

Downtown Specific Plan

Draft IS/MND

City of Twentynine Palms

12 January 2022

Downtown Specific Plan Draft IS/MND

This document has been prepared by:



In collaboration with:



GHD
320 Goddard Way, Suite 200
Irvine, CA 92618

12 January 2022

Contents

Contents i

1. Project Information 1-1

 1.1 CEQA Requirements 1-1

 Environmental Analysis Methodology 1-1

 1.2 Project Background 1-2

 1.3 Project Location and Existing Setting 1-2

 1.4 Project Description 1-3

 Purpose 1-3

 Proposed Land Use Designations (Proposed Zoning) 1-3

 Commercial Districts 1-3

 Residential Districts 1-3

 Other Features 1-4

 Development Strategy Areas 1-4

 Design Guidelines 1-6

 Beautification 1-6

 Street Network 1-7

 1.5 Required Agency Approvals 1-7

 1.6 Tribal Consultation 1-7

2. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected 2-1

3. Environmental Analysis 3-1

 3.1 Aesthetics 3-1

 3.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources 3-4

 3.3 Air Quality 3-5

 3.4 Biological Resources 3-7

 Special-status Plant Species 3-8

 Special-status Wildlife Species 3-8

 Mitigation Measures 3-8

 3.5 Cultural Resources 3-11

 Mitigation Measures 3-12

 Mitigation Measures 3-13

 Mitigation Measures 3-13

 3.6 Energy Resources 3-14

 3.7 Geology and Soils 3-16

 Flooding Hazards 3-17

 Mitigation Measures 3-20

 3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions 3-21

 3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials 3-23

 Mitigation Measures 3-25

 3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality 3-27

 Domestic Water 3-27

	Wastewater Treatment.....	3-28
	Flood Control/Drainages.....	3-28
	Surface Water Quality.....	3-28
3.11	Land Use and Planning	3-32
	Consistency with the General Plan Land Use Designations and Zoning Code.....	3-32
	Consistency with the General Plan Goals and Policies.....	3-33
	Consistency with the Downtown Specific Plan Goals and Policies	3-39
3.12	Mineral Resources	3-40
3.13	Noise.....	3-41
3.14	Population and Housing.....	3-43
3.15	Public Services	3-45
	Fire Protection.....	3-45
	Police Protection	3-45
	Schools	3-45
	Parks	3-46
3.16	Recreation	3-47
3.17	Transportation.....	3-49
	Roadways	3-49
	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities.....	3-50
	Public Transit	3-50
	Airports.....	3-50
	VMT Analysis Methodology	3-53
	VMT Analysis Results.....	3-53
3.18	Tribal Cultural Resources	3-55
3.19	Utilities and Service Systems	3-57
	Domestic Water	3-57
	Wastewater Treatment.....	3-57
	Solid Waste	3-58
3.20	Wildfire.....	3-61
3.21	Mandatory Findings of Significance.....	3-63
4.	References	4-1
5.	Report Preparers	5-1
5.1	City of Twentynine Palms	5-1
5.2	GHD.....	5-1
5.3	Sub-consultants	5-1
	Stantec.....	5-1
	Converge 2 Plan	5-1

Table index

Table 1-1	City of Twentynine Palms Downtown Specific Plan Area Development Potential: Additional Uses Compared to Existing Conditions.....	1-6
Table 3.13-1	Noise Standards.....	3-41

Figure index

Figure 1. Project Location	1-8
Figure 2. Project Vicinity	1-9
Figure 3. Aerial Photo	1-10
Figure 4. Land Use and Zoning	1-11

1. Project Information

Project Title	Downtown Specific Plan
Lead Agency Name & Address	City of Twentynine Palms 6136 Adobe Road Twentynine Palms, CA 92277
Contact Person & Phone Number	Travis Clark Community Development Director City of Twentynine Palms (760) 367-6799 x1008
Project Location	Located within the City of Twentynine Palms, which is in the County of San Bernardino along the State Route (SR) 62 corridor.
General Plan Land Use Designation	Various
Zoning	Various

1.1 CEQA Requirements

This project is subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The lead agency is the City of Twentynine Palms. The purpose of this Initial Study is to provide a basis for deciding whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Report, a Mitigated Negative Declaration or a Negative Declaration. This Initial Study is intended to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA, (Public Resources Code, Div 13, Sec 21000-21177), and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sec 15000-15387). CEQA encourages lead agencies and applicants to modify their projects to avoid significant adverse impacts.

Section 15063(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines states the content requirements of an Initial Study as follows:

1. A description of the project including the location of the project;
2. An identification of the environmental setting;
3. An identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix, or other method, provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries;
4. A discussion of the ways to mitigate the significant effects identified, if any;
5. An examination of whether the project would be consistent with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land use controls;
6. The name of the person or persons who prepared or participated in the Initial Study.

Environmental Analysis Methodology

The State CEQA Guidelines present several "Special Situations" that include unique requirements for environmental evaluation. Section 15183 discusses "Projects Consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan, or Zoning". Subsection (a) states, "CEQA mandates that projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be necessary to

examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. This streamlines the review of such projects and reduces the need to prepare repetitive environmental studies.”

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan would enable proposed future projects to consider this impact analysis when evaluating their potential environmental impacts. Where sufficiently addressed herein, future development may be considered “within the scope” of this environmental analysis. As a programmatic-level document, however, this CEQA analysis is not anticipated to provide sufficient detail to fully address the project-specific impacts of all future development. Indeed, it is anticipated that in many cases additional environmental technical studies or CEQA documentation may be needed for future projects once sufficient details are known. In such cases, the necessary environmental studies and documentation may be conducted at the time of proposal. Many future projects, as small infill development, are anticipated to meet the criteria for a Categorical Exemption under CEQA.

1.2 Project Background

The City of Twentynine Palms is preparing a new Downtown Specific Plan to foster the economic and physical revitalization of the downtown area. It is intended to guide the orderly development and redevelopment of the downtown infrastructure, businesses, and housing. The City’s objectives include creating a walkable, pedestrian friendly downtown and a lively center that is the focal point for the community. Population growth anticipated by the Downtown Specific Plan is assumed to be captured within the City’s current General Plan; however, the Downtown Specific Plan would concentrate portions of that growth into various development areas described herein. This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to provide a programmatic-level review of potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed Downtown Specific Plan.

1.3 Project Location and Existing Setting

The Downtown Specific Plan project area is located in the City of Twentynine Palms, which is in the County of San Bernardino along the State Route (SR) 62 corridor. The City is located in the Morongo Basin, which forms the southwestern corner of the Mojave Desert. This basin includes Joshua Tree National Park and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. The Mojave Desert is separated from the Sonoran Desert to the south by the Little San Bernardino and Eagle Mountains, which are extensions of the Transverse Ranges. The western Mojave Desert is a flat, sparsely vegetated region that is interspersed with mountain ranges and dry lakes. There are no natural drainages. The only major drainage structure in the City is the Twentynine Palms Flood Control Channel, which was designed and constructed to protect the central business district.

The project area encompasses over 188 acres (0.30 square miles) of the City’s downtown core spanning from Sun Valley Drive on the north end to Cactus Road on the south; and from approximately Margot Avenue on the west, to West Court on the east. The site includes the Civic Center area located at Adobe Road and Civic Center Drive. The project area is developed along its principal transportation corridors, accompanied by occasional vacant lots, street trees, and other ornamental landscaping. The area consists of a mix of various types of development, principally one- to two-story residential and commercial structures. Uses include commercial (e.g., antique shops, vehicle repair, restaurants, gas stations), hotel/lodging, and civic (e.g., library, city hall, police department). The project area in its current state is largely improved with a full grid-pattern street network, some curbs and sidewalks, crosswalks, and on-street parking that aligns Highway 62 and other local roads in the project area. Figure 2, Project Vicinity,

presents the project area within the context of the City of Twentynine Palms. Figure 3, Aerial Photo, presents an aerial photo of the project site and surrounding environment.

1.4 Project Description

Purpose

The proposed City of Twentynine Palms Downtown Specific Plan (hereinafter “Specific Plan” or “proposed project”) provides guidance for implementing development within the planning area. The draft Specific Plan is available for public review by contacting the City of Twentynine Palms Community Development Department. The Specific Plan includes an implementation action plan which identifies specific improvement projects, their priority, and who is responsible for implementation. The proposed specific plan furthers the objectives of the City of Twentynine Palms General Plan (hereinafter “General Plan”) by providing a more detailed planning document for development of specific sites and streetscape improvements. The City of Twentynine Palms Development Code sets forth site specific standards and regulations that govern the size, shape, and type of use that would occur in accordance with the proposed project.

The proposed Specific Plan is intended to be built out over the course of 20 or more years. Economically feasible buildout under the Specific Plan could result in the following additional square feet (sf) compared to existing conditions:

- Commercial development: 45-60,000 sf
- Lodging: 120-150,000 sf
- Housing: 295-350,000 sf
- Office: 20-30,000 sf
- Civic Center Development: 20-30,000 sf

Proposed Land Use Designations (Proposed Zoning)

Proposed land use designations for the Downtown Specific Plan Area include:

Commercial Districts

- Downtown Traditional (DT): Inspired by, and consistent with, the City of Twentynine Palms historic, traditional main street development pattern to support a pedestrian-oriented district full of outdoor dining, visitor amenities, and a high-quality public realm. Parking is predominantly public and shared.
- Downtown General (DG): Inspired by, and consistent with, the City of Twentynine Palms’ most prevalent suburban-style car-centric commercial development. The district permits the widest range of development types. Projects are surrounded by parking and driveways – such as fast-food restaurants

Residential Districts

- Downtown Residential (DR-20): Walkable, mid-density multi-family residential district that benefits from its proximity to downtown amenities and distinctive requirements for landscape and setbacks. Both low- and mid-densities are allowed to ensure this area remains a compact yet quiet livable neighborhood.
- Downtown Residential (DR-8): Familiar low-density single-family residential district that maintains a quiet suburban setting accessible to downtown. Some duplexes and low-density multi-family uses may be allowed. Here, the goal is to support new home development and to preserve character.

Figure 4, Land Use + Zoning, presents the Downtown Specific Plan Land Use Map with the project boundary delineated.

Other Features

Other features of the Downtown Specific Plan Area include the following types of improvements:

- Landscape + Public Realm
 - Pedestrian
 - Open Space Landscape
 - Shade Tree Corridors
 - Shade Structures
 - Placemaking + Wayfinding
- Transportation + Mobility
 - Pedestrian
 - Active Mobility
 - Automotive
 - Recreation
 - Park and Walk
 - Transit Nodes
- Parking
 - On-Street
 - Off-Street
 - Pedestrian Connections
 - Park & Walk Areas

Development Strategy Areas

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan divides the project area (downtown) into six Development Strategy Areas (areas), which provide a vision for future land uses, development standards, and design guidelines as envisioned by the community. The six areas include the West Gateway, Twentynine Palms Highway, Adobe Road, Downtown East, Downtown Living, and Civic Center. Desirable land uses within each of the Specific Plan Development Strategy Areas are as follows:

West Gateway

- Traditional Commercial Food and Beverage (F+B)
- Fast Casual (Pad Commercial)
- Vacation Bungalows (Vacation Home Rentals)
- Motel
- Hotel Expansion

Twentynine Palms Highway

- Laundromat
- Shared Parking

- Transit Center
- Duplexes
- Triplex
- Live-Work
- Hotel
- Joshua Tree Cultural Center
- Community Center
- Adaptive Reuse + F+B
- Boutique Market
- Townhomes
- Attached Flats

Adobe Road

- Traditional Commercial F+B
- Outdoor Food Hall
- Pocket Park
- Stacked Quadraplex
- Duplex
- Stacked Flats

Downtown East

- Pocket Park
- Traditional Commercial F+B
- Attached Townhomes
- Event Space
- Townhomes
- Triplex
- Courtyard Bungalows

Downtown Living

- Townhomes

Civic Center

- Stacked Flats (Affordable)
- Community or Civic Facility
- Attached Flats
- Urgent Care Center
- Urgent Care Center Parking

Figure 5, Downtown Development, presents the location of each Development Strategy Area within the context of the project vicinity and existing street network. Table 1-1, District Development Potential and

Densities, presents low and high ranges of economically feasible additional buildout for various land uses that could occur within each Development Strategy Area with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Within the Specific Plan Area, the City would also create 115 additional parking spaces, which, in combination with the existing/reconfigured 815 parking spaces, would provide a total of 930 parking spaces in the project area.

Table 1-1 City of Twentynine Palms Downtown Specific Plan Area Development Potential: Additional Uses Compared to Existing Conditions

Development Strategy Area	Low Range (Square Feet)	High Range (Square Feet)
West Gateway		
Commercial	8,000	15,000
Lodging	68,000	75,000
Twentynine Palms Hwy		
Commercial	19,000	23,000
Lodging	50,000	70,000
Housing	55,000	66,000
Downtown East		
Commercial	6,000	7,000
Lodging	2,000	5,000
Housing	31,000	44,000
Adobe Road		
Commercial	12,000	15,000
Housing	54,000	60,000
Civic Center		
Housing	55,000	60,000
Office	20,000	30,000
Civic	20,000	30,000
Downtown Living		
Housing	100,000	120,000

Design Guidelines

The Specific Plan includes design guidelines for signs, mixed-use projects, utility service components of buildings/structures, facades (building elements and articulation), and other building design principles (color, materials, massing, scale), lighting, landscape and hardscape, parking lots, and site planning considerations. These design guidelines provide specific recommendations that serve to implement the aesthetic intent of the proposed project.

Beautification

The project includes streetscape beautification and other public improvements to public rights-of-way, sidewalks, and public open spaces. Proposed urban design concepts contained within the Specific Plan present the streetscape improvements planned within downtown core area.

Street Network

The project proposes several roadway corridor improvements, including:

- Pedestrian emphasis and widened sidewalks in the SR 62 corridor.
- An optional roundabout at SR 62 / Split Rock Avenue to provide an attractive welcome to the downtown core.
- A road diet from four to two lanes, to reduce the number of travel lanes for multimodal improvements (such as bike lanes, pedestrian crossing islands, and curb extensions) plus turn lanes.
- SR 62 / Adobe Road intersection improvements.
- A road diet from four to two lanes along Adobe Road, with widened sidewalks, curb extensions, and bicycle lanes, plus turn lanes.
- Adobe Road / Gorgonio Drive intersection improvements.

1.5 Required Agency Approvals

Adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan may require the following approvals:

- City of Twentynine Palms – General Plan Amendment
- City of Twentynine Palms – Development Code Update

