



# CITY OF LA QUINTA

78-495 Calle Tampico  
La Quinta, California 92253  
Phone: (760) 777-7125

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## ENVIRONMENTAL INITIAL STUDY

**Project Title:** St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church

**City Project No:** SDP2019-004  
EA2019-0003  
CUP2019-0001

**Lead Agency  
Name and Address:** City of La Quinta  
78-495 Calle Tampico  
La Quinta, California 92253  
Phone: (760) 328-2266

**Applicant:** The Roman Catholic Bishop of San Bernardino, A Sole Corporation  
c/o Fredrick Saunders  
47225 Washington Street  
La Quinta, CA 92253

**Representative:** The Roman Catholic Bishop of San Bernardino, A Sole Corporation  
c/o Fredrick Saunders  
47225 Washington Street  
La Quinta, CA 92253

**Contact Person &  
Phone Number:** Carlos Flores  
Senior Planner  
Phone: (760) 777-7069

**Project Location:** 47225 Washington Street  
Assessor's Parcel Number 643-090-035.

**General Plan Designation:** Low Density Residential – 2-4 du/ac Maximum (RL).

**Zoning Designation:** Low Density Residential – 2-4 du/ac Maximum (RL).

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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Expansion project (“project”) proposes to develop approximately 4.43 acres south of the existing Saint Francis of Assisi Church, in the City of La Quinta, California. The project site is currently characterized as a graded and unpaved overflow parking area, a paved church adjacent parking area and a portion of the paved main parking lot associated with the existing Church. Project development will include the construction of the proposed parish hall, administrative offices, walking paths, parking spaces, and associated infrastructure and landscaping.

Currently the 4.43-acre project site bounded by the existing Saint Francis of Assisi Church on the north, the bulk of the existing main parking lot associated with the Church on the east, vacant land on the south, and open space slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountains on the west. Washington Street is located on the eastern boundary of the paved parking lot.

In 2002, the St. Francis of Assisi Church applied for an Environmental Assessment 2002-463, Conditional Use Permit 2002-463, and Site Development Permit 2002-755 to construct a temporary parking lot. The temporary parking lot, which was proposed in the project area, would be grass and allow a capacity of 207 vehicles. In 2003, City Council approved the applications for the temporary parking lot. The temporary grass lot was illuminated with 12-foot-high shoebox lighting fixtures, and utilized telephone poles to separate vehicles and define the parking area. The City Council approved the application for the temporary parking lot on May 20, 2003.

Years later, the Church applied to construct a permanent parking lot over the temporary lot (Environmental Assessment 2006-564, Conditional Use Permit 2006-097, and Site Development Permit 2006-860). The permanent parking lot would allow 220 paved parking spaces, a temporary overflow parking lot with a capacity of 134 gravel-surface parking spaces, a retention basin, and landscaping within the southern portion of the Church site. The completion of the permanent parking lot would allow a total parking capacity of 532 parking spaces. The Environmental Assessment determined that the project would not result in significant impacts that could not be mitigated to a less than significant level. The plan was approved in 2010 and developed by 2011. This plan currently characterizes the project site.

The current zoning designation for the proposed project site is Low Density Residential (RL). RL zones are typically appropriate for attached or detached single family residential developments, allowing up to four dwelling units per acre, however, churches are permitted in this land use designation with the approval of a conditional use permit. The project site currently serves as a church property; however, a revised conditional use permit to update the project site will be submitted as part of the project.

Access to the project site occurs at one location from Washington Street, at the Washington Street and Avenue 47 intersection, where traffic signal control is provided. Traffic entering the site from the Washington Street and Avenue 47 intersection maneuvers onto the Washington Street frontage road, and travels southbound to the Project Main Driveway. Traffic exiting the project site either returns northbound along the Washington Street frontage road to Avenue 47, or travels southbound along the Washington Street frontage road to enter Washington Street southbound travel lanes. The project does not propose changes to the existing access routes to and from the project site. On-site parking consists of a combination of paved parking areas (west, north, and southeast of the sanctuary) as well as an unpaved parking lot (south of the sanctuary).

The project proposes the development of a parish hall building and administrative office building. Both buildings will be located south of the existing church building. The existing and proposed building areas are provided in the table below.

**Table 1 Existing and Proposed Building Area**

<i>Existing Buildings</i>	<i>Area Square Feet (sf)</i>
Sanctuary	13,474 sf
Parish hall	5,727, sf
Pastoral Center	7,709 sf
Total existing	26,910 sf
<i>Proposed Buildings</i>	<i>Area Square Feet (sf)</i>
Parish hall	22,499 sf
Administrative	4,835 sf
Total New	27,334 sf
<b>Total Building Area</b>	<b>57,434 sf</b>

The parish hall building is proposed to include a 7,012-sf parish hall with 930-sf stage. Additional rooms in the parish hall building would include a lobby, choral room, kitchen, pantry, maintenance room, restrooms, office, ten meeting rooms, storage, workroom, and additional miscellaneous rooms associated with the operation of the parish hall building. The administration office building is proposed east of the parish hall and would include an administration lobby, reception area, counseling room, conference room, break room, ten office rooms, storage, and restrooms. The parish hall and administrative offices are proposed to occur in separate buildings.

The Church currently does not have adequate indoor meeting space for patrons. The meetings are currently held in Bluett Hall and consists of 2,600 square feet of outdated space. The current meeting space is not capable of holding large meeting or event, resulting in overflow into outdoor gardens and courtyard areas to accommodate attendees. The current space does not have technology or security. The proposed project buildings and improvements are intended to accommodate meetings currently held in the inadequate indoor spaces and outdoor gardens and courtyards. The new parish hall meeting and events room will have the latest technology for lighting, sound and communications and security. Because the new buildings would replace the existing meeting spaces, the proposed project will not increase membership at the Church. Additionally, the proposed meeting rooms/event center will not be used at the same time as the sanctuary. With the addition of new enclosed meeting spaces and offices, existing staff offices and activities will transfer to the new and improved facilities.

In addition to the parish hall and administrative offices, improvements to the on-site parking conditions are proposed. The project proposes 154 standard (9 x 19) stalls, 3 handicap stalls, and 1 handicap van accessible stall. The project will provide a total of 518 paved parking spaces for the entire church property. The project is proposed to occur in one phase.

As a part of the entitlement process to allow the proposed uses, the project applicant is submitting a Site Development Plan (SDP2019-0004), this Environmental Assessment (EA2019-0003), and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP2019-0001). The SDP is required by the City for approval of site-specific landscape design, architectural design, and site plan. This environmental assessment analyzes the impacts of the proposed project. Finally, the CUP is required to amend the existing CUP. The City of La Quinta will review the project site plan and entitlements.

