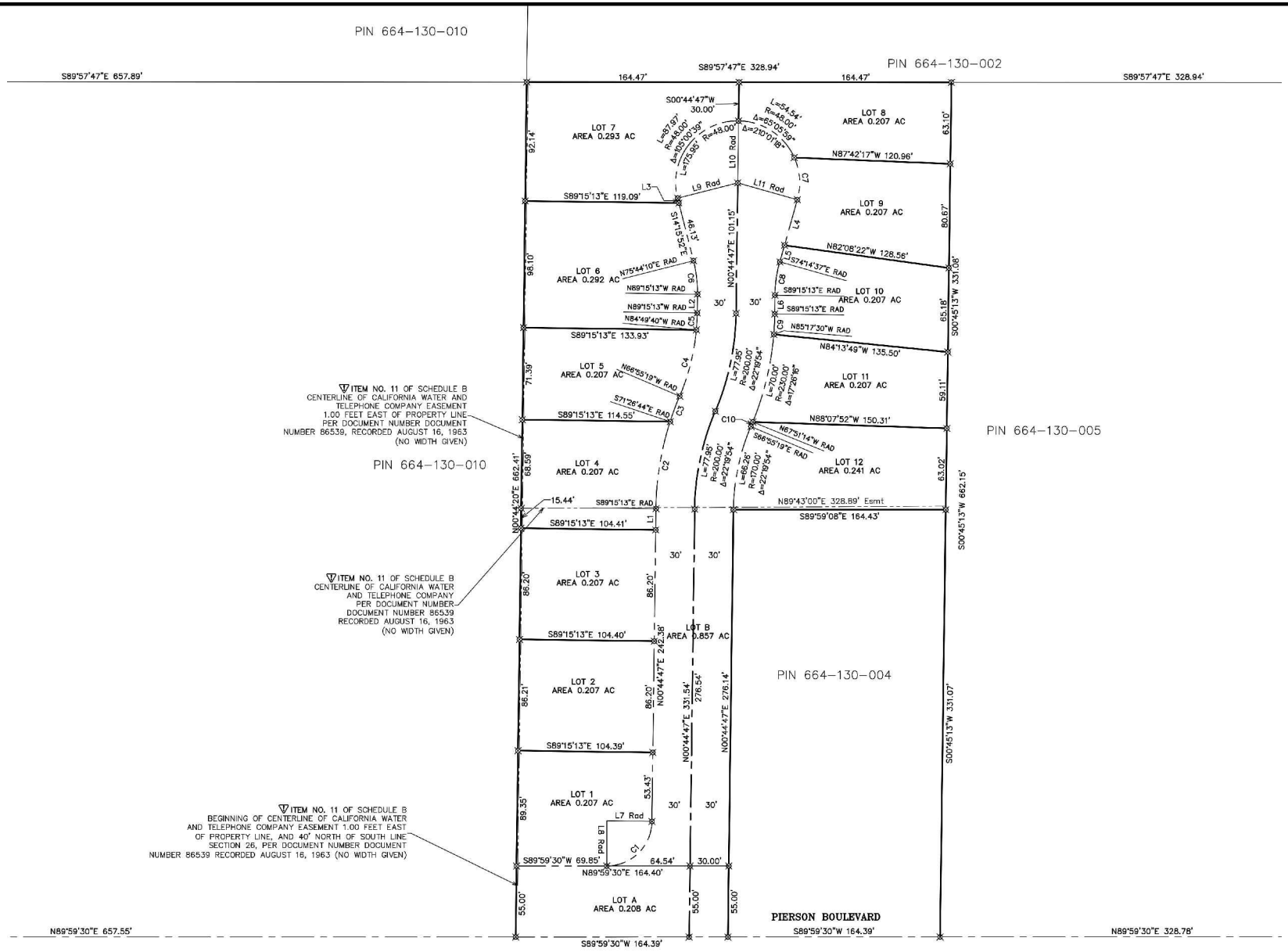
PROJECT SITE PLAN

C&R REALTY

INITIAL STUDY

EXHIBIT 3



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PROJECT SITE PLAN

C&R REALTY

INITIAL STUDY

EXHIBIT

4

2.3 Mitigation Monitoring Program

Table 2-1: Mitigation Monitoring Program outlines the potential impacts and mitigation measures of the proposed project and assigns responsibility for the oversight of each mitigation measure. This Table shall be included in all bid documents and included as part of the project development.

Table 2-1
Mitigation Monitoring Program

Section Number	Mitigation Measures	Responsible for Monitoring	Timing	Impact after Mitigation
IV. Biological Resources	**BR-1:** To comply with CEQA Guidelines 15125 and/or 15380, the project proponent shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a spring rare plant survey following the procedures stated in the *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW, March 20, 2018).	Developer Planning Dept Biological Monitor	Prior to building permits	Less than significant
	BR-2: The project proponent shall ensure that the applicable MSHCP Local Development Mitigation Fee is paid to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission. The time of payment must comply with the City's Municipal Code (Chapter 3.40). The fee shall be paid in full at the time of the issuance of a building permit.	Developer	Prior to building permits	Less than significant
	BR-3: The project proponent shall ensure that the project site design and operations adhere to and incorporate the applicable Land Use Adjacency Guidelines established in the CVMSHCP throughout project approvals and the life of the project. The project will adhere to the following as stated in the CVMSHCP. **4.5.1 Drainage** Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Stormwater systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent	Developer	Prior to grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant

Section Number	Mitigation Measures	Responsible for Monitoring	Timing	Impact after Mitigation
	Conservation Area. **4.5.2 Toxics** Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate bioproducts such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife and plant species, Habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation Area. **4.5.3 Lighting** For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual. **4.5.4 Noise** Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual. **4.5.5 Invasives** Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native			

Section Number	Mitigation Measures	Responsible for Monitoring	Timing	Impact after Mitigation
	plant materials to the maximum extent Feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112. The plants listed in Table 4-113 shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence			
	BR-4: The project proponent shall through agency consultation (including but not limited to the City of Desert Hot Springs, Army Corps of Engineers, and California Fish and Wildlife) determine if streambed alteration permits are necessary prior to the issuance of a building permit.	Developer Planning Dept Biological Monitor	Prior to grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant
	BR-5: The project shall retain a qualified avian biologist to conduct a migratory nesting bird survey, to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. To yield the most accurate results, the survey shall be conducted in April and early May.	Developer Planning Dept Biological Monitor	Prior to grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant
V. Cultural Resources	**CUL-1:** The presence of a qualified archaeological monitor and Cultural Resource Monitor shall be required during all project related ground disturbing activities. In the event that cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the project outside the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Cultural Resources Department (SMBMI) shall be contacted regarding any pre-contact and/or historic-era finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.	Planning Department Qualified Archaeologist Cultural Resource Monitor	During grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant

Section Number	Mitigation Measures	Responsible for Monitoring	Timing	Impact after Mitigation
	CUL-2: If significant pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources, as defined by CEQA, are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to SMBMI for review and comment. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly.	Planning Department Qualified Archaeologist Tribe	During grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant
	CUL-3: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of this find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.	Planning Department Qualified Archaeologist Cultural Resource Monitor	During grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant
VII. Geology and Soils	**GEO-1:** A qualified paleontologist shall be retained and present during the first days of ground disturbing activities. Once the paleontologist has had a chance to assess the sediments and paleontological potential of the project area, he/she may make a recommendation to reduce the monitoring effort, as appropriate, or continue with full time monitoring. This decision shall be communicated along with the rationalization to the City for their records.	Developer Planning Department	During grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant
XVII. Tribal Cultural Resources	**TCR-1:** The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Cultural Resource Department (SMBMI) shall be contacted of any pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources discovered during project implementation and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA, a cultural resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with SMBMI, and all subsequent finds shall	Developer Planning Department Tribe	During grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant

Section Number	Mitigation Measures	Responsible for Monitoring	Timing	Impact after Mitigation
	be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents the SMBMI for the remainder of the project, should SMBMI elect to place a monitor on-site.			
	TCR-2: Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the applicant and Lead Agency for dissemination to SMBMI. The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with SMBMI throughout the life of the project.	Developer Planning Department Tribe	Prior to grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant
	TCR-3: The presence of an approved Agua Caliente Native American Cultural Resource Monitor during any ground disturbing activities (including archaeological testing and surveys). Additionally, the Tribe shall receive a cultural resources inventory of the project area by a qualified archaeologist prior to development activities, a copy of the records search with associated survey reports and site records, and copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with the project.	Developer Planning Department Cultural Resource Monitor	During grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant

CHAPTER THREE – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

1. **Project Name:** C&R Realty / 12-Lot Residential Project

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**
   City of Desert Hot Springs
   65950 Pierson Boulevard
   Desert Hot Springs, California 92240

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**
   Rebecca Deming
   Community Development Director
   760-329-6411

4. **Project Location:**
   See Exhibits 1 and 2

5. **Project Applicants' Name and Address:**
   C&R Realty
   c/o Gino Criscione
   1168 Twin Canyon
   Diamond Bar, CA 91765

6. **General Plan Designation:** R-L/SP Residential Low Density (0-5 du/ac) Specific Plan Overlay

7. **Zoning Designation:** R-L/SP Residential Low Density (0-5 du/ac) Specific Plan Overlay

8. **Description of Project:** The project proposes to construct residential dwelling units on 12 lots on approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land. The proposed residential lots will range from 0.207 acres to 0.293 acres. Vehicular access will occur on Pierson Boulevard, providing access to each residential and end on the northern portion of the site in a cul-de-sac. The landscaped areas are proposed throughout the project site and at the Pierson Boulevard frontage. Underground stormwater retention chambers will be located along the proposed internal paved road. The project will be surrounded by 6-foot-high block walls.

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting**: The site is surrounded by a single family residential neighborhood, Palm View Estates to the west, vacant desert land to the north and approximately 325 feet of the project's eastern boundary, Elks Lodge to the southeast and Pierson Boulevard to the south. Surrounding land use designations includes Residential Medium/High Density (Specific Plan) to the west and south, Residential Low Density (Specific Plan) to the north and partial east, and Community Commercial to the east. The project also lies within the Residential Low Density (Specific Plan) land use designation.

10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):** The project shall require approval from the Mission Springs Water District, the Regional Water Quality Control Board and, prior to construction and grading, the project proponent shall through agency consultation (including but not limited to the City of Desert Hot Springs, Army Corps of Engineers, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife) determine if streambed alteration permits are necessary.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)
On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project have been made by or agreed to by the Project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.

_____ _____

Senior Planner Date

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

CHAPTER FOUR – DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS

Issues:

I. AESTHETICS – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:
Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code, accessed 2020; *State Scenic Highway Program*, CalTrans, accessed 2020; U.S. Geological Survey Map

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
The City of Desert Hot Springs has varying distinguished views of surrounding topographic features and mountain ranges. According to the Desert Hot Springs General Plan (DHS GP) Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the most valuable visual resources in the Coachella Valley includes the mountain and open space views. The perception and uniqueness of scenic vistas and visual character can vary according to location and composition of its surrounding context. The subjective value of views is generally affected by the presence and intensity of neighboring man–made improvements, such as structures, overhead utilities, and landscape, often in relation to the aesthetic quality offered by a natural background, such as open space, mountain ranges, or a landmark feature. The proximity and massing of structures, vegetation, overhead utilities and other visual barriers interact with the visibility of surrounding environments to restrict or enhance local characteristic views. The assessment of scenic value also considers the compatibility of proposed projects in relation to areas, land uses or vantage points where the enjoyment of scenic vistas may exist, such as scenic roads or residential areas.

The project encompasses approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land situated north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road in Desert Hot Springs. The site is presently vacant and exhibits a predominantly flat condition with scattered vegetative coverage, primarily associated with the Sonoran creosote bush scrub community. The project property has been previously graded and cleared of vegetation, however, inactivity of the project site has allowed native and non-native vegetation to regrow. Pole-mounted overhead utility lines are present along the west side of the project site and through the center of the site. Pierson Boulevard and other local streets are absent of any light posts or illuminated light signals. Overall, there are no salient topographic features or other natural visual landmarks on the project site or its general surroundings, and the onsite characteristics and physical features do not contribute to a unique scenic vista.

The project property is adjoined by a mix of undeveloped land and residential land uses. The northern and eastern boundary is adjoined by the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), due to its adjacency to the Big Morongo Wash corridor. The Big Morongo Wash corridor is characterized by relatively flat and scattered vegetation coverage. The project's northern and eastern project boundaries are separated from the Big Morongo Wash by chain-link fencing. The southeastern boundary is met by Elk's Lodge (a community center), which includes a paved drive aisle and parking area. The project's southern boundary is met by Pierson Boulevard, which is an east-west trending road. A mobile home park lies south of Pierson Boulevard. The western project boundary is met by a residential community, separated from the project site by a

block wall. Existing residential uses in the City typically consist of one-story single family residences with a mass and scale suitable for the zoning district, parcel size, and use being supported.

As previously stated, the DHS GP EIR declares that the mountain and open space views are the most valuable visual resources in the Coachella Valley. The San Jacinto Mountains to the West, the San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north, and the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south create the panoramic mountain views in the Coachella Valley. The San Jacinto Mountain's toe of slope is approximately 6.50 miles southwest of the project site. The mountain range extends from its highest elevation at Mount San Jacinto, reaching an elevation 10,804 feet above sea level.

The San Bernardino Mountains form the northwestern boundary of the City. San Gorgonio peak is the highest peak in the region and rises to an elevation of 11,502 feet. The northern boundary of the City is met by the Little San Bernardino Mountains. Being the closest mountain range to the City, the Little San Bernardino Mountain range provides aesthetically attractive viewsheds that give the City its unique character. The Santa Rosa Mountains are located more than ten miles south of the City boundaries, and its highest peak is classified as Toro Peak which rises to 8,717 feet.

Additional features that contribute to the local scenic vista includes Indio Hills located approximately 2 miles southeast of the City as well as Edom Hill and Flat Top Mountain, both located near the southeast boundary of the City. These hills stand more than 1,000 feet above the valley floor and provide a vivid display of color in the late afternoons, according to the DHS GP EIR.

As previously stated, the project site sits on approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land, characterized by scattered, low-lying desert vegetation. In its current state, the vacant project property has distant views of the San Jacinto Mountains and Santa Rosa Mountains, which are obstructed by the existing, south-lying residential community. The San Bernardino Mountains, to the northwest, are obstructed by the existing, west-lying residential community. The obstructions from the existing residential communities include residential buildings, walls, hedges, trees, and overhead utility poles. Views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north are not obstructed, due to the vacant and undeveloped land north of the project property.

According to Chapter 17.08.260 (Single-family architecture) of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code, the City does not establish a particular architectural style for residential structure. However, residential developments should employ design elements that enhance the visual character of the site and avoid certain features deemed undesirable. In general, the architecture should consider compatibility with the surrounding character, including harmonious building style, form, size, color, material and roofline. The project shall adhere to the guidelines outlined within the Municipal Code to ensure that the project does not negatively impact the existing natural and developed context. Project design and architecture will be submitted to the City for review.

The proposed project is not anticipated to adversely alter the existing view shed on any scenic vistas and less than-significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
As previously discussed, the project property consists of relatively flat terrain with dispersed vegetation coverage. The project property has been previously cleared and graded. However, inactivity of the site has allowed native vegetation to grow within the project boundaries. Utility posts with overhead lines are found traversing the project. The property does not contain any landmarks or scenic resources, such as trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings that may be altered or damaged by utilization of the site.

The purpose of the State Scenic Highway Program is to preserve and protect scenic State highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. State highways can be officially designated as Scenic Highways or be determined to be eligible for designation. The status of a state scenic highway changes from eligible to "officially designated" when a local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) approves the designation as a Scenic Highway. The project property is not located adjacent to any existing highway or freeway. The Caltrans status map of scenic highway designations indicates that Highway 62, from north of Interstate 10 to the San Bernardino County line, is considered an Eligible State Scenic Highway, but is not officially designated. The distance between the project and Highway 62 is approximately 3 miles.

Furthermore, the project is not located within close proximity to any designated county scenic highway, as identified in the Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan Update. Therefore, the proposed residential lots would not result in in adverse impacts to scenic resources adjacent to or within close proximity to state scenic highway or other local transportation corridor. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public Views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing the scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
As previously stated in discussion a., Chapter 17.08.260 (Single-family architecture) of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code (DHS MC) does not establish a particular architectural style for residential structure. However, residential developments should employ design elements that enhance the visual character of the site and avoid certain features deemed undesirable. In general, the architecture should consider compatibility with the surrounding character, including harmonious building style, form, size,

color, material and roofline. Architectural components, such as façade and roof articulation, varied structure design, scale, finish materials, and lighting are discussed within the City's Municipal Code. The DHS MC also lists design aspects that should be avoided in the development of residential communities. These include using materials such as metal or aluminum siding, reflective materials and finishes, unfinished concrete block, use of uncovered flood security lighting, etc. The project shall adhere to the guidelines outlined within the DHS MC. Project design and architecture will be submitted to the City for review. The compliance of the project's design will ensure that the visual character of the site is not degraded.

Moreover, the project's design will avoid the elements identified by the City as being undesirable. In particular, the project will avoid highly reflective surfaces at the ground story; large blank, unarticulated wall surfaces; exposed, untreated precision block walls and chain link fencing. The proposed perimeter landscaping and wall design will be complimentary to building elements. The project edges and Pierson Boulevard frontage will be improved with landscaping to visually coordinate with the surrounding desert environment. The landscaping design will be subject to review and approval by the City of Desert Hot Springs. Additionally, building heights and setbacks will comply with the standards set by the City of Desert Hot Springs to ensure that views minimally obstructed to the surrounding properties.

The project site currently sits on approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land north of Pierson Boulevard. The project site has been subject to previous grading and clearing of vegetation, however, lack of development on the project site has led to its undeveloped and vacant character. The project proposes the development of 12 single family residential homes and associated improvements such as an internal paved driveway, curb and gutter improvements, landscaped frontages and paved pedestrian sidewalks. Onsite landscaping will enhance the visual character of the streetscape in a manner that is compatible with the local desert environment. Therefore, the project is not expected to degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The project property is situated within the City of Desert Hot Springs's Residential Low Density land use designation, with a Specific Plan overlay. The project site is currently characterized by vacant land with low-lying dessert vegetation. The surrounding area is primarily defined by single family residential dwellings to the west and south, vacant land to the north and east, and Elk's Lodge to the southeast.

In the local vicinity, existing sources of low-intensity nighttime lighting can be attributed to residential structures located north, east, south and west of the project site. The individual residential lighting typically consists of low-intensity, wall-mounted, downward-oriented fixtures on patios, side, and front yards of homes. Light fixtures associated with Elk's Lodge, located southwest of the project, are similar to the fixtures found in surrounding residential communities. Light fixtures associated with Elk's Lodge includes low-intensity, wall-mounted fixtures to illuminate the building frontage and entrances. Currently,

Pierson Boulevard does not have public street lighting or illuminated traffic signals in the project's vicinity. Day-time glare and night-time lighting can be attributed to vehicular traffic on these roadways.

Section 17.40.170 of the City's Municipal Code provides standards for outdoor lighting in order to maintain ambient lighting levels as low as possible and to enhance the City's community character and charm and maintain dark skies. The lighting standards were also established to maintain safety, utility and security, as well as ensure good visibility while maintaining minimum glare and spillage onto other properties or into the sky.

According to Chapter 17.08.260 of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code, lighting fixtures on single-family homes serve safety and convenience, as security devices, and as integral design elements of the home. Garage-mounted lighting should be carriage-type or equivalent in scale that is consistent with the architectural style and proportions of the home. The use of flood security lighting shall be screened or shielded to avoid spilling onto adjoining properties and streets. In all instances, lighting levels shall be kept to that minimum necessary to illuminate paths and walkways, while providing their security function. The proposed project shall adhere to these regulations.

Additionally, because a portion of the project is located adjacent to a CVMSHCP Conservation Area, it will be required to comply with the CVMSCHP Adjacency Guidelines. These guidelines include a provision addressing adjacent lighting limitations. See the Biological Resources section of this document for further discussion.

Consistent with the architectural design guidelines for residential districts, established in Chapter 17.08 of the City's Municipal Code, the proposed buildings will avoid bright tines, oversized window, highly reflective surfaces, and large blank facades, such that would result in substantial daytime glare. The proposed combination of exterior materials and surfaces are expected to have partial solar reflectivity. The landscaped areas proposed along the building frontages and project perimeter are expected to help attenuate the visibility and partial sunlight reflectivity associated with the proposed buildings.

Moreover, construction of the proposed project is not intended to create substantial light or glare during the daytime or nighttime hours since construction of the site would occur during the permitted construction hours established by the City of Desert Hot Springs (Municipal Code 9.04.030).

Overall, the project is not expected to create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES – Would the project:
Sources: *California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program*, California Department of Conservation, 2016; Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; *Williamson Act Program 2015-16 Status Report*, California Department of Conservation.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
The project will not disturb or convert any designated farmland or other form of agricultural resource. The subject property is designated as "Urban Built Up Land" according to the most recent Important Farmland Map of the 2016 California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. A large portion of the City of Desert Hot Springs is designated as Urban Built Up Land, which is land occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structure to a 10-acre parcel. Common examples include residential, industrial, commercial, institutional facilities, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment and water control structures. Agricultural lands surrounded by urban areas must exceed 40 acres minimum in size in order to be mapped as farmland. The subject site and surrounding land to the north, east, south and west are not categorized as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of local or statewide importance, thus no impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
The project site is not located in an existing zone for agricultural use or classified as farmland. According to the Williamson Act Program 2015-16 Status Report, no portion of land within a one-mile radius is recognized as being under a Williamson Act Contract. The proposed project will not impact or remove land from the City or County's agricultural zoning or agricultural reserve. No impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220 (g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
The proposed project will occur in an existing urban desert setting zoned for residential uses. No forest land, timberland or Timberland Production zoning occurs on the project site or in the surrounding area

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

because forest vegetation is not characteristic of the Coachella Valley desert environment. No impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
The proposed project will occur in an existing urban desert setting zoned for residential uses. No forest land, timberland or Timberland Production zoning occurs on the project site or in the surrounding area because forest vegetation is not characteristic of the Coachella Valley desert environment. No impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or Conversion of forest land to non-forest land use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
As previously described, the project site and vicinity are designated by the Desert Hot Springs General Plan and Zoning map as Residential Low Density with a Specific Plan overlay. The proposed 12-lot residential property will not result in conversion of any farmland or forest land because no farmland or forest land is situated within or adjacent to the project. No impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:
Sources: *Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan* (AQMP), by SCAQMD, March 2017; *Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan* (CVSIP), by SCAQMD, August 2003; *Analysis of the Coachella Valley PM10 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan*, by the California Air Resources Board, February 2010; *California Emissions Estimator Model* (CalEEMod), Version 2016.3.2.

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Existing Air Quality Setting and Regulatory Framework:

The project site and its Coachella Valley regional context are situated within the Riverside County portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), under jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Existing air quality in relation to the applicable air quality standards for criteria air pollutants is measured at established air quality monitoring stations throughout the SCAQMD jurisdiction. The three permanent ambient air quality monitoring stations in the Coachella Valley are located in Palm Springs (AQS ID 060655001), Indio (AQS ID 060652002), and Mecca (Saul Martinez - AQS ID 060652005).

To comply with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), SCAQMD has adopted an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which is updated regularly with strategies to effectively reduce emissions, accommodate growth, and minimize any negative fiscal impacts of air pollution control on the economy. The most current version of the AQMP (2016 AQMP) was released in March of 2017 to continue serving as a regional blueprint for achieving the federal air quality standards. The 2016 AQMP includes the most current strategies to meet the air quality standards and ensure that public health is protected to the maximum extent feasible. It also includes a comprehensive analysis of emissions, meteorology, atmospheric chemistry, regional growth projections, and the impact of existing control measures is updated with the latest data and methods. Moreover, 2016 AQMP provides guidance for the State Implementation Plans (SIP) for attainment of the applicable ambient air quality standards.

