COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

Planning and Development

www.sbcountyplanning.org

Draft Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration

Brookside Avenue Fire Station

October 1, 2021

Owner/Applicant:
County of Santa Barbara
Fire Department
4410 Cathedral Oaks Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Prepared By:
Rincon Consultants, Inc.
209 East Victoria Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

For More Information, Contact Division Chief Matt Farris
(805) 681-4045

Table of Contents

Tables

Figures

1.0 REQUEST/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

The County of Santa Barbara (County) is proposing to construct a new approximately 8,600-square foot (s.f.) fire station with three apparatus bays at the western terminus of Brookside Avenue, immediately north of Union Valley Parkway on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 107-321-013. The proposed Brookside Avenue Fire Station (herein referred to as "proposed project" or "project") would serve the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley area west of U.S. Highway 101 (U.S. 101). The community of Orcutt is located in unincorporated Santa Barbara County, immediately south of the city of Santa Maria (Figure 1). The project site is located in Key Site 27 of the Orcutt Community Plan Area and includes a portion of the Orcutt Open Space Area in the northwest corner. The parcel is overlain with the Airport Approach Zone (F[APR]) but outside the Airport No Build Zone. Figure 2 shows the boundaries of the Orcutt Community Plan Area, and Figure 3 shows the project site.

The proposed project would comply with policies from the Fire Protection subsection of the Orcutt Community Plan. The project is compatible with current land use and zoning designations and would not require a comprehensive plan amendment or rezone.

1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the proposed project is to increase safety in the Orcutt and Santa Maria area. As addressed in the Fire Protection subsection of the Orcutt Community Plan, additional firefighter, equipment, and construction of or expansion of existing stations will be necessary to meet the future fire protection service needs of the community as buildout in the Orcutt Planning Area (OPA) occurs. In addition, areas on the periphery of the OPA experience limited fire protection services due to limited access. These areas include southeast Orcutt, which experiences complicated access for fire trucks due to many cul-de-sacs and dead-end roads.

Currently, the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley area is served by County Fire Station 21, located at 335 Union Avenue, which also serves the communities of Tanglewood and Casmalia, and County Fire Station 26, located at 1596 Tiffany Park Court, which serves the area bounded to the south by Solomon Grade, to the north by Santa Maria Way, to the west by Bradley Road, and to the east by Dominion Road. The best practices standard of response time for fire service is commonly considered to be five minutes per the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. Fire Stations 21 and 26 do not currently meet the five-minute response time standard in developed portions or the Urban Core (a 3,600-acre sub-area of major commercial and residential uses in the OPA) along with Key Sites 25 through 32 and 34. In addition, South, West, and East Orcutt sub-areas within the Orcutt Community Plan contain fire-related hazards. Most of South Orcutt is outside the five-minute response time radius, except for the portion adjacent to Clark Avenue west of U.S. 101. South Orcutt contains foothills with dense vegetation on steep slopes that create high fire hazards during dry times. Within West Orcutt, some high fire hazard areas are located in the northeastern corner of Key Site 22 and scattered throughout the Casmalia Hills. East Orcutt contains high fire hazard areas in the southeastern portion, and most of East Orcutt is outside the five-minute response zone, except for about half of the Lake Marie Estates.

The proposed project would improve safety and emergency response times to the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley area by increasing the number of local fire stations from two to three. Increasing the number of fire stations in the OPA to three would substantially improve fire services in the OPA and surrounding unincorporated areas. This expansion would enable the Santa Barbara County Fire Department (SBCFD) to achieve the following objectives:

- Add a new three-person fire station crew on duty around the clock;
- Meet the NFPA five-minute response time for fire service throughout the OPA;

- Substantially improve emergency response times for fires, accidents, and emergency medical response calls in the OPA and surrounding unincorporated areas

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND) evaluates the potential environmental impacts related to the construction of a new fire station in the OPA. The proposed project consists of a 8,600-s.f. fire station with a maximum roof height of 32 feet. The project also includes three drive-through bays for fire trucks and associated apparatus that would connect to three driveways: one at the western terminus of Brookside Avenue and two along Union Valley Parkway. Emergency vehicles (i.e., fire engines and ambulances) would egress onto Union Valley Parkway through the westernmost driveway and return to the station via the second driveway along Union Valley Parkway. The interior of the proposed fire station would include amenities such as bedrooms, bathrooms, a communal kitchen, dining area, fire station captain's office, day room, workout area, laundry room with extractor units, among other amenities. In addition, the project would include 15 parking spaces on site, including two accessible spaces. Areas adjacent to the fire station would include native and drought tolerant landscaping. Additionally, the project frontage along Union Valley Parkway would be lined with raised landscaped berms and other screening features, per DevStd KS27-2 in the Orcutt Community Plan (County of Santa Barbara 1997a). Figure 4 shows the conceptual site plan for the proposed fire station.

The project would include one or two aboveground fuel tanks for the storage of up to 250 gallons of gasoline and up to 1,000 gallons of diesel. If only one fuel tank is on the site, the tank would be bifurcated to hold both gasoline and diesel fuels. An emergency diesel-powered generator would also be located on the northeast side of the proposed fire station. The generator would be tested weekly by station personnel and run twice annually for testing. The emergency generator is conservatively estimated to have a 150-kilowatt (kW) capacity, and it would be completely shielded by a Level 2 sound-attenuated enclosure that would include a roof, similar to a trash enclosure. Additional exterior structures would include a trash and recycling enclosure and storage area for lawn and gardening tools to the north of the main building.

Construction Activities

Preliminary construction, including grading and site preparation, would occur approximately over a four-month period. All grading would be balanced on-site with a maximum excavation depth of 10 feet. Subsequent building construction would occur over a 12- to 14-month period. It is anticipated project construction would begin the summer of 2027 and the station would begin operations by early 2029.

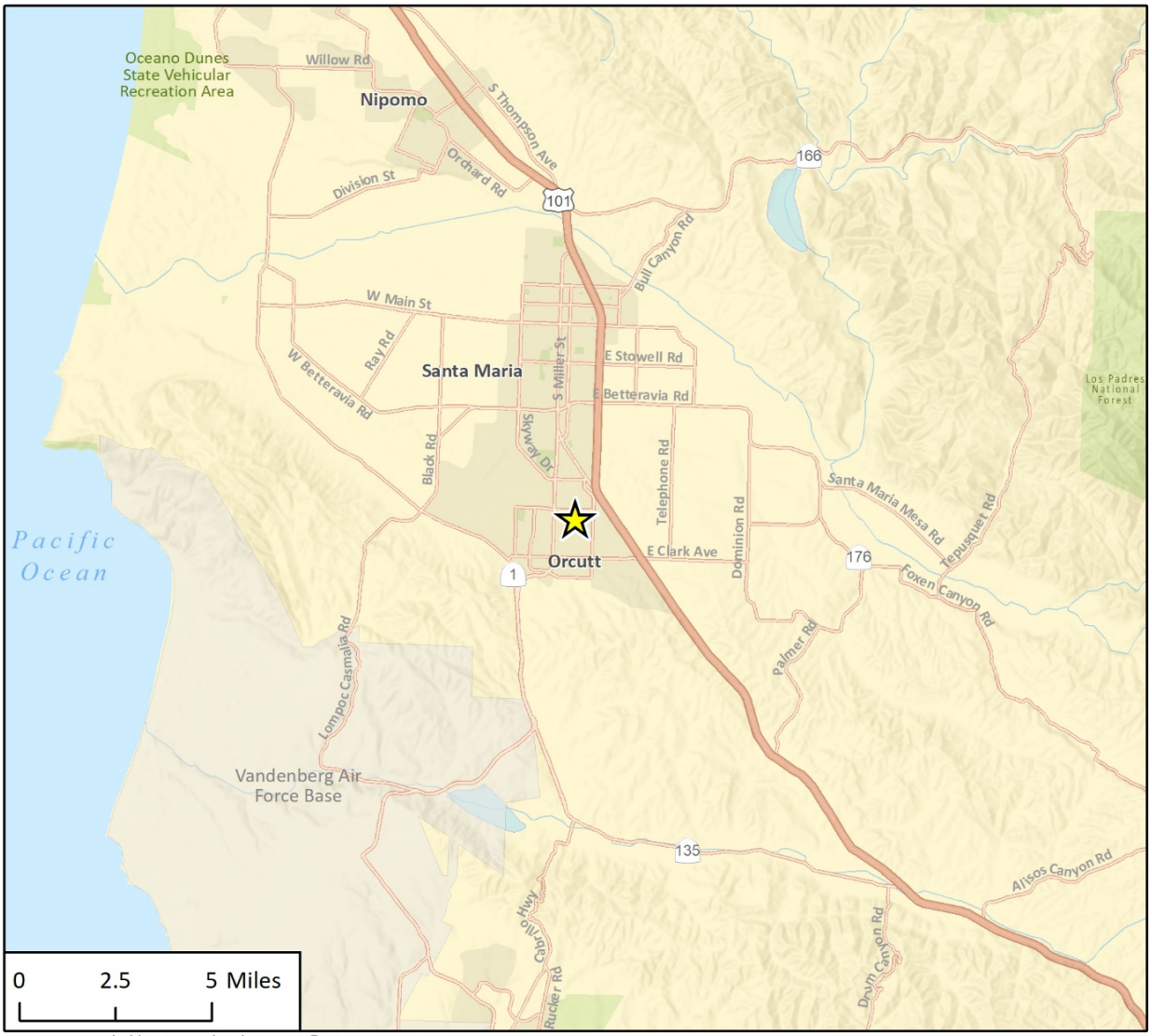
Existing Allowed Uses

The project site currently contains 4.6 acres of vacant lands, with a residential zoning designation of DR-3.3 (Design Residential) and a Comprehensive Plan designation of RES-3.3 (Residential). The project site is located within the Airport Approach Zone (F[APR]), which imposes additional development standards, but outside the Airport No Build Zone. The project is compliant with the current land use and zoning designations and is considered an allowed use.

1.4 PROJECT APPROVALS

The proposed project would include the construction and operation of a new fire station in the community of Orcutt in unincorporated Santa Barbara County. Approval of this IS-MND by the County Board of Supervisors will be required prior to commencement of construction for the project. Grading and occupancy permits will be required for construction and operation of the proposed fire station. No approvals by agencies other than the County of Santa Barbara would be required.

Figure 1 Regional Location Map



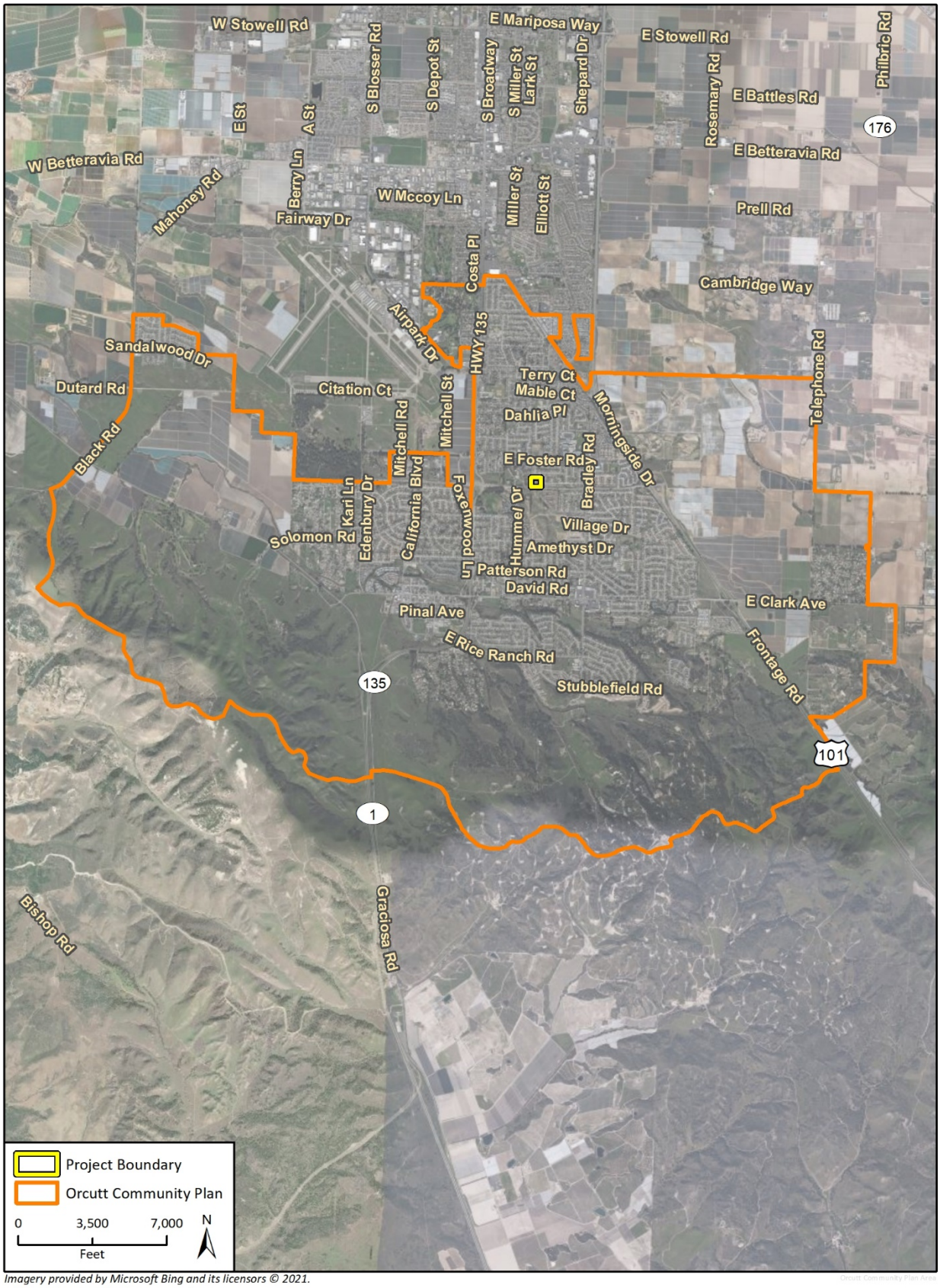
Imagery provided by Esri and its licensors © 2021.

Project Location

N

Fig 1 Regional Location

Figure 2 Orcutt Community Plan Area



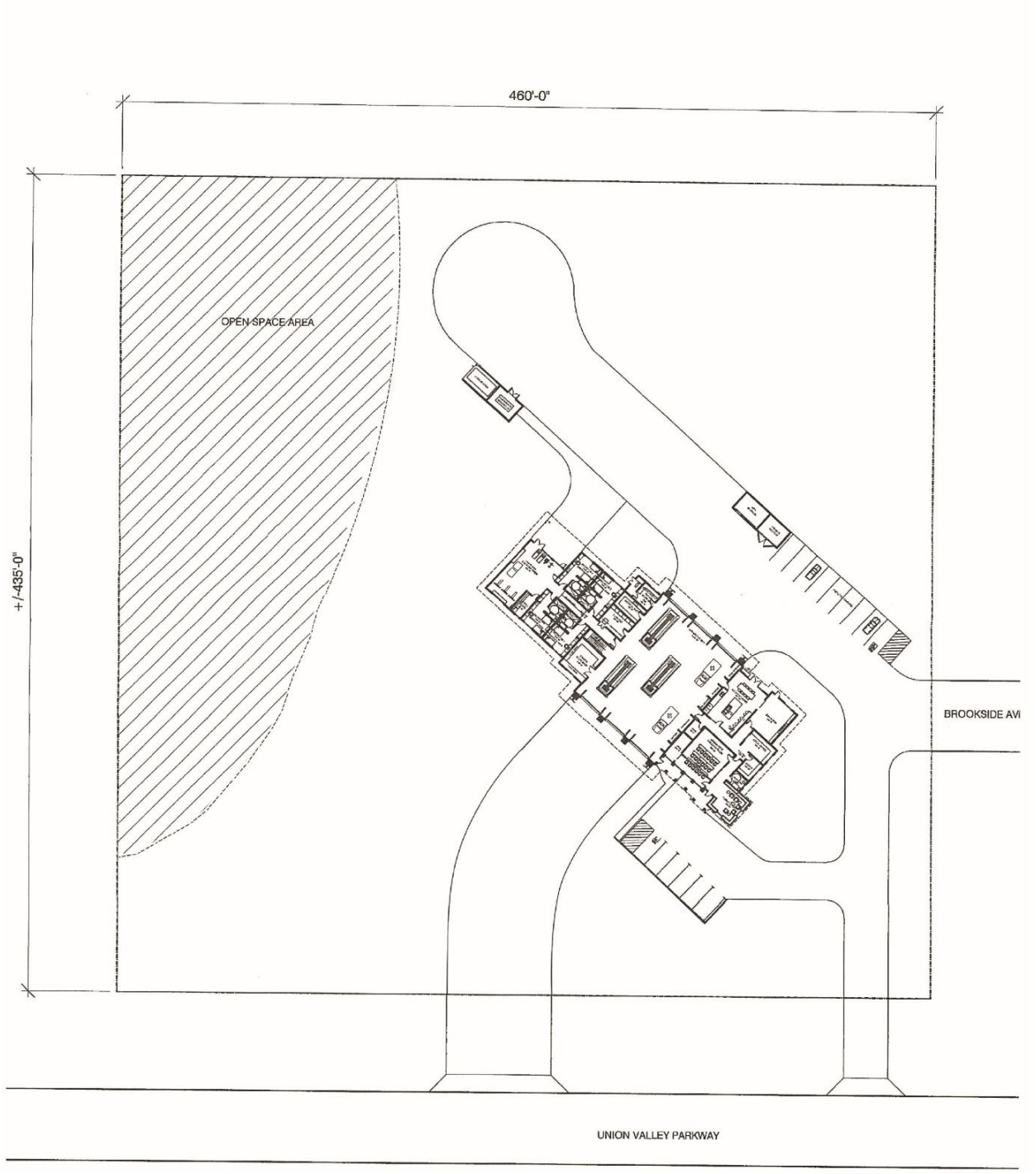
Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2021.
Additinal data provided by Santa Barbara County, 2021

Figure 3 Project Location

Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2021.

Fig 2 Project Location

Figure 4 Conceptual Site Plan



2.0 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site (APN 107-321-013) is located in the center of the Urban Core area of the community of Orcutt in unincorporated Santa Barbara County and west of U.S. 101. The project site is located at the western terminus of Brookside Avenue, immediately north of Union Valley Parkway. The Orcutt Community Planning Area contains 43 "Key Sites." The County previously identified within each Key Site the areas suitable for development, as well as constrained areas within each Key Site. The project site is part of Key Site 27 and contains a portion of the Orcutt Open Space Area. The Orcutt Community Plan anticipates future development of the site would not include the northwestern corner, which contains a eucalyptus grove in undeveloped open space.

Figure 1 (above) shows the regional location of the project site to understand its context within the greater Santa Barbara County area and adjacent counties. Figure 2 (above) shows the location of the project site within the OPA. Figure 3 (above) shows the boundaries of the project site and roadways within and adjacent to the site. Table 1 summarizes land use, access, and public services applicable to the project site.

Table 1 Land Use and Public Services

Project Site Information	
Comprehensive Plan Designation	Residential (Res-3.3)
Zoning District, Ordinance	Design Residential (DR-3.3)
Project Site Size	4.6 acres
Present Use and Development	Vacant, undeveloped land
Surrounding Uses/Zoning	North: Zoning: Residential (DR-4.6 and 8-R-1) Land Use: Residential (Res-3.3 and Res-4.6) South: Zoning: Residential (DR-3.3) and Recreation (REC) Land Use: Planned Development-3.3, Recreation and Open Space (REC), and Residential (Res-4.6) East: Zoning: Residential (10-R-1) Land Use: Residential (Res 3.3) and Educational Facility (Community Facility land use type) West: Zoning: Residential (DR-3.3) and Commercial (C-2) Land Use: Planned Development – 3.3 and Residential (RES-3.3)
Access	Western terminus of Brookside Avenue and Union Valley Parkway
Public Services	Water Supply: Golden State Water Company, sourced from the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin Sewage: Laguna County Sanitation District Wastewater Reclamation Facility Fire: Santa Barbara County Fire Department, Stations 21 and 26 Other: N/A District: Fourth Supervisorial District

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 PHYSICAL SETTING

The project site (APN 107-321-013) is located just north of Union Valley Parkway at the western terminus of Brookside Avenue. The site is 4.6 acres of vacant, undeveloped land containing low-lying grasslands, a eucalyptus grove on the western portion of the site, a culvert and a water utility box on eastern portion of the site, a natural gas pipeline and gas pipeline marker in the southwestern corner of the site and concrete debris in the northeastern corner of the site.

An elevated knoll exists on site with slopes between 10 and 20 percent to the north and south of the knoll. Slopes greater than 30 percent exist on the southern perimeter of the site. Soils on the site are composed primarily of Marina sand and Oceano sand soil units. The project site is adjacent to single-family residential neighborhoods and Orcutt Open Space Area.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

The environmental baseline from which the project's impacts are determined consists of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project site, as previously described.

3.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS METHODOLOGY

The discussion of cumulative impacts contained in this IS-MND is based on a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130[b][1][A]). Table 2 summarizes the list of projects included in the cumulative impact analysis.

Table 2 Cumulative Projects List

No.	Project Name	Location (APN)	Description	Project Status
Orcutt Community Plan Area				
1	PCEC Solar Photovoltaic System Grading	101-020-074	20 acres of Solar Development	In Process
Santa Maria Valley – Old Town Orcutt and Orcutt Community Plan				
2	Orcutt Union Plaza Phase II Amendment	105-121-006	Includes 19 residential units/lots and 16,880 s.f. of commercial use	In Process

No.	Project Name	Location (APN)	Description	Project Status
3	OUSD Senior Housing (Key Site 17) Development Plan	105-134-004, 105-134-005, 105-330-005, 105-330-006	7,745-s.f. community center building primarily for use by residents, 7,252-s.f. non-residential daycare center for 36 students and 10 employees, 0.75-acre public park, 108 dwelling units (20 for employees, the rest for seniors), and special care home with 116 beds (memory care and assisted living)	Proposed
Santa Maria Valley – Orcutt Community Plan				
4	Addamo Winery/Diamante [TM 14,616]	129-151-042	Includes 5 residential units/lots	Under Construction
5	Rice Ranch Development Plan	101-010-013, 101-020-004, 105-140-016	Includes 725 residential units/lots	Under Construction
6	Clark Avenue Commercial	103-750-038	Includes 12,875 s.f. of commercial use	Approved
7	Key Site 20 Development Plan	107-250-008	Includes 69 residential units/lots	In Process
8	Terrace Villas [TM 14,770]	129-300-001 through -20	Includes 16 residential units/lots	Approved
9	Key Site 3 Development Plans	129-151-02	Unknown	In Process
10	Oasis General Plan Amendment	105-020-063, 105-020-064	Includes 15,333 s.f. of commercial use	In Process
11	Orcutt Public Marketplace	129-120-024	Includes 252 residential units/lots and 211,264 s.f. of commercial use	Proposed
12	Vintage Ranch Tract Map [TM 14,812]	101-400-008	Includes 41 residential units/lots	In Process
13	Key Site 30 MR-O Apartments and Fine Grading	107-250-008	Includes 214 residential units/lots	Under Construction
14	Orcutt Gateway Retail Center (Key Site 2)	129-280-001	Includes 49,921 s.f. of commercial use	In Process

No.	Project Name	Location (APN)	Description	Project Status
15	The Neighborhoods of Willow Creek & Hidden Canyon Specific Plan	113-250-015 through -017	143 residential units/lots on APNs 113-250-015 through -017, and 146 residential units/lots on APN 113-250-016	In Process
16	Key Site 3 New Multi-Family Residential Project	129-151-026	Includes 160 residential units/lots	In Process
17	Orcutt Gas Station	107-011-026	Includes 7,868 s.f. of commercial use	In Process
18	Guy Tentative Parcel Map [TPM 14,836]	129-151-019	TPM 14,836 to subdivide a 10-acre parcel into two 5-acre parcels	In Process
19	Freebourn Tentative Parcel Map [TPM 14,847]	111-251-001	Tentative Parcel Map to divide existing 3.89-acre parcel into 3 residential lots	In Process
Source: County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development Department, Cumulative Projects List for the Entire County(March 5, 2021)				

4.0 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS CHECKLIST

The following checklist indicates the potential level of impact and is defined as follows:

Potentially Significant Impact: A fair argument can be made, based on the substantial evidence in the file, that an effect may be significant.

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation: Incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from a Potentially Significant Impact to a Less Than Significant Impact.

Less Than Significant Impact: An impact is considered adverse but does not trigger a significance threshold.

No Impact: There is adequate support that the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to the subject project.

Reviewed Under Previous Document: The analysis contained in a previously adopted/certified environmental document addresses this issue adequately for use in the current case and is summarized in the discussion below. The discussion should include reference to the previous documents, a citation of the page(s) where the information is found, and identification of mitigation measures incorporated from the previous documents.

4.1 AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public or the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?			✓		
b. Change to the visual character of an area?			✓		
c. Glare or night lighting which may affect adjoining areas?			✓		
d. Visually incompatible structures?			✓		

Existing Setting:

The project site is located in an area designated as having "moderate" scenic value by the Open Space Element of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan (2009). No officially designated State or local scenic highways located near the project site. U.S. 101, which is an eligible scenic highway, is located approximately one mile east of the project site, and the site is not visible from the highway. Public views of the project site are limited to motorists on Union Valley Parkway and Brookside Avenue. Views of the project site from Union Valley Parkway consist of slopes on the southern boundary of the project site and the on-site elevated knoll. The eucalyptus grove that is within the Orcutt Open Space Area on the western portion of the project site is highly visible from Union Valley Parkway. Travelers on the western end of Brookside Avenue have a direct view of the project site, which consists of low lying, non-native grasses as well as the eucalyptus grove.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The Visual Aesthetics Impact Guidelines in the County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County Environmental Thresholds) (County of Santa Barbara 2021a) classify coastal and mountainous areas, the urban fringe, and travel corridors as "especially important" visual resources. A project may have the potential to create a significantly adverse aesthetic impact if (among other potential effects) it would impact important visual resources, obstruct public views, remove significant amounts of vegetation, substantially alter the natural character of the landscape, or involve extensive grading visible from public areas. The County Environmental Thresholds address public, not private views.

The following questions are intended to provide information to address the criteria specified in Appendix G. Affirmative answers to the following questions indicate potentially significant impacts to visual resources:

1a. Does the project site have significant visual resources by virtue of surface waters, vegetation, elevation, slope, or other natural or man-made features which are publicly visible?

1b. If so, does the proposed project have the potential to degrade or significantly interfere with the public's enjoyment of the site's existing visual resources?

2a. Does the project have the potential to impact visual resources of the Coastal Zone or other visually important area (i.e., mountainous area, public park, urban fringe, or scenic travel corridor)?

2b. If so, does the project have the potential to conflict with the policies set forth in the Coastal Land Use Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, or any applicable community plan to protect the identified views?

3. Does the project have the potential to create a significantly adverse aesthetic impact though obstruction of public views, incompatibility with surrounding uses, structures, or intensity of development, removal of significant amounts of vegetation, loss of important open space, substantial alteration of natural character, lack of adequate landscaping, or extensive grading visible from public areas?