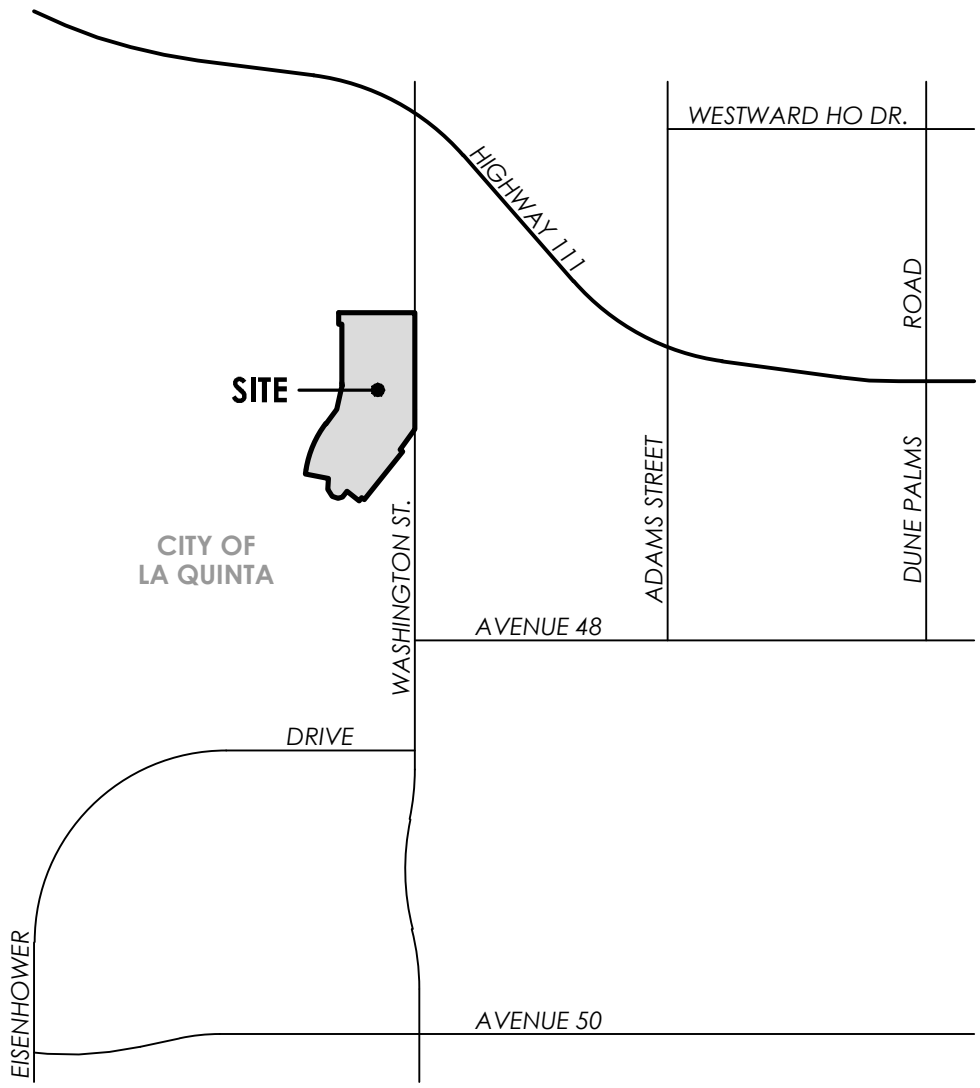
**Land Use and Setting**

North – Low Density Residential (RL)

South – Vacant land – Low Density Residential (RL)

East – General Commercial land use – Community Commercial zone (CC)

West – Open Space – Natural (OS)



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**VICINITY MAP**

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH EXPANSION**  
 MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

EXHIBIT

1





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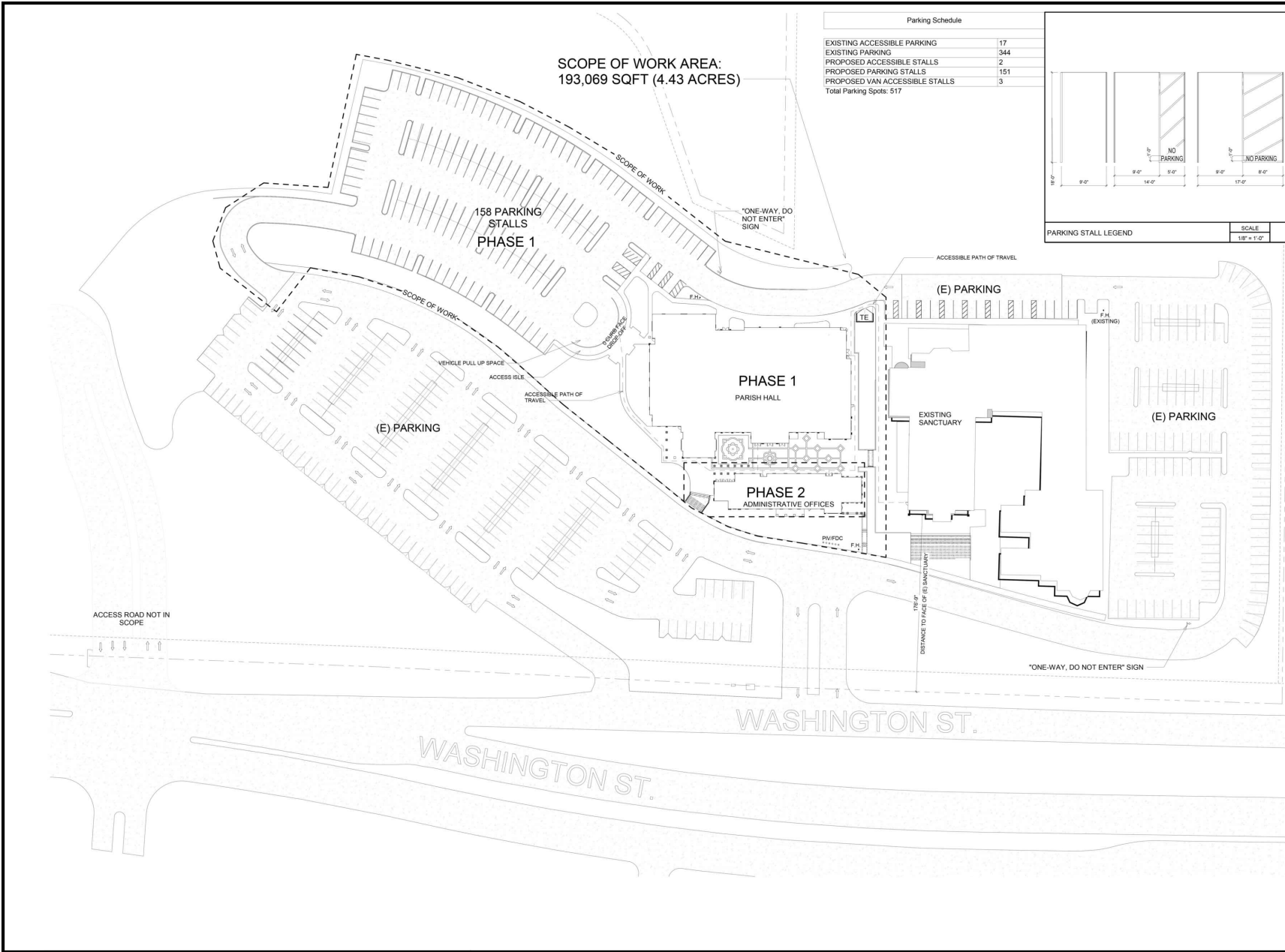
**AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH**

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH EXPANSION**  
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION



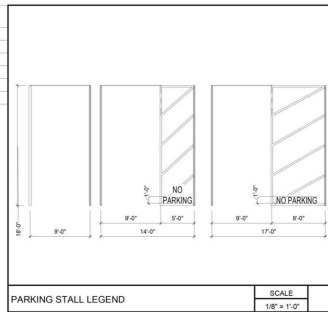
EXHIBIT

2



SCOPE OF WORK AREA:  
193,069 SQFT (4.43 ACRES)

