DRAFT

Environmental Checklist Form (Initial Study)

County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning

Project title: "Ball Mountain Single-Family Residences"/ Project No. 2019-001416 / Case No(s). Environmental Assessment ("EA") RPPL2021010782; Conditional Use Permit ("CUP") RPPL2019002661

Lead agency name and address: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

Contact person and phone number: Richard Claghorn, (213) 974-6443,
Email: rclaghorn@planning.lacounty.gov

Project sponsor's name and address: James C. Ball, 16612 Sierra Highway, Canyon Country, CA 91351.

Project location: 16600 block of Sierra Highway.
Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 16600 block of Sierra Highway
3231-010-018, 3231-010-019, 3231-010-020, 3231-010-023, 3231-010-025, 3231-010-028

USGS Quad: Mint Canyon.

Gross Acreage: 19.91 acres

General Plan designation: N/A. Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area

Community/Areawide Plan designation: Rural Land (RL5 – Rural Land 5 (NU3 – Non-Urban 3)) (Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan)

Zoning classification: A-2-2 (Heavy Agricultural, Two-Acre Minimum Required Lot Area); Sand Canyon Zoned District

Description of project: The Project Site is comprised of six existing legal parcel, totaling up to 19.91 acres. The applicant is proposing to build one single-family residence on each of the six parcels. The proposed residences are two stories in height, with a height of approximately 27 feet above grade, and floor area of approximately 2,700 square feet each according to the preliminary architectural plans. The actual sizes and heights of the residences may differ from the preliminary plans when ultimately built. Because the project site within a Hillside Management Area, a CUP is required for the proposed development. A CUP is also required for the water distribution system, Ball Mountain Mutual Water Company, which serves the subject parcels and two adjoining parcels (APN 3231-010-026 & 3231-010-029). Each of these two adjoining parcels contains a single-family residence. Proposed grading for the project has been estimated as 18,867 cubic yards of cut and 16,338 cubic yards of fill, to be balanced on site.

Proposed	Gross Area		Disturbed Areas	
Assessor's Parcel Number (Parcel Name)	(Acres)	(Square feet)	(Square feet)	(Percentage)
3231-010-020 (Parcel 20)	3.71	161,663	43,129	26.7%
3231-010-025 (Parcel 25)	2.38	103,789	31,370	30.2%

3231-010-023 (Parcel 23)	2.80	122,082	38.296	31.4%
3231-010-018 (Parcel 18)	5.23	227,684	74,306	32.6%
3231-010-019 (Parcel 19)	3.25	141,745	32,869	23.2%
3231-010-028 (Parcel 28)	2.57	111,828	21,000	18.8%
Total	**19.94**	868,791	240,970	27.7% average

Surrounding land uses and setting: The Project Site is located in a hillside area extending from Sierra Highway on the west side to Sand Canyon Road on the east side. Approximately 81% of the gross site area exceeds a 25% natural slope, with nearly 48% of the gross area having natural slopes in excess of 50%. An existing driveway runs from Sierra Highway to an existing home on APN 3231-010-026 (16612 Sierra Highway). The driveway then enters the project site and continues eastward, passing through five of the six parcels comprising the Project Site, before exiting the Project Site and ending at APN 3231-010-029 (16666 Sierra Highway), where an existing single-family residence is located. Most of the driveway is proposed to remain, but portions of it will be re-routed, and a new driveway is proposed to branch from the main driveway north to APN 3231-010-019. Elevations on the site range from approximately 1,660 feet along Sierra Highway to over 2,000 feet at the high point in the southeast part of the site. Surrounding properties include a 110-unit detached condominium development to the southwest of the project site, a 123-unit mobilehome park to the east, a mixture of commercial uses along Sierra Highway to the west, and vacant land to the north and the southeast. There are also some single-family residences to the southeast and to the west. There is no Significant Ecological Area (SEA) on the project site. The nearest SEA is the Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools SEA, which is located approximately 0.86 miles to the west of the site. The Santa Clara River SEA is located approximately 1.3 miles south of the project site.

Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21080.3.1? Yes, the Fernandeño Tataviam Tribe, also known as the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, has requested consultation.

If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.? Yes. Tribal consultation with the Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians was concluded on January 20, 2022 with development of mitigation measures for tribal cultural resources incorporated into the conditions of approval.

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

Other public agencies whose approval may be required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

Public Agency *Approval Required*

Major projects in the area:

Project/Case No. *Description and Status*

TR 46353/CUP 90-264 / CUP 98-152	Major land division for 110 detached residential condominiums on a 65-acre site in a hillside management area. Final map was recorded on August 19, 2004.
CUP 88-030	123-unit mobilehome park; approved April 3, 1989

Figure 1: Project Site

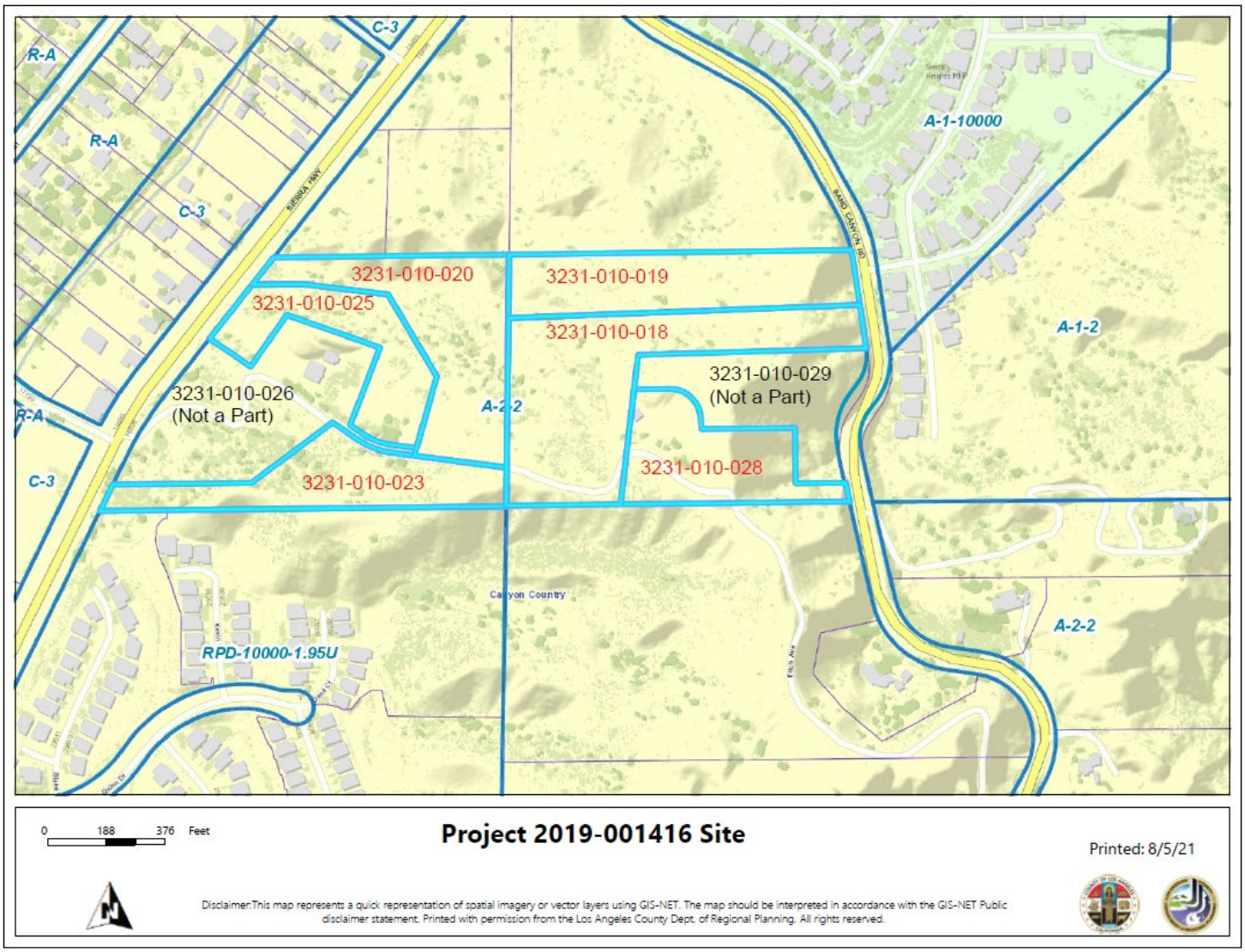


Figure 2: Slope Analysis

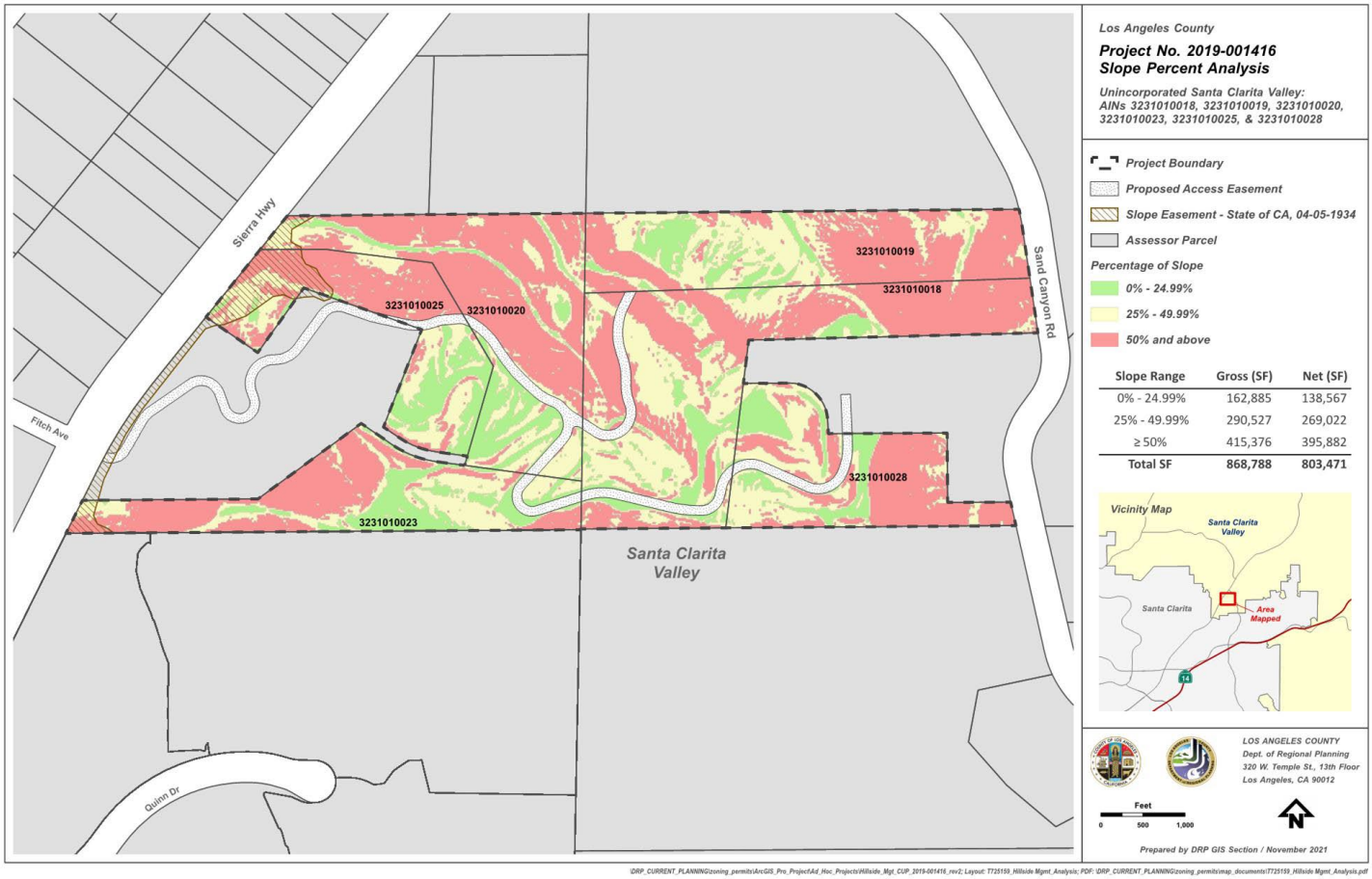


Figure 3: Open Space Map

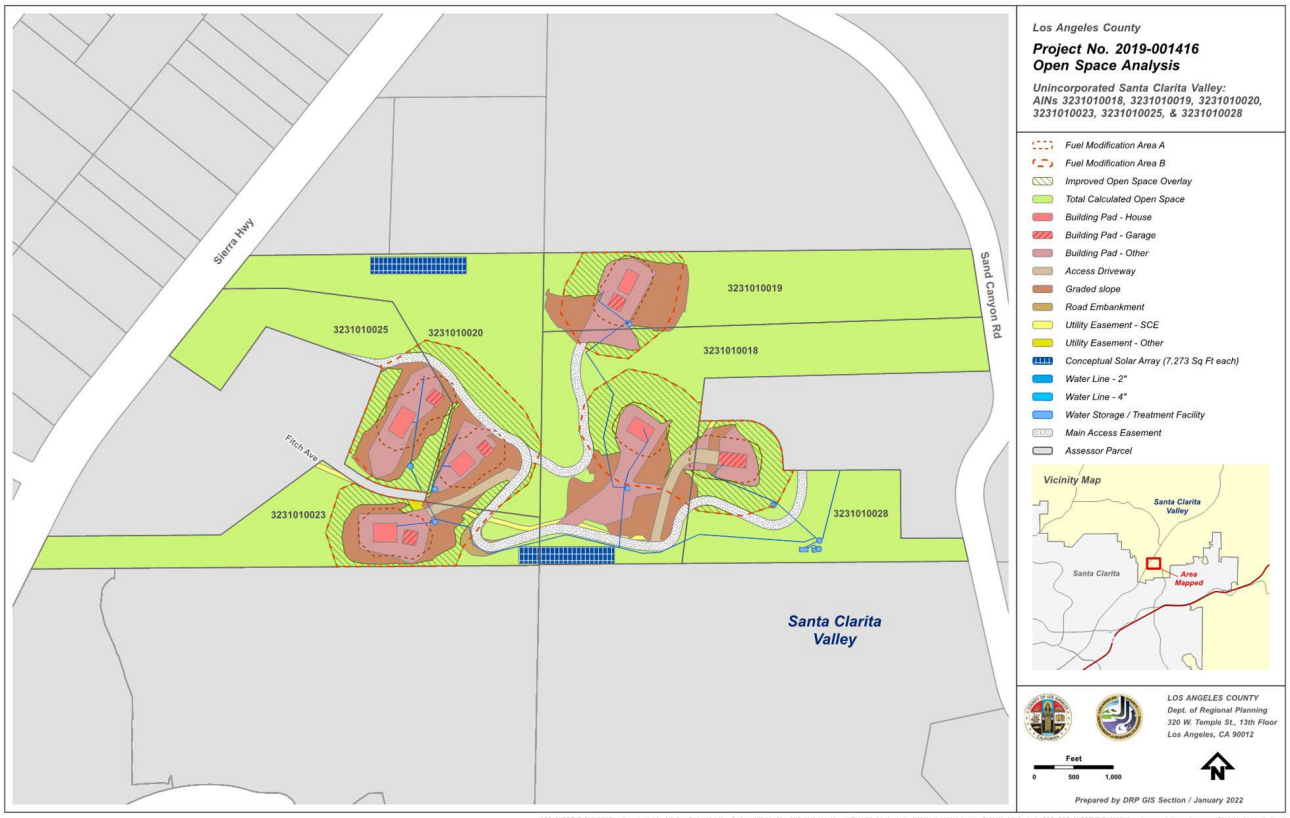
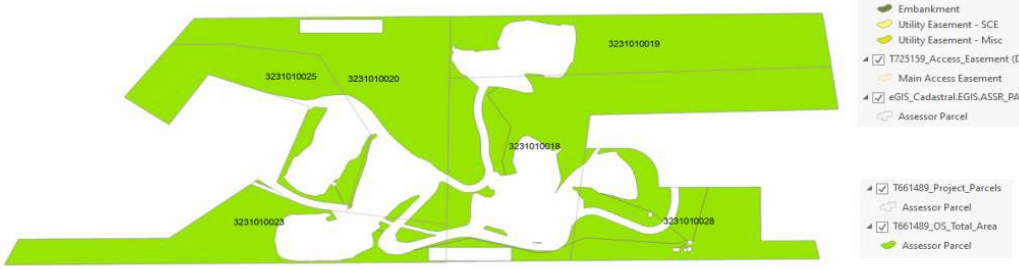