Impact Discussion:

a. **Less than significant.** The proposed project includes construction of a new 8,600-s.f. fire station that would be 32 feet in height. The project site is not located in an area which would affect coastal or urban fringe views, or scenic views of the Sierra Madre Mountains and Casmalia Hills. The project would be required to comply with Key Site 27 Policy KS27-1 in the Orcutt Community Plan which ensures new developed shall stay consistent with the zoning development standards such as DevStd KS27-1, "The area within the Airport 'No-Build' zone and the grove of eucalyptus trees on the western portion of the site shall remain in natural, undeveloped open space," and DevStd KS27-2, "Project landscaping shall include raised landscaped berms and other screening features along the site's frontage with Union Valley Parkway. Such landscaping shall not include solid masonry walls. The developer shall be responsible through a bond for the maintenance of the [Union Valley Parkway] frontage landscaping for a period of three years or until a maintenance district or other mechanism is formed, whichever is sooner. Eucalyptus trees onsite should be retained in the project development." (County of Santa Barbara 1997a, p.410-411). Because of the requirement to screen development on the project site along Union Valley Parkway, the project would not significantly impact a scenic vista or view open to the public along this roadway. The proposed fire station would be constructed at the terminus of the western end of Brookside Avenue, and thus, would potentially obstruct part of the views of the eucalyptus grove in the Orcutt Open Space Area in the background from the public view at the terminus of Brookside Avenue. However, the number of viewers would likely be relatively minor given that Brookside Avenue terminates in a cul-de-sac which typically result in less vehicular traffic than "through" street. Additionally, the height of the new fire station would be 32 feet, which is compatible with the 40-foot height limitation in section 35.23.060-DR Zone Standards of the County's Land Use & Development Code (County of Santa Barbara 2021). Therefore, the project's impacts to scenic vistas or views open to the public would not be aesthetically offensive to public view, and impacts would be less than significant.

b, d. **Less than significant.** The proposed project includes construction of a new fire station on currently undeveloped land. The proposed fire station would be 32 feet in height, would be adequately set back from public-right-of-way and the Orcutt Open Space Area, and would be compliant with the Design Residential zoning development standards for the site and surrounding neighborhoods. The height of the two-story fire station would not be substantially different than the one-story houses along Brookside Avenue in the project area, considering the minor difference of one story in height. In addition, the project would include landscaping and berms to separate the project site from adjacent properties. On the southern boundary of the site, eastbound and westbound travelers along Union Valley Parkway would have limited views of the proposed fire station because the frontage of the project site along the roadway would be screened by berming and landscaping, decreasing the impact the structure would have from that roadway. However, the existing slopes along Union Valley Parkway could be considered a visual resource that could be affected by grading of the two driveways proposed along Union Valley Parkway. The project site is part of Key Site 27 of the Orcutt Community Plan and would incorporate Key Site 27 policies and development standards into its design, as mentioned under Response "a." In addition, grading would have a maximum excavation depth of 10 feet and would be designed to blend with the existing topography. As a result, the proposed project would not substantially change the visual character or visual setting for motorists traveling along Union Valley Parkway or Brookside Avenue. Impacts would be less than significant.

c. **Less than significant.** The proposed project would require the installation of exterior lighting fixtures as part of the design of the structure for security purposes. Exterior lighting would be designed and located so as to minimize impacts on neighboring properties and the community in general, as required by Policy VIS-O-6 of the Orcutt Community Plan (County of Santa Barbara 1997a). Additionally, Action VIS-O-6.1 and DevStd VIS-O-6.3 of the Orcutt Community Plan would ensure minimal lighting intensity required for public safety would be used on site (County of Santa Barbara 1997a). Specifically, proposed exterior lighting with be located close to the fire station, and directed downward toward the parking lot area and walkways to the building and away from existing nearby residences and open space. The nearest residences are located approximately 150 feet to the east of the proposed fire station location and would not be affected by lighting during operation of the proposed project due to distance, intervening topography, and ambient nighttime lighting already present in the vicinity. In addition, there would occasionally be headlights and emergency lights from fire engines and emergency vehicles exiting the project site, but such lighting would be temporary and would primarily be directed away from residences on Brookside Avenue as fire engines and emergency egress onto Union Valley Parkway. Construction of the project would be limited to daytime, and thus, no night lighting would be required during project construction. Furthermore, construction and operation of the proposed project would not introduce any glare-creating features on the project site. Therefore, the project would not create glare or night lighting that may affect adjoining areas, and impacts would be less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial change in the visual character of the area because the proposed project would be visually compatible with its existing surroundings. In addition, none of the cumulative projects listed in Table 2 are located near the project site, and would not be visible from the project site. Thus, the project would not contribute to any cumulatively considerable effects to aesthetics.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use, impair agricultural land productivity (whether prime or non-prime) or conflict with agricultural preserve programs?				✓	
b. An effect upon any unique or other farmland of State or Local Importance?				✓	

Existing Setting:

Agricultural lands play a critical economic and environmental role in Santa Barbara County. Agriculture continues to be Santa Barbara County's major producing industry with a gross production value of over $1.8 billion in 2020 (County of Santa Barbara 2021c). Furthermore, domestic livestock graze 39 percent of the rangelands in Santa Barbara County, which provides the basis for the county's multi-million-dollar livestock industry (Shapero 2019). In addition to the creation of food, jobs, and economic value, farmland provides valuable open space and maintains the county's rural character.

Several thousand acres of agricultural lands dominate the regional project setting and are primarily located approximately one mile east of the project site across U.S. 101. Agricultural operations in this setting generally range from 20 to more than 600 acres in size. Most operations include irrigated crops, such as blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, peas, squash, zucchini, tomatillos, beans, and flowers (County of Santa Barbara 2014).

The proposed project would be constructed on an approximately 4.6-acre lot zoned as Design Residential (DR-3.3). According to the California Department of Conservation (DOC), the project site is partially designated as urban and built-up land on the eastern portion with the remaining portion designated as "other lands" (DOC 2016). The project site is also located within an urban area as mapped by the Orcutt Community Plan (County of Santa Barbara 1997a). The parcel is currently vacant and undeveloped, and includes a eucalyptus grove on the western boundary.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County's Agricultural Resource Guidelines (County of Santa Barbara 2021a) provides a methodology for evaluating agricultural resources. These guidelines utilize a weighted point system to serve as a preliminary screening tool for determining significance. The tool helps planners determine whether a proposed subdivision would divide a viable agricultural parcel into two or more parcels that are no longer viable for agricultural production. A project that would result in the loss or impairment of agricultural resources could create a potentially significant impact. The point system measures the productive ability of an existing parcel as compared to proposed parcels. The tool compares availability of resources and prevalent uses that benefit agricultural potential but does not quantifiably measure a parcel's actual agricultural production.

Initial Studies use this weighted point system in conjunction with any additional information regarding agricultural resources. The Initial Study assigns values to nine particular characteristics of agricultural productivity of a project site. These factors include parcel size, soil classification, water availability, agricultural suitability, existing and historic land use, comprehensive plan designation, adjacent land uses, agricultural preserve potential, and combined farming operations. If the tabulated points total 60 or more, the parcel is considered agriculturally viable. A project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact on agricultural resources if a division of land or other development would result in

parcels that do not score over 60 points themselves or score substantially lower than the parcel under existing conditions. Any loss or impairment of agricultural resources identified using the point system could constitute a potentially significant impact and warrants additional site-specific analysis.

Impact Discussion:

a. **Less than significant.** The following subsections discuss the potential impacts associated with the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural use.

Agricultural Land Productivity – Weighted Point System. Table 3 lists the points assigned to each of the nine characteristics of agricultural productivity for APN 107-321-013. The subsections following Table 3 summarize the key factors justifying the points assigned to the parcel.

Table 3 Agricultural Suitability and Productivity Analysis

Agricultural Suitability and Productivity	Existing/Pre-Project Conditions
Parcel size • Less than 5 acres, 0-3 points • 5-10 acres, 4-6 • 10-40 acres, 7-8	3
Soil classification • Class I, 14-15 points • Class II, 11-13 points • Class III, 8-10 points • Class IV, 6-7 points • Class VI or VII, 1-5 points	7
Water availability • Adequate supply, 12-15 points • May be marginal, 8-11 points • Potentially available, 3-7 points • Does not have developed water, sources of poor quality/quantity, 0-2 points	15
Agricultural suitability *Crops* • Highly suitable for irrigated crops, 8-10 points • Highly suitable for irrigated ornamentals, pasture, dry farming, 6-8 points • Moderately suitable for irrigated crops, 4-5 points • Low suitability for any crops, 1-3 points *Rangeland* • Highly suitable for pasture or range, 6-10 points • Moderately suitable for pasture or range, 3-5 points • Low suitability for pasture or range, 1-2 points	5
Existing and historic land use • Active agricultural production, 5 points • Maintained range, 5 points • Unmaintained, productive within last 10 years, 3-5 points • Vacant land: fallow or never planted with range of suitabilities of agricultural potential, 1-3 points • Substantial urban or agricultural industrial development on-site, 0 point	3
Comprehensive plan designation • Residential less than 5 acres, 0 point	0

Agricultural Suitability and Productivity	Existing/Pre-Project Conditions
Adjacent land uses • Partially surrounded by agriculture/open space with some urban uses adjacent, in a region without adequate agricultural support uses, 3-6 points • Immediately surrounded by urban uses, no buffers, 0-2 points	2
Agricultural preserve potential • Can qualify for prime agricultural preserve by itself, or is in a preserve, 5-7 points • Can qualify for non-prime agricultural preserve by itself, 2-4 points • Can qualify for prime agricultural preserve with adjacent parcels, 3-4 points • Can qualify for non-prime agricultural preserve with adjacent parcels 1-3 points • Cannot qualify, 0 point	0
Combined farming operations • Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation, 5 points • Provides an important component of a combined farming operation, 3 points • Provides a small component of a combined farming operation, 1 point • No combined operation, 0 point	0
TOTAL	35

Parcel Size. The project site is approximately 4.6 acres in size.

Soil Classification. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifies the soils on the project site as Class 4 when irrigated and Class 6 when not irrigated (USDA 2021).

Water Availability. According to the County Public Health Department, the project site has no permitted water well (County of Santa Barbara 2021d). The site is, however, located adjacent to residential development served by existing potable water connections from the Golden State Water Company, which sources its water from the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin. Therefore, to provide a conservative analysis, it is assumed the project site has adequate water availability.

Agricultural and Rangeland Suitability. The Conservation Element of the County Comprehensive Plan (map titled "Santa Barbara County Agricultural Suitability for Major Crops") classifies the project site as "suitable only for certain crops" (County of Santa Barbara 2010). Therefore, the project site is classified as "moderately suitable for irrigated crops."

Existing and Historic Land Use. The project site is currently vacant, and historic aerial imagery dating back to 1985 shows that the parcel has been vacant since at least 1985. Nonetheless, the parcel has soils that are suitable for agriculture; therefore, to be conservative, this parcel is classified as vacant/fallow agricultural lands.

Comprehensive Plan Designation. The County Comprehensive Plan designates the project site as Design Residential (DR-3.3).

Adjacent Land Uses. The project site is primarily surrounded by urban land uses, which include residential uses to the north, west, and east, and residential and recreational/open space land uses to the south.

Agricultural Preserve Potential. The Santa Barbara County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones (Uniform Rules) (County of Santa Barbara 2021e) state that a parcel may qualify for an agricultural preserve contract if the parcel satisfies the following requirements:

- Comprehensive Plan designation of Agricultural Commercial, Agriculture I, Agriculture II, or Mountainous Area;
- Zoning designation of Agriculture, Mountainous, or Resource Management;
- Minimum parcel size of 40 acres for prime or superprime land and 100 acres for nonprime land; and
- Land is and will be used principally for the active production of commercial agricultural products (grazing and/or cultivated agriculture) and has a secure water source to support the agricultural activity.

The project site is approximately 4.6 acres in size and is not designated for an agricultural use by the Comprehensive Plan. As a result, this parcel is too small and is not zoned to qualify for the County Agricultural Preserve Program.

Combined Farming Operations. The project site is not currently under agricultural production. Therefore, it is not currently part of a combined farming operation.

Overall Rating. Projects that affect a parcel scoring 60 or more points may have a potentially significant impact on agricultural resources. As shown in Table 3, the project site scored 35 points. Therefore, the project site has relatively low agricultural suitability and productivity, and constructing the proposed project on this parcel would have a less than significant impact on agricultural land productivity and agricultural resources.

Prime Agricultural Land [1]

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service uses land capability classifications to show the suitability of soils for field crops. The classification groups soils in the following three levels: capability class, subclass, and unit. Capability classes, the broadest group, range from Class 1 through Class 8. The numbers indicate progressively greater limitations and narrower choices for agricultural use. For example, Class 1 soils have few limitations that restrict their use. Class 8 soils have limitations that preclude commercial plant production. The County Environmental Thresholds (County of Santa Barbara 2021a) state, "Classes I [1] and II [2] are considered to be prime agricultural soils because they impose few limitations on agricultural production, and almost all crops can be grown successfully on these soils." The USDA classified the soils on the project site as Class 4 irrigated and Class 6 non-irrigated (USDA 2021). Therefore, these soils do not qualify as prime agricultural soils, and the proposed project would not impact prime agricultural soils.

Agricultural Preserve Program

The project site is not enrolled in the County Agricultural Preserve Program (County of Santa Barbara 2020a). Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the County Agricultural Preserve Program.

In summary, the proposed project would not convert prime agricultural soil to non-agricultural use, impair agricultural land productivity, or conflict with agricultural preserve programs. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts on agricultural resources.

b. **Less than significant.** The DOC's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) rates and maps (Important Farmland Maps) agricultural lands according to soil quality and irrigation status. For environmental review under CEQA, the FMMP classifies agricultural lands into the following five categories: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of

[1] The County Environmental Thresholds (County of Santa Barbara 2021a) uses the terms "prime agricultural soils" and "prime agricultural land." The County Environmental Thresholds define "prime agricultural soils" as soils that the USDA has classified as Class 1 or Class 2. The County Environmental Thresholds do not define "prime agricultural land." Therefore, the impact discussion under item (a) evaluates the project's potential impacts on prime agricultural soils.

Local Importance, and Grazing Land. Prime Farmland has the best physical and chemical features for agriculture. Farmland of Statewide Importance is similar to Prime Farmland but has greater slopes or other minor shortcomings and only includes irrigated lands. Unique Farmland has lesser quality soils used for the state's leading crops and may include non-irrigated lands. Farmland of Local Importance is land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county. Grazing Land has vegetation suitable for the grazing of livestock. The FMMP periodically updates the Important Farmland Maps, which were last updated within the vicinity of the project site in 2016.

The FMMP classifies the project site as urban and built-up land, and Google Earth aerial imagery shows the project site has been vacant since at least 1985 (DOC 2016). Therefore, the project would not result in an effect upon any unique or other farmland of State or Local Importance, and impacts would be less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts:

The County's environmental thresholds, in part, define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant issue constitutes a significant effect at the project level. As discussed above, the proposed project would not exceed the thresholds of significance for impacts to agricultural resources. Therefore, the project's contribution to the regionally significant loss of agricultural resources would not be considerable, and the cumulative effect on regional agriculture would be less than significant.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.3a AIR QUALITY

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. The violation of any ambient air quality standard, a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, or exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (emissions from direct, indirect, mobile and stationary sources)?		✓			
b. The creation of objectionable smoke, ash or odors?				✓	
c. Extensive dust generation?		✓			

Existing Setting:

The project site is located in the community of Orcutt in unincorporated Santa Barbara County. The climate in and around Orcutt, as well as most of southern California, is dominated by the strength and position of the semi-permanent high-pressure center over the Pacific Ocean near Hawaii. It creates cool summers, mild winters, and infrequent rainfall. It drives the cool daytime sea breeze and maintains a comfortable humidity range and ample sunshine after the frequent morning clouds dissipate. However, the same atmospheric processes that create the desirable living climate combine to restrict the ability of the atmosphere to disperse the air pollution generated by the population attracted in part by the desirable climate.

Air pollutant emissions are generated primarily by stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources can be divided into two major subcategories:

- Point sources occur at a specific location and are often identified by an exhaust vent or stack. Examples include boilers or combustion equipment that produce electricity or generate heat.
- Area sources are widely distributed and include such sources as residential and commercial water heaters, painting operations, lawn mowers, agricultural fields, landfills, and some consumer products.

Mobile sources refer to emissions from motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions, and can also be divided into two major subcategories:

- On-road sources that may be legally operated on roadways and highways.
- Off-road sources include aircraft, ships, trains, and self-propelled construction equipment.

Air pollutants can also be generated by the natural environment, such as when high winds suspend fine dust particles.

Based on typical wind patterns, locally generated air pollutant emissions are carried offshore at night and toward inland Santa Barbara County by day. Dispersion of pollutants is restricted when the wind velocity for nighttime breezes is low. However, the lack of development in inland Santa Barbara County causes few air quality problems during nocturnal air stagnation. Daytime ventilation is usually much more vigorous. Both summer and winter air quality in the project area is generally very good. The closest air monitoring station to the project site is the Santa Maria-906 South Broadway monitoring station, located in downtown Santa Maria. This station measures ozone (O_3), particulate matter with diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM_{10}), and sulfur dioxide.

Regulatory Framework:

The federal and State Clean Air Acts (CAA) mandate the control and reduction of certain air pollutants. Under these laws, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for "criteria pollutants" and other pollutants. Some pollutants are emitted directly from a source (e.g., vehicle tailpipe, an exhaust stack of a factory, etc.) into the atmosphere, including carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds (VOC)/reactive organic compounds (ROC),[2] nitrogen oxides (NO_X), PM_{10}, particulate matter of 2.5 microns or less ($PM_{2.5}$), sulfur dioxide, and lead. Other pollutants are created indirectly through chemical reactions in the atmosphere, such as ozone, which is created by atmospheric chemical and photochemical reactions primarily between ROC and NO_X. Secondary pollutants include oxidants, ozone, and sulfate and nitrate particulates (smog). By law, the federal standards may be exceeded not more than once per year, while the California standards may not be exceeded at all.

Air Quality Standards and Attainment

The project site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB), which encompasses San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties and is under the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD). As the local air quality management agency, the SBCAPCD is required to monitor air pollutant levels to ensure that the NAAQS and CAAQS are met and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards. Depending on whether the standards are met or exceeded, the SCCAB is classified as being in "attainment" or "nonattainment." In areas designated as non-attainment for one or more air pollutants, a cumulative air quality impact exists for those air pollutants, and the human health impacts associated with these criteria pollutants, presented in Table 4 are already occurring in that area as part of the environmental baseline condition. Under state law, air districts are required to prepare a plan for air quality improvement for pollutants for which the district is in non-compliance. Santa Barbara County is currently designated nonattainment for the state standard for PM_{10}, nonattainment for the state and federal standard for 1-hour and 8-hour ozone, and attainment or unclassifiable for all other federal and state ambient air quality standards (SBCAPCD 2021). These nonattainment statuses are a result of several factors, including mobile and stationary sources in the SCCAB.

Table 4 Health Effects Associated with Non-Attainment Criteria Pollutants

Pollutant	Adverse Effects
Ozone	(1) Short-term exposures: (a) pulmonary function decrements and localized lung edema in humans and animals and (b) risk to public health implied by alterations in pulmonary morphology and host defense in animals; (2) long-term exposures: risk to public health implied by altered connective tissue metabolism and altered pulmonary morphology in animals after long-term exposures and pulmonary function decrements in chronically exposed humans; (3) vegetation damage; and (4) property damage.

[2] CARB defines VOC and ROC similarly as, "any compound of carbon excluding carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate," with the exception that VOC are compounds that participate in atmospheric photochemical reactions. For the purposes of this analysis, ROC and VOC are considered comparable in terms of mass emissions, and the term ROC is used in this IS-MND.

Pollutant	Adverse Effects
Suspended particulate matter (PM_{10})	(1) Excess deaths from short-term and long-term exposures; (2) excess seasonal declines in pulmonary function, especially in children; (3) asthma exacerbation and possibly induction; (4) adverse birth outcomes including low birth weight; (5) increased infant mortality; (6) increased respiratory symptoms in children such as cough and bronchitis; and (7) increased hospitalization for both cardiovascular and respiratory disease (including asthma).[1]
Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency 2018	

Air Quality Management

Because Santa Barbara County is designated nonattainment for the state ozone and PM_{10} standards, the SBCAPCD is required to implement strategies to reduce pollutant levels to achieve attainment of the NAAQS and CAAQS. The 2019 Ozone Plan is the current SBCAPCD Board-adopted air quality management plan for the County. The 2019 Ozone Plan incorporates and builds upon the prior Clean Air Plans and predominantly focuses on achieving attainment of the state ozone standards, in addition to the federal ozone standard. The 2019 Ozone Plan focuses on reducing ozone precursor emissions through implementation of transportation control measures that serve to reduce mobile source emissions, which are the primary source of ROC and nitrogen oxides emissions in the county (SBCAPCD 2019). The major sources of ozone precursor emissions in Santa Barbara County are motor vehicles, the petroleum industry, and solvent usage (paints, consumer products and certain industrial processes). Sources of PM_{10} include mineral quarries, grading, demolition, agricultural tilling, road dust, and vehicle exhaust (County of Santa Barbara 2021a).

Sensitive Receptors

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, depending on the population groups and the activities involved. CARB has identified the following typical groups who are most likely to be affected by air pollution: children under 14 years of age; elderly over 65 years of age; athletes; and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Land uses typically associated with sensitive receptors include schools, parks, playgrounds, childcare centers, retirement homes, convalescent homes, hospitals, and clinics (CARB 2005). The sensitive receptors nearest to the project site include adjacent single-family and multi-family residential land uses located to the north and east. Additional single-family residences to the south of Union Valley Parkway are approximately 300 feet from the project site.

County Environmental Thresholds:

Chapter 5 of the County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) address air quality. Based on the County Environmental Thresholds, air quality impacts would be considered significant if the project:

- Interferes with progress toward the attainment of the ozone standard by releasing emissions which equal or exceed the established long-term quantitative thresholds for NO_X and ROC; or
- Equals or exceeds the state or federal ambient air quality standards for any criteria pollutant (as determined by modeling).

The County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) and the SBCAPCD do not provide thresholds for short-term construction emissions. However, SBCAPCD recommends quantification of construction-related emissions from construction activities and uses 25 tons per year for ROC and NO_X as a guideline for determining the significance of construction impacts. In addition, under SBCAPCD Rule 202.F.3, if the combined emissions from all construction equipment used to construct a stationary source which requires

an Authority to Construct have the potential to exceed 25 tons of any pollutant, except carbon monoxide, in a 12-month period, the owner of the stationary source shall provide offsets under the provisions of Rule 804 and shall demonstrate that no ambient air quality standard would be violated. Therefore, this analysis uses 25 tons per year as a significance threshold for construction-related emissions of ROC, NO_X, sulfur dioxide, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$.

The County's Grading Ordinance (Santa Barbara County Code, Chapter 14) requires standard dust control conditions for most projects. In addition, the County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) require implementation of dust mitigation measures for all discretionary construction activities that involve earth-moving activities regardless of project size or duration because the Santa Barbara County region is designated nonattainment for the state PM_{10} standard.

The County Environmental Thresholds provide operational emission thresholds, which state that operational air quality impacts would be considered significant if the project:

- Emit (from all project sources, mobile and stationary), less than the daily trigger (Currently 55 pounds per day for NOx and ROC, 80 pounds per day for PM_{10}, and 240 pounds per day for attainment pollutants (except $PM_{2.5}$ and carbon monoxide) for offsets set in the APCD New Source Review Rule, for any pollutant; and
- Emit less than 25 pounds per day of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) or reactive organic compounds (ROC) from motor vehicle trips only; and
- Not cause or contribute to a violation of any California or National Ambient Air Quality Standard (except ozone); and
- Not exceed the APCD health risk public notification thresholds adopted by the APCD Board; and
- Be consistent with the adopted federal and state Air Quality Plans.

The County Environmental Thresholds also state that a project will have a significant air quality impact if it causes a carbon monoxide "hotspot" by adding emissions to existing background carbon monoxide levels that exceed the California one-hour standard of 20 parts per million, which typically occurs at severely congested intersections. The County provides the following screening criteria for carbon monoxide impacts:

- If a project contributes less than 800 peak hour trips, then carbon monoxide modeling is not required.
- Projects contributing more than 800 peak hour trips to an existing congested intersection at level of service (LOS) D or below, or that will cause an intersection to reach LOS D or below, may be required to model for CO impacts. However, projects that will incorporate intersection modifications to ease traffic congestion are not required to perform modeling to determine potential carbon monoxide impacts.

The County Environmental Thresholds recommend discussing the following issues if they are applicable to the project:

- Emissions which may affect sensitive receptors (e.g., children, elderly, or acutely ill);
- Toxic or hazardous air pollutants in amounts which may increase cancer risk for the affected population; or
- Odor or other air quality nuisance problems impacting a considerable number of people.

For cumulative impacts, the County Environmental Thresholds state that a project's contribution to the cumulative air quality impact of the region's nonattainment designation for ozone would be cumulatively considerable if a project's total emissions of ozone precursors (NO_X or ROC) would exceed the County's operational threshold of 55 lbs/day. For projects that do not have significant ozone precursor emissions or localized pollutant impacts, emissions have been taken into account in the 2019 Ozone Plan growth

projections; therefore, these projects would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative air quality impact.

Methodology

Air pollutant emissions generated by project construction and operation were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2020.4.0. CalEEMod uses project-specific information, including the project's land uses, square footages for different uses (e.g., Government and Parking Lot), and location, to model a project's construction and operational emissions. The analysis reflects the construction and operation of the project as described under *Project Description*.

Construction emissions modeled include emissions generated by construction equipment used on-site and emissions generated by vehicle trips associated with construction, such as worker and vendor trips. CalEEMod estimates construction emissions by multiplying the amount of time equipment is in operation by emission factors. Construction of the proposed project was analyzed based on the general construction schedule timeframe provided by County staff and standard CalEEMod assumptions on construction equipment. Construction would occur over approximately 18 months, and soil material would be balanced on site. It is assumed all construction equipment used would be diesel-powered. This analysis assumes the project would comply with all applicable regulatory standards. In particular, the project would comply with SBCAPCD Rules 345 and 323.1.

Operational emissions modeled include mobile source emissions (i.e., vehicle emissions), energy emissions, area source emissions, and stationary sources emissions (i.e., generator). Mobile source emissions are generated by vehicle trips to and from the project site. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers *Trip Generation Handbook, 10th edition*, fire and rescue station land uses have an average trip generation rate of 0.48 afternoon peak hour trips per 1,000 s.f. (Institute of Transportation Engineers 2017). Using an industry standard assumption that peak hour traffic is approximately 10 percent of average daily traffic, the average trip generation rate for fire and rescue station land uses is approximately 4.8 trips per 1,000 s.f. (Precision Traffic & Safety Systems 2021). Therefore, for the purposes of emissions modeling, it was assumed the project would generate approximately 41 average daily trips (4.8 trips per thousand square feet x 8.6 thousand square feet). Emissions attributed to energy use include natural gas consumption by appliances as well as for space and water heating. Area source emissions are generated by landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products and architectural coatings. An emergency diesel generator would generate stationary source emissions and tested for a total of 30 hours per year.

Impact Discussion:

a, c. **Less than significant with mitigation.** The following subsections discuss air pollutant emissions generated by project construction and operation.

Short-term Construction Emissions:

Criteria Air Pollutants

Project construction would involve site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating, which would temporarily generate air pollutant emissions. Project construction activity would emit ozone precursors NO_X and ROC, as well as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. The majority of construction-related emissions would result from grading due to the use of heavy-duty construction equipment and fugitive dust generation. Other emissions would result from building construction, paving and the evaporation of ROC from architectural coatings (paint). Table 5 summarizes estimated annual construction emissions for the proposed project. As shown therein, project construction would generate approximately less

than one ton per year of ROC, sulfur dioxide, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions and approximately 1 ton per year of NO_X emissions. Therefore, construction emissions would not exceed the County's threshold of 25 tons per year for ROC, NO_X, sulfur dioxide, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. Furthermore, the County of Santa Barbara considers short-term construction emissions of NO_X to be less than significant because countywide emissions of NO_X from construction equipment is insignificant compared to regional NO_X emissions from other sources, such as vehicles (County of Santa Barbara 2021a). Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 5 Anticipated Proposed Project Construction Emissions

	Maximum Annual Emissions (tons/year)					
	ROC	**NO_X**	**CO**	**SO_2**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Maximum Annual Construction Emissions	< 1	1	2	< 1	< 1	< 1
County Threshold	25	25	n/a	25	25	25
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**
Notes: All emissions modeling was completed using CalEEMod. See Attachment A for CalEEMod outputs for modeling results. Some numbers may not sum exactly due to rounding. Emission data shown is from "mitigated" results, which account for compliance with regulations and project design features.						

Fugitive Dust

Project construction activities would be subject to the County's grading ordinance to minimize fugitive dust emissions and associated impacts to air quality. The grading ordinance requires a grading permit and an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for all new grading, excavations, fills, cuts, borrow pits, stockpiling, compaction of fill, and land reclamation projects on privately owned land where the transported amount of materials exceeds 50 cubic yards or the cut or fill exceeds three feet in vertical distance to the natural contour of the land.[3] Soil cut and fill for the proposed project would be balanced on site. Because the County is designated nonattainment for the state standard for PM_{10}, the County and the SBCAPCD require implementation of standard dust control measures for all discretionary projects based on the policies in the 1979 Air Quality Attainment Plan, which was most recently updated in the 2019 Ozone Plan. Although PM_{10} emissions from project construction activities would not exceed the County's thresholds, the project's impacts related to PM_{10} emissions and extensive dust generation would be potentially significant because the project, as proposed, would not implement the County's and SBCAPCD's dust control measures. With implementation of Mitigation Measure Air-01 (see below), which requires implementation of the County's and SBCAPCD's dust control measures, the potential impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Construction Toxic Air Contaminant (TAC) Emissions

Toxic air contaminants (TACs) are defined by California law as air pollutants that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. Construction-related activities would result in temporary project-generated emissions of diesel particulate matter (DPM) exhaust emissions from

[3] The County accepts a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in lieu of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, as long as the SWPPP contains the requirements of the County's Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

off-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment for site preparation, grading, building construction, and other construction activities. DPM was identified as a TAC by CARB in 1998. The potential cancer risk from the inhalation of DPM (discussed in the following paragraphs) outweighs the potential non-cancer health impacts (CARB 2020) and is therefore the focus of this analysis.