Parking Schedule	
EXISTING ACCESSIBLE PARKING	17
EXISTING PARKING	344
PROPOSED ACCESSIBLE STALLS	2
PROPOSED PARKING STALLS	151
PROPOSED VAN ACCESSIBLE STALLS	3
<b>Total Parking Spots:</b>	<b>517</b>



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Phone: 909-335-7400  
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owner approval		
initials	date	phase

revisions/addenda		
#	Date	Comment

**SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI**  
4725 WASHINGTON STREET, LA QUINTA, CA  
NPN: 643-590-035

**THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF SAN BERNARDINO, A Corporation Sole**

project information	
Project Number:	17001919.RA
Drawn By:	Author
Checked By:	GWM
Issue Date:	9/24/21

**sheet name**  
SITE PLAN

**sheet number**  
AS-100

Sheet Of Sheets

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**PROJECT SITE PLAN**

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH EXPANSION**  
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

EXHIBIT

3



EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Geology / Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hydrology / Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Land Use / Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	Population / Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tribal Cultural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Utilities / Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildfire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mandatory Findings of Significance

**DETERMINATION:** (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	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: City of La Quinta	6-17-2022 Date:
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**Table 1 St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Expansion Project  
 Mitigation and Monitoring Program**

Section	Mitigation Measures	Responsible for Monitoring	Timing	Impact after Mitigation
IV. Biological Resources	<p><b>BIO-1:</b> The project developer shall adhere to the CVMSHCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines for projects adjacent to Conservation Areas. The following Land Use Adjacency Guidelines shall be considered by the Permittees in their review of individual public and private Development projects adjacent to or within the Conservation Areas to minimize edge effects and shall be implemented where applicable.</p> <p><b>4.5.1 Drainage</b>            Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Stormwater systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent Conservation Area.</p> <p><b>4.5.2 Toxics</b>            Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate bioproducts such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife and plant species, Habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation Area.</p> <p><b>4.5.3 Lighting</b>            For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.</p>	Developer	Prior to building permits	Less than significant

Section	Mitigation Measures	Responsible for Monitoring	Timing	Impact after Mitigation
	<p><b>4.5.4 Noise</b>            Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.</p> <p><b>4.5.5 Invasives</b>            Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native plant materials to the maximum extent Feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112 of the CVMSHCP. The plants listed in Table 4-113 in the CVMSHCP shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence.</p>			
	<p><b>BIO-2:</b> The Plan prohibits the planting of oleanders on sites adjacent to Conservation Areas. Existing oleanders shall be removed.</p>	<p>Planning Department  Developer</p>	<p>Prior to building permits</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>
<p>V. Cultural Resources</p>	<p><b>CR-1:</b> The presence of a qualified archaeologist shall be required during all project related ground disturbing activities, including clearing and grubbing. In the event that potentially significant archaeological materials are discovered, all work must be halted in the vicinity of the archaeological discovery until the archaeologist can assess the significance of the find, and its potential eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHC).</p>	<p>Planning Department  Qualified Archaeologist Developer</p>	<p>During grading and other ground disturbing activities</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>
	<p><b>CUL-2:</b> The presence of an approved Native American Monitor of Cahuilla heritage is required during any ground disturbing activities. Should buried cultural deposits be encountered, the monitor may request that destructive construction halt in the vicinity of the deposits, and the monitor shall notify a qualified archaeologist (Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines), within 24 hours, to investigate. Additional consultation with the tribes may be required.</p>	<p>Planning Department  Approved Native American Monitor Developer</p>	<p>During grading and other ground disturbing activities</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>

Section	Mitigation Measures	Responsible for Monitoring	Timing	Impact after Mitigation
XVII. Tribal Cultural Resources	<b>TCR-1:</b> Formal government consultation under California Assembly Bill No. 52 (AB 52) shall commence between the City of La Quinta and the ACBCI.	City of La Quinta  ACBCI	Prior to building permits	Less than significant
	<b>TCR-2:</b> Prior to any development activities, the project proponent shall provide a cultural resources inventory of the project area, conducted by a qualified archaeologist, a copy of the records search with associated survey reports and site records from the information center, and copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with the project.	Planning Department  Project Applicant ACBCI	Prior to any development activities	Less than significant
	<b>TCR-3:</b> The presence of an approved Agua Caliente Native American Cultural Resource Monitor(s) shall be required during any ground disturbing activities (including archaeological testing and surveys). Should buried cultural deposits be encountered, the Monitor may request that destructive construction in that area stop, and the Monitor shall notify a Qualified Archaeologist (Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines) to investigate and, if necessary, prepare a mitigation plan for submission to the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Agua Caliente Tribal Historic Preservation Office.	Planning Department  Project Developer  Agua Caliente Native American Cultural Resource Monitor  Qualified Archaeologist	During grading and other ground disturbing activities	Less than significant

**Environmental Checklist and Discussion:**

The following checklist evaluates the proposed project’s potential adverse impacts. For those environmental topics for which a potential adverse impact may exist, a discussion of the existing site environment related to the topic is presented followed by an analysis of the project’s potential adverse impacts. When the project does not have any potential for adverse impacts for an environmental topic, the reasons why there are no potential adverse impacts are described.

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

Sources: La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update, 2013; La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report, 2013; La Quinta Municipal Code.

**Setting:**

*Caltrans State Scenic Highways*

Caltrans manages the State Scenic Highway Program, provides guidance, and assists local government agencies, community organizations and citizens with the process to officially designate scenic highways. The California Scenic Highway Program was created in 1963 to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors, through special conservation treatment. The Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260 to 263 govern the Scenic Highway Program. In the development of official scenic highways, Caltrans gives special attention both to the impact of the highway on the landscape and to the highway’s visual appearance.

*Scenic Vistas*

The topography of the region progresses from the flat desert floor, where La Quinta is located, to the top of mountaintops that rise over 10,000 feet. The contrast between the flat desert landscape and the mountain peaks surrounding it provides views and picturesque landscapes for residents and visitors. The City of La Quinta is located adjacent to the Santa Rosa Mountains to the west and south, which reach 8,717 feet at the Toro Peak. Coral Reef Mountain makes up the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains and stands approximately 1,000 feet tall. Coral Reef Mountain is located in the southern portion of the City.

*Visual Character*

The existing visual character of the City is both rural and suburban. In La Quinta, the rural visual character consists of agricultural land uses typically found in the southeastern portion of the City, including the City’s Sphere of Influence. The incorporated portion of La Quinta, however, exemplifies the suburban visual character, comprised of residential neighborhoods, commercial shopping centers, office parks, golf courses, parks and community facilities built along landscaped boulevards with curb, gutter and sidewalks. Buildings tend to be low-rise, which preserves views of the surrounding mountains from private and public lands. An interconnected street system provides accessibility throughout the City, and, for the most part, streets are developed with sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. Landscaping along rights-of-way provides visual relief from the built environment and enhances the visual character of the community (LQGP EIR, page III-5).

*Light and Glare*

Existing light and glare within the City are produced in areas such as the large commercial centers along Highway 111, the existing school playfields and recreational facilities, and major arterials.