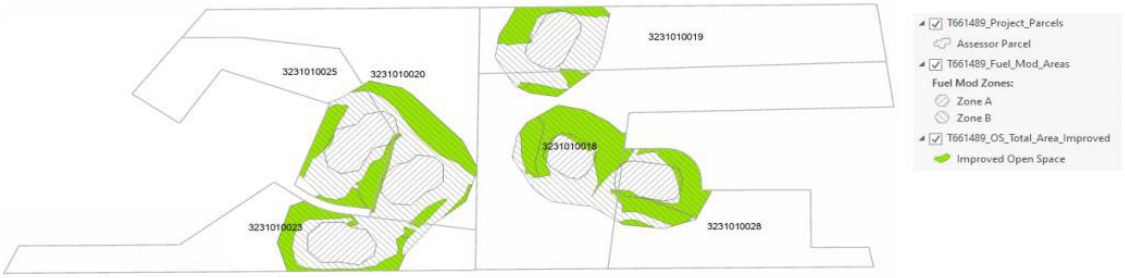
Figure 4: Open Space Analysis Table

AIN	Area (SF)	Building Pads	Access Driveways	Graded Area	Easement - SCE	Easement - Misc	Main Access Road	Solar Arrays	Water Infrastructure	Totals	% disturbed	acreage
3231010018	227,684	25,665	4,395	22,430	1,096	-	14,924	5,700	96	74,306	32.6%	5.23
3231010019	141,745	13,854	-	19,004	-	-	-	-	11	32,869	23.2%	3.25
3231010020	161,663	9,569	3,334	13,398	-	-	9,553	7,273	2	43,129	26.7%	3.71
3231010023	122,082	13,263	860	15,676	2,101	529	4,277	1,573	17	38,296	31.4%	2.80
3231010025	103,789	15,870	-	12,670	-	-	2,709	-	122	31,370	30.2%	2.38
3231010028	111,828	9,467	1,451	2,389	197	-	6,743	-	754	21,000	18.8%	2.57
Total SF:	**868,791**	**87,688**	**10,039**	**85,567**	**3,394**	**529**	**38,205**	**14,546**	**1,001**	**240,970**	27.7%	19.94

Open Space: **627,821**



Improved OS: **103,440**



Reviewing Agencies: [*See* **CEQA Appendix B** *to help determine which agencies should review your project***]**

Responsible Agencies

- ☐ None
- Regional Water Quality Control Board:
  - ☒ Los Angeles Region
  - ☐ Lahontan Region
- ☐ Coastal Commission
- ☐ Army Corps of Engineers
- ☐ LAFCO

Special Reviewing Agencies

- ☐ None
- ☐ Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- ☐ National Parks
- ☐ National Forest
- ☐ Edwards Air Force Base
- ☐ Resource Conservation District of Santa Monica Mountains Area
- ☒ Native American Heritage Commission
- ☒ William S. Hart Union High School District
- ☒ Sulphur Springs Union School District
- ☒ Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians

Regional Significance

- ☐ None
- ☐ SCAG Criteria
- ☐ Air Quality
- ☐ Water Resources
- ☐ Santa Monica Mtns. Area
- ☐

Trustee Agencies

- ☐ None
- ☒ State Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
- ☐ State Dept. of Parks and Recreation
- ☐ State Lands Commission
- ☐ University of California (Natural Land and Water Reserves System)

County Reviewing Agencies

- ☒ DPW
- ☒ Fire Department
  - Forestry, Environmental Division
  - Planning Division
  - Land Development Unit
- ☐ Sanitation District
- ☒ Public Health/Environmental Health Division: Land Use Program (OWTS), Drinking Water Program (Private Wells), Toxics Epidemiology Program (Noise)
- ☒ Sheriff Department
- ☒ Parks and Recreation
- ☐ Subdivision Committee
- ☒ Library

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Signature (Prepared by) — Date: 4/5/22

Signature (Approved by) — Date: 4/4/22

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources the Lead Department cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3) Once the Lead Department has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level. (Mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced.)
5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA processes, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. (State CEQA Guidelines § 15063(c)(3)(D).) In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
    a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
    b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of, and adequately analyzed in, an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
    c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
7) The explanation of each issue should identify: the significance threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question, and; mitigation measures identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance. Sources of thresholds include the County General Plan, other County planning documents, and County ordinances. Some thresholds are unique to geographical locations.

1. AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. There are no Scenic Highways or Scenic Drives in the vicinity of the project site. The proposed residences are on hillsides overlooking the surrounding area. However, because they are set back hundreds of feet from the nearest roads and because of the topography of the area, the homes will not be visible from most points along the roads. The homes may be incidentally visible from some nearby locations along the roads, as are the existing homes on APN 3231-010-026 & 3231-010-029. However, because of the long distance from the roads, any visual impacts will be minimal.

b) Be visible from or obstruct views from a regional riding, hiking, or multi-use trail?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. There is an adopted proposed unnamed trail along Sand Canyon Road shown on the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan Trails map along the eastern frontage of the project site. However, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has determined that the proposed trail route along the property frontage is not suitable due to the steep topography and unsafe conditions for a trail, as well as a lack of connectivity, and has determined that no trail easement is required for the project. DPR issued a letter on June 2, 2020 stating that the proposed project will not impact any DPR facilities. There is no existing trail currently in the area, and it does not appear likely that a trail will be developed there in the future due to the topography, which has very little room between Sand Canyon Road and the steep hillside. Even if a trail is developed along Sand Canyon Road in the future, it would likely have to be on the opposite side of the road due to the topography.

c) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is not near any designated scenic highways. There are no known nationally- or state-designated historic resources in the project area. No oak trees are proposed for removal. No scenic resources, including rock outcroppings, will be significantly impacted.

d) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings because of height, bulk, pattern, scale, character, or other features or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The project will comply with the applicable Zoning Code requirements for height, setbacks, and other development standards. The project site will mostly be dedicated open space.

The homes will be spaced widely, and views of the homes from off-site will be limited due to the surrounding topography and long distances from surrounding roads to the proposed homes.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The project is located within a Rural Outdoor Lighting District. It will be subject to the restrictions of the Rural Outdoor Lighting District pertaining to outdoor lighting. Implementation of these standards will prevent substantial shadows, light, and glare from affecting views in the area.

2. AGRICULTURE / FORESTRY

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with 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?**	☐	☐	☐	☒

No Impact. The California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data that are used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated based on the soil quality and irrigation status; the best quality land is called Prime Farmland. The maps are updated every two years with the use of a computer mapping system, aerial imagery, public review, and field reconnaissance. FMMP produces Important Farmland Maps, which are a hybrid of resource quality (soils) and land use information. The project site is not identified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance on maps prepared pursuant to FMMP. According to these maps, there is no Farmland on or neighboring the project site. Therefore, the project would not have an impact related to converting Farmland to non-agricultural use.

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

No Impact. The project site is zoned A-2-2 (Heavy Agricultural, Two-Acre Minimum Required Lot Area). This zone allows single-family residences, and the proposed residences will comply with the requirements of this zone. No Agricultural Resource Area is located on or near the project site. The project site is not in conflict with a Williamson Act contract.

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

No Impact. The project site does not contain any forest land, timberland, or timberland production areas.

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

No Impact. The project site does not contain any forest land.

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No Impact. There is no farmland or forest land on or near the project site, and no changes resulting from the project would impact any farmland or forest land.

3. AIR QUALITY

The Federal government and the State of California have established air quality standards designed to protect public health from these criteria pollutants. Among the federally identified criteria pollutants, the levels of ozone, particulate matter, and carbon monoxide in Los Angeles County continually exceed federal and state health standards. The County is also considered a non-attainment area for these pollutants.

In response to the region's poor air quality, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) & the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD) were created. The SCAQMD and the AVAQMD are responsible for monitoring air quality as well as planning, implementing, and enforcing programs designed to attain and maintain state and federal ambient air quality standards in the region.
The SCAQMD implements a wide range of programs and regulations, most notably, the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). According to the SCAQMD, if a project does not conform to a general plan, then it is not within SCAG's population and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) projections, which are the foundation for the AQMP.

The air pollutants that are regulated by the Federal and California Clean Air Acts fall under three categories, each of which are monitored and regulated:

- Criteria air pollutants;
- Toxic air contaminants (TACs); and
- Global warming and ozone-depleting gases.

In 1970, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identified six "criteria" air pollutants they found to be the most harmful to human health and welfare. These include:

- Ozone (O3);
- Particulate Matter (PM10 and PM2.5);
- Carbon Monoxide (CO);
- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2);
- Sulfur Dioxide (SO2); and,
- Lead (Pb).

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.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans of either the South Coast AQMD (SCAQMD) or the Antelope Valley AQMD (AVAQMD)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is located within the South Coast Air Basin and falls within the purview of the SCAQMD. A significant air quality impact would occur if the proposed Project is found to be inconsistent with the SCAQMD's AQMP or directly obstruct the implementation of the policies or goals set forth in the AQMP. The AQMP was prepared to comply with the federal and State Clean Air Acts and amendments, to accommodate growth, to reduce the high levels of pollutants Los Angeles Basin, to meet federal and state air quality standards, and to minimize the fiscal impact that pollution control measures have on the local economy. A project is consistent with the AQMP if it is consistent with the population, housing, and employment assumptions that were used in the development of the AQMP.

Under the Clean Air Act, SCAQMD is required to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants for which the Basin is in non-attainment (i.e., ozone, $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}). The Project would be subject to the SCAQMD's 2016 AQMP1, which was adopted by the SCAQMD Governing Board on March 3, 2017. The 2016 AQMP includes a comprehensive list of pollution control strategies and measures directed at reducing emissions and achieving the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The 2016 AQMP demonstrates attainment of the 1-hr and 8-hr ozone NAAQS as well as the latest 24-hr and annual $PM_{2.5}$ standards. These strategies are developed, in part, based on regional population, housing, and employment projections prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

SCAG is the regional planning agency for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino and Imperial Counties and serves as a forum for regional issues relating to transportation, the economy, community development and the environment. The emissions inventory of the 2016 AQMP are based in part on demographic growth forecasts and transportation activities projections developed by SCAG for the 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016-2040 RTP/SCS). The 2016-2040 RTP/SCS forms the basis for the land use and transportation control portions of the AQMP and are utilized in the preparation of air quality forecasts and consistency analysis included in the AQMP. Both the RTP/SCS and AQMP strategy incorporate projections from local planning documents. In sum, the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS was integrated in the 2016 AQMP.

Because the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS is based on the General Plan growth projections of the local municipalities within the Los Angeles Basin, projects that are consistent with the projections of employment and population forecasts identified in their respective General Plans are considered consistent with the AQMP. Projects that are not consistent with the local General Plan and/or involve Plan Amendments for higher densities must be analyzed for consistency with the AQMP.

The Project Site is located within the unincorporated area of the County within the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. The 2012 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan is a component of the County General Plan 2035. By conforming to the adopted General Plan 2035 and applicable zoning regulations, the proposed project will not conflict or obstruct the implementation of 2016 AQMP. Projects that are consistent with the applicable zoning and long-range plans requirements are typically considered to be consistent with the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). The proposed project is consistent with the Rural Land 5 land use category of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan as well as the A-2-2 Zone uses subject to permits. The development of single-family residences within a hillside management area is allowed in the A-2-2 Zone with approval of a CUP. Compliance with the required CalGreen standards as part of the project will help to ensure the project

[1] On October 1, 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) strengthened the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone, lowering the primary and secondary ozone standard levels to 70 parts per billion (ppb). The South Coast Air Basin is classified as an "extreme" non-attainment area and the Coachella Valley is classified as a "severe-15" non-attainment area for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS. SCAQMD is currently updating its plan to address such requirements and the 2022 AQMP has not been approved. For the purposes of this analysis, the Project is still subject to the approved 2016 AQMP.

will be in compliance with the applicable AQMP. Nevertheless, there is potential for dust to be generated during construction activities which could adversely impact the air quality of the area without adequate dust control measures. Implementation of dust control measures during construction will help to avoid adverse air quality impacts and any conflict with applicable air quality plans. As such, air quality impacts are expected to be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is located within the SCAQMD basin, which is classified as a non-attainment area for the federal and state standards for ozone (O3). It is also a non-attainment area for the state standard for particulate matter for PM_{10}The basin generally has poor air quality. Air quality impacts may occur during site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating required to implement the proposed land use. Sources of emissions during construction include exhaust emissions, fugitive dust generated from soil and material disturbance during site preparation and grading activities resulting in net increase of particulates, and the emission of reactive organic gases (ROGs) during the painting of the structures.

Construction and operation of the Project will result in net increases of O3 precursors (ROG and NOx), and PM10, and would also generate emissions of CO, SOx, and PM2.5. However, the construction of six new low-rise, single-family detached residences is not anticipated to exceed SCAQMD air quality significance thresholds for daily construction emissions. Due to its small size, the project is not deemed a project of statewide, regional or areawide significance (CEQA Statute and Guidelines Section 15206(b)). The threshold for statewide, regional or areawide significance is 500 dwelling units and the proposed project is substantially below this threshold of significance. The emissions would be a very small fraction of SCAQMD CEQA significance thresholds for regional and local construction emissions. Given the small scale of the project and small size of the project site, the project will have a less than significant impact on air quality standards. Furthermore, single-family residential use is an allowed under the A-2-2 Zone and is consistent with the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan and the General Plan 2035.

For this analysis, CalEEMod 2020.4.0 was used to model with default parameters for the construction and operational emissions from the proposed Project. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(3), the SCAQMD's approach for assessing cumulative impacts is based on the AQMP forecasts of attainment of ambient air quality standards in accordance with the requirements of the federal and state Clean Air Acts. If the mass regional emissions calculated for a project exceed the applicable SCAQMD daily significance thresholds that are designed to assist the region in attaining the applicable state and national ambient air quality standards, that project can be considered cumulatively considerable. As shown in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2, the unmitigated modeled construction and operational emissions do not exceed the significance thresholds established by SCAQMD.

Table 3.1 Maximum Daily Construction Emissions (lbs per day)

	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	PM2.5
Construction Year 2023	3.39	34.56	28.72	0.06	21.12	11.32
Construction Year 2024	18.95	13.49	16.24	0.03	0.64	0.59
Maximum Emissions	**18.95**	**34.56**	**28.72**	**0.06**	**21.12**	**11.32**

SCAQMD Regional Thresholds[2]	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**
Maximum On-Site Emissions	3.32	34.51	28.05	0.06	10.63	4.96
SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs)	N/A	183	1,814	N/A	14	9
Threshold Exceeded?	**N/A**	**No**	**No**	**N/A**	**No**	**No**

Notes: ROG=reactive organic gases; NO_X=nitrogen oxide; CO=carbon monoxide; PM_{10}=course particulate matter; $PM_{2.5}$=fine particulate matter.

The table assumes the proposed project would comply with SCAQMD Rule 403. Emission data is pulled from "unmitigated" results. Maximum on-site emissions are the highest emissions that would occur on the project site from on-site sources such as heavy construction equipment and architectural coatings and excludes off-site emissions from sources such as construction worker vehicle trips and haul truck trips.

Source: CalEEMod simulation using CalEEMod2020.4.0, completed March 2022.

Table 3.2 Maximum Daily Operational Emissions (lbs per day)

	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Area	2.89	0.13	0.53	**<0.01**	0.46	0.46
Energy	<0.01	0.04	0.02	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Mobile	0.17	0.19	1.73	<0.01	0.41	0.11
Project Emissions	3.06	0.36	2.28	<0.01	0.87	0.57
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	**55**	**55**	**550**	**150**	**150**	**55**
Threshold Exceeded	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes: Some numbers may not add up due to rounding. Emission data is pulled from "unmitigated" results. The table assumes the proposed project would comply with SCAQMD Rule 403.
Source: CalEEMod simulation using CalEEMod2020.4.0, completed March 2022.

Furthermore, SCAQMD's Rule 403 governs fugitive dust emissions from construction projects. This rule sets forth a list of control measures that must be undertaken for all construction projects to ensure that no dust emissions from the project are visible beyond the property boundaries. Adherence to Rule 403 is mandatory and as such, does not denote mitigation under CEQA. Implementation of construction best management practices and dust control measures during construction would help to avoid exacerbating the non-attainment status for PM_{10}. In sum, the project's regulatory compliance would be adequate to ensure that the construction and operational emissions would not exceed SCAQMD regional significance thresholds for all six criteria pollutants. Impacts are less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The existing single-family residences within a 500-foot radius of the Project Site are considered sensitive receptors. The proposed Project consists of new six new residences; new sensitive receptors are introduced to the area since the Project itself is considered a sensitive receptor.

Construction activities have the potential to emit diesel particulate matter (DPM). DPM is known to the State of California as a toxic air contaminant (TAC). Although off-road heavy-duty diesel equipment used for site grading, paving, and other construction activities would result in the generation of DPM, construction is only

[2] http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/scaqmd-air-quality-significance-thresholds.pdf

temporary. It occurs over a relatively short duration in comparison to the operational lifetime of the Proposed project. In addition, only portions of the site would be disturbed at a time, with operation of construction equipment regulated by federal, State, and local regulations, including SCAQMD rules and regulations, and occurring intermittently throughout the course of a day. Thus, the likelihood that any one sensitive receptor would be exposed to high concentrations of DPM for any extended period is low.