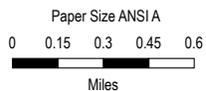
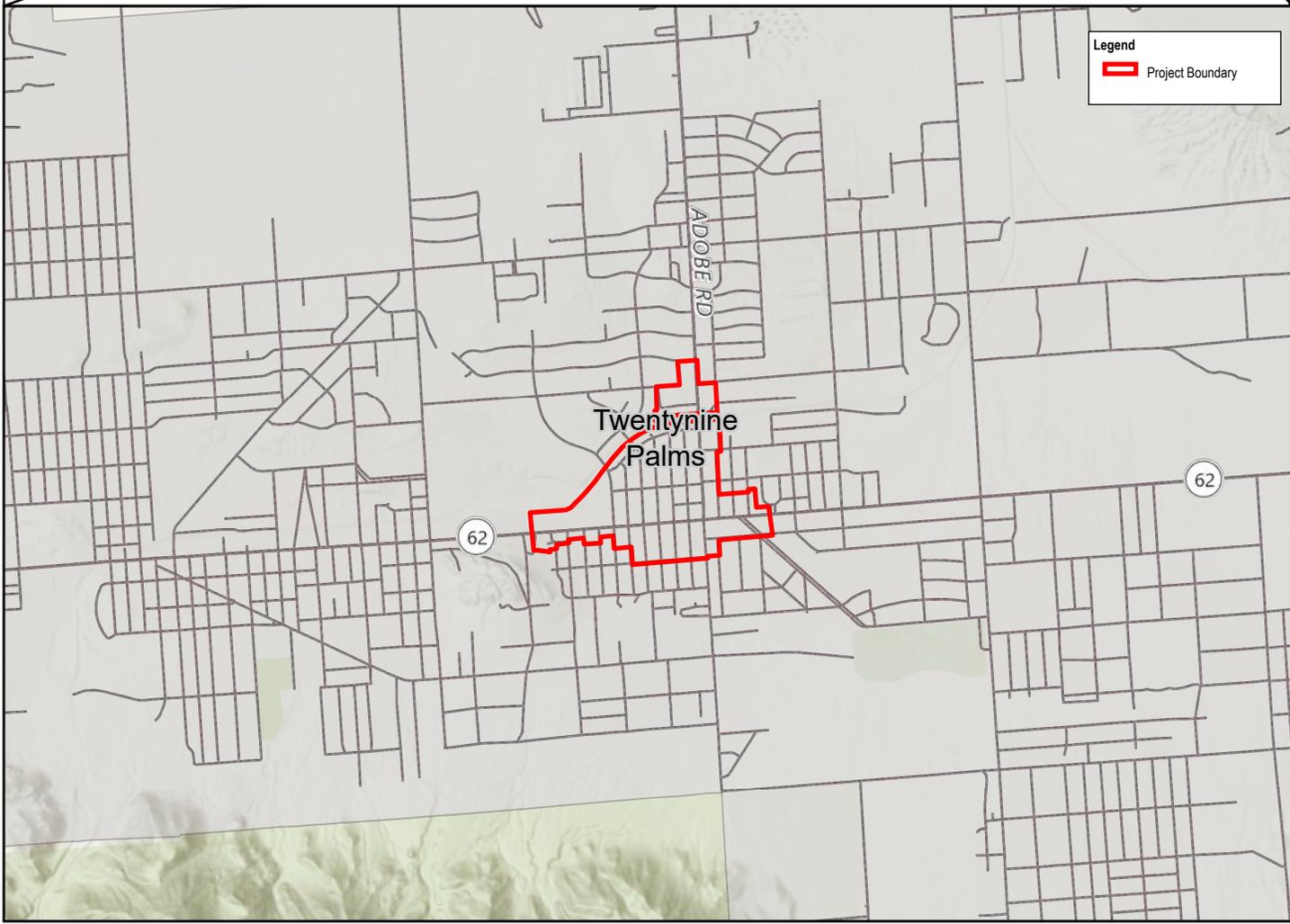
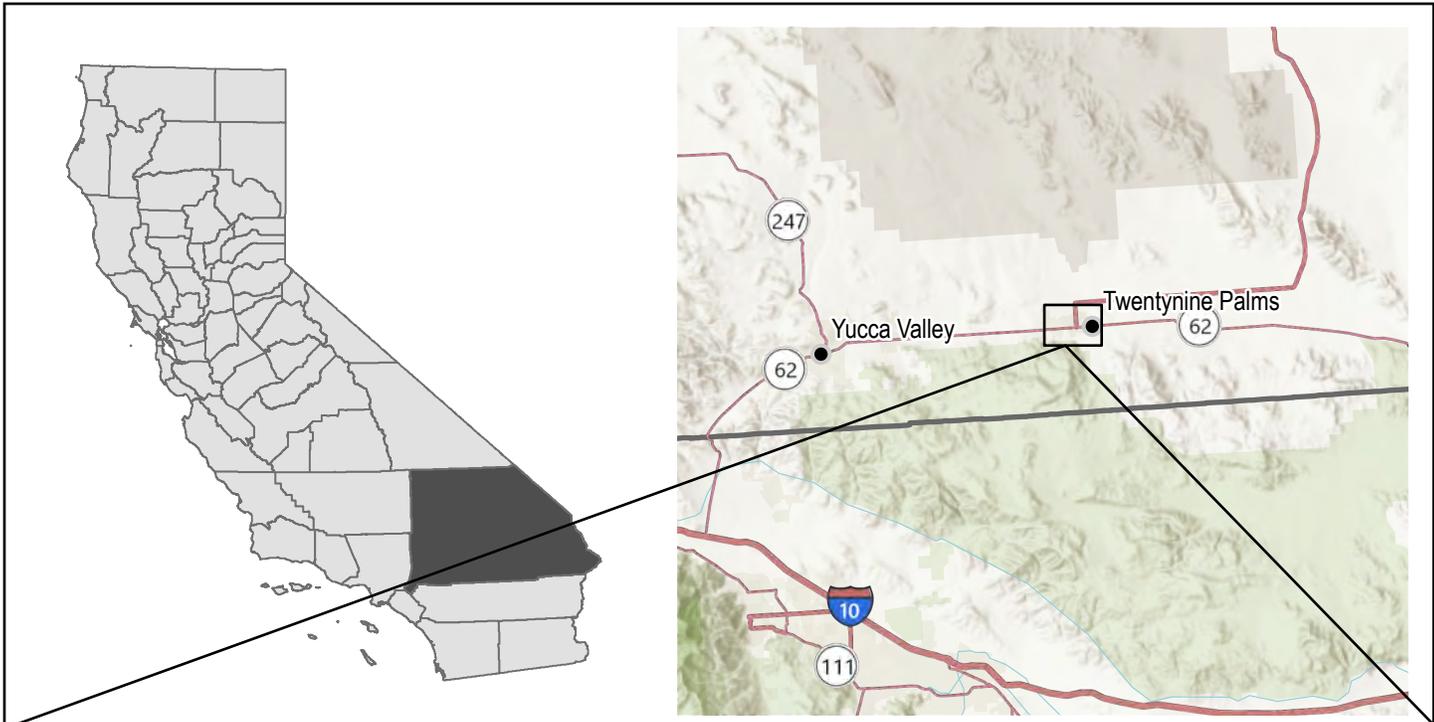
Future implementation of development proposed by the Downtown Specific Plan may require the following approvals:

- Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) – NPDES General Construction Permit and Storm Water Pollution and Prevention Plan
- Twentynine Palms Water District – Connection Permit

1.6 Tribal Consultation

Pursuant to Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), prior to the adoption or any amendment of a city or county's general plan, proposed on or after March 1, 2005, the city or county shall conduct consultations with California Native American tribes that are on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of preserving or mitigating impacts to places, features, and objects described in Sections 5097.9 and 5097.995 of the Public Resources Code that are located within the city or county's jurisdiction. The City has initiated contact with 12 Native American tribes pursuant to the list acquired from the NAHC, as part of preparing this environmental review document. Please refer to Section 3.18, Tribal Cultural Resources, for additional information.

Similarly, pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), the CEQA Lead Agency for any project for which a Notice of Preparation, Notice of Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Notice of Negative Declaration is filed on or after July 1, 2015 must provide notification to tribes that may be traditionally and culturally affiliated to the geographic area where the project is located. The City has initiated contact with three Native American tribes, pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) § 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (i.e., AB 52), as part of preparing this environmental review document. Please refer to Section 3.18, Tribal Cultural Resources, for additional information.



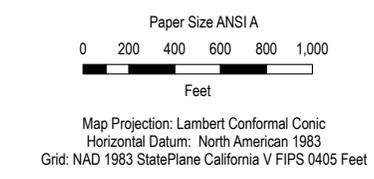
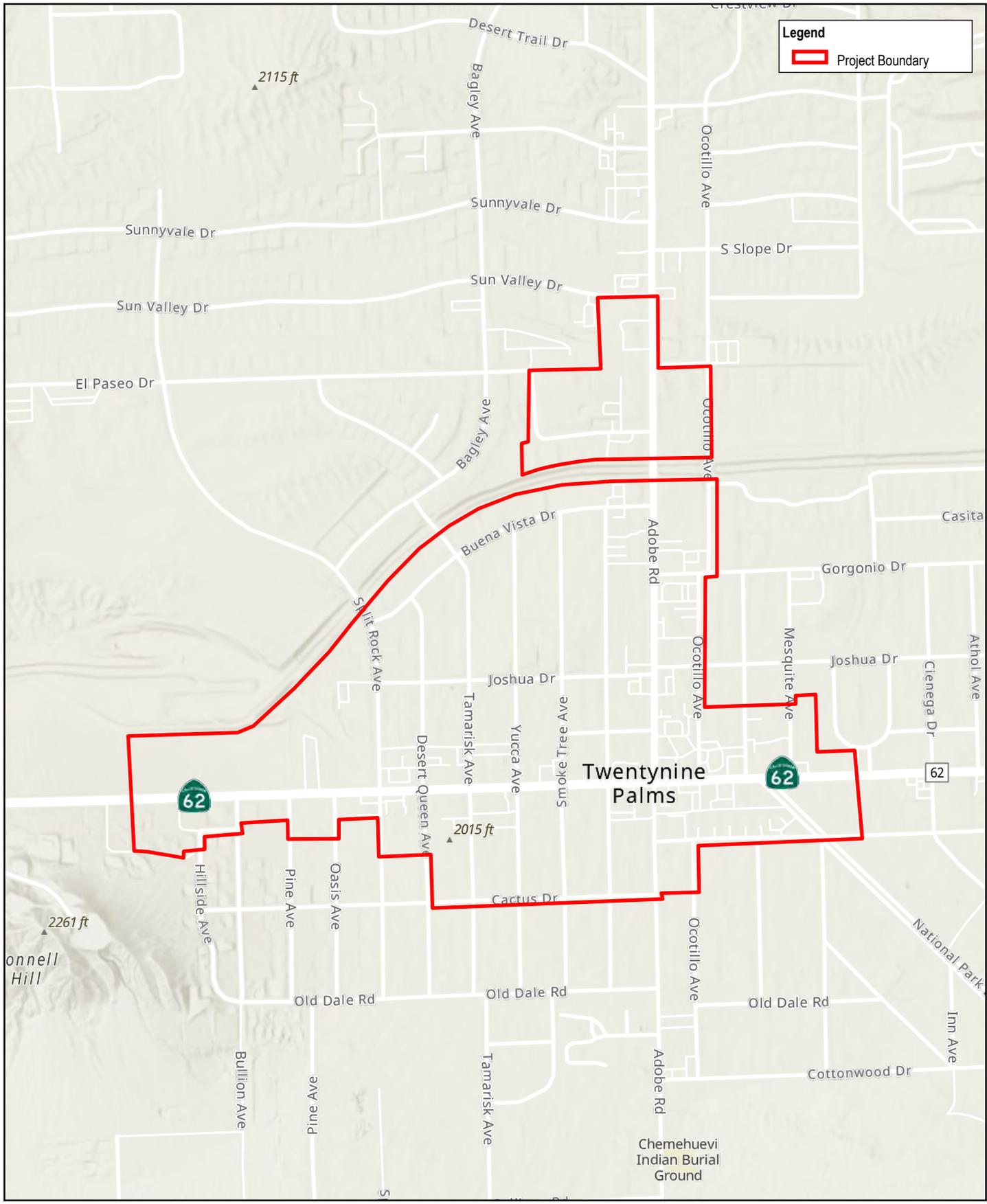
City of 29 Palms
29 Palms CEQA

Project No. 11222675
Revision No. -
Date Nov 2021

Map Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Horizontal Datum: North American 1983
Grid: NAD 1983 StatePlane California II FIPS 0402 Feet

Project Location

FIGURE 1

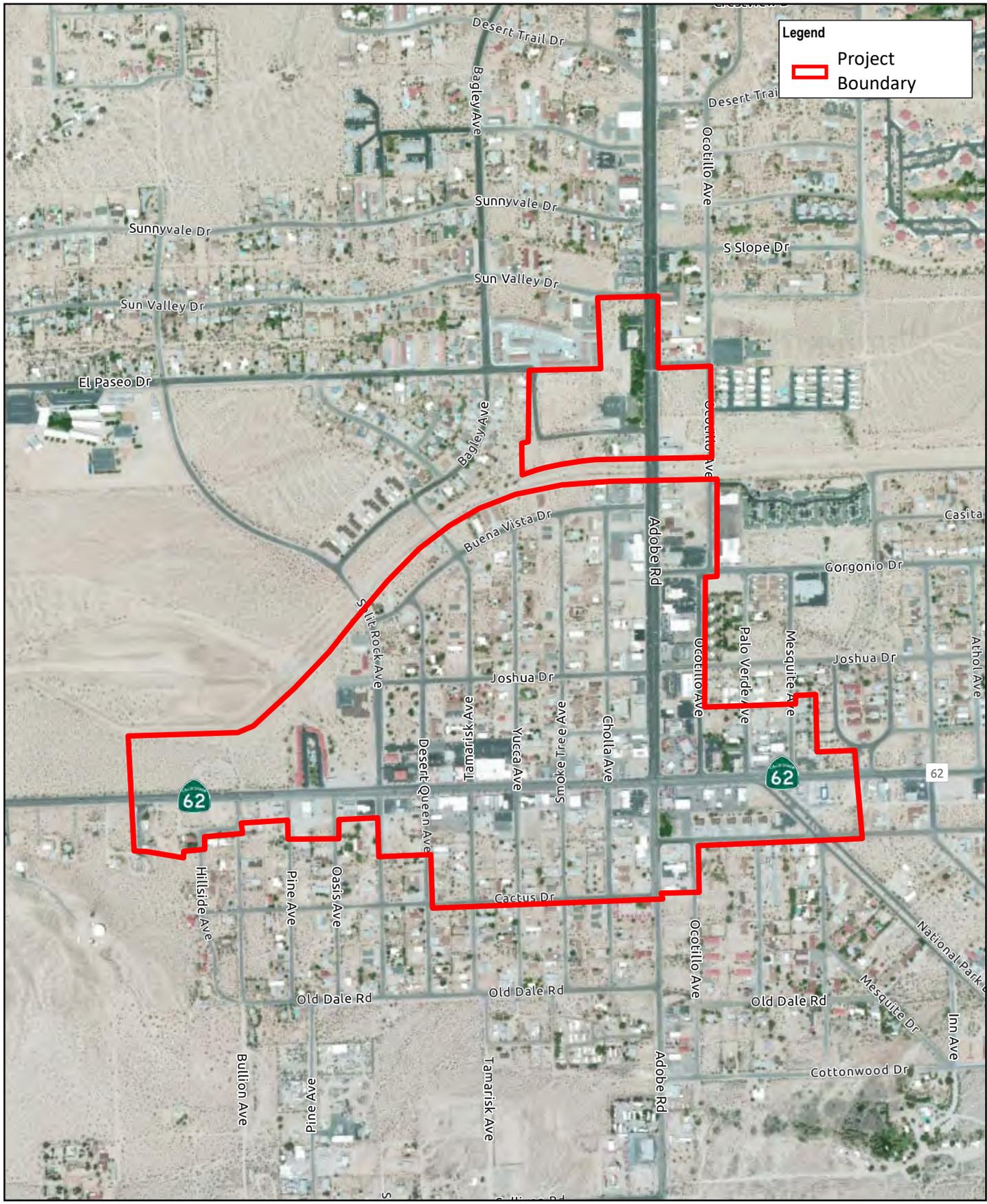


City of 29 Palms
29 Palms CEQA

Project No. 11222675
Revision No. -
Date Nov 2021

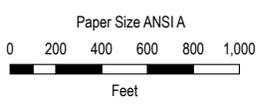
Project Vicinity

FIGURE 2



Legend

Project Boundary



Map Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Horizontal Datum: North American 1983
Grid: NAD 1983 StatePlane California V FIPS 0405 Feet

**City of 29 Palms
29 Palms CEQA**

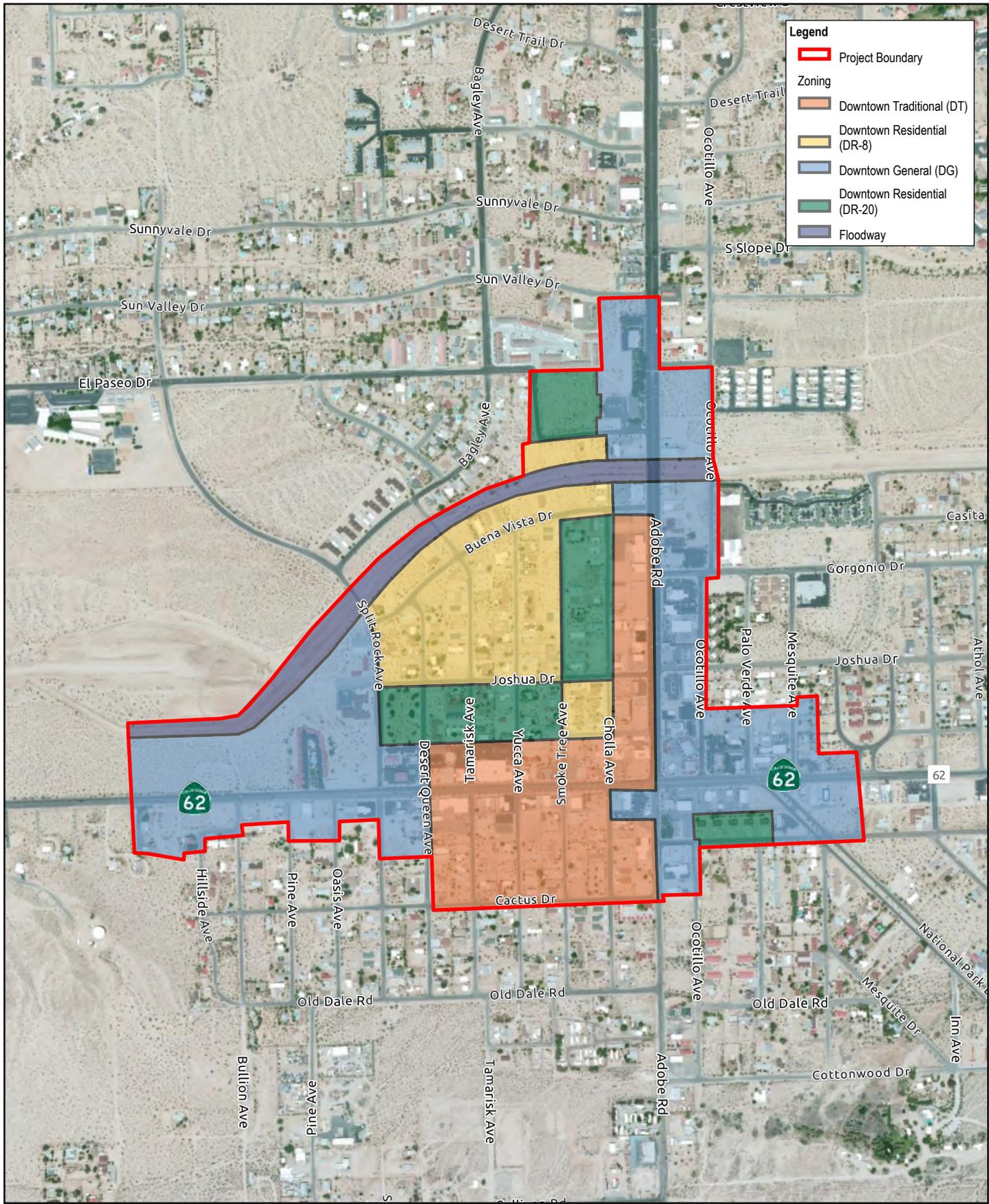
Project No. **11222675**
Revision No. -
Date **Nov 2021**

Aerial Photo

FIGURE 3

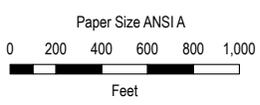
\\ghdnet\ghd\US\Irvine\Projects\56111222675\GIS\Maps\Deliverables\29Palms\Figures\11222675_29Palms.aprx - 11222675_03_Aerial Print date: 18 Nov 2021 - 14:29

Data source: Road Names: Esri Community Maps Contributors, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, INCREMENT P, METINASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA World Imagery (Clarity): Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community. Created by: ethompson3



Legend

- Project Boundary
- Zoning**
- Downtown Traditional (DT)
- Downtown Residential (DR-8)
- Downtown General (DG)
- Downtown Residential (DR-20)
- Floodway



Map Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Horizontal Datum: North American 1983
Grid: NAD 1983 StatePlane California V FIPS 0405 Feet

City of 29 Palms
29 Palms CEQA

Project No. 11222675
Revision No. -
Date Dec 2021

Land Use and Zoning

FIGURE 4

\\ghdnet\ghd\US\Irvine\Projects\56111222675\GIS\Maps\Deliverables\29Palms\Figures\11222675_29Palms.aprx - 11222675_04_LandUse Print date: 16 Dec 2021 - 13:39

Data source: Road Names: Esri Community Maps Contributors, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, INCREMENT P, METINASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA World Imagery (Clarity): Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community. Created by: ethompson3

2. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

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

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural & Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Energy
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology & Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology & Water Quality
- Land Use & Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population & Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities & Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there would not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect: (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect: (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



LEAD AGENCY Signature

January 12, 2022
Date

3. Environmental Analysis

3.1 Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				✓
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				✓
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public view of the site and its surroundings? (Public Views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?				✓
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				✓

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? (Less than Significant)

The City of Twentynine Palms is situated in the Mojave Desert just north of Joshua Tree National Park. Properties in the Downtown Specific Plan project vicinity enjoy views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains located approximately one mile to the south and southwest. Existing lower elevation mountain views are partially obstructed by surrounding developments that range from one to two-story buildings. Middle and upper elevations of the mountains are visible above the surrounding structures but are more distant, so their immediate scenic value is diminished.