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The perception and uniqueness of scenic vistas from a particular setting vary according to location and surrounding context. According to the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update (GPU), development within the City limits are generally built at lower densities, and buildings throughout the planning area tend to be low rise structures. Views of local mountains and scenic vistas throughout the incorporated portions are generally good, however views are also influenced by suburban development, which includes the presence and intensity of man-made neighboring improvements (e.g., structures, overhead utilities and vegetation). The massing of structures and vegetation in the project area and surroundings interacts with the natural regional environmental and can obstruct or compliment the scenic vistas. The evaluation of scenic vistas takes into consideration the physical compatibility of proposed projects in relation to land uses, transportation corridors, or other vantage points, where the enjoyment of unique vistas may exist, such as residential areas or scenic roads. Within the City, scenic vistas include views of natural features, including the Santa Rosa, San Jacinto, and Little San Bernardino Mountains. The development of new manmade structures, including buildings, streets, signage, walls, and landscaping has the potential to replace or disrupt views of the surrounding natural landscape (2035 General Plan Update).

The approximately 4.43-acre project site currently operates as parking for the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church property. The project area includes 219 paved and dirt parking spaces. Existing landscaping and light fixtures are also onsite associated with the Church facility. The project property has been subject to past development activities, due to its association with the St. Francis of Assisi Church. The project area has served as a parking facility for the Church since 2002, when it was proposed to be temporary overflow parking, and 2010, when the Church proposed a permanent parking lot. The project site is surrounded by the existing sanctuary building of the Saint Francis of Assisi Church to the north, paved Church parking spaces and drive aisles to the east, vacant land to the south, and the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains to the west.

Due to the size of the mountains that border the City, views of these scenic vistas in the City are generally unobstructed; however, this is largely dependent on viewpoint location since views can be obstructed by existing structures and landscaping. From Washington Street, public views of the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south and the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north are distant and obstructed by manmade structures and landscaping. The Santa Rosa Mountain foothills immediately west of the project site reaches an elevation of approximately 650 feet and provides a natural landscape in the City. When viewed from Washington Street, views of the base of the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills are obstructed by existing structures and landscaping. However, midrange and peak views of the foothills are visible. The Santa Rosa Mountains obstructs the views of the San Jacinto Mountains to the west. The exhibit below shows the existing sanctuary building and proposed project building to the left.

**Exhibit 1-I**



The project is proposing the development of a 22,499-square-foot parish hall, a 4,835-square-foot administration office building, and associated parking on approximately 4.43 acres south of the existing St. Francis of Assisi sanctuary buildings. Associated improvements include paved drive aisles and parking spaces, pedestrian pathways, and landscaped features consistent with the existing Church facility. The project will abide by building height and set back standards. Buildings within RL zones shall not exceed 28 feet or two-stories per La Quinta Municipal Code (LQMC) Chapter 9.50.030. The parish hall and administration offices are not proposed to exceed two stories. The proposed administration office building will be located closer to Washington Street and will be a maximum height of 19 feet. The administration building complies with LQMC Chapter 9.50.030. The proposed parish hall building is proposed to be approximately 30 feet 8 inches in height. As previously stated, buildings within RL designations are not to exceed 28 feet in height, however, the project proposes a 10 percent height deviation to allow for the 30-foot building. The City of La Quinta will review the elevation plans provided by the project applicant. The proposed 30-foot parish hall will be located east of the administration building. Also, in comparison to the existing sanctuary building associated with the St. Francis of Assisi Church (north of the proposed project), the new parish hall building will be reduced in scale compared to the sanctuary building.

The building mass and scale is not proposed to significantly impact the view of the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills west of the site when viewed from public viewsheds (i.e., Washington Street). The project is not anticipated to obstruct the scenic vistas in the City. The distant Santa Rosa Mountains to the south will remain visible to motorists and pedestrians traveling along Washington Street that can currently view them post project development. See Exhibit 1-I above. The project will also comply with the standards and guidelines set within the La Quinta Municipal Code for buildings within RL zones. Overall, the project is not expected to have a substantial impact on the existing scenic vistas.

**Mitigation:** None

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** A review of the California Scenic Highway Mapping System web site revealed that the project is not located adjacent to or near any state or county, eligible or designated scenic



highway. As such, the proposed site plan, architectural design, and landscaping design would not result in adverse impacts to scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

Independent of the Caltrans Scenic Highway Program, the Circulation Element of the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update (GPU) identifies roadways that are considered Image Corridors. Washington Street, east of the project site, is designated as an Image Corridor. Image corridors, as defined by the GPU, are City public rights-of-way that provide views of scenic resources and the natural landscape. These views may be threatened by inappropriate and unattractive land uses and landscaping, inadequately buffered parking, excessive or inappropriate signage, high walls and berms that block views and overhead power lines that degrade views.

As previously stated, the project proposes the development of a 22,499-sf parish hall, a 4,835-sf administration office building, and parking lot associated with the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church property. The proposed buildings will be cohesive with the design of the existing church building (sanctuary). Additionally, the proposed buildings will be appropriate in mass and scale that will complement the existing church. The proposed administration office building will be a maximum height of 19 feet. The administration building complies with LQMC Chapter 9.50.030 designating building height within RL zones. The proposed parish hall building is proposed to be approximately 30 feet 8 inches in height. As previously stated, the project proposes a 10 percent height deviation to allow for the 30-foot building. The City of La Quinta will review the elevation plans provided by the project applicant. The proposed 30-foot parish hall will be located east of the administration building. Also, in comparison to the existing sanctuary building associated with the St. Francis of Assisi Church (north of the proposed project), the new parish hall building will be reduced in scale compared to the sanctuary building. Project landscaping will also be consistent with the existing onsite landscaping, which includes desert and drought-tolerant trees, shrubs and ground coverings. Title 9 Chapter 9.50.020 (Height limits and setbacks near image corridors) of La Quinta's Municipal Code, requires that additional height limitations shall apply to buildings within 150 feet of the edge of right-of-way of the following general plan-designated image corridors. The project is located more than 150 feet from the Washington Street right-of-way, therefore, additional height restrictions do not apply. Overall, adverse impacts to the image corridors are expected to be less than significant.

Additionally, the project site does not contain scenic resources onsite due to its current use as a parking lot. As previously stated, the project will not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills, west of the site due to the foothill's height compared to the scale of the proposed church buildings.

According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System, the La Quinta 2035 GPU and EIR, the project site is not anticipated to result in adverse impacts to scenic resources within a state scenic highway. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** According to the La Quinta General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (GPU EIR), the existing visual character of the City can be characterized as both suburban and rural. The incorporated portion of the City, including the project site, is located in the suburban context, which is influenced by typical suburban land uses, including residential neighborhoods, commercial shopping centers, office parks, golf courses, parks and community facilities. These land uses are built along landscaped boulevards with curb, gutter and sidewalks.

The project site occupies approximately 4.43 acres of the south/southwestern portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Church. The site is located within a suburban context of the City and is surrounded by the Church to the north, followed by a residential neighborhood, the Church parking lot followed by Washington Street and commercial buildings to the east, vacant land followed by a residential neighborhood to the south, and the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains to the west.

The project site is currently located within the City's Low Density Residential (RL) land use and zoning designation. RL zones are typically appropriate for attached or detached single family residential developments, allowing up to four dwelling units per acre, however, churches are permitted in this land use designation with the approval of a conditional use permit (CUP). The proposed project would require an amendment to the existing CUP.