Particulate Matter (PM10):

As indicated in the 2016 AQMP, the Coachella Valley is currently designated as a serious nonattainment area for PM10 (particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less). In the Coachella Valley, the man-made sources of PM10 are attributed to direct emissions, industrial facilities, and fugitive dust resulting from unpaved roads and construction operations. High-wind natural events are also known contributors of PM10. The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires those states with nonattainment areas to prepare and submit the corresponding State Implementation Plans (SIPs) to demonstrate how these areas will attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The implementation strategies include modeling, rules, regulations, and programs designed to provide the necessary air pollutant emissions reductions.

Pertaining to PM10 attainment, the Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan (CVSIP) was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on December 14, 2005. It incorporated updated planning assumptions, fugitive dust source emissions estimates, mobile source emissions estimates, and attainment modeling with control strategies and measure commitments. Some of those measures are reflected in SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1, which are enacted to reduce or prevent man-made fugitive dust sources with their associated PM10 emissions. The CVSIP established the controls needed to demonstrate expeditious attainment of the standards such those listed below:

- Additional stabilizing or paving of unpaved surfaces, including parking lots;
- A prohibition on building new unpaved roads;
- Requiring more detailed dust control plans from builders in the valley that specify the use of more aggressive and frequent watering, soil stabilization, wind screens, and phased development (as opposed to mass grading) to minimize fugitive dust;
- Designating a worker to monitor dust control at construction sites; and
- Testing requirements for soil and road surfaces.

On February 25, 2010, the ARB approved the 2010 Coachella Valley PM10 Maintenance Plan and transmitted it to the U.S. EPA for approval. With the recent data being collected at the Coachella Valley monitoring stations, consideration of high-wind exceptional events, and submittal of a PM10 Re-designation Request and Maintenance Plan, a re-designation to attainment status of the PM10 NAAQS is deemed feasible in the near future according to the 2016 AQMP.

Ozone and Ozone Precursors:

The Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) is deemed to be in nonattainment for the 1997 8-hour ozone standard. Coachella Valley is unique in its geography due to its location downwind from the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB). As such, when high levels of ozone are formed in the South Coast Air Basin, they are transported to the Coachella Valley. Similarly, when ozone precursors such as nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are emitted from mobile sources and stationary sources located in the South Coast Air Basin, they are also transported to the Coachella Valley. It is worth noting that SCAQMD deems that local sources of air pollution generated in the Coachella Valley have a limited impact on ozone levels compared to the transport of ozone precursors generated in SCAB.

The U.S. EPA classifies areas of ozone nonattainment (i.e., Extreme, Severe, Serious, Moderate or Marginal) based on the extent to which an area exceeds the air quality standard for that pollutant. The higher the exceedance level, the more time is allowed to demonstrate attainment in recognition of the greater challenge involved. However, nonattainment areas with the higher classifications are also subject to more stringent requirements. In the 2016 AQMP, the attainment target date for the 1997 8-hour ozone standard was listed as June 15, 2019. However, based on recent data for higher levels of ozone experienced in 2017 and 2018, it was determined that the Coachella Valley region could not practically attain the said standard by the established deadline. Given that additional time is needed to bring the Coachella Valley into attainment of the ozone standard, SCAQMD submitted a formal request to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) to reclassify the Coachella Valley from Severe-15 to Extreme nonattainment, with a new attainment date of June 15, 2024. The reclassification ensures that the Coachella Valley will be given the needed extension to make attainment feasible and prevent the imposition of the non-attainment fees on major stationary sources. This process would also require SCAQMD to develop or update the State Implementation Plan (SIP) documentation to demonstrate how the area will meet the standard on or before June 15, 2024.

SCAQMD continues to reduce ozone and improve air quality in the Coachella Valley, in part by providing more than $50 million in grant funding towards paving dirt roads and parking lots, clean energy projects and cleaner vehicles. Future emission reductions anticipated to occur in the South Coast Air Basin associated with current and planned regulations on mobile and stationary sources are expected to contribute to improvements in ozone air quality in the Coachella Valley and lead to attainment of the standard.

Regional Significance Threshold Criteria:

The SCAQMD has established that impacts to air quality are significant if there is a potential to contribute or cause regional and/or localized exceedances of the federal and/or state ambient air quality standards, such as the NAAQS and CAAQS. To assist lead agencies in determining the significance of air quality

impacts, SCAQMD has established suggested short-term construction-related and long-term operational impact significance thresholds for direct and indirect impacts on air quality. Table III-1 displays the established construction and operational daily significance thresholds to which the air emissions results are measured against. The project-specific construction and operational emissions results are subsequently analyzed and quantified.

Table III-1
SCAQMD's Air Quality Significance Thresholds (Pounds/Day)

Emission Source	CO	VOC	NOx	SOx	PM10	PM2.5
Construction or Operation	550	75	100	150	150	55

Source: Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook, Chapter 5.
Prepared by the South Coast Air Quality Management District. www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/hndbk.html

Localized Significance Threshold Criteria:

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has developed and published the Final Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology to help identify potential impacts that could contribute or cause localized exceedances of the federal and/or state ambient air quality standards (NAAQS/CAAQS). LST methodology was developed in response to environmental justice and health concerns raised by the public regarding exposure of individuals to criteria pollutants in local communities. The purpose of analyzing LSTs is to determine whether a project may generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts in relation to the nearest exposed sensitive receptors, such as schools, churches, residences, hospitals, day care facilities, and elderly care facilities. LST thresholds represent the maximum emissions from a project that will prevent an exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard at the nearest sensitive receptor, taking into consideration ambient concentrations in each source receptor area (SRA), project, size, and distance to the sensitive receptor. Therefore, meeting the lowest allowable emissions thresholds translates to meeting the most stringent air quality standards for a project locality.

As part of the LST methodology, SCAQMD has divided its jurisdiction into 37 source receptor areas (SRAs) which can be used to determine whether a project may generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts. The proposed development is located in SRA 30, which covers the Coachella Valley and City of Desert Hot Springs. LSTs only apply to certain criteria pollutants: carbon dioxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NOx) particulate matter equal to or less than 10 microns in diameter (PM10), and particulate matter equal to or less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5).

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping analysis was used to delineate the project area and identify the nearest sensitive receptors using the distance intervals established by the LST methodology, which are 25 meters (82 feet), 50 meters (164 feet), 100 meters (328 feet), 200 meters (656 feet), and 500 meters (1,640 feet). The project surroundings include a combination of vacant land and residential uses. The Palm View Estates mobile home park, located west of the project site, represents the nearest residential use for purposes of LST analysis. Other nearby residential uses include the Park West mobile home park and single-family homes on the south side of Pierson Blvd. Since the project's immediate surroundings include residential development, the shortest and most conservative distance interval of 25

meters (82 feet) serves as the basis for this LST analysis. The shortest distance interval to the nearest sensitive receptor establishes the strictest threshold with the lowest emissions allowances needed to maintain compliance. The LST analysis results are subsequently quantified and discussed.

Air Emissions Methodology:

In November of 2017, the SCAQMD in conjunction with the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and other California air districts, released the latest version of the California Emissions Estimator Model™ (CalEEMod™) Version 2016.3.2. CalEEMod serves as an adopted platform to calculate both construction emissions and operational emissions from land use projects. CalEEMod can be used to calculate criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases. CalEEMod utilizes widely accepted methodologies for estimating emissions combined with default data that can be used when site-specific information is not available. Sources of these methodologies and default data include but are not limited to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) AP-42 emission factors, California Air Resources Board (CARB) vehicle emission models, studies commissioned by California agencies such as the California Energy Commission (CEC) and CalRecycle. In addition, some local air districts provided customized values for their default data and existing regulation methodologies for use for projects located in their jurisdictions. For this project, the model input accounted for twelve single-family residential units and 1.06 acres of asphalt surfaces corresponding to the proposed street improvements.

Discussion:

As previously introduced, the proposed development involves twelve dwelling units and the associated street improvements extending from Pierson Boulevard. Based on the California Department of Finance 2019 Population and Housing Estimates, the City of Desert Hot Springs' total population is 29,251, with approximately 11,674 total housing units and a household size of 3.17 persons per household. As such, project implementation of twelve constructed dwelling units would result in a population increase of 38 persons, which represents less than one percent of the total City population. Additionally the project is in compliance with the designated Zoning and General Plan designations and therefore consistent with estimates based on existing land use designations. The land use and zone for the project site is Residential Low Density / Specific Plan Overlay (R-L/SP). As such, the extent and scale of the project would not result in any direct or indirect population or housing increases, such that it would substantially change the City's land use composition and associated growth assumptions factored into the regional air quality management strategies. Therefore, there are no expected conflicts with the land use and growth assumptions factored into the Final 2016 AQMP.

As previously introduced, CalEEMod version 2016.3.2 was utilized to estimate the short-term construction-related and long-term operational emissions of criteria air pollutants and greenhouse gases associated with project implementation. Short-term construction-related emissions are calculated for site preparation, grading (earth movement), vertical construction, paving, and architectural coating. Long-term operational emissions are attributed to mobile sources (vehicle trips, vehicle emissions, fleet mix and road dust), land use area sources, energy use, solid waste disposal, and water use. The model input also includes the fugitive dust control measures which are a requirement under the City's Dust Control Ordinance and SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1. The measures under this local regulatory framework are designed to prevent sediment track-out onto public roads, prevent visible dust emissions from exceeding a 20-percent opacity, and prevent visible dust emissions from extending more than 100 feet (vertically or

horizontally from the origin of a source) or crossing any property line. Being a requirement in the Coachella Valley, dust control practices are not deemed mitigation.

As demonstrated in the modeling results included in Table III-2, construction related emissions resulting from site preparation, grading, utilities/building construction, paving, and architectural coating would not exceed the applicable SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance for any criteria pollutants, including PM10 and Ozone precursors. Thus, a less than significant impact would occur for project-related construction-source emissions.

Table III-2
Short Term Air Pollutant Emissions
Associated With Construction of the Proposed Project (Unmitigated)
(Pounds/Day)

	ROG/VOC	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Maximum Daily Emissions from, Site Preparation, Grading, Building Construction, Paving, and Architectural Coating	8.9520 (Summer)	46.5220 (Winter)	34.2746 (Summer)	0.0618 Summer)	7.6006 (Winter)	4.9591 (Winter)
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded	No	No	No	No	No	No

Note: CalEEMod does not directly calculate ozone (O3) emissions. Instead, the emissions associated with ozone precursors are calculated. VOC and ROGs are summed in the CalEEMod report under the header ROG. The PM10 and PM2.5 emissions are based on the CalEEMod mitigated results due to the local standard requirement to implement SCAQMD Rule 403 and 403.1 to control fugitive dust.

Moreover, CalEEMod was utilized to estimate the long-term operational air pollutant emissions that would occur during the life of the project. These operations include mobile (vehicular) and energy use. As shown in Table III-3, the project-related emissions of criteria pollutants are not expected to exceed any of the SCAQMD recommended significance threshold criteria for operational impacts.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Table III-3
Long Term Operational Air Pollutant Emissions
Associated With Development of the Project (Unmitigated)
(Pounds/Day)

Emission Source	ROG/VOC	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Total Area Sources, Energy Use, Mobile Sources	1.6420 (Summer)	1.6614 (Summer)	4.7318 (Summer)	0.0140 (Summer)	0.8605 (Summer)	0.4446 (Summer)
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded	No	No	No	No	No	No

Note: CalEEMod does not directly calculate ozone (O3) emissions. Instead, the emissions associated with ozone precursors are calculated. VOC and ROGs are summed in the CalEEMod report under the header ROG.

In summary, the project is not expected to result in growth or land use changes that would interfere with the City or region's ability to comply with the most current air quality plans including the 2016 AQMP, CVSIP for PM10, and the ozone level attainment efforts. Moreover, the project's short-term construction and long-term operational emissions would not exceed the established regional thresholds for criteria air pollutant emissions. Pertaining to the obstruction of an applicable air quality plan, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Discussion:
As previously discussed, the Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) was formerly classified as "Severe-15" nonattainment for the 1997 8-hour ozone national ambient air quality standard with an attainment deadline of June 15, 2019. Over the past 15 years, the air quality in the Coachella Valley has steadily improved because of the implementation of emission control measures by SCAQMD and California Air Resources Board (CARB). However, in 2017 and 2018, higher ozone levels were experienced throughout the State of California due to changes in meteorology, biogenic emissions, and/or anthropogenic emissions. As a result of the higher ozone experienced in 2017 and 2018, it was determined that the Coachella Valley could not practically attain the 1997 8-hour ozone standard by the June 15, 2019 deadline. The inability to attain the standard is largely due to weather conditions that are

impacting not only the Coachella Valley and the South Coast Air Basin, but the entire State of California and Western United States. As a result, SCAQMD requested a reclassification that would extend the attainment deadline to June of 2024. The reclassification has allowed South Coast AQMD up to five years to reach attainment. The U.S. EPA classifies areas of ozone nonattainment (i.e., Extreme, Severe, Serious, Moderate or Marginal) based on the extent to which an area exceeds the standard. The higher the exceedance level, the more time can be used to demonstrate attainment in recognition of the greater challenge involved. Nonattainment areas with the higher classifications are also subject to more stringent requirements. SCAQMD has prepared additional documentation and will be implementing additional measures to comply with the June 2024 deadline. Current and planned regulations on mobile and stationary sources are expected to contribute to improvements to ozone air quality in the Coachella Valley and lead to attainment of the standard.

As demonstrated in tables III-2 and III-3, project-related short-term construction and long-term operational emissions are not expected to exceed the daily thresholds of significance established by SCAQMD for ozone precursors, such as NOx and ROG/VOC. By complying with the adopted thresholds, the proposed development is also complying with the overall attainment strategies reflected in the currently adopted 2016 AQMP.

Furthermore, it was previously introduced that the Coachella Valley is currently designated as a serious nonattainment area for PM10 (particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less). The U.S. EPA-approved Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan is in place with an attainment strategy for meeting the PM10 standard. Some of the existing measures include the requirement of detailed dust control plans from builders that specify the use of more aggressive and frequent watering, soil stabilization, wind screens, and phased development to minimize fugitive dust. Appropriate air quality measures to prevent fugitive dust are required by the City's Fugitive Dust Control ordinance and plan implementation requirements, which are consistent with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1 that apply to the Coachella Valley strategy for reducing fugitive dust emissions.

Under the City's Dust Control Ordinance, a Fugitive Dust Control Plan must be prepared and approved prior to any earth-moving operations. Consistent with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1, implementation of the Fugitive Dust Control Plan is required to occur under the supervision of an individual with training on Dust Control in the Coachella Valley. The plan will include methods to prevent sediment track-out onto public roads, prevent visible dust emissions from exceeding a 20-percent opacity, and prevent visible dust emissions from extending more than 100 feet (vertically or horizontally from the origin of a source) or crossing any property line. The most widely used measures include proper construction phasing, proper maintenance/cleaning of construction equipment, soil stabilization, installation of track-out prevention devices, and wind fencing. Since project-related emissions would be consistent with the Air Quality Management Plan, the Coachella Valley PM10 SIP, and all SCAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds, long-term operational air quality impacts associated with the project should not be considered cumulatively considerable. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Discussion:

A sensitive receptor is a person in the population who is particularly susceptible (i.e. more susceptible than the population at large) to health effects due to exposure to an air contaminant. Sensitive receptors and the facilities that house them are of particular concern if they are located in close proximity to localized sources of carbon monoxide, toxic air contaminants, or odors. Land uses considered by the SCAQMD to be sensitive receptors include residences, long-term health care facilities, schools, rehabilitation centers, playgrounds, convalescent centers, childcare centers, retirement homes, and athletic facilities. The project site is located within close proximity to existing residential structures. Construction-related emissions resulting from the project are not expected to reach or exceed the SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance and therefore would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations at a regional level.

The CalEEMod results previously discussed were compared to the most stringent Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology to identify potential impacts that could contribute or cause localized exceedances of the federal and/or state ambient air quality standards. As previously mentioned, the shortest distance interval of 25 meters (82 feet) was utilized based on the neighboring mobile homes located west of the project site. The west-lying residential properties are located adjacent to the project site. Although the existing homes are located immediately west of the project, the shortest distance interval provided by the LST Methodology is 25 meters, therefore, this distance interval was utilized. The shortest distance interval establishes the strictest threshold with the lowest emissions allowances needed to maintain compliance. The AQMD LST Look-Up Tables were utilized to determine whether the site would exceed the LST threshold. For purposes of this analysis, the 2-acre thresholds for SRA 30 were consulted in order to provide a worst-case scenario analysis, since the project is greater than 2 acres.

Table III-4
Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) Associated with Construction of the Proposed Project with Receptors at 25 Meters (82 Feet), (In Pounds/Day)

Emission Source	NOx	CO	PM10	PM2.5
Maximum Unmitigated Emissions Resulting from Site Preparation, Grading, Building Construction, Paving and Architectural Coating (Rounded Value)	25.3911	19.7319	1.7733	1.4178
SCAQMD LST Threshold for SRA 30	191	1,299	7	5
LST Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No

Sources: CalEEMod Results and AQMD LST Look-Up Tables
Note: The PM10 and PM2.5 emissions are based on the CalEEMod mitigated results due to the local standard requirement to implement SCAQMD Rule 403 and 403.1 to control fugitive dust.

The data provided in Table III-4 demonstrates that the construction activities would not generate emissions in excess of the site-specific LSTs; therefore, site-specific impacts during construction of the project would be less than significant. Based on the LST methodology, if the calculated emissions for the proposed construction or operational activities are below the LST emission levels. As previously discussed, project construction would require the implementation of a fugitive dust control plan, which

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

would establish temporary wind screening, soil stabilization, and other measures to prevent fugitive emissions of particulate matter. Related to the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
Implementation of the proposed twelve-home development is not expected to result in emissions that would exceed the South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds pertaining to construction or operation. Moreover, the project emissions would not exceed the Localized Significance Thresholds applicable to the project setting in relation to the existing residences near the project.

The proposed residential project will not include the types of facilities commonly known to generate odors, such as wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfills, composting/green waste facilities, recycling facilities, petroleum refineries, chemical manufacturing plants, painting/coating operations, rendering plants, or food packaging facilities. As such, the project is not expected to result in odor emissions adversely affecting nearby neighbors. Pertaining to other emissions adversely affecting a substantial number of people, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the Project:
Sources: *Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan*, CVAG; Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; *General and Focused Biol ogical Resources Assessment,* James W. Cornett Ecological Consultants, February 2020.

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion:
In February 2020, James W. Cornett Ecological Consultants conducted a *Project-Specific General and Focused Biological Resources Assessment.* The assessment area covered the project site and 200 yards beyond all site boundaries (except to the west and south of the project site due to the presence of private property and construction). The biological survey and analyses were designed to ascertain the impacts of proposed development on the potential biological resources of the project site and immediate vicinity, as mandated by CEQA and required by the City of Desert Hot Springs.

The specific objectives of the biological survey are listed below:

- Determine the vascular plant and vertebrate animal species that occur on, and immediately adjacent to, the project site.
- Ascertain the presence of plant or animal species given special status by government agencies, with an emphasis on sensitive species or communities not covered under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP).
- Ascertain the existence of other significant biotic elements, corridors or communities.
- Consider the site's biological resources as they relate to the CVMSHCP and its Conservation Areas.
- If necessary and where appropriate, recommend measures to mitigate significant adverse impacts of the project on sensitive species and habitats not covered in the CVMSHCP but determined to occur within the project boundaries.

Survey methodology included literature, records, collections, website, or staff review to determine resources that are known to exist within the general area and to determine the possible occurrence of sensitive species. The University of California at Riverside Herbarium, the Boyd Deep Canyon Desert Research Center, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, Calflora, and the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Database were reviewed and consulted for specific information regarding the occurrence of sensitive species. Field surveys were initiated in February 2020. Daytime field surveys were conducted on February 15, 16, 17, 20, and 21, 2020. Night surveys were conducted on February 17 and 18, 2020. Animal surveys were conducted simultaneously with plant surveys. In addition, twenty-five live-animal traps (which capture animals unharmed) for large and small mammals were set within the project site for twenty-four-hour periods on February 17 and 18, 2020.

Surveys were conducted by walking east-west transects at 10-yard intervals through the project site and 100 yards beyond all site boundaries (except to the west and south of the project site due to the presence of private property). The survey techniques used during this assessment have been approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for determining the presence or absence of the burrowing owl and desert tortoise and represents an intensive survey effort that resulted in no officially listed or federally protected species being overlooked.

The elevation of the project site is approximately 1,144 feet above sea level. According to the report, the only topographical relief consists of a small ravine, that is a tributary of Big Morongo Wash, which drops approximately seven feet below ground level. The environment of the project site is included as part of the desert scrub habitat of the valley floor as described in the CVMSHCP.

The project specific Biological Assessment, there are no naturally occurring springs or permanent aquatic habitats in or near the project boundary. A stream corridor (desert wash) is shown on the Desert Hot Springs U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps for the project site. Site surveys confirmed the presence of this wash and is located along the northeastern edge of the project site. Because of these findings'

streambed alteration permits from the State of California and / or the Army Corps of Engineers may be necessary.

Plant Survey

Though the entire site has been graded in the past, remnants of a climax plant association or community were found on the site periphery: the Sonoran creosote bush scrub community. Sonoran creosote bush scrub community dominates vegetation beyond the project site and is the pervasive plant community throughout the Colorado Desert of southeastern California. The most abundant climax plant on the site was the creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) followed by brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), black-banded rabbitbrush (*Ericameria paniculata*), burrobush (*Ambrosia dumosa*), and Emory's Dalea (*Dalea emoryi*).

Soil disturbance (grading) resulted in intrusion of weed species that germinate and grow after damage or removal of native vegetation. Such species include Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*), bugseed (*Dicoria canescens*) and Schismus grass (*Schismus barbatus*). Each of these species occur in the Colorado Desert wherever the natural vegetation has been removed.

Soil characteristics are uniform over the entire site. Surface soil is composed of coarse sand, pebbles, cobbles and occasional small boulders. Flood waters have carried these materials out of the San Bernardino Mountains to the northwest and the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north.

Per the project-specific Biological Assessment, the Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, published by the California Native Plant Society (2001), the CNDDB Special Plant List (2020), or the Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Plants of California (2018) list a total of twenty-seven plant species occurring within the three U.S.G.S. quadrangles considered in the Biological Assessment. Seven of these species could conceivably occur on the project site. They are the glandular ditaxis, ribbed cryptantha, flat-seeded spurge, Coachella Valley milk vetch, white-bracted spineflower, slender cottonheads, and Little San Bernardino Mountains Linanthus.

The glandular ditaxis is a rare perennial herb that blooms from December through March. It is restricted to sandy environments in the Sonoran Desert and has been found in the Coachella Valley at elevations like those found on the project site. Since the glandular ditaxis is a perennial and surveys were conducted during its blooming period, it likely would be detected during the plant surveys. It was not detected and therefore presumed to not occur onsite.

The ribbed cryptantha is an uncommon ephemeral known to occur on sandy soils in the Coachella Valley. The project site can be considered suitable habitat for this species. The species was not detected during the surveys; however, the surveys were conducted in February when this species might not have been detectable.

The flat-seeded spurge is an extremely rare ephemeral herb known to occur on sandy soils in the Sonoran Desert. There has been at least one specimen found in the Coachella Valley. The species was not detected but the surveys were done in winter when some ephemerals would not be in evidence.

The white-bracted spineflower is a small ephemeral found on sand or gravel plains at middle elevations primarily west of Highway 62. A handful of specimens have been found in the northwestern Coachella Valley. It was not found during surveys but would not be in bloom and unlikely to be detected in February.

The Little San Bernardino Mountains Linanthus is a small ephemeral found primarily in the northwestern Coachella Valley. It usually occurs on sandy benches adjoining washes and has been found within one mile of the project site. It is known to bloom as early as February though no specimens were found on or near the project site. This is a covered species under the CVMSHCP and, other than paying the mitigation fees, no other actions are required.

The slender cottonheads is a small ephemeral found across the Sonoran Desert of California. Several individuals have been found in the Coachella Valley though nearly all south of the project site. The subspecies could occur in the project area though no evidence of it was located on or near the site and no records exist for its presence on, or immediately adjacent to, the project site. Per the Biological Assessment, the surveys were complete in winter when the plant would likely go undetected.