During operation, the project would not involve the use of stationary diesel engine or become a major on-site stationary source of TACs. The California Air Resources Board's Handbook includes facilities (e.g., distribution centers) with associated diesel truck trips of more than 100 trucks per day as a source of substantial TAC emissions. The project is not a facility that would generate such high numbers of diesel truck trips. As a residential project, it would not be a type of land use that would generate operational TACs (which typically include commercial or industrial uses such as dry cleaners, factories, and refineries). No industrial and distribution facilities, and major transportation projects are located within 1,000 feet. There are also no dry cleaners within 300 feet and no gasoline station within 500 feet. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose any existing sensitive receptors to any new permanent or substantial TAC emissions. The proposed Project is immediately surrounded by mostly residential uses and would not place new sensitive receptors to existing sources of pollutants. Impacts from exposure to substantial pollutants would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed Project consists of six detached single-family residences that would not generate objectionable odors, which are generally associated with agricultural activities; landfills and transfer stations; the generation or treatment of sewage; the use or generation of chemicals; and food processing. Construction equipment and activities may generate odors from diesel exhaust emissions, painting, and paving operations. There may be situations where construction odors would be noticeable by neighboring residents and other nearby individuals, but these odors would not be unfamiliar or necessarily objectionable. The odors would be temporary and would dissipate rapidly from the source with an increase in distance. Therefore, the impacts would be short-term and would not be objectionable to a substantial number of people.

Project operation would not result in objectionable odors as the project is a typical small single-family residential project that does not manufacture or store material, nor are uses allowed within the zone that would generate significant objectionable odors. The limited amounts of trash in the trash receptacles anticipated from residences are not considered significant source of objectionable odors. These trash receptacles would be located in an enclosed area and subject to regular maintenance, including the collection of trash for off-site disposal. Although the Project will include an onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) for each of the six parcels, the OWTS should not be a source of offensive odors as long as they are properly maintained. The OWTS shall be subject to the requirements of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and be subject to stringent monitoring and testing. There would be a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
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 Wildlife (CDFW) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The site is partially disturbed and supports remnant stands of coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and ruderal vegetation. No biological documentation has been prepared for the project site; however, queries of the California Natural Diversity Database and California Native Plant Society Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants indicate recorded observations of 62 special-status species within the USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle containing the site and 8 adjacent quadrangles. Most of these are not expected to occur due to geographic range limitations and habitat requirements. Those with potential to occur on site include Peirson's morning-glory (*Calystegia peirsonii*), Palmer's grapplinghook (*Harpagonella palmeri*), slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*), Plummer's mariposa-lily (*Calochortus plummerae*), southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), Bell's sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli belli*), California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennettii*), San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), rosy boa (*Charina trivirgata*), and coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*).

If present on site, Peirson's morning-glory, Palmer's grapplinghook, slender mariposa lily, Plummer's mariposa-lily, southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, Bell's sage sparrow, loggerhead shrike, and San Diego desert woodrat would be restricted primarily to remnant patches of coastal sage scrub and chaparral vegetation outside of direct impact areas related to construction on the existing pads and approach road. Indirect impacts to these species could be expected through implementation of fuel-modification activities for fire protection; night lighting; introduction of pets and domestic animals; and chemicals including pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.

California horned lark, coastal whiptail, rosy boa, and coast horned lizard are tolerant or dependant on sparse habitats similar to the disturbed areas on site and may be subject to the indirect impacts listed above, as well as mortality or nest failure resulting from construction activity on the existing pads and access road.

Direct and indirect impacts to special-status species resulting from development of the site would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of project conditions. The access roads and other development shall be designed to avoid impacting any areas where special-status species may be present. A wildfire burned over much of the site in October 2019, damaging or destroying much of the existing vegetation.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural communities (e.g., riparian habitat, coastal sage scrub, oak woodlands, non-jurisdictional wetlands) identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by CDFW or USFWS? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. Several specimens of Tucker oak (*Quercus john-tuckeri*) are present on-site along the approach road. Individuals of this species occur on-site within the context of remnant chaparral vegetation and do not form part of a woodland. Remaining coastal sage scrub and ruderal vegetation on site is not considered sensitive by CDFW or other resource agencies.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, coastal wetlands, and drainages) or waters of the United States or California, as defined by § 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act or California Fish & Game code § 1600, et seq. through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. Drainage courses are present on the project site. One drainage course will be impacted by the project, which is located on Parcels 18 and 19 and includes part of the driveway leading to the building site on Parcel 19. In the event that this drainage course is recognized as CDFW jurisdiction under California Fish & Game Code 1600, et seq. a Streambed alteration Agreement would be required prior to any development impacting CDFW jurisdiction.

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 Impact. The site lies approximately 1.9 miles west of the nearest linkage design recognized by the South Coast Missing Linkages Project (the San Gabriel – Castaic Connection); however, through-movement opportunities exist on site by virtue of its undeveloped condition and adjacency to intact natural habitat areas. These are sporadically interrupted by roads and suburban and rural development and extend west towards Cruzan Mesa and onward to Vasquez and Plum Canyons, and northeast along the complex system of ridges separating Mint and Tick Canyons. Wide-ranging mammals (coyote, bobcat, deer, etc), flying insects, birds, and bats are expected to traverse this network easily. Non-volant, small-bodied animals (rodents, reptiles, most invertebrates) are probably limited in their movement through the area by roads, especially Sierra Highway and Sand Canyon Road. Development of the project site would not be expected to appreciably frustrate existing movement opportunities.

Wildlife nursery sites on site may comprise nesting sites of native bird species, which are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-712; Ch. 128; July 13, 1918; 40 Stat. 755) and the California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.

Direct and indirect impacts to wildlife nursery sites resulting from development of the site would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of project conditions.

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e) Convert oak woodlands (as defined by the state, oak woodlands are oak stands with greater than 10% canopy cover with oaks at least 5 inch in diameter measured at 4.5 feet above mean natural grade) or other unique native woodlands (juniper, Joshua, southern California black walnut, etc.)? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. Several specimens of Tucker oak (*Quercus john-tuckeri*) are present on-site along the approach road. Tucker oak is a large shrub/small tree; individuals of this species occur on-site within the context of remnant chaparral vegetation and do not form part of a woodland. Remaining coastal sage scrub and ruderal vegetation on site is not considered sensitive by CDFW or other resource agencies.

Individuals of Tucker oak with single trunks larger than 8" at 4 ½ ft above the ground, or with any two trunks having a combined diameter of 12" at 4 ½ ft above the ground would be subject to the provisions of the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance.

f) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, including Wildflower Reserve Areas (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.36), the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 22.174), the Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 102), and Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERAs) (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 22.44)? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

No Impact. The site is not located within a designated Wildflower Reserve Area, Significant Ecological Area, or Sensitive Environmental Resource Area. Oak trees are present which may be protected by the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance; however, impacts to these trees are not presently proposed.

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

No Impact. The site is not located within an area subject to the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with 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 CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. A historical resource under the CEQA definition generally falls within one of three categories: 1) mandatory; 2) presumptive; and/or 3) discretionary. A "historical resource" is a resource that meets one or more of the following criteria:

Mandatory Resource:

- Formally listed in, or determined by the State Commission to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources(California Register);

Presumptive Resource:

- Officially listed in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5020.1(k) or be recognized by local ordinance or resolution (or in local general plan);
- Identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements of PRC Section 5024.1(g); or;
- Determined to be a historical resource by an agency by a preponderance of the evidence that the site is not historically or culturally significant (PRC Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(2)).

Discretionary Resource:

- May be determined to be historic in agency discretion, independent of any decision to list or not on a register, pursuant to PRC Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(3)).

According to the County's Historic Resource/Cultural Resource Map, no resources are identified on the project site. The Project Site consists of vacant land and no designated historical resources exist on or near the project site. Existing accessory structures such as a storage units and water tanks exist on three of the six residential parcels. The Project will not impact any identified historic resources defined in CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5 for the following reasons:

- The property is not formally listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- The property is not formally listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resource Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources.
- The property is not included in a local register of historical resources or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code.
- The property is not designated by the County's Historic Preservation Ordinance in the Registry of Landmarks and Historic District

- The existing accessory structures are not determined by the County to be historically significant. These structures and its architecture are neither unique nor distinctive in the area. They are not associated with significant events that made contribution to the broad pattern of California's history or cultural heritage, not associated with any important persons, nor embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or present the work of important creative individual. No famous person is associated with the existing structures, nor was it designed by an important creative individual.
- The property is unlikely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

The existing structures do not meet the definition of a historical resource and are not determined to be a significant historical resource; therefore, impact is less than significant. No historic resources are known to exist on the site.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site has been previously disturbed by rough grading. The proposed ground-disturbing footprint will be primarily limited to previously graded areas. No archaeological resources are known to exist on the project site. Due to the potential for unknown archaeological resources to be discovered during the fine grading phase of the project, mitigation measures have been developed in consultation with the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians to cease project activities in the area of any cultural resource or tribal cultural resource that may be found, to develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan and provide an archaeological monitor in the event that significant resources are found, to consult with the tribe regarding the disposition and treatment of any tribal cultural resources encountered during all ground disturbing activities, and related measures to protect cultural resources and tribal cultural resources.

Conditional Use Permit Conditions of Approval:

- Draft Condition No. 31: In the event that Tribal Cultural Resources are discovered during Project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall assess the find. The Department or permittee shall contact the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) to consult if any such find occurs.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. It is not currently known whether unmarked human remains may exist on the site. Human remains can be found unexpectedly on development sites during grading activities. California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that in the event that human remains are discovered within a project site, disturbance of the site shall halt and remain halted until the coroner has conducted an investigation into the circumstances, manner, and cause of death, and recommendations regarding the disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to an authorized representative. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and if the coroner determines or believes the human remains to be those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the NAHC. This requirement will be included as a conditional of approval for the project

Conditions of Approval:

- Draft Condition No. 32: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the Project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted by the permittee or their representative pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code shall be enforced for the duration of the Project.

    - Inadvertent discoveries of human remains and/or funerary object(s) are subject to California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and the subsequent disposition of those discoveries shall be decided by the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), as determined by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), should those findings be determined as Native American in origin.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Any paleontological resources that may have existed on-site is likely to have been disturbed by previous grading activity**.** No unique geological features or rock formations will be disturbed by the project. If paleontological resources are discovered during grading or other project activities, then work on the project shall be halted and the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum and the Department of Regional Planning (DRP) shall be notified. A certified paleontological resource specialist would need to be retained by the applicant to ensure the protection of paleontological resources in the event that such resources are discovered on the site. Work may not resume on the site in this situation until clearance is given by the paleontological specialist. This will be included as a CUP condition.

6. ENERGY

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The project would not involve inefficient use of energy resources. During operation, the proposed project would be powered by solar energy and would be connected to the Southern California Edison energy grid as a secondary power source. Each property would also be equipped with a battery for storage of surplus energy generation and use during nighttime and on cloudy days. Overall, the project would be required to comply with the mandatory provisions of the Los Angeles County Title 31 Green Building Standards Code and all other applicable requirements to achieve the objective of improving public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact, or positive environmental impact, and encouraging sustainable construction practices. Title 31 which is based on the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), for residential construction. Title 31 addresses green building, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, low-impact development, and landscape design. The project would be reviewed by the County Department of Public Works to ensure that the building construction techniques, building materials, and landscape design are consistent with the principles of sustainability and green design in the Los Angeles County Green Buildings Standard Code.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The project would include residential solar power installation for each single-family residence and would comply with the state's renewal energy plan**.** The proposed project is required to provide energy saving features to comply with applicable County Green Building Standards Code, as well as Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code) of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and the State of California Green Code. The efficient energy consumption measures required by the Green Building Standards Code and CALGreen would result in a less than significant impact.

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known active fault trace? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒

No Impact. Based on criteria established by the California Geological Survey (CGS), faults can be classified as active, potentially active, or inactive. CGS establishes regulatory zones around active faults, called Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones. An active fault, for the purposes of the Alquist-Priolo Act, is one that has ruptured in the last 11,000 years. These zones, which extend from 200 feet to 500 feet on each side of a known fault, identify areas where a potential surface fault rupture could prove hazardous for buildings used for human occupancy. Development projects located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone are required to prepare special geotechnical studies to characterize hazards from any potential surface ruptures. The CGS states that wherever an active fault exists, if it has the potential for surface rupture, a structure for human occupancy cannot be placed over the fault and must be a minimum distance from the fault (generally fifty feet).

There are no known active faults traversing the project site, and the project site is not located within the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone or any other established fault zones according to the CGS California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application (EQ Zapp)[3]. The San Gabriel Fault is the nearest earthquake fault to the project site and is located approximately six miles southwest of the project site. Thus, the project would not be exposed to fault rupture hazards along the San Andreas Fault, and no impact would occur.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. As part of a seismically active region, there is a risk of strong seismic ground shaking due to the presence of a major or potentially active faults throughout Southern California. As previously stated, the Project Site does not contain any active faults.

The California Building Code and County Code Title 26 and Title 30 contain provisions for earthquake safety based on factors including occupancy type, the types of soil and rock onsite, and the strength of

[3] https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/EQZApp/app/ [Accessed February 23, 2022]

ground motion with specified probability of occurring at the site. It requires the preparation of project-specific geotechnical reports prepared by a Certified Engineering Geologist or Geotechnical Engineer prior to construction of proposed structures. Site specific requirements are incorporated into project plans that are reviewed by County Building and Safety Division prior to issuance of permits and improvements are inspected in the field prior to permit sign off to ensure that these requirements are implemented.

Due to the seismic history of the region, all structures, including extension of public utilities and infrastructure to serve the proposed development, will be designed to resist seismic forces in accordance with the criteria and seismic design parameters contained in the most current version of the California Building Code. The construction and placement of all structures and infrastructure facilities would conform to state regulations, seismic design requirements, ordinances, and existing standard requirements. Impacts related to seismic ground shaking would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Liquefaction describes a phenomenon where cyclic stresses, which are produced by earthquake-induced ground motions, create excess pore pressures in cohesionless soils. As a result, the soils may acquire a high degree of mobility, which can lead to lateral spreading, consolidation and settlement of loose sediments, ground oscillation, flow failure, loss of bearing strength, ground fissuring, and sand boils, and other damaging deformations. This phenomenon occurs only below the water table, but after liquefaction has developed. It can propagate upward into overlying, non-saturated soil as excess pore water escapes. Liquefaction, as well as other ground failure hazards such as lateral spreading, flow failures, ground oscillations, sand boils, and/or general loss of bearing strength can lead to near-surface or surface ground failure that can result in property damage and structural failure. Should any structures be located in areas potentially susceptible to ground failure hazards, a potentially significant impact would occur.

Liquefaction Zones identify where the stability of foundation soils must be investigated, and countermeasures undertaken in the design and construction of buildings for human occupancy. Statutes require that cities and counties use these zones as part of their construction permitting process. A small western portion of Parcel 25 of the Project Site is mapped within a Liquefaction Zone Area where historical occurrence of liquefaction, or local geological, geotechnical and ground water conditions indicate a potential for permanent ground displacements such that mitigation as defined in Public Resources Code Section 2693(c) would be required.

A geotechnical investigation will be required when the proposed work is a "Project" as defined in California Public Resources Code section 2693 and is located in an area designated as a "Seismic Hazard Zone" as defined in section 3722 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations and on Seismic Hazard Zone Maps issued by the State Geologist under Public Resources Code section 2696. Furthermore, the geotechnical report shall include data regarding the nature, distribution, and strength of existing soils, conclusions, and recommendations for grading procedures and design criteria for corrective measures, including buttress fills, when necessary, and an opinion on the adequacy for the intended use of sites to be developed by the proposed grading as affected by geotechnical factors, including the stability of slopes. This investigation would also include a liquefaction study for any parcels that meet the criteria stipulated by County Code Section 1613 in Chapter 16 of Title 26 Building Code for liquefaction potential and any recommendations shall be incorporated in the site plans. This Project would prepare parcel-specific geotechnical investigation as determined by the County Building Official during the plan check stage to ensure that any proposed liquefaction or lateral spreading risks to the proposed structures would be reduced to less than significant.

iv) Landslides? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The CGS designates the portions of the Project Site as being within a landslide and liquefaction zone According to the CGS's Landslide Inventory, the western portions of the Parcel 18 and Parcel 19 are mapped within a Definite Dormant Old/Mature/Age Not Specified Landslide Activity. Another area directly north of Fitch Avenue overlapping the northern portion of Parcel 23 and southern portion of Parcel 25 is mapped Questionable Landslide for earth flow, which means that there is a 50 percent confidence level that it is a landslide, but a geomorphic feature could be explained by other processes and cannot be certain it is a landslide without detailed site investigation.