The project proposes to develop a parish hall, administration offices, and parking spaces in association with the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. With the addition of new enclosed meeting spaces and offices, existing staff and activities will transfer from outside communal areas to the new and improved facilities. Paved parking surfaces will replace the existing unpaved parking lot.

The proposed buildings will be developed to complement the existing Church in architecture and design. As such, the placement, scale, and design of the proposed buildings are expected to replace existing paved and unpaved parking lots. Project design, including architecture and landscape architecture, will require review and approval by the City to ensure that aesthetic considerations are addressed in the design. Moreover, building size and scale will not conflict with the existing Church building or the established standards regulating scenic quality in RL zones. With the compliance of City standards, the project is not expected to conflict with applicable zoning or other regulation governing the scenic quality of the site, therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

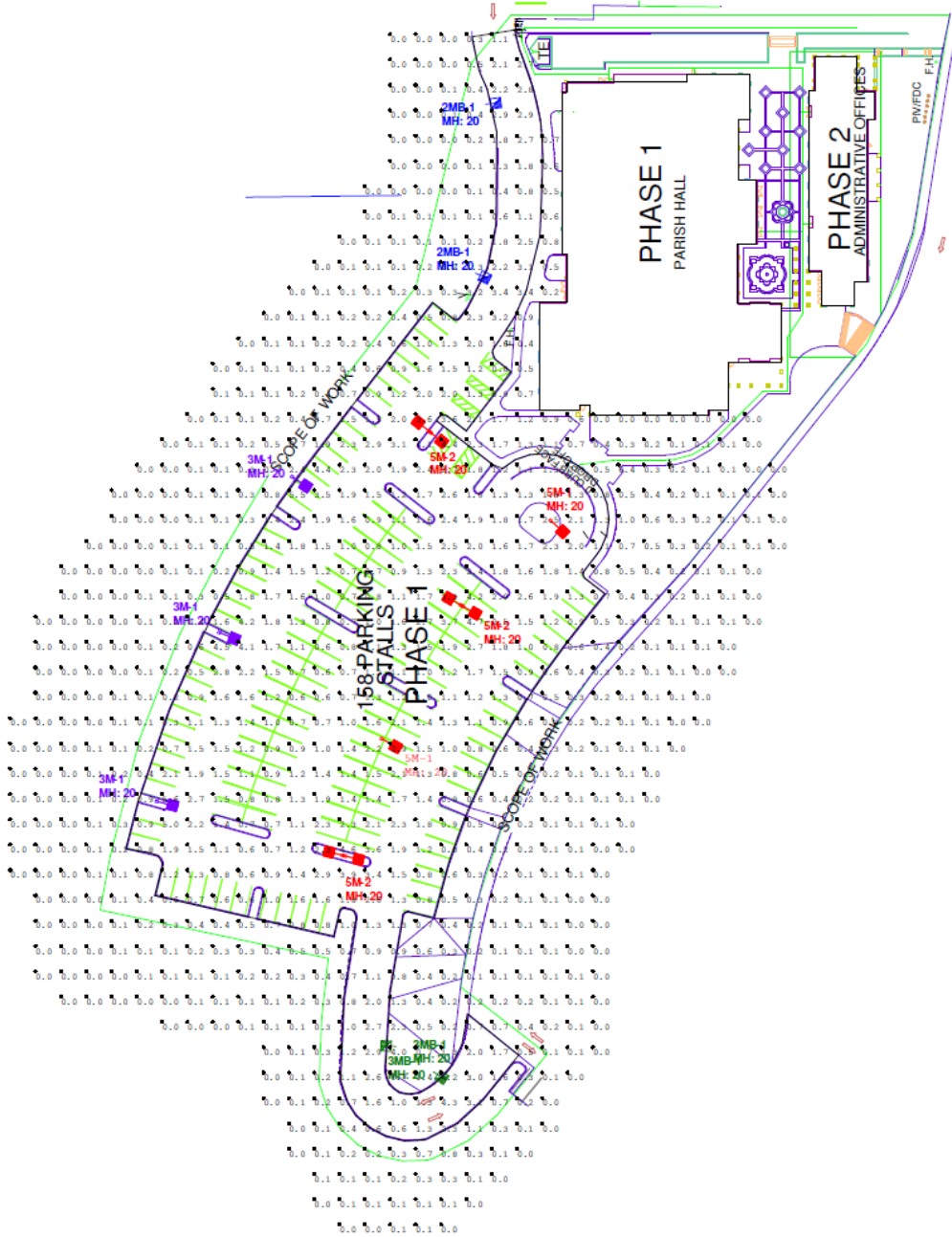
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project occurs on a previously disturbed, 4.43-acre property on the southwest portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Church property in the City of La Quinta. The project property is surrounded by the sanctuary building of the St. Francis of Assisi Church to the north, parking lot followed by Washington Street and commercial buildings to the east, vacant land followed by a residential community to the south, and open space and mountain slopes to the west. Existing sources of fixed nighttime lighting in the project's vicinity can be attributed to the existing church, homes, commercial uses, traffic signals at the intersection of Washington Street, and ground mounted parking lot light fixtures on the project site, as well as north and east of the project site. Individual home lighting typically consists of low-intensity, wall-mounted, downward-oriented fixtures in the patio, side and front yards of homes. Church lighting also consists of wall-mounted, downward-oriented fixtures along building frontages near entrances, and pole-mounted downward-oriented fixtures in the parking lot. Along Washington Street, nighttime vehicular circulation, traffic lights, and landscaping illumination contribute to the nighttime ambient lighting. Day-time glare can also be attributed to the existing vehicular traffic.

The proposed project includes development of a parish hall, administration buildings, and parking spaces associated with the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. The proposed exterior materials for the church buildings will be consistent with the existing sanctuary building located north of the project. Colors complimentary to the surrounding desert landscape are proposed as part of project implementation. Building surfaces will not have highly reflective construction materials or other conditions that would cause substantial day-time or nighttime glare. The proposed building finishes, which primarily consist of cement plaster and other complimentary materials, are expected to have low solar reflectivity. The proposed landscaping and building setbacks will function as a screen to soften the visibility of buildings from the streets.

The project will provide various forms of lighting to adequately illuminate the parking areas, entrances, walkways, building frontages, and other project features for security purposes. The use of exterior light fixtures will be made compatible with the architectural and materials of the buildings. In compliance with Chapter 9.100.150 of the La Quinta Municipal Code, the proposed exterior lighting shall be either fully or partially shielded and located and directed so as not to shine directly on adjacent properties. Lighting within the project parking lot will be consistent with LQMC Section 9.150.080(J). Per the project photometric plan, the project will include 12 light poles throughout the project site to illuminate the roadways and parking lot. Per the photometric plan, the proposed project will not exceed 0.1 footcandles along adjacent

areas west, south, and east of the project boundaries. The light fixtures proposed in the northern portion of the project will illuminate the proposed driveway and areas adjacent to this area up to 0.5 footcandles. See the exhibit below for project photometric plan. Building lighting will consist of downward-oriented fixtures in strategic locations and will avoid fixtures at unnecessary locations.