The federally endangered perennial herb, the Coachella Valley Milk Vetch, usually occurs on sandy soils in the Coachella Valley. During the survey, no individuals within the project site boundaries. This subspecies has been found less than a mile from the project site in nearly identical habitat. Seeds of the species may, therefore, occur on the project site. Despite surveys being conducted in late winter, many ephemeral plant species had germinated, and some had flowered. No plant species that is considered sensitive and not covered under the CVMSHCP or listed by state or federal agencies was found or recorded during the survey and none are expected. Although there is a very slight possibility that one or more rare and sensitive plant species may occur on, or immediately adjacent to, the project site, the City of Desert Hot Springs is requiring that a spring rare plant survey be conducted following the procedures stated in the *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW, March 20, 2018).

Animal Survey

Encountered arthropods on the site included the sand scorpion, Eleodes beetle, honeybee, and harvester ant. Three insect species known to occur within the Coachella Valley have been placed on the California Department of Fish and Game's Special Animals list. They include the Coachella giant sand treader cricket, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, Coachella Valley grasshopper, and Casey's June beetle. Per the project-specific Biological Assessment, none of these four-insect species were found during the surveys though the former three may be present. All are either covered species under the CVMSHCP or are not listed.

Detected reptiles encountered included the side blotched lizard and western whiptail. No individuals of the officially threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard were observed, detected, or expected due to the absence of areas of loose, windblown sand.

A concerted effort was made to locate sign of the officially listed desert tortoise. However, no evidence of any kind (shell fragments, scat, tracks, burrows) was found and no direct observations were made. It is concluded in the Biological Assessment that this species does not occur within the project site and immediate vicinity at this time and no additional surveys for this species are recommended.

An intensive effort was also made to locate evidence of the flat-tailed horned lizard; however, no individuals were observed, and no sign (scat, tracks) was found. The inability to detect the flat-tailed horned lizard, a very cryptic species, does not necessarily indicate it is absent from the site. Though the flat-tailed horned lizard was proposed to be listed by the federal government as threatened, the proposal

has been rescinded. The state government considers the flat-tailed horned lizard a Species of Special Concern. The flat-tailed horned lizard is a covered species under the CVMSHCP and specific mitigation for this species is not required.

Frequently observed birds within the project area were the common raven, mourning dove, house finch, and house sparrow. No observations or calls of LeConte's thrasher were recorded during the surveys. In the Coachella Valley this species is strongly associated with golden cholla in which it nests. The cactus was not present on site. The highly disturbed nature of the site and the proximity of areas of human activity most likely make the site and its surroundings unsuitable for this species. The LeConte's thrasher is a covered species under the CVMSHCP.

According to the Biological Assessment, two special-status avian species, potentially occurring within the project boundaries, are the burrowing owl and loggerhead shrike. No observations of the loggerhead shrike were recorded. Shrikes nest in dense shrubs or trees that are at least three feet in height. The absence of such plants within the project boundaries precludes this species from nesting on the project site. The shrike is a non-covered species and considered a Species of Special Concern by the state of California. Due to the lack of breeding habitat, no future breeding surveys are recommended.

The burrowing owl is a state and federally protected species and not functionally covered under the CVMSHCP. However, no owls were observed during the field surveys and no active burrows were found. The project site is not considered suitable habitat for the burrowing owl. The soil on the site was compacted which would make excavations difficult for the owl which typically enlarges existing rodent burrows for shelter and ground squirrel burrows were non-existent within the site boundaries. Moreover, intense human activity from vehicles on Pierson and the adjacent residential areas immediately adjacent to the site would be expected to deter owls from taking up residency on the site. Field observations of domestic cats and dogs within the site boundaries were also recorded and would also discourage owls from use of the site.

Mammals recorded during the survey included the black tailed jackrabbit, coyote, and long-tailed pocket mouse. No individuals of the Palm Springs Pocket Mouse were found. Additionally, no individuals of the desert kit fox were observed or detected on or near the project site. Human activity in lands surrounding the site is the likely explanation for its absence. The desert kit fox is fully protected in California and is not a covered species under the CVMSHCP. One mammalian species contained within the California Department of Fish & Game Special Animals Report (2015) is the Palm Springs ground squirrel. The Palm Springs ground squirrel is considered a state Species of Special Concern. In the past it was considered a candidate species for listing by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service. It may possibly occur on or near the site but is a covered species under the CVMSHCP and mitigation is provided under the Plan.

The project lies within the boundary of the CVMSHCP, which outlines policies for conservation of habitats and natural communities. The CVMSHCP implements a habitat mitigation fee from new development in order to support the acquisition of conservation lands. The fee would be applied per Chapter 3.40 of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code (Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan Mitigation Fees). The project is expected to comply with provisions of the CVMSHCP. Moreover, the project site's easterly boundary abuts the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area that is treated as Conservation Area in the plan. Therefore, the project is subject to CVMSHCP Plan requirements regarding lands adjoining Conservation Areas. The Land Use

Adjacency Guidelines were established in the CVMSHCP to avoid or minimize indirect effects from development adjacent to or within the Conservation Areas. Adjacent refers to sharing a common boundary with any parcel in a Conservation Area. Indirect effects, commonly known as edge effects, may include drainage, toxics, lighting, noise, and invasive species. The project is expected to comply with the Plan requirements regarding land adjoining Conservation Areas.

Therefore, less than significant impacts are expected to species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, following the recommended mitigation measures listed below:

Mitigation Measures:

BR-1: To comply with CEQA Guidelines 15125 and/or 15380, the project proponent shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a spring rare plant survey following the procedures stated in the *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW, March 20,2018).

BR-2: The project proponent shall contact Coachella Valley Association of Governments to determine precise mitigation fees applicable under the CVMSHCP. The time of payment must comply with the City's Municipal Code (Chapter 3.40). The fee shall be paid in full at the time of the issuance of a building permit for the project.

BR-3: The project proponent shall ensure that the project site design and operations adhere to and incorporate the applicable Land Use Adjacency Guidelines established in the CVMSHCP throughout project approvals and the life of the project. The project will adhere to the following as stated in the CVMSHCP.

4.5.1 Drainage

Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Stormwater systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent Conservation Area.

4.5.2 Toxics

Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate bioproducts such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife and plant species, Habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation Area.

4.5.3 Lighting

For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Manual.

4.5.4 Noise
Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.

4.5.5 Invasives
Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native plant materials to the maximum extent Feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112. The plants listed in Table 4-113 shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence

BR-4: The project proponent shall through agency consultation (including but not limited to the City of Desert Hot Springs, Army Corps of Engineers, and California Fish and Wildlife) determine if streambed alteration permits are necessary prior to the issuance of a building permit.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion:
The biological survey performed on the project property did not find any on-site naturally occurring springs, permanent aquatic habitats or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. According to the Project Specific Biological Assessment, there are no naturally occurring springs or permanent aquatic habitats in or near the project site boundaries. A stream corridor (desert wash) is shown on the Desert Hot Springs U.S. Geological Survey Quadrangle map for the project site and site surveys confirmed the presence of this feature. It is located along the northeastern edge of the project site. However, the wash vegetation was poorly developed and offered no significant wildlife habitat. Nevertheless, streambed alteration permits from the State of California and / or the Army Corps of Engineers may be necessary. Less than significant impacts are expected provided the procedures established in Mitigation Measure BR-4 of this Initial Study are implemented.

Mitigation Measures: See BR-4

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

As previously discussed, the project site does not contain federally protected wetlands, marshes or other drainage features. The National Wetlands Inventory from the USFWS, indicated that there are no wetlands or riparian resources on the project property. Furthermore, the Biological Resources Assessments did not identify naturally occurring springs or permanent aquatic habitats in or near the project site boundaries nor are there botanical indicators of such corridors. However, as previously discussed, a desert wash was found along the site's northeastern edge. The wash vegetation was poorly developed and offered no significant habitat.

Implementation of the project would not result in the direct removal, filling or other hydrological interruption to any of these resources. The proposed on-site storm drain improvements shall include facilities to prevent the direct discharge impacts of runoff to any adjacent land uses. A project-specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) is expected to be prepared to ensure that the project does not contribute pollutants of concern in any project storm runoff. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion:

Per the project-specific biological report, no migratory wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery sites were found on the project and no discernable and routinely used corridors were identified. The Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon, located north and northeast of the site, is considered a biological corridor. However, the project-specific biological report concluded that no concentration of animal tracks was found and no evidence of a wildlife corridor within the site boundaries was detected. Additionally, the biological report stated that the site does not provide significant resources to bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Although the potential for other nesting birds known to by migratory is exceedingly low, to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513, a ground-nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified avian biologist. It is recommended that the survey be conducted in April and early May. This is indicated as mitigation measure BR-5. No impacts to movement of any native resident or migratory fish. With the implementation of BR-5, less than significant impacts to movement of any native resident or migratory wildlife species or wildlife nursery sites are expected.

Mitigation Measures:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

BR-5: The project shall retain a qualified avian biologist to conduct a migratory nesting bird survey, to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. To yield the most accurate results, the survey shall be conducted in April and early May.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
The project property is presently vacant and undeveloped with scattered vegetation. Project implementation would not result in demolition or tree removal. The proposed site plan provides landscaping improvements along the project edges in a manner consistent with the local development standards. The project will comply with the CVMSHCP and the land use adjacency guidelines for Conservation Areas. There are no other unique local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources that would cause a conflict nor does the site support high value biological resources that could be affected. There are no applicable tree preservation policies or ordinances and no impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion:
As previously discussed, the project lies within the boundary of the CVMSHCP, which outlines policies for conservation of habitats and natural communities. The CVMSHCP implements a habitat mitigation fee from new development in order to support the acquisition of conservation lands. The fee would be applied per Chapter 3.40 of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code (Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan Mitigation Fees). The project site's easterly boundary abuts the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area that is treated as Conservation Area in the plan. Therefore, the project is subject to CVMSHCP plan requirements regarding lands adjoining Conservation Areas. These guidelines have been established to avoid or minimize indirect effects from development adjacent to Conservation Areas and discussed previously in this section.

The project is expected to comply with provisions of the CVMSHCP. Less than significant impacts would result from project implementation provided the procedures established in Mitigation Measure BR-1 and BR-2 of this Initial Study are implemented.

Mitigation Measures: See BR-2 and BR-3

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES –Would the Project:
Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; *Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report*, CRM Tech, 2020.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

CRM Tech prepared a Project Specific Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report for the project site located on approximately 3.62 acres of vacant and undeveloped land in Desert Hot Springs. The purpose of the report is to provide the City of Desert Hot Springs with the necessary information and analysis to determine whether the project would cause a substantial adverse change to any "historical resources" that may exist in or around the project area. The report found no evidence of any settlement or land development activities on or near the project area. The research methods performed by CRM Tech as part of this assessment includes a comprehensive records search, historical background research, contact with Native American representatives, and an intensive-level field survey.

According to Eastern Information Center (EIC) records, the project area had not been surveyed for cultural resources prior to this study, and no historical/archaeological resources had been recorded on or adjacent to the property. The scope of that study also included a records search and an intensive-level field survey, and no cultural resources were identified in the project area as a result. Within the one-mile scope of the records search, at least 43 previous studies on various tracks of land and linear features have been reported to the EIC. In all, over 60% of the land within the one-mile radius has been surveyed, which resulted in the identification of five historical/archaeological sites and three isolates. One of the recorded sites was of prehistoric Native American origin; and the remaining sites dated to the historic period. None of these previously recorded cultural resources was found in the immediate vicinity of the project area, and therefore, none of them requires further consideration during this study.

Historical maps consulted for the Project Specific study suggest that the project area is relatively low in sensitivity for cultural resources from the historic period. Prior to 1900, no settlement or other land use, either Native American or non-Native, was evident in or near the project area, and the only man-made feature in the vicinity was trail identified as "Road leading to Mohave River", which passed more than a mile to the northwest of the project location. As late as the early 1940s, only a few scattered buildings and roads, including the unpaved forerunner of today's Pierson Boulevard, were noted in the vicinity of the project area.

By 1972, the Elks Lodge and the Park West mobile home park were present on the nearby properties, followed by the development of the Palm View Estates mobile home park in the mid-1990's. Most of the ground surface has been leveled and cleared of vegetation by 1996, but no further work occurred on the property except for the construction of a portion of the Elks Lodge parking lot between 1996 and 2002. In 2009, a large stockpile of imported soil was observed in the southern portion of property, and the soil appears to have been spread over the site shortly afterwards. Despite these activities, the project area has remained vacant and undeveloped to the present time.

The field survey results were negative for cultural resources. The entire project area was closely inspected for any evidence of human activities dating to the prehistoric or historic period, but none was found. Field observations confirmed the prior ground disturbance on the property and the presence of imported soil on the surface. Modern refuse, such as constriction debris, landscaping waste, and household discards, was observed over much of the property, none of the items are of any historical or

archaeological interest. No buildings, structures, objects, sites, features, or artifacts more than 50 years of age were encountered. Therefore, less than significant impacts to historical resources are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

Discussion:

Archaeological resources are described as cultural resources, such as structures or objects that provide evidence to past human activity. They are important for scientific, historic, and/or religious reasons to cultures, communities, groups or individuals.

As previously discussed, CRM Tech conducted a project and site-specific study on historical and archaeological resources. The assessment included a records search, Native American scoping, historical background research and an intensive-level field survey.

The field survey produced negative results from either the historic or pre-historic period. Within the one-mile scope of the records search, five historical/archaeological sites and three isolates were previously recorded. One of the recorded sites was of prehistoric Native American origin; and the remaining sites dated to the historic period. Per the cultural report, none of these previously recorded cultural resources was found in the immediate vicinity of the project area, and therefore, none of them requires further consideration during this study. Furthermore, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) sacred lands record search did not indicate the presence of Native American resources within project area and no notable cultural features were known to be present in the project area.

Therefore, following implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, less than significant impacts are expected following the recommended mitigation measure.

Mitigation Measures:

CUL-1: The presence of a qualified archaeological monitor or Cultural Resource Monitor shall be required during all project related ground disturbing activities. In the event that cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the project outside the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Cultural Resources Department (SMBMI) shall be contacted regarding any pre-contact and/or historic-era finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

CUL-2: If significant pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources, as defined by CEQA, are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to SMBMI for review and comment. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
The historical and archaeological reports prepared by CRM Tech for this project included intensive-level field observations of the entire site. The entire project area was closely inspected for evidence of human activities dating to prehistoric or historic periods. As discussed previously, no other sites, features, artifacts, or built-environment features of prehistoric or historic age were encountered within the project area during the field survey.

Pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 require that in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site, or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains, until the County Coroner has examined the remains. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American or has reason to believe that they are Native American, the coroner shall contact by telephone within 24-hours of the Native American Heritage Commission. Pursuant to the mentioned California Health and Safety Code, proper actions shall take place in the event of a discovery or recognition of any human remains during project construction activities. This is indicated as mitigation measure CUL-3, below.

Mitigation Measures:
CUL-3: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of this find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

VI. ENERGY -- Would the project:
Sources: *California Emissions Estimator Model* (CalEEMod), Version 2016.3.2; Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; Desert Hot Springs General Plan Environmental Impact Report, 2020; Propane Fuel Basics, U.S. Department of Energy, accessed 2020; U.S. Energy Information Administration, accessed 2020.

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
The project proposes a 12-lot residential community on approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road, in the City of Desert Hot Springs. As stated throughout this document, the project will include lots ranging from 0.207 acres and 0.293 acres. Associated improvements include pedestrian walkways, a paved drive aisle and landscaping.

According to the Desert Hot Springs General Plan (DHS GP), consumption of electricity and natural gas

per capita or per household in the Coachella Valley are estimates that vary significantly in use. However, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), in cooperation with utility providers, has developed a set of assumptions to define the general level of energy consumption on a use basis. The residential sector is the City's largest consumer segment of energy. Residential energy users on average utilize approximately 79,000 cubic feet of natural gas, and 6,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) per household per year. Electricity and natural gas are the primary sources of energy in the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Electricity is provided to the City and Sphere of Influence (SOI) by Southern California Edison (SCE). SCE is regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), and receives electric power from a variety of sources. According to the California Public Utilities Commission's 2016 Biennial Renewables Portfolio Standard Program Update, 23.2 percent of SCE's power came from eligible renewable sources in 2014, including biomass/waste, geothermal, small hydroelectric, solar and wind sources.

The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas or the Gas Company) provides natural gas to Desert Hot Springs. Natural gas is found in association with petroleum crude oil deposits and is transported throughout the country through high-pressure transmission lines. It is the primary source of energy used in the City for space and water heating, as well as cooking. On average, the typical household uses approximately 6,600 cubic feet (cf) of natural gas per dwelling unit per month, according to the DHS GP.

Petroleum accounts for approximately 92 percent of California's transportation energy sources. In 2015, California consumed 23.2 billion gallons of petroleum, including 15.5 billion gallons of finished gasoline and 3.7 billion gallons of diesel. Gasoline and other vehicle fuels are commercially provided commodities and would be available to the project via commercial outlets. Technological advances, market trends, consumer behavior and government policies could result in significant changes to fuel consumption by type and total. Various policies, rules and regulations have been enacted to improve vehicle fuel efficiency, promote the development and use of alternative fuels, reduce transportation-source air pollutants and GHG emissions, and reduce VMT, at the Federal and State levels. Technological advances have made use of other energy resources or alternative transportation modes increasingly feasible, as market forces have driven the price of petroleum products steadily upward.

The project is expected to consume energy in the form of electricity, natural gas and petroleum during project construction and operation. Analysis of the project-related energy consumption was calculated using the latest version of CalEEMod (v2016.3.2), which calculates construction-source and operational-source criteria pollutant and GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources. The project is categorized into two land uses within CalEEMod: Single Family Housing and Other Asphalt Surfaces. Project related energy consumption, via electricity, natural gas and petroleum is summarized in the table below and analyzed subsequently.

Table VI-1 Summary of Annual Energy Use During Operation

Source	Units	Total Project Energy Use
Electricity Total	kWh/yr	104,598
Natural Gas Total	kBTU/yr	367,154
Petroleum Total	Gallons	36,170.41

Electricity

As previously stated, electricity is provided to the City of Desert Hot Springs and the project site by SCE. SCE's facilities include high-voltage transmission lines, lower voltage distribution lines, and substations, which lowers voltage so that it can be distributed to homes and businesses. SCE's transmission system includes high-voltage lines rated at 500, 230, 115, 66 and 55 kilovolts (kV). Distribution lines are those rated below 55 kV. Electric power is transported to individual homes and businesses from substations through 33 and 12 kV distribution lines. As previously stated, residential energy users on average utilize approximately 6,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) per household per year.

Construction

Temporary electrical power for lighting and electronic equipment, such as computers inside interim construction trailers, would be provided by SCE. Electricity consumed for onsite construction trailers, which are used by managerial staff during the hours of construction activities, as well as electrically-powered hand tools are expected to use a minimal amount of electricity. However, the electricity used for such activities would be temporary and negligible. Most energy used during construction would be from petroleum consumption (discussed further in following subsection).

Operation

The project proposes the operation of a 12-lot residential community on approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land. The project would not result in the use of excessive amounts of fuel or electricity and would not result in the need to develop additional sources of energy. Although energy use at the project would not be excessive, the project would incorporate several measures directed at minimizing energy use. These measures include applying energy efficient design features, including using high efficiency lighting, such as LEDs, to meet 2019 Title 24 Standards, and therefore, reducing electricity consumption during project operation.

According to the CalEEMod calculations, the project is expected to generate the demand for approximately 104,598 kWh of annual electricity, depicted in Table VI-2, Operational Electricity Demand.

Table VI-2 Operational Electricity Demand

	Electricity Demand
Land Use	kWh/yr
Single Family Housing	104,598
Other Asphalt Surfaces	0
Total	104,598

According to the DHSGP Environmental Impact Report (EIR), residential electricity usage is determined by applying the SCE's electrical power usage rates to potential development on a per unit basis. Per the EIR, the total annual electric usage for residential development at City buildout is 396,398,178 kWh, as depicted below:

Annual Electric Energy Usage (per unit)	Total Number of Dwelling Units	Total Annual Electric Usage

5,626.50 kWh/unit/year	x	70,452 units	=	396,398,178 kWh

The project is proposed to consume approximately 104,598 kWh/yr., which is approximately 0.026 percent of the estimated total annual electricity use for residential development at City buildout (396,398,178 kWh/yr).Therefore, operation of the project site is not anticipated to use excessive amounts of electricity and impacts are expected to be less than significant.

Natural Gas

As stated previously, the typical household uses approximately 6,600 cubic feet (cf) of natural gas per dwelling unit (du) per month (mo). This number is equivalent to 6,732 thousand British Thermal Units (kBTU), which is the unit used in the CalEEMod calculations. According to the DHSGP EIR, natural gas consumption for residential development at buildout totals to approximately 418,441,288 cf/mo, as depicted below:

Natural Gas Consumption for Residential Development at Buildout

Single Family DUs = 6,665.0 cf/unit/mo	x	51,183 du	=	341,134,695 cf/mo
Multi-Family DUs = 4,011.5 cf/unit/mo	x	19,269 du	=	77,297,593 cf/mo
		Total	=	418,441,288 cf/mo

(Note: 418,441,288 cf/mo is equivalent to approximately 491,070,113.76 kBTU/mo or 5,892,841,365.12 kBTU/year.)

Construction

Natural gas is not anticipated to be required during construction of the project. Fuels used for construction would primarily consist of diesel and gasoline, which are discussed under the following petroleum subsection. Any minor amounts of natural gas that may be consumed because of project construction would be temporary and negligible and would not have an adverse effect.

Operation

The consumption of natural gas typically is consumed during building heating, water heating and cooking, which will occur during project operation. The project's expected natural gas consumption was calculated using the CalEEMod default values. Based on the CalEEMod calculations, the project is estimated to consume approximately 367,154 kBTU of natural gas annually during operation of the entire project. This is displayed in Table VI-3, Operational Natural Gas Demand.

Table VI-3 Operational Natural Gas Demand

	Natural Gas Demand
Land Use	kBTU/yr
Single Family Housing	367,154
Other Asphalt Surfaces	0
Total	367,154

As such, the project would result in a long-term increase in demand for natural gas. As previously stated, the DHSGP EIR calculated that the residential sector, at total buildout, will consume approximately 5,892,841,365.12 kBTU/yr. The project is proposed to consume approximately 367,154 kBTU of natural gas per year, which is approximately 0.006 percent of the estimated total annual natural gas use for residential development at City buildout (5,892,841,365.12 kBTU/yr). Therefore, natural gas consumption would be appropriate and not place a significant burden on SoCal Gas services.

Petroleum

Petroleum is the largest U.S. energy source according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). Petroleum products are used to fuel vehicles and produce electricity. U.S. Petroleum consumption in 2017 was primarily used by the transportation sector (71 percent). The industrial sector accounted for 24 percent petroleum consumption, the residential sector consumed 3 percent, commercial consumed 2 percent, and finally, electric power consumed 1 percent.

Gasoline is the most consumed petroleum product in the United States. In 2017, consumption of finished motor gasoline averaged about 392 million gallons per day, which was equal to about 47 percent of total U.S. petroleum consumption, according to the U.S. EIA. Gasoline and other vehicle fuels are commercially provided commodities and would be available to the project via commercial outlets.

Construction

Petroleum would be consumed throughout construction of the project. Fuel consumed by construction equipment would be the primarily energy resource expended over the course of construction, while vehicle miles traveled (VMT) associated with the transportation of construction materials and construction worker commutes would also result in petroleum consumption. Heavy-duty equipment used for project construction would rely on diesel fuel, as would haul trucks involved in off-hauling materials from excavation. Construction workers are expected to travel to and from the project site in gasoline-powered passenger vehicles. There are no unusual project characteristics or construction processes that would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive that is used for comparable activities or use of equipment that would not conform to current emission standards (and related fuel efficiencies).

Heavy-duty construction equipment of various types would be used during each phase of construction. CalEEMod was used to estimate construction equipment usage. In the analysis of the project the mitigated construction figures were used, based on the assumption that the project will implement applicable mitigation measures. Fuel consumption from construction equipment was estimated by converting the total CO2 emissions from each construction phase to gallons using the conversion factors shown in the tables included subsequently.