The landslide activity classification is based on the recency of activity into one of four categories (i.e., active/historic, dormant/young, dormant/mature, dormant/old) based on the system created by Keaton and DeGraff in 1996. The designation of activity shows an estimate of how recently the landslide moved, but also suggests the type of hazard represented. More recently active landslides are more likely to continue to fail, or to fail completely. Older landslides are less likely to move as single slide masses, but may be the source of smaller slides. The present risk at the Project is earth flow moving northwest in the 300 degree direction. CGS defines an earth flow as "a specific type of soil flow landslide where the majority of the soil materials are fine-grained (silt and clay) and cohesive. The material strength is low through much of the slide mass, and movement occurs on many discontinuous shear surfaces throughout the landslide mass. This movement along numerous internal slide planes disrupts the landslide mass leading to cumulative movement that resembles the flow of a viscous liquid characterized by a lumpy, or "hummocky" slope morphology. The lower parts of an earth flow usually bulge outward and are steeper than adjacent slopes. Earth flows commonly occur on moderately steep slopes. Slope gradients are commonly from 10% to as steep as 30%, although steeper slopes may be found in headscarp and toe areas. Earth flows typically are initiated by periods of prolonged rainfall and sometimes do not initiate until well after a storm or the rainy season has passed. They are characteristically slow moving, in the millimeters or centimeters per day range, and may continue to move for a period of days to weeks after initiating."[4]

During the plan check stage, the Department of Public Works may require an engineering geology or soils engineering report (or both), prepared by a licensed professional in the State of California. The engineering geology or soils engineering report or both shall contain a finding regarding the safety of the site of the proposed work against hazard from landslide, settlement or slippage and a finding regarding the effect that the proposed work will have on the geotechnical stability of the area outside of the proposed work.

Furthermore, the proposed single-family residences, accessory structures, and associated infrastructure will be required to comply with the 2019 California Building Code and Residential Code, which have been adopted and incorporated by reference into Title 26 and Title 30 of the County Code. Title 26 and Title 30 of the County Code provides minimum standards to protect property and the public welfare by regulating the design and construction of excavations, foundations, building frames, retaining walls, and other building elements to mitigate the effects of seismic shaking and adverse soil conditions. Specifically, there are seismic design regulations governing the design and construction of new buildings and additions to existing buildings when constructing such buildings on or into slopes steeper than 33.3 percent. Site specific requirements are incorporated into project plans that are reviewed by County Building and Safety Division prior to issuance of permits and improvements are inspected in the field prior to permit sign off to ensure that these requirements are implemented. If necessary, the proposed project could be conditioned to be setback further from an unstable part of a slope and the project may be conditioned

[4] https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/landslides#earthflows

for soil mitigation, such as soil stabilizing measures, as required by the Los Angeles County Public Works Geotechnical and Materials Engineering Division. Due to the age of the landslide activity and there is no record of recent landslide activity in the project vicinity, the Project would have less than significant related to landslide after complying with the applicable requirements specified in the California Building Code and County Code related to slope stability and hazards against landslide.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Grading is proposed for the project, including an estimate of 18,867 cubic yards of cut and 16,338 cubic yards of fill, to be balanced on site. Erosion control measures will be incorporated as project features. The project is required to submit a hydrology study and Low-Impact Development (LID) plan to DPW Land Development Division and to comply with LID (County Code Section 12.84.440) standards in accordance with the LID standards manual. These standards are designed to Minimize hydromodification impacts to natural drainage systems, including erosion impacts, as well as preventing pollution.

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? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed above in the response to Checklist Question 7(a)(i) through (iv), the Project will conduct a detailed site geotechnical investigation at each parcel during the plan check stage to determine soil and slope conditions for the proposed building pads of each residence. This geotechnical investigation would make specific recommendations with respect to the building foundation and grading activities that would reduce potential impacts to less than significant level. Additionally, the proposed Project would be constructed in conformance with all applicable engineering and building standards enforced by the County Division of Building and Safety and under observation and testing of a geotechnical engineer. The geotechnical engineer would provide continuity of geotechnical interpretation and check that the recommendations presented for geotechnical aspects of site development are incorporated during site grading, construction of improvements, and excavation of foundations. Due to seismic compliance standards, the construction contractor shall also incorporate best management practices consistent with the guidelines provided in the California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction as well as project design elements consistent with Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, California Building Code, Uniform Building Code, or other required standards to further reduce any potential for impacts resulting from unstable slopes that may result in collapse. Therefore, impacts including the risk of landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse would be less than significant.

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? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. Expansive soils contain significant amounts of clay particles that swell considerably when wetted and shrink when dried. Foundations constructed on these soils are subject to uplifting forces caused by the swelling. Grading would occur to create building pads that are in compliance with the applicable requirements related to expansive soil of the California Building Code and the County Building Code. The detailed site geotechnical investigation at each parcel will identify soils that may possess expansive characteristics and the removal depth shall be determined by a geotechnical engineer in the field

during grading. All proposed engineered grading shall be performed in accordance with an approved grading plan and specifications prepared by a Civil Engineer, unless otherwise required by the Building Official. Furthermore, grading inspections shall be conducted under a permit to ensure that grading operations are performed under the retained services of a Field Engineer, Geotechnical Engineer, and Engineering Geologist. The Field Engineer for all engineered grading projects shall prepare routine inspection reports and shall file these reports with the Building and Safety Division. Therefore, the detailed site investigation and the routine inspections of grading operations by the County Building Official, the Project would have less than significant impact related to expansive soils.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in the Section 19, Utilities and Service Systems, the project site proposes the use of both conventional and non-conventional OWTS. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a work plan and feasibility report shall be required for each residential parcel to document soil profile excavation, exploratory boring to determine historic and seasonal high groundwater mark, presence of subsurface water, and percolation testing to confirm that the soil on the property could support the use a conventional OWTS or non-conventional OWTS. Testing shall be conducted in an area likely to be utilized as a dispersal field, including the 100% future dispersion area. The report shall be prepared in compliance with the "Conventional and Non-Conventional Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems – Requirements and Procedures." Non-conventional OWTS will account for the smaller dispersal field or site condition limitations not conducive to conventional OWTS by making use of supplemental treatment components, telemetry features, system sampling, reporting, annual permit, and a County Registrars recorded covenant & agreement on the properties/parcels title ensure compliance and monitoring. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant in the event soils were found to be incapable of supporting a conventional OWTS.

f) Conflict with the Hillside Management Area Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch.22.104)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site located within a Hillside Management Area containing slopes of 25 percent or greater and is therefore subject to the Hillside Management Ordinance. A Hillside Management Conditional Use Permit (CUP) is required. A rural land use designation in a Hillside Management Areas is required to provide at least 70 percent of land for open space (up to 33 percent of the dedicated open space as improved open space) as well as implement design guidelines as part of the project. The proposed project will provide at least 70 percent to open space and incorporate design guidelines The project is designed to minimize grading and disturbance to hillside areas. All proposed buildings will not exceed two stories in height. Therefore, the approval of the requested Hillside Management Areas CUP would ensure compliance with the Hillside Management Ordinance.

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The project will generate GHGs during construction and operation. The project is not a large-scale development that would have significant cumulative GHG impacts in the Antelope Valley Region or have a significant impact on GHG emission levels. The majority of guests are expected to arrive in buses and vans, reducing the need for motor vehicle trips, and thus resulting in lower GHG emissions. Buildings used for the project will be required to comply with CalGreen building standards to reduce potential GHG impacts and improve energy efficiency. The site proposes to use solar panels, thereby reducing the amount of GHGs generated by the project. Compliance with the CalGreen standards and the use of solar panels will help to reduce GHG impacts, and such impacts will be at less than significant levels.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 adopted in 2015 contains a Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP) identifying the County's goals with regard to climate change and GHGs. This project is required to comply with the current Title 31 standards, the County's Green Building Standards, which are intended to "improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact, or positive environmental impact, and encouraging sustainable construction practices" in the areas of planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, and environmental air quality. The use of solar panels by the project is also consistent with the County's plans and policies, including the CCAP. The scale of this project is relatively small and it does not conflict with any specific requirement in the CCAP, or GHG requirements of the California Air Resources Board (ARB), AVAQMD, or any other pertinent state or local agency.

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with 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, storage, production, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. Hazardous materials are generally defined as any material that because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or future hazard to human health and safety or to the environment, if released into the workplace or the environment (Health and Safety Code §25501(o)). The California Department of Toxic Substances (DTSC) is responsible for classifying hazardous materials in the state of California. Hazardous materials are commonly stored and used by a variety of businesses and are commonly encountered during construction activities.

The type and quantities of hazardous materials to be used in association with the Project would be typical of those used in single-family residential developments. The project does not include the routine transportation, storage, production, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, or the use of pressurized tanks. During the construction phase of the project, the project may include minimal use of hazardous materials, such as solvents, paints, lubricants, oils, and other hazardous materials that are commonly associated with construction activities. Hazardous materials that are used during construction would be transported, used, stored, and disposed in accordance applicable County, State, and Federal laws. After construction, unused hazardous materials may be properly transported for use at other projects. Hazardous wastes may be properly disposed at licensed facilities or recycled to minimize wastes requiring disposal.

During operation, the proposed six single-family residences would use common, everyday hazardous materials such as cleaning products (floor and antiseptic cleaners), painting supplies, pool maintenance products, and landscaping products (fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides) that may be hazardous if improperly used or ingested. These products have a low incidence of unsafe use. Materials that may be used during construction and operation are not acutely hazardous. While it is impossible to guarantee compliance from Project residents, it is likely that virtually all potentially hazardous materials, presumed to be in small quantities, would be contained, stored, and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and handled in compliance with applicable standards and regulations. Any associated risk would be adequately reduced to a less than significant level through compliance with these standards and regulations.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is unlikely to create significant hazard to the public or environment through accidental release of large quantities of hazardous materials or waste into the environment. The Project involves construction of six new single-family residences, which typically require grading, site preparation, installation of infrastructure to provide power, potable water, gas, and wastewater

services, and other works associated with residential construction. The hazardous materials to be used in association with operation of the Project are anticipated to be everyday products such as
cleaning solvents, painting supplies, and pesticides for landscaping. Further, there was no significant environmental concern induced by the present or past operations and practices at the Project site and its immediate vicinity. Compliance with California Fire Code standards for design, storage, operations, maintenance, and spill prevention/response measures, would reduce impacts associated with the handling of hazardous materials during construction and operation of the proposed project to less than significant level.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of sensitive land uses? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. Sensitive land uses are generally considered to be uses such as residential uses, schools, churches, playgrounds, senior citizen centers, hospitals, day-care facilities, or other uses that are more susceptible to hazardous materials. The proposed Project itself is considered a sensitive land use. The sensitive uses within one-quarter mile of the Project Site include the residential communities (i.e., single-family residences and mobile home parks) to the north and south of the Project Site. There are two adjoining single-family residential properties to the Project Site, but these are also owned and operated by the Project Applicant.

Despite the Project Site's proximity to sensitive land uses, Project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. Existing regulatory measures and local oversight of the County Fire Department on residential construction would avoid significant hazardous emissions to the public or environment. Standard protocols would be adopted to minimize the risk associated with hazardous materials and wastes handling and use. Because the proposed Project does not anticipate using large quantities of hazardous materials, accidental hazardous material releases would be low under existing regulatory requirements. Materials that may be used during construction and operation are not acutely hazardous. Everyday cleaning products used during operation contaminating hazardous materials or substances have a low incidence of unsafe use. Compliance with California Fire Code standards for design, storage, operations, maintenance, and spill prevention/response measures, would reduce impacts associated with the handling of hazardous materials during construction and operation of the proposed project to less than significant level.

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

No Impact. The project site was not found on the list pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. The Project Site is currently undeveloped and is not located in an area with a history of industrial uses or hazardous material uses. Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the DTSC, State Department of Health Services, State Water Resources Control Board, and local enforcement agency to compile and update as appropriate, at least annually, the "Cortese" List, and submit to the Secretary of Environmental Protection for consolidation and distribution. The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies and developers to comply with the CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. A review of the Hazardous Waste and Substances Site

List –Site Cleanup database[5] showed no records on the project site. The project sites are not included in any Water Board's list of solid waste disposal sites, list of "active" orders where necessary actions have not yet been completed (known as Cease and Desist Orders (CDO) and Cleanup and Abatement Orders (CAO)). According to the State Water Resources Control Board Geotracker database, there are no leaking underground storage tank (LUST), permitted USTs, or cleanup sites identified on the property. Results from the DTSC's EnviroStor database also shows no records of cleanup sites or permitted sites on the property.

The Project Site has no documented occurrence or potential of either petroleum or hazardous material contamination. Existence of significant environmental impairments is unlikely. Due to the undeveloped nature of the Project Site, it is unlikely unknown hazardous environmental concerns exist on the property. Thus, less than significant impact would occur.

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 project is not located within the vicinity of an airport, a private airstrip or an airport land use plan. The nearest airport, Palmdale Regional Airport, is more than 31 miles away. It would therefore have no impact for any potential safety hazards or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is primarily vacant and undeveloped.
The project is near the Sierra Highway, which is designated as a Highway Disaster Route according to Figure 12.6 Disaster Routes of the Los Angeles County General Plan 2035. However, the project does not have direct vehicular access to this route. The access will be provided via private access path, which will connect Sierra Highway to the Project Site. Implementation of the Project would not result in the closure of Sierra Highway, or any streets designated as an evacuation route in an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Construction activities and staging areas would be confined to the Project site. The construction activities would not physically impair access to and around the Project site. Furthermore, development of the Project would comply with County's building and applicable fire and safety codes, which would require adequate access for fire personnel and equipment in and out of the Project site. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving fires, because the project is located:

i) within a high fire hazard area with inadequate access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

[5] Accessed March 22, 2022. http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone but on-site adequate Fire access will meet Los Angeles County Fire Department (Fire Department) access requirements. The Project Site will be connected to the Sierra Highway, designated as a Highway Disaster Route by the 2035 General Plan, via a private road. The County Fire Code requirements would stipulate applicable County access standards (i.e., roadway widths, all-weather surface requirements, length of streets, turning requirements, grade restrictions, maintenance requirements, and parking restrictions) that would be implemented by the Project. Specific fire and life safety requirements would be addressed at the building permit phase when architectural plans are submitted to the Fire Department for review and approval. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

ii) within an area with inadequate water and pressure to meet fire flow standards?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. As mentioned above, the project will be required to meet the required fire flow standards of the LACFD. The LACFD Fire Prevention Division has reviewed the conceptual design of the proposed Project and issued a clearance letter for the project CUP in letter dated October 4, 2021 with recommended conditions of approval including the plan check phrase with a Fire Engineer and ensure compliance with fire flow standards. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

iii) within proximity to land uses that have the potential for dangerous fire hazard?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. As mentioned above, the project is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The regional natural vegetation in this area is highly prone to wildfires. Residential uses do not generally present a high potential for dangerous fire hazards. However, wildfires may occur in this area due to its highly natural state. The Project will comply with all applicable fire safety requirements including fuel modification as required by the CUP conditions of approval. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

h) Does the proposed use constitute a potentially dangerous fire hazard?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project will not be a source of dangerous fire hazard because it does not involve the storage, use, or transportation of flammable chemicals and other combustible materials. The Project only consists of six two-story high single-family residences and is not a commercial or industrial operation that would use large quantities of hazardous materials to have the potential to ignite a dangerous fire. The plan check phrase of the Project would ensure compliance with the fuel modification requirements, water system requirements, and access requirements of the Fire Department. Therefore, it will not constitute a potentially dangerous fire hazard.

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. Development of the proposed project may result in two types of water quality impacts: 1) short-term impacts due to construction related discharge of pollutants and through wind and water driven erosion of soil; and 2) long-term impacts from operation or changes in site runoff characteristics such as buildings, roads, parking lots (impervious surfaces) that prevent water from being absorbed back into the ground which also results in increase rate and flow of stormwater runoff. Runoff can contain pollutants such as oil, fertilizers, pesticides, trash, soil, and animal waste. These pollutants flow into water bodies such as lakes, streams, rivers, and ultimately drain into the ocean. The increased urban runoff also leads to increase in intensity of flooding and erosion.

Through the Clean Water Act, the United States Environmental Protection Agency has established regulations under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to control direct storm water discharges in order to ensure that water quality standards are upheld. Point source discharges are regulated through the local Regional Water Quality Control Board. This federal program has also delegated authority to the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards) for implementation. Each regional board prepares and maintains a Basin Plan, which identifies water quality objectives to protect the waters of that region. The objectives detailed in the Basin Plan range from controlling the amount of oxidized ammonia in inland surface waters to regulating the mineral quality of ground waters. The Basin Plans achieve the identified water quality objectives through implementation of Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs). These water quality objectives are achieved by employing three strategies for addressing water quality issues: control of point source pollutants, control of nonpoint source pollutants, and remediation of existing contamination.

The Project Site is located within the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) that is responsible for the issuance of waste discharge requirements, construction stormwater runoff permits, and NPDES permitting. The LARWQCB's Basin Plan has established water quality standards to protect waters in the region through the implementation of WDRs and the control of point and non-point source pollutants.