The proposed project – a Downtown Specific Plan – comprises a programmatic, policy-level planning document. The Specific Plan is intended to guide the orderly development and redevelopment of the downtown infrastructure, businesses, and housing, but does not propose any specific development at this time. Future development with the project area would be subject to environmental review as required by federal, State and City regulations, discretionary review and must be consistent with the policies of the Downtown Specific Plan. In addition, the Downtown Specific Plan contains a dedicated topic on view preservation as the distant hillsides provide scenic views within the project area. The policies within this topic would serve to preserve the downtown views of the hillsides. Furthermore, site development standards that address site relationships and views are identified within the Downtown Specific Plan. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? (No Impact)

According to the Caltrans Scenic Highway Systems Map, there is no officially designated scenic highway within the project area. Highway 62, which bisects the proposed Downtown Specific Plan Area, is designated as an “eligible” state scenic highway (Caltrans 2021).

The proposed project does not include any development, but includes various policies intended to promote the preservation of scenic resources in the Downtown Specific Plan Area. As examples, one of the stated goals of the Specific Plan is to “preserve and enhance the desert adobe character of the downtown.” This would be addressed through the proposed Architectural Design Guidelines. Several policies that foster preservation of existing large trees, including heritage trees, have been carried over from the Landscape and Scenic Highways Element and included in the Downtown Specific Plan. Additionally, historic preservation is addressed within this topic as many of the historic buildings are located downtown. Future physical improvements and site developments would be subject to the City’s Design Review process and would be required to satisfy various criteria, including those related to natural hazards and land feature preservation, historic preservation/infill development, and building scale and design. The policies and design criteria contained in the Specific Plan are intended to protect, improve and adaptively manage these resources as the community evolves. As the Specific Plan Area is not located adjacent to an officially designated state scenic highway, no impact would occur.

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public view of the site and its surroundings? (Public Views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. As a policy and regulatory document, the Specific Plan would provide policy direction, guidelines, development standards, and implementation actions intended to preserve and enhance the unique character of Downtown Twentynine Palms. Highway entrances and corridors showcase the broad qualities of its desert landscape and set the stage for the experience of downtown and residential neighborhoods. The Downtown’s visual character is typified by the built environment, which features a mix of retail, office, restaurant, residential, public, and open space uses generally designed in the Desert Adobe style.

Because the specifics of future development projects are not currently known, the extent to which various improvements envisioned in the proposed Specific Plan could result in changes to scenic views or degrade the Downtown Specific Plan Area’s visual character cannot be precisely described at this time. However, future development would be located in currently developed areas and would be consistent with the architectural guidelines of the Downtown Specific Plan. Related surface-level streetscape improvements, including sidewalk enhancements, bicycle parking racks and shelters, bicycle lane/route striping and signage, street furnishings, lighting, and landscaping, would be similar in type and scale to existing facilities in the Downtown Specific Plan Area.

Future improvements would be subject to applicable City regulations and requirements and to the proposed design/architectural guidelines that are intended, in part, to preserve the visual character of the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Such improvements would be subject to future project-level CEQA documentation. Given the built out condition of the Downtown Specific Plan Area, the limited nature of the conceptual improvements envisioned in the proposed Downtown Specific Plan, and because existing views are

intermittent and primarily limited to vehicular roadways and pedestrian facilities, as well as the fact that any new development would be subject to the existing and proposed regulatory environment, adoption of the proposed Downtown Specific Plan would not adversely affect existing scenic views or the Downtown Specific Plan Area's visual character or quality. Potential impacts would be less than significant. Furthermore, the proposed Specific Plan is intended to preserve the Downtown's small-town character and charm, albeit with increased development density. With the recommended streetscape enhancements and design guidelines, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan has the potential to improve the visual quality and character of the area. A less than significant impact would occur.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? (Less than Significant)

The Downtown Specific Plan includes architectural design guidelines that address site design and architecture, and identifies design approaches and guidelines regarding lighting for parking areas, buildings and streets. The intent of the lighting guidelines is to encourage design that creates a safe and welcoming downtown environment at night, while minimizing light pollution and unwanted glare. Lighting would be shielded or recessed to minimize light pollution and glare. All lighting would conform to dark sky policies. The City of Twentynine Palms has adopted ordinances to reduce artificial lighting and glare from buildings and outdoor areas, along with allowing starry night sky views for community enjoyment. As future development within the Downtown Specific Plan Area would be required to adhere to the architectural design guidelines and relevant polities, a less than significant impact would occur.

3.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				✓
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				✓
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				✓
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓

a-e) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land? Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? Or, involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? (No Impact)

The project area is located in an urbanized area of the City that does not contain any agriculture or forest uses. Because of the urban nature of the region, the Downtown Specific Plan Area was not surveyed by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (DOC 2021). The project area contains a variety of zoning districts, none of which allow agriculture or forest uses. Therefore, project implementation would have no direct or indirect effect on agriculture or forest resources. There would be no impacts.

3.3 Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			✓	
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?			✓	
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			✓	
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			✓	

The City of Twentynine Palms is located in the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB) under the jurisdiction of Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD). The MDAB forms the southwestern corner of the Mojave Desert. The MDAB includes the desert regions of San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles and Kern counties. The MDAB is an assemblage of mountain ranges interspersed with long broad valleys that often contain dry lakes.

MDAQMD is geographically the second largest of the 35 air districts in the State of California. All development within the City is subject to MDAQMD's 2016 "California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Federal Conformity Guidelines." MDAQMD operates and maintains six regional air quality monitoring stations in cities throughout its jurisdiction (MAQMD 2016).

The primary agencies responsible for regulations to improve air quality in this region are the MDAQMD and the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is an important partner to the MDAQMD, as it is the designated metropolitan planning authority for the area and produces estimates of anticipated future growth and vehicular travel in the District which are used for air quality planning. The MDAQMD sets and enforces regulations for non-vehicular sources of air pollution in the District and works with SCAG to develop and implement Transportation Control Measures (TCM). TCM measures are intended to reduce and improve vehicular travel and associated pollutant emissions.

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? (Less than Significant)

According to MDAQMD's 2016 CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines, a project is considered non-conforming if it conflicts with or delays implementation of any applicable attainment or maintenance plan. A project is conforming if it complies with all applicable District rules and regulations, complies with all proposed control measures that are not yet adopted from the applicable plan(s), and is consistent with the growth forecasts in the applicable land use plan(s) (or is directly included in the applicable plan). Conformity with growth forecasts can be established by demonstrating that the project is consistent with the General Plan growth assessment.

The improvements envisioned in the proposed Specific Plan are recommended conceptual designs intended to be used as guidance for the City in implementing future improvements. The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. As a policy and regulatory document, the proposed Specific Plan would have no physical effect on the environment. Future improvements would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation, including consistency with the land use designations for the Downtown Specific Plan Area in comparison to the General Plan. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any applicable attainment or maintenance plans related to air quality ambient standards. This impact would be less than significant.

b, c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? (Less than Significant)

The Downtown Specific Plan is a policy document that does not propose any specific development; therefore, adoption of the Plan would not violate any air quality standard, contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Plan adoption would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations because it is not anticipated to result in a net increase in emissions beyond those anticipated under the City General Plan. Future site-specific improvements would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

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

The land use designations in the Downtown Specific Plan Area allow for uses that are typically not odor-generating. The compliance division of the MDAQMD handles odor complaints, keeps related records, and if warranted, will investigate the odor to determine the source and association with any potentially hazardous air pollutants. If the odor is indicative of a hazardous air pollutant, the MDAQMD may require the land use to obtain the appropriate permits and mitigate the problem. The potential for the Downtown Specific Plan to create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people is minimal. A less than significant impact would occur.

3.4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?		✓		
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?				✓
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				✓
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			✓	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			✓	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				✓

The following information is based on the Biological Reconnaissance Technical Memorandum that was prepared in support of the proposed Downtown Specific Plan (GHD 2021). The Technical Memorandum documents the results of a site visit conducted on November 6, 2021, and provides information to support a programmatic-level review of potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed Downtown Specific Plan.

The Downtown Specific Plan Project Area is located within the downtown area of Twentynine Palms and is currently composed of commercial and residential properties as well as several vacant lots. The Project Area is bordered to the north, east, and south by additional commercial and residential properties. The vast majority of the Project Area has been developed and contains very limited habitat to support native wildlife. Although the few vacant lots within the Project Area contain native vegetation, these areas have been heavily degraded by vehicular traffic and the presence of trash. The dominant vegetation on vacant lots consists of creosote (*Larrea tridentata*).

Overall, there is little natural habitat structure present across the Project Area. There are some trees and vegetation that may provide suitable nesting habitat for common avian species protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (FGC). No suitable habitat for any special status wildlife or plant species was observed within or directly adjacent to the Project Area.

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

Special-status Plant Species

No special status plant species were observed within the Downtown Specific Plan Area. While the field survey was not protocol-level nor conducted during the optimal growing season windows for species with potential to occur in the vicinity (the site visit occurred during the Fall, outside of the blooming period for some plants), based on existing habitat, the Project area is unlikely to support special status plants. No impacts are expected.

Special-status Wildlife Species

No special status wildlife species were observed within the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Seven native bird species and one non-native bird species were detected during the site visit. As the survey was not protocol-level and many neotropical avian species have likely migrated south by Fall, those observed do not comprise a comprehensive list of all species that could potentially occur throughout the breeding season. Nonetheless, no other wildlife species were observed, and based on existing habitat, the Project Area likely only supports urban-adapted common wildlife species.

Future development proposals would be required to conduct additional CEQA review and a prepare site-specific biological report. If future development would remove trees, a potentially significant impact could occur related to impacting nesting birds protected by the MBTA. The following mitigation measure is included to reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Protect Nesting Birds and Raptors

- Ground disturbance and vegetation clearing shall be conducted, if possible, during the fall and/or winter months and outside of the avian nesting season (generally February 1 – August 31) to avoid any direct effects to protected birds. If ground disturbance cannot be confined to work outside of the nesting season, a qualified ornithologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys within the vicinity of the Project area, to check for nesting activity of native birds and to evaluate the site for presence of raptors and special status bird species. The ornithologist shall conduct at minimum a one-day pre-construction survey within the seven-day period prior to vegetation removal and ground-disturbing activities. If ground disturbance or vegetation removal work lapses for seven days or longer during the breeding season, a qualified ornithologist shall conduct a supplemental avian pre-construction survey before Project work is reinitiated.
- If active nests are detected within the construction footprint or up to 500 feet from construction activities, the ornithologist shall flag a buffer around each nest (assuming property access). Construction activities shall avoid nest sites until the ornithologist

determines that the young have fledged or nesting activity has ceased. If nests are documented outside of the construction (disturbance) footprint, but within 500 feet of the construction area, buffers would be implemented as needed (buffer size dependent on species). Buffer sizes for common species would be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the CDFW and, if applicable, with USFWS. Buffer sizes would consider factors such as:

- (1) noise and human disturbance levels at the construction site at the time of the survey and the noise and disturbance expected during the construction activity;
- (2) distance and amount of vegetation or other screening between the construction site and the nest; and
- (3) sensitivity of individual nesting species and behaviors of the nesting birds.

If active nests are detected during the survey, the qualified ornithologist shall monitor all nests at least once per week to determine whether birds are being disturbed. Activities that might, in the opinion of the qualified ornithologist, disturb nesting activities (e.g., excessive noise), shall be prohibited within the buffer zone until such a determination is made. If signs of disturbance or distress are observed, the qualified ornithologist shall immediately implement adaptive measures to reduce disturbance. These measures may include, but are not limited to, increasing buffer size, halting disruptive construction activities in the vicinity of the nest until fledging is confirmed or nesting activity has ceased, placement of visual screens or sound dampening structures between the nest and construction activity, reducing speed limits, replacing and updating noisy equipment, queuing trucks to distribute idling noise, locating vehicle access points and loading and shipping facilities away from noise-sensitive receptors, reducing the number of noisy construction activities occurring simultaneously, and/or reorienting and/or relocating construction equipment to minimize noise at noise-sensitive receptors.

With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Protect Nesting Birds and Raptors, impacts to protected birds and raptors would be less than significant.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service? (No Impact)

No riparian vegetation was observed during the reconnaissance-level site visit. No Sensitive Natural Communities were observed within the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Future development would be required to conduct further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation and prepare a site-specific biological report to evaluate impacts to biological resources. However, no Sensitive Natural Communities or riparian areas were observed within the Downtown Specific Plan Area, therefore, no impact would occur.

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

The Project area is located within the downtown area of Twentynine Palms and is currently composed of commercial and residential properties as well as several vacant lots. The Twentynine Palms Flood Control Channel is the only aquatic feature and major drainage structure in the vicinity of the Downtown Specific Plan Area. It was designed and constructed to protect the central business district, including the Project

Area. The Twentynine Palms Channel is located outside of the Downtown Specific Plan Area and will not be impacted by Project Activities. No potentially jurisdictional wetlands or waters of the United States or State were observed in the Project Area or in areas to be impacted by future development within the Downtown Specific Plan Area footprint. Therefore, no impact would result.

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

Wildlife corridors refer to established migration routes commonly used by resident and migratory species for passage from one geographic location to another. Maintaining the continuity of established wildlife corridors is important to: a) sustain species with specific foraging requirements, b) preserve a species' distribution potential, and c) retain diversity among many wildlife populations. Therefore, resource agencies consider wildlife corridors to be a sensitive resource.

No wildlife movement corridors or regional wildlife linkages have been identified within the Downtown Specific Plan Area. The Project Area is not located within or near a high-integrity forest habitat "natural landscape block," as identified in the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project (GHD 2021). The Project Area does not contain riparian or aquatic habitat or intersect riparian corridors. There is no direct hydrologic connectivity between the Project Area and off-site waterbodies, waterways, or drainages. No impact on the movement of native resident or migratory fish or essential fish habitat would result from the Project. As the proposed Downtown Specific Plan is a regulatory and policy document, no development is currently proposed. Future development would be required to conduct further CEQA review and prepare a site-specific biological report to evaluate impacts to the environment. Similarly, no new barriers to terrestrial wildlife movement would result from the Project, and the Project would not substantially interfere with migratory birds, bats, or other species. The impact would be less than significant.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development that would have the potential to conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. The City's General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element provides a variety of goals and implementation policies related to protecting and enhancing the existing habitat and present special-status species. The City does not have an adopted tree ordinance. Future development proposed to implement the Specific Plan would be required to comply with all applicable policies included in the General Plan. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? (No Impact)

Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) and Natural Community Conservation Plans are site-specific plans to address effects on sensitive species of plants and animals. There are no such adopted plans covering the Project Area. No impact would result.

3.5 Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?		✓		
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?				✓
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				✓

The following analysis is based on the *Archaeological Resources Review for City of Twentynine Palms Downtown Specific Plan* (Stantec 2021). In order to evaluate the potential for cultural resources to occur within the project area, Stantec conducted a records search and a pedestrian survey. The records search results were received from the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on July 30, 2021. The records search included the Plan Area and a 0.25-mile radius. The results of the SCCIC record search conducted for the current Plan were received on July 30, 2021. The results indicate there are a total of 24 cultural resources within the Plan Area and surrounding 0.25-mile radius. A total of 18 cultural resources are located within the Plan area, and they include 17 historic-age buildings and 1 historic-age road (Twentynine Palms Highway (P-36-010525)). The remaining six resources present within the 0.25-mile buffer include three historic-age buildings, one multicomponent site (The Oasis of Mara P-36-002052), one prehistoric lithic scatter, and one historic-age water tank. On October 28 and 29, 2021, Stantec conducted a pedestrian survey of the majority of the 188-acre Plan Area. The pedestrian survey was completed using standard archaeological and architectural field inventory procedures and techniques. The methods consisted of documentation of all historic documentation of all historic-age buildings, which included noting the address, type, architectural style, and condition of integrity, and capturing photographs of each building. All open-space areas, including vacant dirt lots, and parking lots, were noted and visually inspected for potential archaeological evidence from the roadside. A total of 567 parcels were surveyed.

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5? (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

A cultural resource is considered “historically significant” if the resource is 50 years old or older, possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and meets the requirements for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) under any one of the following criteria (Title 14 CCR, § 15064.5):

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic value
4. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

The fact that a resource is not listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the CRHR or is not included in a local register of historical resources, does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource.

The majority of the 188-acre Plan area was surveyed in October 2021. The setting of this area consists primarily of commercial and residential buildings; however, there are several areas of open space, which have appeared to have been largely graded or landscaped. 18 cultural resources have been previously documented within the Plan Area. None of these resources were determined eligible for the CRHR, as a result of previous study. The survey for the current study identified 14 of these previously documented cultural resources. The remaining four were not identified and have apparently been demolished.