Table VI-4, Construction Worker Gasoline Demand, illustrates the demand of gasoline fuel for construction worker trips to and from the site during each construction phase, and phase of development. Construction worker gasoline demand during each phase of development equals a total of 2,458.96 gallons of gasoline fuel.

Table VI-4 Construction Worker Gasoline Demand

Phase	Days	Trips	Miles	VMT	KgCO2e	Kg/CO2/Gallon	Gallons
Demolition	1	15	11	165	52	8.89*	5.85
Site Prep.	5	18	11	990	312.1	8.89	35.11
Grading	20	15	11	3,300	1,040.5	8.89	117.04
Building Const.	230	24	11	60,720	18,779.5	8.89	2,112.43
Paving	20	20	11	4,400	1,340.9	8.89	150.83
Arch. Coating	20	5	11	1,100	335.2	8.89	37.71
						Total	**2,458.96**

*https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gases-equivalencies-calculator-calculations-and-references
https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator

Table VI-5, Construction Vendor Diesel Fuel Demand (below), illustrates the demand of diesel fuel for construction vendor trips to and from the site. These trips are associated with the delivery of construction materials during the construction phase. Construction vendor demand equals a total of 2,106.85 gallons of diesel fuel.

Table VI-5 Construction Vendor Diesel Fuel Demand

Phase	Days	Trips	Miles	VMT	KgCO2e	Kg/CO2/Gallon	Gallons
Demolition	1	0	0	0	0	10.18*	0
Site Prep.	5	0	0	0	0	10.18*	0
Grading	20	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
Building Const.	230	9	5.40	11,178	21,447.7	10.18	2,106.85
Paving	20	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
Arch. Coating	20	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
						Total	**2,106.85**

*https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gases-equivalencies-calculator-calculations-and-references
https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator

Table VI-6, Construction Equipment Diesel Fuel Demand, displays the demand of diesel fuel for construction vehicles on-site during the various construction phases. Construction equipment diesel demand equals a total of 31,604.24 gallons of diesel fuel.

Table VI-6 Construction Equipment Diesel Fuel Demand

Phase	Days	Equipment Units	KgCO2e	Kg/CO2/Gallon	Gallons
Demolition	1	6	1,711.9	10.18	168.16
Site Prep.	5	7	8,425.2	10.18	827.62
Grading	20	6	26,269.4	10.18	2,580.49
Building Const.	230	9	267,983.4	10.18	26,324.49
Paving	20	8	16,499.2	10.18	1,620.75
Arch. Coating	20	1	2,557.6	10.18	251.24
				Total	**31,604.60**

Overall, the project is estimated to consume approximately 2,458.96 gallons of gasoline and 33,711.45 gallons of diesel fuel during the project's construction phases. In total, the project will consume

approximately 36,170.41 gallons of petroleum. Petroleum use is necessary to operate construction equipment. The US EPA applied a Tier 3 program in order to reduce the impacts of motor vehicles on air quality and public health. The vehicle emissions standards will reduce both tailpipe and evaporative emissions from passenger cars, light-duty trucks, medium duty passenger vehicles, and some heavy-duty vehicles. The construction equipment will utilize Tier 3 engines or higher, therefore would be newer off-road equipment units.

The energy used during the construction of the project would be limited to the development of the project and would not require long-term petroleum use. Additionally, there are no unusual project characteristics or construction processes that would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive that is used for comparable activities or use of equipment that would not conform to current emissions standards (and related fuel efficiencies). Thus, project construction would not consume petroleum in a wasteful or inefficient manner.

Operation

According to the figures provided by the CalEEMod calculations, the project would have an estimated annual VMT of 253,590. The average daily trip rate for weekdays is 114.24 VMT, 118.92 on Saturdays, and 103.44 on Sundays. Total mobile source CO2e is 122.97 MT per year, or 122,974 kg per year. CalEEMod assumes 92.5 percent of VMT burns gasoline, while the remaining 7.5 percent burn diesel. Thus, of the 37,460 kg of mobile emissions, 34,650.5 kg is generated by gasoline combustion and 2,809.5 kg is generated by diesel combustion. The project would have an annual gasoline demand of 7,210.2 gallons and an annual diesel demand of 510.5 gallons, as displayed in Table VI-8.

Table VI-7, Operational Petroleum Demand

Land Use	Annual VMT
Single Family Housing	253,590
Other Asphalt Surfaces	--
Total	253,590

Table VI-8 Operational Annual Petroleum

	Annual VMT	Kg/CO2/Gallon	Annual Gallons
Gasoline	234,570.8	8.89	26,385.9
Diesel	19,019.3	10.18	1,866.5
		Total Petroleum	28,252.4

253,590 x 0.925 = 234,570.8; 253,590 x 0.075 = 19,019.3

A comprehensive traffic impact analysis was prepared to evaluate the potential traffic and circulation impacts associated with buildout of the Desert Hot Springs General Plan Area. Per the traffic analysis conducted for the General Plan EIR, buildout of the City is expected to result in approximately 1,488,770 vehicle trips per day. Thus, the General Plan EIR predicts that the City at total buildout will generate 4,466,310 miles traveled per day (assuming that the average trip length is 3 miles). Therefore, the City, at buildout, will generate approximately 1,661,467,320 VMTs annually. The proposed project will

contribute approximately 253,590 VMTs annually, or 0.015 percent of the total annual VMT at City buildout.

Over the lifetime of the project, the fuel efficiency of vehicles in use is expected to increase, as older vehicles are replaced with newer more efficient models. Therefore, it is expected that the amount of petroleum consumed due to the vehicle trips to and from the project site during operation would decrease over time. Additional advancement of technology includes the use of plug-in hybrid and zero emission vehicles in California, which will also decrease the amount of future petroleum consumed in the state. With the foregoing, operation of the project is expected to use decreasing amounts of petroleum over time, due to advances in fuel economy.

Additionally, the proposed residential community is located within a two-mile-radius to existing restaurants and services primarily along Palm Drive east of the project site. The regional VMTs and associated vehicular-source emissions are reduced by the following project design feature/attribute: on-site sidewalk improvements will be implemented to improve pedestrian connectivity to the surroundings. Providing a pedestrian access network to link areas of the project site encourages people to walk instead of drive.

Although the project would result in an increase in petroleum use during construction and operation compared to the existing conditions, the project would implement measures required under the City's General Plan and City Municipal Code. Given these considerations, petroleum consumption associated with the project operation would not be considered excessive.

In conclusion, the project would increase demand for energy in the project area and in the service areas of SCE and SoCal Gas Company. However, based on the findings described above, project construction and operation are not anticipated to result in potentially significant impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The approximately 3.62-acre project proposes the development of 12 residential lots. The project is located on vacant land north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road in Desert Hot Springs. As stated in the previous discussion, project development and operation are not anticipated to use an unnecessary amount of energy resources. To ensure the conservation of energy, the state of California and the City of Desert Hot Springs implements various regulations in order to be more energy efficient and reduce the amount of GHG emissions. Some of the State-wide and local regulations are listed below.

State Regulations

Assembly Bill 32

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32) was signed in 2006 to establish and reduce the amounts of greenhouse gases being emitted on a state-wide level. Specifically, AB 32 requires a reduction of emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. It plans to do this by establishing an annual reporting program for significant sources. Energy efficiency goals listed in AB 32 includes maximizing energy efficiency building and appliance standards, and pursuing additional efficiency efforts including new technologies, and new policy and implementation mechanisms.

Executive Order S-3-05

Executive Order (EO) S-3-05, passed in 2005, established reduction targets of an 80 percent of 1990 levels reduction by 2050, and created agencies to achieve these targets. The passage of this regulation requires the use of more energy efficient practices regarding building development and operation in order to reduce the amount of GHGs produced.

Title 20: Appliance Efficiency Standards

The California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 20: Division 2, Chapter 4, Article 4, Sections 1601-1608 (Appliance Efficiency Regulations) regulates the sale of appliances in California. The Appliance Efficiency Regulations include standards for both federally regulated appliances and non-federally regulated appliances. 23 categories of appliances are included in the scope of these regulations. The standards within these regulations apply to appliances that are sold or offered for sale in California, except those sold wholesale in California for final retail sale outside the state and those designed and sold exclusively for use in recreational vehicles or other mobile equipment.

Title 24: Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen Building Standards Code

In addition to Title 20 (Sections 1601-1608) of the CCR, Title 24, parts 6 and 11, also outlines energy efficient building designs for new development. The CCR's 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6), and the CALGreen Building Standards Code (Title 24, Part 11), establish mandatory guidelines and standards requiring more energy efficient new and existing developments. The California Energy Commission adopted the Building Energy Efficient Standards for all new residential and nonresidential construction to reduce greenhouse gases, as a part of the California Building Code, Title 24. This requires new homes to include at least 50 percent of kitchen lighting to be LED, compact fluorescent or similar high efficiency fixtures, double pane windows, cool roofs, and other design techniques to reduce heat loss. Title 24, Part 11, establishes design and development methods that include environmentally responsible site selection, building design, building siting and development to protect, restore and enhance the environmental quality of the site and respect the integrity of adjacent properties. The proposed project will be required to comply with the state implemented standards for energy efficient new developments.

California's Renewable Portfolio Standards

The California Renewable Portfolio Standards will reduce GHG emissions by requiring utility companies, such as IID, to switch from non-renewable resources, such as coal-fired power plants, to renewable resources, such as wind turbines and solar power.

Low Carbon Fuel Standard

The Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), or Executive Order (EO) S-1-07, establishes a low carbon fuel standard for transportation fuels in California. EO S-1-07 was enacted to reduce carbon intensity in transportation fuels as compared to conventional petroleum fuels, such as gasoline and diesel. It

requires that the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels be reduced at least 10 percent by 2020.

Clean Car Standards

The Clean Car Standards, otherwise known as Pavley 1493, sets more stringent vehicle fuel economy standards for cars and light trucks that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In 2009, the federal government enabled the state of California to enforce stricter tailpipe emissions limits on new passenger vehicles. In 2010, the US EPA and the Department of Transportation's National Highway Safety Administration announced new vehicle greenhouse gas emission standards and corporate average fuel economy standards that reinforce California's standard.

City Regulations

Desert Hot Springs Climate Action Plan

The Desert Hot Springs Climate Action Plan (CAP) was published in 2013 to act as a comprehensive framework for the development and implementation of policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) within the City of Desert Hot Springs. The CAP is based on the directives of the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) adopted by legislature in 2006, which plans to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. EO S-3-05, which was issued in 2005, requires the reduction of emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, also established directives for the Desert Hot Springs CAP. According to the CAP, the 2010 baseline GHG emission level within Desert Hot Springs was 100,799 tonnes CO2e.

The CAP includes 80 measures to reduce the City's GHG emissions, which are grouped into seven spheres. The seven spheres include: where we live, where we work, how we build, how we get around, how we govern, where we visit and play, and how we teach and learn. Measures listed in the CAP vary from educational programs, energy or water conservation audits, implicating ordinances, and promoting energy efficient vehicles and transportation methods. The measures outlined within the CAP are expected to result in an annual savings of 50,040 tonnes CO2e, 739 tonnes CO2e over the City's AB 32 target reductions of 49,301 tonnes CO2e.

Desert Hot Springs General Plan

The City of Desert Hot Springs is committed to reducing energy demand and consumption within their jurisdictional boundaries. Since the production of electricity and natural gas requires the burning of fossil fuels, the increased demand for electricity in the City also leads to an increase in air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions created in the City. Therefore, reducing energy consumption will contribute to the reduction of air pollutants and GHGs generated in the City.

Residential land uses typically generate large electricity and natural gas demands in the City. The Open Space and Conservation Element of the General Plan addresses existing energy resources and consumption patterns in an effort to preserve and expand these resources and determine how they may be most effectively managed.

According to the Desert Hot Springs General Plan, energy conservation is important, particularly in the summer months. Energy conservation is encouraged through development regulations, building regulations and General Plan standards. The goal of the Energy and Mineral Resources Element of the General Plan focuses on the conservation and thoughtful management of energy sources and mineral

deposits, assuring the long-term viability of limited and non-renewable resources. This is achieved in the General Plan through the promotion of energy conservation in all areas of community development, including transportation, development planning, public and private sector office construction and operation, as well as in the full range of residential, commercial and industrial projects. Program 5B of the Energy and Mineral Resources Element in the General Plan requires that the City support and facilitate the integration of co-generation and other energy management systems into larger industrial and commercial operations in the City to enhance operational efficiencies and provide additional opportunities for local power production.

In addition to the goals and policies outlined within the General Plan Update, the General Plan also enforces the standards required in Title 24 and Building Code regulations, which require energy efficiency in all new construction of residential and nonresidential projects, as well as providing encouragement for the use of energy efficient construction techniques.

Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code

Similar to the City's CAP and GPU, the City's Municipal Code also encourages the conservation of energy. Chapter 15.08.100, California Energy Code, requires that the California Energy is adopted by reference and used to implement, administer and enforce the California Building Standards Code.

Chapter 10.56 (Transportation Demand Management Requirements), is intended to protect the public health, welfare and safety by reducing air pollution caused by vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMTs). This chapter is intended to reduce emissions by requiring the development of a trip reduction and travel demand element to the congestion management plan (CMP), and adoption and implementation of trip reduction and travel demand ordinances by local agencies.

The project property proposes a residential community on approximately 3.62 acres north of Pierson Boulevard, in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The residential community will consist of 12 lots, ranging from 0.207 acres to 0.293 acres, landscaped areas and paved drive aisles and pedestrian walkways. The project will comply with state-implemented building standards such as those outlined in Title 20 and Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. Energy efficient appliances will be utilized during project operation. As stated in the previous discussion, project-related energy consumption and VMTs created by the project are not anticipated to be substantial. Construction activities would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive that is used for comparable activities. However, construction equipment will comply with the Tier 3 program engines or higher, therefore would be newer off-road equipment units.

The project property is located in an area that is primarily defined by residential uses and vacant land. Existing single-family residential lots are located west and south of the project, Elks lodge is located southeast of the project, and vacant, undeveloped land borders the project's northern and partially the eastern portion of the project property. Existing grocery stores, restaurants, commercial uses, services and bus stops lie approximately 1.50 mile east of the project property, primarily along Pierson Boulevard and Palm Drive. The closest SunLine Transit stop to the project property is Bus Line 15 stop ID 301, Pierson at West, located approximately 1.25 miles east of the site.

The project property will comply with all applicable State and local guidelines and regulations regarding energy efficient building design and standards. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to conflict or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Less than significant

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the Project:
Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; Desert Hot Springs General Plan Environmental Impact Report, 2020; Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code; Riverside County General Plan, 2015; Riverside County General Plan Environmental Impact Report, 2015; *2015 Urban Water Management Plan*, Missions Springs Water District, 2015; *Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM),* Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA), effective August 28, 2008; *Land Subsidence, Groundwater Levels and geology in Coachella Valley, California, 1993-2010,* USGS Scientific Investigations Report 2014-5075.

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
According to the General Plan Geotechnical Element, during an earthquake ground rupture and ground shaking are the most significant seismic hazards that will impact the Desert Hot Springs planning area. Critical parameters include whether foundations and/or structures straddle the fault, distance between the fault and various portions in the City, the maximum credible earthquake each fault is capable of generating, the intensity of ground shaking expressed as a fraction of the acceleration of gravity (g), and the Modified Mercalli (MM) seismic intensity values that have been calculated for the City. In general, peak ground accelerations and seismic intensity values decrease with increasing distance from the causative fault. However, local site conditions, such as the top of ridges, may amplify the seismic waves generated by an earthquake, resulting in higher accelerations.

Per the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (GP EIR), no known active faults traverse the project site. General Plan EIR Exhibit V-1, *Faults in the Desert Hot Springs General Plan Area*, indicate that the nearest Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone is located approximately 1 mile to the northeast and labeled the San Andreas Fault Zone. Alquist-Priolo Maps are corroborated by the Riverside County Seismic Faults and Fault Zones database and by the Desert Hot Springs EIR Map.

In addition to the Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones, Riverside County has identified and designated county fault zones that require similar special studies prior to development (Riverside County General Plan). These areas represent zones that have been identified from groundwater studies and should be viewed as speculative , but until solid field evidence is generated to prove or disprove their existence, the County of Riverside continues to consider them to be a potential hazard. According to the County designated fault

zone maps, provided by the most recent Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, the closest county fault zone lies approximately 2.35 miles east of the project property and labeled Blind Canyon Fault.

Surface rupture occurs when movement on a fault deep within the earth breaks through to the surface. The GP EIR indicates that fault ruptures usually follow preexisting faults, which are zones of weakness. The project site, however, does not lie within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Surface fault rupture is considered to be unlikely at the project site due to the well-delineated fault lines through the Coachella Valley as shown on California Department of Mines and Geology (CDMG) maps. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

As mentioned previously, relative to properties that are not located on faults or within fault study areas, ground shaking is the primary seismic hazard that can be expected. Intensity can be affected based on distance from faults. Strong shaking from an earthquake can result in secondary actions including landslides, ground lurching, structural damage or destruction, and liquefaction (discussed subsequently in this Geotechnical Section).

The proposed lots and associated structures will be required to be constructed in a manner that reduces the risk of seismic hazards (Title 24, California Code of Regulations). The project will be conditioned to comply with the most current seismic design coefficients and ground motion parameters and all applicable provisions of the California Building Code (CBC). Remedial grading and construction will work to reduce exposure of people or structures to adverse effects to the greatest extent possible against seismic hazards. All grading and construction plans will be reviewed and approved by the City. Following compliance with standard conditions relative to seismic design requirements, less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The Desert Hot Springs General Plan Geotechnical Element indicates that when loose, unconsolidated, saturated, sandy soils are subjected to ground vibrations during a seismic event they may liquefy; this phenomenon is called liquefaction. This occurs in areas where the ground water table is within 50 feet of the ground surface. Effects of liquefaction include a loss of bearing strength, ground oscillations, lateral spread and slumping.

According to the Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) Draft 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, groundwater levels in the Mission Creek Subbasin, in which the project is located, average 300 feet below the ground surface. Therefore, the chance for hazards associated with liquefaction is considered low in the Desert Hot Springs area, principally because of the approximate depth to ground water. The exception includes lands located immediately adjacent to and on the north side of the Banning and

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Coachella Valley (Mission Creek) Faults, which dike ground water and allow it to rise within 50 feet of the surface. The property is located approximately 1-mile northeast from the Mission Creek Fault.

Through the development review process of the proposed structure, a site-by-site analysis is required to assess building design and check that proposed structures meet existing regulations or applicable codes. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

Per the General Plan Geotechnical Element, the subject property is located near an area with a low susceptibility of being impacted by rock falls and seismically induced landsliding. Exhibit V-2, Seismically Induced Rock Falls and Landslide Susceptibility, in the Geotechnical Element, indicates that the closest area with moderate susceptibility to landsliding is approximately 2 miles to the southwest, at an isolated geological feature referred to as Devers Hill. Additionally, the hazard of landsliding is unlikely due to the relatively flat topography of the property; therefore, no impacts are expected relative to landslides.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The project is located north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road. The project site is currently vacant with scattered, low-lying desert vegetation. Project development will include the construction of 12 lots for single family residential units, and associated improvements.

Remedial grading including clearing of all vegetation, over-excavation and re-compaction will be required to ensure firm and uniform bearing conditions. These activities may increase the potential of soil erosion at the time of development. Therefore, in order to mitigate the effect of erosion at the project site, the project shall implement the Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan (PM10 Plan), otherwise identified by the City of Desert Hot Springs as the Fugitive Dust Control Plan. The purpose of this plan is to reduce the amount of particulate matter entrained in the ambient air as a result of anthropogenic fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent, reduce or mitigate fugitive dust emissions. The PM10 Plan requires the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) such as the use of perimeter fencing, applying adhesive dust suppressant, or watering the project site. The project property shall implement the BMPs outlined within their project specific PM10 Plan during construction of the project site. To address windborne soil erosion during project operation, adequate paving, landscape and other means of stabilization will be incorporated into the project. These plans will be prepared and submitted to the City for approval. Refer to the Air Quality section of this environmental document for further information.

Relative to waterborne erosion, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panel 06065C0885G, effective August 28, 2008, the entire project and its immediate surroundings are located within Zone AO and are therefore identified as areas subject to inundation by 1 percent annual chance shallow flooding, with average depths between one and three

feet. The site is susceptible to water erosion, in which standard construction measures to reduce seasonal flooding including waterborne erosion will be incorporated into the site grading plans. These include the onsite retention of 100 percent of the incremental increase of storm water. The proposed site plan indicates that runoff will be collected onsite, in underground retention chambers along the proposed paved internal roadway. The worst-case scenario increase of the pre- and post-construction runoff would be adequately contained in the retention system. The proposed project would not alter the FEMA Flood Zone AO sheet flow or be impacted by the flood depth. See Section IX Hydrology and Water Quality for further discussion.

In order to ensure the project does not contribute to a substantial amount of soil erosion or loss of topsoil, the project will implement the following conditions:

- All future grading shall be performed in accordance with the grading ordinance of the City of Desert Hot Springs.
- A grading plan that outlines measures to contain any runoff shall be prepared and submitted to the City for approval.

Compliance with adopted procedures for grading and erosion will mitigate impacts associated with grading the site to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The onsite area has a variably vegetated topography that slopes to the south. As discussed previously, hazards associated with liquefaction, lateral spread and offsite landslides are not expected due to the deep groundwater depths in the area.

The General Plan states that ground subsidence is the gradual settling or sinking of the ground surface with little or no horizontal movement. This phenomenon is usually associated with the extraction of oil, gas or ground water from below the surface, but it may also occur as a result of an earthquake. The 4-meter high scarp on the west side of Devers Hill indicates that uplift has occurred within the Desert Hot Springs Area. Devers Hill is approximately 2 miles southwest of the subject property.

A USGS Scientific Investigations Report 2014-5075 “Land Subsidence, Groundwater Levels and geology in Coachella Valley, California, 1993-2010” indicates the following: While most of the Coachella Valley was relatively stable, land surfaces declined about nine inches to two feet in some areas of Palm Desert, Indian Wells, and La Quinta, between 1995 and 2010. Following the 2009 installation of groundwater replenishment systems, an important recent exception was observed in La Quinta where groundwater levels stabilized and rose, and the rate of land subsidence substantially decreased. Subsidence is considered a regional problem requiring regional mitigation not specific to the project vicinity.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

The largely unconfined nature of local ephemeral washes has prompted Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to designate a 100-year flood plain (Zone AO designation) covering developed and undeveloped portions of the City, including the project site. The FEMA Zone AO designation applies to areas subject to inundation by the 100-year (1-percent-annual-chance) flood at varying depths and velocities. Although the Zone AO designation applies to the entire site, published FEMA mapping subsequently discussed indicates that the westernmost 3 acres are subject to a potential flood depth of two feet with an estimated velocity of six feet per second. The remaining northeastern portion (approximately 0.62 acres) is subject to a potential flood depth of three feet with an estimated velocity of eight feet per second.

In this context, the project is expected to implement the necessary site design features and engineering improvements to handle the existing drainage conditions in a way that prevents inundation to the proposed homes and prevents obstructing the existing drainage pattern. Discussed further in the Hydrology Section of this environmental document.

According to the General Plan, soil collapse typically occurs in recently deposited soils in an arid or semi-arid environment. When saturated, collapsible soils undergo a rearrangement of their grains and a loss of cohesion or cementation, resulting in a substantial and rapid settlement even under relatively low loads. The alluvial sediments which comprise much of Desert Hot Springs are prone to collapse, which can result from surface irrigation. Remedial grading including proper preparation and compaction of project soil will be required and indicated in project-specific grading plans which will be reviewed and approved by the City. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life of the property?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Expansive soil is defined in the Desert Hot Springs General Plan as soils that include a significant amount of clay and are subject to swelling. Expansive soils can change in volume and can exert significant pressure on loads (such as buildings) that are placed on them. In the General Plan study area, expansive soils are not generally considered a hazard because of the relatively minor amount of clay present in the soils. Where expansive soils may occur is in the Qf3 and Qf4 soils, which generally occur north of the Mission Creek Fault and in the vicinity of Whitewater Hill. The property is approximately 1 mile southwest of the Mission Creek Fault and 5 miles northeast of Whitewater Hill. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Discussion:
Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) currently provides sewer service to the south along Pierson Boulevard. The project will connect to sewer for disposal of wastewater. Project design will undergo City review; the project will be required to meet the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) standards and to comply with MSWD, and Riverside County Environmental Health. Design for all disposal systems shall comply with industry regulations. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion:
According to the Riverside County General Plan, paleontological resources is evidence of past life forms and their biota, that is valued for the information they yield about the history of earth and its past ecological settings. Per Figure OS-8, *Paleontological Sensitivity*, in the Riverside County General Plan, the property is recognized for having low potential for Paleontological Sensitivity. Areas recognized for having "low" potential have a reduced likelihood of containing significant non-renewable paleontological resources, including vertebrate or significant invertebrate fossils. Moreover, the site is not recognized as a unique paleontological or a unique geologic feature. Therefore, it is unlikely that paleontological resources are onsite. However, a qualified paleontologist shall be retained and present during the first days of ground disturbing activities. Once the paleontologist has had a chance to assess the sediments and paleontological potential of the project area, he/she may make a recommendation to reduce the monitoring effort, as appropriate, or continue with full time monitoring. This decision shall be communicated along with the rationalization to the City for their records. . Less than significant impacts are expected following the recommended mitigation measure.