The pollutants of greatest concern during construction activities are generally sediment, which may run off the project site due to site grading or other site preparation activities, and hydrocarbon or fossil fuel remnants from the construction equipment. Construction runoff is regulated by the California's WDRs and the NPDES Construction General Permit. The permits are issued by the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board and may set discharge limitation or other discharge provisions and applies to all construction which disturbs an area of at least one acre.

Section 402 of the federal Clean Water Act requires dischargers of potential pollutants into waters of the United States to: (1) implement best management practices (BMPs) to eliminate or reduce point and non-point source discharges of pollutants, and, (2) if one acre or more of soil is disturbed during construction, to

prepare a site-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to protect human health and the environment, and obtain a NPDES permit. NPDES permits establish enforceable limits on discharges, require effluent monitoring, designate reporting requirements, and require construction and post-construction BMPs to eliminate or reduce point and non-point source discharges of pollutants. Point source discharges are regulated through the local Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Construction

Construction projects typically expose soil to erosion and may temporarily alter drainage patterns. Storm water runoff during construction may contain soil amendments such as fertilizers and pesticides, trash, waste oil, paints, solvents and other substances used during construction. Because the Project Site is more than one acre, a General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit and a site-specific SWPPP are required. The project is covered by the requirements of the County's MS4 Permit (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System NPDES Permit) to control and minimize potentially polluted runoff. Furthermore, the proposed project would also be required to comply with the requirements of the County's Low-Impact Development (LID) Ordinance and Stormwater Ordinance (Chapter 12.80 of County Code). The LID Ordinance is designed to promote sustainability and improve the County's watersheds by preserving drainage paths and natural water supplies in order to '…retain, detain, store, change the timing of, or filter stormwater or runoff.'

Compliance with the County LID Ordinance would reduce potential water quality impacts and the Stormwater Ordinance would address discharge, deposit, or disposal of any stormwater and/or runoff to the storm drain system and/or receiving waters within the area covered by MS4 Permit. As part of the conditions for the grading permit issuance, the project will also implement appropriate BMPs such any slopes with disturbed soils or denuded of vegetation must be stabilized and eroded sediments and other pollutants must be retained on site. Implementation of appropriate BMPs, compliance to the requirements of the MS4 Permit, LID Ordinance, and Stormwater Ordinance would ensure that the construction of the project would not violate any water quality standards or discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade water quality.

Operation

The project site is currently undeveloped and mostly unimproved with a segment of the Fitch Avenue running through Parcels 18, 20, 25 and Parcel 28. The proposed six building pads with a new two-story single-family residence and associated accessory uses on each would result in a greater area of impervious surfaces. Although not all disturbed areas would result in impervious surfaces, the estimated construction footprint of the Project, excluding fuel modification zones but including water infrastructure, solar arrays, driveways/access roads, utility easements, is estimated at 155,403 square feet or 3.57 acres (18 percent) of a 19.86-acre site. More than 70 percent of the Project Site would remain open space. The surface water runoff from the Project Site would be directed to adjacent storm drains. Catch basin, infiltration basin would be incorporated into the project design per LID requirements and Stormwater Ordinance.

The Project will be served by a conventional and/or non-conventional on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) on each parcel. The State Water Resources Control Board's OWTS Policy[6], required by Assembly Bill (AB) 885, provides a multi-tiered strategy for management of OWTS in California, and sets standards for wastewater treatment and monitoring requirements. It also authorizes the State, through the Regional Water Boards, to authorize local governments to approve OWTS for domestic wastewater through a Local Area Management Program (LAMP). LAMP allows DPH to regulate septic systems within the unincorporated areas as well as the contract cities and implement alternate standards from OWTS Policy Low Risk standards, including the conditions that allow DPH to issue operating permits for non-conventional OWTS. Prior to

[6] State Water Resources Control Board adopted the Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation and Maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems, dated June 19, 2012, also referred to as the "OWTS Policy"

LAMP, OWTS discharges effluent loadings exceeding 10,000 gallons per day would fall under the regulations of the State's WDR permitting. These projects would be required to comply with WDRs (Title 23 of the California Code of Regulations), issued by the local Regional Water Quality Control Board. Under this scenario, the proposed project would have to demonstrate compliance with such requirements in order to receive construction permits and certificates of occupancy. Under LAMP, the Project would not be required to apply a WDR permit from the local Water Board for the OWTS but would fall under the purview and oversight of the Land Use Program of the County Department of Public Health (DPH), Environmental Health Division.

The OWTS on each parcel must undergo a rigorous sceptic system plan check and approval process before an OWTS could be installed by a qualified contractor. A feasibility report, plot plan, and floor plan are required as well as proof of availability of potable water is also required for a new building. The proposed OWTS must also designate and test both the initial dispersal system and the future dispersal area. In the requested CUP, conditions of approval are imposed to ensure that the installation of OWTS would not result in significant environmental effects. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a work plan and feasibility report shall be required for each residential parcel to document soil profile excavation, exploratory boring to determine historic and seasonal high groundwater mark, presence of subsurface water, and percolation testing to confirm that the soil on the property could support the use a conventional OWTS or non-conventional OWTS. Testing shall be conducted in an area likely to be utilized as a dispersal field, including the 100% future dispersion area. The report shall be prepared in compliance with the "Conventional and Non-Conventional Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems – Requirements and Procedures." In sum, all operational activities would comply with applicable provisions required to local, State, and Federal laws. Therefore, implementation of the regulatory requirements would ensure operation-related impacts to any water quality standards would be less than significant.

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 Impact. The Project Site is located within the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin[7] and a small eastern segment of the Project Site (extending from Sierra Highway) falls within the Upper Santa Clara River Basin (also known as the Eastern Santa Clara River Valley Basin or East Subbasin), which is part of the larger Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin. The Basin encompasses an area of approximately 103 square miles and comprises two primary aquifers that are used for groundwater production. They provide about 50 to 60 percent of the water supply for the Santa Clarita Valley residents: a shallow Alluvial Aquifer and an older, underlying geologic unit called the Saugus Formation. The main surface drainage features in the area include the Santa Clara River (which provides most of the annual groundwater recharge to the groundwater system), Bouquet Creek, and Castaic Creek.

According to current groundwater levels data from March 2020 to September 2021 obtained from a nearby monitoring well along Sierra Highway, ground surface depth to groundwater level was 61.1 to 63.5 feet[8]. Due to this depth of the ground to groundwater level, groundwater is not anticipated to be encountered during construction activities. In the rare event that groundwater is encountered, a treatment system would be implemented. A dewatering permit would be obtained from the Los Angeles County if treated groundwater needs to be discharged into the San Clara River.

[7] https://dwr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Styler/index.html?appid=740d10eefd6148579321a3abcd065a36

[8] https://wdl.water.ca.gov/GroundwaterBrowseData.aspx?StationId=49744

Although the Project would be served by on-site water wells, the underlying aquifer of the Project Site has not been identified as being a critically overdrafted groundwater basin[9], per the California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118[10]. The Project Site has two existing private groundwater wells (primary Well 01 located on Parcel 28 and secondary Well 02 located on Parcel 25) operated under the Ball Mountain Water Mutual Company, which would supply water for the project. The Ball Mountain Water Mutual Company is a small state water system under the regulatory oversight of the Drinking Water Program of Environmental Health Division within DPH. A water availability approval letter has been issued. The well water is piped to potable water tanks located on each parcel. The proposed Project would result in a small increase in the demand of potable and non-potable water because of the six new single-family residences. No new water wells are proposed as part of the Project. A significant impact would occur if the Project would substantially decrease groundwater or interfere with groundwater recharge. Due to the small scale and size of the proposed Project and the requirements of the LID Ordinance, the Project would not significantly interfere with groundwater recharge or would result in a significant impact at a regional or greater aquifer level. During operation, Drinking Water Program's well testing requirements must also be met to verify that the amount of water needed for the project can be safely provided by the wells without interfering substantially with groundwater recharge or impeding sustainable groundwater management. Therefore, impacts related to groundwater supply, recharge, and management during the construction phase would be less than significant.

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 offsite? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The project must comply with LID requirements, employ Best Management Practices to counter potential sheet erosion from construction activities, and obtain approval for a drainage plan from DPW Land Development Division. Furthermore, the required the SWPPP will outline the source control and/or treatment control Best Management Practices to avoid or mitigate runoff pollutants at the construction site to the maximum extent practicable. The Project will also be required to comply with post-construction Best Management Practices requirements as detailed in the Los Angeles County Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan. The project may not result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite in order to comply with the LID requirements.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. There are **n**o lakes, streams, or natural stream channels located on or in the vicinity of the Project Site. The Project Site has been previously graded and will propose additional grading amounting to 18,867 cubic yards of cut and 16,338 cubic yards of fill, would be balanced on site. The grading activities would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff because

[9] https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Basin-Prioritization/Files/CODBasins_websitemapPAO_a_20y.pdf

[10] California's Groundwater (Bulletin 118) is the State's official publication on the occurrence and nature of groundwater in California. The publication defines the groundwater basin boundaries and summarizes groundwater information for each of the State's 10 hydrologic regions.

the project would conform to the County's LID Ordinance by having an LID-compliant grading and site plan, which would account for potential modifications to flow and reduce any potential for flooding on- or offsite. Additionally, implementation of the SWPPP would reduce the amount of surface water runoff after storm events, as the Project would be required to implement Stormwater BMPs and comply with NPDES and the LID Ordinance. In sum, the project must comply with LID requirements and obtain approval for a drainage plan from DPW Land Development Division. The project may not result in flooding on or offsite in order to comply with the LID requirements.

(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. As previously discussed, the project is covered by the requirements of the County's MS4 Permit to control and minimize potentially polluted runoff. Per the County's LID Ordinance and Stormwater Ordinance, the project may not result in an excessive amount of runoff which would exceed the capacity of stormwater drainage systems or substantially increase polluted runoff. The County's LID Ordinance and Stormwater Ordinance would require design requirements to promote and improve the County's watersheds and prevent potential polluted runoffs from the Project to drain into natural water bodies. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the Project is required to obtain approval from the DPW Land Development Division for a hydrology report, a LID/drainage plan, and conduct appropriate infiltration tests in the LID reports to ensure the design of any flood control facilities meet the standards set in the LID Ordinance. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows which would expose existing housing or other insurable structures in a Federal 100-year flood hazard area or County Capital Flood floodplain to a significant risk of loss or damage involving flooding?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The Project Site does not contain a 100-year or 500-year flood plain according to the Los Angeles County General Plan Figure 12.2: Flood Hazard Zones Policy Map or GIS-Net FEMA Flood Zone maps. The project design will comply with the latest County design standards and codes, including LID requirements. Flood flows will not be substantially impeded or redirected by the project.

d) Otherwise place structures in Federal 100-year flood hazard or County Capital Flood floodplain areas which would require additional flood proofing and flood insurance requirements?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The Project Site does not contain a Federal 100-year flood hazard area or County Capital Flood floodplain area according to the Los Angeles County GIS-Net hydrological hazard maps. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

e) Conflict with the Los Angeles County Low Impact Development Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.84)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No Impact. As previously discussed, the project must demonstrate compliance with the LID Ordinance prior to the issuance of a grading or building permit. The Project is required to adhere to the specifications set forth in the LID Standards Manual; therefore, it would not conflict with the LID Ordinance.

f) Use onsite wastewater treatment systems in areas with known geological limitations (e.g. high groundwater) or in close proximity to surface water (including, but not limited to, streams, lakes, and drainage course)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is not located in close proximity to surface waters and the proposed OWTS shall comply with all applicable standards to protect drainage courses and groundwater. The proposed Project would install on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS) for wastewater disposal for each of the six single-family residences. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a work plan and feasibility report shall be required for each residential parcel to document soil profile excavation, exploratory boring to determine historic and seasonal high groundwater mark, presence of subsurface water, and percolation testing to confirm that the soil on the property could support the use a conventional OWTS or non-conventional OWTS. Testing shall be conducted in an area likely to be utilized as a dispersal field, including the 100% future dispersion area. The report shall be prepared in compliance with the "Conventional and Non-Conventional Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems – Requirements and Procedures." Generally, the Department of Public Health would require non-conventional OWTS for lot size less than 2.5 acres. Two out of the six parcels fall under this 2.5-acre minimum lot size and may require a non-conventional OWTS to be used. A non-conventional OWTS would make use of supplemental treatment components, telemetric monitoring of the system, system sampling, annual operating permit, annual inspection by qualified contractor (with testing for bacteria near impaired water bodies), reporting, and a County Registrars recorded covenant & agreement on the properties/parcels title to inform future prospective owners of the requirements. As stated in a clearance letter dated September 28, 2021, the County Department of Public Health (DPHS) has imposed conditions of approval that would ensure that any OWTS installation would not result in significant environmental effects.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is located more than 30 miles northeast of the nearest coastline and is outside the tsunami inundation areas along the coast. The Santa Clara River is approximately 1.5 miles south of the Project Site. The Project Site is not located within a 100-year or 500-year flood plain according to the Los Angeles County General Plan Figure 12.2: Flood Hazard Zones Policy Map or in areas identified on GIS-Net maps as FEMA Flood Zones, Dam Inundation Areas (seiche zones), or Tsunami Hazard Zones. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is located within the Santa Clara River Watershed and within the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board's Basin Plan[11], which also includes sustainability and basin-specific protection of groundwater. The Basin Plan is designed to preserve and enhance water

[11] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/basin_plan_documentation.html

quality and protect the beneficial uses of all regional waters by numerical water quality objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the State's anti-degradation policy, and implementation programs and other actions that are necessary to achieve the water quality objectives established in the Basin Plan. Project is subject to the applicable requirements of the Basin Plan administered by the LARWQCB through the NPDES General Construction Permits and any WDR Permits. As discussed above, the Project would include required BMPs and drainage control requirements that would be consistent with the Basin Plan. The Project shall be required to comply with all applicable DPH and Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements to ensure that groundwater will be protected and use of groundwater will be maintained at sustainable levels.

The Project will be served by private wells operated by a small water system and the well owner production rights have annual volume limits thereby controlling groundwater deficits. The amount of water use planned for the six single-family residences is not anticipated to be significant enough deplete groundwater supplies. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the groundwater management of the area and potential impacts would be less than significant.

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No Impact. The proposed project conforms to the existing land use patterns of the community. North of the Project Site is the Sierra Heights Mobile Home Estates and south of the Project Site is the Mint Canyon residential community. The uses west of Sierra Highway are predominately commercial and industrial businesses, and Sand Canyon Road, vacant land, and several residences are located on the east side. The project does not propose a new construction of highways, freeways, rails or flood control channel that are generally associated with the physical division of an established community. It will conform to the existing street grid and continues with the existing pattern of residential development and would not create barriers within an existing community or otherwise physically divide an established community. Therefore, no impact is anticipated.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is designated in the Rural Land (RL5 – Rural Land 5 (NU3 – Non-Urban 3)) of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. This land use category allows for one dwelling unit per five acres, but specific allowable uses and development standards are determined by the underlying zoning designation, which is A-2-2 (Heavy Agriculture with minimum two-acre lot minimum). The proposed residential use is compatible with the established community, the zone, and the land use designation.

The six legal lots where the single-family residences are being built range from 2.36 acres to 5.23 acres in size and were created prior the 1980 General Plan, the first Santa Clarita Valley Plan adopted in 1986 and prior to the adoption of the 2012 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. In the 2012 Santa Clarita Area Plan, Intro Chapter, Section VIII, Page 9, it states that "Existing legal lots may be developed (following current development requirements) regardless of lot size." These lots were created in 1970 and 1971 pursuant to Certificates of Exception 11930 and 12601. There was no applicable long-range plan at the time of the lot creation. The Certificates of Compliance were recorded for each of the lots in 2002, and they are all legal lots. Lot Line Adjustments recorded in 2008 and 2013 changed the boundaries of some of the lots, but the total number of lots has remained unchanged, and all of the lots are legal lots. Since the Project is not a subdivision and each of the six single-family residences are located on legal lots, the Project is deemed consistent with the plan.

c) Conflict with the goals and policies of the General Plan related to Hillside Management Areas or Significant Ecological Areas?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is not located in a Significant Ecological Area, but is located within a Hillside Management Area. A CUP is required to develop within a Hillside Management Area. As part of the Hillside Management CUP approval, the Project is required to dedicate at least 70% of the land to

open space and the Project currently proposes to disturb nearly 28 percent of the Project Site. Over 70 percent of the remaining Project Site will be preserved in place. The Project employs sensitive hillside design techniques related to site planning, grading and facilities, road circulation, building design, and landscaping as required by the Hillside Management Areas Ordinance. As designed, the Project would minimize grading and disturbance to areas with slopes greater than 25 percent. The project includes some new structures or building pads being in areas with natural slopes exceeding 25 percent, but the buildings will generally be located in relatively flatter areas, or areas where grading has previously occurred, to minimize the need for extensive additional grading. Buildings will not exceed two stories in height and will comply with the applicable design measures. The project is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan with respect to Hillside Management Areas. With compliance with the requested CUP for the Hillside Management Areas, the Project would be consistent with applicable standards of the County's Zoning Code. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

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12. MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. California's Geological Survey (State Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology) identifies deposits of regionally- significant aggregate resources. These clusters or belts of mineral deposits are designated as Mineral Resources Zones (MRZ-2s). There are four major MRZ-2 zones (i.e., Little Rock Creek Fan, Soledad Production Area, Sun Valley Production Area, and Irwindale Production Area) designated in the County. The Project Site is located outside of these four major MRZ-2 zones but is located within the MRZ-3 zone[12], which are areas containing known or inferred Portland cement concrete aggregate resource of undetermined mineral resource significance. In accordance with the requirements of the Hillside Management Area Ordinance, over 70 percent or 14.22 acres of the Project Site would be set aside for open space and an additional 5.64 acres will dedicated for improved open space such as community solar arrays. Although single-family residences are being proposed for the site, the project will not prevent such resources from being used in the future if mineral resources still exist on the project site.