**Exhibit 1-II Project Photometric Plan**



Pertaining to glare, the project would not introduce facilities with large reflective surfaces that would generate substantial glare, nor would the project involve new sources of high-intensity lighting that would be deemed incompatible with the existing uses surrounding the project property. The proposed materials will be painted with flat or non-reflective finishes, therefore preventing daytime glare. The proposed structures are expected to have earth-tone finishes that do not have highly reflective properties or other conditions that would cause substantial daytime or nighttime glare. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

<b>2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES –</b> 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 Dept. 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 forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update, 2013; La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report, 2013; California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, California Department of Conservation, 2016.

**Setting:**

The project site and the City of La Quinta General Plan area is characterized by the urban context, primarily consisting of residential and commercial developments. Per the La Quinta General Plan Environmental Impact Report (LQGP EIR), significant agricultural resources within the City of La Quinta no longer exist. However, agriculture is still an economic factor east of the incorporated boundary, within the City’s Sphere of Influence. The La Quinta General Plan facilitates urban development on lands designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance since agricultural production and have been designated for urban uses for some time.

California Land Conservation Act of 1965

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (the “Williamson Act”) encourages the preservation of agricultural lands through tax incentives due to the increasing trend toward the conversion of agricultural lands and urban uses. The act enables counties and cities to designate agricultural preserves (Williamson Act lands) and within these preserves, offer preferential taxation to agricultural landowners based on the agricultural income producing value of the property. There are no active or permitted quarries identified within the City of La Quinta’s General Plan area; however, approximately 582 acres of land in the City’s Sphere of Influence, have been set aside for farmland conversion under the Williamson Act provisions.

State Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) established the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) in 1982 as a non-regulatory program that provides a consistent and impartial analysis of agricultural land use and land use changes throughout California. The FMMP produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. Prime agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status and identified by the following categories: Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Local Importance, Urban and Built-Up Land, and Other Land. Each category is described as follows:

- Prime Farmland: areas with both good physical and chemical attributes able to sustain long-term agricultural production.
- Farmland of Statewide Importance: areas that have a good combination of physical and biological characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is available for these uses.
- Unique Farmland: areas that produce crops of statewide importance; however, contain lower quality soils than those within Prime Farmland.
- Farmland of Local Importance: lands generally without irrigation, and which produce dry crops that may be important locally but are not important for statewide agriculture production.
- Urban Built-Up Land: areas occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel.
- Other Land: areas of land not included in any other mapping category.

According to the most recent (2016) FMMP, the most prominent categories within the City of La Quinta are Urban Built-Up Land and Other Land. Farmland of Local Importance and Unique Farmland are also present within the City limits, however, agricultural production within the City has been designated for urban uses.

Lands under the Williamson Act, or California Land Conservation Act, are agricultural lands that allow special tax assessment. These lands are taxed on the basis of agricultural production rather than market value. The goal of the Williamson Act is to protect agricultural land from being sold for development. 582 acres of land with Williamson Act contracts are located in the City's Sphere of Influence. Based on 2008 Riverside County data, approximately 218.9 acres were in renewal, and 363 acres were in non-renewal. Non-renewal indicates that the farmland reverts back to market conditions and can be sold at fair market value. Farmland in non-renewal status generally indicates agricultural land will be developed to non-agricultural land uses.

a-e) **No Impact.** The proposed project is located in the southern portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Church property and west of Washington Street in the City of La Quinta. The approximately 4.43-acre project is proposing to develop a parish hall and administration building along with associated parking south of the existing Church building. The project site currently operates as paved overflow parking for the existing Church. The project is not located on lands zoned for agriculture and is not covered by a Williamson Act contract. There are no areas of forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production.

According to the Williamson Act 2016 Status Report, no portion of the land is within or near a recognized Williamson Act Contract area. There are no other agricultural areas or related zoning polices with which the proposed project would conflict. The project will not impact or remove any portion of land from the County's agricultural zoning or agricultural preserve.

Additionally, the 2016 California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) indicates that the property is designated as "Other Land" on a majority of the 4.43-acre site. A small of the northern portion of the site is designated "Urban and Built-up Land", as established by the California Department of Conservation. Other Land is defined as land not included in any other mapping category. Urban and Built-up Land, as defined by the Department of Conservation, is occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. Typical examples include residential, industrial, commercial, institutional facilities, to name a few. The surrounding land to the north, east, and south are also designated as Urban and Built-up Land, while the area west of the project site, the



Santa Rosa foothills, is designated as Other Land. These FMMP land designations do not support agricultural uses.

Moreover, the project site is located within a residential land use and zoning designation established by the City of La Quinta. The project site is not located in an existing zone for agricultural use or classified as farmland.

Further, no forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production zone occurs on the project site or in the surrounding areas, largely because forest vegetation is uncharacteristic of the Coachella Valley's desert floor environment. Therefore, the proposed project will have no impact on agricultural or forestry resources.

**Mitigation:** None

3. AIR QUALITY – Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Saint Francis of Assisi Air Quality Impact Analysis, by Urban Crossroads, July 7, 2020; *Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP)*, by SCAQMD, March 2017; *Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan (CVSIP)*, by SCAQMD, August 2003; *Analysis of the Coachella Valley PM10 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan*, by the California Air Resources Board, February 2010

Setting:

Existing Air Quality Regulatory Framework

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

To comply with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), SCAQMD has adopted an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which is updated regularly with strategies to effectively reduce emissions, accommodate growth, and minimize any negative fiscal impacts of air pollution control on the economy. The most current version of the AQMP (2016 AQMP) was released in March of 2017 to continue serving as a regional blueprint for achieving the federal air quality standards with the most current strategies to meet the air quality standards and ensure that public health is protected to the maximum extent feasible. The 2016 AQMP incorporates scientific and technological information and planning assumptions, including the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), a planning document that supports the integration of land use and transportation to help the region meet the federal Clean Air Act requirements. It also factors a comprehensive analysis of emissions, meteorology, atmospheric chemistry, regional growth projections, and the impact of existing control measures is updated with the latest data and methods. Moreover, 2016 AQMP provides guidance for the State Implementation Plans (SIP) for attainment of the applicable ambient air quality standards.

Particulate Matter (PM10):

As indicated in the 2016 AQMP, the Coachella Valley is currently designated as a serious nonattainment area for PM10 (particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less). In the Coachella Valley, the man-made sources of PM10 are attributed to direct emissions, industrial facilities, and fugitive dust resulting from unpaved roads and construction operations. High-wind natural events are also known contributors of PM10. The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires those states with nonattainment areas to prepare and submit the corresponding State

Implementation Plans (SIPs) to demonstrate how these areas will attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The implementation strategies include modeling, rules, regulations, and programs designed to provide the necessary air pollutant emissions reductions.

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

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

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

#### Ozone and Ozone Precursors:

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

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

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

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** This analysis relies on the analytical and quantitative findings of the *Saint Francis of Assisi Air Quality Impact Analysis (AQIA)*, prepared by Urban Crossroads on July 7, 2020 with the purpose of evaluating the potential impacts to air quality associated with construction and operation of the proposed project. The AQIA findings are based in part on the numeric results from running the most current California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2) available at the time of AQIA report preparation to calculate construction emissions and operational emissions from the project. This computer software was developed in conjunction with the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and other California air districts to calculate criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases using widely accepted methodologies, combined with default data that can be used when site-specific information is not available. Sources of these methodologies and default data include, but are not limited to, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) AP-42 emission factors, California Air Resources Board (CARB) vehicle emission models, studies commissioned by California agencies such as the California Energy Commission (CEC) and CalRecycle.