Mitigation Measures:

GEO-1: A qualified paleontologist shall be retained and present during the first days of ground disturbing activities. Once the paleontologist has had a chance to assess the sediments and paleontological potential of the project area, he/she may make a recommendation to reduce the monitoring effort, as appropriate, or continue with full time monitoring. This decision shall be communicated along with the rationalization to the City for their records.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS --Would the Project:
Sources: *Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan* (AQMP), by SCAQMD, March 2017; *Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan* (CVSIP), by SCAQMD, August 2003; *Analysis of the Coachella Valley PM10 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan*, by the California Air Resources Board, February 2010; California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2016.3.2. California G reenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2017, Trends of Emissions and Other Indicators, 2019 Edition, California Air Resources Board; Release No. 18-37 & 19-35, California Air Resources Board Press Release, July 2018 and August 2019.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Setting:

Greenhouse gases (GHG) are a group of gases that trap solar energy in the Earth's atmosphere, preventing it from becoming too cold and uninhabitable. Common greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere include water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), ozone, and chlorofluorocarbons to a lesser extent. Carbon dioxide is the main GHG thought to contribute to climate change. Carbon dioxide reflects solar radiation back to Earth, thereby trapping solar energy and heat within the lower atmosphere. Human activities (such as burning carbon-based fossil fuels) create water vapor and CO_2 as byproducts, thereby impacting the levels of GHG in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) is a metric used to compare emissions of various greenhouse gases. It is the mass of carbon dioxide that would produce the same estimated radiative forcing as a given mass of another greenhouse gas. Carbon dioxide equivalents are computed by multiplying the mass of the gas emitted by its global warming potential. Global Climate Change (GCC) is defined as the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, precipitation, and storms. GCC is currently one of the most controversial environmental issues in the United States, and debate exists within the scientific community about whether or not GCC is occurring naturally or as a result of human activity.

To address the long-term adverse impacts associated with global climate change, California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) requires California Air Resource Board (CARB) to reduce statewide emissions of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by 2020. In 2016, Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 32 (SB32) that requires California to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. With the passage of the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32) in California, environmental documents for projects pursuant to CEQA are required to analyze greenhouse gases and assess the potential significance and impacts of GHG emissions.

On July 11, 2018, CARB announced in a press release (No. 18-37) that greenhouse gas pollution in California fell below 1990 levels for the first time since emissions peaked in 2004, an achievement roughly equal to taking 12 million cars off the road or saving 6 billion gallons of gasoline a year. Moreover, according to the CARB report on California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2017 (published in 2019), which tracks the trends of GHG emissions, California's GHG emissions have followed a declining trend between 2007 and 2017. In 2017, emissions from GHG emitting activities statewide were 424 million metric tons of CO_2 equivalent ($MMTCO_2e$), 5 $MMTCO_2e$ lower than 2016 levels and 7 $MMTCO_2e$ below the 2020 GHG Limit of 431 $MMTCO_2e$. The largest reductions are attributed to the electricity sector, which continues to see decreases as a result of the State's climate policies. The transportation sector remains the largest source of GHG emissions in the state, but saw a 1 percent increase in emissions in 2017, the lowest growth rate over the past 4 years.

On August 12, 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced in a press release (No. 19-35) that GHG emissions in California continued to fall ahead of schedule in 2017 as the state's economy grew ahead of the national average, according to the California Air Resources Board's latest state inventory of climate-changing emissions. The data also shows that for the first time since California started to track

GHG emissions, the state power grid used more energy from zero-GHG sources like solar and wind power than from electrical generation powered by fossil fuels. In addition, the data demonstrates that emissions from the transportation sector did not rise as fast as in previous years. 2017 was also the second year in a row in which GHG emissions fell below the 2020 reduction target of 431 million metric tons established by the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32). GHG emissions came in at 424 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent in 2017, a decrease of five million metric tons from 2016. The press release also included the following highlights:

Electricity: Emissions from electricity generation made up about 15 percent of 2017 statewide greenhouse gas emissions. In 2017, those emissions fell nine percent from 2016, the largest decline of any economic sector. A large increase in zero-emission energy resources drove the reduction. Those clean sources powered 52 percent of all California's electricity consumed in 2017.

Transportation: Vehicle tailpipe emissions accounted for 37 percent of California's 2017 GHG emissions. Those emissions rose, but showed signs of leveling off. The 2017 increase was 0.7 percent, down from two percent the preceding year. Most of the greenhouse gas emissions increase came from passenger vehicles.

Industry: Industrial emissions over multiple sectors showed a slight reduction or remained flat. California's industrial sectors generated 21 percent of state GHGs in 2017. Oil & gas refineries and hydrogen production were responsible for one-third of those emissions. The rest came mostly from oil & gas extraction, cement plants, glass manufacturers and large food processors.

Discussion:

CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2 was used to quantify GHG emissions associated with the project involving twelve residential units and the associated road improvements. As previously mentioned, CalEEMod utilizes widely accepted methodologies for estimating emissions. Sources of these methodologies and default data include but are not limited to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) AP-42 emission factors, California Air Resources Board (CARB) vehicle emission models, studies commissioned by California agencies such as the California Energy Commission (CEC) and CalRecycle. The project's total number of hotel guest rooms and associated parking lot were factored into the model to evaluate whether the estimated criteria pollutants and GHG emissions would exceed the established thresholds and therefore conflict with the plans and efforts of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Construction-related GHG emissions were amortized over a 30-year period and added to the project's annual operational GHG emissions. The operational GHG emissions can be attributed to area sources, mobile sources, solid wastes and water supply, treatment and distribution.

The currently applicable GHG thresholds for local lead agency consideration are referenced from the SCAQMD Draft Local Agency Threshold supporting documentation, which establishes an interim tiered approach. Under this guidance, a screening threshold of 3,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e) per year has been an acceptable approach for non-industrial projects. The GHG analysis for this project aims to meet the lowest screening level of 3,000 MTCO2e per year, shown in Table VIII-1.

Table VIII-1
Total Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Unmitigated Emission Source	Emissions (metric tons per year)
	Total CO2E
Annual Construction Emissions Amortized Over 30	6.5360
Area, Energy, Mobile Sources, Waste, and Water Usage	198.2973
Total CO2E (All Sources)	204.8333
SCAQMD Threshold for Non-Industrial Projects	3,000
Threshold Exceeded?	NO

As shown in VIII-1 resulting from the CalEEMod calculations, the project is expected to generate approximately 204.8333 MTCO2e per year from construction, area, energy, mobile sources, waste, and water usage sources. As such, the project GHG emissions would not exceed the lowest threshold of significance set at 3,000 MTCO2e per year. Having been evaluated against the regionally accepted thresholds, which are part of the State's regulations aimed at addressing climate change, the project is not expected to interfere with the plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Discussion:

As previously mentioned, under Assembly Bill 32 passed in 2006, California must reduce its emissions to 1990 levels (431 million metric tons) by 2020. Senate Bill 32, signed in 2016, requires the state to go even further than AB 32 and cut emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030—the most ambitious carbon goal in North America. California's primary programs for reducing greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by 2020 are the Renewables Portfolio Standard, the Advanced Clean Cars Program, the Low Carbon Fuel Standard and the Cap-and-Trade Program. Additional programs address a variety of greenhouse gas sources. These include the Short-Lived Climate Pollutants Strategy, the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Sustainable Freight Action Plan. The 2030 Scoping Plan, adopted by CARB, lays out how these initiatives work together to reduce greenhouse gases to achieve California's 2030 target of 260 million metric tons and also to reduce smog-causing pollutants. This target will require California to more than double the rate at which it has been cutting climate-changing gases. Future reductions will occur against a backdrop of natural sources of GHGs which are increasingly variable because of the climate change California is already witnessing. The SCAQMD adopted the interim GHG

significance threshold for stationary/industrial sources on December 5, 2008 which applies to Projects where the SCAQMD is the lead agency. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

On July 11, 2018, CARB announced in a press release (No. 18-37) that greenhouse gas pollution in California fell below 1990 levels for the first time since emissions peaked in 2004, an achievement roughly equal to taking 12 million cars off the road or saving 6 billion gallons of gasoline a year. Moreover, according to the CARB report on California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2017 (published in 2019), which tracks the trends of GHG emissions, California's GHG emissions have followed a declining trend between 2007 and 2017. In 2017, emissions from GHG emitting activities statewide were 424 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent (MMTCO2e), 5 MMTCO2e lower than 2016 levels and 7 MMTCO2e below the 2020 GHG Limit of 431 MMTCO2e. The largest reductions are attributed to the electricity sector, which continues to see decreases as a result of the State's climate policies. The transportation sector remains the largest source of GHG emissions in the state, but saw a 1 percent increase in emissions in 2017, the lowest growth rate over the past 4 years. The transportation sector, the state's largest source of greenhouse gases, saw a 2 percent increase in emissions in 2016 because of increased fuel consumption. The state has also documented the increased use of biofuels as a result of the state's Low Carbon Fuel Standard. These low-carbon alternative fuels, consisting mostly of biodiesel, renewable diesel, and ethanol, reduced emissions by 14 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, when compared to what would have been generated if conventional fossil fuels had been used.

The Desert Hot Springs Climate Action Plan (CAP) published in 2013 acts as a comprehensive framework for the development and implementation of policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). The CAP is based on the directives of the State's global warming strategies previously discussed. Therefore, project compliance with the State's GHG reduction methods and measures would be equivalent and consistent with the City's CAP measures.

In summary, the proposed project of twelve residential units is expected to result in GHG emissions totaling 204.8333 MTCO2e at full operation of the built-out condition, which is substantially below the established 3,000 MTCO2e threshold. Therefore, the project is not expected to conflict with the applicable plans and strategies for the purposes of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS --Would the project:
Sources: *Code of Federal Regulations Title 40 Part 261.* Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; Desert Hot Springs General Plan Environmental Impact Report, 2020; *EnviroStor*, Department of Toxic Substances Control, accessed 2020; *Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO)*, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), accessed 2020; *GeoTracker*, State Water Resources Control Board, accessed 2020; Riverside County Municipal Code.

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR Title 40, Part 261) defines hazardous materials based on ignitability, reactivity, corrosivity, and/or toxicity properties. The State of California defines hazardous materials as substances that are toxic, ignitable or flammable, reactive and/or corrosive, which have the capacity of causing harm or a health hazard during normal exposure or an accidental release. As a result, the use and management of hazardous or potentially hazardous substances is regulated under existing federal, state and local laws. Hazardous wastes require special handling and disposal methods to reduce their potential to damage public health and the environment. Manufacturer's specifications also dictate the proper use, handling, and disposal methods for the specific substances. In most cases, it is a violation of Federal or State law to improperly store, apply, transport or dispose of hazardous materials and waste.

The project site is located on approximately 3.62 acres of undeveloped land surrounded by perimeter fencing. The site has been previously cleared of vegetation and graded, however, due to the inactivity of the project site, scattered clusters of native vegetation are currently found at the site. The project proposes to develop a 12-lot residential community with associated improvements. Construction of the proposed project is expected to involve the temporary management and use of oils, fuels, and other potentially flammable substances. Materials used during construction of the project are not anticipated to be used in quantities exceeding what is needed during construction. These materials will be stored and applied according to manufacturer's instructions to mitigate the potential for incidental release of hazardous materials or explosive reactions.

Construction of the project is expected to involve the temporary management and use of potentially hazardous substances and petroleum products. The nature and quantities of these products would be limited to what is necessary to carry out construction of the project. Some of these materials would be transported to the site periodically by vehicle and would be stored in designated controlled areas on a short-term basis. When handled properly by trained individuals and consistent with the manufacturer's instructions and industry standards, the risk involved with handling these materials is considerably reduced.

Furthermore, to prevent a threat to the environment during construction, the management of potentially hazardous materials and other potential pollutant sources will be regulated through the implementation of control measures required in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the project. The SWPPP requires a list of potential pollutant sources and the identification of construction areas where additional control measures are necessary to prevent pollutants from being discharged. Best management practices (BMPs) are necessary for *Material Delivery and Storage*; *Material Use*; and *Spill Prevention and Control*. These measures outline the required physical improvements and procedures to prevent impacts of pollutants and hazardous materials to workers and the environment during construction. For example, all construction materials, including paints, solvents, and petroleum products, must be stored in controlled areas and according to the manufacturer's specifications. In addition, perimeter controls (fencing with wind screen), linear sediment barriers (gravel bags, fiber rolls, or silt fencing), and access restrictions (gates) would help prevent temporary impacts to the public and environment. The contractor will be required to identify a controlled staging area within the project limits for practices to assure that impacts are minimized and that any minor spills are immediately and properly remediated. Controlled staging areas for the storage of hazardous materials will be located onsite during construction activities. The staging areas would likely be located on a single lot in one area of the site. The location of the staging areas will be determined in the project specific SWPPP document and the project specific Fugitive Dust Control Plan (PM10 Plan). Both plans will be reviewed by the City prior to

the issuance of grading permits. In addition to the BMPs previously listed, spills and leaks will be mitigated by implementing the following procedures at the project site:

- Implementation and placement of storage containers.
- Implementation of washout facilities.
- Construction vehicles and equipment shall be maintained and refueled onsite, away from the street, gutter, and storm drains.
- Vehicles shall be inspected frequently for leaks
- Use a drip pan and funnel when draining or pouring fluids.
- Sweep up dry spills instead of hosing.
- Keep construction materials and devris away from the street, gutter and storm drains.
- Cover exposed stockpiles of soil, sand or gravel and excavated material with plastic sheeting, protected from rain, wind and runoff.

The listed BMPs are standard requirements, therefore, they are not considered mitigation. With such standard measures in place, less than significant impacts are anticipated during construction.

As previously stated, the proposed project includes a residential community on 12 lots. The nature of these uses is not expected to involve, as a primary activity, the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials in quantities that would pose a hazard to the public or the environment. The regular operation of the proposed project will most likely involve the limited handling, application and storage of cleaning agents, solvents and other related substances. These products are not expected to be used in amounts harmful to the public. Therefore, less than significant impacts related to the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The project site is located within a residential land use sector of the City along Pierson Boulevard that is characterized by residential uses of various densities. As previously discussed, the project is not expected to handle any significant quantities of hazardous materials. Any other use of potentially hazardous substances, is expected to occur in small quantities and managed on-site with the proper containment and facilities, as required by the industry standards.

The project proposes a 12-lot residential community and associated improvements approximately 3.62 acres of undeveloped land in Desert Hot Springs. The nature of this use is not expected to involve, as a primary activity, the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials in quantities that would pose a threat to the project and its surroundings or create a significant hazard through a foreseeable accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. The regular operation of the proposed project will involve the handling, application and storage of cleaning agents,

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

buildings maintenance products, paints, solvents and other related substances commonly used with residential uses. These products are not expected to be used in amounts harmful to the public.
Materials used during construction of the project site would be required to be stored and handled in compliance with the property's SWPPP (see discussion a. for further analysis). Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Discussion:
The proposed project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The nearest existing school is Desert Hot Springs High School located approximately 0.85 miles east of the subject property. As stated in discussion a.), materials used during the construction and operation of the project will be stored and applied according to manufacturer's instructions to mitigate the potential for incidental release of hazardous materials or explosive reactions. Access routes for vehicles transporting construction-related materials may pass a school site briefly during transit to the project; however, brief passing of a school would not emit hazardous wastes that would affect the attendees at or around the school sites. Trucks routes will typically occur on Interstate 10 and Little Morongo Road. Additionally, operation of residential neighborhoods will not result in the generation of hazardous emissions or the use of hazardous materials. Therefore, no impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Discussion:
Record searches on the project property were performed within multiple database platforms compiled pursuant to Government Code 65962.5 and its subsections. The resources consulted included GeoTracker, EnviroStor, and the EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO).

GeoTracker is a database maintained by the State of California Water Resources Control Board that provides online access to environmental data. It serves as the management system for tracking regulatory data on sites that can potentially impact groundwater, particularly those requiring groundwater cleanup and permitted facilities, such as operating underground storage tanks and land disposal sites.

EnviroStor is a database maintained by the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). The EnviroStor database identifies sites with known contamination or sites for which there may

be reasons to investigate further. It includes the identification of formerly contaminated properties that have been released for reuse; properties where environmental deed restrictions have been recorded to prevent inappropriate land uses; and risk characterization information that is used to assess potential impacts to public health and the environment at contaminated sites.

Moreover, the ECHO database focuses on inspection, violation, and enforcement data for the Clean Air Act (CAA), Clean Water Act (CWA) and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and also includes Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) data.

In January 2020, a search was performed on all three database platforms. The EnviroStor and ECHO databases listed at least one registered site within a mile radius of the project property. The search results, however, did not identify any records or sites in connection with the subject property. The registered facilities are listed below.

The EnviroStor database listed one site within a mile radius of the proposed project. The site is Desert Hot Springs High School, located at 65850 Pierson Boulevard, approximately 0.85 miles east of the project. This site was registered as a School Investigation Site, and as of May 2003, no action has been required.

The ECHO database listed one site within a mile radius of the project property. The registered facility is Christ Lutheran Church, at 64565 Pierson Boulevard, approximately 400 feet southwest of the project. The site is registered by the CWA as a general permit covered facility with an expired storm water construction permit. The site has been non-compliant since January 2019.

Unlike the EnviroStor and ECHO databases, the GeoTracker database did not identify a facility within a mile radius of the project site.

Per the records search pursuant of Government Code 65962.5, the project site was not registered as having any Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Cleanup Sites, Land Disposal Sites, Military Sites, DTSC Hazardous Waste Permits, DTSC Cleanup Sites, or Permitted Underground Storage Tanks onsite. The sites registered within the searched databases are not expected to impact the project property due to their distances from the project and status of no action. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

e)	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

The project is not located near an existing airport or airport land use plan. The nearest airport facility to the project is the Palm Springs International Airport, located approximately 8.25 miles to the southeast. No impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The Emergency Preparedness Element of the City's General Plan is designed to address concerns regarding the City's capability to respond to potential natural or man-made disasters. The Element sets forth goals, policies and programs to ensure an effective response. Critical Facilities, Emergency Transportation and Circulation, Emergency Medical Facilities, Emergency Operations Center, Emergency Organization and Chain of Command, and Extended Organizational Structure and Assistance are identified as important components of that strategy.

The City of Desert Hot Springs contracts with Riverside County Fire Department/Cal Fire (RCFD) for a full range of fire protection services provided 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The RCFD is staffed with a combination of County and State of California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection employees. They operate 101 fire stations that serve over two million residents and 7,004 square miles of Riverside County. The City of Desert Hot Springs has three RCFD fire stations, Battalion 10, Station 36; located at 11535 Karen Avenue is approximately 1.8 driving miles from the project site. Battalion 10, Station 37 is the City's busiest fire station and is located at 65958 Pierson Blvd, approximately 1.3 miles (driving) from the proposed project. The third station, Battalion 10, Station 56, is located at 72985 Dillon Road, and is about 10.6 driving miles away from the project. Each station is also equipped with a Type I, 1500 GPM fire engine. Each station is staffed by a minimum of one company officer and one fire fighter at any given time.

In addition to the other RCFD facilities located in the Coachella Valley, the department maintains a cooperative mutual aid agreement with other agencies and communities to assist in suppressing fire or controlling emergency incidents. Mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictions provided resources are available and is not to the detriment of their own service area. Per the City's General Plan, agreements are in place with Palm Springs and Cathedral City. Both of these cities provide their own fire services and do not contract with RCFD/Cal Fire. Paramedic personnel and ambulance service is provided by American Medical Response (AMR), which is dispatched to the scene by the fire station. As previously discussed, the nature of the proposed project is not expected to introduce operations that would hinder the City's ability to implement its emergency response goals, policies or programs.

Vehicular access to the project property will be provided from Pierson Boulevard. The proposed design would be subject to a standard review process by the Riverside County Fire Department to ensure that the site-specific emergency access, water pressure, and other pertinent criteria are met by the project. Less than significant impacts are expected.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Mitigation Measures: None

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Large areas of Southern California are susceptible to Wildfires all year round due to the region's weather, topography and vegetation conditions. The Coachella Valley's hot dry summer and autumn weather is ideal to generate the dry vegetation that fuels most wildfires. The California Board of Forestry (CDF) ranks fire hazard of wildland areas of the State using four main criteria: fuels, weather, assets at risk, and level of service. The project site is currently vacant and lies within a urbanize context, surrounded by residential and vacant uses. These conditions have not been recognized to meet the criteria of high or very high fire hazard zones.

Wildland fire protection in California is the responsibility of either the State, local government, or the federal government. Local responsibility areas include incorporated cities where fire protection is typically provided by City fire departments, fire protection districts, counties, and by CAL Fire under contract to local government. As mentioned previously, the City of Desert Hot Springs contracts with Riverside County Fire Department/Cal Fire (RCFD) for a full range of fire protection services provided 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The responsibility for fire prevention and suppression outside of the City boundaries is under the State and federal agencies.

The Riverside County General Plan and the Cal Fire Maps for Western Riverside County indicate that project and its surroundings are located outside of the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) for Local Responsibility Area and outside of the Very High/High/Moderate FHSZ for State and Federal Responsibility Areas. As previously discussed, the project will include the on-site fire protection facilities necessary to satisfy the local Fire Department requirements. Less than significant impacts related to wildland fire are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:

Sources: Flood Insurance Rate Map # 06065C0885G, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Effective August 28, 2008; Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region, January 2019; Mission Springs Water District (MSWD), 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, Final Report, July 2016.

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Discussion:

Summary of Regulatory Framework:

The Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972 was enacted to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters by regulating the discharge of pollutants to waters of the U.S. from point sources. As part of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, subsequent amendments to the CWA established a framework for regulating non-point source discharges from urban land runoff and other diffuse sources that were also found to contribute to runoff pollution. Under CWA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) authorized the NPDES permit program to various state, tribal, and territorial governments, enabling them to perform many of the permitting, administrative, and enforcement aspects of the program. California is a delegated NPDES state and has authority to administer the NPDES program within its limits.

The Porter-Cologne Act is the principal law governing water quality regulation for surface waters in California. It established a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water. Presently in the state of California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) regulate and protect water quality pursuant to NPDES. Their regulations encompass storm water discharges from construction site, municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s), and major industrial facilities.

The approved Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) identifies the beneficial water uses, describes the water quality which must be maintained to support such uses, and describes the programs, projects, and other actions necessary to achieve the standards and protect water quality. The proposed project is located within the Whitewater River Watershed in the Colorado River Region (Region 7). As a component of Region 7, the Whitewater River Watershed Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) established a compliance program that covers approximately 1,645 square miles, including the Coachella Valley and City of Desert Hot Springs.

The project site is located outside of the coverage area for the 1982 Desert Hot Springs Master Drainage Plan (MDP), by Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCFC). As such, there is no formal and approved MDP that applies to the project site.

Existing Drainage Conditions:

In its existing condition, the project property of 3.62 acres is characterized as a vacant setting within fenced limits. Most of the site has previously been cleared, grubbed, and graded to result in a level terrain condition relatively clear of native vegetation growth. Only portions of the northerly and easterly edge have remained relatively undisturbed. Moreover, a south portion of the site is occupied by an existing paved driveway associated with the neighboring community center property (Elks Lodge).