Generation of DPM from construction projects typically occurs in a single area for a short period. Construction of the proposed project would occur over approximately 18 months. The dose to which the receptors are exposed is the primary factor used to determine health risk. Dose is a function of the concentration of a substance or substances in the environment and the extent of exposure that person has with the substance. Dose is positively correlated with time, meaning that a longer exposure period would result in a higher exposure level for the Maximally Exposed Individual. The risks estimated for a Maximally Exposed Individual are higher if a fixed exposure occurs over a longer period of time. According to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, health risk assessments, which determine the exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic emissions, should be based on a 70-year exposure period; however, such assessments should be limited to the period/duration of activities associated with the project. Thus, the duration of proposed construction activities (i.e., 18 months) is approximately five percent of the total exposure period used for 30-year health risk calculations. Current models and methodologies for conducting health-risk assessments are associated with longer-term exposure periods of 9, 30, and 70 years, which do not correlate well with the temporary and highly variable nature of construction activities, resulting in difficulties in producing accurate estimates of health risk (Bay Area Air Quality Management District 2017).

The maximum PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would occur during the site preparation and grading activities. These activities would last for approximately four months. PM emissions would decrease for the remaining construction period because construction activities such as building construction and architectural coating would require less intensive construction equipment. While the maximum DPM emissions associated with site preparation, and grading activities would only occur for a portion of the overall construction period, these activities represent the worst-case condition for the total construction period. This would represent approximately one percent of the total 30-year exposure period for health risk calculation. Given the aforementioned discussion, DPM generated by project construction would not create conditions where the probability is greater than 10 in one million of contracting cancer for the Maximally Exposed Individual or to generate ground-level concentrations of non-carcinogenic TACs that exceed a Hazard Index greater than one for the Maximally Exposed Individual. Therefore, project construction would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations, and impacts would be less than significant.

Long-term Operational Emissions:

Criteria Air Pollutants

Operation of the project would generate criteria air pollutant emissions associated with area sources (e.g., consumer products, landscape equipment), energy sources (i.e., use of natural gas for space and water heating and cooking), and mobile sources (i.e., vehicle trips to and from the project site). Table 6 summarizes the project's maximum daily operational emissions by emission source. As shown therein, operational emissions would not exceed SBCAPCD regional thresholds for criteria pollutants of 55 pounds per day for ROC and NO_X, 80 pounds per day for PM_{10} and 240 pounds per day for attainment pollutants (except $PM_{2.5}$ and carbon monoxide). Therefore, project operation would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment, and impacts would be less than significant.

Table 6 Anticipated Proposed Project Operational Emissions

	Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day)					
	ROC	**NO_X**	**CO**	**SO_2**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Area	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Energy	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Mobile	< 1	< 1	1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Stationary	< 1	1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Total	1	1	1	< 1	< 1	< 1
County Threshold	55	55	n/a	240	80	n/a
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**
Mobile Only	<1	<1	1	< 1	<1	< 1
County Threshold	25	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**
Notes: All emissions modeling was completed using CalEEMod. See Attachment A for CalEEMod outputs for modeling results. Some numbers may not sum exactly due to rounding. Emission data shown is from "mitigated" results, which account for compliance with regulations and project design features.						

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

Localized carbon monoxide "hotspots" can occur at intersections with heavy peak hour traffic. Specifically, hotspots can be created at intersections where traffic levels are sufficiently high such that the local carbon monoxide concentration exceeds the federal ambient air quality standard of 35.0 parts per million (ppm) or the State ambient air quality standard of 20.0 ppm.

The County recommends a local carbon monoxide hotspot analysis if the project would contribute more than 800 peak hour trips to an existing congested intersection at LOS D or below. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Trip Generation Handbook, 10th edition*, fire and rescue station land uses have an average trip generation rate of 0.48 afternoon peak hour trips per 1,000 s.f. (Institute of Transportation Engineers 2017). Therefore, the project would generate approximately four peak afternoon trips (0.48 peak hour trips/thousand square feet x 8.6 thousand square feet). Therefore, project-generated traffic would not exceed the screening criteria of adding 800 peak hour trips to an existing congested intersection, and a local carbon monoxide hotspot analysis is not warranted. In addition, according to SBCAPCD, due to the relatively low background ambient carbon monoxide levels in Santa Barbara County, localized carbon monoxide hotspot impacts associated with congested intersections are not expected to exceed the carbon monoxide health-related air quality standards. Therefore, SBCAPCD no longer requires carbon monoxide hotspot analyses. No impact related to carbon monoxide hotspots would occur.

Operational Toxic Air Contaminant Emissions

CARB's *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (2005) provides recommendations regarding the siting of new sensitive land uses near potential sources of air toxic emissions (e.g., freeways, distribution centers, rail yards, ports, refineries, chrome plating

facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline dispensing facilities). SBCAPCD adopted similar recommendations in its *Scope and Content of Air Quality Sections in Environmental Documents* (2017). Together, CARB and SBCAPCD guidelines recommend siting distances both for the development of sensitive land uses in proximity to TAC sources and for the addition of new TAC sources in proximity to existing sensitive land uses. Public facility land uses are not considered land uses that generate substantial TAC emissions based on review of the air toxic sources listed in CARB's guidelines. It is expected that quantities of hazardous TACs generated on site (e.g., cleaning solvents, paints, landscape pesticides, etc.) for the types of proposed land use would be below thresholds warranting further study under the California Accidental Release Program. The analysis of vehicle trips to and from the project site would suggest minimal emissions of TACs, particularly DPM, from idling fire trucks, which would not create conditions for contracting cancer for the Maximally Exposed Individual. Because the project would not include substantial TAC sources and is consistent with CARB and SBCAPCD guidelines, it would not result in the exposure of off-site sensitive receptors to significant amounts of carcinogenic or toxic air contaminants. Impacts would be less than significant.

Consistency with Air Quality Plan:

To be determined to be consistent with the 2019 Ozone Plan, a project's direct and indirect emissions must be accounted for in the growth assumptions of the Ozone Plan and the project must be consistent with the policies in the Ozone Plan (SBCAPCD 2019). In addition, to be consistent with Ozone Plan, all projects involving earthmoving activities must implement the standard dust control measures. Proper implementation of these measures is assumed to fully mitigate fugitive dust emissions in the Mitigation Measure Air-01 below. The project would not contain any changes in the value of pollution-producing activity that would affect the growth assumptions of the 2019 Ozone Plan. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure Air-01, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b. **No impact.** The proposed project would not include land uses that typically produce objectionable smoke, ash, or odors, such as agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, chemical plants, and composting facilities (CARB 2005). Therefore, odor emissions would be limited to emissions associated with typical construction, such as vehicle and engine exhaust. Project construction would not generate smoke or ash emissions. As a result, no impact would occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Growth within Santa Barbara County contributes to existing exceedances of the state ozone and PM_{10} ambient air quality standards; therefore, these exceedances represent cumulative air quality impacts. Construction and operation of the project would generate emissions of ozone precursors as well as emissions of PM_{10}. As discussed under Responses "a" and "c", the project would be required to comply with the County's grading ordinance, and implementation of Mitigation Measure Air-01 would require use of standard dust control measures required by the County and SBCAPCD. This measure would reduce PM_{10} emissions during construction. In addition, operational emissions of ozone precursors (NO_X or ROC) and PM_{10} would not exceed the County's annual operational emission threshold because the project would not induce new vehicle trips. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure Air-01, the contribution of the project to the County's nonattainment status for the state ozone and PM_{10} standards would not be cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

The proposed project could result in a potentially significant impact due to dust generation during construction activities. With implementation of Mitigation Measure Air-01, the potential impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level:

MM Air-01 **Dust Control:** In addition to SBCAPCD's standard fugitive dust control measures, the project proponent shall comply with the following dust control components at all times, including weekends and holidays:

- Dust generated by the development activities shall be kept to a minimum with a goal of retaining dust on the site.
- During clearing, grading, earth moving, excavation, or transportation of cut or fill materials, water trucks, or sprinkler systems shall be used to prevent dust from leaving the site and to create a crust after each day's activities cease.
- During construction, water trucks or sprinkler systems shall be used to keep all areas of vehicle movement damp enough to prevent dust from leaving the site.
- The construction area shall be wetted down after work is completed for the day and whenever wind exceeds 15 miles per hour.
- When wind exceeds 15 miles per hour, the site shall be watered at least once each day, including weekends and holidays.
- Increased watering shall occur as necessary to prevent transport of dust off-site.
- Soil stockpiled for more than two days shall be covered or treated with soil binders to prevent dust generation. Soil binders shall be reapplied as needed.
- If the site is graded and left undeveloped for over four weeks, the project proponent shall immediately:
  - (i) Seed and water to revegetate graded areas;
  - (ii) Spread soil binders; and/or
  - (iii) Employ any other method(s) deemed appropriate by the County Planning and Development Department or SBCAPCD.

PLAN REQUIREMENTS: These dust control requirements shall be included in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

TIMING: The dust monitor shall be designated prior to grading permit issuance. The dust control components shall apply from the beginning of any grading or construction throughout all development activities.

MONITORING: The County shall ensure measures are included on plans. The County shall spot check and ensure compliance on site. SBCAPCD inspectors shall respond to nuisance complaints.

4.3b AIR QUALITY - Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Will the proposal:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			✓		
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				✓	

Existing Setting:

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) include carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6), and nitrogen trifluoride (NF_3) (California Health and Safety Code § 38505(g)). These gases create a blanket around the Earth that allows light to pass through but traps heat at the surface, preventing its escape into space. While this is a naturally occurring process known as "the greenhouse effect," human activities have accelerated the generation of GHG emissions above pre-industrial levels (United States Global Change Research Program 2018). The global mean surface temperature increased by approximately 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (°F; 1 degree Celsius [°C]) in the past 80 years, and is likely to reach a 2.7°F (1.5°C) increase between 2030 and 2050 at current global emission rates (IPCC 2018).

The largest source of GHG emissions from human activities in the United States is from fossil fuel combustion for electricity, heat, and transportation. Specifically, the Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gases and Sinks: 1990-2017 (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2019) states that the primary sources of GHG emissions from fossil fuel combustion in 2017 included electricity production (35 percent), transportation (36.5 percent), industry (27 percent), and commercial and residential end users (17 and 19 percent, respectively). Factoring in all sources of GHG emissions, the energy sector accounts for 84 percent of total emissions in addition to agricultural (8 percent), industrial processes (5.5 percent), and waste management (2 percent) sources.

The County of Santa Barbara's Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP) (County of Santa Barbara 2015b) and the 2016 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Update and Forecast (County of Santa Barbara 2018) contain a detailed description of the proposed project's existing regional setting as it pertains to GHG emissions. Regarding non-stationary sources of GHG emissions within Santa Barbara County specifically, the transportation sector produces 38 percent of the total emissions, followed by the building energy (28 percent), agriculture (14 percent), off-road equipment (11 percent), and solid waste (9 percent) sectors (County of Santa Barbara 2018).

The overabundance of GHG in the atmosphere has led to a warming of the Earth and has the potential to substantially change the Earth's climate system. More frequent and intense weather and climate-related events are expected to damage infrastructure, ecosystems, and social systems across the United States (United States Global Change Research Program 2018). California's Central Coast, including Santa Barbara County, will be affected by changes in precipitation patterns, reduced foggy days, increased extreme heat days, exacerbated drought and wildfire conditions, and acceleration of sea level rise leading to increased coastal flooding and erosion.

Global mean surface warming results from GHG emissions generated from many sources over time, rather than emissions generated by any one project (IPCC 2014). As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15355, and discussed in Section 15130, "'Cumulative impacts' refers to two or more individual effects

which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." Therefore, by definition, climate change under CEQA is a cumulative impact.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b) states that a lead agency "should focus its analysis on the reasonably foreseeable incremental contribution of the project's [GHG] emissions to the effects of climate change." A project's individual contribution may appear small but may still be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, it is not appropriate to determine the significance of an individual project's GHG emissions by comparing against state, local, or global emission rates. Instead, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research recommends using an established or recommended threshold as one method of determining significance during CEQA analysis (California Governor's Office of Planning and Research [OPR] 2018). A lead agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution to an existing cumulatively significant issue, such as climate change, is not significant based on supporting facts and analysis (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(2)).

Regulatory Framework:

In response to climate change, California implemented Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the "California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006." AB 32 required the reduction of statewide GHG emissions to 1990 emissions levels (essentially a 15 percent reduction below 2005 emission levels) by 2020 and the adoption of rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions. On September 8, 2016, the Governor signed Senate Bill (SB) 32 into law, extending AB 32 by requiring the State to further reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (the other provisions of AB 32 remain unchanged). On December 14, 2017, CARB adopted the 2017 Scoping Plan, which provides a framework for achieving the 2030 target. The 2017 Scoping Plan relies on the continuation and expansion of existing policies and regulations, such as the Cap-and-Trade Program and the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, and implementation of recently adopted policies and legislation, such as SB 1383 (aimed at reducing short-lived climate pollutants including methane, hydrofluorocarbon gases, and anthropogenic black carbon) and SB 100 (discussed further below). The 2017 Scoping Plan also puts an increased emphasis on innovation, adoption of existing technology, and strategic investment to support its strategies. As with the 2013 Scoping Plan Update, the 2017 Scoping Plan does not provide project-level thresholds for land use development. Instead, it recommends local governments adopt policies and locally-appropriate quantitative thresholds consistent with a statewide per capita goal of six metric tons (MT) of CO_2e by 2030 and two MT of CO_2e by 2050 (CARB 2017).

Other relevant state laws and regulations include:

SB 375: The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375), signed in August 2008, enhances the state's ability to reach AB 32 goals by directing the CARB to develop regional GHG emission reduction targets to be achieved from passenger vehicles by 2020 and 2035. Metropolitan Planning Organizations are required to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which allocates land uses in the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). On March 22, 2018, CARB adopted updated regional targets for reducing GHG emissions from 2005 levels by 2020 and 2035. The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) was assigned targets of a 13 percent reduction in GHGs from transportation sources by 2020 and a 17 percent reduction in GHGs from transportation sources by 2035. The SBCAG 2040 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (2040 RTP-SCS) demonstrated the SBCAG region would achieve its regional emissions reduction targets for the 2020 and 2035 target years.

SB 100: Adopted on September 10, 2018, SB 100 supports the reduction of GHG emissions from the electricity sector by accelerating the state's Renewables Portfolio Standard Program. SB 100 requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total retail sales by 2020, 60 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2045.

California Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations Title 24): The California Building Standards Code consists of a compilation of several distinct standards and codes related to building construction including plumbing, electrical, interior acoustics, energy efficiency, and handicap accessibility for persons with physical and sensory disabilities. The current iteration is the 2019 Title 24 standards. Part 6 is the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which establishes energy-efficiency standards for residential and non-residential buildings in order to reduce California's energy demand. Part 12 is the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), which includes mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up new construction of residential and non-residential structures.

Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Planning

In 2015, the County adopted the Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP) (County of Santa Barbara 2015a) and certified the accompanying Final EIR for the ECAP (County of Santa Barbara 2015b). The purpose of the ECAP is to reduce GHG emissions from land use development in the County through selected emission reduction measures. The ECAP sets a GHG reduction target of 15 percent below 2007 (baseline) emissions by 2020, consistent with the State's target established by AB 32. It contains goals, policies, and emission reduction measures to achieve this target. In this regard, the ECAP was adopted as the County's "plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions" in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5.

The County has been implementing the ECAP's emission reduction measures. However, the 2016 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Update and Forecast concludes the County is not projected to meet its 2020 GHG reduction target (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2018b; County of Santa Barbara 2015a). Therefore, the County can no longer rely on the ECAP's EIR or its emission reduction measures when determining the significance of a project's GHG emissions. The County of Santa Barbara is currently in process of preparing the 2030 Climate Action Plan which is anticipated in 2022, replacing the 2015 Energy Action Plan. Furthermore, in July 2020, the County Board of Supervisors also adopted an updated target to reduce emissions in unincorporated Santa Barbara County by 50 percent below 2007 levels by 2030.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County of Santa Barbara adopted the ECAP in 2015 as a GHG emission reduction plan. The County has been implementing the plan's emission reduction measures since 2016. However, the County is not projected to meet the 2020 GHG emission reduction goal contained within the plan, and the plan is currently being updated. Therefore, the Board adopted Interim GHG Emissions CEQA Thresholds of Significance in January 2021.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a) states, "A lead agency should make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate the amount of GHG emissions resulting from a project." CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b) further states:

> A lead agency should consider the following factors, among others, when assessing the significance of impacts from greenhouse gas emissions on the environment:
>
> (1) The extent to which the project may increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting;
>
> (2) Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project…

Climate change under CEQA differs from most other types of impacts in that they are examined as a cumulative impact that results not from an individual project's GHG emissions, but rather from GHG emissions emitted on a global scale for many decades and from many different sources. Therefore,

analysis of a project's GHG emissions under CEQA focuses solely on the incremental contribution of estimated project emissions to climate change. The CEQA Guidelines address GHG emissions as a cumulative impact given that climate change is a global phenomenon (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4.(b)). As the California Supreme Court explained, "because of the global scale of climate change, any one project's contribution is unlikely to be significant by itself" (Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments [2017] 3 Cal. 5th 497,512). A project's significant GHG impacts must be disclosed and mitigated to the extent feasible whenever the lead agency determines that the project contributes to a significant, cumulative climate change impact (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.4.(b) and 15183.5). Therefore, GHG emissions impacts should be considered in a broader, cumulative context. A project's incremental contribution may be cumulatively considerable even if it appears relatively small compared to statewide, national, or global emissions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4.(b)). The interim GHG emissions thresholds are designed to identify (1) a cumulatively considerable contribution to an existing adverse condition, and (2) a cumulatively significant impact in combination with other projects causing related impacts.

A CEQA lead agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution to an existing cumulatively significant issue, such as climate change, is not significant based on supporting facts and analysis (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130, *Discussion of Cumulative Impacts*, Subsection (a)(2)). The CEQA Guidelines direct that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered insignificant if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure designed to alleviate the cumulative impact (CEQA Guidelines Section15130(a)(3)). The lead agency must provide substantial evidence in the environmental document to demonstrate that mitigation required of a project represents the project's "fair-share" contribution towards alleviating the cumulative impact.

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7, *Thresholds of Significance*, the County developed and adopted thresholds of significance for determining the significance of a project's GHG emissions. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7(a) states, "[a] threshold of significance is an identifiable quantitative, qualitative or performance level of a particular environmental effect." Projects that comply with an applicable threshold will normally have an insignificant effect on the environment. Projects that exceed or otherwise do not comply with an applicable threshold may have a significant effect on the environment and, as a result, may require project modifications or mitigation measures to avoid or reduce those effects to insignificant levels. The following thresholds reflect this general guidance as well as the specific guidance set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 regarding the significance of impacts from GHG emissions.

Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 states that lead agencies shall make a good faith effort to estimate or describe a project's GHG emissions. The section further states that in determining the significance of a project's GHG emissions, the lead agency should focus its analysis on the reasonably foreseeable incremental contribution of the project's emissions to the effects of climate change. A project's incremental contribution may be cumulatively considerable even if it appears relatively small compared to statewide, national, or global emissions. The agency's analysis should consider a timeframe that is appropriate for the project. The agency's analysis also must reasonably reflect evolving scientific knowledge and state regulatory schemes.

Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4, County staff should consider the following factors, among others, when determining the significance of impacts from GHG emissions on the environment: (1) the extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting; (2) whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that applies to the project; and (3) the extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions (e.g., CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, *Tiering and Streamlining the Analysis of Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, Subsection (b)). The CEQA Guidelines also clarify that the County has the discretion to select a model or methodology that it considers most appropriate for estimating GHG emissions, but that it must "support

its selection of a model or methodology with substantial evidence" and "explain the limitations of the particular model or methodology selected for use."

Methodology

The County used the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) to estimate potential GHG emissions resulting from construction and operation of the project. CalEEMod calculates annual GHG emissions and criteria pollutants (e.g., carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulate matter) for a given project for CEQA analysis. With regard to GHG emissions, CalEEMod estimates CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O because they are the most common GHGs associated with land use developments. The model reports the annual metric tons (MT) of each pollutant as well as the total annual metric tons in carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e). Attachment A shows the CalEEMod outputs for the project.

The assumptions described under Section 4.3a, *Air Quality*, as well as the following assumptions were applied to the quantification of GHG emissions associated with the proposed project:

- **Amortization of Construction Emissions**. The interim thresholds apply to non-exempt discretionary projects under CEQA; specifically, land use development projects (residential and non-residential), as well as land use plans (e.g., specific plans, community plans, or master plans). Construction-related emissions are to be amortized across the lifetime of the project (i.e., dividing total construction emissions by the number of years the project is expected to be operated) (County of Santa Barbara 2021a).
- **Water Use**. CalEEMod does not incorporate water use reductions achieved by CALGreen (Part 11 of Title 24). New development would be subject to CALGreen, which requires a 20 percent increase in indoor water use efficiency and use of indoor water-efficient irrigation systems. Thus, in order to account for compliance with CALGreen, a 20 percent reduction in indoor water use the use of water-efficient irrigation systems was included in the water consumption calculations for new development.
- **Utility Energy Intensity Factors.** The project would be served by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). Therefore, PG&E's specific energy intensity factors (i.e., the amount of CO_2e per megawatt-hour) are used in the calculations of GHG emissions. However, per SB 100, the statewide Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) Program requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy sources to 60 percent by 2030. To account for the continuing effects of the RPS, the energy intensity factors included in CalEEMod were reduced for year 2030 based on the percentage of renewables reported by PG&E. PG&E energy intensity factors that include this reduction are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 PG&E Energy Intensity Factors

	2021 (lbs/MWh)	**2030 (lbs/MWh)[1]**
Percent procurement	28.5%[2]	60%
CO_2	203.98	114.11
CH_4	0.033	0.018
N_2O	0.004	0.002

[1] RPS goal established by SB 100
[2] Source: PG&E 2020
lbs = pounds; MWh = megawatt-hour; CO_2 = carbon dioxide; CH_4 = methane; N_2O = nitrous oxide

Impact Discussion:

a. **Less than significant.** Temporary construction-related GHG emissions would be generated by the use of heavy-duty construction equipment and vehicle trips to and from the project site during construction activities. Table 8 summarizes the estimated construction-related GHG emissions for

each year of project construction activities. As shown therein, project construction would generate approximately 392 MT of CO_2e, which would equal approximately 13 MT of CO_2e when amortized over a 30-year period.

Table 8 Estimated Construction GHG Emissions

Year	Emissions (MT of CO_2e)
2027	137
2028	254
2029	1
Total	**392**
Amortized over 30 years	**13**

MT = metric tons; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents
Notes: Emissions modeling was completed using CalEEMod. See Attachment A for modeling results.

Operation of the proposed project would generate GHG emissions associated with area sources, energy and water usage, vehicle trips, testing of the emergency generator, and wastewater and solid waste generation. As shown in Table 9, annual operational emissions generated by the proposed project combined with amortized construction emissions would total approximately 66 MT of CO_2e per year, which would not exceed the County's screening level threshold of 300 MT of CO_2e per year. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 9 Combined Annual GHG Emissions

Emission Source	Annual Emissions (MT of CO_2e per year)
Construction	13[1]
Operational	
Area	<1
Energy	15
Solid Waste	23
Water	1
Mobile	12
Stationary	2
Total Emissions	**66**
Screening Threshold	**300**
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**

[1] Construction emissions amortized over a 30-year period.
MT = metric tons; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents
Notes: Emissions modeling was completed using CalEEMod.
See Attachment A for CalEEMod outputs.

b. **No impact.** There are numerous State plans, policies, and regulations adopted to reduce GHG emissions. The principal state plan and policy is AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, and the follow up, SB 32. The quantitative goal of AB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and the goal of SB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. Pursuant to the SB 32 goal, the 2017 Scoping Plan was created to outline goals and measures for the State to achieve the reductions. The 2017 Scoping Plan's goals include reducing fossil fuel use and energy demand. The project would comply with the latest Title 24 Green Building Code and Building Efficiency Energy for lighting efficiency.

The SBCAG 2040 RTP-SCS demonstrated the SBCAG region would achieve its regional emissions reduction targets of a 13 percent reduction in GHG emissions from transportation sources by 2020 and a 17 percent reduction in GHG emissions from transportation sources by 2035. The project does not include housing and therefore would not directly induce population growth that would result in additional vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The proposed project would provide a small number of additional employment opportunities in the local area; however, due to the nature of these opportunities, it is expected they would be filled by current residents of the region. Therefore, the provision of additional employment opportunities would not indirectly induce substantial population growth. As a result, the project's daily VMT was accounted for in the 2040 RTP-SCS, and GHG emissions would be consistent with those evaluated in the SBCAG 2040 RTP-SCS.

The County adopted the ECAP in 2015 as its GHG emission reduction plan. The final ECAP progress report will be released in 2021, using data through 2020. Until the 2030 CAP is adopted, the County considered projects or plans that have emissions below interim thresholds to be

consistent with County GHG emission reduction plans. The interim thresholds are part of the County's GHG emissions reduction strategy and were informed by the County's 2030 target. The interim thresholds provide a pathway to show compliance with County goals. As discussed in Response "a" above, the project would comply with interim thresholds and be consistent with the County's GHG emission reduction strategy.

The County's 2030 GHG emission reduction goal (50 percent reduction from 2007 levels by the year 2030) is consistent with the State's direction under Senate Bill 32 as codified in the California Health and Safety Code, Division 25.5, Part 4, Section 38566 (40 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2030). CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan (CARB 2017) describes the State's strategy for achieving California's 2030 GHG emission reduction target. The 2017 Scoping Plan does not prescribe or require specific actions by local government agencies; rather, the Scoping Plan provides guidance to local agencies and CARB supports programs that assist local agencies. CARB recommends statewide targets of no more than six MT of CO_2e per capita by 2030, and no more than two MT of CO_2e per capita by 2050. The statewide per capita targets account for all emissions sectors in the State, the statewide population forecasts, and the statewide reductions necessary to achieve the 2030 statewide target under SB 32 and the longer term State emissions reduction goal of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. This limit represents California's and these other governments' recognition of their "fair share" to reduce GHG emissions to the scientifically based levels to limit global warming below two degrees Celsius. It is recommended that local governments evaluate and adopt robust and quantitative locally appropriate goals that align with the statewide per capita targets and the State's sustainable development objectives and develop plans to achieve the local goals. The County's interim GHG emission efficiency threshold is considerably lower than the State's 2030 per capita target. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the State's GHG emission reduction strategy and the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. No impact would occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

The geographic scope for related projects considered in the cumulative impact analysis for GHG emissions is global because impacts of climate change are experienced on a global scale regardless of the location of GHG emission sources. Therefore, as discussed under the County Environmental Thresholds, GHGs and climate change are, by definition, cumulative impacts. As discussed under *Existing Setting*, the adverse environmental impacts of cumulative GHG emissions, including sea level rise, increased average temperatures, more drought years, and more large forest fires, are already occurring. As a result, cumulative impacts related to GHG emissions are significant. Thus, the issue of climate change involves an analysis of whether a project's contribution towards an impact is cumulatively considerable. The screening level threshold of 300 MT CO_2e per year used to evaluate the project's GHG emissions is also intended to address cumulative GHG impacts. As shown in Table 9, the project's combined construction and operational emissions would not exceed the screening threshold; therefore, the project's contribution to cumulative GHG impacts are considered less than significant.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified in the above analysis; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
Flora					
a. A loss or disturbance to a unique, rare or threatened plant community?				✓	
b. A reduction in the numbers or restriction in the range of any unique, rare or threatened species of plants?			✓		
c. A reduction in the extent, diversity, or quality of native vegetation (including brush removal for fire prevention and flood control improvements)?			✓		
d. An impact on non-native vegetation whether naturalized or horticultural if of habitat value?			✓		
e. The loss of healthy native specimen trees?		✓			
f. Introduction of herbicides, pesticides, animal life, human habitation, non-native plants or other factors that would change or hamper the existing habitat?			✓		
Fauna					
g. A reduction in the numbers, a restriction in the range, or an impact to the critical habitat of any unique, rare, threatened or endangered species of animals?		✓			
h. A reduction in the diversity or numbers of animals onsite (including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish or invertebrates)?		✓			
i. A deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat (for foraging, breeding, roosting, nesting, etc.)?		✓			
j. Introduction of barriers to movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?			✓		
k. Introduction of any factors (light, fencing, noise, human presence and/or domestic animals) which could hinder the normal activities of wildlife?			✓		

The following impact discussion is based, in part, on a biological resources reconnaissance survey of the biological survey area (BSA) performed by Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) on July 8, 2021. The BSA includes the entire project site, plus the relatively small portion of land between the project site and Union Valley Parkway (see Figure 2 in Attachment B for the boundary of the BSA). The results of the biological resources reconnaissance survey are included in full as Attachment B (Rincon 2021a).