A total of 567 parcels were surveyed. Of these 567 parcels, 166 included historic-age buildings. These buildings are a mixture of commercial and residential buildings, and one church. The architectural styles varied, and include Chain Retail, Contemporary (also known as Mid-century Modern), Ranch, Transitional Ranch, Minimal Traditional, Spanish Revival, and Hi-Desert Adobe. Most of the buildings do not embody a specific style, and only exhibited elements of one or two architectural styles. There was evidence of significant remodeling or additions to many of the buildings, and none of them appear to have sufficient integrity for CRHR eligibility. A full CRHR evaluation of all historic-age resources is needed to properly assess the impacts. As the proposed Downtown Specific Plan is a regulatory and policy document, no development is currently proposed. Future development would be required to conduct further CEQA review and prepare site-specific cultural reports to evaluate site-specific impacts. However, if a historic resource is impacted during future development a significant impact could occur. Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 is required during future development to provide further documentation and CRHR evaluation of historic-age resources within the Plan area. With incorporation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Protect Historic Resources

Future developers within the Specific Plan Area, for projects not considered exempt, shall retain a qualified architectural historian to evaluate all historic-age buildings within the proposed project footprint for CRHR eligibility, to determine any potential adverse impacts to historical resources under CEQA. A report of findings shall be prepared and submitted to the City within 30 days of completion of the evaluation, concurrent with the proposed application for development.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The survey of the Specific Plan Area did not identify any prehistoric archaeological resources; however, the survey did identify two potential historic-age archaeological resources. Both resources are concrete foundations, identified in vacant dirt lots (Parcel numbers 0617-103-14-0000 and 0618-232-33-0000).

As the proposed Downtown Specific Plan is a regulatory and policy document, no development is currently proposed and therefore, the Project would not impact any unknown archaeological resources within the Plan Area. Future development would be required to conduct further CEQA review and prepare a site-specific cultural report to evaluate site-specific impacts. However, if an archaeological resource is impacted during future development a significant impact could occur. Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 during future development would establish the need for further documentation of any archaeological resources within the Plan Area thereby reducing impacts to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Protect Archaeological Resources

Future developers within the Specific Plan Area, for projects not considered exempt, shall retain a qualified archaeological monitor to be present during all earth moving activities within the Plan area. The monitor shall be empowered to stop and redirect construction activities should an archaeological resource be uncovered. Resources shall be identified and documented in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's standards. A report of findings shall be prepared and submitted to the City within 30 days of the completion of monitoring activities.

c) **Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

The Plan area has been previously developed, and it is unlikely that human remains will be uncovered during any proposed developments. However, excavations shall be monitored to assure the identification of any previously unknown remains occurs. As the proposed Downtown Specific Plan is a regulatory and policy document, no development is currently proposed and therefore, the Project would not impact any unknown human remains within the Plan Area. However, if during future development unknown human remains are encountered, a significant impact could occur. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-3 during future development would establish ensure proper treatment of human remains should any be encountered during construction. Therefore, a less than significant impact associated with human remains would occur.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure CUL-3: Protect Human Remains Discovered During Construction

If human remains, associated grave goods, or items of cultural patrimony are encountered during construction, the City shall halt work in the vicinity of the find and notify the County Coroner immediately. The City shall follow the procedures in Public Resources Code § 5097.9 and Health and Safety Code § 7050.5. If the human remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours of the determination. The Native American Heritage Commission shall then notify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), who has 48 hours to make recommendations to the landowner for the disposition of the remains. A qualified archaeologist, the City and the MLD shall make all reasonable efforts to develop an agreement for the treatment, with appropriate dignity, of any human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects. The agreement would take into consideration the appropriate excavation, removal, recordation, analysis, custodianship, and final disposition of the human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects.

3.6 Energy Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?			✓	
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?			✓	

Nuclear energy, fossil fuels such as oil, coal and natural gas, and renewable sources such as wind, solar, geothermal and hydropower are various sources of energy. The electrical energy to the City is provided by Southern California Edison (SCE). Natural gas service is provided to the City by Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). Natural gas is mainly utilized for water heaters and heating of homes, as well as a broad range of commercial and industrial equipment. In areas where natural gas is not available, propane gas, stored in on-property tanks, is also utilized. Both SCE and SoCalGas offer various programs and incentives for all users to reduce energy consumption.

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. Future development in the Downtown Specific Plan Area would involve the use of energy during and associated with construction and operation. Energy use during construction would primarily be in the form of fuel consumption to operate heavy equipment, light-duty vehicles, machinery, and generators for lighting. Temporary grid power may also be provided to construction trailers or electric construction equipment. In addition, construction activities would also result in short-term fuel consumption from worker trips, operation of diesel-powered equipment, and hauling trips. Energy use during construction would be temporary and would be standard for similar construction projects in the region. Long-term operation of development projects would require permanent grid connections for electricity and natural gas service to power internal and exterior building lighting, as well as heating and cooling systems. In addition, the increase in vehicle trips associated with potential development would increase fuel consumption.

Future development in the Downtown Specific Plan Area would be subject to energy conservation requirements in the California Energy Code (Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations [CCR], California’s Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings) and the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) (Title 24, Part 11, of the CCR). Therefore, compliance with these energy efficiency and energy reduction measures would reduce the use of nonrenewable energy sources for development in the Plan Area. Adherence to Title 24 requirements and California Green Building Standards would ensure that future development in the Plan Area would not result in wasteful and inefficient use of non-renewable resources due to building operation. A less than significant impact would occur.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? (Less than Significant)

In 2003, the California Energy Commission (CEC), the California Power Authority (CPA), and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) jointly adopted an Energy Action Plan (EAP) that listed goals for California's energy future and set forth a commitment to achieve these goals through specific actions (CEC 2003). In 2005, the CPUC and the CEC jointly prepared the EAP II to identify the further actions necessary to meet California's future energy needs. Additionally, the CEC prepared the State Alternative Fuels Plan in partnership with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and in consultation with other state, federal, and local agencies. The alternative fuels plan presents strategies and actions California must take to increase the use of alternative non-petroleum fuels in a manner that minimizes costs to California and maximizes the economic benefits of in-state production (CEC 2007).

Locally, the City of Twentynine Palms General Plan includes goals to promote energy efficient designs and equipment beyond the requirements of Title 24 and encourage development to utilize the CEC's Voluntary Tier II Energy Efficiency standards (Implementation Policy CO-4-17).

As the project is a policy and regulatory document, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan would have potential to conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan. However, future site-specific development improvements would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation. Therefore, the Downtown Specific Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

3.7 Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse impacts, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42?				✓
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?			✓	
iii. Seismic related ground failure, including liquefaction?			✓	
iv. Landslides?				✓
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			✓	
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on, or off, site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			✓	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?			✓	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?			✓	
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		✓		

Seismicity and Soils

The City is located within the Mojave Desert geomorphic province, a wedge-shaped fault block known as the “Mojave Block.” The Mojave Block is bounded by the Garlock Fault to the north, the San Andreas fault system to the west and southwest, and the southern Death Valley fault zone, Granite Mountains, and Packard Well faults to the east. The Mojave Block is broken by many major but discontinuous faults (e.g., Pinto Mountain Fault, Mesquite Lake Fault, and Twentynine Palms Mountain Fault).

In the Twentynine Palms area, the trace of the Pinto Mountain Fault is recognized by a pressure ridge. This fault divides into two splays in the Twentynine Palms area. The northern splay of this fault is mostly buried

by Quaternary valley fill but emerges where it joins the west splay of the Mesquite Lake Fault east of the Twentynine Palms area.

The City's geologic composition and seismicity are directly related to the regional tectonics and other local seismic faults in the region. The region is susceptible to a range of geologic hazards, including ground rupture, major ground shaking, slope instability, and collapsible and expansive soils. The valley areas in Twentynine Palms are underlain primarily by silty sand, sand, and gravel.

Flooding Hazards

Twentynine Palms has no rivers or perennial streams but is subject to unpredictable seasonal rainfall which results in sheet flow and the deposition of sand and gravel on the valley floor. During storm events, channels that are dry most of the year can quickly become dangerous torrents of water, sand, mud, and rocks. The southern part of the City receives runoff from numerous canyons in Joshua Tree National Park, and from the Pinto Mountains to the east.

Most of the existing development in Twentynine Palms has been completed without significant alteration to the natural terrain. Therefore, natural drainage courses pass through developed or semi-developed areas. Small channels pass through private yards, and some structures are built within the flow paths of shallow drainages. Most streets which are unpaved follow the natural contours of the land, crossing arroyos and gullies without culverts or bridges. Floodwaters can also overflow these natural channels sending water, sand, mud, and debris into streets, homes, and businesses. Shallow flooding that previously impacted the downtown area has been directed to the flood control channel directly north of downtown and the Specific Plan Area.

a.i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. (No Impact)

The Downtown Specific Plan Area is not located within or adjacent to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The nearest earthquake fault is the Pinto Mountain Fault, which runs approximately 0.24 miles south of downtown Twentynine Palms. The Pinto Mountain Fault is connected to the Mesquite Lake Fault in the subsurface. These faults are capable of generating earthquakes of magnitude >7.0. The project comprises the adoption of a Downtown Specific Plan, a programmatic regulatory and policy document. No development is specifically proposed at this time that would result in exposing building occupants to impacts from rupture of a known earthquake fault beyond current conditions that exist throughout Twentynine Palms. Therefore, no impact would occur.

a.ii) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking? (Less than Significant)

The Downtown Specific Plan Area is located in a seismically active region where earthquakes originating on local and regional seismic faults can produce severe ground shaking. No site-specific development would occur as a result of Plan adoption. However, future development within the project area would be subject to environmental review as required by federal, State and City regulations, and discretionary review, and must be consistent with the policies of the Downtown Specific Plan. In addition, any future development proposed for the Downtown Specific Plan Area would be required to be constructed in accordance with the most recent edition of the California Building Code (CBC) and the City's Municipal Code Section 18.01.020 to provide collapse resistant design. Compliance with all applicable regulations and the CBC would ensure

that future development would minimize potential impacts to people and property in the event of an earthquake. Project-related impacts associated with seismic ground shaking would be less than significant.

a.iii) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic related ground failure, including liquefaction? (Less than Significant)

Liquefaction involves a sudden loss in strength of saturated, cohesion-less soils that are subject to ground vibration and results in temporary transformation of the soil to a fluid mass. If the liquefying layer is near the surface, the effects are much like that of quicksand for any structure located on it. If the layer is deeper in the subsurface, it may provide a sliding surface for the material above it. Liquefaction typically occurs in areas where the soils below the water table are composed of poorly consolidated, fine- to medium-grained, primarily sandy soil. In addition to the requisite soil conditions, the ground acceleration and duration of the earthquake must also be of a sufficient level to induce liquefaction if the groundwater levels are within 50 feet of the ground surface.

The Downtown Specific Plan is a programmatic policy-level document. No development is specifically proposed at this time. However, future development with the project area would be subject to environmental review as required by federal, State and City regulations, discretionary review, and must be consistent with the policies of the Downtown Specific Plan. In addition, any development proposed for the Downtown Specific Plan Area would be required to be constructed in accordance with the most recent edition of the California Building Code (CBC) and the City's Municipal Code Section 18.01.020 to provide collapse resistant design. Compliance with applicable regulations and the CBC would ensure that future development would minimize potential impacts to people and property in the event of seismic related ground failure. Project-related impacts associated with seismic related ground failure would be less than significant.

a.iv) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides? (No Impact)

The Downtown Specific Plan Area is located within a generally urban and built-out area. The Downtown Specific Plan Area is also located within a relatively flat topographical area that would not be at risk of landslides occurring. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include current proposals for development projects nor would the Project grant any entitlements for development. Although the Specific Plan would not directly result in any soil erosion, future activities involving land clearing, grading, and/or excavations could potentially result in soil erosion.

Ground disturbance during future construction of facilities or redevelopment of existing buildings associated with the proposed Specific Plan would have the potential to result in soil erosion and loss of topsoil. However, existing state law requires future development projects to obtain coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) statewide General Construction permit. The NPDES program regulates point source discharges caused by construction activities and the quality of stormwater in municipal stormwater systems. As part of the permit application process, future projects would require a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), which would include a list of best management practices (BMPs) to be implemented on the site both during and after construction to minimize erosion and

sedimentation. Compliance with state law would minimize potential soil erosion impacts. This impact would be less than significant.

- c, d) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on, or off, site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? Or located on expansive soil creating direct or indirect risks to life or property? (Less than Significant)**

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include current proposals for development projects, nor would the project grant any entitlements for development. Future development would need to comply with existing state and local regulations. Compliance with these regulations would minimize potential risks associated with unstable and expansive soils. This impact would be less than significant.

- e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? (Less than Significant)**

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan is located within the area where the City does not have sanitary sewer service for infrastructure. A small package treatment plant is proposed that would serve the buildings that make up the Project Phoenix area. The Downtown Specific Plan does not include current site-specific development proposals, nor would the Specific Plan grant any entitlements for development. Future development would either need to be served by a package wastewater treatment plant or by individual septic tanks in order to treat anticipated wastewater generated by that development as proposed. The proposed wastewater treatment methods utilized would be required to comply with Regional Water Control Board regulations related to wastewater treatment to minimize any potential release into local water sources. In addition, installation of a wastewater treatment system, including its use, sizing and placement, would be subject to a review and approval by the County of San Bernardino Department of Environmental Health (DEH), Regional Water Quality Control Board. Moreover, the City will require project-specific geotechnical engineering analysis as part of the building permit process to determine if soils underlain the site would be able to adequately support the chosen wastewater treatment method.

The Downtown Specific Plan does not propose any site-specific development projects at this time, and future development would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation, as well as compliance with local laws and regulations. Potential wastewater impacts associated with adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan would be less than significant.

- f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Paleontological resources include fossil remains, as well as fossil localities and rock or soil formations that have produced fossil material. Fossils are the remains or traces of prehistoric life. The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any specific projects, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. Further, the proposed land use plan would be consistent with the existing General Plan land use designations for the Plan Area. As a policy and regulatory document, the Specific Plan would not directly result in potential disturbance of paleontological resources. However, future improvements to implement the Specific Plan could adversely affect these resources. This impact would be less than significant with the following mitigation measure incorporated.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce the impact of future construction activities on potentially unknown paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level by addressing discovery of unanticipated buried resources and preserving and/or recording those resources consistent with appropriate laws and requirements.

Mitigation Measure GEO-1: Protect Paleontological Resources during Construction Activities

In the event that fossils are encountered during construction (i.e., bones, teeth, or unusually abundant and well-preserved invertebrates or plants), the Town shall divert construction activities away from the discovery within 50 feet of the find and notify a professional paleontologist to document the discovery as needed, to evaluate the potential resource, and to assess the nature and importance of the find. Based on the scientific value or uniqueness of the find, the paleontologist may record the find and allow work to continue, or recommend salvage and recovery of the material, if it is determined that the find cannot be avoided. The paleontologist shall make recommendations for any necessary treatment that is consistent with currently accepted scientific practices. Any fossils collected from the area shall then be deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution where they will be properly curated and preserved.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
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?			✓	

In 2014, the San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) prepared the San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan. The Reduction Plan provides an overview of the actions each city has selected in order to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG), state-mandated actions, GHG emissions avoided in 2020 associated with each local and state action, and each city's predicted progress towards their respective GHG reduction goal (SANBAG 2014). According to the Plan, the City of Twentynine Palms selected a goal to reduce its community GHG emissions to a level of 15% below 2008 GHG emissions level by 2020. The city reduction plans developed as part of this document are intended to serve as a foundation upon which each individual jurisdiction may decide to develop its own customized and comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CAP). To date, the City of Twentynine Palms has not developed a formal CAP.

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? (Less than Significant)

As a policy and regulatory document, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not directly propose or grant any entitlements for development or change any existing land use designations that would be inconsistent with historical and existing development patterns, and thus would not result in any direct physical changes to the environment. Future site-specific development improvements would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation. Construction and implementation of these improvements could generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from construction activities, increased vehicle use, natural gas combustion, and other operational sources. Emissions would incrementally contribute to global GHG levels. However, the San Bernardino GHG Reduction Plan provides goals and measures intended to reduce GHG emissions. Additionally, future development that would occur under the provisions of the Specific Plan would be required to comply with the California Green Building Standards Code and the California Energy Code. Compliance with these requirements would result in lower emissions than produced by the existing buildings in the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Further, future CEQA review of project-level impacts would evaluate the potential for individual projects to generate GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment and would include feasible mitigation measures as appropriate. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? (Less than Significant)

California has adopted several policies and regulations for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Assembly Bill (AB) 32 was enacted in 2006 to reduce statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

Senate Bill (SB) 375 was enacted in 2009 with the goal of reducing GHG emissions by limiting urban sprawl and its associated vehicle emissions. The proposed Downtown Specific Plan would be consistent with applicable plans adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, as it seeks to concentrate development in the downtown area and encourage alternate transportation through bus, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements. The Downtown Specific Plan is intended to ultimately create a walkable, pedestrian friendly downtown and a lively center that is the focal point for the community. As such, implementation of the Specific Plan would serve to reduce GHG emissions. Furthermore, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan would not directly propose or grant any entitlements for development or change any existing land use designations and, as a policy and regulatory document, would not result in any direct physical changes to the environment. Future improvements would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do not conflict with any applicable plans or policies. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			✓	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			✓	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			✓	
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?		✓		
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				✓
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				✓
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				✓

a,b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. As a policy and regulatory document, the Specific Plan would not directly increase the transport, use, or storage of hazardous materials in the Plan Area and would not create a significant hazard to the public related to hazardous materials. The proposed Specific Plan includes commercial development, residential uses, office uses and civic center development, as well as parking improvements, landscaping, and mobility enhancement. Construction of the Specific Plan components would require the use of hazardous materials such as gasoline, diesel fuel, oil, grease, solvents, and paints. However, there are numerous laws and regulations in place to ensure the safe

transportation, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. For example, Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol regulate the transportation of hazardous materials and wastes, including container types and packaging requirements, as well as licensing and training for truck operators, chemical handlers, and hazardous waste haulers. Worker safety regulations cover hazards related to the prevention of exposure to hazardous materials and a release to the environment from hazardous materials use. The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal-OSHA) also enforces hazard communication program regulations, which contain worker safety training and hazard information requirements, such as procedures for identifying and labeling hazardous substances, communicating hazard information related to hazardous substances and their handling, and preparing health and safety plans to protect workers and employees. As contractors involved with future development proposals in the Downtown Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with existing hazardous materials laws and regulations, the potential impact associated with transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials is considered less than significant.