From the hydrology perspective, the project vicinity is characterized by a prevalence of ephemeral drainage washes associated with the Big Morongo Wash. By definition, ephemeral drainages are those that become active in direct response to precipitation events, therefore being dry for a majority of the year. The said drainage paths associated with Big Morongo Wash originate approximately 4 miles northwest of the project site, where flows descend from the Little San Bernardino Mountains into coalescing alluvial fans and the valley floor before continuing in a southeastern direction following a braided-like pattern across a wide swath of land, to which the project site is adjacent. Based on the most current U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), an area of approximately

1.37 acres out of the 3.62-acre project site is overlaid by a mapped wash feature, which confluences with other dry washes approximately 0.75 miles to the southeast.

The largely unconfined nature of local ephemeral washes has prompted Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to designate a 100-year flood plain (Zone AO designation) covering developed and undeveloped portions of the City, including the project site. The FEMA Zone AO designation applies to areas subject to inundation by the 100-year (1-percent-annual-chance) flood at varying depths and velocities. Although the Zone AO designation applies to the entire site, published FEMA mapping subsequently discussed indicates that the westernmost 3 acres are subject to a potential flood depth of two feet with an estimated velocity of six feet per second. The remaining northeastern portion (approximately 0.62 acres) is subject to a potential flood depth of three feet with an estimated velocity of eight feet per second.

In this context, the project is expected to implement the necessary site design features and engineering improvements to handle the existing drainage conditions in a way that prevents inundation to the proposed homes and prevents obstructing the existing drainage pattern.

Regulatory Compliance:

The size and nature of the proposed development prompts compliance with the existing regulations pertaining to water quality standards and waste discharge requirements during and after construction. As a result, the project proponent must comply with the State's most current Construction General Permit (CGP), Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-006-DWQ. Compliance with the CGP involves the development and implementation of a project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), designed to prevent potential adverse impacts to surface water quality, including erosion and siltation, during the period of construction. The required plan will identify the limits of temporary disturbance, indicating specific locations where activities will require implementation of storm water Best Management Practices (BMPs). Storm water BMPs refer to a schedule of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, and other management practices to prevent, eliminate, or reduce the pollution of receiving waters. BMP examples also include treatment requirements, operating procedures, and practices to control plant site runoff spillage or leaks. Consistent with Section XIV of the CGP, the required SWPPP must also specify the necessary recordkeeping, relevant good site housekeeping requirements, proper waste management, proper handling and storage within the allowable construction limits.

Based on the project location and setting, the compliant SWPPP is expected to identify temporary sediment track-out prevention BMPs at each construction entrance/exit point that eventually exits to a public street. This type of BMP will provide temporary stabilization to prevent sediment track-out and fugitive dust emissions from exiting the site. Linear sediment barriers may be warranted along portions of the construction perimeter to prevent soil erosion impacts and sediment impacts. As construction progresses, any on-site catch basin inlets that become operational will require temporary protection to prevent sediment or pollutants from entering the on-site storm drain system. As a standard condition, any ground surface area disturbed by construction activities must be entirely covered by the SWPPP and must be properly re-stabilized to satisfy the City and NPDES requirements. Compliance with the State's CGP during construction will be regulated and enforced as part of the local agency site inspection protocols.

During construction, the project will also be required to comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) Rule 403 and 403.1 and the City's Fugitive Dust Control Ordinance. Implementation of Fugitive Dust Control Plan primarily pertains to air quality, but also supports water quality protection through the requirement of soil stabilization measures aimed at preventing sediment erosion and track-out. The concurrent implementation of the required SWPPP and Dust Control Plan plans will prevent the potential construction-related impacts to water quality, including erosion and siltation, at the site and its surroundings, therefore, resulting in less than significant impact.

As a standard requirement, the project is required to provide facilities to adequately retain storm water generated from the proposed residential uses. The preliminary engineering plans identify a proposed underground retention structure to accept storm water runoff from the residential land uses and associated street surfaces. The project proponent is required to develop and implement an approved Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to comply with the most current standards of the *Whitewater River Region Water Quality Management Plan for Urban Runoff* and the *Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit*. The project-specific WQMP will identify a strategy of site design, source controls, and treatment controls with a required operation and maintenance program to address post-construction runoff quality and quantity. The project's engineering plans and WQMP will be subject to City review and approval.

In summary, during construction and operation, project implementation will require compliance with CWA, NPDES, and local regulations to prevent impacts to water quality standards and the beneficial uses assigned to local receiving waters. As proposed, the stormwater capture and management strategy for on- and off-site runoff will waste discharge violations through the implementation of properly sized retention facilities. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The project is not located on or near any existing or planned groundwater recharge facility, such that it would result in any conflict or obstruction with such types of facilities. Local groundwater resources are managed under the Missions Springs Water District (MSWD) 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). In the Coachella Valley Region, groundwater resources are managed by a partnership among MSWD, Coachella Water Authority (CWA), Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), Desert Water Agency (DWA), and Indio Water Authority (IWA) under the Coachella Valley Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program. The UWMP acknowledges that continued artificial groundwater recharge efforts are necessary to eliminate or reduce the groundwater overdraft condition. MSWD, DWA, and CVWD presently manage the Mission Creek Subbasin resources and its replenishment efforts under the terms of a 2004 settlement agreement. Groundwater management is also guided by the evaluation and water use strategies identified in the UWMP. As required by the policies of the General Plan, the City continues to cooperate with MSWD and other agencies in implementing a groundwater replenishment program capable of ensuring the viability of the Mission Creek Subbasin.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Water use and conservation strategies identified in the UWMP incorporate demographic data and planned land use conditions identified in local plans (e.g. City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan) to forecast the development intensities and other growth factors as they relate to achieving the most efficient use of groundwater resources. As previously disclosed, project implementation of twelve proposed homes would result in an estimated population increase of 38 persons (based on 3.17 persons per household), which represents less than one percent of the total City population. The UWMP indicates that the per-capita water usage is on a declining trend due in part to the implementation of various conservation measures, plumbing codes, and landscape ordinance. As such, the proposed residential project will be served by existing water connections available to the project site and will be required to implement the necessary water conservation measures, including water conserving plumbing fixtures, drought tolerant landscaping, and drip irrigation systems as well as on-site stormwater infiltration. Moreover, each household will contribute to the regional recharge funding efforts through the monthly water billing obligations.

The proposed underground retention facilities will operate by infiltrating the required stormwater volume instead of allowing it to leave as runoff. This method of stormwater management will therefore facilitate groundwater recharge through infiltration. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

c)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
	i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The project property consists of fenced undeveloped land with prior modifications involving clearing, grubbing, and grading to establish a relatively level terrain. Only portions of the northerly and easterly property edges have remained relatively undisturbed. A northern portion of the project site traversed by an unnamed ephemeral (dry) wash feature associated with the Big Morongo Wash. This drainage feature mapped by USGS enters the site from the northerly boundary and exists along the easterly boundary, continuing in a southeasterly direction to confluence with other local drainages. The approximate property area overlaid by the mapped USGS wash is approximately 1.37 acres. The identification and mapping of the mentioned wash is reflected in the current and historic United States Geological Survey (USGS) Topographic Maps (Desert Hot Springs Quadrangle), in the USGS National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), and the *Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit Area Facilities Map* published by the Riverside County Flood Control District. To prevent off-site erosion and siltation impacts pertaining to the mentioned wash feature, the project will be required to implement the necessary flood protection facilities to adequately convey the existing drainage patterns without disrupting conditions downstream. The adequate handling of these ephemeral off-site flows will be demonstrated in the project-specific hydrology report, grading

design, and other associated improvement plans for City review and approval. Only after proper City review of the proposed flood control and storm drain design would project the project be granted approval. These are required by the City as standard conditions during the approval process; therefore, are not mitigation.

For the on-site residential condition, existing instances of soil erosion and siltation caused by the undeveloped setting, will be improved through the introduction of permanent storm drain facilities designed to convey the on-site runoff into a proposed underground retention structure adequately sized to capture and infiltrate the controlling 100-storm event volume. The site design and plans associated with on-site stormwater management will also be subject to City review and approval. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The proposed residential development will introduce impervious surfaces in the form of buildings, hardscape, and asphalt to a presently undeveloped (pervious) ground condition. This modification caused by development would normally result in a site-specific increase in the rate and quantity of surface runoff. As a standard requirement to comply with the City and State regulatory standards, the project design will include an on-site storm drain system designed to accept and infiltrate urban runoff generated on-site. Based on preliminary engineering plans currently available, the retention system would be an underground structure sized to infiltrate the controlling 100-year storm event volume. Such system would be subject to review and approval by the City. Moreover, the project is also expected to incorporate flood and drainage control facilities along the northerly boundary to handle off-site drainage around the project, protecting it from off-site flows and maintaining the off-site condition. These improvements includes the development of block walls along the project's perimeter to divert water around the project property. With such improvements in place, the project is not expected to result in an increase the rate or amount of surface runoff to result in flooding on- or off-site.

Mitigation Measures: None

iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The City of Desert Hot Springs is a Permittee of the Whitewater River Watershed Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit area. Within the City limits, MS4 facilities include a system of conveyances (including roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels, or storm drains) designed for collecting and conveying stormwater. Storm

drain facilities can be public or private. Examples of public facilities include pipes, gutters, channels, and basins occurring on the public right-of-way and/or maintained by a public agency. Private facilities are distinguished by being maintained separately by a private entity, like a homeowner's association.

The undeveloped project property is absent of any formal stormwater drainage facilities. Based on the existing site topography, runoff from the developed and undeveloped portions of the property would have the propensity to sheet-flow toward the south and southeast.

The proposed residential development involves a stormwater drainage system incorporated into the site plan and grading design allowing on-site runoff to drain into a proposed retention facility sized to meet the City's hydrologic requirements and City approval. As such, the project will prevent the increases in runoff flow rates, volumes, velocities and durations that are normally known to impact public storm drain systems. With the capture and retention of project site runoff, any pollutants normally found in runoff will also be contained on-site and prevented from being discharged off-site. Less than significant impacts relative to runoff water are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

As previously described, a portion of the project site is traversed by an unnamed wash feature tributary to Big Morongo Wash. The proposed development is expected to incorporate the necessary flood protection facilities along the northerly project boundary to properly handle and convey the mentioned drainage in a way that prevents disruptions to the existing patterns and hydrologic conditions. Flood protection and management facilities will be subject to review and approval by the City to ensure that their requirements are adequately met. In doing so, the project will not be permitted to impede or redirect flood flows, resulting in less than significant impacts.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) serve as the basis for identifying potential flood hazards. According to FIRM Panel 06065C0885G, effective August 28, 2008, the entire project area and its immediate surroundings are located within the Zone AO designation, which applies to areas subject to inundation by the 100-year (1-percent-annual-chance) flood at varying depths and velocities. As part of this designation, the westernmost 3 acres are subject to a potential flood depth of two feet with an estimated velocity of six feet per second. The remaining northeastern portion (approximately 0.62 acres) is subject to a potential flood depth of three feet with an estimated velocity of eight feet per second. The proposed development is expected to incorporate the necessary flood protection and management improvements to protect the project from inundation. These measures are expected to include flood protection from off-site flows. For on-site conditions, the proposed retention system has been sized to adequately handle project runoff based on the controlling 100-year storm event. All proposed improvement plans will be

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

required to meet the local hydrologic requirements in order to obtain approval. Moreover, the project is not located near any coastal areas and therefore is not prone to tsunami hazards. The project is not located near any body of water and therefore is not prone to seiche hazards. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

As discussed previously, the project proponent is required to implement a project-specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to comply with the most current standards of the Whitewater River Region Water Quality Management Plan for Urban Runoff, Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit. The WQMP will incorporate grading, hydrology, and other plans to document the site design, source controls, and treatment controls with a required operation and maintenance program to comply with the hierarchy water quality objectives. Moreover, the project's storm water retention facilities will ensure that urban runoff is recharged into the ground via infiltration. Additionally, water conservation practices, such as installing automatic irrigation systems to maintain landscape watering as well as the use of native and drought-tolerant plant species, will be implemented at the site. Combined with the required water conservation practices, the project is expected to contribute to the groundwater sustainability efforts implemented for the Coachella Valley region. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:
Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan; Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code.

a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

The approximately 3.62-acre project site is situated north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The currently undeveloped project property is surrounded by residential uses, including single family homes to the west and south. Elks lodge is located immediately east of the project site and vacant, undisturbed desert land is located north and east of the project property, referred to as the Big Morongo Wash corridor. The existing properties east, south and west of the project operate separately from each other, therefore, project development will not physically divide an established community. No impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

As stated throughout this environmental document, the project site sits on approximately 3.62 acres of undeveloped and vacant land situated north of Pierson Boulevard. The site is zoned within the Residential Low Density (R-L) land use designation with a Specific Plan (SP) Overlay. R-L designations provides for single-family residential development on individual lots of not less than 9,000 square feet. These lands allow for 0 to 5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and serve to buffer more dense residential development from estate residential uses. The SP overlay is used in conjunction with other underlying designations and requires the development of a Specific Plan of land use on parcels or groups of parcels of 40 acres or more. The project will not submit a Specific Plan as a part of the entitlement process due to its single proposed use and size.

The project proposes a 12-lot residential community on 3.62 acres of vacant land. The R-L land use and zoning designations allow 0 to 5 dwelling units per acre; therefore, the property is allowed up to 18 dwelling units onsite. The project proposes 12 residential units and is compliant with the R-L land use designation. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:
Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; Riverside County General Plan, 2015.

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

In accordance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA), mineral land classification maps and reports have been developed to assist in the protection and development of mineral resources. Local agencies, including the City of Desert Hot Springs, utilize the existing information on mineral classifications for land use plan development and decision-making. According to the SMARA map of Desert Hot Springs, the project and its surroundings are located within Mineral Resource Zone 3 (MRZ-3), which applies to areas where the significance of mineral deposits cannot be evaluated from the available data. There are no specific known mineral resource deposits or facilities on or near the project. Additionally, the land use designation for the site is not compatible with mining operations.

The project site is adjacent to the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Wash. These drainage courses have conditions where sand and gravel deposits may occur, but they are located within designated Conservation Areas of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) and therefore are not an accessible mineral resource site. Additionally, the land use designation for the site is not compatible with mining operations.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

The nature of the project does not involve the extraction of mineral deposits. Construction of the proposed residential community would rely on existing local and regional aggregate resources from permitted facilities. The project is not expected to result in a considerable extraction and/or loss of known mineral resources that are considered important to the Coachella Valley Region or residents of California. Less than significant impacts are expected related to the loss of availability of known mineral resources.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Mineral resources that are known to exist in the Coachella Valley region primarily consist of sand and gravel (aggregate) typically deposited along and near local drainages. Aggregate material is deemed necessary to the local building industry as a component of asphalt, concrete, road base, stucco and plaster. Local or regional construction industries tend to be dependent on readily available aggregate deposits within reasonable distance to the market region. The project site is not recognized as a mineral resource recovery site delineated in the County of Riverside General Plan, City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan or the resource maps prepared pursuant to SMARA. The proposed project is located near the regional drainage system, the Big Morongo Wash, which is located within conservation areas of the CVMSHCP and therefore will not be disturbed by the project. The proposed project is not identified by the General Plan or any specific plan or other land use plan as being part of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

XIII. NOISE -- Would the project result in:

Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; Desert Hot Springs General Plan Environmental Impact Report, 2020; Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code.

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Noise is simply defined as unwanted sound that interferes with normal activities or that diminishes the quality of the environment. Sounds becomes unwanted when it interferes with normal activities, when it causes actual physical harm or when it has adverse effects on health. Noise is measured on a logarithmic scale of sound pressure level known as a decibel (dB). An A-weighted decibel (dBA) is an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear. In an A-weighted system, the decibel values of sounds at low frequencies are reduced compared with unweighted decibels, in which no correction is made for audio frequency. Excessive noise or prolonged exposure to noise can contribute

to temporary and permanent impairments, such as hearing loss, fatigue, stress, sleep deprivation, anxiety and annoyance. Although noise has been accepted as a necessary by-product of urban development, it can become an environmental hazard. Various components of the urban environment generate noise such as construction equipment and activities, motor vehicles, air traffic, mechanical equipment, household appliances and other sources.

The most common sound range for human exposure is between 40 dB (very quiet) and 100 dB (very loud). Community noise impacts are commonly evaluated using the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) noise index, which reduces the combined effect of daily noise exposure to a single number. The value computed by this method is the sum of the decibel values of sound, averaged over 24 hours, which corrections for time of day, such as a 5 dBA penalty for noises occurring during the evening time period (from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.) and a 10 dBA penalty for noises occurring during the nighttime period (from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.).

The City of Desert Hot Springs has the authority to establish land use noise standards and corresponding restrictions under the City's Noise Ordinance. A range of noise standards apply to different receiving land uses based on sensitivity and compatibility. Table SN-2, Community Noise and Land Use Compatibility, in the 2020 Desert Hot Springs General Plan (DHS GP) Noise Element. The proposed residential project corresponds to the category of "Residential Land Uses", based on the land use designation. For this category, the recommended "normally acceptable" noise limit is 55 dBA for single and multi-family dwellings. Noise levels up to 60 dBA are considered "conditionally acceptable" for residential, schools, and libraries. This is depicted in Table SN-2 from the 2020 General Plan:

Table SN-2
Community Noise and Land Use Compatibility

Land Uses	CNEL, dB						
	50	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential land uses: Single and multifamily dwellings,	A	A	B	C	C	D	D
Residential land uses: Mobile homes	A	B	C	C	D	D	D
Transient lodging: Hotels and motels	A	A	B	B	C	C	D
Schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, nursing homes & convalescent hospitals	A	A	B	C	C	D	D
Recreation land uses: Golf courses, open space (with walking, bicycling or horseback riding trails, etc.)	A	A	A	A	B	C	C
Playgrounds, neighborhood parks	A	A	A	B	C	D	D
Office building, person business, and professional services	A	A	A	B	B	C	D
Commercial land uses: Retail trade, movie theaters, restaurants, bars, entertainment activities, services	A	A	A	A	B	B	C
Heavy commercial/industrial: wholesale, manufacturing, utilities, transportation, communications	A	A	A	A	B	B	B
Auditoriums, concert halls, amphitheaters, music shells, meeting halls	B	B	C	C	D	D	D

Explanatory Notes:

A. Normally Acceptable: With no special noise reduction requirements assuming standard construction.

B. Conditionally Acceptable: New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirement is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

C. Generally Unacceptable: New construction is discouraged. If new construction does proceed, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

D. Land Use Discouraged: New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

E. The residential exterior noise standard of 65 dBA shall generally be applicable only to outdoor living areas, such as rear yard areas.

In addition to the compliance of Table SN-2, the project will also comply with Section 17.40.180, Noise, of the DHS MC. Per 17.40.180, no loudspeaker, bells, gongs, buzzers, mechanical equipment or other sounds, attention attracting, or communication device associated with any use shall be discernible beyond any boundary line of the parcel, except fire protection devices, burglar alarms and church bells. The following provisions shall apply:

A. In residential areas, no exterior noise level shall exceed 65 dBA and no interior noise level shall exceed 45 dBA.

B. All residential developments shall incorporate the following standards to mitigate noise levels:

1. Increase the distance between the noise source and receiver.
2. Locate land uses not sensitive to noise (i.e., parking lots, garages, maintenance facilities, utility areas, etc.) between the noise source and the receiver.
3. Bedrooms should be located on the side of the structure away from major rights-of-way.
4. Quiet outdoor spaces may be provided next to a noisy right-of-way by creating a U-shaped development which faces away from the right-of-way.

C. The minimum acceptable surface weight for a noise barrier is 4 pounds per square foot (equivalent to 3/4-inch plywood). The barrier shall be of a continuous material which is resistant to sound including: (1) masonry block; (2) precast concrete; or (3) earth berm or a combination of earth berm with block concrete.

D. Noise barriers shall interrupt the line of sight between noise source and receiver.

As discussed previously, the project property is located on vacant land surrounded by a mix of developed residential properties and undeveloped vacant land. The project and the surrounding area are designated in the Desert Hot Springs General Plan to support the development of low-density, single-family detached residential units.

Construction

Construction of the project site is expected to generate short-term noise increases compared to the existing levels. A temporary incremental increase in noise levels along local roadways is expected to occur during the transport of workers and equipment to and from the site. Noise increases will also be generated by the actual on-site construction activities. Equipment used during the construction phases would generate both steady state and episodic noise that would be heard both on and off the project site. Noise levels generated during construction would primarily affect the residential land uses immediately adjacent to the project site's western boundary. Elks lodge, to the east and Park West Mobile Home Park to the south may also be affected by construction noise generated from the project.

Noise levels generated during various construction phases are presented in Table XIII-1, *Typical Maximum Noise Levels for Construction Phases*. Equipment estimates used for the analysis for grading and building construction noise levels was provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation and are representative of worst-case conditions, since it is unlikely that all the equipment contained on-site would operate simultaneously.

Table XIII-1
Typical Maximum Noise Levels for Construction Phases

	Appropriate Leq dBA without Noise Attenuation			
Construction Phase	25 Feet	50 Feet	100 Feet	200 Feet
Clearing	90	84	78	72
Excavation	94	88	82	78
Foundation/Conditioning	94	88	82	78
Laying Subbase/Paving	85	79	73	67

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Construction Noise Handbook, Chapter 9.0, August 2006.

During construction, the project shall follow common industry standards that will help limit noise level increases. For example, all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, should be equipped with properly operating and maintained mufflers and the engines should be equipped with shrouds. Approved haul routes shall be used to minimize exposure of sensitive receptors to potential adverse levels from hauling operations. All construction equipment shall be in proper working order and maintained to reduce backfires. Grading activities would involve the use of standard earth moving equipment, which would be stored on the site during construction to minimize disruption of the surrounding land uses. Above-grade construction activities would involve the use of standard construction equipment, such as hoist, cranes, mixer trucks, concrete pumps, laser screeds and other related equipment.

Construction traffic and equipment is also anticipated to generate noise along access routes to the proposed development. The larger pieces of heavy equipment would be moved onto the development only one time for each construction activity (i.e. site prep, grading, etc.). Daily transportation of construction workers and the hauling of materials both on and off the project site are expected to cause increases in noise levels along surrounding roadways.

As a standard requirement, the project is expected to abide by the Municipal Code regulations on construction hours, which limit activities to the less sensitive times of the day. Construction activities are only permitted between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. During daylight savings time, construction is permitted between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Construction is not permitted on Sundays and national holidays. Due to the project's proximity to existing residential uses, construction of the project will abide by the construction hours established in the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code. Additionally, the project will utilize construction equipment compliant with industry standards.

As stated in the Biological Resources section of this document, the project will be required to comply with the standards of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) Land Use Adjacency Guidelines. Per the Guidelines, proposed development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual. This is indicated in Mitigation Measure **BIO-2**.

Less than significant impacts are anticipated during project construction.

Operation

The vacant project property is located north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road. The area surrounding the project is characterized by a mix of single-family residential dwellings to the immediate west, vacant land to the immediate north and northeast, Elks lodge to the immediate east and a mobile home park to the south. According to the DHS GP, the noise environment of the City is generally quiet, consistent with the City's residential community. The existing residential community west of the project site are completely separated from the project site by block walls. Elk's lodge, east of the project, is surrounded by block walls to the north and west, creating a barrier from the project site. These existing features will act in reducing noise levels generated by the proposed project to the existing community (west) and Elk's Lodge (east).

The Noise Element in the DHS GP identifies vehicular traffic as the principal source of noise in the community. To understand and evaluate the impacts of land use patterns, traffic and development on the noise environment, computer models and simulations were used to calculate transportation noise along major roadways based upon the operating characteristics and traffic volumes. The calculations identify the projected noise contours along major roadways at General Plan Buildout in Figure SN-7 in the DHS GP. Per Figure SN-7, Pierson Boulevard and Little Morongo Road are the two closest roadways to the project property. However, noise from Little Morongo Road is not anticipated to impact the project due to its distance from the roadway (approximately 0.30 miles east). Traffic from Pierson Boulevard may impact the project site due to its adjacency to the roadway, however, design features, such as block walls and landscape barriers will lower the noise levels generated from street traffic. Block walls will surround the proposed residential lots in compliance with DHS Municipal Code 17.40.180.