Existing Setting:

Flora

No native grasslands or other rare or sensitive vegetation communities or habitat types were observed within the BSA during the reconnaissance survey. The BSA contains four vegetation communities and land cover types: non-native annual grassland, eucalyptus grove, iceplant mat/landscaped, and road shoulder/disturbed. These communities and land cover types are described below and shown on Figure 5.

Non-Native Annual Grassland

Non-native annual grassland within the BSA encompasses approximately 3.89 acres and consists primarily of exotic annual grasses and includes areas dominated by non-native grasses including rip-gut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), wild oat (*Avena fatua*), and veldt grass (*Ehrharta calycina*). Although non-native annual grasses form the dominant plant species composition, annual and perennial forbs, such as jimson weed (*Datura stramonium*) and doveweed (*Croton californicus*), are also scattered within this vegetation type. Additionally, four coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) individuals that appear to have been planted occur within the southernmost region of this vegetation community. The non-native annual grassland within the BSA most closely resembles the *Bromus* (*diandrus*, *hordeaceous*) – *Brachypodium distachyon* Semi-Natural Herbaceous Stands in MCV2 (Rincon 2021a).

Eucalyptus Grove

Within the BSA, this alliance is dominated by blue gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*) as the sole tree species and is characterized by a dense stand of eucalyptus with over 80 percent cover within the tree layer. The herbaceous layer is sparse, and primarily consists of leaf litter with sparse weedy non-native grasses. This alliance is found within the eastern portion of the BSA corresponding with the area designated as Open Space. The BSA contains 1.37 acres of this vegetation community. The eucalyptus grove within the BSA most closely resembles the *Eucalyptus spp. - Ailanthus altissima - Robinia pseudoacacia* Woodland Semi-Natural Alliance in MCV2 (Rincon 2021a).

Iceplant Mat/Landscaped

Iceplant (*Carpobrotus edulis*) dominates a small area in the southern region of the BSA, bordering Union Valley Parkway. Non-native grasses occur in low abundance within this vegetation community. Planted nonnative shrubs also occur amongst the mats of iceplant. The iceplant mat vegetation community within the BSA most closely resembles the *Mesembryanthemum* spp. - *Carpobrotus* spp. Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance in MCV2 (Rincon 2021a). The BSA contains 0.15 acre of this vegetation community.

Road Shoulder/Disturbed

The road shoulder/disturbed land cover type includes areas that have been heavily disturbed or altered from natural vegetation and is associated with the shoulder of Union Valley Parkway. This land cover type consists of sparsely vegetated native and non-native species, such as ripgut brome and telegraph weed, but consist of mostly bare ground. It is not officially identified in A Manual of California Vegetation as a defined vegetation community (Rincon 2021a). The BSA contains 0.26 acre of this land cover type.

Figure 5 Vegetation Communities in the BSA

Special-Status Plant Species

Special-status plant species are those that are either listed as endangered or threatened under the Federal or California Endangered Species Acts, or rare under the California Native Plant Protection Act, or considered to be rare or of scientific interest (but not formally listed) by resource agencies, professional organizations (e.g., Audubon Society, California Native Plant Society [CNPS], The Wildlife Society), and the scientific community.

Based on the database queries and literature review of records from the *Santa Maria, California* United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle, the surrounding eight quadrangles, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation list of federally listed species reveals 69 special status plant species are known to or have the potential to occur within the vicinity of the BSA. No special status plant species were determined to have a moderate or high potential to occur within the BSA, and only four special status plant species were determined to have low potential to occur within the BSA, Hoover's bent grass (*Agrostis hooveri;* California Rare Plant Rank 1B.2), Douglas' fiddleneck (*Amsinckia douglasiana*; California Rare Plant Rank 4.2), California spineflower (*Mucronea californica*; California Rare Plant Rank 4.2), and large-flowered leptosiphon (*Leptosiphon grandiflorus*; California Rare Plant Rank 4.2); however, it is very unlikely these species would occur due to the prevalence of nonnative grasses on site and the amount of existing disturbances on and adjacent to the site.

Wetlands and Other Jurisdictional Waters

No wetlands or waters are mapped within the BSA by the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory or USGS National Hydrography Dataset and none were observed during an on-site reconnaissance survey.

Fauna

Wildlife species observed within the BSA during biological surveys were limited to common avian species and western fence lizards. There were also abundant small mammal burrows present in the BSA, likely created by gophers (*Thomomys* sp.). A complete list of species observed can be found in Appendix C of the Biological Resources Assessment.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

Based on the database queries of the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation System, CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), and CNPS Online Inventory of Rare, Threatened and Endangered Plants of California, special status animal species are known to or have the potential to occur within the vicinity of the BSA. Of those, the following six special status animal species were determined to have low potential to occur within the BSA: monarch - California overwintering population (*Danaus plexippus* pop. 1; Federal Candidate), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii;* Species of Special Concern), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia;* Species of Special Concern), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*; State Threatened), American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*; Fully Protected), and American badger (*Taxidea taxus;* Species of Special Concern). Because of the marginally suitable habitat or lack of certain habitat features, these species are not likely to occur within the BSA. Two species were determined to have moderate potential to occur on site, northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*; Species of Special Concern) and western spadefoot toad (*Spea hammondii*; Species of Special Concern). These species are further discussed below.

Northern California Legless Lizard:

The northern California legless lizard is a small slender lizard with no legs, has eyelids, a shovel-shaped snout, smooth shiny scales, and a blunt tail. This species lives mostly underground and occurs with sandy and loose loamy soils or leaf litter. The northern California legless lizard inhabits areas of sparse vegetation within chaparral, coastal dunes, and coastal scrub habitats. This species prefers moist, warm

soil. The non-native annual grasslands and eucalyptus grove within the BSA contains areas of sandy soil and leaf litter, providing potentially suitable habitat for the northern California legless lizard. In addition, this species is known to occur along Union Valley Parkway in similar habitat types. Based on the habitat requirements, known occurrences in the vicinity of the BSA and suitable habitat found within the BSA, this species has a moderate potential to occur.

Western Spadefoot:

The western spadefoot is almost completely terrestrial, entering water only to breed. Breeding pools that are suitable for breeding are those which do not contain bullfrogs, fish, or crayfish and that pond for at least 30 days for successful completion of larval development. Outside the breeding season, the western spadefoot spends the majority of the time underground to avoid desiccation and prefers open areas with sandy or gravelly soils in a variety of habitats in the vicinity of a suitable breeding pond. The western spadefoot has been documented within the nine-quad search area surrounding the BSA as well as 500 feet from the BSA. This closest occurrence documented by the CNDDB is described as a seasonal rain-filled depression used for breeding by the species and is located in the southeast corner of the intersection of Union Valley Parkway and Hummel Drive. The BSA does not contain suitable aquatic habitat; however, the upland habitats found within the BSA provide suitable upland habitat for the western spadefoot as they contain sandy soils and suitable vegetation types for western spadefoot occupancy during the non-breeding season in close proximity to a known breeding location. Based on the habitat requirements, known occurrences in the vicinity of the BSA and suitable habitat found within the BSA, this species has a moderate potential to occur.

In addition the special status species discussed above, the grasslands, trees, and shrubs within and adjacent to the BSA have potential to support nesting birds protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (CFGC) Section 3500.

Wildlife Corridors

Regionally, the BSA is not located within an Essential Connectivity Area (ECA) as mapped in the report California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project: A Strategy for Conserving a Connected California (2010). The project site is within an urban setting, bordered by existing barriers to most regional wildlife movement in the form of existing housing developments along the entire northern and eastern boundaries because of these barriers and edge effects, in combination with the existing disturbances on site, the habitats within the BSA likely do not contribute greatly to regional wildlife movement patterns.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County Environmental Thresholds (County of Santa Barbara 2021a) include guidelines for the assessment of biological resource impacts. The following thresholds are applicable to this project:

Wetlands:

Projects which result in a net loss of important wetland area or wetland habitat value, either through direct or indirect impacts to wetland vegetation, degradation of water quality, or would threaten the continuity of wetland-dependent animal or plant species are considered to have a potentially significant effect on the environment. Projects which substantially interrupt wildlife access, use and dispersal in wetland areas would typically be considered to have a potentially significant impact. Projects which disrupt the hydrology of wetlands systems would be considered to have a potentially significant impact.

Native Grasslands:

In general, project created impacts to native grasslands may be considered significant if they involve removal of or severe disturbance to a patch or a combined patch area of native grasses that is greater than 0.25 acre in size. The grassland must contain at least 10 percent relative cover of native grassland species (based on a sample unit). Impacts to patch areas less than 0.25 acre in size that are clearly isolated and not

part of a significant native grassland or an integral component of a larger ecosystem are usually considered insignificant.

Other Rare Habitat Types:

The County Environmental Thresholds recognize not all habitat-types found in Santa Barbara County are addressed by the habitat-specific guidelines. Impacts to other habitat types or species may be considered significant, based on substantial evidence in the record, if they substantially: (1) reduce or eliminate species diversity or abundance; (2) reduce or eliminate the quality of nesting areas; (3) limit reproductive capacity through losses of individuals or habitat; (4) fragment, eliminate, or otherwise disrupt foraging areas and/or access to food sources; (5) limit or fragment range and movement; or (6) interfere with natural processes, such as fire or flooding, upon which the habitat depends.

Native Trees:

The County considers native specimen trees, regardless of size, to be potentially significant. Rare native trees that are very low in number or isolated in distribution may be particularly significant. The significance evaluation is performed on a case-by-case basis and considers tree size, numbers, location, and relationship to habitat among other factors. Specimen trees are defined as mature trees that are healthy and structurally sound and have grown into the natural stature particular to the species. In general, the County considers the loss of 10 percent or more of the trees of biological value on a project site to be potentially significant.

Impact Discussion:

Flora:

a. **No impact**. As described under *Existing Setting*, the BSA contains four vegetation communities and land cover types: non-native annual grassland, eucalyptus grove, iceplant mat/landscaped, and road shoulder/disturbed. No native grasslands or other rare or sensitive vegetation communities or habitat types were observed within the BSA during the reconnaissance survey. Therefore, the project would not result in a loss or disturbance to a unique, rare or threatened plant community, and no impact would occur.

b-d. **Less than significant**. As described under *Existing Setting*, no special status plant species were determined to have a moderate or high potential to occur within the BSA, and only four special status plant species were found to have a low potential to grow on the site: Hoover's bent grass, Douglas' fiddleneck, California spineflower, and large-flowered leptosiphon. However, it was determined very unlikely that these species would occur due to the prevalence of non-native grasses on site and the amount of existing disturbances on and adjacent to the site. Therefore, potential impacts to special status plant species would be less than significant.

e. **Less than significant with mitigation.** Based on observations made during the biological reconnaissance survey, the only native tree species that occurs within the biological survey area is the coast live oak. Four coast live oak trees are located on the southern boundary of the project site adjacent to Union Valley Parkway. At least one of these trees may be impacted by construction of a proposed driveway that would connect the proposed fire station with Union Valley Parkway, either through direct removal or encroachment into the dripline. Therefore, the project could result in the loss of at least one native tree and this impact would be potentially significant. With implementation of Mitigation Measures Bio-01 and Bio-02 (see below), which require tree protection measures and replacement as needed, the potential impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, potential impacts to native trees would be less than significant with mitigation.

f. **Less than significant**. Operation of the proposed project would likely include the use of herbicides and pesticides as part of landscape maintenance of the project site. However, use of such chemicals would be relatively minor and would follow the requirements and guidelines associated with the products. The

project would not introduce animal life, human habitation beyond the few fire station staff, non-native plants, or other factors that would change or hamper existing habitat. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Fauna

g-i. **Less than significant with mitigation**. As described under *Existing Setting*, six special status wildlife species have a low potential to occur on the BSA: monarch - California overwintering population, coast horned lizard, burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk, American peregrine falcon, and American badger. Because of the marginally suitable habitat or lack of certain habitat features, these species are not likely to occur within the BSA. Two species were determined to have moderate potential to occur on site: northern California legless lizard and western spadefoot.

Suitable habitat for the northern California legless lizard occurs within sandy soils and iceplant mats of the proposed development footprint as well as the eucalyptus grove leaf litter within the BSA. Direct impacts to these species could occur during ground disturbance in the form of harassment and/or injury, if present.

Suitable upland habitat for the western spadefoot can be found throughout the BSA. Much of the impact area within the BSA does occur within suitable upland habitat for the western spadefoot. Potential impacts, if present in upland areas, could occur during ground disturbance in the form of harassment and/or injury, especially since western spadefoot are known to burrow underground. No impacts to aquatic breeding habitat would occur from the proposed project.

Several bird species protected by the CFGC and the MBTA may nest in grasslands, trees, and shrubs within or adjacent to the BSA. Development of the project may result in direct or indirect impacts to nesting bird species, should they be present within and/or in the immediate vicinity of areas of disturbance at the time of construction. Impacts to nesting birds could occur if nests with eggs or young are present within the proposed disturbance area during project implementation that may cause direct impact to the nest, and/or failure or abandonment of the nest.

Impacts to special status animal species are potentially significant but would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measures Bio-03 and Bio-04 (see below).

j. **Less than significant**. The project site is bordered by existing barriers to most regional wildlife movement in the form of existing housing developments along the entire northern and eastern boundaries. In addition, the project site is located largely in an urban setting, is disturbed and construction of the fire station would encompass a relatively small area and not include development of the entire parcel. Designated open space areas would maintain connectivity with adjacent parcels. Therefore, impacts to wildlife movement would be less than significant.

k. **Less than significant**. The proposed project would permanently introduce a fire station and pave over a small portion of existing disturbed land that may provide marginal habitat for wildlife species, thereby precluding any future functional habitat value for these species. In addition, the project would include fire engines ingressing and egressing the site and emergency sirens which would increase noise in this area. However, as discussed in Section 4.11, *Noise*, ambient noise levels in the study area are generated by vehicular traffic on Union Valley Parkway and secondary noise provided by overflight noise as Union Valley Parkway runs adjacent to the Santa Maria Airport and the project would not substantially alter noise levels on the project site. In addition, new lighting associated to the project would be shielded and directed downward so as not to hinder the normal activities of wildlife. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts:

With implementation of mitigation measures, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts to biological resources. Buildout of the Orcutt area would continue to urbanize this area and could result in additional impacts to biological resources. The Orcutt Community Plan EIR (County of Santa Barbara 1994b) identified potentially significant cumulative impacts to biological resources, including wetlands, riparian, central dune scrub, oak woodlands, central coast scrub, and sandhill chaparral communities resulting from Orcutt Community Plan buildout. The potential biological resources impacts of each project would be addressed on a case-by-case basis as individual projects are reviewed by County decision-makers. Implementation of County policies and development standards related to biological resources such as Orcutt Community Plan Policies BIO-O-1 through BIO-O-5 would minimize these potential cumulative impacts. Although cumulative biological resources impacts would be potentially significant, the proposed project's contribution to such impacts would not be cumulatively considerable and would therefore be less than significant after mitigation.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

The proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts to biological resources. With implementation of Mitigation Measures Bio-01 through Bio-04, potential impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level:

MM Bio-01 Tree Avoidance and Tree Protection Plan

If feasible, the County shall modify the proposed project to either incorporate (to implement OCP Policy BIO-O-3 and OCP EIR BIO-26) and/or avoid oak trees. A County-approved biologist and/or arborist shall prepare a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) to ensure avoidance of impacts to protected trees that are not planned for removal. The TPP shall include the following components:

a. Prior to the onset of any construction activities, high visibility orange construction fencing shall be installed around existing stands and individuals that are to be retained at a buffer/extent radius of six feet beyond the canopy dripline, wherever the topography allows for such fencing or otherwise marked in the field to protect them from harm during grading and construction.
b. No construction equipment shall be parked, stored, or operated within 25 feet of any protected tree dripline.
c. No fill soil, rocks, or construction materials shall be stored or placed within 25 feet of the dripline of a protected tree.
d. No artificial surface, pervious or impervious, shall be placed within 25 feet of the dripline of any protected tree, except for County-approved project access roads.
e. Any roots encountered that are one inch in diameter or greater shall be cleanly cut. This shall be done under the direction of a County-approved arborist/biologist.
f. Any construction activity required within three feet of a protected tree's dripline shall be done with hand tools.
g. No permanent irrigation shall occur within the dripline of any existing protected tree.
h. Only designated trees shall be removed. All grading and construction plans shall clearly delineate those trees to be removed and those to remain.

If avoidance of oak trees is not feasible, the County shall also implement Mitigation Measure Bio-02 below.

Plan Requirements and Timing. The County-approved biologist and/or arborist shall submit the TPP to the County. The County shall include as notes or depictions all plan components listed above, graphically depicting all those related to earth movement, construction, and temporarily and/or permanently installed

protection measures that are indicated in the TPP. The construction contractor shall install the tree protection measures indicated in the TPP and project plans prior to the initiation of on-site project activities.

Monitoring. The County shall demonstrate that trees identified for protection were not damaged or removed or, if damage or removal occurred, that replacement is completed as required by the TPP prior to final building inspection clearance.

MM Bio-02 Tree Replacement Plan (Also Implements OCP EIR BIO-26)

If any protected oak tree will be removed, a Tree Replacement Plan shall be prepared by a certified arborist or landscape architect. The tree replacement plan shall be designed to replace native trees removed by the proposed project at a ratio of 10:1 (trees planted: trees impacted) for protected oak trees. Upon final design, the County or County-approved biologist and/or arborist shall determine the final impacts to protected trees and the subsequent number of replacement plantings needed for restoration for the project. Replacement trees shall be installed on-site. Monitoring of planted trees shall be for a minimum of seven years or until stasis has been determined by a certified arborist. The plan shall include the following components at a minimum:

a. Description of the project/impact site (i.e., location, responsible parties, areas to be impacted by habitat type);
b. Goal(s) of the compensatory mitigation project;
c. Description of the proposed compensatory mitigation site (location and size, ownership status, existing functions and values);
d. Implementation plan for the compensatory mitigation site (rationale for expecting implementation success, responsible parties, schedule, site preparation, planting plan [including species to be used and container sizes]);
e. Maintenance activities during the monitoring period, including weed removal and irrigation as appropriate (activities, responsible parties, schedule);
f. Monitoring plan for the compensatory mitigation site, including no less than quarterly monitoring for the first year (performance standards, target functions and values, target acreages to be established, restored, enhanced, and/or preserved, annual monitoring reports);
g. Success criteria based on the goals and measurable objectives; said criteria to be, at a minimum, at least 80 percent survival of container plants;
h. An adaptive management program and remedial measures to address any shortcomings in meeting success criteria;
i. Notification of completion of compensatory mitigation; and
j. Contingency measures (initiating procedures, alternative locations for contingency compensatory mitigation, funding mechanism).

Plan Requirements and Timing. The County-approved biologist and/or arborist shall submit the Tree Replacement Plan to the County. Plan components shall be included on grading and landscaping plans.

Monitoring. The County shall demonstrate that all required components of the approved Tree Replacement Plan are in place as required prior to final inspection clearance and maintained throughout maintenance period.

MM Bio-03 Northern California Legless Lizard and Western Spadefoot Pre-construction Survey and Relocation

At a minimum of two weeks prior to initiation of ground disturbing activities and vegetation removal, a County-approved biologist shall survey the limits of grading for northern California legless lizards and western spadefoot. Surveys for legless lizards shall include raking of leaf litter and sand under shrub and

trees in suitable habitat within the disturbance footprint to a minimum depth of eight inches. If northern California legless lizards and/or western spadefoots are found and would be impacted by the project the County-approved biologist shall capture and relocate the species to designated open space areas on site or at County-approved off-site locations. Captured animals shall be placed into containers with sand or other moist substrates and released in the designated areas within three hours. In addition to preconstruction surveys, the biologist shall be on-site during initial grading activities to relocate any northern California legless lizards and/or western spadefoots that are unearthed during excavation. If in good health, they shall be immediately relocated to the designated relocation area. If injured, the animals shall be turned over to a CDFW-approved specialist until they are in a condition suitable for release into the designated release area or deposited at an approved vertebrate museum.

Plan Requirements and Timing. Prior to ground-disturbing activities, the name, qualifications, scope, and contact information for the surveying biologist must be submitted to the County for approval in advance of the surveys. Proposed relocation areas shall be identified and approved by the County prior to beginning the work. A report of the results of the pre-construction survey and any required capture and relocation efforts shall be submitted to the County for review prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities. Weekly monitoring reports shall be submitted to the County by the County-approved biologist during initial ground disturbing activities. Biological monitoring requirements are to be implemented during construction. This measure shall be printed on all grading and construction plans.

Monitoring. The County and/or County-approved biologist shall monitor compliance with the above avoidance and minimization measures.

MM Bio-04 Nesting Bird Surveys

If feasible, removal of vegetation within suitable nesting bird habitats will be scheduled to occur in the fall and winter (between September 1 and February 14), after fledging and before the initiation of the nesting season. For vegetation removal activities occurring during the nesting season (generally February 15 to August 31), surveys for nesting birds covered by the CFGC and the MBTA shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than 14 days prior to vegetation removal. The surveys shall include the disturbance area plus a 300-foot buffer around the site, or to the topographic divide where substantial topography is present in the buffer. If active nests are located, all construction work shall be conducted outside a buffer zone from the nest to be determined by the qualified biologist. The buffer shall be a minimum of 50 feet for non-raptor bird species and at least 300 feet for raptor species. Larger buffers may be required depending upon the status of the nest and the construction activities occurring in the vicinity of the nest. The buffer area(s) shall be closed to all construction personnel and equipment until the adults and young are no longer reliant on the nest site. A qualified biologist shall confirm that breeding/nesting is completed, and young have fledged the nest prior to removal of the buffer. If buffer zones are determined to be infeasible, a full-time qualified biological monitor must be onsite to monitoring construction within the buffer zones to ensure active nests and nesting birds are not impacted.

Plan Requirements and Timing. The surveys shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to the initiation of vegetation and/or tree removal activities. A report of the nesting bird survey results shall be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to construction activities which involve tree or vegetation removal. These measures are to be implemented during grading and construction activities.

Monitoring. The County and/or County-approved biologist shall monitor compliance with the above avoidance and minimization measures. Active nests shall be monitored periodically by the County-approved biologist until it has been determined that the nest is no longer being used by either the young or adults.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of any object, building, structure, area, place, record, or manuscript that qualifies as a historical resource as defined in CEQA Section 15064.5?				✓	
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a prehistoric or historic archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Section 15064.5?			✓		
c. Disturb any human remains, including those located outside of formal cemeteries?				✓	
d. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in the Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: 1) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or 2) 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				✓	

The following impact discussion is based, in part, on a cultural resources technical study prepared by Rincon (2021b), which is included as Attachment C.

Existing Setting:

Archaeological and Historical Resources

For at least the past 10,000 years, the area that is now Santa Barbara County has been inhabited by Chumash Indians and their ancestors. On July 21, 2021, Rincon received the results of a records search of the California Historical Resources Information System, which was conducted by the staff at the Central Coast Information Center (CCIC) located at University of California, Santa Barbara. The search was

conducted to identify previously recorded cultural resources (prehistoric or historic), as well as previously conducted cultural resources work within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site. The cultural resources records search identified a total of 15 previous studies within the 0.5-mile search radius, three of which (SR-04603, SR-04604, and SR-04605) included portions of the project site. The cultural resources study identified no cultural resources within the 0.5-mile search radius, and no cultural resources located within the project site.

Tribal Cultural Resources

As part of the process of identifying Native American cultural resources within or near the project site, Rincon contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on July 14, 2021 and to request a review of the Sacred Lands File. The NAHC emailed a response on August 2, 2021 and stated the results of the search was negative. The NAHC provided a contact list of nine Native American individuals or tribal organizations that may have knowledge of cultural resources in or near the project site. The County conducted Native American consultation consistent with AB 52 for the project to identify potential concerns or issues associated with Native American cultural resources near the project.

As required by Public Resources Code (CEQA) Section 21080.3.1 (AB 52), the County sent a total of nine (9) consultation letters to California Native American tribes affiliated with the geographic area of the project site: six (6) were emailed on August 12, 2021 and three (3) were sent by U.S. Post Office certified mail on August 13, 2021. Follow-up phone calls were made to all non-responsive recipients on August 19, 2021, and again on September 1, 2021. Of the nine recipients, only the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians informed the County that it would consider the project. On September 27, 2021, the County received written notice from the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians that it did not wish to consult further. Therefore, tribal consultation under AB 52 has concluded for the project.

Pedestrian Survey

Rincon Consultants, Inc. conducted a pedestrian survey of the project site and the area between the project site and Union Valley Parkway on July 28, 2021. Overall ground visibility was considered excellent with approximately 80 to 100 percent exposure. The on-site soil is well-sorted and contained naturally occurring, non-cultural shells consisting of red abalone (*Haliotis rufescens*) and scallop (*Crassadoma* sp.). There was modern trash located throughout the project site consisting of household goods and plastics. One unmodified Pismo clam shell fragment was observed within the study area during the survey. The field survey did not identify any cultural resources in the project site (Rincon 2021b).

County Environmental Thresholds:

Chapter 8 of the County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) contain guidelines for the identification, significance evaluation, and mitigation of impacts to cultural resources, including archaeological, historic, and tribal cultural resources. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, these guidelines specify that if a resource cannot be avoided, it must be evaluated for importance using the criteria in CEQA Guidelines 15064.5(a)(3)A-D. Generally, a lead agency must consider a cultural resource to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the significance criteria for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. CEQA considers cultural resources that meet these criteria "historical resources."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that "…a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment." As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b), substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.