Air quality impacts can be deemed significant if there is a potential to contribute or cause regional and/or localized exceedances of the federal and/or state ambient air quality standards, such as the NAAQS and CAAQS. To assist lead agencies in determining the significance of air quality impacts from land development projects, SCAQMD established quantitative short-term construction-related and long-term operational impact thresholds (South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds). Table III-1 below displays these numeric thresholds applicable to construction and operational activities to which the project-specific air emissions results will be compared.

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

Emission Source	CO	VOC	NO <sub>x</sub>	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM10	PM2.5
Construction or Operation	550	75	100	150	150	55

Source: Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook and SCAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds, April 2019

The AQIA used the project parameters (land uses and facilities) to calculate the criteria air pollutants expected to be generated from the project. The AQIA findings included in Table III-2 below demonstrate that the unmitigated construction related emissions resulting from site preparation, grading, utilities/building construction, paving, and architectural coating of the project would not exceed the applicable SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance for any criteria pollutants, including PM10 and Ozone precursors. No further mitigation is necessary to lower the emission levels. Thus, a less than significant impact would occur for project-related construction-source emissions in relation to the applicable South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds.

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

**(Pounds/Day)**

	ROG/VOC	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Peak Emissions Resulting from Site Preparation, Grading, Building Construction, Paving, and Architectural Coating	15.79	80.09	33.45	0.16	8.86	4.54
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded	No	No	No	No	No	No

Moreover, the AQIA also calculated the long-term operational air pollutant emissions that would occur during the life of the project. These operations include area, energy and mobile sources. As shown in Table III-3 below, the project-related emissions of criteria pollutants are also not expected to exceed any of the SCAQMD South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds for operational impacts.

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

Emission Source	ROG/VOC	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Peak Area Sources, Energy Use, Mobile Sources	0.66	0.20	0.19	0.00	0.02	0.02
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded	No	No	No	No	No	No

The criteria for determining consistency with the AQMP are defined in Chapter 12, Section 12.2 and Section 12.3 of the SCAQMD’s CEQA Air Quality Handbook (1993), as summarized below:

Consistency Criterion No. 1: The proposed project will not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations, or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.

The violations that Consistency Criterion No. 1 refers to are the CAAQS and NAAQS. CAAQS and NAAQS violations would occur if localized significance thresholds (LSTs) or regional significance thresholds were exceeded. As demonstrated in Tables III-2 and III-3, the project would not exceed the applicable regional significance thresholds for construction activity for emissions of any criteria air pollutant, including PM10 and ozone precursors, and therefore would not conflict with the AQMP according to this criterion. The project operational-source air pollutant emissions would also not exceed applicable thresholds or result in or cause violations of the CAAQS and NAAQS.

Consistency Criterion No. 2: The project will not exceed the assumptions in the AQMP based on the years of project build-out phase.

The 2016 AQMP demonstrates that the applicable ambient air quality standards can be achieved within the timeframes required under federal law and any extensions for attainment can be processed accordingly, such as the case of Ozone. As concluded in the AQIA, the project land uses are generally consistent with the land uses allowed under the City land use designations for the project site. As such, the project would be consistent with the growth projections and with the air quality plan.

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

**Mitigation:** None

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) was formerly classified as "Severe-15" nonattainment for the 1997 8-hour ozone national ambient air quality standard with an attainment deadline of June 15, 2019. Over the past 15 years, the air quality in the Coachella Valley has steadily improved because of the implementation of emission control measures by SCAQMD and California Air Resources Board (CARB). However, based on recent data for higher levels of ozone experienced in 2017 and 2018, it was determined that the Coachella Valley region could not practically attain the said standard by the established deadline. As a result, SCAQMD requested a reclassification that would extend the attainment deadline to June of 2024. SCAQMD has prepared additional documentation and will be implementing additional measures to comply with the June 2024 deadline. Current and planned regulations on mobile and stationary sources are expected to contribute to improvements to ozone air quality in the Coachella Valley and lead to attainment of the standard.

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

Furthermore, the Coachella Valley is currently designated as a serious nonattainment area for PM10 (particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less). The CVSIP is in place with an attainment strategy for meeting the PM10 standard. Some of the existing measures include the requirement of detailed dust control plans from builders that specify the use of more aggressive and frequent watering, soil stabilization, wind screens, and phased development to minimize fugitive dust.

Per Chapter 6.16 (Fugitive Dust Control) of the La Quinta Municipal Code, a Fugitive Dust Control Plan must be prepared and approved prior to any earth-moving operations. Implementation of the Fugitive Dust Control Plan is required to occur under the supervision of an individual with training on Dust Control in the Coachella Valley. The plan will include methods to prevent sediment track-out onto public roads, prevent visible dust emissions from exceeding a 20-percent opacity, and prevent visible dust emissions from extending more than 100 feet (vertically or horizontally from the origin of a source) or crossing any property line. The most widely used measures include proper construction phasing, proper maintenance/cleaning of construction equipment, soil stabilization, installation of track-out prevention devices, and wind fencing. As shown in Tables III-2 and III-3, project-related short-term construction and long-term operational emissions are not expected to exceed the regional thresholds of significance established by SCAQMD for PM10.

Since project-related emissions would be consistent with the AQMP, CVSIP, and all SCAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds, long-term operational air quality impacts associated with the project would not be considered cumulatively considerable. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** A sensitive receptor is a person in the population who is particularly susceptible (i.e. more susceptible than the population at large) to health effects due to exposure to an air contaminant. Sensitive receptors and the facilities that house them are of particular concern if they are



located in close proximity to localized sources of carbon monoxide, toxic air contaminants, or odors. Residences, long-term health care facilities, schools, rehabilitation centers, playgrounds, convalescent centers, childcare centers, retirement homes, and athletic facilities are generally considered sensitive receptors.

The SCAQMD has developed and published the Final Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology to help identify potential impacts that could contribute or cause localized exceedances of the federal and/or state ambient air quality standards (NAAQS/CAAQS). LST methodology was developed in response to environmental justice and health concerns raised by the public regarding exposure of individuals to criteria pollutants in local communities. The purpose of analyzing LSTs is to determine whether a project may generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts in relation to the nearest exposed sensitive receptors, such as those listed above. LSTs represent the maximum emission levels that comply with the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard at the nearest sensitive receptor, taking into consideration ambient concentrations in each source receptor area (SRA), project, size, and distance to the sensitive receptor. Therefore, meeting the lowest allowable emissions thresholds translates to meeting the most stringent air quality standards for a project locality in consideration of sensitive receptors. As part of the LST methodology, SCAQMD has divided its jurisdiction into 37 source receptor areas (SRAs) which can be used to determine whether a project may generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts. The proposed development is located in SRA 30, which covers the Coachella Valley and City of La Quinta. LSTs only apply to certain criteria pollutants: carbon dioxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NOx) particulate matter equal to or less than 10 microns in diameter (PM10), and particulate matter equal to or less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5).