However, no mineral extraction operations currently occur on the Project Site or near the Project Site. There are no known mineral resources in the project vicinity. The site has also been rough graded for development and is surrounded by other urban uses such as mobile home park and the nearby Sierra Highway is lined with urbanized uses. The Project Site and the surrounding developed area are unlikely to become a value to the region for mineral resources. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Less Than Significant Impact. Except for Mineral Resources Zones, the County does not have any locally important mineral resources specifically delineated in the General Plan. No impact would occur, and no mitigation measures are required.

[12] https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/PublishingImages/Publications/SR-254-preview.jpg

13. NOISE

Noise is often described in qualitative terms, and individuals differ greatly on what noises are considered pleasant or annoying. Certain land uses are particularly sensitive to noise and vibration. These uses include residential, schools, libraries, churches, nursing homes, hospitals, and open space/recreation areas where quiet environments are necessary for enjoyment, public health, and safety. Commercial and industrial uses are generally not considered noise- and vibration-sensitive uses, unless noise and vibration would interfere with their normal operations and business activities. The surrounding sensitive receivers of the proposed site include the existing single-family residences and multi-family residences immediately to the north, east, west, and south.

The main sources of noise on and near the project site are automobile and truck traffic on surrounding roads, specifically Sierra Highway. Sierra Highway is classified as an existing major highway by the County Master Plan of Highways.

The community noise metrics used in the General Plan Noise Element are either Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or Day-Night Average Level (Ldn). CNEL and Ldn are the metrics used to describe annoyance due to noise and to establish land use planning criteria regarding noise. Table 13A represents the subjective effect of changes in sound pressure levels.

Noise Descriptors

- Decibel (dB): A unit of level that denotes the ratio between two quantities that are proportional to power. The number of decibels is 10 times the logarithm (base 10) of this ratio which has a reference quantity in the denominator. For sound pressure decibels, the reference quantity is 20 micropascals (μPa).

- A-Weighted Decibel (dBA): An overall frequency-weighted sound level in decibels that approximates the frequency response of the human ear.

- The equivalent noise level (Leq): The average of sound level over a defined time period (such as 1 minute, 15 minutes, 1 hour or 24 hours). Thus, the Leq of a time-varying noise and that of a steady noise are the same if they deliver the same acoustic energy to the ear during exposure.

- The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL); The 24-hour average Leq with a five decibel (dBA) "penalty" added to noise during the hours of 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., and a 10-dBA penalty added to noise during the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. to account for noise sensitivity in the evening and nighttime. The CNEL metric is currently used by the California Aeronautics Code for the evaluation of noise impacts at airports. Local compliance with the state airport standard requires that community noise levels be expressed in CNEL.

- Day-Night Average Noise (Ldn): The 24-hour average Leq with an additional 10-dBA "penalty" added to noise that occurs between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. Ldn represents a simplification of CNEL.

- A noise level that is exceeded 90 percent of the time (L90) at a given location; it is often used as a measure of "background" noise.

TABLE 13.1 Change in Apparent Loudness

±3 dB	Threshold of human perceptibility
±5 dB	Clearly noticeable change in noise level

±10 dB	Half or twice as loud
±20 dB	Much quieter or louder
Source: General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2014	

The analysis of noise impacts considers project construction and operational noise. The proposed project would have a significant adverse impact if the project results in at least one of the following:

- Conflict with an applicable noise restrictions standard imposed by regulatory agencies.
- Cause the permanent ambient noise level at the property line of an affected land use to increase by 3 decibels (dBA)[13] CNEL. It is widely accepted that in the community noise environment the average healthy ear can barely perceive CNEL noise level changes of 3 dBA.
- Construction takes place between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and any time on Sunday or a legal holiday.
- Construction activities result in vibration levels of 80 velocity decibels (VdB) or higher.[14]

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the County General Plan or noise ordinance (Los Angeles County Code, Title 12, Chapter 12.08), or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. Temporary construction noise would also occur, but due to the distances from the nearest residences, the noise levels would not be expected to exceed the applicable noise standards.

The proposed Project is the construction and operation of six single-family residences located in an existing low-density residential community. Noise impacts are considered significant if the proposed project would generate excess noise that would cause ambient noise level at the project site to exceed noise level standards. The proposed Project is required to must comply with the noise standards established in the County General Plan Noise Element and the Noise Control Ordinance (Chapter 12.08 Noise Control and Chapter 12.12 Building Construction of the County Code).

Construction Noise

A short-term increase in noise level due to construction activities is anticipated from the proposed project. Construction of the proposed project would require the use of heavy equipment for demolition, grading, foundation preparation, installation of utilities, paving, and structure construction. There would be a different mix of equipment operating; noise levels would vary based on the number of equipment in operation and the location of each specific activity. Noise levels are projected to be highest during the

[13] An increase of 3 dBA is barely perceptible to the human ear.

[14] FTA criteria for residences and buildings where people normally sleep.

demolition phase and site preparation phase. The use of heavy construction equipment could expose nearby residential or commercial real-property to construction noise.

The County Code Section 12.08.440 and Section 12.12.030 prohibit the operation or causing the operation of any tools or equipment used in construction, drilling, repair, alternation or demolition work between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on Monday through Saturday, and at any time on Sundays and legal holidays. The Noise Control Ordinance also requires the contractor to conduct construction activities in such a manner that the maximum noise levels at the affected building will not exceed the noise levels listed in Table 13.1 – Maximum Construction Noise Levels.

Table 13.2 Maximum Construction Noise Levels

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES			
	Single-family Residential	**Multi-family Residential**	**Semi-residential Commercial**
Mobile Equipment: Maximum noise levels for nonscheduled, intermittent, short-term operation (less than 10 days) of mobile equipment			
Daily, except Sundays and legal holidays, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	75 dBA	80 dBA	85 dBA
Daily, 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. and all day Sunday and legal holidays	60 dBA	64 dBA	70 dBA
Stationary Equipment: Maximum noise levels for repetitively scheduled and relatively long-term operation (more than 10 days) of stationary equipment			
Daily, except Sundays and legal holidays, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	60 dBA	65 dBA	70 dBA
Daily, 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. and all day Sunday and legal holidays	50 dBA	55 dBA	60 dBA
BUSINESS STRUCTURES			
Mobile Equipment: Maximum noise levels for nonscheduled, intermittent, short-term operation (less than 10 days) of mobile equipment			
Daily: all hours (including Sundays and legal holidays)	85 dBA		
Source: County of Los Angeles, Noise Control Ordinance of the County of Los Angeles, website: https://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=16274, accessed February 24, 2022.			

There are noise sensitive land uses such as the two single-family residences downslope from the Project Site to the southwest and southeast within a 500-foot radius. Due to the project site's proximity to these sensitive receptors, the project would be expected to exceed the threshold of 75 dBA for single family residential structures when construction activities occur. Thus, a temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels would occur at these sensitive receptors. However, incorporation of the following conditions of approval during construction would reduce noise impacts to a less than significant level. The implementation of these conditions of approval would also ensure compliance with the required time restrictions and maximum noise levels for each type of affected building nearby would limit construction noise.

Draft Condition No. 35: Operating Construction Equipment

Construction activities shall be scheduled to avoid the operation of several pieces of equipment simultaneously, which causes high noise levels, to the extent feasible. The construction contractor shall ensure that all construction equipment, fixed or mobile is properly serviced and maintained to the manufacturer's standards, and that mufflers are working adequately. Construction contractor shall also limit idling of non-essential construction equipment to no more than five consecutive minutes.

Draft Condition No. 36: Noise Screening

Noise and groundborne vibration construction activities whose specific location on the site may be flexible (e.g., operation of compressors and generators, cement mixing, general truck idling) shall be conducted as far as possible from the nearest noise- and vibration-sensitive land uses, and natural and/or manmade barriers (e.g., intervening construction trailers) shall be used to screen propagation of noise from such activities towards these land uses to the maximum extent possible.

Draft Condition No. 37: Temporary Shields and Noise Barriers

Barriers such as, but not limited to, plywood structures or flexible sound control curtains or sound blankets extending eight feet in height shall be erected around the perimeter of active construction areas wherever feasible and physically possible to minimize the amount of noise during construction on the nearby sensitive receivers.

Draft Condition No. 38: Construction Site Notice

The project shall provide a construction site notice that includes the following information: job site address, permit number, name and phone number of the contractor and owner (or owner's agent), hours of construction allowed by County Noise Control Ordinance and/or mitigation measures, and telephone numbers which violations may be reported. The notice shall be displayed in a location visible by the public.

Operation Noise

During operation of the proposed residences, the on-site operational noise would be generated by heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment installed on the new building structures. The HVAC noise levels must comply with the requirement of Section 12.08.530 of County Code which governs the operating or permitting the operation of any air conditioning and refrigeration equipment. Specifically, the noise level measured at any point on neighboring property line, five feet above grade and no closer than three feet from any wall, cannot exceed 55 dBA. The air conditioning units for the proposed project are currently proposed on top of the building roof, more than 25 feet above finished grade, and centrally located away from the property lines. This distance from the property line provides a buffer to the nearby sensitive uses. Standard design features including shielding would also further reduce HVAC equipment noise emissions.

The proposed use is residential, which is consistent with the surrounding residential uses. Any noise generated by the project would be similar to the ambient noise level in the residential area. The addition of nine residential apartment unit would not generate substantial traffic flow to contribute to an increase in the ambient noise level. Thus, the project would not result in less than significant long-term increase in ambient noise level in the project vicinity.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site has been roughly graded previously. Additional proposed grading for the three westerly parcels (Parcels 20, 23, and 25) includes a total of 6,260 cubic yards of cut and 5,077 cubic yards of fill. The proposed grading will occur mostly on the remaining three easterly parcels (Parcels 18, 19, and 28), with an estimated 12,607 cubic yards of cut and 11,261 cubic yards fill for all six project parcels, proposed additional grading includes 18,867 cubic yards of cut, and 16,338 cubic yards of fill, to be balanced onsite. A shrinkage factor of 15% was used in the grading calculations. Groundborne vibration may occur. Construction operations can generate varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the construction procedures and equipment. Operation of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish with distance from the source. The vibration effect on buildings in the vicinity of the construction site varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and receptor-building construction. The results from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels (VdB), to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibrations at moderate levels, to slight structural damage at the highest levels. Construction activities rarely reach the levels that can damage structures, but can achieve audible and perceptible ranges in buildings close to the construction site[15]. Table 13.3 lists vibration levels for construction equipment.

Table 13.3 Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Approx. Velocity Level at 25 Feet (VdB)	Approx. PPV[16] at 25 Feet (inches/second)
Pile Driver (sonic) Upper Range	105	0.734
Pile Driver (sonic) Lower Range	93	0.170
Large Bulldozer	87	0.089
Caisson Drilling	87	0.089
Jackhammer	79	0.035
Small Bulldozer	58	0.003
Loaded Trucks	86	0.076
FTA Criterion – Human Annoyance	80	--
FTA Criterion – Structural Damage to non-engineered timber and masonry buildings	--	0.2000
Source: FTA, 2006 & General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2014		

Groundborne Vibration (Criterion b)

As discussed in the Initial Study (Appendix A) construction of the proposed project would utilize vibration-generating equipment including dozers and rollers during most construction phases. As shown in Table 4.7-5, groundborne vibration from construction equipment would not exceed the County's threshold of 0.01 in./sec. PPV (68 vibration decibels (VdB)) at distances of 175 feet, which is the distance between on-site construction equipment and the nearest structure with sensitive receivers (15760 Gun Tree Drive). Furthermore, the Noise

[15] Placeworks 2014. Los Angeles County General Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Santa Ana, June.

[16] The peak particle velocity (PPV) or root mean square (RMS) velocity is usually used to describe vibration levels. PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous peak of the vibration level and is typically used for evaluating potential building damage. RMS is defined as the square root of the average of the squared amplitude of the level. RMS velocity in decibels (VdB) is typically more suitable for evaluating human response. It is calculated from vibration level (VbB) using the reference of 1 micro-inch/second.

and Vibration Study for the proposed project determined that project construction and operations would not generate significant groundborne vibration impacts (Appendix G). Thus, this subject is not discussed further.

Table 4.7-1 Vibration Levels at Sensitive Receivers

Equipment	VdB at 175 feet	in./sec. PPV at 175 feet
Bulldozer (large)	68	0.010
Loaded Trucks	64	0.009
Los Angeles County Threshold	68	0.01
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No

in/sec = inches per second.
PPV= peak particle velocity
See Appendix G for vibration analysis worksheets.
Source: FTA 2018

As shown in Table 13.3, vibration generated by construction equipment has the potential to be substantial due to its potential to exceed FTA Criteria for human annoyance of 80 VdB and structural damage of 0.200 inch/second. For purpose of addressing vibration impacts relative to human annoyance, the following analysis relies on the FTA's vibration impact thresholds, which are 80 VdB and above at residences and buildings where people normally sleep (e.g., nearby residences) and 83 VdB and above at institutional buildings, which includes schools and churches. These thresholds are based on an "Infrequent Events" scenario defined as fewer than 30 vibration events of the same kind per day[17].

However, groundborne vibration is almost never annoying to people who are outdoors. It is usually evaluated in terms of indoor receivers (FTA 2006). The background vibration velocity level in residential areas is usually around 50 VdB. The vibration velocity level threshold of perception for humans is approximately 65 VdB. A vibration velocity level of 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible levels for most people.

The nearest residence to the project site is approximately 120 feet away and the other nearby residences such as the mobile parks are located more than 600 feet away. There are no sensitive receptors within 25 feet of the proposed grading activities, which would subject these sensitive receptors to potential FTA's vibration impact thresholds at greater than 80 VdB and above. The level of excavation and construction proposed for the project site is likely to cause significant noise and vibration impact to nearby residences. Draft **Condition No. 36** would specifically address vibration impacts from construction equipment. Furthermore, the implementation of above noise related conditions of approval would further reduce vibration impacts from the project site. Limiting construction hours primarily to Monday through Friday would reduce vibration exposure to indoor receptors as most people would not be at home during the daytime on a weekday. The project would not result in a significant noise impact with the incorporation of four noise-relatedconditions.

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 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

[17] FTA 2006. Federal Transit Administration. Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, Washington D.C. May.

expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan and would have no impact regarding exposure of people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels.

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with 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)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less than Significant Impact. According to the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan 2012, population of the Santa Clarita Valley at build-out of the uses shown on the Land Use Maps of the County's Area Plan would be approximately 460,000 to 485,000 residents, comprising of approximately 150,000 to 155,000 households. According to the Southern California Association of Government's Demographic and Growth Forecast adopted on September 3, 2020[18], the unincorporated Los Angeles areas are projected to have a population of 1,258,000 people and 419,300 households in 2045, which is approximately three persons per household. In the 2020 U.S. Census, Census Tract 9200.40 in which the Project Site is located has approximately 3.25 persons[19] per housing unit. Using this average of 3.25 persons per housing unit, the construction of six new single-family residences on the project site would generate a population of approximately 20 persons, which is a number not likely to induce high demand on existing infrastructure.

The project will not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area. Although private access roads may be improved or constructed to provide fire access to the Project Site, no public roads will be added or extended, nor will any other public infrastructure be added or extended, which would potentially attract other development. The project site is surrounded by other residential development such as mobile home parks and single-family residences; therefore, the proposed residential use is compatible with the area. The project will not substantially alter the location, distribution, density or growth grate of the population beyond that projected by the County's General Plan Housing Element, Santa Clarita Area Plan, or result in a substantial increase in population.

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

No impact. There are no residences currently on the project site, and no residents would be displaced as a result of the project.

[18] Southern California Associations of Governments. Demographic and Growth Forhttps://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocal_demographics-and-growth-forecast.pdf?1606001579

[19] Census Tract 9200.40 has 1552 housing units with a population of 5045 per the 2020 decennial census.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Would the project create capacity or service level problems, or result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
1) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) provides 24-hour fire suppression services in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The current standards for response times are: 5 minutes or less for urban areas; 8 minutes or less for suburban areas; and 12 minutes or less for rural areas. The Project would be served by LACFD Fire Station No. 132 at 29310 Sand Canyon Road, which is located approximately 1.5 miles from the Project Site and is located within the appropriate response-time distance from the nearest fire station. LACFD also operates under a regional concept in its approach to providing fire protection and emergency medical services, where in emergency response units are dispatched as needed to an incident anywhere in the LACFD's service territory based on distance and availability, without regard to jurisdictional or municipal boundaries.