Impact Discussion:

a. **No impact.** As discussed above, the CCIC records search did not identify any previously recorded historical resources within the cultural study area. Therefore, the proposed project would not require physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of historical resources. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impact to historical resources.

b. **Less than significant.** As discussed under *Existing Setting*, no archaeological resources were previously recorded within the cultural study area. Nonetheless, it is possible that previously-unidentified archaeological resources may be encountered during ground-disturbing activities associated with construction of the proposed project (e.g., grading or any other activity that disturbs the surface of the ground). Construction activities may result in the destruction, damage, or loss of undiscovered scientifically-important archaeological resources. However, as part of the County's conditions of approval for the proposed project, the County would require the construction contractor to implement the County's Standard Condition CulRes-09, Stop Work at Encounter, which would require construction workers to stop or redirect work immediately in the event archaeological resources are encountered during grading, construction, or other construction-related activity. The contractor would immediately contact the County and retain a County-qualified archaeologist and Native American representative to evaluate the significance of the find in compliance with the County's Standard Conditions CulRes-01, -05, -07, -08, -09, and/or -10 of the County Archaeological Guidelines, as necessary. Specifically, the construction contractor would immediately contact the County and retain a County-qualified archaeologist and Native American representative to evaluate the significance of the find in compliance with the County Archaeological Guidelines. If the discovery proves to be significant under CEQA and avoidance of impacts to the resource is not feasible, the resource shall be subject to a Phase 3 mitigation program consistent with the County Archaeological Guidelines. The mitigation program may include, but shall not be limited to, data recovery and curation of non-burial related artifacts within a qualified institution within Santa Barbara County (such as the University of California, Santa Barbara's Department of Anthropology). With implementation of the County's Standard Conditions typical for a construction project, impacts would be less than significant.

c. **No impact.** No evidence of human remains has been encountered within the cultural study area, and no cultural resources have been identified within the cultural study area. Should human remains be discovered during project construction, the construction contractor would be required to comply with State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which requires no further disturbance occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Therefore, no impact to human remains would occur.

d. **No impact.** Native American consultation efforts were completed by the County pursuant to the requirements AB 52. These efforts did not identify specific tribal cultural resources within the cultural study area, and the Native American Heritage Commission indicated that there are no known sacred lands in the project vicinity. Therefore, no impact to tribal cultural resources would occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

With implementation of the County's Standard Conditions typical for a construction project, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts to cultural resources. Cumulative development in the community of Orcutt includes new residential units and commercial space, all of which are currently proposed, in process, approved, and/or under construction. Buildout of the Orcutt area would continue to urbanize this area and could result in impacts to cultural resources, including previously-unidentified archaeological resources. The Orcutt Community Plan EIR (County of Santa Barbara 1997a) identified potentially significant impacts to historic resources resulting from Orcutt Community Plan buildout due to

construction of structures, roadways, utility lines, and parks on historic sites. The Orcutt Community Plan EIR also identified potentially significant impacts to archaeological resources resulting from Orcutt Community Plan buildout due to destruction of pre-historic resources resulting from surface and subsurface grading, as well as increased incidents of pilferage and vandalism. The potential cultural resources impacts of each project would be addressed on a case-by-case basis as individual projects are reviewed by County decision-makers. Implementation of County policies and development standards related to cultural resources such as Orcutt Community Plan Policies OT-O-1, HA-O-1, and HA-O-2 and Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element Historical and Archaeological Sites Policies 1 through 5 would minimize these potential cumulative impacts. Therefore, cumulative cultural resources impacts would be potentially significant, but the project's contribution to such impacts would not be considerable and would therefore be less than significant.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.6 ENERGY

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Substantial increase in demand, especially during peak periods, upon existing sources of energy?				✓	
b. Requirement for the development or extension of new sources of energy?				✓	

Existing Setting:

PG&E and Southern California Gas provide electric and natural gas services, respectively, to Orcutt. The project site is located in the North County Lighting District, and currently, several streetlights are located within the County rights-of-way along Union Valley Parkway and Brookside Avenue. Motor vehicle fuels such as gasoline and diesel are consumed by vehicles traveling along local roadways, including Union Valley Parkway and Brookside Avenue.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) do not contain significance thresholds for energy impacts. Therefore, this analysis is based on the two questions in the table above, as well as the following checklist questions from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines:

1. Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?
2. Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Impact Discussion:

a, b. **No impact.** The following subsections discuss energy consumption by project construction and operation.

Short-term Construction Energy Demand

Project construction would require energy resources primarily in the form of fuel consumption to operate heavy equipment, light-duty vehicles, machinery, and generators. Temporary grid power may also be provided to construction trailers or electric construction equipment. CalEEMod version 2020.4.0 was used to estimate energy demand based on project data, locally appropriate industry-standard assumptions, and CalEEMod default values for projects in Santa Barbara County when project specifics were not known (see Section 4.3a, *Air Quality*, for modeling assumptions). Table 10 summarizes the anticipated energy consumption from construction equipment and vehicles, including construction worker trips to and from the project site. As shown therein, construction of the project would require approximately 835 gallons of gasoline and 43,106 gallons of diesel fuel. Energy use during construction would be temporary in nature, and construction equipment used would be typical of similar-sized construction projects in the region. Furthermore, in the interest of cost efficiency, construction contractors would not utilize fuel in a manner that is wasteful or unnecessary. Table 10 summarizes the anticipated energy consumption from operational uses and as shown therein, energy use during operation of the proposed fire station would require approximately 1,776 gallons of gasoline and 294 gallons of diesel fuel. Therefore, project construction would not result in potentially significant environmental effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy. In addition, due to its temporary and short-term nature,

project construction would not result in a substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of energy or require the development or extension of new sources of energy. As such, no impact would occur.

Long-term Operational Energy Demand

Upon completion, the project would result in direct consumption of energy. Table 11 summarizes the anticipated energy consumption from operational uses and as shown therein, energy use during operation of the proposed project would require approximately 1,776 gallons of gasoline and 294 gallons of diesel fuel. As shown in Table 12, electricity and natural gas consumption during operation of the project would require approximately 147,662 kilowatt-hour per year (kWh/yr) of electricity and 139,320 metric million British thermal units per year (MMBTU/yr) of natural gas. As a result, the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in energy demand or require the development or extension of new sources of energy. Therefore, project operation would not result in potentially significant environmental effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy and the project would not conflict with any state or local plans for renewable energy and energy efficiency, such as the County's ECAP (2015a).

Table 10 Anticipated Proposed Project Construction Energy Use

	Fuel Consumption (Gallons)	
Source	**Gasoline**	**Diesel**
Construction Equipment and Hauling Trips	–	43,106
Construction Worker Vehicle Trips	835	–
See Attachment A for CalEEMod default values for fleet mix and average distance of travel, and Attachment C for energy calculation sheets.		

Table 11 Anticipated Proposed Project Operational Energy Use

	Fuel Consumption	
Source: Transportation Fuels	**Gallons**	**MMBtu**
Gasoline	1,776	195
Diesel	294	37
See Attachment A for CalEEMod default values for fleet mix and average distance of travel, and Attachment D for energy calculation sheets.		

Table 12 Electricity and Natural Gas Consumption

Energy Type	County	Provider (SoCal Edison/SoCal Gas)	California	Project Demand	Proportion of Provider Consumption	Proportion of Statewide Consumption
Electricity (GWh/yr)	Santa Barbara	80,913	279,402	0.148	0.0002%	0.0001%
Natural Gas (MMBtu/yr)	Santa Barbara	504,383,950	1,223,351,892	139,320	0.03%	0.01%
Source: California Energy Commission 2021 GWh/yr = gigawatt-hour per year; MMBtu/yr = metric million British thermal unit per year						

Cumulative Impacts:

Because the proposed project would have no impacts on energy resources, the proposed project combined with cumulative development would not contribute to cumulative impacts on the regional demand for energy.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.7 FIRE PROTECTION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Introduction of development into an existing high fire hazard area or exposure of people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				✓	
b. Project-caused high fire hazard?				✓	
c. Introduction of development into an area without adequate water pressure, fire hydrants or adequate access for firefighting?				✓	
d. 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?					
e. Introduction of development that will substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan, emergency evacuation plan, or fire prevention techniques such as controlled burns or backfiring in high fire hazard areas?				✓	
f. Development of structures beyond safe Fire Dept. response time?				✓	

Existing Setting:

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) does not identify the project site or vicinity as being located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (CAL FIRE 2008). The closest fire station is the Santa Barbara County Fire Station #21, located at 335 Union Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles southwest of the project site.

Predictions about the long-term effects of climate change in California include increased incidence of wildfires and a longer fire season due to drier conditions and warmer temperatures. Any increase in the number or severity of wildfires has the potential to impact resources to fight fires when they occur, particularly when the state experiences several wildfires simultaneously. Such circumstances place greater risk on development in high fire hazard areas.

Impact Discussion:

a-f. **No impact.** The proposed project includes construction of an approximately 8,600-s.f. fire station. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase the exposure of the public to increased fire hazard. County Fire Stations #21 and 26 currently serve the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley area, but currently do not meet the five-minute response time standard for all areas. The proposed project would improve fire department response times in the local area by constructing a fire station in close proximity to existing development, which would improve fire protection capacity as compared to baseline conditions. In addition, the proposed project would not require or hamper fire prevention activity or infrastructure; conversely, the proposed project would ultimately result in

the improved provision of fire protection services to the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley area west of U.S. 101. No impact would occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Implementation of the proposed project is not anticipated to result in a substantial change to the project site that would affect the level of fire hazards. In addition, the proposed project would ultimately result in the provision of improved fire protection services within the vicinity of the project site. Thus, the project would not contribute to cumulative impacts to fire protection.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.8 GEOLOGIC PROCESSES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Exposure to or production of unstable earth conditions such as landslides, earthquakes, liquefaction, soil creep, mudslides, ground failure (including expansive, compressible, collapsible soils), or similar hazards?			✓		
b. Disruption, displacement, compaction or overcovering of the soil by cuts, fills or extensive grading?			✓		
c. Exposure to or production of permanent changes in topography, such as bluff retreat or sea level rise?				✓	
d. The destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic, paleontologic or physical features?		✓			
e. Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?			✓		
f. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands or dunes, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river, or stream, or the bed of the ocean, or any bay, inlet or lake?				✓	
g. The placement of septic disposal systems in impermeable soils with severe constraints to disposal of liquid effluent?				✓	
h. Extraction of mineral or ore?				✓	
i. Excessive grading on slopes of over 20%?			✓		
j. Sand or gravel removal or loss of topsoil?			✓		
k. Vibrations, from short-term construction or long-term operation, which may affect adjoining areas?			✓		
l. Excessive spoils, tailings or over-burden?			✓		

Existing Setting:

The project site is situated within the Santa Maria Basin, north of the Santa Ynez Mountains, and north-northwest of the Santa Ynez River Valley in the southern Coast Ranges, one of 11 major geomorphic provinces in California (California Geological Survey 2002). The Coast Ranges extend 600 miles from the Oregon border to the Santa Ynez and Big Pine faults in Santa Barbara County. The Coast Ranges are characterized by north-south trending peaks and valleys that range in elevation from 500 feet above mean sea level (amsl) to 7,581 feet amsl at the highest summit (Norris and Webb 1990). The basement rocks of the southern Coast Ranges include the Jurassic to Cretaceous metasedimentary and metavolcanic rocks of the Franciscan Assemblage and Knoxville Formation. During the Cenozoic, the area of the present-day Coast Ranges was covered by seawater and a thick deposit of marine to nonmarine shale, sandstone, and conglomerate accumulated on the Franciscan basement rock (Norris and Webb 1990). Later, during the late Miocene to Pliocene, a mountain-building episode occurred in the vicinity of the present-day Coast Ranges, resulting in their uplift above sea level. During that time, the Santa Maria Basin formed due to the interaction of tectonic plates along the west coast, and a thick sequence of predominantly Miocene to

Pliocene sediments accumulated unconformably over the Cretaceous bedrock. Subsequently, from the late Pliocene to Pleistocene, extensive deposits of terrestrial alluvial fan and fluvial sediments were deposited in the Coast Ranges (Dibblee and Ehrenspeck 1989; Norris and Webb 1990; Tennyson 1992).

According to the geologic mapping by Dibblee and Ehrenspeck (1989) and Tennyson (1992), the project site is immediately underlain by Quaternary young (Holocene) dune sand deposits (Qd, Qos). Formed by the prevailing northwesterly winds, these Quaternary sand deposits were deposited during the Holocene to latest Pleistocene epochs and are comprised of weakly consolidated, well-sorted fine sand. According to Woodring and Bramlette (1950), three age sets of dunes (old, intermediate, and modern) are present within the Santa Maria Basin, creating generally parallel belts succeeding one another inland in order of increasing age. The modern dune deposits are considered active and are bare or have sparse, scattered vegetation. The intermediate dunes are moderately anchored by vegetation and are perfectly preserved. Overlapped by the intermediate and modern dunes, the old dunes are anchored by vegetation and are mostly poorly preserved. These older dune deposits are the most extensive of the three groups because they also consist of deposits derived from Orcutt Sand.

Quaternary old (Pleistocene) Orcutt Sand deposits are not mapped at the surface of the project site but they may be present at moderate or unknown depths beneath Quaternary young (Holocene) dune deposits (Qd, Qos). Quaternary old (Pleistocene) Orcutt Sand deposits are composed of poorly sorted marine terrace sand and gravel with deposits of tan to brown eolian wind-blown sand, silty clay, and marl.

Paleontological Sensitivity

The paleontological sensitivity of the geologic units that underlie the project site was evaluated using the results of a paleontological locality search and review of existing information in the scientific literature concerning known fossils within those geologic units. Rincon examined fossil collections records from the Paleobiology Database and University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) online database, which contains known fossil localities in Santa Barbara County.

Following the literature review, a paleontological sensitivity classification was assigned to the geologic units within the project site. The potential for impacts to significant paleontological resources is based on the potential for ground disturbance to directly impact paleontologically sensitive geologic units. The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP; 2010) developed a system for assessing paleontological sensitivity and classifies sedimentary rock units as having high, low, undetermined, or no potential for containing scientifically significant nonrenewable paleontological resources. This criterion is based on rock units within which vertebrate or significant invertebrate fossils have been determined by previous studies to be present or likely to be present.

Quaternary young (Holocene) dune sand deposits (Qd, Qos) mapped at the surface of the project site have been assigned a low paleontological sensitivity because Holocene sedimentary deposits, particularly those younger than 5,000 years old, are generally too young to contain fossilized material. In addition, no fossils have been reported from Holocene dune sand deposits (Paleobiology Database 2021; Woodring and Bramlette 1950; UCMP 2021). However, the Quaternary young (Holocene) dune sand deposits may grade downward into Quaternary old (Pleistocene) Orcutt Sand deposits (Qo) at moderate or unknown depths within the project site.

Accurately assessing the boundaries between younger and older units within the project site is generally not possible without site-specific stratigraphic data, some form of radiometric dating, or fossil analysis, so conservative estimates of the depth at which paleontologically sensitive units may occur reduces potential for impacts to paleontological resources. Based on the project site's proximity to exposures of Quaternary old (Pleistocene) Orcutt Sand and alluvial deposits of Pleistocene-age (i.e., Qoa) and existing site conditions, Rincon estimates the transition between younger and older units in the project area likely to occur at depths exceeding 10 feet below ground surface.

As the oldest and most extensive terrace deposits in the vicinity, Quaternary old (Pleistocene) Orcutt Sand has yielded several invertebrate fossil specimens near the project site, including specimens of freshwater mollusk and ostracod. Quaternary old (Pleistocene) Orcutt Sand has also produced an incomplete femur of a camelid (*Camelops*) and a tapir tooth that was collected along Corralitos Canyon, approximately nine miles northwest of the project site (Woodring and Bramlette 1950). Therefore, Quaternary old (Pleistocene) Orcutt Sand deposits are assigned a high paleontological sensitivity, in accordance with SVP guidelines (2010). Therefore, the paleontological sensitivity of Quaternary dune sand deposits within the project area is determined to be low to high, increasing below depths of 10 feet.

County Environmental Thresholds:

Pursuant to the County Environmental Thresholds (2021a), impacts related to geological resources may have the potential to be significant if the project involves any of the following characteristics:

1. The project site is located on land having substantial geologic constraints, as determined by the Planning and Development Department or the Public Works Department. Areas constrained by geology include parcels located near active or potentially active faults and property underlain by rock types associated with compressible/collapsible soils or susceptible to landslides or severe erosion. "Special Problems" areas designated by the Board of Supervisors have been established based on geologic constraints, flood hazards and other physical limitations to development.
2. The project results in potentially hazardous geologic conditions such as the construction of cut slopes exceeding a grade of 1.5 horizontal to 1 vertical.
3. The project proposes construction of a cut slope over 15 feet in height as measured from the lowest finished grade.
4. The project is located on slopes exceeding 20 percent grade.

Impact Discussion:

a. **Less than significant.** No major faults traverse the project site, and no Alquist-Priolo fault zones exist on or near the site (DOC 2021a). The project site also has low potential to experience high groundwater levels and compressible and/or collapsible soils (County of Santa Barbara 1979a and 1979b, respectively). Therefore, the risk of ground surface rupture and related hazards on the site is low. Nonetheless, the site is in a seismically active region and is subject to shaking from both local and distant earthquakes.

   The proposed project would involve construction and operation of a fire station at the western terminus of Brookside Avenue, adjacent to Union Valley Parkway. The project site is located within an area rated as "low to moderate" on the geological problems index. The project site also has low potential to experience liquefaction, soil creep, slope instability/landslides, and expansive soils and moderate potential to experience seismic tectonic activity, high groundwater levels, and compressible and/or collapsible soils (County of Santa Barbara 2015c). Therefore, although the proposed project may be exposed to fault rupture, the proposed fire station would not increase the potential for fault rupture and related hazards, such as landslides, liquefaction, soil creep, mudslides, ground failure (including expansive, compressible, collapsible soils), or similar hazards, to occur. In addition, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with mandatory federal, state, and local laws, policies, regulations, and engineering/construction codes that guide the design of buildings, such as the California Building Standards Code. Therefore, impacts related to unstable earth conditions under the proposed project would be less than significant.

b. **Less than significant.** The proposed project involve the construction and operation of a fire station. The proposed project would include balanced grading on site with a maximum depth of soil cut of 10 feet. Although it may cause disruption, displacement, compaction, or overcovering of existing soils on the site by cuts, fills, or grading, such earthwork would not be extensive, and any impacts from such

construction activities would not be significant. In addition, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with mandatory federal, state, and local laws, policies, regulations, and engineering/construction codes that guide the design of buildings, such as the California Building Standards Code. Therefore, impacts related to the proposed project would be less than significant.

c. **No impact.** The site is located approximately 12 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean, and implementation of the proposed project would not increase public exposure to bluff retreat or sea level rise. There would be some localized changes in topography associated with the grading required for the project; however, no substantial changes to topography would occur. Therefore, no impact would occur.

d. **Less than significant with mitigation.** As previously stated, surface geology within the project site consists of Quaternary young (Holocene) dune sand deposits (Qd, Qos) deposits. Such geologic deposits are not considered unique or likely to contain paleontological resources. In addition, the project area does not contain physical features, such as rock outcroppings, that are considered unique.

   As discussed under *Existing Setting*, Quaternary young (Holocene) dune sand deposits mapped at the surface of the project site have been assigned a low paleontological sensitivity, in accordance with SVP guidelines (2010). However, Quaternary young (Holocene) dune sand deposits may grade downward into fossil-bearing sediments of Quaternary old (Pleistocene) Orcutt Sand (Qo), which are considered to have a high paleontological sensitivity, at depths exceeding 10 feet below ground surface. Project ground disturbance associated with the proposed fire station would not be expected to extend below depths of 10 feet. Given the nature of the proposed improvements and existing site conditions, project-related ground disturbance (i.e., excavations) is unlikely to impact fossiliferous deposits. Although project implementation is not expected to uncover paleontological resources, a possibility for such resources to be uncovered exists, and therefore, potentially significant impacts could occur related to unknown paleontological resources. Implementation of Mitigation Measure Geo-01 (see below) would reduce potentially significant impacts to paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level.

e. **Less than significant.** The majority of the project site is currently undeveloped land covered primarily with low-lying vegetation (e.g., shrubs and grasses) and a eucalyptus grove in the northwestern portion of the site. The project would include grading of 30 percent slopes for the two proposed driveways along Union Valley Parkway; however, such grading would not be considered substantial hillside grading given the relatively small area. Potential erosion associated with stormwater flows during construction of the proposed project would be adequately addressed by the County's standard erosion control and drainage requirements (see Section 4.15, *Water Resources/Flooding*). In addition, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with mandatory federal, state, and local laws, policies, regulations, and engineering/construction codes that guide the design of buildings, such as the California Building Standards Code, to ensure no significant impacts to water quality due to potential soil erosion during construction or operation of the project. Such measures would include compliance of on-site construction activities with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) California State Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-2009-DWQ, as amended) because project construction would disturb more than one acre of land. Compliance with the NPDES California State Construction General Permit would require the creation and implementation of a project-specific SWPPP, which would include best management practices (BMPs) to prevent stormwater pollution and would address erosion and sediment discharge during construction. Inspections would be conducted on the project site once every seven calendar days, or once every 14 calendar days and within 24 hours of a 0.25-inch storm event. Furthermore, the project site is within the County's NPDES Municipal General Permit area and is subject to the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) post construction requirements (County of Santa Barbara 2019). With regulatory compliance, potential impacts associated with construction of the proposed project to water quality would be less than significant.

f. **No impact.** The site is located approximately 12 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean and there are no nearby surface water bodies. As a result, the proposed project would not result in deposition or erosion of beach sands or dunes or changes in siltation, deposition, or erosion that may modify surface water bodies. No impact would occur.

g. **No impact.** The proposed project would not include septic disposal systems. No impact would occur.

h. **No impact.** The proposed project would not include the extraction of mineral or ore. No such activities currently occur on the site. No impact would occur.

i. **Less than significant.** The project site does not contain slopes exceeding 20 percent that could potentially be impacted by the proposed project. However, the slope between the project site and Union Valley Parkway exceeds 20 percent. The proposed project would include grading of 30 percent slopes for the two driveways along Union Valley Parkway; however, such grading would not be considered substantial hillside grading given the relatively small area. Therefore, the proposed project would not include excessive grading on slopes of over 20 percent. Impacts would be less than significant.

j. **Less than significant.** The proposed project would not involve sand or gravel removal. Potential soil erosion associated with stormwater flows during the future construction of the proposed project would be adequately addressed by the County's standard erosion control and drainage requirements (see Section 4.15, *Water Resources/Flooding*). In addition, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with mandatory federal, state, and local laws, policies, regulations, and engineering/construction codes that guide the design of buildings, such as the California Building Standards Code, to ensure no significant impacts to water quality due to soil erosion during construction and operation of the project. Such measures would include implementation of a project-specific SWPPP and water quality management plan. Nonetheless, construction of the proposed project would result in the loss of topsoil on the project site. Due to the relatively small area to be affected, this impact would be less than significant. Once operational, the fire station would not involve activities that would result in the loss of topsoil. This impact would be less than significant.

k. **Less than significant.** Construction of the proposed project would involve operating heavy, earth moving equipment during construction that would create vibration. According to Caltrans, residential structures can allow vibration levels anywhere from 0.2 to 0.5 inch and distinctively perceptible vibration by humans is 0.24 inch per second (Caltrans 2004). The County of Santa Barbara utilizes a vibration threshold of 0.2 inch per second for assessing the damage to residential structures (County of Santa Barbara 2021a). Construction of the proposed project would involve heavy equipment during construction that would create vibration, such as the vibratory roller that would likely be used for paving. Residential uses exist in the vicinity of the study area, which are vibration-sensitive receivers (County of Santa Barbara 2021a). The greatest anticipated source of vibration during general project construction activities would be from a dozer, which may be used within 25 feet of the nearest off-site structures to the east when accounting for setbacks. A dozer would create approximately 0.089 inch per second peak particle velocity (PPV) at a distance of 25 feet (Federal Transit Administration [FTA] 2018). This would be lower than what is considered a distinctly perceptible impact for humans of 0.24 inch per second PPV, and the structural damage impact of 0.4 inch per second PPV. Therefore, although a dozer may be perceptible to nearby human receptors, temporary impacts associated with the dozer (and other potential equipment) would be less than significant. Once operational, the proposed project would not involve activities that would generate substantial vibration.

l. **Less than significant.** The site is located within an area rated as "low to moderate" on the geological problems index (County of Santa Barbara 2015c). The proposed project would require some excavation and contouring; however, such earthwork would not be considered substantial excavation or import/export of soils as earthwork would be balanced on site with a maximum soil cut depth of 10 feet. In addition, the proposed fire station would be constructed in accordance with mandatory federal, state, and local laws, policies, regulations, and engineering/construction codes that guide

building design and construction. Therefore, impacts related to spoils, tailings, or over-burden would be less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts:

Since the proposed project would not result in significant geologic impacts and geologic impacts are typically localized in nature, impacts on geologic hazards under the proposed project would not be cumulatively considerable.

The sites of the cumulative projects likely vary in paleontological sensitivity, and there is a potential for discovery of unknown paleontological resources during construction of all cumulative projects. Although the first 10 feet below ground surface of the proposed fire station site has been assigned a low paleontological sensitivity, there is a potential that unknown paleontological resources may be encountered during project construction. Implementation of Mitigation Measure Geo-01 would reduce potentially significant impacts to paleontological resources associated with the proposed project to a less-than-significant level by halting construction activities if paleontological resources are discovered and preparing, identifying, analyzing, and permanently curating any significant resources. However, potentially significant impacts to such resources would be minimized by requiring cumulative projects to by implementation of similar measures. Therefore, cumulative cultural resources impacts could be potentially significant, but the project's contribution to such impacts would not be considerable and would therefore be less than significant.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

The proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts to paleontological resources. Implementation of Mitigation Measure Geo-01 would reduce the potential for impacts to unanticipated fossils present on site by providing for the recovery, identification, and curation of paleontological resources. With implementation of the following measure, potential impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level:

MM Geo-01 Unanticipated Discovery of Paleontological Resources

In the event an unanticipated fossil discovery is made during project development, construction activity shall be halted in the immediate vicinity of the fossil, and a qualified professional paleontologist shall be notified and retained to evaluate the discovery, determine its significance, and determine if additional mitigation or treatment is warranted. Work in the area of the discovery shall resume once the find is properly documented and authorization is given to resume construction work. Any significant paleontological resources found during construction shall be prepared, identified, analyzed, and permanently curated in an approved regional museum repository under the oversight of the qualified paleontologist.

Plan Requirements and Timing. The qualified paleontologist shall evaluate any unanticipated fossil discovery made during ground-disturbing activities on the project site. The find shall be properly documented, and the findings shall be reported to the County. Construction activities shall resume once the paleontologist approves such. Any significant paleontological resources found during construction monitoring shall be prepared, identified, analyzed, and permanently curated in an approved regional museum repository under the oversight of the qualified paleontologist.

Monitoring. The County and/or qualified paleontologist shall monitor compliance with the above avoidance and minimization measures.

4.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/RISK OF UPSET

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. In the known history of this property, have there been any past uses, storage or discharge of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel or oil stored in underground tanks, pesticides, solvents or other chemicals)?			✓		
b. The use, storage or distribution of hazardous or toxic materials?			✓		
c. A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (e.g., oil, gas, biocides, bacteria, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?			✓		
d. Possible interference with an emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?				✓	
e. The creation of a potential public health hazard?			✓		
f. Public safety hazards (e.g., due to development near chemical or industrial activity, producing oil wells, toxic disposal sites, etc.)?				✓	
g. Exposure to hazards from oil or gas pipelines or oil well facilities?				✓	
h. The contamination of a public water supply?			✓		

The following impact discussion is based, in part, on a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment conducted by Rincon (2020 and 2021c, respectively). These reports are included in full as Attachments E and F, respectively.

Existing Setting:

Based on review of the GeoTracker (State Water Resources Control Board 2021), EnviroStor (California Department of Toxic Substances Control 2021), and EnviroMapper for Envirofacts (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2021) databases, no hazardous material sites or leaking underground storage tanks are located on the project site. In addition, according to a site reconnaissance conducted on April 15, 2020, no hazardous materials were identified on the site, including above and below ground storge tanks, noxious odors, pools of liquid, drums, hazardous substances, and petroleum products. However, the site contains trash/debris, metal pipes labeled “warning Gas Pipeline” and two gas pipeline markers that were interpreted to be natural gas pipelines. A soil vapor sampling was conducted on site, which determined that volatile organic compounds (VOCs), total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline (TPHg), and methane were not detected above laboratory reporting limits.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County’s safety threshold addresses involuntary public exposure from projects involving significant quantities of hazardous materials. The threshold addresses the likelihood and severity of potential accidents to determine whether the safety risks of a project exceed significant levels.

Impact Discussion:

a, e. **Less than significant impact.** The project site is currently vacant, and Google Earth historic aerial imagery shows the site has been vacant and undeveloped land since at least 1985. Parcels adjacent to the project site are currently designated as residential uses. As discussed under *Existing Setting*, no hazardous materials were identified on the site. Natural gas pipelines occur underground on site. However, soil vapor sampling results indicate the site has not been affected by the natural gas pipelines.