The project, as stated throughout this environmental document, is proposing a 12-lot residential community on approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land. The project will be subject to follow the noise-related prohibitions established in Chapter 8.12, and specifically Section 8.12.040, of the DHS MC. Per 8.12.040, no person shall cause, suffer, allow, permit, continue, or cause to be made, suffered, permitted or continued within the City limits or within 200 feet thereof, any noise disturbance. Therefore, prohibiting:

- Sounding of any horn or other auditory signaling devices on or in any motor vehicle except as a warning of danger
- The use or operation of any sound production or reproduction device, radio receiving set, musical instrument, drums, phonograph, television set, loud speakers, sound amplifier, public address system or other similar machine or device for the producing or reproducing of sound:
    - Between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. the following day in such a manner as to create a noise disturbance across a real property boundary;
    - In such a manner as to be plainly audible within any noise sensitive zone;
    - In such a manner as to be plainly audible as a distance of 50 feet from the source;
    - In such a manner as to create a noise disturbance to any person other than the operator of the device, when operated by any passenger or a common carrier.
- Yelling, shouting, hooting, whistling or singing on the public streets or on any publicly owned property between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m., or at any time or place so as to disturb the quiet comfort or repose of persons in any office, or in any dwelling, hotel or other type of residence or persons in the close proximity.

Noise sources associated with the proposed development are expected to include opening and closing of vehicle doors in driveways, people talking, car alarms, trash pick-ups, and operating HVAC equipment. According to Table 4.13-1, Typical Noise Levels, in the DHS Environmental Impact Report (EIR), quiet suburban nighttime areas have a noise level of 35 dBA, while quiet urban daytime areas have a noise level of 50 dBA. These noise levels will be typical of the proposed 12-lot residential neighborhood. A grass lawn mower at 3 feet has a typical noise level of 95 dBA, and a noise level of 70 dBA at 100 feet. However, these activities typically occur for short periods of time and during the daytime hours. In addition to the enforceable noise controls established in the DHS MC, to minimize noise conflicts between properties, the existing and proposed solid barriers (such as walls) are expected to reduce noise levels.

While the project would result in an increase in noise levels compared to the existing undeveloped condition, the nature and intensity of operations that would occur in the proposed structures are not expected to result in the generation of noise levels that would surpass the community noise and land use compatibility standards. Additionally, the project is expected to result in a nominal increase in traffic-related noise levels on the local roadways since the project proposes 12 residential lots. Assuming that each household would have 1 to 3 vehicles, the 12 residential lots could introduce approximately 12 to 36 vehicles (total) to the roadways. Vehicles within the residential neighborhood will not exceed 25 miles per hour, unless otherwise posted (per the California Department of Motor Vehicles). For example, a vehicle traveling 30 mph, generates 62 dBA at 50 feet. This is acceptable in a residential area. This will not result in a significant increase in traffic-related noise. Due to the low density and intensity proposed at the project site, the 12-lot residential project will not result in a significant increase in traffic noise.

Offsite noise impacting the project would consist of the operational activities from Elk's Lodge, east of the project, and Pierson Boulevard, south of the project. Elks Lodge, east of the project operates as a community center for members of Elks USA. The facility is utilized as a meeting location for members. The members meet at this location on the second and fourth Thursday of the month between September to June. In the months of July and August they meet on the second Thursday, per the Elk's website. Operational noise generated by Elks Lodge would consist of vehicles parking in the parking lot on the days the members meet, people talking in the parking lot, doors shutting, and trash pick-ups. The noise generated from these activities are temporary and are compliant with residential areas. All meetings and activities of Elks Lodge occurs inside the building facility, therefore, noise from the meetings/activities is not anticipated to impact the proposed residential property. With the foregoing, the operational noise generated from Elks Lodge is not anticipated to significantly impact the project site.

Vehicle use of Pierson Boulevard (south of the project property) generates traffic noise. Impacts of noise generated from Pierson Boulevard to the project would be reduced via noise reduction design features such as walls, berms, and other noise attenuation measures. The project proposes setbacks, walls, and building materials used for the residential homes in order to reduce noise generated offsite. Lot 1 of the project is the closest residential lot to Pierson Boulevard. Lot 1's property boundary is located approximately 55 feet north of Pierson Boulevard. The 55-foot separation between Pierson Boulevard and Lot 1 is dedicated for an easement for electrical and telephone lines. The closest residential structure from Pierson Boulevard will be located at a distance greater than 55 feet. Additionally, block walls will be located between the residential lot (Lot 1) and the roadway, thus acting as a noise barrier. Typical of residential communities, the perimeter walls will consist of concrete masonry block. The second closest residential lot to Pierson Boulevard in located approximately 144.35 feet from the right-of-way. In addition to the setbacks and block walls proposed between the residential lots and Pierson Boulevard, the residential structures will be designed with noise reducing materials per building standards (California

Building Code Section 1206). Noise reducing materials include well-fitted windows, weather-stripped doors, airtight walls, industry standard roofs, and proper ventilation. The use of these noise reducing materials, as standard state regulations, will ensure noise experienced indoors is reduced to less than significant levels.

Noise generated by the project site is anticipated to be similar to the existing residential land uses that currently define the surrounding area and less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Discussion:

Groundborne vibration also referred to as earthborne vibration, can be described as perceptible rumbling, movement, shaking or rattling of structures and items within a structure. Groundborne vibration can generate a heightened disturbance in residential areas. These vibrations can disturb residential structures and household items while creating difficulty for residential activities such as reading or other tasks. Although groundborne vibration is sometimes perceptible in an outdoor environment, it does not result in the degree of disturbance that is experienced inside a building. Groundborne vibration can be measured in terms of amplitude and frequency or vibration decibels (VdB). Trains, buses, large trucks and construction activities that include pile driving, blasting, earth moving, and heavy vehicle operation commonly cause these vibrations. Other factors that influence the disturbance of groundborne vibration include distance to source, foundation materials, soil and surface types. Table 4.13-12, Groundborne Vibration and Noise from Typical Construction Equipment, from the DHS EIR is provided below.

Table 4.13-12 Groundborne Vibration and Noise from Typical Construction Equipment

Equipment	Peak Particle Velocity (in/sec) (A)			Velocity Decibels (VdB) (B)		
	25 feet	50 feet	100 feet	25 feet	50 feet	100 feet
Small bulldozer	0.003	0.001	0.001	58	49	40
Jackhammer	0.035	0.016	0.008	79	70	61
Rock Breaker	0.059	0.028	0.013	83	74	65
Loaded truck	0.076	0.035	0.017	86	77	68
Auger Drill Rig	0.089	0.042	0.019	87	78	69
Large bulldozer	0.089	0.042	0.019	87	78	69
Vibratory Roller	0.210	0.098	0.046	94	85	76
Impact Pile Driver (upper range)	1.518	0.708	0.330	112	103	94
Impact Pile Driver (typical)	0.644	0.300	0.140	104	95	86
Sonic Pile Driver (upper range)	0.734	0.42	0.160	105	96	87
Sonic Pile Driver (typical)	0.170	0.079	0.037	93	84	75

Sources: Caltrans 2013b and FTA 2018

(A) Estimated PPV calculated as: PPV(D)=PPV(ref)*(25/D)^1.1 where PPV(D)= Estimated PPV at distance; PPVref= Reference PPV at 25 ft; D= Distance from equipment to receiver; and n= ground attenuation rate (1.1 for dense compacted hard soils).

(B) Estimated Lv calculated as: Lv(D)=Lv(25 feet)-30Log(D/25) where Lv(D)= estimated velocity level in decibels at distance, Lv(25 feet)= RMS velocity amplitude at 25 ft; and D= distance from equipment to receiver.

Note: No pile drivers, bulldozers, rock breakers, or auger drill rigs would be utilized during construction of the project.

As shown in Table 4.13-12, specific vibration levels associated with typical construction equipment are highly dependent on the type of equipment used. Vibration levels dissipate rapidly with distance, such that even maximum impact pile driving activities would result in vibration levels below Caltrans' recommended 0.5 PPV threshold for transient vibration-induced damage in historic, older buildings at a distance of 100 feet. All other activities would be below Caltrans' threshold for transient vibration-induced damage in historic, older buildings at a distance of 25 feet. Historic, older buildings are not located adjacent or in the vicinity of the project property. Standard construction equipment (e.g., bulldozers, trucks, jackhammers) generally does not cause vibration that could cause structural or cosmetic damage but may be felt by nearby receptors. However, the use of bulldozers, rock breakers, auger drill rigs, or pile drivers will not occur onsite. Vibratory rollers are typically utilized at construction sites to compact and densify soil, asphalt or other materials. It is likely that a vibratory roller will be used at to compact the soils and asphalt materials used for the project's proposed internal street, which is proposed approximately 104.39 feet from the existing residential community boundary to the west. Additionally, the use of the vibratory roller will not occur in the same location for prolonged periods of time. Therefore, impacts of a vibratory roller to the existing residential community will be less than significant.

The project is surrounded by a combination of vacant and developed land. Residential uses are located west of the project boundary, while Pierson Boulevard, separates the project from residential uses to the south. Elks lodge is located east of the project site. The existing source of groundborne vibration is attributed to the circulation of vehicles and trucks along the southern roadway. The closest sensitive land use is the existing residential community west of the project site. However, most construction equipment does not operation in the same location for prolonged periods of time. Therefore, even if construction equipment were to operate near a building where receptors may feel vibration, it would only be for a temporary amount of time and would not be considered excessive.

Construction of the project will involve the temporary operation of vehicles and equipment that could result in localized, short term vibration increases during the permitted hours of construction established by the City. All construction equipment staging will be located within the temporary construction limits, while vehicular and equipment access to the construction site would be restricted to only the approved entry points that minimize disturbance to local traffic. Short-term increases in vibration and sound during construction are not expected to result in significant impact.

After construction, the nature of the proposed residential property would not typically involve activities expected to generate excessive vibration or groundborne noise. All activities within the project will be required to adhere to the City's Noise Ordinance. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) For a Project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
The project site is located approximately 8.25 miles north of Palm Springs International Airport, and 20.50 miles northwest of the Bermuda Dunes Airport. Therefore, the project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or the vicinity of a private airstrip, and as such, no impact related to the exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport related noise levels is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Would the project:
Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan; Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code.

a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
As previously discussed throughout this document, the project is proposing the construction of approximately 3.62 acres of vacant land north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles of Little Morongo Road in Desert Hot Springs. The project proposes 12 lots for single family residential dwellings and associated improvements. The project's existing General Plan land use and zoning designation of Low Density Residential allows up to 5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac).

According to the 2018-2019 California Department of Finance population and housing estimates, the City of Desert Hot Springs's total population is approximately 29,251 with an average household size of 3.17. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has developed demographic forecasts designed to assist cities, counties and other agencies in projecting future population and economic trends. According to SCAG's forecast provided in 2012, Desert Hot Springs was forecasted to have a population of 43,500 people in 2020, and 58,100 people in 2035.

As stated previously, the project proposes 12 single family dwellings at buildout. As a result of project build-out, the proposed development could add approximately 38 new residents to the City, for an approximate population of 29,289. This is an increase of approximately 0.12 percent and still below the projected 2020 population forecast of 43,500. This projected increase is a conservative figure because it assumes that the project's future residents will not be current residents of Desert Hot Springs. However,

it is anticipated that some of the project's tenants will be existing residents from within the City of Desert Hot Springs and/or from neighboring incorporated and unincorporated areas.

Additionally, the project site is located in an urban and developed area that is equipped with paved roadways and supporting infrastructure. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to contribute to a significant growth to population, housing and employment within the City of Desert Hot Springs. Less than significant impact is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
The proposed development is located on land that is currently vacant and designated as Residential Low Density allowing 0 to 5 dwelling units per acre. The project proposes the development of a 12-lot residential community on approximately 3.62 acres of undeveloped land. Due to the vacant character of the property, development of the project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing or people necessitating the construction of replacement housing. No impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan; Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code.

a) Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
The City of Desert Hot Springs contracts with Riverside County Fire Department/Cal Fire (RCFD) for a full range of fire protection services provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The RCFD is staffed with a combination of County and State of California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection employees. They operate nearly 100 fire stations that serve approximately two million residents over 7,004 square miles of Riverside County. The City of Desert Hot Springs has three RCFD fire stations, Battalion 10, Station

36, located at 11535 Karen Avenue is approximately 1.9 miles from the project site. Battalion 10, Station 37 is the City's busiest fire station and is located at 65-958 Pierson Blvd, approximately 1.4 miles from the proposed project. The third station, Battalion 10, Station 57, is located at 72985 Dillon Road, and is approximately 10 miles away from the project's facility. Each station is staffed by 8.2 full time personal and each shift has 3 professionals consisting of a Fire Captain/and or engineer and one or two Firefighter II / licensed paramedic on duty at all times. Each station is also equipped with a Type I, 1500 GPM fire engine.

In addition to the other RCFD facilities located in the Coachella Valley, the department maintains a cooperative mutual aid agreement with other agencies and communities to assist in suppressing fire or controlling emergency incidents. Mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictions provided resources are available and is not to the detriment of their own service area. Per the City's General Plan, agreements are in place with both Palm Springs and Cathedral City. These cities provide their own fire services and do not contract with RCFD/Cal Fire.

The project proposes the development of 12 single family residential units and associated improvements on approximately 3.62-acres. Development of the proposed project is not expected to have a significant impact on fire services nor cause an undue hardship to the fire department. The project could be adequately served without the expansion of a new fire facility and adequate response times would be met.

Additionally, the project would be required to implement all applicable and current California Fire Code Standards. This would include installation of fire hydrants as well as sprinkler systems inside the buildings. Furthermore, the project will be reviewed by City and Fire officials to ensure adequate fire service and safety as a result of project implementation. The project will also be required to comply with the City's Development Impact Fees (DIF) to assist with the funding of public facilities and services, including fire, therefore, less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Police services are provided to the project area by the Desert Hot Springs Police Department. The police department operates out of a single location and is located at 65-950 Pierson Blvd, approximately 1.3 miles from the project site. The DHSPD has 27 sworn officers and 6 support staff, totaling 33 positions. The department serves a population of 29,251 residents. The development of 12 single family residential units could result in additional incident call and responses but not to the extent that would delay response times or create demands that would require the construction of a new police station or other facilities.

Furthermore, the project will be reviewed by City and Police officials to ensure adequate police service and safety as a result of project implementation. The project will also be required to comply with the City's Development Impact Fees (DIF) to assist with the funding of public facilities and services, including police, therefore, less than significant impacts are expected.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Furthermore, the project will be reviewed by City and Police officials to ensure adequate police service and safety as a result of project implementation. The project will also be required to comply with the City's Development Impact Fees (DIF) to assist with the funding of public facilities and services, including police, therefore, less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The City of Desert Hot Springs is served by the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD). There are four elementary schools in the City, one middle school and one high school. Desert Hot Springs High School is the closest school to the proposed project and is approximately 0.85 miles away. Painted Hills Middle School and Bella Vista Elementary School is approximately 1.45 miles away and 1.63 miles away, respectively. Two Bunch Palms Elementary School is approximately 1.72 miles from the project site.

As previously discussed throughout this document, the project is proposing a 12-unit single family residential development which could generate school age kids. Per the California Department of Finance, Population and Housing Estimates (2019), the City of Desert Hot Springs has 3.17 persons per household (PPH). The project has the potential to generate 4 new students based on the District's Student Generation Rate (Table XV-1).

Table XV-1
PSUSD District Wide Student Generation Rate

School Type	Dwelling Units	Generation Rate*	Students Generated
Elementary School	12	0.1134	1
Middle School	12	0.0922	1
High School	12	0.1275	2
Total New Students			4
*Source: 2018 PSUSD Residential Development School Fee Justification Study , April, 2018			

The addition of 4 new students would not cause a substantial impact to the District nor would additional school facilities need to be constructed as a result of the proposed project. Moreover, Assembly Bill 2926 and Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) allow school districts to collect "development fees" for all new construction for residential/commercial and industrial use. At the time of writing, PSUSD developer fees are $3.79/sq.ft. for residential and $0.61/ sq.ft. for commercial. Monies collected are used for construction and reconstruction of school facilities. Therefore, less than significant impact to school services are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

As discussed below in Section XVI(a) and XVI(b), the proposed project would not create additional demand for public park facilities, nor result in the need to modify existing or construct new park facilities. No impacts are expected to parks.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Mitigation Measures: None

Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
No increase in demand for government services and other public facilities is expected beyond those discussed in this section. No impacts to other public facilities are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

XVI. RECREATION

Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan; Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code.

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
According to the Desert Hot Springs General Plan, there are seven existing parks in the City consisting of mini, neighborhood and community parks. The closest park to the project site is Sargent Frank Hodge Skate Park, located approximately 1.30 miles east of the site, at 11777 West Drive. Guy J. Tedesco Park is located approximately 1.40 miles southeast of the project site at 1177 West Drive, and includes a trail, benches, a skate park, shaded areas, and a community center. The City parks are open to the public, therefore, the residents of the proposed project would be able to enjoy the recreational amenities. As stated previously, the project proposes 12 lots for single family residential units. It is likely that the residents of the project will use existing neighborhood parks, regional parks or other recreational facilities. The future residents generated by the project may lead to an incremental increase in the physical deterioration of the City public recreational facilities. However, the project will comply with the City's parkland in lieu fee (Quimby) and other development impact fees. Less than significant impacts are expected with project implementation.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Does the Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
The construction of the proposed residential neighborhood lies within a residential low density land use designation and will not involve the development of a recreational facility. No construction or expansion of other recreational facilities is required for project implementation; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Mitigation Measures: None

XVII. TRANSPORTATION -- Would the project:

Sources: *California Emissions Estimator ModelTM* (CalEEModTM) Version 2016.3.2, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA); Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code; *Traffic Census Report*, Coachella Valley Association of Governments, 2015. Riverside County Transportation Commission, Long Range Transportation Study, December 2019; California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, December 2018.

a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The project proposes the development of a vacant, 3.62-acre property north of Pierson Boulevard and approximately 0.30 miles west of Little Morongo Road. The proposed project site includes 12 single family residential units. Associated improvements include paved road with a 60-foot right of way, underground retention facility, and landscaped features. Access is proposed on Pierson Boulevard, at the southern boundary of the site.

The land use and zone for the project site is Residential Low-Density Specific Plan Overlay (R-L/SP). R-L/SP Districts are intended to promote the development of low density, single-family detached residential units with a minimum average lot size of 9,000 square feet. These lands allow 0 to 5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and serve to buffer more dense residential development from estate residential uses. The Specific Overlay requires the development of a Specific Plan of Land Use on parcels or groups of parcels of 40 acres or more.

Pierson Boulevard is currently paved with curb, gutter and sidewalk.

A paved road with curb and gutter is proposed for the main project street that ends in a cul-de-sac. The Project will be developed in one Phase. Circulation and parking will be consistent with City parking standards as determined by City Staff.

Average Daily Trips (ADT) refers to the total number of vehicles that travel a defined segment of roadway over a twenty-four-hour period. The standard most often used to evaluate the operating conditions of the transportation system is called level of service (LOS). LOS is a qualitative assessment of the quantitative effect of factors such as: speed and travel time, traffic volume, geometric features, traffic interruptions, delays, and freedom to maneuver, driver comfort and convenience, and vehicle operating costs. LOS allows operating conditions to be categorized as LOS “A” through LOS “F”, where LOS “A” represents the most favorable free flow condition and LOS “F” the least favorable forced flow driving condition. The LOS categories are based on relative levels of driver acceptability of various delays. A given lane or roadway may provide a wide range of service levels, depending upon traffic volumes and speeds.

Roadway capacity has been defined as the maximum number of vehicles that can pass over a given roadway during a given time period under prevailing roadway and traffic conditions. The capacity of a roadway used for design purposes (generally defined as LOS D) is the level at which the facility is handling the maximum traffic volume that it can accommodate while maintaining an acceptable level of driver satisfaction. The City of Desert Hot Springs has defined Level of Service "D" as the minimum adequate intersection service level during peak hours for planning and design purposes. The following table illustrates the commonly accepted LOS designations (based on volume and capacity) for typical roadways.

Table XVII-1
Daily Roadway Volume Estimates for Each Level-of-Service (1)
Ave. Daily Traffic Volume @ Upper Limit of Each LOS (1)

Classification	Typical Lane Configuration	LOS A(2)	LOS B(2)	LOS C(3)	LOS D(2)	LOS E(3)
Freeway	8-lane divided	74,000	103,000	132,000	161,000	190,000
Arterial Highway	6-lane divided	17,000	27,500	38,000	48,500	59,000
Major Highway	4-lane divided	10,000	17,000	24,000	31,000	38,000
Secondary	4-lane undivided	10,000	15,000	20,000	25,000	30,000
Collector	2-lane undivided	6,000	9,000	12,000	15,000	18,000

(1) The upper limit of LOS D was assumed to be the "design" capacity in Desert Hot Springs. All capacities are based upon improvement to full city standards under optimum operating conditions.
(2) Source: Based on LOS C and LOS E values provided by Riverside County.
(3) Source: Riverside County Road Dep., "Information Pamphlet for Riverside County Traffic Circulation and Roadway Improvement Requirements", revised 11/24/87.

Pierson Boulevard is designated as a Major Arterial, with a proposed 110 ft right-of-way, 6 lanes divided with no on-street parking. The proposed onsite road is designated at a Local Collector, with at 60 ft right-of-way, two lanes undivided with parking and sidewalk. The General Plan roadway designations are determined based on projected traffic numbers associated with land use. The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Designation. The proposed project will be conditioned to improve the adjacent portions of Pierson Boulevard to their ultimate conditions. The improvements are identified as half-width (55 ft for Pierson Boulevard) sections, including paving, gutter, sidewalk and landscaped parkway. Final Street Improvement Plans will be reviewed and approved by the City.

The Circulation Element of the City's General Plan indicates that the Pierson Boulevard segment located adjacent to the southern boundary of the project and between the roads of Little Morongo Road and Indian Canyon Drive is projected to have an ADT of 28,200 at City Buildout. According to the GP, Pierson Boulevard had approximately 4,100 ADT and a LOS of A in 1994. The 2017 Coachella Valley Association of Governments reported an ADT of 5,094 on Pierson Boulevard west of Little Morongo Road.

Street improvements have been designed to accommodate conditions associated with development in compliance with General Plan projections. Exhibit III-3 of the General Plan Buildout Traffic Projections indicates that this segment of roadway will accommodate 28,200 ADT. Table III-10 of the GP EIR

Preferred Land Use Alternative Daily Traffic Volumes at Buildout indicates that Pierson Boulevard east of Indian Avenue will function with a LOS of D with the proposed improvements.

The subsequent analysis was prepared for the proposed project to compare the projected trip generation of the project proposed density with the existing maximum density allowable under the R-L/SP designation

Project Impacts:
The Transportation Engineers (ITE) trip generation rates were utilized to determine trip generation for the proposed project. The land use type utilized is Single Family Residential (310.) The analysis calculates that, upon buildout, the project will generate approximately 114 daily vehicle trips or average daily trips (ADT), with 9 ADT expected to be generated in the morning peak hour and 12 ADT in the evening peak hour.

Table XVII-2
ITE Trip Generation Rates for Existing Project Land Uses

Land Use (ITE Code)	Unit	Daily Trip Rate	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			In:Out Split	Trip Rate	In:Out Split	Trip Rate
Single Family Residential (210)	DU	9.52	25:75	0.75	63:37	1.00

Land Use	Max Density DU/AC	Acreage	Quantity DU	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
					In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Single Family Residential	5	3.62	18	171	3	10	14	11	7	18
Proposed Project	N/A	3.62	12	114	2	7	9	8	4	12

Table XVII-3
ITE Trip Generation Rates for Proposed Project Land Uses

Land Use	Max Density DU/AC	Acreage	Quantity DU	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
					In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Existing Low Density (R-L/SP)	5	3.62	18	171	3	10	14	11	7	18
Proposed Project	N/A	3.62	12	114	2	7	9	8	4	12
Difference	N/A		6	57	1	3	5	3	3	6

The proposed project is not expected to have a significant adverse impact on the area transportation network over those analyzed in the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan EIR. Overall, the proposed project is a less intense land use than what is currently allowed per existing R-L/SP zoning as it will produce 5 fewer AM peak hour trips, 6 fewer PM peak hour trip and 57 fewer daily trips. These changes in ADT can be expected to result in a less than significant impact.