Furthermore, development in the unincorporated areas must comply with the requirements of the Fire Code (Title 32), which provides design standards for all development in the unincorporated County. As part of the condition of approval, the Project will be required to undergo building plan check review and obtain approval from Fire Prevention Engineering Section to ensure compliance with the applicable Fire Code related to construction, access, water mains, fire flows, and fire hydrants. An approved Fuel Modification Plan will be required to ensure proper vegetation management and maintenance in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The Fire Department Fire Prevention Division issued a clearance letter for the project CUP in letter dated October 4, 2021. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

2) Sheriff protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LACSD) provides law enforcement and protection services in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The Project Site is located within the Sheriff's Department North Patrol Division and is served by the LACSD Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station located at 26201 Golden Valley Road in Santa Clarita, approximately 7.7 miles west of the Project Site. Various other law enforcement agencies within and beyond the limits of the County also provide additional law enforcement services and resources to the LASD per existing mutual aid agreements.

The Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station has a service area population of 282,254 in the year 2020, and currently employs 207 sworn personnel and 34 civilian employees[20]. The service area encompasses approximately 656 square miles, which includes the City of Santa Clarita, Angeles National Forest, and

[20] Email communication with Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Facilities Planning Bureau, dated March 2, 2022.

unincorporated areas of Bouquet Canyon, Canyon Country, Castaic, Gorman, Hasley Canyon, Newhall, Neenach, Sand Canyon, Saugus, Six Flags Magic Mountain, Sleepy Valley, Southern Oaks, Stevenson Ranch, Sunset Point, Tesoro del Valle, Valencia, Val Verde, and West Hills, Westridge. This Sheriff's Station is equipped with a heliport for emergency flight operations. Special service teams within the division and the Sheriff Station include the arsons explosives detail, canine services detail, emergency services detail, hazardous materials detail, and the special enforcement detail.

The project would also incorporate design features such as provide sufficient lighting through the project site to ensure safety and visibility. Entryways and driveways would also be illuminated and designed to eliminate areas of concealment. The addition of six two-story single-family residential buildings does not necessitate the construction of a new sheriff's station and any increase in law enforcement services demands would be relatively low. The project would not create capacity or service level problems or result in substantial adverse physical impacts on sheriff protection. Therefore, impacts associated with the sheriff protection would be less than significant.

3) Schools? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site would be served by two different school districts, Sulphur Springs School District and William S. Hart High School District. Sulphur Springs School District covers the grades K-6 student population on the east side of the Santa Clarita Valley including most of Canyon County. It consists of nine elementary schools, which are all located within the incorporated City of Santa Clarita except for Mint Canyon Community School which is located nearest the Project Site in unincorporated County. William S. Hart Union High School District will serve the student population grades 7 through 12 that may potentially result from the proposed Project. The Sierra Vista Junior High School located at 19425 West Stillmore Street in Santa Clarita and the Canyon High School located at 19300 W. Nadal Street in Canyon Country) are assigned to the Project Site and are located four and five miles, respectively, southwest of Project Site.

School (School District)	Student Generation Rate Per Single-Family Residential Detached Unit	Project Total
Mint Canyon Community School Grades K-6 (Sulphur Springs Union District)	0.308	1.8
Sierra Vista Junior High Grades 7-8 (Hart High School District)	0.101	0.6
Canyon High School Grades 9-12 (Hart High School District)	0.153	0.9
		Total: 3.3 or 4 Students
Source: Table 4- Student Yield Factors (SYF's), William S. Hart Union High School Student Population Projections Report Fall 2016-2022[21].		

Although the number of school age population will likely increase but the increase will likely be less than four school-age persons to Sulphur Springs Union District and Hart High School District. Such a small number is unlikely to generate a potentially significant impact and would likely not exceed the capacity of the schools serving the project site.

[21] https://1.cdn.edl.io/ceA4JmEtR1XRv00jOmJSEmJaXpZsoI6rfqOxof1Op7UR3XP6.pdf

4) Parks? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation would provide park services to the project site. The Los Angeles County General Plan Parks and Recreation Element, provides the standard for the allocation of parkland in the unincorporated county. This standard is four acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents, and six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents. The project site's nearby park facilities include Country Park and Plum Canyon Park, located approximately 2.1 and 2.5 miles away respectively. The 5,261-acre Castaic Lake State Recreation Area is also 17 miles west of the project site. The 2016 Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment has already determined that the area in which the project site is located, the Unincorporated Agua Dulce – Angeles National Forest -Canyon Country study area, the park need is considered Low. The anticipated increase of approximately 20 persons is unlikely substantially reduce the existing parkland-to-population ratio. Furthermore, the project may be subject to the County Department of Parks and Recreation's in-lieu fees to offset the impact on existing park facilities. Therefore, impact would be less than significant.

5) Libraries? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is located within the proximity of both the Los Angeles County Public Library (LACPL) and the City of Santa Clarita Library systems. The nearest LACPL library is the Stevenson Ranch Library at 25950 The Old Rd, Stevenson Ranch, approximately 11 miles west of the Project Site. The Canyon Country Jo Anne Darcy Library at 18601 Soledad Canyon Rd in the incorporated City of Santa Clarita is approximately 2.8 miles away. The projected incremental increase of 20 persons, impact on library services is anticipated to be minimal and would not affect the County's ability to provide library services.

To ensure that the Project pays its fair share of costs associated with library services, the Permittee shall comply with the Developer Fee Program for the LACPL as provided in County Code Section 22.246.060 (Library Facilities Mitigation Fee). A fee of $1,010 will be collected for each residential dwelling unit built for the Project. Compliance to pay this mitigation fee would offset any incremental need for funding of capital improvements to maintain adequate library facilities and service, resulting from the Project by payment of development fees per the Code. As such, impacts regarding library services would be less than significant.

6) Other public facilities? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

No Impact. The other public facilities above those discussed above are not anticipated to have the potential for adverse physical impact associated with the project construction or operation. No significant impacts on other public facilities are anticipated.

16. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The nearest parks to the project site are Canyon Country Park and Plum Canyon Park, located approximately 2.1 and 2.5 miles away respectively. The 5,261-acre Castaic Lake State Recreation Area is also 17 miles west of the project site. The increase of six dwelling units on the project site and the projected 20 residents are not anticipated to increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities to such a level of intensity to cause substantial physical deterioration. This addition of six new single family residential units is also unlikely to induce high demand on existing infrastructure. Such use is not expected to result in substantial deterioration because the population growth from the proposed project would fall within the SCAG population growth forecast for the unincorporated area of the County and fall within the projected growth of the Countywide General Plan.

Although the new residents resulting from this development are expected to use the surrounding neighborhood and regional parks, the introduction of this relatively small population in comparison with the local and regional service populations would not substantially affect nearby park facilities. County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation will be consulted as part of the Environmental Assessment to determine the impacts of the project to the existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. According to the 2016 Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, the project site is located within the Unincorporated Agua Dulce – Angeles National Forest - Canyon Country study area where the park need is Low[22]. The project will not substantially alter the location, distribution, density or growth grate of the population beyond that projected by the County's General Plan Housing Element or result in a substantial increase in population.

b) Does the project include neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of such facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project does not include construction of neighborhood or regional parks or on-site recreational areas. The proposed project is a small residential development that does not warrant the construction or expansion of park, trails, or recreational facilities. No new park or other recreational component is proposed as part of the project. The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation will be consulted as part of the conditional use permit process to assess any related park impact fees.

[22] https://lacountyparkneeds.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FinalReport.pdf

c) Would the project interfere with regional open space connectivity?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not significantly affect regional open space connectivity. The project site is surrounded by residentially and agriculturally zoned land and existing residential development, including a mobile home park, on three of the four cardinal directions. The existing connectivity of the surrounding open space areas will remain unaffected. The majority of the project site will remain undeveloped, particularly the steep hillside areas, and the areas to be developed will be done so in such a way as to maintain connectivity in the natural environment.

17. TRANSPORTATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The 100-foot-wide Sierra Highway, which is classified as an existing Major Highway in the County Master Plan of Highways, is located just west of the Project Site. An existing 20-foot-wide shared private vehicular access road, known as Fitch Avenue, traversing through neighboring Parcel 3231-010-026 from Sierra Highway will be extended and improved as part of the Project to provide public access to the proposed six single-family residences on the Project Site. The City of Santa Clarita Transit runs a bus line (Line 5 Stevenson Ranch/Vasquez Canyon) along Sierra Highway and a bus stop is located at a corner of Sierra Highway and Fitch Avenue. According to the County Master Plan of Bikeways, a proposed Class III bikeway is designated within the Sierra Highway public right-of-way. There are also no continuous sidewalks along Sierra Highway or Fitch Avenue. The construction and operation of the Project would not conflict such the Master Plan of Highways or Master Plan of Bikeways because it would not obstruct

Due to the small size and location of the six single-family residential Project, the number of vehicle trips is not expected to be significant enough to warrant a Transportation Impact Analysis. Based on the most recent edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, the average daily trip generation rate for detached single-family residences in general urban/suburban setting is 9.44 trips per dwelling unit, and the project is anticipated to generate 57 daily trips. An average of 57 daily trips for six single-family residences is below the 110 or more daily vehicle trips threshold for a traffic study. According to the County Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines, if a development project does not generate a net increase of 110 or more daily vehicle trips, then a less than significant impact determination could be made. This project is not expected to significantly contribute to increased population growth to the area and is not a contributor to a significant increase in traffic trips.

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. As mentioned in the response above, the County Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines dated July 2020 determined that only development projects estimated to generate a net increase of 110 or more daily trips would be required to prepare a vehicles miles traveled (VMT) analysis. As such, the proposed Project's anticipated trip generation of 57 daily average trip falls below this screening criteria for non-retail project trip generation; further VMT analysis is not warranted because the Project's projected transportation impact would fall below the threshold of significance and is presumed to have less than significant impacts.

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous	☐	☒	☐	☐

intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is currently vacant but is adjacent to nearby residences. Vehicular access to the Project Site would be provided by a driveway approach on Fitch Avenue, which is perpendicular to the Sierra Highway. The Project is required to make improvements to the existing Fitch Avenue and the design of any 20-foot-wide paved driveway approach to the proposed single-family residences would be constructed in accordance with the County Public Works Department' standards. The driveway geometry design must also be compatible with or accommodate the future road widening and grades of Sierra Highway. Specifically, in a clearance letter dated September 7, 2021 issued by the County Public Works Department for the requested CUP, Condition No. 1.3 requires such street improvements to be made or an Agreement to Improve has been executed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. This condition further requires that the submittal of a Signing and Striping Plan to Public Works for review and approval before the issuance of the grading or building permit. These steps prior to the project construction would ensure that there would be no increased hazards due to a geometric feature or incompatible uses for the Project. Therefore, impacts will be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not involve the closure of any public roadway. The project is designed to provide adequate emergency access for emergencies that occur on-site. The proposed Project would not impede emergency access on-site or off-site. The proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access to the project site or to nearby properties. The project shall be subject to the conditions of approval, including those conditions related to access, if the project is approved. The Fire Department has imposed conditions in a clearance letter dated October 4, 2021 that would ensure adequate access requirements are met prior to a building permit is obtained. Therefore, no impact would occur.

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code §21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code § 5020.1(k), or	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The vacant Project Site is not listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code § 5020.1(k). There are no known tribal cultural resources on the project site listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. Conditions incorporated into the CUP for cultural and tribal cultural resources will ensure that any impacts to those resources from the project will be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. AB 52 requires public agencies to consult with tribes during the CEQA process and respond to Native American tribal representative requests by providing formal notification of proposed projects within the geographic area that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribe. The project site is located within a geographic area that is affiliated with the Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians. A notification letter informing the Native American tribal representatives of the proposed Project were emailed on October 21, 2021. The Fernandeño Tataviam Tribe, also known as the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, responded to the notification letter on Friday, October 22, 2021 and expressed interest in the Project. Emails were exchanged between December 7, 2021 and January 14, 2022, and consultation concluded on January 20, 2022.

The Fernandeño Tataviam Tribe indicated the Project is situated in a culturally sensitive zone. This area is known for prehistoric and historic villages and seasonal habitation settlements, food production sites as well as tool production sites, sites with rock shelters containing petroglyphs or pictographs, sites

containing human burial(s), as well as isolated artifacts (isolates), and trails. Additionally, there are unique geological formations, oak trees, and places with natural resources where people gathered to conduct daily life activities such as harvesting plants for food and medicine and collecting raw materials for tool production. Although the Project Site does not contain any known tribal cultural resources, there is potential for such tribal resources to exist on the site due to its location. Based on provided written information shared by the tribe, the following conditions of approval are incorporated into the CUP to reduce potentially significant impacts resulting from project excavation:

Draft Condition No. 31: In the event that Tribal Cultural Resources are discovered during Project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall assess the find. The Department or permittee shall contact the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) to consult if any such find occurs.

Draft Condition No. 32: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the Project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted by the permittee or their representative pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code shall be enforced for the duration of the Project. Inadvertent discoveries of human remains and/or funerary object(s) are subject to California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and the subsequent disposition of those discoveries shall be decided by the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), as determined by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), should those findings be determined as Native American in origin.

Draft Condition No. 33: The Project permittee shall retain a professional Native American monitor procured by the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians to observe all ground-disturbing activities including, but not limited to, excavating, digging, trenching, plowing, drilling, tunneling, quarrying, grading, leveling, clearing, driving posts, auguring, backfilling, blasting, stripping topsoil or a similar activity, and any archaeological work conducted during Project implementation. If cultural resources are encountered, the Native American monitor, in conjunction with the onsite archaeologist, will have the authority to request ground disturbing activities cease within 60-feet of discovery to assess and document potential finds in real time.

Draft Condition No. 34: The permittee shall enter into a cultural resource agreement with the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians for the protection of cultural resources and identification of sensitive Tribal Cultural Resource areas. The Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians shall be identified to provide the following services:

- Consultation and Project support during the Project planning stages related to Tribal Cultural Resources and mitigation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1, subdivision (b), (d), and (e),
- Consultation on the treatment of inadvertent discoveries and the disposition of inadvertently discovered non-funerary resources.

The above conditions for cultural and tribal cultural resources have been developed through this consultation process for the project to protect those resources and to ensure that any impacts from the project will be less than significant.

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, storm water draining, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact.

Water

The County Department of Public Health (DPH) Division of Environmental Health, Drinking Water Program has verified that the Ball Mountain Mutual Water Company[23] would provide potable water supply, which will be piped to the six parcels from two existing wells (Primary Well 01 on Parcel 28 and Secondary Well 02 on Parcel 25). The water company has demonstrated to the DPH's Drinking Water Program that adequate water supply is available from the water system's well sources and the distribution storage facilities would be enhanced to supply a minimum of three gallons per minute for at least 24 hours for each service connection served by the system. This distribution storage facilities would include one 10,000-gallon water tank to be installed on five of the parcels, specifically Parcels 18, 19, 20, 23, and 25. Parcel 28 would have three 10,000-gallon tanks (two non-potable and one potable). Based on the water distribution plan for the eastern portion of the Project Site, a 10,000-gallon potable water tank on Parcel 28 will be connected to the main well. This tank would supply water through two-inch or four-inch PVC mains to the residences on Parcels 18, 19, and 28, and another line would be connected to the potable water tanks on Parcels 20, 23 and 25. The rest of the tanks on the eastern parcels (18, 19, and 28) are non-potable and would source water to the on-site fire hydrants.

The construction of these water mains, storage tanks, and connection pipelines are not anticipated to result in significant environmental effects. The proposed water infrastructure would be installed in accordance with applicable Building, and Health and Safety regulations to ensure proper operation and maintenance. The Project falls substantially below the threshold of a development generating water demand equivalent to or greater than that of 500 dwelling units under Senate Bill (SB) 610 and would not require a water supply assessment be conducted by the water service provider to determine if there is sufficient water supply to serve the Project during normal, single dry, and multiple dry water years. Therefore, sufficient water supplies would be available to serve the Project from existing entitlements and resources, and new or expanded entitlements would not be necessary. As a result, impacts would be less than significant.