Construction of the proposed fire station would include the use of typical hazardous materials, such as diesel, oil, and other lubricants for the construction equipment. However, storage and use of such materials would be conducted in compliance with typical construction BMPs. Operation of the fire station would likely include the use and storage of gasoline, diesel, oil, and other lubricants for the fire trucks and equipment, as well as herbicides and pesticides for landscape maintenance, and limited quantities of paint, cleansers, and oxygen as part of their normal operations. These hazardous materials would be used, stored, and disposed of as directed by manufacturers' guidelines and requirements. Therefore, the project would not result in a public health hazard, and impacts would be less than significant.

b, c, h. **Less than significant.** Operation of the fire station would likely include the use and storage of oil and other lubricants for the fire trucks and equipment, as well as herbicides and pesticides for landscape maintenance, and limited quantities of paint, cleansers, and oxygen as part of their normal operations. The quantities of these materials are small enough that a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) would not be required. In addition, the project would include one or two aboveground fuel tanks for the storage of up to 250 gallons of gasoline and up to 1,000 gallons of diesel (if only one fuel tank would be on the site, the tank with be bifurcated to hold both gasoline and diesel). The SBCFD is responsible for regulating and permitting aboveground fuel storage. Due to the small quantity of hazardous materials used in daily fire station operations, as well as SBCFD regulatory and permit requirements for aboveground fuel storage, the potential risk to the public and the environment resulting from accidental release of such materials would be less than significant.

d. **No Impact.** The proposed project would involve construction of a new fire station in the community of Orcutt and would therefore improve emergency access and the response time of fire protection services at the project site. By constructing a new fire station in the area, the project would also have a beneficial impact on the implementation of emergency response plans. No impact would occur.

f, g. **No impact.** The proposed project would not include new development near land uses that rely on the use of hazardous materials, such as chemical or industrial activity, producing oil wells, or toxic disposal sites. Furthermore, no oil or gas wells, other oil production facilities, or oil or gas pipelines are located on or adjacent to the project site. Based on the DOC Well Finder application, the nearest recorded oil and gas wells are located 800 feet to the south of the project site (DOC 2021c). No impact would occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Implementation of the proposed project would not potentially result in significant impacts related to hazardous materials during construction. In addition, soil samples taken at the project site concluded safe levels of VOCs, TPHg, and methane occur on site and no mitigation is required. The proposed fire station would improve emergency services response times to the Santa Maria Valley/Orcutt area after construction of the project is completed. The proposed project would also comply with applicable federal, State, and local laws and regulations regarding hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts associated with hazardous materials/risk of upset from the proposed project would not be cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.10 LAND USE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Structures and/or land use incompatible with existing land use?				✓	
b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			✓		
c. The induction of substantial growth or concentration of population?			✓		
d. The extension of sewer trunk lines or access roads with capacity to serve new development beyond this proposed project?			✓		
e. Loss of existing affordable dwellings through demolition, conversion or removal?				✓	
f. Displacement of substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓	
g. Displacement of substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓	
h. The loss of a substantial amount of open space?				✓	
i. An economic or social effect that would result in a physical change? (i.e. Closure of a freeway ramp results in isolation of an area, businesses located in the vicinity close, neighborhood degenerates, and buildings deteriorate. Or, if construction of new freeway divides an existing community, the construction would be the physical change, but the economic/social effect on the community would be the basis for determining that the physical change would be significant.)				✓	
j. Conflicts with adopted airport safety zones?				✓	

Existing Setting:

The project site is located at the western terminus of Brookside Avenue, directly north of Union Valley Parkway. The project site currently consists of undeveloped land and contains a portion of the Orcutt Open Space Area. The project site is primarily surrounded by urban land uses, which include residential uses to the north and east, and residential and recreational/open space uses to the south and west.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) contain no specific thresholds for land use. Generally, a potentially significant impact can occur if a project would result in substantial growth-inducing effects or

result in a physical change in conflict with County policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Impact Discussion:

a. **No impact**. The proposed project involves construction and operation of a fire station that would be constructed on a vacant parcel zoned as Design Residential 3.3 (DR-3.3) with a land use designation of RES-3.3 (Residential). The proposed project is considered an allowable land use within this zone and land use designation. Additionally, the project would not be incompatible with the nearby residential area directly east of the project site, as discussed in Section 4.1, *Aesthetics/Visual Resources*. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b. **Less than significant with mitigation**. As discussed in the following subsections, with the implementation of mitigation measures, the proposed project would be consistent with all plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of mitigating an environmental effect, including the County's Comprehensive Plan and the Orcutt Community Plan. The project would be designed in accordance with the County's Engineering Design Standards, and land use and zoning standards.

Agricultural Resources

As discussed in Section 4.2, *Agricultural Resources*, the project site is zoned Design Residential (DR-3.3). The project site has low agricultural suitability and productivity. The proposed project is classified as urban and built up land by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Because the project would not be built on farmland and has low agriculture suitability, there would be no effect on agricultural production or viability. Therefore, the proposed project would not convert prime agricultural soil to non-agricultural use, impair agricultural land or productivity, or conflict with agricultural preserve programs. Therefore, the project would be consistent with Policy LUA-O-2 of the Orcutt Community Plan and Goal I, Policy IA, Goal II, Policy II.D, and Goal III of the Agricultural Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Air Quality

As discussed in Section 4.3a, *Air Quality*, the project construction activities would be subject to the County's grading ordinance to minimize fugitive dust and associated impacts to air quality the proposed project. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on the violation of any ambient air quality standard, a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, or exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (emissions from direct, indirect, mobile, and stationary sources) and extensive dust generation with implementation Mitigation Measure Air-01. Therefore, with mitigation, the proposed project would be consistent with Policy AQ-O-2 of the Orcutt Community Plan.

Biological Resources

As discussed in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, the proposed project may result in direct and indirect impacts to special status wildlife species, nesting birds, and native trees. Implementation of Mitigation Measures Bio-01 through Bio-04 would require measures for surveys, and native tree replacement, which would reduce biological resources impacts to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, with mitigation, the project would be consistent with Policy BIO-O-3, DevStd BIO-O-3.1, Policy BIO-O-4, DevStd BIO-O-4.1, Policy BIO-O-5, and DevStd BIO-O-5.1 of the Orcutt Community Plan.

Energy

As discussed in Section 4.6, *Energy*, construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in demand on existing sources of energy and would not require the development or extension of new sources of energy. In addition, the project, which would be a governmental facility, would be required to comply with Goal 1 and Policy 1.3 of the Energy Element of the County's Comprehensive Plan, which promotes such facilities to be energy efficient.

Flooding and Drainage

As discussed in Section 4.15, *Water Resources/Flooding*, the proposed project would include drainage improvements consistent with the Central Coast RWCQB's post-construction stormwater management requirements and would follow relevant performance requirements. The project would be constructed in accordance with mandatory federal, State, and local laws, policies, and regulations, which would require implementation of a project-specific SWPPP that would address erosion, sediment discharge, and water quality and pollution control during all phases of construction through implementation of BMPs. In addition, implementation of Mitigation Measure Wat-01 would be required to address operational impacts to water quality through implementation of a Post-Construction Stormwater Control Plan. Therefore, with mitigation, the project would be consistent with Policy FLD-O-2, DevStd FLD-O-2.1, Policy FLD-O-3, DevStd FLD-O-3.1, and DevStd FLD-O-3.2 of the Orcutt Community Plan and Hillside and Watershed Protection Policies 1 through 7 of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Historical and Archaeological Resources

As discussed in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*, the cultural resources records search did not identify any cultural resources within or near the cultural study area and the pedestrian survey did not identify resources that indicate archaeological remains. Furthermore, the proposed project would be required to implement a standard condition of approval to stop work in the event archaeological remains are encountered during grading, construction, or other construction-related activities, which would reduce potential impacts to previously-unidentified archaeological resources to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with Historical and Archaeological Sites Policies 2, 3, and 5 of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Noise

As discussed in Section 4.11, *Noise*, project construction activities would potentially result in temporarily elevated noise levels in excess of the County's noise threshold of 65 CNEL at sensitive receivers to the east of the project site where residences exist on Brookside Avenue. Implementation of Mitigation Measure N-01 would restrict construction activities to standard construction working hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekdays and would require the use of noise attenuation measures such as barriers and mufflers to reduce construction noise to below the County's threshold. Therefore, with mitigation, the proposed project would be consistent with Policy NSE-O-2, DevStd NSE-O-2.1, and DevStd NSE-O-2.2 of the Orcutt Community Plan.

Seismic Safety and Safety Element

As discussed in Section 4.6, *Geologic Processes*, the proposed project would not increase the potential for fault rupture and related hazards, such as landslides, liquefaction, soil creep, mudslides, ground failure (including expansive, compressible, collapsible soils), or similar hazards to occur. In addition, the proposed fire station would be constructed in accordance with mandatory federal, State, and local laws, policies, regulations, and engineering/construction codes that guide the construction and design of buildings and structures. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the geologic and seismic goals and policies of the Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Visual/Aesthetic Resources

As discussed in Section 4.1, *Aesthetics/Visual Resources*, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to scenic vistas, public view corridors, public viewsheds, or the visual character of the project area. Therefore, the project would be consistent with Policy VIS-O-2, DevStd VIS-O-2.1, and Policy VIS-O-4 of the Orcutt Community Plan.

Key Site 27 Development Standards

The project site is located within Key Site 27. Of the Key Site 27 development standards included in the Orcutt Community Plan, Policy KS27-1, DevStd KS27-1, and DevStd KS27-2 would apply to the project. The Airport "No Build Zone" is not overlain on the project site (County of Santa Barbara 2021f) and the proposed fire station would not be built within the Orcutt Open Space Area. Landscaping would be incorporated into the project design. Therefore, the project would be consistent with Policy KS27-1, DevStd KS27-1, and DevStd KS27-2 of the Orcutt Community Plan, which address development standards.

c. **Less than significant.** A development project can induce growth by removing existing constraints to growth, such as by extending roadways and utility infrastructure to previously unserved areas. In assessing the potential growth inducement of a proposed project, it is important to clearly identify growth induced by the project beyond that already anticipated and planned for by local land use agencies.

The project involves construction and operation of a local fire station that would improve emergency response time and the provision of fire protection services to the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley area. As described in Section 1.2, *Project Objective*, the purpose of the project is to improve safety and emergency response time in the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley Area.

The project would generate a small number of new job opportunities that would likely be filled by people from the local region and would not result in a substantial relocation of people to the project area. Currently, the two county fire stations serving the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley area, Fire Stations 21 and 26 are operated by four staff members each. In addition, the Orcutt Community Plan states a total of nine additional full-time fire fighters will be required by buildout of the plan.

Therefore, the proposed project would not induce substantial growth or concentration of population beyond what was considered in the Orcutt Community Plan Area, and impacts would be less than significant.

e-g. **No impact.** No dwellings adjoin or exist on the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not displace or otherwise affect existing dwellings or people. No impact would occur.

h. **No impact**. A portion of the project site is part of the Orcutt Open Space Area; however, grading and construction for the project would not encroach into this area. Therefore, no impact would occur.

i. **No impact.** The proposed project involves a fire station that would improve safety and emergency response time to the Orcutt and Santa Maria Valley area. Therefore, the project would not result in any social or economic effects that would cause a physical change in the local community. No impact would occur.

j. **Less than significant**. The project site is located approximately 1.4 miles southeast of Santa Maria Airport Runway 30 and is within the Airport Approach Zone (F[APR]) (SBCAG 1993); however, the project site is outside the Airport No Build Zone. According to the County of Santa Barbara Land Use and Development Code, the Airport Clear and Approach zones are land uses that extend from the end of a runway and are subject to particular hazards requiring land use restrictions to promote public safety and preserve navigable airspace. According to subsection F.1(a) of the Land

Use Code 35.28.060-Airport Approach (F) Overlay Zone, the highest point of any structure above the elevation of Runway 30 shall not exceed one vertical foot per 34 feet of horizontal distance between the structure and the runway end. The fire station is 1.4 miles away from the end of Runway 30, is within the F(APR), and would have a maximum building height of 32 feet. The project would not interfere with any adopted airport safety zones, and impacts would be less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts:

With mitigation from this IS-MND incorporated, implementation of the project is not anticipated to result in a substantial change to the site's conformance with environmentally protective policies and standards or have significant growth-inducing effects. Buildout of the Orcutt area would continue to urbanize this community and result in additional loss of open space areas. The Orcutt Community Plan EIR, Case No, 95-EIR-01 (1997b), identified potentially significant impacts resulting from Orcutt Community Plan buildout due to increased regional traffic, economic fiscal impacts, conversion of agricultural land, and urbanization of rural and semi-rural areas. Cumulative development in the Orcutt area would also result in short-term construction air and noise emissions, and long-term land use compatibility effects related to quality of life issues, noise and traffic nuisances, aesthetic incompatibility, and agriculture/urban conflicts. The potential land use conflicts of each cumulative project would be addressed on a case-by-case basis as individual projects are reviewed by County decision-makers. Implementation of County policies and development standards related to land use in the Orcutt Community Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and Land Use Development Code would minimize these potential cumulative impacts. Therefore, cumulative land use impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

The proposed project could result in a potentially significant land use impact due to impacts to air quality, biological resources, noise, and water quality. With implementation of Mitigation Measures Air-01 (see Section 4.3a, *Air Quality*), Bio-01 through Bio-04 (see Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*), N-01 (see Section 4.11, *Noise*), and Wat-01 (see Section 4.15, *Water Resources/Flooding*), impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

4.11 NOISE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Long-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds (e.g. locating noise sensitive uses next to an airport)?			✓		
b. Short-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds?		✓			
c. Project-generated substantial increase in the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas (either day or night)?			✓		

Existing Setting:

Overview of Noise and Vibration

Noise

Sound is a vibratory disturbance created by a moving or vibrating source, which is capable of being detected by the hearing organs. Noise is defined as sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected, or undesired and may therefore be classified as a more specific group of sounds. The effects of noise on people can include general annoyance, interference with speech communication, sleep disturbance, and, in the extreme, hearing impairment (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] 2013).

Human Perception of Sound

Noise levels are commonly measured in decibels (dB) using the A-weighted sound pressure level (dBA). The A-weighting scale is an adjustment to the actual sound pressure levels so they are consistent with the human hearing response. Decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale that quantifies sound intensity in a manner similar to the Richter scale used to measure earthquake magnitudes. A doubling of the energy of a noise source, such as doubling of traffic volume, would increase the noise level by 3 dB; dividing the energy in half would result in a 3 dB decrease (Caltrans 2013).

Human perception of noise has no simple correlation with sound energy: the perception of sound is not linear in terms of dBA or in terms of sound energy. Two sources do not "sound twice as loud" as one source. It is widely accepted that the average healthy ear can barely perceive changes of 3 dBA, increase or decrease (i.e., twice the sound energy); that a change of 5 dBA is readily perceptible (8 times the sound energy); and that an increase (or decrease) of 10 dBA sounds twice (half) as loud (10.5 times the sound energy) (Caltrans 2013).

Sound Propagation and Shielding

Sound changes in both level and frequency spectrum as it travels from the source to the receiver. The most obvious change is the decrease in the noise level as the distance from the source increases. The manner by which noise reduces with distance depends on factors such as the type of sources (e.g., point or line), the path the sound will travel, site conditions, and obstructions.

Sound levels are described as either a "sound power level" or a "sound pressure level," which are two distinct characteristics of sound. Both share the same unit of measurement, the dB. However, sound power (expressed as Lpw) is the energy converted into sound by the source. As sound energy travels through the air, it creates a sound wave that exerts pressure on receivers, such as an eardrum or

microphone, which is the sound pressure level. Sound measurement instruments only measure sound pressure, and noise level limits are typically expressed as sound pressure levels.

Noise levels from a point source (e.g., construction, industrial machinery, air conditioning units) typically attenuate, or drop off, at a rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance. Noise from a line source (e.g., roadway, pipeline, railroad) typically attenuates at about 3 dBA per doubling of distance (Caltrans 2013). Noise levels may also be reduced by intervening structures; the amount of attenuation provided by this "shielding" depends on the size of the object and the frequencies of the noise levels. Natural terrain features, such as hills and dense woods, and man-made features, such as buildings and walls, can significantly alter noise levels. Generally, any large structure blocking the line of sight will provide at least a 5-dBA reduction in source noise levels at the receiver (FHWA 2011). Structures can substantially reduce exposure to noise as well. The FHWA's guidance indicates that modern building construction generally provides an exterior-to-interior noise level reduction of 10 dBA with open windows and an exterior-to-interior noise level reduction of 20 to 35 dBA with closed windows (FHWA 2011).

Descriptors

The impact of noise is not a function of loudness alone. The time of day when noise occurs and the duration of the noise are also important factors of project noise impact. Most noise that lasts for more than a few seconds is variable in its intensity. Consequently, a variety of noise descriptors have been developed. The noise descriptors used for this study are the equivalent noise level (L_{eq} and the community noise equivalent level (CNEL; may also be symbolized as L_{den}).

L_{eq} is one of the most frequently used noise metrics; it considers both duration and sound power level. The L_{eq} is defined as the single steady-state A weighted sound level equal to the average sound energy over a time period. When no time period is specified, a 1-hour period is assumed. The L_{max} is the highest noise level within the sampling period, and the L_{min} is the lowest noise level within the measuring period. Normal conversational levels are in the 60 to 65 dBA Leq range; ambient noise levels greater than 65 dBA L_{eq} can interrupt conversations (Federal Transit Administration [FTA] 2018).

Noise that occurs at night tends to be more disturbing than that occurring during the day. Community noise can be measured using Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL or LDEN), which is the 24 hour average noise level with a +5 dBA penalty for noise occurring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and a +10 dBA penalty for noise occurring from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. (Caltrans 2013). The relationship between the peak-hour L_{eq} value and the LDN/CNEL depends on the distribution of noise during the day, evening, and night; however noise levels described by LDN and CNEL usually differ by 1 dBA or less. Quiet suburban areas typically have CNEL noise levels in the range of 40 to 50 CNEL, while areas near arterial streets are in the 50 to 60+ CNEL range (FTA 2018).

Groundborne Vibration

Groundborne vibration of concern in environmental analysis consists of the oscillatory waves that move from a source through the ground to adjacent buildings or structures and vibration energy may propagate through the buildings or structures. Vibration may be felt, may manifest as an audible low-frequency rumbling noise (referred to as groundborne noise), and may cause windows, items on shelves, and pictures on walls to rattle. Although groundborne vibration is sometimes noticeable in outdoor environments, it is almost never annoying to people who are outdoors. The primary concern from vibration is that it can be intrusive and annoying to building occupants at vibration-sensitive land uses and may cause structural damage.

Typically, ground-borne vibration generated by manmade activities attenuates rapidly as distance from the source of the vibration increases. Vibration amplitudes are usually expressed in peak particle velocity (PPV) or root mean squared (RMS) vibration velocity. The PPV and RMS velocity are normally described in inches per second (in/sec). PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or

negative peak of a vibration signal. PPV is often used as it corresponds to the stresses that are experienced by buildings (FTA 2018).

High levels of groundborne vibration may cause damage to nearby building or structures; at lower levels, groundborne vibration may cause minor cosmetic (i.e. non-structural damage) such as cracks. These vibration levels are nearly exclusively associated with high impact activities such as blasting, pile-driving, vibratory compaction, demolition, drilling, or excavation. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has determined vibration levels with potential to damage nearby buildings and structures; these levels are identified in Table 13.

Table 13 AASHTO Maximum Vibration Levels for Preventing Damage

Type of Situation	Limiting Velocity (in/sec)
Historic sites or other critical locations	0.1
Residential buildings, plastered walls	0.2–0.3
Residential buildings in good repair with gypsum board walls	0.4–0.5
Engineered structures, without plaster	1.0–1.5
Source: Caltrans 2020	

Numerous studies have been conducted to characterize the human response to vibration. The vibration annoyance potential criteria recommended for use by Caltrans, which are based on the general human response to different levels of groundborne vibration velocity levels, are described in Table 14.

Table 14 Vibration Annoyance Potential Criteria

	Vibration Level (in/sec PPV)	
Human Response	Transient Sources	Continuous/Frequent Intermittent Sources[1]
Severe	2.0	0.4
Strongly perceptible	0.9	0.10
Distinctly perceptible	0.25	0.04
Barely perceptible	0.04	0.01
in/sec = inches per second; PPV = peak particle velocity Source: Caltrans 2020 [1] Continuous/frequent intermittent sources include impact pile drivers, pogo-stick compactors, crack-and-seat equipment, vibratory pile drivers, and vibratory compaction equipment.		

Project Noise Setting

The most prevalent source of noise in the project site vicinity is vehicular traffic on Union Valley Parkway, which runs adjacent to the southern portion of the project site. Santa Maria Public Airport aircraft over-flight noise is a secondary noise source in the project site vicinity. Ambient noise levels are generally highest during the daytime and rush hours unless congestion substantially slows speeds, which tends to reduce ambient noise levels.

Sensitive Receivers

The County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) state that noise-sensitive land uses include residential dwellings, transient lodging, hospitals, educational facilities, libraries, churches, and places of public assembly. Noise-sensitive land uses adjacent to the location of the proposed project consist of single-family residential land uses and open space. Single-family residential uses are also located across Union Valley Parkway, approximately 215 feet to the south, and multi-family residential uses are located

approximately 400 feet to the northwest. Most of the existing sensitive land uses in the immediate area are located north of Union Valley Parkway.

Noise Measurements

To characterize ambient noise levels at and near the project site, two short-term 15-minute sound level measurements were conducted on August 5, 2021, and one 24-hour measurement was conducted on August 5 and 6, 2021. An Extech, Model 407780A, ANSI Type 2 integrating sound level meter was used to conduct the measurements. The sound meter was calibrated prior to measurements. Noise Measurement (NM) 1 was conducted adjacent existing residences at the northeastern edge of the project site to represent noise levels at residential uses to the east of the project site. NM2 was conducted at the southern portion of the project site adjacent to Union Valley Parkway. Long-term Measurement (LT) 1 was measured at the project's northern portion of the site to capture 24-hour noise levels on-site nearest the off-site residences to the north of the project site. Figure 6 shows the measurement locations, Table 15 summarizes the results of the short-term noise measurements, and Table 16 summarizes the results of the long-term noise measurements.

Table 15 Project Site Noise Monitoring Results – Short Term

Measure-ment Location	**Measurement Location**	**Sample Times**	**Approximate Distance to Primary Noise Source**	**L_{eq} (dBA)**	**L_{min} (dBA)**	**L_{max} (dBA)**
NM1	Northeastern portion of project site, adjacent to residential backyard	12:09 – 12:24 p.m.	400 feet from East Union Valley Parkway	49	44	64
NM2	Southern portion of project site adjacent to East Union Valley Parkway	12:30 – 12:45 p.m.	60 feet from East Union Valley Parkway	67	47	78
Detailed sound level measurement data are included in Attachment G and shown on Figure 6. Traffic counts at NM2: 183 autos (90.6 percent), 1 medium truck (0.5 percent), 18 heavy trucks (8.9 percent)						

Table 16 Project Site Noise Monitoring Results – Long Term

Sample Time	dBA L_{eq}	Sample Time	dBA L_{eq}
LT1 – Northern Boundary of Project Site, August 5 and 6, 2021			
12:59 p.m.	48	12:59 a.m.	32
1:59 p.m.	50	1:59 a.m.	37
2:59 p.m.	50	2:59 a.m.	35
3:59 p.m.	51	3:59 a.m.	38
4:59 p.m.	53	4:59 a.m.	42
5:59 p.m.	48	5:59 a.m.	47
6:59 p.m.	47	6:59 a.m.	48
7:59 p.m.	45	7:59 a.m.	47
8:59 p.m.	45	8:59 a.m.	46
9:59 p.m.	43	9:59 a.m.	46
10:59 p.m.	38	10:59 a.m.	46
11:59 p.m.	37	11:59 a.m.	47
24-hour Noise Level, dBA CNEL			**50**
Source: Rincon Consultants, field measurements conducted on July 6 and 7, 2021, using ANSI Type II Integrating sound level meter. See Attachment G.			

Figure 6 Noise Measurement Locations

Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2021.

Fig X Noise Measurement Locations

County Environmental Thresholds:

Chapter 13, Noise Thresholds, of the County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) establishes the following noise thresholds:

- A proposed development that would generate noise levels in excess of 65 CNEL and could affect sensitive receivers would generally be presumed to have a significant impact.
- Outdoor living areas of noise sensitive uses that are subject to noise levels in excess of 65 CNEL would generally be presumed to be significantly impacted by ambient noise. A significant impact would also generally occur where interior noise levels cannot be reduced to 45 CNEL or less.
- A project will generally have a significant effect on the environment if it will increase substantially the ambient noise levels for noise-sensitive receivers adjoining areas. This may generally be presumed when ambient noise levels affecting sensitive receivers are increased to 65 CNEL or more. However, a significant effect may also occur when ambient noise levels affecting sensitive receivers increase substantially, by 3 CNEL, but remain less than 65 CNEL, as determined on a case-by-case level.
- A project will generally have a significant effect on the environment if it will increase substantially the ambient interior noise levels for noise-sensitive receivers adjoining areas. This may generally be presumed when ambient interior noise levels affecting sensitive receivers are increased above 45 CNEL or more. A significant effect may also occur when existing ambient interior noise levels exceed 45 CNEL at sensitive receivers and the project results in an increase of interior noise levels by 3 CNEL at those interior areas of sensitive receivers.
- Noise from grading and construction activity proposed within 1,600 feet of sensitive receivers, including schools, residential development, commercial lodging facilities, hospitals or care facilities, would generally result in a potentially significant impact. According to EPA guidelines, average construction noise is 95 dBA at a 50-foot distance from the source. A 6-dBA drop occurs with a doubling of the distance from the source. Therefore, locations within 1,600 feet of the construction site would be affected by noise levels over 65 dBA. To mitigate this impact, construction within 1,600 feet of sensitive receivers shall be limited to weekdays between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. only. Noise attenuation barriers and muffling of grading equipment may also be required. Construction equipment generating noise levels above 95 dBA may require additional mitigation.

Impact Discussion

a, c. **Less than significant.** Based on the CalEEMod modeling results (Attachment A), average daily operational traffic would be approximately 41 trips per day. Sensitive receivers to the east and adjacent to Union Valley Parkway are located within the 65 to 70 CNEL noise level contour of Union Valley Parkway (see NM2 of Table 14); therefore, noise levels at these locations are already elevated above the County's 65 CNEL standard. Noise generated by operational traffic would not substantially increase noise levels at these receivers given that operational traffic would represent approximately 0.2 percent of existing daily traffic volumes of approximately 17,000 vehicles on the segment of Union Valley Parkway adjacent to the project site (County of Santa Barbara 2020b).

Based on combined data from Trane, Carrier, and Rheem HVAC manufacturing companies, noise from HVAC equipment would typically generate a noise level in the range of 70 dBA L_{eq} at a reference distance of 3 feet from the source. The nearest noise-sensitive receivers, consisting of the single-family residences to the east of the site, would be located at least 185 feet from the nearest rooftop-mounted HVAC equipment based on the location of the fire station, assuming HVAC equipment would be mounted in the center of the proposed fire station rooftop, and the distance between the fire station and off-site residence adjacent to the site's eastern boundary. Because noise from HVAC equipment would attenuate at a rate of approximately 6 dBA per doubling of distance from the source, rooftop-mounted equipment would generate an estimated noise level of 34 dBA Leq

at 185 feet. Furthermore, rooftop HVAC units are traditionally shielded from surrounding land uses with parapets and roofs that block line-of-sight to sensitive receivers would typically provide at least a 5 dBA noise reduction. Project HVAC operation would not exceed 65 dBA CNEL or result in a 3 dBA increase in existing noise levels due to HVAC use at the proposed fire station.

Noise-sensitive receivers in the immediate project vicinity may experience periodic exposure to high noise levels due to siren use. In terms of magnitude of noise exposure, a typical siren emits approximately 100 dB at 100 feet. However, because emergency vehicle response is, by nature, rapid, the duration of exposure to these peak noise levels is estimated to last for a maximum of 10 seconds as emergency vehicles pause at the driveway exit, engage the siren and turn onto the roadway and accelerate rapidly away from the fire station. Therefore, residents of existing nearby homes would be exposed to short-duration high noise levels for approximately ten seconds during an emergency event. Further, the typical practice for emergency siren use is to use sirens to break traffic at intersections or warn drivers of the emergency vehicle approach when traffic is congested. Responses to nighttime emergency calls, when nuisance noise is most noticeable, routinely occur without the use of sirens. Other homes and residents along routes used for emergency access would also be exposed to similar noise levels, although the magnitude and frequency of this exposure would vary by distance from the road and proximity to the project site. The duration of such exposure would likely be less than the projected ten seconds for homes and residents further away from the project site, as the emergency vehicles would generally be assumed to be passing at full speed, with no time required for turning out of the driveway or accelerating. The relatively short duration of events and the low frequency of siren use would not substantially change the existing CNEL for the vicinity and would not exceed 65 CNEL or result in a 3 dBA increase in existing noise levels due to emergency vehicle and siren use at the proposed fire station. Therefore, operational noise impacts due to off-site traffic increases, HVAC operation, and emergency siren use from the proposed fire station would be less than significant.

b. **Less than significant with mitigation**. Project construction activities would occur approximately 75 feet from adjacent sensitive receivers located to the east and north of the project site. Construction activities and operation of heavy equipment (e.g., graders and bulldozers) and stationary equipment (e.g., generators) would generate short-term noise during project construction. Construction noise impacts were estimated using the FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) (2006). RCNM predicts construction noise levels for a variety of construction operations based on empirical data and the application of acoustical propagation formulas. Noise impacts from stationary equipment are assessed from the center of the equipment, while noise impacts from mobile construction equipment are assessed from the center of the equipment activity area (e.g., construction site).