Prior to approval, the proposed site circulation, including offsite street design standards and the project's fair share portion of any offsite street improvements will be reviewed by the City as part of the site and conditional use analysis. As a Standard Condition, the applicant shall complete adjacent roadway improvements as designated by the General Plan.

Alternative Transportation

SunLine Transit Agency provides bus services to the City of Desert Hot Springs through Lines 14, 15 and 20. Line 20 serves Desert Hot Springs on weekdays only. Line 15 is the nearest route to the project. One bus stop, serviced by Line 15, is found in the vicinity of the project and located approximately 1.25 miles in driving/biking distance to the east at the intersection of Pierson Boulevard and West Drive.

SunLine Transit Agency buses are wheelchair accessible and include bicycle racks accommodating two or three bicycles. The potential use of local bus services by future project guests or employees is not expected to conflict with or substantially increase the demand for this transit service. Project implementation is not anticipated to interfere with the existing service or performance at bus stop facilities. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

If future demand warrants, expansion of available services may be appropriate. Transit services are monitored by both the City and SunLine. Additional services are periodically considered in response to anticipated increase in use.

Sidewalks currently exist along the Pierson Boulevard frontage. The proposed project would improve pedestrian mobility by improving pedestrian sidewalks, if necessary (dependent on the condition of the existing sidewalk), along the frontage of Pierson Boulevard. The widening and improvements of the roadways do not include bicycle lanes, however improvements resulting from the project are expected to enhance, rather than obstruct or conflict with, the City's established goals on bicycle transportation or with any existing facilities. Less than significant impacts are expected.

TUMF

The Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Ordinance became effective July 1, 1989. The TUMF program is a component of the twenty-year Measure A sales tax program managed by the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) and approved by voters in November, 1988. In 2002, a thirty-year extension was approved by Riverside County voters and resulted in an expiration date of 2039.

Under the TUMF, developers of residential, industrial and commercial property pay a development fee to fund transportation projects that will be required as a result of the growth the projects create. TUMF will be required as a Condition of Approval.

Following implementation of Standard Conditions, the project is not anticipated to conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or Policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. Less than significant impacts are expected.

CMP

The Congestion Management Program (CMP), prepared by the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), is intended to link land use, transportation and air quality with reasonable growth management methods, strategies and programs that effectively utilize new transportation funds to alleviate traffic congestion and related impacts. As the designated Congestion Management Agency (CMA), the RCTC prepares the CMP that designates a system of highways and roadways to include all State Highway facilities within Riverside County and a system of "principal arterials" to be included as the Congestion Management System (CMS). Program updates include consultation with local agencies, the County of Riverside, transit agencies and sub-regional agencies like the Coachella Valley Association of

Governments (CVAG).

It is the responsibility of local agencies, when reviewing and approving development proposals to consider the traffic impacts to the CMS. All development proposals and circulation projects to be included within the City of Desert Hot Springs are required to comply with the current policies and procedures set forth by the RCTC's CMP. The CMA provides a uniform database of traffic impacts for use in a countywide transportation computer model. The RCTC has recognized use of the Coachella Valley Area Transportation System (CVATS) sub-regional transportation model and the Riverside Transportation Analysis Model (RIVTAM) to analyze traffic impacts associated with development proposals or land use plans. The methodology for measuring LOS must be that contained in the most recent version of the Highway Capacity Manual. Traffic standards must be set no lower than LOS E for any segment or intersection on the CMP system unless the current LOS is lower (i.e., LOS F).

The project is located approximately 4.0 miles northeast of the Indian Canyon westbound on-ramp to the Interstate 10 Freeway (I-10). Interstate 10 is identified as a CMP corridor. Traffic resulting from the small-scale operations at the proposed residential development, in compliance with the General Plan, is not anticipated to individually or cumulatively contribute to an exceedance of a level of service standard established in the CMP. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT)

Vehicle Miles Travelled is a measure of the amount of travel for all vehicles in a geographic region over a given period of time, typically a one-year period. There are currently no adopted state or City guidelines, or thresholds associated with VMT analyses. According to the Governor's office of Planning and Research (OPR) CEQA Guideline Implementing SB 743, projects that decrease vehicle miles traveled in a project area compared to existing conditions should be considered to have a less than significant transportation impact.

According to the National Center for Sustainable Transportation, a number of cities, regions and states across the United States have begun to deemphasize vehicle delay metrics such as LOS. In their place, policymakers are considering alternative transportation impact metrics that more closely approximate the true environmental impacts of driving. VMT is one metric that is increasingly being utilized.

Goals for reducing Greenhouse Gasses (GHG) have been the primary motivation for the shift to VMT measures. Reductions in VMT produce many other potential benefits such as reductions in other air pollutant emissions, water pollution, wildlife mortality and traffic congestion, as well as improvements in safety and health and savings in public and private costs.

Coordinating land use and transportation planning is the basis for creating connected, accessible, and complete mobility networks. Due in part to the connection between transportation funding and greenhouse gas reduction established in SB 375, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is an increasingly important metric of impact in the circulation element.

The calculations performed using California Emissions Estimator Model™ (CalEEMod™) Version 2016.3.2. from the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) generated an estimate for operational annual vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in an unmitigated and mitigated scenario.

The GHG reduction strategies incorporated into the project include Increase Transit Accessibility (LUT-5), Improve Pedestrian Network (SDT-1,) and Install Higher Efficacy Public Street and Area Lighting (LE-1). Based on these factors, the annual VMT is reduced by approximately 1 percent from 69,996 to 69,296. Additional description of the VMT concept is provided in the Greenhouse Gas section of this Initial Study. Table XVII-4 identifies the specific strategy, rate of effectiveness and justification for use.

Table XVII-4
GHG Reduction Strategies as Project Design Features

Measure Number	Strategy	Range of Effectiveness per CAPCOA Quantifications	GHG/VMT Reduction Basis
LUT-5	Increase Transit Accessibility	0.5 – 24.6% VMT reduction and therefore 0.5-24.6% reduction in GHG emissions	The project is located 0.25 miles east of Sunline Transit Agency Route 14, which occurs on Palm Drive. This distance is equivalent to a 5-minute walk. Route 14 provides transit connectivity to the rest of the Coachella Valley. This proximity will facilitate the use of public transit by project users or employees.
SDT-1	Improve Pedestrian Network	0 - 2% vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction and therefore 0 - 2% reduction in GHG emissions	The project includes sidewalk improvements along 5th Street and Mesquite Avenue frontages. Providing a pedestrian access network to link areas of the project site encourages people to walk instead of drive. This mode shift results in people driving less and thus a reduction in VMT.
LE-1	Install Higher Efficacy Public Street and Area Lighting	16-40% of outdoor lighting	The project is expected to incorporate high efficiency lighting, such as LEDs. Lighting sources contribute to GHG emissions indirectly via the production of the electricity that powers these lights. Installing efficient lighting can result in a reduction in the associated indirect GHG emissions.

Following implementation of the project design features, TUMF, DIF and standard conditions, the project is expected to result in less than significant impacts.

Mitigation Measures: None

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
The proposed residential development is a permissible land use within the existing Low Density Residential development located near the intersection of Pierson Boulevard and Little Morongo Road. In its current condition, the undeveloped project property is bordered by the paved alignment of Pierson Boulevard to the south.

To provide proper access to the facility, off-site design and the proposed off-site improvements include portions of Pierson Boulevard along the project's frontage. Circulation design will undergo City and Fire Department review before approval to ensure that the local development standards for roadways, in interior and exterior circulation designs, are met without resulting in traffic safety impacts including hazardous design features. The project will not include sharp curves or dangerous intersections. No incompatible uses will result from the proposed project.

A traffic control plan will be prepared prior to construction to reduce the potential for temporary hazards associated with construction activities. This requirement will work to coordinate traffic associated with the construction traffic and existing users along Pierson Boulevard. All project plans shall be reviewed and approved by the City Engineering Department. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
The proposed project will provide adequate access to emergency response vehicles, as required by the City of Desert Hot Springs and in accordance with the Fire Department review and requirements. Site plan review would include in-depth analysis of emergency access to the site to ensure proper access to facilities. As mentioned previously, the proposed site plan provides one vehicular access point. The primary point of access will be on Pierson Boulevard. The design details of vehicular driveways will be reviewed and approved by the Fire Department and the City.

The project is anticipated to provide proper premises identification with legible site name, address numbers, and clear signage indicating the site access points. Operational fire hydrants and extinguishers are also required in accordance with the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code. Off-site project improvements will involve improvement of Pierson Boulevard within the required rights-of-way and according to the City's designated street standards.

Following implementation of standard conditions, the project is anticipated to result in less than significant impact related to emergency access.

Mitigation Measures: None

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the Project:
Sources: *Historical/Archaeological Resources Assessment,* CRM Tech, 2020.

a) Would the Project cause a substantial Adverse change in the significance of a Tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resource Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local Register of historical resources as defined in Public Resource Code Section 5020.1(k), or:	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion:

As previously discussed, CRM Tech conducted a project and site-specific study on historical and archaeological resources. The assessment included a records search, Native American scoping, historical background research and an intensive-level field survey.

The field survey produced negative results from either the historic or pre-historic period. Within the one-mile scope of the records search, five historical/archaeological sites and three isolates were previously recorded. One of the recorded sites was of prehistoric Native American origin; and the remaining sites dated to the historic period. Per the cultural report, none of these previously recorded cultural resources was found in the immediate vicinity of the project area, and therefore, none of them requires further consideration during this study. Furthermore, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) sacred lands record search did not indicate the presence of Native American resources within project area and no notable cultural features were known to be present in the project area.

Therefore, following implementation of the recommended mitigation measure outlined in the Cultural Resources Section of this Initial Study, less than significant impacts are expected following the recommended mitigation measure.

Mitigation Measures: CUL-1 and **CUL-2**

i) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Discussion:

Public Resource Code 21074 identifies "Tribal Cultural Resources" as "sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe" and that are either included or determined to be eligible for inclusion on the national, state, or local register of historic resources, or that are determined by the lead agency, in its discretion, to be significant when taking into consideration the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

As previously discussed, CRM Tech conducted a project and site-specific study on historical and archaeological resources. The assessment included a records search, Native American scoping, historical background research and an intensive-level field survey. The field survey produced negative results from either the historic or pre-historic period.

To ensure that all significant Tribal Resources are identified and fully considered, the 30-day AB 52 Consultation process was conducted by the City of Desert Hot Springs starting on January 4, 2021. On January 4th, the AB 52 notification letters were sent to 21 Native American tribal governments or designated tribal representatives via certified mail. Of the 21 tribes or tribal representatives (in some cases multiple letters were sent to representatives of the same tribe), four responses were received. The responses, indicated by date, are provided below:

- January 4, 2021: One Tribe responded on January 4th stating that they do not wish to comment on the project and would defer to more local Tribes.
- January 5, 2021: The second Tribe, in their January 5th response, stated that the proposed project area exists within their ancestral territory, and therefore, is of interest to the Tribe. However, due to the nature and location of the proposed project, the Tribe does not have any concerns with the project's implementation, as planned. As a result, the Tribe requested mitigation as part of the project/permit/plan conditions. These mitigation measures are indicated as mitigation measure CR-1 through CR-3. The Tribe also provided two tribal cultural resources mitigation, indicated as TCR-1 and TCR-2. They also requested for the applicant to provide the final copy of the project/permit/plan conditions so that the Tribe may review the included language.
- January 13, 2021: The third Tribe responded on January 13th, stating that the project area is not located within the boundaries of the Tribe's Reservation, but is within the Tribe's Traditional Use Are. The Tribe also requested formal government to government consultation and requested any prepared technical reports and data regarding the project such as a cultural resources inventory, a copy of the records, and requested the presence of an approved Cultural Resources Monitor during ground disturbing activities (including archaeological testing and surveys).
    - On February 11, 2021, the documents were obtained from the applicant and sent to the Tribe per their request. A conference call was scheduled with the Tribe to discuss the project. The Tribe requested the presence of a Cultural Monitor during ground disturbing activities and stated that a follow-up AB 52 consultation letter of completion would be sent by the Tribe, thereby concluding consultation. However, at the time of writing, the City has not received a conclusion letter or additional responses from the Tribe.
- March 11, 2021: The fourth tribe contacted the City on March 11th seeking project consultation; however, the Tribe did not send an email for formal consultation (per the request of the City).

No additional responses or requests were received as of March 9, 2021. The City of Desert Hot Springs, as lead agency, fulfilled its obligations under AB 52 to engage in tribal consultation with all other tribal governments. With the implementation of mitigation measures TCR-1 through TCR-3, less than

significant impacts to tribal cultural resources are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures:

TCR-1: The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Cultural Resource Department (SMBMI) shall be contacted of any pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources discovered during project implementation and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA, a cultural resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with SMBMI, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents the SMBMI for the remainder of the project, should SMBMI elect to place a monitor on-site.

TCR-2: Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the applicant and Lead Agency for dissemination to SMBMI. The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with SMBMI throughout the life of the project.

TCR-3: The presence of an approved Agua Caliente Native American Cultural Resource Monitor during any ground disturbing activities (including archaeological testing and surveys). Additionally, the Tribe shall receive a cultural resources inventory of the project area by a qualified archaeologist prior to development activities, a copy of the records search with associated survey reports and site records, and copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with the project.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- Would the project:
Sources: Desert Hot Springs General Plan, 2020; *Urban Water Management Plan*, Mission Springs Water District, 2015; *Sewer Master Plan,* Mission Springs Water District, 2007.

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which would significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Domestic water for the proposed development would be provided to the project by connecting into the existing water and sewer mains along Pierson Boulevard. The project would then connect to water and sewer through a series of water service lines and sewer laterals. Electric power and telecommunication connections are also located with the project's boundary. Natural gas connections are located within proximity of the site and the project is designed with an on-site stormwater retention system that during the life of the project will comply with the City's drainage requirements by preventing site discharge and transport of untreated runoff. The proposed storm drain system includes facilities which have been preliminarily sized to provide enough storage for the 100-year controlling storm event. The extension of

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

all onsite utilities will occur with the projects existing footprint and no new construction or new water, wastewater, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities will need to be constructed or relocated. Therefore, less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal dry and multiple dry years? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Discussion:
Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) provides water and sewer services to the communities of Desert Hot Springs, West Garnet, North Palm Springs, and various portions of unincorporated Riverside County. The District provides water service to approximately 37,600 people in their water service area. Groundwater is the primary source of domestic water supply in the Coachella Valley; the MSWD provides potable water to the City by extracting groundwater from the Mission Creek Subbasin.

The MSWD 2015 Urban Water Management Plan has been developed to assist the agency in reliably meeting current and future water demands. This document also serves to ensure that adequate water supplies are available to meet the existing and future urban water demands. As shown in Table 3-1 Population Current and Projected, from the MSWD 2015 UWMP, the 2020 population for the City of DHS is 34,287. The California Department of Finance population estimate for the City in 2019 is 29,251 persons. The Districts 2020 target water use stated in the UWMP is 234.9 gallons per capita per day (gpcd). MSWD has had lower per-capita water use than its 2015 target since 2009. In 2015, the District's per-capita water use was 172.1 gpcd, which is significantly lower than its 2015 target. It is anticipated that per-capita water usage will continue to decrease due to the implementation of plumbing code and updated landscape ordinance.

Table 3-1: Population - Current and Projected

Service Area	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Increase[(a)]
City of Desert Hot Springs	28,134	34,287	40,440	46,593	52746	58,900	109.4%
Outside City of Desert Hot Springs	9,480	9,827	10,174	10,521	10,868	11,214	18.3%
Total	37,614	44,114	50,614	57,114	63,614	70,114	86.4%

(a) Increase relative to 2015

As previously discussed, the project is a proposing 12 single family residential units to be developed adjacent to an existing residential community. The project site is currently vacant and undeveloped land and therefore is not currently using domestic water services. Water connections are available to the

project site on Pierson Boulevard and the project will install 8-inch pipes to connect to the existing main. The proposed Project would have a very nominal increase to potable water. The proposed development will be expected to follow water conservation guidelines to mitigate impacts to public water supplies. Examples of these water conservation methods include water conserving plumbing fixtures, drought tolerant landscaping, and drip irrigation systems as well as on-site stormwater infiltration. Additional domestic water improvements necessary to serve this development will be identified by MSWD and included as conditions of approval by the City of Desert Hot Springs during the City's standard review process. Therefore, less than significant impacts relative to water supply are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The proposed development of 12 single family residential units would not result in a substantial increase to wastewater flows and the project will be able to connect to the public sewer system located on Pierson Boulevard. The US Environmental Policy Act (EPA) estimates that the typical average daily wastewater flows are 40 to 60 gallons per person per day (USEPA, 2002). Therefore, using the City's current household number of 3.17 persons per household, the project could generate approximately 126.8 to 190.2 gallons of wastewater per day.

Wastewater generated by the project will be conveyed to MSWD Horton Wastewater Reclamation Plant. MSWD currently has 9,100 sewer connections throughout its service area and provides sewer service to approximately 26,000 people. Per the 2015 MSWD Urban Water Management Plan (UWMMP), the Horton Wastewater Treatment Plant (Horton WWTP), located on Verbena Drive, has a capacity of 2.3 million gallons per day (mgd) (2,800 acre feet per year [AFY]). The average daily flow metered to the Horton Plan in 2015 was 1.69 MGD (1,893 AFY). MSWD is pursuing the construction of the West Valley Wastewater Treatment Plan (WVWWTP). The WVWWTP is anticipated to be implemented over an extended period of 3-10 years with an ultimate buildout capacity of 20 MGD. The MSWD 2007 Sewer Master Plan estimates a 2020 sewer connection of 35,245 connections. However, per the 2019 WVWWTP DEIR, the District currently has 9,100 sewer connections, which is far below the estimated demand.

As previously stated, the project could generate approximately 126.8 to 190.2 gallons of wastewater per day. This is approximately 0.0055 percent or 0.0083 percent (respectively) of the Horton WWTP capacity. Therefore, the proposed project would have a nominal increase to wastewater and sufficient capacity would be available to serve the project. Additionally, project plans will be reviewed by MSWD and City Staff to ensure wastewater capacity and compliance. Sewer installation and connection fees in place at the time of development or connection would be collected by MSWD. Therefore, less than significant impacts relative to wastewater capacity are expected.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

Solid waste disposal and recycling services for the City of Desert Hot Springs are provided by Desert Valley Disposal (DVD). Solid waste and recycling collected from the proposed project will be hauled to the Edom Hill transfer station. Waste from this transfer station is then sent to a permitted landfill or recycling facility outside of the Coachella Valley. These include Badlands Disposal Site, El Sobrante Sanitary Landfill and Lamb Canyon Disposal Site. Cal-Recycle data indicates the Badlands Disposal site has 15,748.799 cubic yards of remaining capacity, the El Sobrante Landfill has a remaining capacity of 145,530,000 tons of solid waste, and Lamb Canyon Disposal has a remaining solid waste capacity of 19,242,950 cubic yards. Solid waste generated by the project would consist of standard household waste. Using the residential solid waste generation factor of 0.41 tons per dwelling unit from the Riverside County EIR No. 521, the project could generate up to 4.92 tons of solid waste.

As part of its long-range planning and management activities, the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources (RCDWR) ensures that Riverside County has a minimum of 15 years of capacity, at any time, for future landfill disposal. The 15-year projection of disposal capacity is prepared each year by as part of the annual reporting requirements for the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan. The most recent 15-year projection by the RCDWR indicates that no additional capacity is needed to dispose of countywide waste through 2024, with a remaining disposal capacity of 28,561,626 tons in the year 2024.

In addition, development of the project would be required to comply with mandatory commercial and multifamily recycling requirements of Assembly Bill 341. Therefore, the project will comply with all applicable solid waste statutes, policies and guidelines; and the project will be served by a landfill with sufficient capacity to serve the project. Therefore, less than significant impacts relative to solid waste are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

The project will comply with all applicable solid waste statutes and guidelines. The project will comply with the recycling requirements of Cal Green and develop a waste management plan that will include diverting at least 50% of construction and demolition material fill from landfills. No impacts are expected relative to applicable solid waste statues and regulations.

Mitigation Measures: None

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

XX. WILDFIRE – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:
Sources: *Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Areas*, CAL FIRE.

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Discussion:
The approximately 3.62-acre project site, located north of Pierson Boulevard, is currently characterized by vacant, undeveloped land with scarce, low-lying vegetation. Human activities on the project property, such as clearing of native vegetation and grading, is evident onsite. However, inactivity of the project area allowed some desert vegetation to regrow. The project property lies within an area of the City defined by residential communities to the west and south, and vacant land to the north and east. The Morongo Wash delineates the project property's northern and approximately 325 feet of the project's eastern boundary. The Morongo Wash is defined by undisturbed, vacant land with low-lying desert vegetation. Chain-link fencing surrounds the north, east and south property boundary, while block wall delineates the western boundary.

According to CAL Fire's Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) in State Responsibility Areas (SRA) Map, the project is not located in an SRA or located in an area classified as very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZ). Additionally, the project property is not located in or near lands classified as high or moderate fire hazard severity zones. The closest SRA or VHFHSZ classified area is located approximately 1.70 miles north of the project site. Due to the project's distance from SRAs and areas designated as VHFHSZs, no impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollute concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Discussion:
See previous discussion.

Mitigation Measures: None

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Discussion:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

See discussion a.

Mitigation Measures: None

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:
See discussion a.

Mitigation Measures: None

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:
As concluded in the Biological and Cultural Resources sections of this Initial Study, the proposed project would result in no impacts or less than significant impacts to these resources. The project is compatible with the City of Desert Hot Springs Zoning and its surroundings. The project will not significantly degrade the overall quality of the region's environment, or substantially reduce the habitat if a wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California History or pre-history. Based upon the information and mitigation measures provided within this Initial Study and independent studies prepared for Biological and Cultural Resources, approval and implementation of the project is not expected to substantially alter or degrade the quality of the environment, including biological, cultural or historical resources. Therefore, less than significant impacts are expected following the recommended mitigation measures outlined in the Biological and Cultural Resource Section of this initial study.

Mitigation Measures: See Sections IV and V of this Initial Study

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a Project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past Projects, the effects of other current Projects, and the effects of probable future Projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The project is adjacent to existing residential development and the proposed project and location, is found to be adequate and consistent with existing federal, state and local policies and is consistent with the existing and future land uses. Future development in the vicinity of the project is anticipated to occur, however, developments would be consistent with the surrounding land uses, which includes light industrial facilities, such as cultivation facilities. Future developments in the area would be required to obtain the appropriate approvals and permits prior to development. Based upon the information and mitigation measures provided within this Initial Study, approval and implementation of the proposed project is not expected to result in impacts that, when considered in relation to other past, current or probable future projects, would be cumulatively considerable. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

The proposed project will not result in impacts related to environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings. The project has been designed to comply with established design guidelines and current building standards. The City's review process will ensure that applicable guidelines are being followed. Based upon the findings provided in this document, and mitigation measures and standard conditions incorporated into the project, less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures: None

Sources

Localized Significance Thresholds Look-Up Tables, Table C, Air Quality Management District.

Analysis of the Coachella Valley PM10 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan, by the California Air Resources Board, February 2010

California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2016.3.2

City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan, adopted 2020

City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Draft EIR, 2020

City of Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code

Cultural Resources Records Search for the Villas D'Luxe, Eastern Information Center, California Historical Resources Information System, January 30, 2020

Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan (CVSIP), by SCAQMD, August 2003

Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), by SCAQMD, March 2017

Flood Insurance Rate Map # 06065C0905G, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Effective August 28, 2008

General and Focused Biological Resource Assessment, prepared by James W. Cornett, Ecological Consultants, February 2020

Master Drainage Plan for the Desert Hot Springs Area (DHS MDP), prepared in February of 1982 by the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCFC)

Mission Springs Water District 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2016

Mission Springs Water District Wastewater System Comprehensive Master Plan, April 2007

Mission Springs Water District Program DEIR for the West Valley Water Reclamation Program, April 2019

Project Specific Preliminary Water Quality Management Plan, prepared by Amir Engineering, August 2019.

Riverside County General Plan, revised December 2015.

Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region, January 2019

Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems Manual, US Environmental Protection Agency, February 2002.