Wastewater

[23] State Small Water System - #1907039

The proposed Project has no connection to any public sewer connection or system within 200 feet and would install on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS) for wastewater disposal for each of the six single-family residences. The County Department of Public Health (DPHS) Division of Environmental Health, in a clearance letter dated September 28, 2021, imposed conditions of approval that would ensure that the installation of OWTS would not result in significant environmental effects. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a work plan and feasibility report shall be required for each residential parcel to document soil profile excavation, exploratory boring to determine historic and seasonal high groundwater mark, presence of subsurface water, and percolation testing to confirm that the soil on the property could support the use a conventional OWTS or non-conventional OWTS. Testing shall be conducted in an area likely to be utilized as a dispersal field, including the 100% future dispersion area. The report shall be prepared in compliance with the "Conventional and Non-Conventional Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems – Requirements and Procedures." Generally, the Department of Public Health would require non-conventional OWTS for lot size less than 2.5 acres. Two out of the six parcels fall under this 2.5-acre minimum lot size and may require a non-conventional OWTS to be used. A non-conventional OWTS would make use of supplemental treatment components, telemetric monitoring of the system, system sampling, annual operating permit, annual inspection by qualified contractor (with testing for bacteria near impaired water bodies), reporting, and a County Registrars recorded covenant & agreement on the properties/parcels title to inform future prospective owners of the requirements.

Stormwater

As discussed in the Section 10 Hydrology and Water Quality, during the construction phase of a proposed Project, the pollutants of greatest concern are sediment, which may run off the project site due to site grading or other site preparation activities, and hydrocarbon or fossil fuel remnants from the construction equipment. But the construction runoff of the Project would be regulated by the California's Waste Discharge Requirements and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit. This permit applies to all construction which disturbs an area of at least one acre. NPDES is a permitting program that established a framework for regulating municipal, industrial, and construction stormwater discharges into surface water bodies and stormwater channels. Permits are issued by the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board and may set discharge limitation or other discharge provisions. The Project must also comply with applicable California Green Building Code and applicable County regulations on stormwater runoff pollution control to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP would minimize sediment and other pollutants in stormwater runoff commonly associated with construction activities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant related to construction activities.

The increase in impervious surfaces resulting from the Project has the potential to impact the capacity of existing storm water drainage system and alter existing drainage conditions of the site. Therefore, the Project is required to comply with the County's Low Impact Development Ordinance, which was created to deal with storm water runoff from new projects. Proposed roof drains would be drained toward pervious or landscaped surfaces. Per the County's LID Manual, the project is considered a "Designated Project" since proposed development would disturb over one acre and would add more than 10,000 square feet of impervious surface area. As such, the project would be required to implement post-construction storm water management control measures on-site through infiltration, evapotranspiration, storm water runoff harvest and use, or a combination of the three. Before the issuance of a grading or building permit, an approved drainage concept from the Department of Public Works would ensure that LID requirements, as specified in the LID Standards Manual, or as otherwise required, related to storm water drainage would be met. After the implementation of BMPs and LID standards required by Chapter 12.84 of the County Code, the Project impacts related to stormwater would be less than significant.

Electric Power, Telecommunications, and Natural Gas
As discussed in Section 6 Energy, proposed Project would be powered by solar energy and would be connected to the Southern California Edison energy grid as a secondary power source. Each residence would also be equipped with a battery for storage of surplus energy generation and use during nighttime and on cloudy days. The solar array panels will be installed on-site within previously disturbed areas and outside of any designated natural open space areas required by the HMA. Residents would be provided telecommunication services through their mobile carrier provides and be serviced by existing macro communications towers in the project vicinity. No natural gas lines are proposed for the Project. Electric stove will be used. No significant expansion to the utility infrastructure is necessary to serve the project and any such minor changes to the utility infrastructure would not 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. As stated previously, the Project consists of six single-family residential units, which falls substantially below the threshold of a development generating water demand equivalent to or greater than that of 500 dwelling units under Senate Bill (SB) 610. No water supply assessment is to determine if there is sufficient water supply to serve the Project during normal, single dry, and multiple dry water years. DPH's Drinking Water Program has verified that the Ball Mountain Mutual Water Company would provide potable water supply, which will be piped to the six parcels from two existing wells (Well 01 and 02). The Project was issued a Water Availability Approval Letter by the Drinking Water Program on September 14, 2021. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

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 Impact. An OWTS feasibility report must be prepared by the applicant and reviewed by the County DPH Division of Environmental Health, Land Use Program to evaluate the feasibility of the OWTS. The applicant must demonstrate the adequacy of the OWTS prior to the issuance of a building permit. The design and installation of a conventional OWTS or non-conventional OWTS shall conform to the requirements of DPH and other applicable regulatory agencies. The required size and capacity of the proposed septic system shall be determined based multiple factors including, bedrooms, bedroom equivalents, fixture unit count, number of employees, beds, number of parking spaces, and restrooms. The proposed system shall result in the largest system capacity, in accordance with requirements established in the DPH's guidelines for OWTS, referenced in Title 28 of the County Code, Appendix H. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The amount of solid waste created by the project will not exceed the capacity of local infrastructure. There is sufficient landfill capacity in the County to handle any solid waste from the

project in addition to the other sources in the area. This is a relatively small-scale project that will not significantly affect the capacity of the existing solid waste disposal infrastructure.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The project must comply with federal, state and local statutes with regard to disposal of solid waste. The project will comply with Chapter 20.87, Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse, of the County Utilities Code for 50 percent recycling during construction. The project would also need to comply with the CALGreen requirements for diversion and reduction of construction and demolition waste. The project must be designed to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

20. WILDFIRE

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would not result in any road closures of any existing public rights-of-way that may affect emergency response or evacuation plans in the vicinity of Project Site. The Project would not impair the implementation of the County's All-Hazard Mitigation Plan (AHMP)[24] or any existing policies of the County General Plan's Safety Element. The proposed six residential lots will be served by an existing 20-foot-wide concrete paved access road and proposed 20-foot-wide access easement that connect to the Sierra Highway. The proposed access improvements would ensure adequate Fire Department's vehicular and equipment access to the Project Site. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on existing emergency response or adopted evacuation plans

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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The Project Site is located on hilly terrain with slopes greater than 25 percent and its existing conditions have the potential to increase the spread of wildfire. According to the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, topography, fuel load, weather, drought, and development patterns are conditions that influence the behavior of wildfires. Prevailing winds in the area are chiefly from the south and southwest[25]. The stronger Santa Ana winds, however, blow in the opposite direction, from the north, and have a greater capacity to spread wildfire. The Santa Ana winds would primarily spread wildfires to the south.

The Project site is currently vacant and consists of roughly graded land with moderate to steep variation in topography. The Tick Fire in 2019 also razed through the Project Site and burned down the vegetation. Project site topography will be further modified through fine grading to create building pads for the proposed residences and consequently result in slopes that would be less steep as compared to existing conditions. As such, the Project grading will not introduce substantially stepper slopes that would exacerbate the potential spread of wildfire or the exposure of project occupants to wildfire pollutant concentrations. In addition, the Project would include new paved roads throughout the Project site, in accordance with applicable Fire codes, making all residential areas of the Project site accessible to emergency responders, thus reducing the risk of the uncontrolled spread of fire.

The Project would also be required to comply with Title 32 of the County Code (Fire Code) which requires various measures for fire safety and prevention including vegetation clearance and management. As the

[24] http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1062614_AHMPPublicDraft_Oct1.pdf
[25] Meteoblue. Climate Santa Clarita. https://www.meteoblue.com/en/weather/forecast/modelclimate/santa-clarita_unitedstates-of-america_5393049.

Project is proposed at a location without any nearby fire hydrants or piped water supplies to the project site, the Project would include internal access roads and fire lanes, which would provide emergency access to the project site. Furthermore, the project would be required to submit a Fuel Modification Plan per County Code Section 4908.1 and follow applicable guidelines with the proposed development. The project shall comply with the fuel modification requirements of the Fire Department and all other fire safety requirements including fire access, as described in the clearance letter from the County Fire Department dated October 4, 2021.

Once developed, the Project would not increase wildfire spread because of the modified topography, and the ignition resistance of the structures and the site fuel modification plan. Prior to project construction, a building permit would be required pursuant to California Government Code 51182, which would require that the project applicant to obtain certification that the building complies with all applicable State and County Fire Code. New construction is required to include safety measures to minimize the threat of fire, including ignition-resistant construction with exterior walls of noncombustible or ignition resistant material from the surface of the ground to the roof system and sealing any gaps around doors, windows, eaves and vents to prevent intrusion by flame or embers.

Conditions of approval of the Project would also ensure that vegetation management around all proposed buildings would be maintained throughout the project operation. Adequate fire flow and the necessary infrastructure to combat a fire during a major wildland fire incident will be provided as part of project approval. the Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks nor expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire different from existing occupants in the area or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors. With compliance with the County Fire Code and conditions of approval, potential impacts would be reduced to 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 Impact. The project would be served by existing Sierra Highway, new improved internal access roads, power lines, and other utilities. Project implementation would involve the installation of new onsite water distribution lines, water tanks, solar arrays, onsite wastewater treatment systems, and improved access road. Any source of natural gas or electric power would be provided onsite by extending existing infrastructure and/or temporary equipment provided by construction contractors. The improvement of the access roads would offer firefighters continued, safer access to the project site, where access is limited under current conditions. Potable water will be piped from existing water wells to the Project Site through new underground water distribution lines.

The proposed access improvements would facilitate emergency access throughout all areas of the Project Site as compared to existing conditions. Construction activities used for infrastructure installation and maintenance could exacerbate fire risk by using gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles and equipment. The proposed project would require the installation project-associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that would reduce the fire risk by removing flammable vegetation during the grading operations. However, adequate fuel modification would be created during construction around grading, site work, and other construction activities in areas where the vegetation is combustible. The firebreaks would reduce the fire risk during construction. Required fuel modification would also reduce the risk of fire during residential occupancy.

The Project's roadways would meet all County access requirements for new single family residential development in a Very High Fire Hazards Severity Zone. The County Fire Code requirements describe the applicable County access standards (i.e., roadway widths, all-weather surface requirements, length of streets, turning requirements, grade restrictions, maintenance requirements, and parking restrictions) that would be implemented by the Project. Specific fire and life safety requirements would be addressed at the building permit phase when architectural and construction plans are submitted to the Fire Department for review and approval. As the project applicant would comply with the requirements of the LACFD and would pay for any necessary water system upgrades to ensure adequate water flow for fire prevention, potentially significant infrastructure impacts that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment would be reduced to a less than significant level.

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 Impact. Mud and debris flows can result and increase hazard risks to people and nearby development following a wildfire event. Mud and debris flows can occur when a wildfire removes native vegetation that prevents erosion. During construction, the Project would include precise grading, which could alter the site topography and therefore potentially alter the existing drainage pattern. As discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, the proposed Project would be required to conform to applicable County design requirements associated with proper site preparation and grading practices. The Project would be required to have a County-approved LID site plan and hydrology report to implement surface drainage improvements and erosion control measures as well as construction BMPs under the SWPPP.

Currently, residential communities surround the Project Site on the north, west and east and undeveloped vacant land is located to the south of the Project site. The risk of wildland fires to the surrounding residential uses would be reduced with the implementation of the Project's fuel modification plan. Project would provide post-construction storm water management with a variety of LID BMPs as specified in the County LID Standards Manual that capture and treat post-construction storm water runoff. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to expose people or structure to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes

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

The Project Site was previously burned in the October 2019 Tick Fire, and Canyon Country is part of the California chaparral ecology that are adapted to wildfires and the process of ecological succession after a wildfire. Severe wildfires damage trees, the shrub canopy, vegetation, and soil. In general, this could reduce the amount of vegetation from hillsides. Vegetation on hillslopes helps to stabilize soil, slow water flow, and allow for percolation into the soil. After a wildfire, exposed slopes on the hillsides could result in increased runoff after intense rainfall, and put residences and structures downslope of a burned area at risk of localized floods and landslides. However, the Project is not located downslope and the new six single-family residences are proposed to be constructed on the flatter areas at higher elevations of the hilltops. Vegetation native to this area is fast-growing, strong, and adaptable, and therefore establishment and maintenance of native vegetation on unstable slopes would mitigate slope instability over time. Adherence to the approved Fuel Modification Plan would require the establishment of fire-resistant vegetation, native to Los Angeles County, on the project site slopes. Furthermore, residential uses do not generally present a high potential for dangerous

fire hazards, but the Project Site would have dedicated open space and the surrounding open space areas to the south could have buildup vegetation that is highly combustible. Under existing site conditions, there is no fuel modification on the Project Site, which would expose the surrounding residential uses to the north, west and east of the site to increased risks of wildland fires when compared to post-project conditions with fuel modification.

To address the risk of loss, death, and injury related to wildfires, LACFD has adopted programs directed at wildland fire prevention, including adopting the State Fire Code standards for new development in hazardous fire areas. Fire prevention requirements include provision of access roads, adequate road width, and clearance of brush around structures located in hillside areas. In addition, proof of adequate water supply for fire flow is required within a designated distance for new construction in fire hazard areas. The Project will comply with the LACFD's fire prevention requirements, which include adequate access roads and fire lanes with the required road width within 150 feet of the first story of all proposed buildings. The Project would also ensure that vegetation management around all proposed buildings would be maintained throughout Project operation. A Water Availability approval letter issued by the Ball Mountain Water Company confirms there is adequate water supply for the required fire flow for this development. Additionally, all proposed residential buildings would be required to provide an approved fire sprinkler system pursuant to County Codes (specifically Section R313.2 of the Residential Code) and buildings materials used for development of the Project would be fire retardant. This would be consistent with Policy S-3.2.4 of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, which requires sprinkler systems, fire resistant building materials, and other construction measures deemed necessary to prevent loss of life and property from wildland fires. In sum, the Project would require compliance with development designs, applicable fire prevention provisions and safety requirements of Title 32 (Fire Code) and Title 26 (Building Code) of the County Code, especially as they relate to Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Areas, as well as applicable standards in Chapter 7A, Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure, of the California Building Code related to fire-retardant construction materials and techniques to combat potential damages and risks from wildfires. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
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 Impact. The project does not have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment. The project's environmental effects are relatively minor and can be adequately mitigated through project conditions.

b) Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed Project consists of the construction and operation of six single-family residences on existing legal lots. The analysis of this initial study includes short-term (construction phase) and long-term (operation phase) environmental impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed Project. No potentially significant impacts were found associated with the proposed Project after the implementation of conditions of approval through the CUP and project design features required through the Hillside Management Areas Ordinance. The proposed Project would be required to comply with the County long-range planning goals and policies in the General Plan 2035, Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, applicable regulations specified in Title 22 (Planning and Land Use), Title 26 (Building Code), Title 30 (Residential Code), Title 31 (Green Building Standards Code), and Title 32 (Fire Code). The proposed project would increase the population in a small number that is within the SCAG's 2016-2040 RTP/SCS growth forecast for the unincorporated area of the County. The unincorporated areas have been assigned a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation of 90,0520units for the 6th Cycle RHNA allocation plan, which covers the planning period October 2021 through October 2029. The Project would provide the critically needed housing units supported by the Housing Element and help the County meet RHNA allocation. The proposed single-family residential use and density complies with the applicable long-term plans including the General Plan, Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, and Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

c) 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 Impact. A significant impact may occur if the proposed project, in conjunction with other related projects in the area, would result in impacts that would be less than significant when viewed separately, but would be significant when viewed together. Related projects include past, current, or probable future projects whose development could contribute to potentially significant cumulative impacts in conjunction with a given project. However, there are no concurrent or pending projects within a 500-foot radius of the project site. Any related planning entitlements issued within the project vicinity are limited to ministerial approvals for community signs and small residential remodeling project such as a new patio. The environmental impacts of the project to the surrounding area are minimal, and the project does not create any cumulatively considerable incremental impacts. Any cumulative impacts to air quality, noise, public services, traffic, or utilities or wildfire, that might result from the Project to the west or multiple or future projects, are not anticipated. Therefore, the Project would not be expected to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

The estimated average daily trip for the proposed project is 57 trips, significantly below the threshold of 110 daily trips or more for a traffic impact analysis. There are no known pending or concurrent projects that would add to the daily trips from the proposed Project. An estimated of 57 daily trips is not high enough to contribute to cumulatively considerable impacts to the Sierra Highways. The Project is required to comply with the LID Ordinance which will reduce impacts on the environment. These additional features will improve the existing condition of the site and will off-set the additional impacts from the increase in density.

For utilities, the Project has demonstrated the availability of water supply, sewer and solid waste collection services, natural gas and electricity. The applicant would also be subject to development impact fees to off-set the cost of development on public services such as schools and libraries. Greenhouse gas emissions, air quality, cultural resources, hydrology, noise, public services, and utilities are all determined to be below the thresholds of significance for the proposed Project. Any future projects within the jurisdiction of County would be under County review and be subject to standard procedures of approval. These projects would be examined on a project-by-project basis to determine the appropriate type of CEQA review process and would be required to provide mitigation measures for their impacts. All projects must also comply with the development and design standards stipulated in the County Code.

The proposed project would not directly induce population growth within the project area. The project does not require new infrastructure beyond that necessary to serve the project. Because the proposed project would not increase environmental impacts, the incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The project's environmental effects are relatively minor and can be adequately mitigated. The project does not cause any substantial adverse environmental effects on human beings. The construction and operation of a small residential project is not anticipated to cause substantial environmental effects which would result in adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The Project Site is vacant and undeveloped with no known history contamination.