Once in operation, future development and other improvements could require the use of small quantities of common materials such as paint, fertilizers and pesticides for landscaping maintenance, and various chemicals, fuels, and oils depending upon the ultimate nature of the development. As stated above, hazardous materials are regulated by state, federal, and local agencies, including the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA).

All development within the Downtown Specific Plan would need to install either septic systems or alternative wastewater treatment systems. Exposure to treated effluent could pose a hazard to the public; however, the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) imposes strict standards for the operation of alternative wastewater treatment facilities. These standard requirements are designed specifically to ensure wastewater is at a level of quality that protects human health. Therefore, impacts associated with an accidental overflow of treated effluent from the wastewater treatment system would have a less than significant impact on the public. Future proposed wastewater treatment systems may also store hazardous materials that could include small quantities of chemicals and cleaning agents. No toxic gases are expected to be used or stored within the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations would ensure the impacts would be less than significant.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? (Less than Significant)

The Downtown Specific Plan Area is located approximately 0.04 mile west of the Little School of the Desert. Under the Downtown Specific Plan, no substantial change in land use is proposed adjacent to this school; the areas adjacent to Little School of the Desert would remain public institutions including the library and church. Other projects including the Community Housing Project, Community Plaza Project, and El Paso Road Crossing planned for this area would improve the existing community and their operation would not require the use of hazardous materials or emit hazardous materials. As described previously, future construction consistent with the Downtown Specific Plan would involve the use of fuels, lubricants, and related materials typical of construction activities. The project sponsor would be required to comply with all existing hazardous materials laws and regulations. As no substantial changes in land use are proposed adjacent to the school site, potential operational hazards would comprise the routine use of minor quantities of chemicals such as paints, cleaning solvents, and ammonia associated with normal residential or retail applications. Consequently, there would be a less-than-significant impact related to the emission or handling of hazardous materials or wastes within one quarter mile of an existing or proposed school site.

- d) **Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

The provisions in Government Code Section 65962.5 are commonly referred to as the "Cortese List." A search of the Cortese List was completed for the project to determine if any known hazardous waste sites have been recorded on or adjacent to the Downtown Specific Plan Area. These include:

- Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor database;
- List of Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites from the Water Board GeoTracker database;
- List of solid waste disposal sites identified by the Water Board with waste constituents above hazardous waste levels;
- List of "active" Cease and Desist Orders and Cleanup and Abatement Orders from the Water Board; and
- List of hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code.

A search of the Cortese List was completed to determine if any known hazardous waste sites have been recorded on or adjacent to the Downtown Specific Plan Area (SWQCB 2021). A total of 14 Cortese Sites were identified on or in the vicinity of the Plan Area. Five of these sites are permitted underground storage tanks that are operating acceptably and pose no risk. Two are leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites for which hazardous materials remediation has been completed. Five are military clean-up sites, where the initial steps to begin clean-up is underway, but remediation has not yet been completed. The final two sites are military LUST sites that have been closed and do not require any additional clean-up.

To ensure that future development under the Downtown Specific Plan would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment, construction or site disturbance at any of the locations where a Cortese List site was recorded would be subject to further environmental investigation, including Phase I or Phase II analyses, prior to excavation or significant construction, described below as Mitigation Measure HAZ-1.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 would ensure that future development under the Downtown Specific Plan would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment, and would protect construction workers and the public from the risk of accidental release of subsurface contaminants.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level

Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Phase I and/or Phase II Site Assessment

For projects within the Plan Area that require excavation at any of the locations where a Cortese List site was recorded, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (and Phase II sampling where appropriate) would be required. If the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment determines that remediation is required, the project sponsor would be required to implement all remediation and abatement work in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), or other jurisdictional agency.

- e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area? (No Impact)**

The Twentynine Palms Airport is located approximately 5.5 miles east of the Downtown Specific Plan Area. The Downtown Specific Plan Area is not located within the boundaries of the airport's land use compatibility plan, nor is it located in the vicinity of a private airstrip. The project would not result in safety hazards for people living or working in the area. No Impact would occur.

- f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (No Impact)**

There are no formally adopted emergency response routes within the City of Twentynine Palms. However, State Route 62 is a major arterial through the City that could serve as an evacuation route. The Downtown Specific Plan would not impair access to the surrounding neighborhoods or adjacent areas of the City, therefore the project would have no impact on adopted emergency response or evacuation plans.

- g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? (No Impact)**

The Downtown Specific Plan Area is located in the City's urban core, is not located in a wildland fire hazard zone, and is not susceptible to wildfires (City 2012). Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to significant risks associated with wildfires. No project related impact is expected. Please refer to Section 3.20 (Wildfire) for a more comprehensive description of wildfire risks.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			✓	
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			✓	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			✓	
ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			✓	
iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			✓	
iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?			✓	
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?			✓	
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?			✓	

Domestic Water

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan Area is located within the Twentynine Palms Water District (District, or TPWD) boundaries for domestic water services. TBWD's water service area consists of 87 square miles, including the City of Twentynine Palms. The District's water supply source is 100 percent groundwater produced from District-owned and operated wells. TPWD provides water service to approximately 6,759 people in their water service area (TPWD 2015).

TPWD overlies two non-adjudicated groundwater basins: the Twentynine Palms Valley Basin, and the Joshua Tree Basin. Within the Twentynine Palms Valley Basin are the Mesquite Lake and Mainside subbasins. Within the Joshua Tree Basin are three subbasins - the Indian Cove, Fortynine Palms, and Eastern subbasins. TPWD also overlies a portion of the Dale Valley Basin, but there is little to no pumping or historical data from this basin and the District has no production wells in this basin.

TPWD primarily produces groundwater from the Joshua Tree Basin. Total storage capacities of the Twentynine Palms Valley and the Joshua Tree basins are approximately 1,420,000 and 2,540,000 acre-feet, respectively. The existing TPWD distribution system consists of 200 miles of pipelines, including water lines within the Downtown Specific Plan Area.

Wastewater Treatment

The only Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in the vicinity of Twentynine Palms is the Mainside Facility located west of Del Valle Road at Seventh Street at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC). The Mainside Facility treats all of the wastewater generated from the MCAGCC's Mainside area including the Marine Palms, Adobe Flats, camp Wilson area and Ocotillo Heights base housing area. The Mainside WWTP headworks have a maximum capacity of three million gallons per day, with an average flow rate of one million gallons per day (U.S. Department of the Navy and U.S. Marine Corps, 2015).

The City, including the Downtown Specific Plan Area, currently operates with septic tanks, and does not have sanitary sewage treatment. In 2014, the City prepared its first Wastewater Master Plan to identify and describe the potential facilities that would be required for a centralized sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant to replace the septic systems currently in place. A small package treatment plant is proposed to serve the buildings of Project Phoenix, but construction has not begun. A new centralized system would be anticipated to include the area of the City of Twentynine Palms and the unincorporated areas around the City, but is not part of the proposed Downtown Specific Plan.

Flood Control/Drainages

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan Area is located in the southern portion of the Mojave Desert. The area has an average rainfall of 5 inches per year. The only major drainage structure in the City is the Twentynine Palms Flood Control Channel, which was designed and constructed to protect the central business district, including the project area. The natural major drainages of Fortynine Palms Canyon, Twentynine Palms Wash, Indian Cove Wash, Dog Wash, and runoff associated with several unnamed small drainages in the Pinto Mountains comprise areas of potential flooding in the City. The San Bernardino County Flood Control District (SBFCD) is responsible for the management of regional drainage within and in the vicinity of Twentynine Palms. The City works with SBFCD to manage the local drainages within the City.

Most of the existing development in the City has been completed without significant alteration to the natural terrain. Most streets follow the natural contours of the land, crossing arroyos and gullies without culverts or bridges.

Surface Water Quality

The water quality of regional surface waters is largely dependent upon land uses that affect runoff, such as agriculture, urban development, and industrial land uses. Runoff from storm water can transport pollutants that collect on the ground surface and affect water quality of receiving streams, rivers, and channels.

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? (Less than Significant)

Future development in the Downtown Specific Plan Area would generate construction of new structures, which would create additional impermeable surfaces, people, and vehicles that would result in the increase of urban pollutants such as oils, heavy metals, pesticides and fertilizers into the storm drain system.

Water quality is regulated by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) through the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, which was established by the Clean Water Act. The goal of the program is to control and reduce pollutants to water bodies from point and non-point discharges for both long term project activities and construction activities. The Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) issues and enforces NPDES permits for discharges to water bodies in the portion of San Bernardino County where the Downtown Specific Plan Area is located.

Projects disturbing more than one acre of land during construction are required to file a notice of intent to be covered under the NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated With Construction Activity for discharges of storm water associated with construction activities. Project applicants must propose control measures that are consistent with this permit and consistent with recommendations and policies of the local agency and the RWQCB. Some sites may be less than, and some more than, one acre. As previously stated, sites greater than one acre would be required to file a notice of intent with the RWQCB.

The State NPDES General Construction Permit requires development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that uses storm water “Best Management Practices” to control runoff, erosion and sedimentation from project sites both during and after construction. The SWPPP has two major objectives: (1) to help identify the sources of sediments and other pollutants that affect the quality of storm water discharges; and (2) to describe and ensure the implementation of practices to reduce sediment and other pollutants in storm water discharges. Compliance with the requirements of the NPDES General Permit would substantially reduce the potential water quality impact to a less than significant level.

The City prepared its Wastewater Master Plan (WWMP) and Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) in 2014, assessing the potential impact on groundwater quality from the existing septic systems and anticipated future development of a wastewater collection and treatment system. Though not included as part of the Downtown Specific Plan, future development of wastewater treatment systems may have the potential to impact groundwater quality but would be required to treat wastewater in a manner that complies with RWQCB and State regulations. These requirements of law would assure no adverse impacts to water quality.

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? (Less than Significant)

As described above, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan Area is located within the TPWD boundaries for domestic water services. TPWD’s water supply source is 100 percent groundwater produced from District-owned and operated wells. Future development within the Specific Plan Area would demand water from the existing groundwater basins that the District draws from.

According to the TPWD’s current Urban Water Management Plan (2015), the City of Twentynine Palms, including the Downtown Specific Plan Area, was considered in its future water demand projections and analysis, which found that the TPWD has sufficient supply to accommodate growth now and in the future, with the implementation of a number of conservation strategies. The City’s projected water demand for 2035 is 6,131 AFY. According to TPWD, approximately 6,424 AFY of water is projected to be pumped from the local underground basins in that year. Therefore, TPWD would pump more water than needed in 2035.

The Downtown Specific Plan is a programmatic policy-level document. No development projects are specifically proposed at this time. However, future development with the project area would be subject to environmental review as required by federal, State and City regulations, discretionary review, and must be

consistent with the policies of the Downtown Specific Plan. In addition, future development proposed for the Downtown Specific Plan Area would be required to be constructed in accordance with water efficiency requirements, including Building Code requirements and the use of drought-tolerant planting materials and limited landscaping irrigation. Implementation of these and other applicable requirements would ensure that water-related impacts remain at less than significant levels.

c.i) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site? (Less than Significant)

There are no natural drainage features in the Downtown Specific Plan Area; therefore, no natural drainage features would be altered through implementation of the Plan. Currently, stormwater flows drain towards the streets and into the City's stormwater drainage system. During future construction activities, development under the Downtown Specific Plan would create the potential for surface soils to erode and sediment transport to occur. Given that the Specific Plan Area is generally developed, alterations to the existing drainage pattern from future development would be minimal or nonexistent, and therefore erosion, siltation, or flooding on- or off-site is not expected. Furthermore, any impacts from development projects within the Specific Plan Area associated with alteration of site drainage and related erosion from site disturbance such as construction activities, would be substantially lessened to a less than significant level through compliance with the NPDES permit requirements under the Clean Water Act.

Future development would also be required to comply with the City's requirements as they relate to storm water retention, including preparation of a project-specific hydrology study and Water Quality Management Plan. The City's requirement is that post-development runoff cannot exceed pre-development runoff plus 10%. Therefore, alterations in the Downtown Specific Plan Area drainage could affect runoff peak rate or duration, but potential impacts on off-site erosion would be less than significant.

c.ii, c. iii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site? Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development that would have the potential to increase the rate or amount of surface runoff. Future improvements proposed within the Downtown Specific Plan Area could alter runoff rates, resulting in flooding and/or exceedance of the drainage system capacity; however, the downtown area is already generally built out with scattered vacant parcels. New buildings or facilities would be required to be designed to accommodate stormwater collection and conveyance into the City's storm drainage system. Continued implementation of City development standards would minimize impacts related to surface runoff and the drainage system. This impact would be less than significant.

c, iv, d) Impede or redirect flood flows? (Less than Significant)

A portion of the Downtown Specific Plan Area, the San Bernardino County Flood Control Channel, is located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year flood zone, and a portion of the Downtown Specific Plan Area is also located within an area protected by levees. The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development that would have the potential to impede or redirect flood flows. Future development proposals

would be reviewed by the City Engineer for compliance with all requirements as they relate to development within a flood hazard area. Development applicants would also be required to prepare a project-specific hydrology study and Water Quality Management Plan. Therefore, continued implementation of City development standards would minimize impacts related to impeding or redirecting flood flows. A less than significant impact would occur.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? (Less than Significant)

The Downtown Specific Plan Area would be located partially within a flood hazard area, specifically the San Bernardino County Flood Control Channel. However, the Specific Plan Area is within an inland area that is not close in proximity to a large body of water that could carry pollutants from a tsunami or seiche. As mentioned above, future development proposals would be reviewed by the City Engineer for compliance with all requirements as they relate to development within a flood hazard area. Development applicants would also be required to prepare a project-specific hydrology study and Water Quality Management Plan. Therefore, with continued implementation of City development standards, the impact related to release of pollutants due to project inundation would be minimized. A less than significant impact would occur.

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? (Less than Significant)

The City of Twentynine Palms developed a Groundwater Management Plan in 2014, pursuant to Assembly Bill 3030. The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development that would have the potential to conflict with or obstruct any water quality plans or sustainable groundwater management plans. However, future development within the Specific Plan Area would be subject to environmental review as required by federal, State and City regulations, discretionary review, and must be consistent with the policies of the Downtown Specific Plan. In addition, development proposed within the Downtown Specific Plan Area would be required to be constructed in accordance with water efficiency requirements, including Building Code and green building requirements and the use of drought-tolerant planting materials and limited landscaping irrigation. Implementation of these and other applicable requirements, such as for Low Impact Development, would ensure that future development does not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or a sustainable groundwater management plan. A less than significant impact would occur.

3.11 Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?			✓	
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			✓	

a) Physically divide an established community? (Less than Significant)

The Downtown Specific Plan Area consists of commercial/retail, office, institutional, and residential uses. The Specific Plan seeks to creating a walkable, pedestrian-friendly downtown and a lively center that is the focal point for the community. The mix of land uses proposed by the Plan would be compatible with the other existing uses in the immediate vicinity of downtown and its main thoroughfares, including areas both north and south of SR 62, and east and west of Adobe Road. In addition, future site-specific development would be subject to specific design criteria and the City’s Zoning Ordinance, which aims to provide consistency in the City’s aesthetic and architectural land use themes. As such, the proposed project would not divide an established community and would have a less than significant impact.

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? (Less than Significant)

The applicable land use plans for the proposed project include:

- The City of Twentynine Palms General Plan; and
- The City of Twentynine Palms Development Code.

Consistency with the General Plan Land Use Designations and Zoning Code

The majority of the Plan Area is located within the area previously evaluated in 2012 for a Downtown Specific Plan; however, that prior draft Plan was never adopted. There is a small portion of the currently proposed Specific Plan Area that was not included in the prior planning effort, and is designated as Single-Family Residential, General Commercial, and Public in the City’s General Plan. In these areas, the Downtown Specific Plan proposes to designate the area previously designated as Single-Family Residential (RS-4) to Downtown Residential (DR-8) and Downtown General; the area previously designated as General Commercial to Downtown General; and the area previously designated as Public to a mix of Downtown Commercial and Downtown Residential (DR-20).

If the currently proposed Downtown Specific Plan is adopted, the City would adopt a General Plan Amendment and revise its Zoning Code for these areas to match the provisions of the Downtown Specific Plan. This would include the additions of provisions to reflect development standards and provisions to have the design guidelines of the Downtown Specific Plan become part of the development review process. Therefore, once changes have been made to the Zoning Code and the development standards, the

proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan land use designations and the Municipal Code zoning ordinances, and no impact would occur.

Consistency with the General Plan Goals and Policies

Each element within the General Plan contains a number of guiding goals and policies, implementing policies, and supporting background data. The overall Downtown Specific Plan vision is consistent with the General Plan policies for Downtown Twentynine Palms, specifically the Land Use, Housing, Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation elements. The proposed project would be required to be consistent with the following goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan.

Land Use Element: The Specific Plan would be consistent with the following Land Use goals and implementation policies:

Goal LU-1 Encourage orderly growth and development as envisioned by community residents.

Implementation Policy LU-1.6 A General Plan Amendment dealing with a change in land use designation shall ensure the gross area included in the proposed change complies with the minimum district requirements shown in Table LU-5. Changes which propose to increase or decrease the size of existing, established Land Use Districts may be approved provided that the resulting Land Use Districts are not smaller than the Minimum Contiguous Land Area specified in the General Plan.