RCNM provides reference noise levels for standard construction equipment, with an attenuation of 6 dBA per doubling of distance. Project construction phases would include site preparation, grading, building construction, architectural coating, and paving of the project site. It is assumed that diesel engines would power all construction equipment. For assessment purposes, the "loudest" construction hour has been used for this assessment regardless of phase (i.e., grading, demolition, and building construction), and has been modeled under the conservative assumption that a dozer, an excavator, and a front-end loader would be operating simultaneously. Using RCNM, construction noise levels were estimated at noise-sensitive residential receivers adjacent to the project site, approximately 180 feet from the center of the construction site.

Maximum hourly noise levels during project construction were calculated at approximately 70 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest single-family residences to the north and east of the project site. Therefore, construction noise could contribute to the exceedance of the County's 65 CNEL noise threshold, especially if construction activities occur during times when sensitive receivers experience lower ambient noise levels (e.g., evening and nighttime). In addition, DvdStd NSE-O-2.1 of the Orcutt Community Plan states that standard construction working hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. are

required for all development activities, although flexibility to allow extended hours on weekdays or occasional working hours on Saturdays can be permitted on a case-by-case basis (County of Santa Barbara 1997a). With implementation of Mitigation Measure N-01 (see below), which limits construction noise to 65 CNEL at the property line of sensitive receivers and establishes requirements for construction working hours, the potential impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, impacts related to the short-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds would be less than significant with mitigation.

Cumulative Impacts:

The proposed project would introduce permanent noise sources of low frequency and low duration and are would not contribute to the cumulative effects of other pending and ongoing projects. The proposed project would not cumulatively increase vehicular traffic on Union Valley Parkway. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase long-term ambient noise levels within the project site and immediate vicinity. As such, the impacts of the proposed project combined with the impacts of cumulative projects listed in Table 2 in Section 3.3, *Cumulative Impacts Methodology*, would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Project construction activities would generate short-term noise that could impact noise-sensitive land uses within and near the project site. Project construction would begin in the summer of 2027; therefore, it is possible the proposed project would be constructed at the same time as other cumulative projects located within 1,600 feet of noise-sensitive receivers impacted by construction activities associated with the proposed project. However, Mitigation Measure N-01 would reduce the short-term noise impacts of the proposed project to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to a significant cumulative noise impact would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

The proposed project could result in a potentially significant impact if construction noise causes an exceedance of the County's noise threshold of 65 CNEL at residential properties adjacent to the project site. With implementation of Mitigation Measure N-01, the potential impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level:

MM N-01 **Construction Noise Control and Equipment Shielding.** The project proponent, including all contractors and subcontractors, shall limit construction activity, including equipment maintenance and site preparation, to the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. No construction shall occur on weekends or State holidays. Non-noise generating interior construction activities such as plumbing, electrical, drywall and painting (which does not include the use of compressors, tile saws, or other noise-generating equipment) are not subject to these restrictions. Any subsequent amendment to the Comprehensive General Plan, applicable Community or Specific Plan, or Zoning Code noise standard upon which these construction hours are based shall supersede the hours stated herein.

Construction noise shall be limited to 65 CNEL as measured at the property line of existing noise-sensitive residential land uses. The contractor may utilize a combination of techniques to reduce the impact of construction to less than 65 CNEL, such as the following noise attenuation techniques:

- Use new or well-maintained construction equipment that reduces sound levels.
- Maintain acoustic shielding of stationary construction equipment that generates noise in excess of 65 dBA L_{eq}.

- Implement a phased construction schedule to minimize or avoid multiple noise-generating activities occurring at the same time.
- Locate stationary construction equipment away from noise-sensitive land uses.
- Turn off idling equipment.
- Use other noise-dampening and sound diversion techniques.

PLAN REQUIREMENTS: These requirements shall be noted in plan specifications. Additionally, the project proponent shall provide and post a sign stating these restrictions at all construction site entries.

TIMING: The project proponent and contractor shall demonstrate compliance with noise standards to the County prior to commencement of construction and throughout construction activities. Signs shall be posted prior to commencement of construction and maintained throughout construction.

MONITORING: The project proponent shall demonstrate that required signs are posted prior to grading/building permit issuance and pre-construction meeting. Building inspectors and permit compliance staff shall spot check and respond to complaints.

4.12 PUBLIC FACILITIES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. A need for new or altered police protection and/or health care services?				✓	
b. Student generation exceeding school capacity?				✓	
c. Significant amounts of solid waste or breach any national, state, or local standards or thresholds relating to solid waste disposal and generation (including recycling facilities and existing landfill capacity)?			✓		
d. A need for new or altered sewer system facilities (sewer lines, lift-stations, etc.)?			✓		
e. The construction of new storm water drainage or water quality control facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			✓		

Existing Setting:

Public services include law enforcement, fire protection, schools, library, solid waste management, water, wastewater, and specialized facilities such as landfills and jails. Section 4.7, *Fire Protection*, addresses fire hazards and protection. Sections 4.13, *Recreation*, and 4.14, *Transportation/Circulation*, address potential impacts to recreation uses, and to roads and other transportation infrastructure, respectively.

The project site is located within the current service area of the SBCFD Fire Station 26 located at 1600 Tiffany Park Court in Santa Maria and the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office at the Santa Maria Station located at 812-A West Foster Road in Santa Maria. The site is also within the boundaries of the Orcutt Union School District, which provides instruction for kindergarten through eighth grade, and the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District (SMJUHSD), which provides high school instruction. Solid waste generated in the vicinity of the project is transported to and disposed of at the Santa Maria Regional Landfill.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County Environmental Thresholds (2021) includes guidelines for the assessment of impacts to public facilities. The following threshold is applicable to this project:

Solid Waste

Any construction, demolition, or remodeling project of a commercial, industrial or residential development that is projected to create more than 350 tons of construction and demolition debris would have a significant impact on public services.

Impact Discussion

a, b. **No impact.** The proposed project would involve construction and operation of a fire station in the Orcutt community. The proposed project would not include residential or commercial development or facilities that would require police protection, health care services, or school facilities. The proposed project would provide a small number of additional employment

opportunities in the local area; however, due to the nature of these opportunities, it is expected that they would be filled by current residents of the region. Therefore, the provision of additional employment opportunities would not indirectly induce substantial population growth that would require additional police protection services, health care services, or school facilities. Therefore, no impact on these public facilities would occur.

c. **Less than significant.** In an effort to address landfill capacity and solid waste concerns, the California Legislature passed the Integrated Waste Management Act in 1989 (AB 939), which mandated a reduction in waste disposed in landfills by 50 percent by the year 2000. Solid waste generation during construction of the proposed fire station would be short-term and minimal. The project site consists of approximately 4.6 acres of vacant land, and therefore, would not require demolition of existing structures. Furthermore, construction waste generated during project construction activities would be minimal, especially given construction contractors would be required to comply with the California Green Building Standards Code, which requires diversion of at least 65 percent of construction and demolition waste for all projects. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

   Based on the waste generation factors in the County Environmental Thresholds (2021a), the proposed project would generate approximately 49 tons per year of operational solid waste. This is based on a conservative solid waste generation factor of 0.0057 ton per year per s.f. (8,600-s.f. "miscellaneous services" building x 0.0057 ton). This amount is less than the threshold for operational solid waste of 196 tons per year. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant.

d. **Less than significant.** The proposed project would involve a new fire station, which would include restrooms and a kitchen. Therefore, the project would require the extension of sewer pipelines onto the project site. However, the project's demand on sewer services would be minimal as only a few staff would occupy the fire station at any given time. The proposed project would not generate demand for new or altered sewage system facilities beyond the extension of a sewer connection to the site. Impacts would be less than significant.

e. **Less than significant.** The project site is within the County's NPDES Municipal General Permit area and is subject to the Central Coast RWQCB post-construction requirements, which list a number of on-site performance requirements to reduce pollution discharge (County of Santa Barbara 2019). Furthermore, compliance with the NPDES California State Construction General Permit would require the creation and implementation of a project-specific SWPPP, which would include BMPs to prevent stormwater pollution and would address erosion and sediment discharge during construction. With regulatory compliance, potential impacts associated with construction of new stormwater drainage, water quality control, or the expansion of existing facilities would be less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to public facilities, as the new fire station would include minimal staff that would likely come from the region. Thus, the project would not contribute to any cumulatively considerable effects to public facilities.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.13 RECREATION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Conflict with established recreational uses of the area?				✓	
b. Conflict with biking, equestrian and hiking trails?				✓	
c. Substantial impact on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities (e.g., overuse of an area with constraints on numbers of people, vehicles, animals, etc. which might safely use the area)?				✓	

Existing Setting:

The project site is not located on any existing County-designated recreational facilities; however, Trail UVP-1 is located along the northern sidewalk of Union Valley Parkway in the project area (County of Santa Barbara 1997c). The project site contains a small portion of the Orcutt Open Space Area, which covers most of the western portion of the 4.6-acre project site; however, no trails that are considered a part of the Orcutt Open Space Area exist on or adjacent to the project site. Bicycle lanes currently exist along Union Valley Parkway.

Impact Discussion:

a. **No impact.** The proposed project would involve an 8,600-s.f. fire station on an approximately 4.6-acre project site. The project would not alter recreational uses in the area and would not impact the Orcutt Open Space Area as the proposed development would not be constructed on the portion of the project site where such exists. No impact would occur.

b. **No impact.** The project site does not contain trails that are part of the Orcutt Open Space Area. However, Trail UVP-1 is located along the northern sidewalk of Union Valley Parkway in the project area and bicycle lanes are present along Union Valley Parkway adjacent to the project site. The proposed project would not affect the existing sidewalk or bicycle lanes along Union Valley Parkway. Therefore, the project would not conflict with biking, equestrian and hiking trails, and no impact would occur.

c. **No impact.** The proposed project would involve a new fire station. The proposed project would not include residential uses that would directly generate new population. The proposed project would provide a small number of additional employment opportunities in the local area; however, due to the nature of these opportunities, it is expected they would be filled by current residents of the region. Therefore, the provision of additional employment opportunities would not indirectly induce substantial population growth that would impact the quality or quantity of recreational opportunities. No impact would occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in any substantial change to the project site that would affect recreational facilities. Thus, the proposed project would not contribute to any cumulatively considerable effects to recreation.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.14 TRANSPORTATION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?				✓	
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)?				✓	
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				✓	
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?				✓	

Existing Setting:

Union Valley Parkway, which runs adjacent to the project site's southern boundary, includes a Class II-designated bicycle lane in each direction, which terminates prior to the existing cul-de-sac east of the U.S. 101 on-/off-ramp to the east and at the intersection of Union Valley Parkway and South Blosser Road to the west. Union Valley Parkway also has a sidewalk along the eastbound lane that terminates at the U.S. 101 on-/off-ramp to the east and at the intersection of Union Valley Parkway and South Blosser Road to the west. No sidewalk exists along the westbound lane of Union Valley Parkway along the frontage of the project site. No bicycle lanes are present along Brookside Avenue; however, there are sidewalks present along both lanes of Brookside Avenue. There are no existing transit facilities along Union Valley Parkway at the project site frontage.

County Environmental Thresholds:

According to the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, a significant transportation impact would occur when:

a. Potential Conflict with a Program, Plan, Ordinance, or Policy. The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' (SBCAG) 2040 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SBCAG 2017) and the County's Comprehensive Plan, zoning ordinances, capital improvement programs, and other planning documents contain transportation and circulation programs, plans, ordinances, and policies. Threshold question "a" considers a project in relation to those programs, plans, ordinances, and policies that specifically address multimodal transportation, complete streets, transportation demand management (TDM), and other vehicle miles traveled (VMT)-related topics. The County and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(a) no longer consider automobile delay or congestion an environmental impact. Therefore, threshold question "a" does not apply to provisions that address level of service (LOS) or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion. A transportation impact occurs if a project conflicts with the overall purpose of an applicable transportation and circulation program, plan, ordinance, or policy, including impacts to existing transit systems and bicycle and pedestrian networks pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1). In such cases, applicants must identify project modifications or mitigation measures that eliminate or reduce inconsistencies with applicable programs, plans, ordinances, and policies. For example, some community plans include

provisions that encourage complete streets. As a result, an applicant for a multifamily apartment complex may need to reduce excess parking spaces, fund a transit stop, and/or add bike storage facilities to comply with a community plan's goals and policies.

b. Potential Impact to VMT. Threshold question "b" establishes VMT as the metric to determine transportation impacts. Because VMT is a new metric, this section begins with background information on VMT and then outlines a three-step process for analyzing and, if necessary, mitigating a project's VMT impacts.

1. Background Information

County VMT

The County uses SBCAG's Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM) to estimate VMT. The RTDM (TransCAD Version 6.0) is a four-step travel demand model that performs the following classical modeling steps:

1. Trip generation (number of trips),
2. Trip distribution (where those trips go),
3. Mode choice (how the trips are divided among the available modes of travel), and
4. Trip assignment (route trips will take).

Each trip forecasted in the RTDM has a purpose, type, origin, and destination. The RTDM estimates and forecasts travel by traffic analysis zones (TAZ) for a 24-hour period[4] on a typical weekday. Approximately 360 TAZs have significant portions within the unincorporated areas of the county.

The SBCAG RTDM requires a geographic boundary to define the extent of data to select and analyze. The County's VMT metrics, described in the subsection below, use the unincorporated areas of the county (entire Santa Barbara County, excluding incorporated cities) as the geographic boundary for estimating VMT. This chapter refers to VMT for the unincorporated areas as "county VMT." County VMT reflects all vehicle-trips that start and/or end in the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County.

SBCAG periodically updates the RTDM's data and functions, such as when it prepares a new regional transportation plan/sustainable community strategy (RTP/SCS). The County uses the most up-to-date version of the RTDM to estimate VMT and evaluate transportation impacts.

Project-Level VMT Calculator

The County and Fehr &Peers developed the Project-Level VMT Calculator to help assess a project's VMT. The VMT Calculator incorporates screening criteria, thresholds of significance, mitigation measures, and data from the SBCAG RTDM.

Planners or applicants enter the project type, location, size, zoning, and other key information into the VMT Calculator. The VMT Calculator uses this information to estimate the project's VMT. It then determines whether the project would meet or exceed the applicable threshold of significance. The VMT Calculator can also estimate the effectiveness of possible mitigation measures if the project would exceed the threshold of significance. The County periodically updates the VMT Calculator to use the most up-to-date version of the SBCAG RTDM.

The VMT Calculator can analyze land-use projects that are smaller than one TAZ. However, it does not have the capability to analyze large, complex, and/or unique projects, such as a community plan update, key site rezone and entitlements, a regionally serving retail project, or a regional-serving community center or agricultural processing facility. Such projects will require a VMT transportation study.

Baseline Environmental Setting

[4] Daily includes: AM, Late AM, Lunch, Early PM, PM, Evening, Late Evening, and Night Time.

Environmental documents must typically describe the physical setting, or baseline, as it exists when a lead agency publishes a notice of preparation(NOP), or if a lead agency does not publish a NOP, when it commences the environmental review process. To calculate county VMT for every year until 2040, the County interpolated between the SBCAG RTDM's 2010 base year and 2040 future year VMT forecasts to establish specific county VMT values for each year.

VMT Metrics

CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.3(b)(1) and 15064.3(b)(2) describe the criteria for analyzing transportation impacts for two types of projects: (1) land use projects and (2) transportation projects. The criteria for land use projects may also apply to land use plans. This section summarizes the VMT methodology and metrics for land use projects, such as the proposed project.

The SBCAG RTDM uses an origin-destination (OD) VMT methodology to estimate the VMT of land use projects and plans. The OD VMT methodology estimates the VMT generated by land uses or plans in a defined geographic area, such as the unincorporated county or a specific project site. The SBCAG RTDM estimates OD VMT by tracking all vehicles traveling to and from a defined geographic area and calculating the number of trips and length of those trips to estimate VMT.

State climate-change legislation typically expresses greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets as a quantitative or absolute numeric threshold. For example, SB 32 (2016) requires "that statewide greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to at least 40 percent below the statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit no later than December 31, 2030." However, these targets do not translate directly into VMT thresholds of significance for individual projects. Therefore, the OPR Technical Advisory recommends that agencies assess a project's VMT impacts using an efficiency metric (e.g., per resident, per employee, or per service population) rather than a quantitative or absolute numeric threshold. The County estimates VMT for land use projects and plans using the following metrics.

- **Total VMT:** VMT generated by all land uses in a defined geographic area. Total VMT reflects all vehicle-trips (passenger and commercial vehicles) assigned on the roadway network. The County applies this metric to retail projects and the cumulative analysis for land use plans.
- **Total VMT per Service Population:** VMT generated by all land uses in a defined geographic area divided by the total number of residents and total number of employees in the geographic area. VMT per service population reflects all vehicle-trips (passenger and commercial vehicles) assigned on the roadway network. The County applies this metric to land use plans.
- **Home-based VMT per Resident:** VMT generated from travel between residents' homes and other destinations, such as work, school, or household errands, in a defined geographic area divided by the total number of residents in the geographic area. This metric excludes trips between two non-residential locations, such as from the store to the coffee shop. Home-based VMT per resident reflects all passenger vehicles (cars and light duty trucks) assigned on the roadway network. he County applies this metric to residential projects.
- **Home-based work VMT per Employee:** VMT generated from travel between employees' homes and work in a defined geographic area divided by the number of employees in the geographic area. Home-based work VMT per employee reflects all passenger vehicles (cars and light duty trucks)assigned on the roadway network. The County applies this metric to employment projects.

2. Analyzing and Mitigating VMT

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 and threshold "b" establish VMT as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts under CEQA. The following subsections outline a three-step process for determining the significance of VMT impacts and, if necessary, mitigating significant VMT impacts.

Step 1: Project Screening

Many agencies use "screening criteria" to identify projects that would result in less than significant VMT impacts without conducting detailed VMT analyses and studies. The OPR Technical Advisory contains screening criteria for land use and transportation projects. The County uses these screening criteria. The OPR Technical Advisory does not include screening criteria for land use plans. Therefore, the analysis of land use plans must begin with Step 2, below.

The County presumes that land use or transportation projects meeting any of the screening criteria, absent substantial evidence to the contrary, would have less than significant VMT impacts and would not require further analysis. A single-component project (e.g., residence, office, or store) only needs to meet one of the screening criteria. However, each component of a multiple-component project (e.g., residential/retail mixed-use development) must meet at least one applicable screening criterion that relates to each specific land use.

Projects that do not meet any of the screening criteria require an analysis of VMT and a VMT transportation study. Such projects must proceed to Step 2, below.

Land Use Projects Screening Criteria

Table 17 lists the screening criteria for land use projects. The table contains a separate row and columns that list each project type and the applicable screening criterion.

Table 17 Screening Criteria for Land Use Projects

Screening Categories	Project Requirements to Meet Screening Criteria
Small Projects	A project that generates 110 or fewer average daily trips.[1]
Locally Serving Retail	A project that has locally serving retail uses that are 50,000 square feet or less, such as specialty retail, shopping center, grocery/food store, bank/financial facilities, fitness center, restaurant, or café. If a project also contains a non-locally serving retail use(s), that use(s) must meet other applicable screening criteria.
Projects Located in a VMT Efficient Area	A residential or office project that is located in an area that is already 15 percent below the county VMT (i.e., "VMT efficient area"). The County's Project-Level VMT Calculator determines whether a proposed residential or office project is located within a VMT efficient area.
Projects near Major Transit Stop	A project that is located within a ½ mile of a major transit stop or within a ½ mile of a bus stop on a high-quality transit corridor (HQTC). A major transit stop is a rail station or a bus stop with two or more intersecting bus routes with service frequency of 15 minutes or less during peak commute periods. A HQTC is a corridor with fixed route bus service with frequency of 15 minutes or less during peak commute periods. However, these screening criteria do not apply if project-specific or location-specific information indicates the project will still generate significant levels of VMT. Therefore, in addition to the screening criteria listed above, the project should also have the following characteristics: - Floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.75 or greater; - Consistent with the applicable SBCAG Sustainable Communities Strategy (as determined by the County); - Does not provide more parking than required by the County's Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances; and - Does not replace affordable housing units (units set aside for very low income[2] and low income households[3]) with a smaller number of moderate or high-income housing units.
Affordable Housing	A residential project that provides 100 percent affordablehousing units (units set aside for very low income and low income households); if part of

	a larger development, only those units that meet the definition of affordable housing satisfy the screening criteria.

[1] The County calculates a project's daily trips using the latest version of the Trip Generation Manual (Institute of Transportation Engineers) or locally valid trip rates approved by the County Public Works Department. Land uses with irregular or seasonal trip making characteristics, such as wineries or special event centers, should apply an annual average daily trip rate and provide a trip generation memo explaining how the project meets the screening criteria for small projects.
[2] As referenced in California Government Code Section 65584(f)(2) and defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 50079.5(a), "'Very low income households' means persons and families whose incomes do not exceed the qualifying limits for very low income families as established and amended from time to time pursuant to Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937. ... In the event the federal standards are discontinued, the department shall, by regulation, establish income limits for very low income households for all geographic areas of the state at 50 percent of area median income, adjusted for family size and revised annually."
[3] As referenced in California Government Code Section 65584(f)(2) and defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 50079.5(a), "'Lower income households' means persons and families whose income does not exceed the qualifying limits for lower income families as established and amended from time to time pursuant to Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937. ... In the event the federal standards are discontinued, the department shall, by regulation, establish income limits for lower income households for all geographic areas of the state at 80 percent of area median income, adjusted for family size and revised annually."

Step 2: Thresholds of Significance for Impact Analysis

The County generally uses thresholds of significance to determine the significance of transportation impacts for projects and plans that do not meet any of the screening criteria in Table 17. The subsections below present separate VMT thresholds for land use projects, land use plans, and transportation projects. The County expresses thresholds of significance in relation to existing, or baseline, county VMT. Specifically, the County compares the existing, or baseline, county VMT (i.e., pre-construction) to a project's VMT. Projects with VMT below the applicable threshold would normally result in a less than significant VMT impact and, therefore, would not require further analyses or studies. Nonetheless, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(b)(2) states, "Compliance with the threshold does not relieve a lead agency of the obligation to consider substantial evidence indicating that the project's environmental effects may still be significant." Projects with a VMT above the applicable threshold would normally result in a significant VMT impact and, therefore, would require further analyses and studies, and, if necessary, project modifications or mitigation measures as discussed in Step 3, below. The VMT thresholds of significance are for general use and should apply to most projects subject to environmental review. However, the thresholds may not be appropriate for unique projects. In such cases, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7(c) allows the County to use other thresholds "... on a case-by-case basis as provided in Section 15064(b)(2)." When using thresholds on a case-by-case basis, the County will need substantial evidence to justify why different thresholds are appropriate. It will also need to explain how non-compliance or compliance with these thresholds means that a project would result in significant or less than significant VMT impacts, respectively.

The OPR Technical Advisory recommended thresholds of significance for land use projects. The County adopted these same thresholds. For land use project types other than residential, employment, regional retail, and mixed-used projects (e.g., school, sports or entertainment facility, park), the County will apply an absolute VMT threshold (e.g., total VMT or total roadway VMT) or efficiency-based VMT threshold (e.g., home-based VMT per resident, home-based work VMT per employee, or total VMT per service population). The applicable threshold will depend on the project's characteristics, including whether the project is locally or regionally serving. For projects that generally produce job-related travel (i.e., employment), the analysis can compare the project's VMT (i.e., home-based work VMT per employee) to existing county VMT. For projects that serve the region, the analysis can compare the project's total VMT to existing VMT, or compare the project's net increase in total VMT to the study area VMT.

Cumulative Impacts

CEQA requires lead agencies to consider a project's individual and cumulative impacts. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(1) states, "the lead agency shall consider whether the cumulative

impact is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable.[5] The County typically uses one of two methods to determine whether a project's

VMT impact is cumulatively considerable. As explained below, one method is for projects subject to an efficiency-based threshold of significance. The County generally uses efficiency-based thresholds of significance (i.e., per resident, per employee, and per service population) to analyze most land use project's VMT impacts. Consistent with the OPR Technical Advisory (page 6), a land use project that falls below the applicable efficiency-based threshold of significance would not have a VMT impact that is cumulatively considerable. Projects that are under the County's efficiency-based impact thresholds are already shown to align with long-term environmental goals to reduce VMT. As a result, a finding of a less-than-significant project impact would imply a less than significant cumulative impact, and vice versa. The Project-Level VMT Calculator provides the information necessary for this analysis.

Step 3: Potential Mitigation Measures

Projects and plans that exceed the thresholds of significance in Step 2 require project modifications or mitigation measures to avoid or reduce VMT impacts to a less-than-significant level (i.e., below the applicable threshold of significance). As discussed above, the VMT Calculator contains and, therefore, can help applicants assess the effectiveness of possible mitigation measures.

Mitigation measures may not always reduce a project's VMT impacts to a less-than-significant level. In such cases, CEQA Guidelines Section 15093 requires decision makers to make a statement of overriding considerations in order to approve the project or plan.

VMT related mitigation measures focus on reducing the number of single-occupant vehicle trips generated by the project or reducing the distance of those trips. The following strategies can help reduce VMT:

- Modify the project's site design or land use characteristics to reduce VMT generated by the project. This can include increasing/decreasing density, introducing a mix of uses, clustering development, or making site design improvements such as sidewalks, bikeways, transit stop enhancements, and/or priority carpool parking.
- Implement TDM to reduce VMT generated by the project. TDM strategies are vehicle trip reductions made through project site modifications, programming, and operational changes. This can include on-going programs such as transit coordinators, transit pass subsidies, and/or shuttle programs.
- Apply any future programmatic mitigation mechanisms, where applicable, such as VMT mitigation banks, exchanges, and/or fee programs.

Applicants should tailor mitigation measures to a project's characteristics and potential impacts. They also must present substantial evidence to support any conclusions regarding whether the mitigation measures would reduce the impacts to less than significant or whether the impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. If the project will rely on programmatic mitigation measures, the applicant must show with substantial evidence how participation in the program will mitigate project-generated VMT.

c. Design Features and Hazards. Threshold "c" considers whether a project would increase roadway hazards. An increase could result from existing or proposed uses or geometric design features. In part, the analysis should review these and other relevant factors and identify results that conflict with the County's Engineering Design Standards or other applicable roadway standards. For example, the analysis may consider the following criteria:

[5] CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(1) states (in pertinent part): "'Cumulatively considerable' means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects."

- Project requires a driveway that would not meet site distance requirements, including vehicle queueing and visibility of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Project adds a new traffic signal or results in a major revision to an existing intersection that would not meet the County's Engineering Design Standards.
- Project adds substantial traffic to a roadway with poor design features (e.g., narrow width, roadside ditches, sharp curves, poor sight distance, inadequate pavement structure).
- Project introduces a new use and substantial traffic that would create potential safety problems on an existing road network (e.g., rural roads with use by farm equipment, livestock, horseback riding, or residential roads with heavy pedestrian or recreational use).

If a project would result in potential roadway hazards, the applicant would need to modify the project or identify mitigation measures that would eliminate or reduce the potential hazards. For example, an applicant for a retail shopping center may need to shift the location of a new driveway or add sidewalks or pedestrian crossings to reduce potential conflicts between customers and pedestrians.

d. Emergency Access. Threshold "d" considers any changes to emergency access resulting from a project. To identify potential impacts, the analysis must review any proposed roadway design changes and determine if they would potentially impede emergency access vehicles.

A project that would result in inadequate emergency vehicle access would have a significant transportation impact and, as a result, would require project modifications or mitigation measures. For example, a project that modifies a street and, as a result, impairs fire truck access, would require modifications or redesign to comply with County and fire department road development standards.