Goal LU-2 Protect existing neighborhoods and the area's natural surroundings by encouraging development that is compatible with the City's small-town character.

Implementation Policy LU-2.1 Development shall be consistent with underlying land use densities and intensities.

Implementation Policy LU-2.3 Require that new development be sensitive to neighborhood context and development scale.

Implementation Policy LU-2.4 Discourage development extremes, such as, but not limited to, the construction of multi-story buildings immediately adjacent to single-family residences.

Goal LU-3 Promote a high quality of life by encouraging attractive high quality development that is compatible with existing uses and the City's desert environment.

Implementation Policy LU-3.1 Encourage high quality attractive residential neighborhoods, economically viable and attractive commercial and industrial areas, and high-quality public uses.

Implementation Policy LU-3.2 Encourage residential development that enhances the visual character, quality and uniqueness of the City's desert environment.

Implementation Policy LU-3.3 Provide opportunities for a variety of residential densities to accommodate rural and suburban lifestyles, and housing types for all economic and demographic segments of the City's population, with convenient access to public facilities, employment and shopping.

Implementation Policy LU-3.5 Ensure that the provision of housing is consistent with the goals and policies contained in the Housing Element.

Implementation Policy LU-3.9 Encourage public and quasi-public uses that provide community-wide benefits vital to the City and that meet the needs of Twentynine Palms residents.

Implementation Policy LU-3.12 Encourage economically successful commercial and industrial centers that are functional, safe, attractive and convenient to users, and which will strengthen the local economy.

Implementation Policy LU-3.13 Encourage the transition of incompatible, ineffective and/or undesirable land uses to attractive land uses that will provide high quality residential, commercial or industrial developments.

Implementation Policy LU-3.14 Allow the creation and implementation of Specific Plans for areas of community concern/special interest to better guide development of these properties.

Implementation Policy LU-3.15 Properties located within Specific Plans shall be developed per the adopted Specific Plan documents.

Implementation Policy LU-3.16 Protect the desert night sky by requiring that private lighting be installed in a manner that perpetuates the view of the stars in the evening, such as shielding outdoor lighting to protect adjacent and nearby residential districts and public rights-of-way.

Goal LU-4 Adequately address the potential impacts of new development on the existing community and the City's infrastructure system.

Implementation Policy LU-4.4 Commercial and industrial uses proposed within a Specific Plan shall adequately buffer existing or planned residential uses, both within and outside the Specific Plan

Implementation Policy LU-4.6 Encourage development that complements the circulation and infrastructure network, meets the circulation demand of residents and businesses, and provides opportunities for non-automobile circulation.

Goal LU-6 Promote development of a well-balanced community that can adequately meet the needs of future residents and promotes economic development.

Implementation Policy LU-6.5 Encourage development that creates employment opportunities in the City.

Goal LU-7 Protect and preserve Twentynine Palms natural resources, promote the existing quality of life and prepare for future residents and businesses by promoting superior sustainable development.

Implementation Policy LU-7.1 New development shall be designed in a manner that sound land use, transportation and economic development policies are implemented.

Implementation Policy LU-7.3 Encourage a mix of retail, service, industrial, manufacturing and professional uses that create diverse, well-paying employment opportunities.

Goal LU-8 Maintain Twentynine Palms as a clean and healthy place to live, while protecting the City's groundwater supply.

Implementation Policy LU-8.3 New development shall adequately address wastewater and solid waste disposal.

Housing Element: The Specific Plan would be consistent with the following Housing goals and implementation policies:

Goal: HS-1 Preserve and improve the conditions of the City's established housing stock.

Goal: HS-2 Promote and encourage housing development that adequately meets the needs of all socioeconomic segments of the community.

Implementation Policy: HS-2.1 Utilize the Land Use Element, Development Code and other land use controls to provide housing sites that can facilitate and encourage the development of a variety of housing consistent with the City's identified local needs and its regional housing responsibilities.

Implementation Policy: HS-2.3 Encourage development of high quality multiple-family developments where they are compatible with adjacent land uses and provide appropriate open and common spaces.

Implementation Policy: HS-2.6 Address the housing needs of special populations and extremely low income households.

Implementation Policy: HS-2.9 Assist residential developers in identifying and preparing land suitable for residential development.

Safety Element: The Specific Plan would be consistent with the following Safety Element goals and implementation policies:

Goal: SF-1 Minimize injury, loss of life, property damage and economic and social disruption caused by seismic shaking and other earthquake-induced hazards, and by geologic hazards such as slope instability, compressible and collapsible soils, and subsidence.

Implementation Policy: SF-1.1 New habitable structures shall be designed and built in accordance with the most recent California Building Code.

Implementation Policy: SF-1.2 Prior to project approval, new development or expansion of existing projects within the Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone Overlay shall conduct geotechnical and engineering geological investigations, prepared by State certified professionals. No structure for human occupancy nor any critical facility (fire and police stations; City communication centers; hospitals, schools, pre-schools, nursing homes and other limited-mobility or high-occupancy populations; electrical substations and towers, water reservoirs, high-pressure or large-diameter pipelines, and bridges or other key transportation structures) shall be allowed across the trace of an active fault. If these studies confirm that the fault trace of concern is active, structural setbacks or other measures designed to mitigate the potential for future surface fault rupture should be implemented.

Implementation Policy: SF-1.3 Prior to project approval, new development or expansion of existing projects within the Liquefaction Susceptibility Overlay shall conduct liquefaction assessment studies, prepared by State-certified professionals.

Goal: SF-2 Minimize injury, loss of life, property damage and economic and social disruption caused by flooding hazards.

Implementation Policy: SF-2.1 New development or expansion of existing projects within the FEMA 100-Year Floodplain Overlay and Indian Cove/Mesquite Drainage Area Overlay (see Exhibit LU-6, Safety Overlays) shall mitigate flooding hazards to the project and potential impacts to surrounding properties.

Implementation Policy: SF-2.2 Require new development within the 100-year flood plain or repeat flood properties as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to conduct hydrological studies, prepared by a State-certified engineer, to assess the potential impacts the new development will have on the flooding and sedimentation potential of existing development down-grade and implement appropriate mitigation measures to reduce this impact to an acceptable level.

Implementation Policy: SF-2.4 Prohibit new facilities that use or store hazardous materials in quantities that would place them in the State's TRI or SQG databases from being located in the

flood zone (Zones A, AO and X), unless all standards of elevation, anchoring and flood proofing have been implemented to the satisfaction of the City's Building Department, and the Twentynine Palms Fire Department.

Goal: SF-3 Reduce the risk of death, injury, property damage and economic loss due to windstorms.

Implementation Policy: SF-3.2 Require the undergrounding of overhead utility lines in new developments, and review the cost benefit of systematically undergrounding the existing overhead utility lines in the planning area, to help reduce the impact of windstorms on the City's power system.

Goal: SF-4 Reduce the risk of death, injury, property damage and economic loss due to structure and vegetation fires.

Implementation Policy: SF-4.1 new habitable structures shall be constructed in accordance with the most recent California Fire Code.

Goal: SF-5 Reduce the potential for hazardous materials contamination in Twentynine Palms.

Implementation Policy: SF-5.10 Require new development that require discretionary approval by the City and are identified in DTSC databases or pertinent agency databases identified by the DTSC to undertake a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, prepared in accordance with the latest ASTM protocol for such assessments. Require the implementation of the recommendations/mitigation measures from the Phase I study.

Conservation and Open Space Element: The Specific Plan would be consistent with the following Conservation and Open Space Element goals and implementation policies:

Goal: CO-1 Designate, maintain and enhance the quality of permanently protected open space used by both endangered and special status species.

Implementation Policy CO-1.1 Until such time as the West Mojave Plan is adopted, require proposed development projects on previously undeveloped land in areas identified in Exhibits CO-2 through CO-7, Special Status Biological Resources, or other areas where suitable habitat may occur, to prepare a biological assessment in accordance with current state and federal requirements to determine the occurrence of any endangered or special status species or habitat and to adopt mitigation measures.

Implementation Policy: CO-1.2 Require focused surveys for the burrowing owl for development projects on vacant properties, to determine the occurrence of burrowing owl and prepare mitigation measures if necessary.

Implementation Policy: CO-1.8 Encourage developers to preserve, protect and at a minimum salvage naturally occurring desert plant materials for incorporation into project landscaping to the greatest extent possible.

Implementation Policy: CO-1.9 Encourage preservation and utilization of on-site indigenous materials on project landscape plans.

Implementation Policy: CO-1.10 A biological assessment shall be performed for all vacant properties proposing development within areas identified as Desert Fan Palm Oasis vegetation in Exhibits CO-2 through CO-7. Projects impacting the fan palm oasis vegetation type shall be required to comply with the mitigations recommended in the biological assessment. Mitigation measures shall be

incorporated to preserve critical habitat, avoid impacts, or offset the impact in a way that restores, replaces or compensates for the lost biological resource.

Goal: CO-2 Identify the City's cultural resources and establish regulations to protect them

Implementation Policy: CO-2.1 All projects in areas where a previous survey has not been completed in the past five years shall contact the Archaeological Information Center (AIC) for a records search on the project site for potential archaeological or historical resources. The project shall comply with AIC recommendations.

Implementation Policy: CO-2.5 Encourage in-place preservation of cultural resources when such resources are deemed sensitive and significant by a certified archaeologist.

Implementation Policy: CO-2.6 When in-place preservation of sensitive and significant resources is not feasible, require proper recovery and preservation of cultural resources when possible.

Implementation Policy: CO-2.7 Require onsite monitoring of grading activities when deemed necessary by a certified archaeologist as a result of the cultural resources survey required in

Implementation Policy: CO-2.8 Require special monitoring on development project sites known to contain or a soils analysis indicates the presence of finer-grained fluvial, lacustrine, or aeolian deposits which are sensitive for potentially containing fossilized remains.

Implementation Policy: CO-2.9 In the event that Native American cultural resources are discovered during project development/construction, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the overall project may continue during this assessment period.

Implementation Policy: CO-2.10 In areas containing finer-grained fluvial, lacustrine, or aeolian deposits where it is unknown if paleontological resources exist, field surveys prepared by a qualified paleontological professional before grading shall be conducted to establish the need for palaeontologic monitoring which shall be done upon recommendation by the professional paleontologist and approval by the Community Development Director.

Goal: CO-3 Develop polices and programs to ensure an adequate supply of high quality water.

Implementation Policy: CO-3.2 Require that all new development within the City comply with City, water district and state mandates concerning the conservation and treatment of water.

Implementation Policy: CO-3.6 Enforce regulations aimed at reducing groundwater and urban runoff pollution, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Implementation Policy: CO-3.7 Enforce regulations and guidelines for the development and maintenance of project-specific on-site retention/detention basins, which implement the NPDES program, enhance groundwater recharge, and complement regional flood control facilities.

Goal: CO-4 Develop regulations and policies which reduce pollutants responsible for lowering the air quality within the City and for adding to the global climate change problem.

Implementation Policy: CO-4.1 Require air quality analyses for all proposed development projects that have the potential to adversely affect air quality and identify and impose mitigation measures within their design. Projects shall be determined to have the potential to adversely affect air quality based on the significance thresholds established by the MDAQMD CEQA Guidelines.

Implementation Policy: CO-4.5 Locate commercial services near population centers to reduce the length of travel trips.

Implementation Policy: CO-4.6 Require developers to phase and stage construction activities to reduce construction-related pollutant emission levels to the lowest level practical.

Implementation Policy: CO-4.7 Require developers to use water trucks and temporary irrigation systems, as well as other feasible measures, to limit fugitive dust emissions resulting from their activities in accordance with MDAQMD Rule 403.

Implementation Policy: CO-4.11 Develop a system of trails, paths and other rights-of-way for the use of non-motorized transportation, including bicycles and walking.

Implementation Policy: CO-4.13 Develop and implement greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures, including discrete, early-action greenhouse gas reducing measures that are technologically feasible and cost effective, for both public and private development projects.

Implementation Policy: CO-4-18 Future development shall be sited in accordance with the guidelines prepared by the California Air Resources Board in their latest Air Quality and Land Use Handbook.

Goal: CO-6 Preserve quality nighttime views within the City.

Implementation Policy: CO-6.2 Require shielding of outdoor lighting and that lighting be designed and installed in a manner that confines the direct light rays to the property upon which the lighting is installed.

Implementation Policy: CO-6.3 Require lighting in and near residential areas to be minimal and shielded to prevent nuisance glare.

Goal: CO-7 Develop regulations and programs to encourage sustainable practices in land use, use of buildings and for development and construction.

Implementation Policy: CO-7.1 Use the City's building codes and development code to encourage sustainable construction practices and the use of energy-saving technology within buildings.

Recreation Element: The Specific Plan would be consistent with the following Recreation Element goals and implementation policies:

Goal: RE-1 Provide safe, accessible and enjoyable parks and recreation facilities that enhance the community.

Implementation Policy: RE-1.1 Maintain a level of service of at least 4.2 acres of park land per 1,000 residents, and strive for a level of service of 4.8 acres of community park land per 1,000 residents.

Goal: RE-2 Create a comprehensive multi-use trail system that connects users to recreational amenities, community gathering spaces, and natural open spaces.

Implementation Policy: RE-2.4 Encourage developers to provide pathways within their proposed developments to link with the Citywide pathway system.

In addition, the consistency of the proposed project with other applicable General Plan policies, principles, and actions is discussed in the relevant topic areas of this Initial Study. For example, conformity of the proposed project with the Circulation Element is discussed in Section 3.17, Traffic, while its consistency with the Noise Element is discussed in Section 3.13, Noise.

Consistency with the Downtown Specific Plan Goals and Policies

In addition to the existing plans and policies in the City, the Downtown Specific Plan presents land use policies specific to its area. The land use policies in the Downtown Specific Plan are meant to guide the orderly development and redevelopment of the downtown infrastructure, businesses, and housing. A mix of land uses, including residential and commercial, are proposed to create a walkable, pedestrian-friendly downtown and a lively center that is the focal point for the community. The Land Use goals and policies presented in the Downtown Specific Plan are intended to promote new opportunities for increased vitality and economic prosperity. The proposed project would be consistent with these goals and policies.

3.12 Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				✓
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				✓

a, b) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? (No Impact)

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) requires that all cities consider mapped mineral resources designations (as defined by the State Mining and Geology Board) in long-term planning efforts. SMARA was enacted to promote the conservation and sensitive use of significant mineral deposits. The law ensures that significant aggregate resources are recognized and considered before land use decisions are made that may compromise the long-term availability of these resources.

According to the City’s Conservation and Open Space Element, neither the State nor San Bernardino County has been identified as a mineral resource area of significance. Most properties surrounding the Specific Plan Area have been disturbed by either residential development or commercial uses.

The nearest surface mining facility is located in the industrial area south of Twentynine Palms Highway, east of Mojave Road, approximately 4 miles east of the Specific Plan Area. The site is not known to be identified in any other land use plans as a mineral resource recovery site.

The proposed project is located in the urban core of the City. No properties in the immediate vicinity of the Specific Plan Area are used for mineral recovery. Development of the proposed Specific Plan is not likely to result in loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource. No impact would occur.

3.13 Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			✓	
b) Result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or noise levels?			✓	
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				✓

- a) **Result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? (Less than Significant)**

The Noise Ordinance within Chapter 19.80 of the City’s Municipal Code identifies specific maximum noise levels within certain zoning districts. These thresholds are shown below in Table 3.13-1.

Table 3.13-1 Noise Standards

Affected Land Use (Receiving Noise)	Noise Level	
	Interior CNEL	Exterior CNEL
Residential Districts (RL, RS, RM, R-HD, OSR)	45 dBA ¹	65 dBA ^{2,3}
Residential within Mixed Use	30 dBA Outdoor to Indoor Noise Reduction ⁴	-
Office Commercial District (CO) and Public District (P)	45 dBA ¹	-
Other Commercial Districts (CN, CG, CT, CS)	45 dBA ¹	-
Community Industrial (IC)	70 dBA	-
Open Space	-	65 dBA
Military	As determined by Base Command	-

1. Applies to indoor environment excluding bathrooms, toilets, closets and corridors.
2. Applies to single-family residential. Outdoor environment limited to private yard of single-family; normally this is a rear yard.
3. Applies to multi-family residential. Applies to first-floor patio area where there is an expectation of privacy (i.e., not a patio area which also serves as the primary entrance to the unit).
4. Standard recognizes that residential in mixed-use areas may be exposed to noise environments which may have late night noise and may change substantially from time to time.
5. Only applies to neighborhood parks where peace and quiet are determined to be of primary importance. Not applicable to urban parks or active parks.

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or development proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. As a policy and regulatory document, the proposed Specific Plan would have no direct impacts related to noise. The conceptual public realm improvements envisioned in the Specific Plan are intended only to serve as guidance for the City in implementing these types of improvements in the future and would require further CEQA consideration at the project-level prior to implementation. The improvements envisioned to implement the proposed Specific Plan are expected to generate noise levels compatible with the surrounding urban environment.

The City may require the preparation of a noise impact study with future development applications for projects within the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Based on the results of the noise impact study, the applicant's project may be conditioned, consistent with General Plan implementation policies NS-1.1 and NS-1.4, by requiring noise studies prior to project approval and sound attenuation features to reduce noise exposure. Implementation of these policies would ensure that people within the Specific Plan Area are not subjected to unacceptable noise levels. A less than significant impact would occur.

b) Result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or noise levels? (Less than Significant)

None of the allowable uses in the proposed Downtown Specific Plan Area are those associated with the generation of excessive vibration or groundborne noise. Construction of future development in the Specific Plan Area may temporarily generate potential short-term noise or vibration impacts. Depending on the type of development proposed, the City may require the preparation of a noise impact study with future development applications for projects within the Specific Plan Area. Based on the results of the noise impact study, the applicant's project may be conditioned consistent with General Plan implementation policy NS-1.1, and by requiring noise studies prior to project approval. Noise studies would address noise impacts including groundborne vibration. Implementation of this policy would ensure that people within the Specific Plan Area are not subjected to unacceptable groundborne vibration or noise levels. A less than significant impact would occur.