Impact Discussion:

a. **No impact.** No sidewalks or bicycle lanes currently exist on the project site. However, Class II-designated bicycle lanes exist in each direction on the segment of Union Valley Parkway along the southern boundary of the project site, and there is a sidewalk along the eastbound lane of Union Valley Parkway fronting the project site. Sidewalks are present along both lanes of Brookside Avenue, which terminates at the eastern boundary of the project site. There are no existing transit routes within the vicinity of the project site. The proposed project would involve construction two new driveways connecting Union Valley Parkway to the proposed fire station and one new driveway connecting the west end of Brookside Avenue to the new fire station. Short-term construction staging would be compliant with the County's Engineering Design Standards, which would minimize conflicts with pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorized vehicles on Union Valley Parkway and Brookside Avenue. Additionally, the project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b. **No impact.** Transportation projects have the potential to change travel patterns. A key consideration under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(2) is whether a project would add additional vehicle travel onto a roadway network or induce VMT. According to the California Office of Planning and Research's (OPR) Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, the screening threshold for "small projects" that generally may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact is: a project that generates or attracts fewer than 110 trips per day (OPR 2018). The proposed project includes a fire station, which would generate VMT as employees drive to and from the project site for their shifts and as fire engines and emergency vehicles respond to calls. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Trip Generation Handbook, 10th edition, fire and rescue station land uses have an average trip generation rate of 0.48 afternoon peak hour trips (Institute of Transportation Engineers 2017). Using an industry standards assumption that peak hour traffic is 10 percent of average daily traffic, the average daily trip rate is

4.8 trips per 1,000 s.f. of gross floor area. Accordingly, the proposed project would generate approximately 41 average daily trips (4.8 trips per thousand s.f. x 8.6 thousand s.f.), which would not exceed the screening level of 110 trips per day for VMT impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

c. **No impact.** The projects proposes two new driveways connecting to Union Valley Parkway, a two-lane arterial with a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour. The Caltrans Highway Design Manual establishes minimum stopping sight distances for various posted roadway speeds to ensure vehicles entering the roadway can be seen from a safe distance by oncoming traffic. According to Table 201.1 in the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, the minimum stopping sight distance for design speeds of 45 miles per hour is 360 feet (Caltrans 2020). The stopping sight distance available for westbound traffic on Union Valley Parkway would be at least 360 feet; therefore, the design of the two driveways would be compliant with the Caltrans minimum stopping sight distance for a two-lane roadway. Furthermore, the proposed project would be required to be designed in accordance with the requirements of the County's Engineering Design Standards (2011). Therefore, the project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses, and no impact would occur.

d. **No impact.** The project would not affect emergency access in the project area. Additionally, the project would improve emergency access in the project area as it would result in another fire station in the Orcutt community. Therefore, no impact related to inadequate emergency access would occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

As discussed above, implementation of the proposed project would not result in any substantial change to transportation in the area. Thus, the proposed project would not contribute to any cumulatively considerable effects to transportation.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

4.15 WATER RESOURCES/FLOODING

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Changes in currents, or the course or direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?				✓	
b. Changes in percolation rates, drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface water runoff?		✓			
c. Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?		✓			
d. Discharge, directly or through a storm drain system, into surface waters (including but not limited to wetlands, riparian areas, ponds, springs, creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, tidal areas, bays, ocean, etc.) or alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, or thermal water pollution?		✓			
e. Alterations to the course or flow of flood water or need for private or public flood control projects?				✓	
f. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding (placement of project in 100-year flood plain), accelerated runoff or tsunamis, sea level rise, or seawater intrusion?				✓	
g. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of groundwater?			✓		
h. Change in the quantity of groundwater, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations or recharge interference?			✓		
i. Overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin? Or, a significant increase in the existing overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin?			✓		
j. The substantial degradation of groundwater quality including saltwater intrusion?		✓			
k. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?			✓		
l. Introduction of storm water pollutants (e.g., oil, grease, pesticides, nutrients, sediments, pathogens, etc.) into groundwater or surface water?		✓			

Existing Setting:

The proposed project would be located on undeveloped and vacant land. Currently, there is a culvert that has been mapped along the northeastern corner of the project site.

No mapped, permanent surface water bodies exist on the project site (USGS 2021). The project site is underlain by the Santa Maria River Valley groundwater basin, which has been given a draft basin

prioritization of "very low" by the California Department of Water Resources (California Department of Water Resources 2021).

The site is not located within the 100-year floodplain or within a tsunami inundation zone (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] 2005; DOC 2021d).

County Environmental Thresholds:

Water Resources

A project may have a significant effect on water resources if it would exceed established threshold values that have been set for each over-drafted groundwater basin. These values were determined based on an estimation of a basin's remaining life of available water storage. If the project's net new consumptive water use (total consumptive demand adjusted for recharge less discontinued historic use) exceeds the threshold adopted for the basin, the project's impacts on water resources are considered significant. A project is also deemed to have a significant effect on water resources if a net increase in pumpage from a well would substantially affect production or quality from a nearby well.

Water Quality

The County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) state a significant impact on water quality may occur if the project involves any of the following:

- Is located within an urbanized area of the county and the project construction or redevelopment individually or as a part of a larger common plan of development or sale would disturb one (1) or more acres of land;
- Increases the amount of impervious surfaces on a site by 25 percent or more;
- Results in channelization or relocation of a natural drainage channel;
- Results in removal or reduction of riparian vegetation or other vegetation (excluding non-native vegetation removed for restoration projects) from the buffer zone of any streams, creeks or wetlands;
- Is an industrial facility that falls under one or more of categories of industrial activity regulated under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase I industrial storm water regulations (facilities with effluent limitation; manufacturing; mineral, metal, oil and gas, hazardous waste, treatment or disposal facilities; landfills; recycling facilities; steam electric plants; transportation facilities; treatment works; and light industrial activity);
- Discharges pollutants that exceed the water quality standards set forth in the applicable NPDES permit, the RWQCB's Basin Plan or otherwise impairs the beneficial uses1 of a receiving water body;
- Results in a discharge of pollutants into an "impaired" water body that has been designated as such by the State Water Resources Control Board or the RWQCB under Section 303(d) of the Federal Water Pollution Prevention and Control Act (i.e., the Clean Water Act); or
- Results in a discharge of pollutants of concern to a receiving water body, as identified by the RWQCB.

Impact Discussion:

a. **No impact.** The proposed project would not require construction in rivers, creeks, or estuaries. Therefore, the project would not result in changes in currents or in the course or direction of water movements in either marine or fresh waters, and no impact would occur.

b, c, d, j, l. **Less than significant with mitigation.** Construction of the project has the potential to result in stormwater runoff with degraded water quality primarily due to erosion and accidental releases of oil, fuels, lubricants, or coolants. However, the project would be constructed in accordance with mandatory federal, State, and local laws, policies, and regulations, which would

require implementation of a project-specific SWPPP that would address erosion, sediment discharge, and water quality and pollution control during all phases of construction through implementation of BMPs. Therefore, short-term construction impacts to surface water runoff and quality as well as groundwater quality would be less than significant.

During operation, stormwater runoff associated with the project would potentially contain pollutants associated with fire engines, such as fuels and oils, as well as the use of herbicides and pesticides for landscape maintenance. The proposed project would also increase the amount of impervious surfaces on the project site, which would potentially increase the amount of surface runoff and pollutants discharged off site as less water would infiltrate into the ground. The project would be required to comply with the requirements of the Phase II MS4 Permit (*Waste Discharge Requirements [WDRs] for Storm Water Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems [MS4s] General Permit],* Order No. 2013-0001-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000004 or most current) and the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's *Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements (PCRs) for Development Projects in the Central Coast Region* (Resolution R3-2013-0032 or most current). The project is anticipated to create more than 22,500 s.f. (0.52 acre) of impervious surface area and would therefore be required to implement a Stormwater Control Plan that complies with the requirements of the PCRs. The Stormwater Control Plan would specify the operational BMPs that would be incorporated into the project to achieve the following requirements:

- Implement Low Impact Development (LID) Measures to:
  - Limit disturbance of natural drainage features
  - Limit clearing, grading, and soil compaction
  - Minimize impervious surfaces
  - Minimize runoff by dispersing runoff to landscape or using permeable pavements
- Treat runoff with an approved and appropriately sized LID treatment system prior to discharge from the site
- Prevent discharge from events up the 95th percentile event using Stormwater Control Measures
- Control peak flows to not exceed pre-project flows for the 2-year through 10-year events.

As a Condition of Project Approval, Project Clean Water staff of the County Public Works Department Water Resources Division would review the Stormwater Control Plan to ensure it complies with the requirements the PCRs. The County Fire Department would be responsible for long-term maintenance of the BMPs. The operational BMPs would capture, treat, and reduce stormwater runoff and associated pollutants of concern in prior to discharge from the project site. Compliance with the Central Coast RWQCB's post-construction stormwater management requirements, including implementation of a post-construction stormwater control plan and operational BMPs, would ensure potential impacts would be less than significant.

e. **No impact.** The project would not be located in the 100-year floodplain and would therefore not result in alterations to the course or flow of flood water (FEMA 2005). Therefore, the project would not result in alterations to the course or flow of flood water or the need for private or public flood control projects. No impact would occur.

f. **No impact**. The project site is not located in the 100-year floodplain or in a tsunami inundation zone (FEMA 2005; DOC 2021d). Furthermore, the site is located approximately 12 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, the project would not expose people or property to water-related hazards such as flooding, accelerated runoff, tsunamis, sea level rise, or seawater intrusion. No impact would occur.

g, h. **Less than significant**. The maximum soil cut during grading for the proposed project would be 10 feet, and according to the California Department of Water Resources, the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin has well depths ranging from 16 to 1,220 feet with an average well depth of 281 feet (California Department of Water Resources 2004). Furthermore, the nearest well is located about 1.2 miles from the project site and has a well depth of 331 feet. Therefore, the proposed project would likely not require dewatering during construction. During operation, the fire station would receive its water from Golden State Water Company, sourced from the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin. The Golden State Water Company's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (2021) indicates the water supplier for the project site will have enough water to meet the proposed fire station's demand through its buildout year (2045). In addition, the project would not include subsurface components that could alter the direction of groundwater flow. Therefore, impacts related to alteration of the direction or rate of flow of groundwater and changes in the quantity of groundwater, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations or recharge interference would be less than significant.

i, k. **Less than significant**. Although the project would incrementally increase the amount of impervious surfaces on the project site, impervious surfaces on the project site after construction would represent minimal interference with groundwater recharge as the project would preserve approximately 40 percent of the site in an undisturbed state that would allow stormwater runoff to continue recharging the underlying groundwater basin. Furthermore, the extent of the proposed project would be relatively small given the large expanses of land along the Sisquoc River east of the project site that are available for groundwater recharge. Therefore, the project would not result in the overdraft or over-commitment of a groundwater basin. In addition, according to estimations from CalEEMod, the estimated water use of the fire station would be approximately 7.4 acre-feet per year (AFY), which is below the 25 AFY groundwater threshold applied to the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin. Furthermore, the proposed project would not require dewatering during construction or permanent groundwater withdrawal during operation. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies. Impacts would be less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts:

The County Environmental Thresholds (2021a) were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for water resources with implementation of Mitigation Measure Wat-01. Therefore, the project's contribution to the regionally significant issues of water supplies and water quality is not cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

No significant impacts were identified; therefore, mitigation is not required.

5.0 INFORMATION SOURCES

Ascent Environmental. 2020. Santa Barbara County Interim Greenhouse Gas Thresholds Justification. October. https://www.countyofsb.org/uploadedFiles/plndev/Content/Projects/SB%20County%20Interim%20GHG%20Thresholds%20Memo_Oct%202020.pdf (accessed August 2021).

Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). 2017. California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines. https://www.baaqmd.gov/~/media/files/planning-and-research/ceqa/ceqa_guidelines_may2017-pdf.pdf?la=en (accessed August 2021).

California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2005. Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective. April 2005. https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf (accessed August 2021).

____. 2017. California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan. November 2017. https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scoping_plan_2017.pdf (accessed August 2021).

____. 2020. Overview: Diesel Exhaust & Health. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/overview-diesel-exhaust-and-health (accessed August 2021).

California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2016. California Important Farmland Finder. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/ (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021a. Fault Activity Map of California. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/fam/ (accessed August 2021)

____. 2021b. Well Finder. https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Pages/WellFinder.aspx (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021c. Well Finder. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/doggr/wellfinder (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021d. Santa Barbara County Tsunami Hazard Areas. https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/tsunami/maps/santa-barbara (accessed August 2021).

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2008. Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA as Recommended by CAL FIRE – Santa Barbara County [map]. 1:125,000. September 2, 2008. https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6762/fhszl_map42.pdf (accessed August 2021).

California Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2021. EnviroStor. https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov (accessed August 2021).

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2013. Technical Noise Supplement to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol. (CT-HWANP-RT-13-069.25.2) September. http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/noise/pub/TeNS_Sept_2013B.pdf (accessed August 2021).

____. 2020. Highway Design Manual. Last updated December 31, 2020. https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/manual-highway-design-manual-hdm (accessed August 2021).

California Department of Water Resources. 2004. Central Coast Hydrologic Region – Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin. California's Groundwater Bulletin 118. Last updated February 27, 2004. https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Bulletin-118/Files/2003-Basin-Descriptions/3_012_SantaMariaRiverValley.pdf (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021. SGMA Basin Prioritization Dashboard. https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bp-dashboard/p2/ (accessed August 2021).

California Energy Commission. 2021. California Energy Consumption Database. https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/ (accessed August 2021).

California Geological Survey. 2002. California Geomorphic Provinces, Note 36.

California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). 2018. Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA. December 2018. http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf (accessed August 2021).

Dibblee, T.W., and Ehrenspeck, H.E., ed. 1989. Geologic map of the Casmalia and Orcutt quadrangles, Santa Barbara County, California: Dibblee Geological Foundation, Dibblee Foundation Map DF-24, scale 1:24,000.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). 2005. Flood Insurance Rate Map #06083C0195F. September 30, 2005. https://msc.fema.gov/ (accessed August 2021).

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). 2006. FHWA Highway Construction Noise Handbook (FHWAHEP-06-015; DOT-VNTSC-FHWA-06-02). http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/construction_noise/handbook (accessed August 2021).

____. 2011. Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Guidance. (FHWA-HEP-10-025). December. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/noise/regulations_and_guidance/analysis_and_abatement_guidance/revguidance.pdf (accessed August 2021).

Federal Transit Administration (FTA). 2018. Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment. November. https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123_0.pdf (accessed August 2021).

Golden State Water Company. 2021. Orcutt Service Area – 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. Adopted July 15, 2021. https://wuedata.water.ca.gov/public/uwmp_attachments/9607480704/GSWC-Orcutt%202020%20UWMP%20Final.pdf (accessed August 2021).

Institute of Transportation Engineers. 2017. Trip Generation Manual 10th Edition. https://ecommerce.ite.org/IMIS/ItemDetail?iProductCode=IR-016H (accessed August 2021).

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. 2014. Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II, and III to the Firth Assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Mayer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland.

____. 2018. Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5°C - Summary for Policymakers. https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/ (accessed October 2021).

Norris, R.M., and Webb, R.W. 1990. Geology of California. John Wiley & Sons, New York.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). 2020. 2019 Power Content Label. October. https://www.energy.ca.gov/filebrowser/download/3245 (accessed August 2021).

Paleobiology Database. 2021. Fossilworks web-based portal. http://fossilworks.org and paleodb.org (accessed August 2021).

Precision Traffic & Safety Systems. 2021. Traffic Studies. http://www.precisiontrafficsafety.com/solutions/traffic-studies/ (accessed August 2021).

Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon). 2020. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment – Brookside Avenue, Assessor's Parcel Number 107-321-013, Santa Maria, California. April 22, 2020.

____. 2021a. Orcutt Fire Station Project – Biological Resources Assessment. August 2021.

____. 2021b. Brookside Avenue Fire Station Project – Cultural Resources Technical Study. August 2021.

____. 2021c. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment – Brookside Avenue, Assessor's Parcel Number 107-321-013, Santa Maria, California. July 22, 2021.

Santa Barbara, County of. 1979a. Santa Maria-Orcutt High Groundwater Map – Seismic and Safety Element of County of Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan. Adopted 1979 and updated January 24, 2019. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/comprehensiveplan/safetyelement.sbc (accessed September 2021).

____. 1979b. Santa Maria-Orcutt Compressible-Collapsible Soils Map – Seismic and Safety Element of County of Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan. Adopted 1979 and updated January 24, 2019. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/comprehensiveplan/safetyelement.sbc (accessed September 2021).

____. 1997a. Orcutt Community Plan. Adopted July 1997, last amended December 2020. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/communityplans/orcutt.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 1997b. Orcutt Community Plan Update Final Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse No. 95031055). https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/communityplans/orcutt.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 1997c. Orcutt Community Plan Parks Recreation and Trails Map. Adopted July 22, 1997 and updated November 4, 2013. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/communityplans/orcutt.sbc (accessed September 2021).

____. 2009. Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan Scenic Highways Element. May 2009. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/comprehensiveplan/scenichighwayselement.sbc (accessed September 2019).

____. 2010. Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan Conservation Element. August 2010. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/comprehensiveplan/conservationelement.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 2011. Engineering Design Standards. September 2011. https://www.countyofsb.org/pwd/asset.c/215 (accessed August 2021).

____. 2015a. County of Santa Barbara Energy and Climate Action Plan. May 2015. https://www.countyofsb.org/ecap/guiding-documents.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 2015b. Final Environmental Impact Report for the Energy and Climate Action Plan. May 2015.

____. 2015c. Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan Seismic Safety & Safety Element. Last amended: February 2015. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/comprehensiveplan/safetyelement.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 2018. 2016 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Update and Forecast. June 2018.

____. 2019. Project Clean Water – New and Redevelopment. https://countyofsb.org/pwd/sbpcw/development/new-and-redevelopment.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 2020a. Agricultural Preserve Advisory Committee Reports – 2020 Contract List. September 28, 2020. https://www.countyofsb.org/agcomm/agpreserve.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 2020b. Traffic Impact Study Orcutt Community Plan Amendment Project. May.

____. 2021a. Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual. Last amended January 2021. https://cosantabarbara.app.box.com/s/vtxutffe2n52jme97lgmv66os7pp3lm5 (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021b. Cumulative Projects List for the Entire County. March 5, 2021. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/projects/cumulativelist.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021c. 2020 Agricultural Production Report – County of Santa Barbara. https://www.countyofsb.org/uploadedFiles/agcomm/Content/Other/crops/2020.pdf (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021d. Water Wells in Santa Barbara County. May 12, 2021. https://www.countyofsb.org/phd/ehs/drinking-water.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021e. Santa Barbara County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones. June 2021. https://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/policy/UniformRules.sbc (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021f. Santa Barbara County Land Use and Zoning Map – Flight Approach and Clear Zones.

Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD). 2017. Scope and Content of Air Quality Sections in Environmental Documents. June 2017. https://www.ourair.org/wp-content/uploads/ScopeContentJune2017-LimitedUpdate.pdf (accessed August 2021).

____. 2019. 2019 Ozone Plan. December 2019. https://www.ourair.org/wp-content/uploads/2019-12-19-Final-Plan.pdf (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021. Meeting Air Quality Standards. https://www.ourair.org/air-quality-standards/ (accessed August 2021).

Santa Barbara County Association of Governments. 1993. Santa Barbara County Airport Land Use Plan. October 1993. http://www.sbcag.org/airport-land-use-commission.html#documents (accessed August 2021).

____. 2017. 2040 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. Adopted August 17, 2017. http://www.sbcag.org/rtp.html (accessed September 2021).

Shapero, Matthew. 2019. Livestock & Range Advisor, University of California Cooperative Extension – Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties. Personal communication regarding the suitability of the study area for rangeland with Annaliese Miller, Associate Environmental Planner, Rincon Consultants, Inc. October 30, 2019.

Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP). 2010. Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources. Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Impact Mitigation Guidelines Revision Committee.

State of California. 2018. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment - Central Coast Region Report. September 2018. http://www.climateassessment.ca.gov/regions/ (accessed August 2021).

State Water Resources Control Board. 2019. GeoTracker. https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov (accessed August 2021).

Tennyson, M.E. 1992. Preliminary geologic map of Santa Maria 30' by 60' quadrangle, California. U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report OF-92-189, scale 1:100,000.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). 2021. "Web Soil Survey." https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm (accessed August 2021).

United States Environmental Protection Agency. 2018. Criteria Air Pollutants. Last modified March 8, 2018. https://www.epa.gov/criteria-air-pollutants (accessed August 2021).

____. 2019. Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2017. Febraury 12, 2019. https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-01/documents/2018_complete_report.pdf (accessed August 2021).

____. 2021. EnviroMapper. https://geopub.epa.gov/myem/efmap/ (accessed August 2021).

United States Geological Survey (USGS). 2021. U.S. Quaternary Faults. https://usgs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer (accessed August 2021).

United States Global Change Research Program. 2018. Fourth National Climate Assessment Volume II: Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States. https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/ (accessed August 2021).

University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) Online Database. 2019. UCMP Specimen Search Portal. http://ucmpdb.berkeley.edu/ (accessed August 2021).

Woodring, W.P., and Bramlette, M.N. 1950. Geology and Paleontology of the Santa Maria District California. U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 222. https://pubs.usgs.gov/pp/0222/report.pdf (accessed August 2021).

5.1 COUNTY DEPARTMENTS CONSULTED

Police, Fire, Public Works, Flood Control, Parks, Environmental Health, Special Districts, Regional Programs, Other: _____

5.2 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

X	Seismic Safety/Safety Element	X	Conservation Element
X	Agricultural Element	X	Noise Element
X	Land Use Element	X	Circulation Element
	ERME	X	Orcutt Community Plan
X	Energy Element	X	Scenic Highways Element

5.3 OTHER SOURCES

X	Field work	X	Ag Preserve maps
X	Calculations	X	Flood Control maps
X	Project plans	X	Other technical references

X	Traffic studies		(reports, survey, etc.)
X	Records	X	Planning files, maps, reports
	Grading plans	X	Zoning maps
	Elevation, architectural renderings	X	Soils maps/reports
X	Published geological map/reports	X	Plant maps
X	Topographical maps	X	Archaeological maps and reports
			Other

6.0 PROJECT SPECIFIC *(Short- and Long-term)* AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

6.1 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

The proposed project would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts.

6.2 SIGNIFICANT BUT MITIGABLE IMPACTS

The proposed project may result in the following significant impacts; however, implementation of the identified mitigation measures would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Air Quality. The project may result in the following impacts, which would be mitigated by Mitigation Measure Air-01:

- The violation of any ambient air quality standard, a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, or exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (emissions from direct, indirect, mobile and stationary sources).
- Extensive dust generation.

Biological Resources. The project may result in in the following impacts, which would be mitigated by Mitigation Measures Bio-01 through Bio-04:

- The loss of healthy at least one native specimen tree.
- A reduction in the numbers, a restriction in the range, or an impact to the critical habitat of any unique, rare, threatened or endangered species of animals.
- A reduction in the diversity or numbers of animals on-site (including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, or invertebrates).
- A deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat (for foraging, breeding, roosting, nesting, etc.).

Noise. The project may result in the following impact, which would be mitigated by Mitigation Measure N-01:

- Short-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds.

Water Resources/Flooding. The project may result in the following impacts, which would be mitigated by Mitigation Measure Wat-01:

- Changes in percolation rates, drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface water runoff.
- Change in the amount of surface water in any water body.
- Discharge, directly or through a storm drain system, into surface waters (including but not limited to wetlands, riparian areas, ponds, springs, creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, tidal areas, bays, ocean, etc.) or alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, or thermal water pollution.
- The substantial degradation of groundwater quality including saltwater intrusion.
- Introduction of storm water pollutants (e.g., oil, grease, pesticides, nutrients, sediments, pathogens, etc.) into groundwater or surface water.

6.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are defined as two or more individual effects which, when considered together are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. Under Section 15064 of the CEQA Guidelines, the lead agency (Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Department) must identify cumulative impacts, determine their significance and determine if the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable. Cumulative impacts have been addressed under each issue area. As discussed therein, the proposed project would not result in cumulatively considerable contributions to cumulative impacts.

7.0 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
1. 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, contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions or significantly increase energy consumption, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		✓			
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?				✓	
3. 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.)			✓		
4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		✓			
5. Is there disagreement supported by facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts and/or expert opinion supported by facts over the significance of an effect which would warrant investigation in an EIR ?				✓	

1. **Less than significant with mitigation.** The project does not have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment. As discussed in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, the project does not have the potential to 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, or substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal with the implementation of mitigation measures. As discussed in Section 4.3b, *Air Quality – Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, and Section 4.6, *Energy*, the project would not contribute significantly to GHG emissions or significantly increase energy consumption. In addition, as discussed in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*, the project would not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact after implementation of the mitigation measures in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*.
2. **No impact.** The project involves the construction and operation of a fire station in the community of Orcutt. The project does not have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals. No impact would occur.

3. **Less than significant.** As discussed in Sections 4.1 through 4.15, the project would result in impacts that are individually limited to the project site and the portion of land between the project site and Union Valley Parkway (related to the two proposed driveways along the roadway) but are not cumulatively considerable. This impact would be less than significant.
4. **Less than significant with mitigation.** In general, impacts to human beings are associated with such issues as air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, and noise impacts. As detailed in Section 4.3a, *Air Quality*, Section 4.9, *Hazardous Materials/Risk of Upset*, and Section 4.11, *Noise*, construction of the proposed project would have the potential to generate extensive dust; however, the project would not expose workers and the public to hazardous materials or result in short- or long-term exposure of people to high noise levels with implementation of Mitigation Measure N-01. Therefore, impacts to human beings would be potentially significant related to extensive dust. With implementation of Mitigation Measure Air-01, which requires implementation of the County's and SBCAPCD's dust control measures, and Mitigation Measure N-01, which would ensure construction noise levels would not exceed the County's noise threshold of 65 CNEL at residential properties, potential impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, impacts to human beings would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated under the proposed project.
5. **No impact.** There is no known disagreement supported by facts or any reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts and/or expert opinion supported by facts over the significance of an effect which would warrant investigation in an EIR.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

The proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts related to human beings related to extensive dust. With implementation of Mitigation Measure Air-01, potential impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

8.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Pursuant to CEQA, project alternatives are only required for projects which would result in significant and immitigable impacts to the environment. Any potentially significant impacts resulting from the proposed fire station could be mitigated to less than significant impacts. Therefore, no project alternatives were considered.

9.0 INITIAL REVIEW OF PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE SUBDIVISION, ZONING AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Zoning

The proposed project is consistent with the requirements of the County's Land Use and Development Code. The proposed project would not change existing land use designations or zoning. The existing Design Residential (DR-3.3) zoning of the project site allows for fire stations provided that the applicable permit (e.g., Land Use Permit or Minor Conditional Use Permit) is obtained.

Comprehensive Plan

The project would be subject to all applicable requirements and policies of the County's Comprehensive Plan, including the Orcutt Community Plan. This analysis will be provided in the forthcoming staff report. These policies include but are not limited to the following:

1. Hillside and Watershed Protection Policies 1 through 7
2. Historical and Archaeological Policies 5
3. Energy Element Policy 1.3
4. Orcutt Community Plan and Key Site 27 policies and development standards

10.0 RECOMMENDATION BY SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT STAFF

On the basis of the Initial Study, the staff of the Fire Protection District:

- Finds that the proposed project WILL NOT have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, recommends that a Negative Declaration (ND) be prepared.

- Finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures incorporated into the REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION would successfully mitigate the potentially significant impacts. Staff recommends the preparation of an ND. The ND finding is based on the assumption that mitigation measures will be acceptable to the project proponent; if not acceptable a revised Initial Study finding for the preparation of an EIR may result.

- Finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and recommends that an EIR be prepared.

- Finds that from existing documents (previous EIRs, etc.) that a subsequent document (containing updated and site-specific information, etc.) pursuant to CEQA Sections 15162/15163/15164 should be prepared.

  Potentially significant unavoidable adverse impact areas:

  With Public Hearing Without Public Hearing

PREVIOUS DOCUMENT:

PROJECT EVALUATOR:_____ **DATE:**

11.0 DETERMINATION BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEARING OFFICER

- I agree with staff conclusions. Preparation of the appropriate document may proceed.
- I DO NOT agree with staff conclusions. The following actions will be taken:
- I require consultation and further information prior to making my determination.

SIGNATURE:_____ **INITIAL STUDY DATE**: _____

SIGNATURE:_____ **NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE**:_____

SIGNATURE:_____ **REVISION DATE:** _____

SIGNATURE:_____ **FINAL NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE:** _____

12.0 ATTACHMENTS

A. CalEEMod Outputs

B. Biological Resources Assessment

C. Cultural Resources Technical Study

D. Energy Calculation Sheets

E. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment

F. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment

G. Noise Calculations