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? (No Impact)

The Downtown Specific Plan Area is not located in an airport land use plan area or within 2 miles of an airport. The Twentynine Palms Airport is located approximately 5.5 miles east of the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Given the distance to this airport, the downtown area would not be exposed to excessive noise levels associated with airport operation. Therefore, there would be no impact.

3.14 Population and Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			✓	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			✓	

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

As a policy-level document, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. However, future improvements within the Downtown Specific Plan Area may include the development of new housing or businesses that may directly or indirectly increase the population within the Downtown Specific Plan Area.

To estimate the potential population and employment growth over the 25-year life expectancy of the Downtown Specific Plan, key factors from the US Census and local economic market data were mined to craft some basic predictions about jobs, resident population, and visitors. The increment over baseline expected growth (i.e., growth anticipated without implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan) was calculated by taking the low-end economic forecast from the Market Study (which is based on low or no action by the City) and comparing that to the most aggressive potential growth outcome foreseeable from implementation of the Plan. Based on the types of development planned within the Downtown Specific Plan Area, it is estimated that the project may result in approximately 370 new permanent residents and approximately 280 new employment opportunities attributable to implementation of the Specific Plan over a lengthy, multi-year time horizon. The actual employment and residential estimates could be substantially less depending on economic conditions and other various factors.

Overall, the Downtown Specific Plan Area would account for approximately 5% of the City’s land area and it is not anticipated that implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan Area would lead to a significant increase in unplanned population growth. The population estimates are contingent on economic conditions and assumes: no residential or commercial vacancies; that none of the new employment opportunities would be filled by existing Twentynine Palms residents proposed under the Downtown Specific Plan. In addition, while the Downtown Specific Plan includes all feasible development parcels within the Plan Area, not all of the projected uses may be constructed. However, even if all of the residential, commercial, and hotel uses contemplated by the Downtown Specific Plan were to be constructed, the timing of development associated population increases would be distributed over an extended period of time. Additionally, future improvements would require further CEQA review of site-specific project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do result in a substantial population growth. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? (Less than Significant)

Future improvements constructed in the Downtown Specific Plan Area would primarily consist of new development on vacant land or infill development. There are a few existing houses that are sited for new development areas. These houses are owned by the City and are presently vacant, therefore, the project is not anticipated to displace any people or residences currently utilized for shelter. Furthermore, future projects would be subject to further CEQA review of project-specific impacts. This impact would be less than significant.

3.15 Public Services

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire Protection?			✓	
Police protection?			✓	
Schools?			✓	
Parks?			✓	
Other public facilities?			✓	

Fire Protection

The San Bernardino County Fire Department (SBCoFD) is responsible for fire protection within the City of Twentynine Palms. SBCoFD serves the City locally through its Fire Station #44 at 6560 Adobe Road, and Fire Station #43 at 3834 Lear Avenue. SBCoFD’s Division Headquarters is located in Yucca Valley. In total, SBCoFD operates 67 fire stations in 24 cities and covers a geographic area of approximately 19,278 square miles in the County. SBCoFD has a staff of about 1,017 firefighting personnel and 654 fire suppression personal available during a given 24- hour period.

Police Protection

The San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department is responsible for law enforcement in the City. A local Sheriff’s station operates out of Twentynine Palms City Hall at 6135 Adobe Road. The Morongo Basin Sheriff’s Station serves the greater vicinity from its location in Joshua Tree, approximately 12.5 miles from downtown Twentynine Palms. The Morongo Basin Station is the third largest Sheriff’s station in both area and total number of calls for law enforcement services in San Bernardino County. Within the Station’s area of responsibility are the City of Twentynine Palms and the Town of Yucca Valley, as well as the unincorporated communities of Morongo Valley, Landers, Johnson Valley, Joshua Tree, Wonder Valley, Pioneertown, Amboy, Cadiz and Flamingo Heights. The Station is part of the County’s Law and Justice Complex, which also houses three courtrooms and a "Type I" jail capable of housing 79 inmates.

Schools

The City of Twentynine Palms is located within the boundaries of the Morongo Unified School District (MUSD), which provides educational services through public school facilities in the Mojave high desert, from Twentynine Palms to Yucca Valley and Morongo Valley. MUSD currently operates eighteen schools within its district, including Mayfield College and Little School of the Desert, which are the schools nearest

to the Downtown Specific Plan Area. In total, the MUSD has more than 1,100 employees who provide educational services to 9,301 students District-wide.

Parks

A total of five parks - Bucklin Park, Luckie Park, Knott's Sky Park (including the City's Dog Park), Pioneer Park (undeveloped), and Veteran's Park - are located within the City of Twentynine Palms. The City's other major recreational facilities include: the Senior Community Center, Theatre 29, a City-operated performing arts facility, Parks and Recreation Community Services Building, and Parks and Recreation Administration Building.

- a) **Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for public services? (Less than Significant)**

As a policy-level document, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. Adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan would have no direct impact on public services; however, future build out of the Specific Plan Area with both private development and public improvements could increase the amount of persons and buildings in the project area, thereby increasing the future demand for fire and police protection and other public services. Potential increases in activity in the Downtown Specific Plan Area would be consistent with the growth envisioned in the City's General Plan, and the Fire Department would review future site-specific plans to ensure that such plans are consistent with City's fire code. In addition, given the limited expansion potential of the Downtown Specific Plan Area, future development would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities.

Future site-specific development would be required to pay State-mandated school fees to offset the impact associated with new students generated by new growth. At present, there are no impact fees other than for schools. Furthermore, future development would also require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do not result in a significant demand on existing public services. Therefore, potential impacts on public services would be less than significant.

3.16 Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			✓	
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			✓	

a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? (Less than Significant)

Local recreational amenities in the vicinity of Twentynine Palms include 175 acres of parks, special use areas, and passive use areas provided by different sources including the City of Twentynine Palms, the Morongo School District and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. The goal of the City’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2008 is to maintain a level of service of 4.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons, and to strive for a level of service of 4.8 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. The City is currently achieving its park ratio goal of 4.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons.

As a policy-level document, the Downtown Specific Plan would not directly or indirectly induce population growth in the City or otherwise increase demand for existing parks or other recreation facilities. Indirectly, future build out of the Specific Plan Area with both private development and public improvements could increase the number of persons in the project area, thereby increasing the demand for parks and recreational facilities. As stated in Section 3.14 (Population and Housing), the project could generate 370 new permanent residents at full build out that are attributable to implementation of the Specific Plan. The addition of 370 new residents would not greatly affect the park ratio of 4.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. This growth is accounted for in the General Plan, and new park facilities are also already planned to account for future population growth. Moreover, future site-specific development would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do result in a significant demand on existing public services. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. However, future development projects envisioned in the Specific Plan could include new and expanded pedestrian and bicycle facilities that could be used for recreational purposes. Given the nature and scale of such improvements (e.g., street furnishings, pavement striping and signage, bicycle racks), the construction of such improvements would result in limited environmental effects, including aesthetic impacts, release of air emissions associated with construction equipment, and

temporary noise impacts. Future development would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do not result in a significant adverse physical effect on the environment. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

3.17 Transportation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?				✓
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (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?			✓	

Roadways

Twentynine Palms Highway (SR 62)

The Twentynine Palms Highway (SR 62) corridor through the City of Twentynine Palms is a four-lane arterial and state highway and accommodates upwards of 11,000 vehicles daily (Caltrans Traffic Census, 2019). Within the study area boundary, SR 62 has a four-lane undivided cross-section with 35 mph posted speed limits. Within the study area, there is one signalized intersection at SR 62 and Adobe Road. There is no two-way left-turn lane, though left turn lanes are provided at the intersection of SR 62 at Split Rock Avenue. The Caltrans' SR 62 Transportation Concept Report (TCR, 2017) identifies a future year 2040 improvement concept to widen SR 62 to six lanes between Sunrise Road and Adobe Road. However, this improvement is not necessary to maintain minimum required level of service "D" on the roadway.

SR 62 serves as a primary east-west connection through San Bernardino County between the City of Twentynine Palms with communities to the west, including Morongo Valley, Yucca Valley, and Joshua Tree. SR 62 provides access to a major tourist destination, Joshua Tree National Park, located south of the City. In addition, SR 29 is a terminal access Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) truck route and is defined locally as a military convoy route for the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) located north of the City.

The corridor within the study area has a relatively high access-point density with approximately 17 intersections as well as over 30 driveway access-points within the 1-mile segment between Margot Avenue and East Court. The corridor accommodates on-street parking along most of its length to service street-facing businesses. SR 62 provides access to residential neighborhoods north and south of the roadway via local streets spaced approximately 300-feet apart. On the eastern edge of the study area, SR 62 connects to Split Rock Avenue (designated locally as a collector roadway), which provides access to residential communities along El Paseo Drive and 2 Mile Road, as well as the Oasis Elementary School. East of Adobe Road, SR 62 connects to National Park Drive, a two-lane divided local street with sidewalks and bicycle lanes. National Park Drive continues southeast, terminating at Utah Trail.

Adobe Road

Within the study area, Adobe Road north of SR 62 is an undivided five-lane arterial with a two-way left-turn lane and sidewalks. This portion of Adobe Road has a 40-mph posted speed limit and accommodates upwards of 11,000 (need to confirm raw count data) vehicles daily (LRSP, 2020). Within the study area, Adobe Road south of SR 62 is an undivided two-lane secondary roadway with sidewalk and bicycle lanes. This portion of Adobe Road has a 45-mph posted speed limit and accommodates upwards of 3,000 vehicles daily. Adobe Road is not defined locally as a military convoy route for the MCAGCC in downtown. It becomes a military convoy route north of Indian Trail, well outside of downtown.

Adobe Road north of SR 62 within the study area has a relatively high access-point density with approximately 4 intersections as well as over 17 driveway access-points within the 1/3-mile segment between SR 62 and Buena Vista Drive. The corridor accommodates on-street parking along most of its length to service street-facing businesses.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities

Due to the rural nature of the City of Twentynine Palms, there is a general lack of multimodal infrastructure including sidewalk and bicycle lanes and paths within downtown. Within and adjacent to the study area, pedestrian infrastructure is largely proximal to the SR 62 and Adobe Road downtown commercial corridors. However, even along these roadways, sidewalk gaps exist at locations where business fronts have not been improved. In addition, the sidewalk width and quality ranges due to disjointed improvements resulting from the mix of older and newer commercial development sites along the roadways. Crosswalks are provided at the signalized intersections of SR 62/Adobe Road and Adobe Road/Gorgonio Drive, and a mid-block crosswalk with flashing beacons is provided along SR 62 near Tamarisk Avenue.

Existing bicycle facilities are concentrated in areas either northwest or southeast of the study area. Class II bicycle lanes are provided along portions of Adobe Road south of SR 62 and along the full extent of National Park Drive to Utah Trail. In the areas surrounding the study area, Class II bicycle lanes are provided along portions of Amoby Road (from Adobe Road to Utah Trail) and Utah Trail (from Amoby Road to Aztec Avenue and from SR 62 to the City limit). Existing Class I bicycle paths are located north and west of the study area, including portions of Split Rock Avenue and El Paseo Drive to the north and portions of Adobe Road and Baseline Road to the west. Planned bicycle facilities within or adjacent to the study area include Class II bicycle lanes along SR 62 and Adobe Road and a Class I bicycle path running adjacent to the existing canal north of Buena Vista Drive and continuing westward.

Public Transit

Existing regional transit routes 1, 3A, and 15 are concentrated along SR 62 and Adobe Road and provide access to the existing Twentynine Palms Transit Center located on Adobe Road. The local route (3B) provides transit service to residential neighborhoods within the City; however, there is limited connectivity within the study area.

Airports

The Twentynine Palms Airport is a public use airport located along SR 62 approximately 6 miles east of the study area.

a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities? (No Impact)

As a policy-level document, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development that may impact the circulation system. However, future improvements within the Downtown Specific Plan Area may include the development of new housing or businesses that may directly or indirectly increase those utilizing the circulation system within the Downtown Specific Plan Area.

The City's General Plan Circulation Element designates Adobe Road, Two Mile Road, Larrea Avenue, and Twentynine Palms Highway (SR 62) as arterial roadways. The western portion of Twentynine Palms Highway is also designated as a six-lane expressway. Other roadways within the project area are designated as collectors, including El Paseo Drive, Sunnyslope Drive, Mesquite Springs Road, and various others. The proposed Specific Plan does not contemplate adding new roadways, however, the Specific Plan may enhance existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as improve the roadways within the project area to meet the standards included in the Circulation Element. Consistent with General Plan policies CI-1, CI-2, CI-3, CI-4, CI-6, and CI-7, the proposed Specific Plan would enhance existing roadways and frontages to allow for efficient movement through the downtown area for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, and would provide adequate parking throughout the project area.

Additionally, in 2005 the City adopted thresholds for requiring a traffic report. Future development would need a traffic report if any of the following applies:

1. A project that could generate 50 directional trips during a peak hour or 500-749 trips during an average day.
2. A new project's traffic will substantially affect an intersection or a roadway segment already identified as operating at an unacceptable level of service.
3. A project that may create a hazard to public safety.
4. A project that will substantially change the off-site transportation system or connections to it.

Future development that would exceed any of the above-listed thresholds would prepare the appropriate traffic report and submit it to the City for review and approval. As no development is proposed under the Downtown Specific Area Plan and future development would be consistent with all applicable plans and policies, the project is not expected to conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system. No impact is anticipated.

The City of Twentynine Palms Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP, 2020) was completed following the guidelines within the Caltrans Systemic Safety Analysis Program (SSARP) to identify and prioritize future safety projects for the City. The LRSP aims to achieve a reduction in collisions on roadways and at intersections along the City's major corridors, including SR 62 and Adobe Road.

The San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP, 2015) is San Bernardino County's long-term transportation plan focused on providing a strategy for long term investment in and management of San Bernardino County's transportation assets. The Plan provides a strategy for SR 62 to "implement improvement projects identified through the Morongo Basin Area Transportation Study (MBATS)". The CTP also includes goals related to reducing travel time, maximizing the efficiency of the transportation system, reducing vehicle emissions, increasing alternative modes of transportation, improving safety of the transportation system, and reducing urban sprawl. The Specific Plan is consistent with the above-mentioned goals within the CTP.

The Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan (2019) was funded by Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Sustainable Planning Grant Program, and was developed with coordination between SCAG, San Bernardino County, the City of Twentynine Palms, and the Town of Yucca Valley. The Plan provides a comprehensive vision for active transportation improvements for communities within the Morongo Basin, and includes the goals related to active transportation improvements. These goals are related to improving safety, providing alternative modes of transportation, improving connectivity, and enhancing the ability of people to interact with their surroundings. The Specific Plan would not conflict with or obstruct any of the above-mentioned goals.

The Morongo Basin Transit Authority (MBTA) provides transit service in the Morongo Basin, including within the City of Twentynine Palms. Alternative transportation in Twentynine Palms is primarily limited to bus service, as biking and walking are limited to streets with those facilities only. Bus Route 1 (Yucca Valley) and 3B (Twentynine Palms Neighborhood) currently serve the project area. Multiple stops are located throughout the Downtown Specific Plan Area. The proposed project is expected to benefit alternative transportation modes and encourage future street improvements in the area, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. No impact would occur.

In addition, the Specific Plan includes the following goal and corresponding policies to ensure consistency with regional transportation efforts:

GOAL 3 – Mobility & streets that promote walking, biking, and transit use throughout downtown.

Policy 3.1: Implement a Park-Once shared parking districts strategy.

Policy 3.2: Pedestrian continuity, safety, and accessibility across downtown.

Policy 3.3: Implement regularly spaced pedestrian crossings.

Policy 3.4: Implement multi-modal corridors along key downtown traditional or walkable districts.

Policy 3.5: Complete an active transportation framework around downtown.

Policy 3.6: Reduce the relative vehicular pollution and climate impact of downtown.

Therefore, the project is anticipated to be consistent with all regional transportation plans and policies applicable to the project site. No impact would occur.

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? (Less than Significant)

The Downtown Specific Plan is not anticipated to conflict with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 (b) criteria for analyzing transportation impacts effective July 1, 2020 concerning vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

The analysis of VMT impacts described below meets the requirements stipulated by CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 (b) and incorporates relevant advice contained in the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA published by the Governor's Office of Planning & Research (OPR) in December 2018. Section 15064.3 of the State CEQA Guidelines describes the requirements for assessing transportation impacts based on VMT that applied statewide beginning on July 1, 2020. As described in Section 15064.3:

- “Vehicle miles traveled” refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel “attributable to a project.” Other relevant considerations may include the effects of the project on transit or non-motorized travel. As described separately in the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation

Impacts in CEQA (OPR, December 2018), VMT re-routed from other origins or destinations as the result of a project would not be attributable to a project except to the extent that the re-routing results in a net increase in VMT. For example, OPR guidelines note that retail projects typically re-route travel from other retail destinations, and therefore a retail project may lead to increases or decreases in VMT, depending on previously existing travel patterns. Similarly, a large share of retail trips are “pass-by trips” that would not be considered attributable to a retail project.

- Lead agencies have discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology to evaluate a project’s vehicles miles traveled, including whether to express the change in absolute terms, per capita, per household, or any other measure.
- If existing models or methods are not available to estimate the vehicle miles traveled for the particular project being considered, a lead agency may evaluate the project’s vehicle miles travelled qualitatively.
- A lead agency may use models to estimate a project’s vehicle miles traveled and may revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence.

VMT Analysis Methodology

The San Bernardino Transportation Analysis Model (SBTAM) travel forecasting model was obtained and used to measure VMT performance for individual traffic analysis zones (TAZs) that make up the project area. Downtown Specific Plan components were converted into SBTAM compatible inputs. The SBTAM model was set up to run a baseline 2016 with and without the project land uses added. From the model results, total daily VMT per service population (population plus employment) was estimated for each TAZ.

Downtown Specific Plan land use development assumptions were utilized to generate VMT attributable the project, namely, population, total households, multifamily households, single family households, retail employment, non-retail employment, K-12 enrollment, college enrollment. Information regarding the project land use was provided in terms of square footage by housing, commercial, retail, and hotel by specific sub-areas of the proposed development. The highest values were used for each. Also, square footage values for residential were converted to housing units based on information provided in terms of SF/unit for each sub-area. All housing units proposed in the Downtown Specific Plan Area were assumed to be multifamily based on the densities and sites being proposed. Each household was assumed to have 2.68 persons per household based on the current Twentynine Palms census data.

VMT Analysis Results

The 2016 without project model scenario results in a VMT per service population of 24.62 while the 2016 with project model scenario resulted in a VMT per service population of 24.51. Therefore, the Downtown Specific Plan reduces VMT per service population and falls below the significance threshold.

In addition, the Specific Plan includes goals and policies consistent with strategies to reduce VMT. The Specific Plan encourages walkable, urban-style development aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and VMT. As such, the Specific Plan transportation improvement concepts for SR 62 and Adobe Road aim to meet local and regional goals related to sustainability, air quality, and reducing vehicle miles travelled by providing the infrastructure necessary to accommodate safe and accessible bicyclist and pedestrian travel along these primary corridors within the City.

Based on these findings, the impact is less than significant.

c, d) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? Result in inadequate emergency access? (Less than Significant)

The Downtown Specific Plan is not anticipated to substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment); or result in inadequate emergency access.

The Downtown Specific Plan recommends the implementation of road diets along primary downtown corridors. Transportation improvements along these key corridors include center and/or left turn lanes, reduced vehicular travel lane widths, signs and pavement markings, curb extensions (bulb-outs), pedestrian refuge islands, and improved bicycle infrastructure along roadways and at intersections. As such, the Specific Plan aims to reduce hazards by reducing pedestrian crossing distances, providing high visibility crossing treatments, and reducing vehicular conflict zones.

The General Plan includes polices that would ensure efficient circulation and adequate access are provided in the City, and that adequate emergency access be provided. Future development under the Downtown Specific Plan, as part of the City's project approval process, would be required to comply with existing regulations, including General Plan policies and Zoning regulations that have been prepared to minimize impacts related to design features and emergency access. The City, throughout the lengthy multi-year buildout period of the Downtown Specific Plan, would ensure relevant coordination with local emergency response providers. Adherence to State and City requirements, combined by compliance with the City's General Plan and Zoning regulations, would ensure that the adoption of the proposed Downtown Specific Plan would result in less-than- significant impacts with respect to design hazards and/or inadequate emergency access.

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources, or in a local register of historic resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?		✓		
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of the Public Resources Code section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of the Public Resources Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.		✓		

The CEQA Guidelines define tribal cultural resources as: (1) a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe that is listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, or on 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 according to the historical register criteria in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c), and considering the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

a, b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources, or in a local register of historic resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)? Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of the Public Resources Code section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of the Public Resources Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

As described in Section 3.V, Cultural Resources, an Archaeological Resources Study was prepared for the Project (Stantec 2021). The study included: a records and literature search at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC); review of the Sacred Lands File; additional contact with appropriate local Native American tribes; and a pedestrian archaeological survey of the Project Area. The Archaeological Resources Study found that based on the records search and field survey, there are a total of 24 cultural resources within the Plan Area and surrounding 0.25-mile radius. A total of 18 cultural resources are located within the Plan Area, and include 17 historic-age buildings and 1 historic-age road. A review of the

Sacred Lands File was determined to be positive, indicating the potential for tribal cultural resources to be present within the Project Area.

On November 24, 2021, Stantec sent out letters to the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, and the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians pursuant to AB 52, and all of the twelve tribes listed on the NAHC's list pursuant to SB 18. On December 14, 2021, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians responded to the SB 18 request for consultation and indicated that the Project was located within Serrano ancestral territory. Although the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians does not see any conflict with the proposed zoning changes, if future projects were to occur the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians might have comments and/or request formal consultation with the Lead Agency at that time. To date, no other responses from any of the tribes contacted under AB 52 or SB 18 have been received.

Given the presence of historic-era resources and the fact that the Sacred Lands File review was positive, the potential exists to encounter as-of-yet unknown historic or archaeological materials during project-related construction activities. If such resources were to represent "tribal cultural resources" as defined by CEQA, any substantial change to or destruction of these resources would be a potentially significant impact; therefore, the following mitigation is included.

Mitigation Measure TCR-1: Minimize Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources

If, during construction of future development projects, potential tribal cultural resources are uncovered, the City shall halt work, and workers shall avoid altering the materials and their context. Project personnel shall not collect cultural materials. The City shall notify California Native American tribes culturally affiliated with the Project Area. The City, in coordination with Native American tribes, shall determine if the resource qualifies as a tribal cultural resource under CEQA. If it does, then all work must remain stopped in the immediate vicinity to allow evaluation of any materials. The City shall ensure that qualified resources are avoided or protected in place, in accordance with the requests of Native American tribes, to the extent feasible. Work may proceed on other parts of the project while mitigation for tribal cultural resources is being carried out.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure TCR-1 would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level because a plan to address discovery of unanticipated buried tribal cultural resources and to preserve and/or record those resources consistent with appropriate laws and requirements would be implemented,

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electrical power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?			✓	
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?			✓	
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			✓	
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?			✓	
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			✓	

Domestic Water

The proposed project site is located within the Twentynine Palms Water District (TPWD) boundaries for domestic water services. TPWD operates as an independent special district, providing water services to the residents of Twentynine Palms and unincorporated areas of San Bernardino. Managing the areas ground water supply, TPWD serves a population of approximately 18,000 residents within an 87-square mile area. The District maintains nearly 8,000 meter services, 200 miles of pipeline and 17 million gallons of water storage capacity housed in 10 reservoirs.

Water demand is met entirely by local groundwater extractions from four sub-basins south of the Pinto Mountain Fault, which are fed by rainfall in the Pinto Mountains. The District overlays portions of the Indian Cove, Eastern and Fortynine Palms sub-basins of the Joshua Tree Basin, and part of the Twentynine Palms Valley Basin. Water is pumped from these sub-basins and delivered through a pipeline system to homes and businesses. Water pumped from the Mesquite Springs sub-basin is treated to remove high levels of fluoride before being distributed.

Wastewater Treatment

As discussed in Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, the only WWTP in the vicinity of Twentynine Palms is the Mainside Facility located west of Del Valle Road at Seventh Street at the MCAGCC. The Mainside Facility treats all of the wastewater generated from the MCAGCC's Mainside area including the

Marine Palms, Adobe Flats, camp Wilson area and Ocotillo Heights base housing area. The Mainside WWTP headworks have a maximum capacity of three million gallons per day, with an average flow rate of one million gallons per day (U.S. Department of the Navy and U.S. Marine Corps, 2015).

The City, including the Downtown Specific Plan Area, currently operates with septic tanks, and does not have sanitary sewage treatment. In 2014, the City prepared its first Wastewater Master Plan to identify and describe the potential facilities that would be required for a centralized sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant to replace the septic systems currently in place. A new centralized system would be anticipated to include the area of the City of Twentynine Palms and the unincorporated areas around the City, but is not part of the proposed Downtown Specific Plan.

Solid Waste

Burrtec Waste Industries provides solid waste pick up and disposal, as well as recycling services in the City. Commercial services provided by Burrtec include construction/demolition waste, portable restrooms, temporary bin rental, roll-offs, and concrete washout. Solid waste disposal and landfill siting is handled by the County of San Bernardino, Solid Waste Management Division. County solid waste facilities serving the City include the Twentynine Palms Transfer Station located at 7501 Pinto Mountain Road in Twentynine Palms, and the Landers Landfill located at 59200 Winters Road in Landers.

- a) **Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electrical power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? (Less than Significant)**

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. As described previously, the conceptual improvement designs envisioned in the Specific Plan are intended to serve as guidance for the City in implementing these types of improvements in the future. With regard to wastewater, the City does not have sanitary sewer service supporting existing or future infrastructure. Future development would need to be served by one of three options: expansion of the existing package treatment plant, construction of a new package treatment plant, or installation of individual septic tanks.

With regard to water supplies, the City's Urban Water Management Plan states that it has capacity to meet projected demand to 2040. As noted in Section 1.2, population growth anticipated by the Downtown Specific Plan is assumed to be captured within the City's current General Plan. The Downtown Specific Plan would concentrate portions of that growth into the downtown area, but no new or expanded water facilities would be required beyond those contemplated in the General Plan. Storm water, electrical power, and other utilities would depend on the type of future development proposed and would be analyzed on a project-by-project basis.

Future improvements would require site-specific design and engineering as well as further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation. Furthermore, future improvements would be subject to the City's development standards, which would minimize impacts to surface runoff and the drainage system by requiring project designs to accommodate stormwater collection and conveyance as necessary. As a policy-level document, the Downtown Specific Plan would not require the construction or relocation of any utilities. A less than significant impact would occur.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? (Less than Significant)

The City relies solely on groundwater to meet its water demands. Based on the Urban Water Management Plan, there is sufficient groundwater supplies to meet demand projected to 2040 (City 2015) during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years. In addition, the TPWD plans to construct a new well to assist in meeting future demand. The City's local water quantities are adequate to support new development identified within the Downtown Specific Plan for the duration of the Plan's time horizon, while acknowledging that water demand will likely vary among future land uses. For example, restaurants typically demand more water than the typical retail shop. Likewise, residential uses typically demand more water than office space. Future development would be required to adhere to the provisions of City ordinances regarding water demand allocations, as applicable. Future site-specific development would require further CEQA review and any new water line extensions or line size modifications would be designed in coordination with the City Engineer. A less than significant impact would occur.

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. As described previously, the conceptual improvement designs envisioned in the Specific Plan are intended to serve as guidance for the City in implementing these types of improvements in the future. With regard to wastewater, the City does not provide sanitary sewer service supporting existing or future infrastructure. As previously noted, future development would need to be served by one of three options: expansion of the existing package treatment plant, construction of a new package treatment plant, or installation of individual septic tanks. Such development would require further CEQA review and any new wastewater treatment systems would be designed in coordination with the City Engineer and abide by all relevant laws and regulations governing wastewater treatment. A less than significant impact would occur.

d, e) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals? Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. As described previously, the conceptual improvement designs envisioned in the Specific Plan are intended to serve as guidance for the City in implementing these types of improvements in the future. Future construction activities envisioned by the Downtown Specific Plan could generate solid waste in the form of waste asphalt and structure demolition. These activities would be required to comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations governing solid waste. Development would be subject to the City's Construction and Demolition Waste Recycling Requirement, which requires a project sponsor to submit a waste reduction plan that demonstrates that at least 50 percent of the construction and demolition waste can be recycled. Therefore, the construction and demolition waste associated with future development contemplated by the Downtown Specific Plan would have less-than-significant impacts on landfills. The operation of future residential, commercial, and institutional land uses would likely generate higher volumes of solid waste than what is currently generated, due to the increase in population associated with new development; however, such increases are assumed

to be captured within the City's current General Plan. Solid waste would be collected, taken to the waste transfer station and then sent to a landfill.

The Downtown Specific Plan Area would continue to be served by Burrtec, the City's solid waste contractor. Trash generated by the project would be hauled to the Twentynine Palms Transfer Station, east of the City, and then transported to Landers Landfill, a regional landfill located approximately 30 miles northwest of the City. Additional capacity, if needed, could be provided by either the expansion of the Landers Landfill or the regional landfill in Barstow, approximately 100 miles north of the City. Burrtec is required to meet all local, regional, State and federal standards for solid waste disposal. Future site-specific development would require further CEQA review and would abide by relevant laws and regulations governing solid waste disposal treatment. Impacts associated with solid waste are expected to be less than significant.

3.20 Wildfire

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			✓	
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?			✓	
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?			✓	
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?			✓	

The Downtown Specific Plan Area is located in the City’s urban core and is not in proximity to a Very High Fire Hazard zone (City 2012). There are areas identified as having a moderate fire risk. The nearest State Responsibility Zone is located approximately 14 miles west of the Specific Plan Area.

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. As described previously, the conceptual improvement designs envisioned in the Specific Plan are intended to serve as guidance for the City in implementing various types of improvements in the future. Development under the Downtown Specific Plan could require the use of vehicles and trucks that temporarily travel along several of the City’s main roadways during construction. However, none of the land uses proposed by the Downtown Specific Plan are anticipated to negatively impact emergency response or evacuation plans. Future development would require further CEQA review to ensure that proposed improvements do not significantly impact emergency response or evacuation plans. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire? (Less than Significant)

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. As described previously, the conceptual improvement designs envisioned in the Specific Plan are intended to serve as guidance for the City in implementing these types of improvements in the future. The Downtown Specific Plan Area is generally flat and is not adjacent to any

mountains or hillsides that could exacerbate wildfire risks. Additionally, the types of developments proposed by the Specific Plan are mostly residential and commercial uses that would utilize typical household cleaners and other relatively minimal amounts of other hazardous materials. If a wildfire were to occur, it is unlikely that use of fertilizers, paint, and household cleaners would expose occupants to pollutant concentrations. Furthermore, future development would require further CEQA review to ensure that proposed improvements do not significantly exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose occupants to pollutant concentrations. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

The Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. As described previously, the conceptual improvement designs envisioned in the Specific Plan are intended to serve as guidance for the City in implementing these types of improvements in the future. However, future projects may require additional infrastructure to adequately serve new development. Future development would require further CEQA review to ensure that proposed improvements do not require infrastructure that would exacerbate wildfire risks. As no development is currently proposed, impacts would be less than significant.

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

The Downtown Specific Plan does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor grant any entitlements for development. As described previously, the conceptual improvement designs envisioned in the Specific Plan are intended only to serve as guidance for the City in implementing these types of improvements in the future. The Downtown Specific Plan Area is located within a relatively flat area and is not generally at risk for downslope flooding or landslides given the topographic characteristics of the area. However, a large portion of the Downtown Specific Plan Area is located within a FEMA flood hazard area. Therefore, future projects may expose future people or structures to risks related to downstream flooding as a result of runoff or post-fire instability. Future development would require further CEQA review to ensure that future improvements do not require infrastructure that would exacerbate wildfire risks. As no development is currently proposed, impacts would be less than significant.

3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant w/ Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Does the project:				
a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		✓		
b) 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)?		✓		
c) Have environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		✓		

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

As described in Section 3.4, Biological Resources, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan would have no direct impact on biological resources, and future improvements envisioned in the Specific Plan would be subject to applicable federal, state, and local regulations that protect such resources, as well as to further CEQA review of project-level impacts. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would also ensure that any trees removed during implementation of future projects would have a less than significant impact on nesting birds. Compliance with these existing regulations and implementation of BIO-1, would ensure that the project would have a less than significant impact on plant and wildlife species and their habitat. Similarly, as described in subsection 3.5, Cultural Resources, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan would have no direct impact on prehistoric or historic resources and future improvements envisioned in the Specific Plan would be subject to mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-3 as well as further CEQA review of project-level impacts, which would ensure proper treatment of any resources unearthed during construction. Therefore, with the incorporation of mitigation measure CUL-1, this impact would be less than significant.

- b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)? (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

The impacts of Downtown Specific Plan implementation may have cumulatively considerable impacts with regard to air quality, cultural resources, public services, and population and housing. Although incremental changes in certain environmental topics can be expected as a result of future improvements envisioned in the proposed Specific Plan, all foreseeable potential environmental impacts would be considered less than significant or would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration or in future CEQA review of project-level impacts. This would also ensure that any contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

- c) Does the project have environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Construction of future improvements envisioned in the proposed Downtown Specific Plan would have the potential to cause adverse environmental impacts related to air quality, hazardous materials, water quality, and greenhouse gas emissions. Although the Plan itself does not include development and construction, it would provide a guide to future development of the downtown area. This Downtown Specific Plan Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration mandates compliance with all required regulations and laws that would reduce potential impacts to air quality, hazardous materials, water quality, and greenhouse gas emissions. Further, the Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 included in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration requires the preparation of a Phase I Initial Site Assessment for sites that may encounter hazardous materials during construction. Additionally, future developments and improvements would be required to complete project-specific CEQA review that would analyze project-level impacts and would likely include mitigation measures that would address site-specific impacts. This would ensure minimization of substantial adverse effects on human beings. Therefore, with the incorporation of the proposed and future mitigation measures, the proposed Downtown Specific Plan would not result in environmental effects that would cause substantial direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings.

4. References

- California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2021. California Important Farmland Finder. Available at:
<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2021. California State Scenic Highway System Highway System Map. Available at:
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca>
- California Energy Commission (CEC). 2005. Energy Action Plan II. October.
<https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/published/REPORT/51604.htm>
- City of Twentynine Palms. 2012. Twentynine Palms General Plan Update. April.
- GHD. 2021. Twentynine Palms Downtown Specific Plan-Biological Reconnaissance Site Visit to Support CEQA IS/MND.
- Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District. 2016. Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District California Environmental Quality Act and Federal Conformity Guidelines.
- San Bernardino Associated Governments. 2014. San Bernardino County Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan. March.
- State Water Resources Control Board. 2021. Geotracker. Available at:
<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/?CMD=runreport&myaddress=twentynine+palms#>
- Twentynine Palms Water District. 2015. 2015 Urban Water Management Plan for Twentynine Palms Water District. December.

5. Report Preparers

5.1 City of Twentynine Palms

Travis Clark, Community Development Director

5.2 GHD

Charles Smith, AICP, LEED AP, Business Group Leader

Haley Cahill, Environmental Planner

Todd Tregenza, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

Makinzie Clark, Transportation Planner

5.3 Sub-consultants

Stantec

Kristina Lindgren

Converge 2 Plan

Dean Munn