The AQIA involved an LST analysis taking into account that the nearest sensitive receptor is a residential community located approximately 452 feet/138 meters northeast of the project site. Distance wise, the LST tables use 100 and 200 meters as reference points. Consistent with the SCAQMD’s LST Methodology, a 100-meter receptor distance is utilized in this analysis and provide for a conservative i.e. “health protective” standard of care. Since the total acreage disturbed is less than five acres per day for site preparation and grading activities, the SCAQMD’s screening look-up tables are utilized in determining impacts.

Per the SCAQMD LST methodology, LST analysis for the operational phase of the project would not be applicable because the project would not include stationary emission sources or activities involving long periods of queuing and idling at the site, such as those associated with warehouse or transfer facilities. As a result, no long-term localized significance threshold analysis is needed.

**Table III-4  
Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) Associated with Projected  
Construction (In Pounds/Day)**

Emission Source	NO	CO	PM10	PM2.5
Site Preparation Emissions	21.87	13.29	1.82	1.01
SCAQMD LST Threshold for SRA 30	301	3,475	45	12
<b>LST Threshold Exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
Grading Emissions	27.38	14.83	4.32	2.73
SCAQMD LST Threshold for SRA 30	301	3,475	45	12
<b>LST Threshold Exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

The results provided in Table III-4 resulting from the Localized Significance Thresholds methodology by SCAQMD demonstrate that the construction-related emission levels would occur well below the established thresholds, taking into account the source receptor area and nearest sensitive receptor location to the project. Therefore, the project would not result in emissions capable of exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Moreover, the proposed project would not situate occupants and

visitors of the proposed parish center and administrative facilities in a location known to be exposed to existing or planned sources of substantial emissions. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- d) **No Impact.** As previously analyzed and disclosed, project implementation would not result in emissions that would exceed the South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds or LSTs. Moreover, the project emissions would not exceed the LSTs applicable to the project setting in relation to the nearby residences. The proposed parish hall, administration facilities, and parking lot expansion within the existing church property will not involve the types of facilities or operations commonly known to generate odors, such as wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfills, composting/green waste facilities, recycling facilities, petroleum refineries, chemical manufacturing plants, painting/coating operations, rendering plants, or food packaging facilities. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in odor or other emissions adversely affecting nearby neighbors or a substantial number of people. No impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

4. <b>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b> -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	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 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** General and Focused Biological Resources Assessment, James W. Cornett Ecological Consultants, June 2020; La Quinta General Plan, Biological Resources, 2013.

**Setting:**

In June 2020, James W. Cornett, Ecological Consultants conducted a project-specific General and Focused Biological Resources Assessment. The assessment area covered the 5-acres of vacant and undeveloped land. There is an existing church along the northern boundary. Previously graded flatlands are located along the southern boundary and a church parking lot forms the eastern boundary. The biological survey and analysis were performed to ascertain the impacts of proposed development on potential biological resources of the project site and immediate vicinity, as mandated by CEQA and required by the City of La Quinta.

Survey methodology included literature review to determine the biological resources that might exist within the general area and to determine the possible occurrence of special status species. The review included records, collections, websites and or staff of the University of Riverside of California at Riverside Herbarium, and other research centers. The review included a search in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Natural Diversity Database. Field surveys were initiated in May 2020 and conducted on May 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, and 28. Night surveys were conducted in the evenings of May 21, and 26<sup>th</sup>. Invertebrate sampling was conducted on the evenings of May 21, 26, 2020. Two Bioquip Light Traps were used for attracting and live capturing flying insects and some terrestrial arthropods.

Surveys were conducted by walking north/south transects at 10-yard intervals through the project site. The survey pattern used has been approved by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for determining the presence or absence of the burrowing owl and desert tortoise and represents an intensive survey effort that resulted in no officially listed or federally protected species being overlooked. Offsite surveys were only conducted to the west, though extremely

steep terrain made it impossible to traverse straight-line transects more than 25-yards beyond project site boundaries. Offsite transects were walked up to 150 yards to the south of the project site. The existing church structures lie to the north of the project site and a paved parking lot and Washington Street, an extremely busy thoroughfare, lie to the immediate east.

The elevation of the project site is approximately 75 feet above sea level. The only topographic relief consists of sand deposits that rise up against a spur of the Santa Rosa Mountains to the immediate west. The rocky spur touches the extreme northwest corner of the site. Soil characteristics are uniform over the entire site. Soil is composed of wind-blown alluvium created by historic and persistent air movements from the northwest. Residential and commercial developments to the east and north have resulted in sand stabilization on the site.

The northern two thirds of the site have been graded with soil stabilization for an informal parking area. Remnants of the Sonoran creosote bush scrub community occurred along the western edge of the site. The creosote bush was the dominant perennial followed by bugseed, Emory's Dalea and croton. Many native and exotic weed species have germinated over the site. The species include Sahara mustard, tumbleweed, bugseed and Schismus grass. These species are found throughout the Colorado Desert of southeastern California whenever natural vegetation has been damaged or removed.

- a) **No Impact.** The Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, published by the California Native Plant Society, lists a total of four plant species that could conceivably occur on or near the project site. They are the glandular ditaxis, ribbed cryptantha flat-seeded spurge, and Coachella Valley milk vetch. The glandular ditaxis is a very rare perennial herb that blooms from December through March. It is restricted to sandy environments in the Sonoran Desert and has been found in the Coachella Valley at elevations like those found on the site. The glandular ditaxis was not detected during the plant survey and therefore presumed absent from the site. This species is not listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by either the state or federal governments nor is it proposed to be listed at this time.

The ribbed cryptantha is an uncommon ephemeral known to occur on sandy soils in the Coachella Valley. The project site can be considered suitable habitat for this species. Since the entire site has been graded in the past the ribbed cryptantha was not detected. The ribbed cryptantha is not listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by either the state or federal governments nor is it proposed to be listed at this time.

The flat seed spurge is an extremely rare ephemeral known to occur on sandy soils in the Sonoran Desert. There has been at least one specimen found in the Coachella Valley. The species was not detected in part due to most of the survey area being graded in the past. The flat-seeded spurge is not listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by either the state or federal governments nor is it proposed to be listed at this time.

The Coachella Valley milk-vetch is an uncommon, spring-blooming ephemeral herb that is known to occur on sand soils in the Coachella Valley. No evidence of this species was found within project site boundaries. The milk-vetch is listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife service. Impacts to the milk-vetch are fully mitigated by the CVMSHCP through the payment of the Plan mitigation fees. No further action is necessary with regard to this species.

The site was surveyed for special status and sensitive species. Three insect species known to occur in the Coachella Valley have been placed on the California Department of Fish & Wildlife *Special Animals* list. They are the Coachella giant sand treader cricket, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, and Coachella Valley grasshopper. None of these three species were found during the surveys and none have any official status with government agencies. Both the Coachella giant sand treader cricket and Jerusalem cricket are covered species under the CVMSHCP.

Per the Project-specific Biological Report, no amphibian species were found during the surveys and none are expected. The officially threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard was not observed or detected. A concerted effort was made to locate any signs of the officially listed desert tortoise. The Biological Report

finds that this species does not occur within the Project site and immediate vicinity and no additional surveys for this species are recommended. The field survey resulted in no observations or evidence of the flat-tailed horned lizard. The site's habitat is considered unsuitable for this species due to past grading. Impacts to the horned lizard are fully mitigated under the Plan.

Two functionally non-covered and sensitive avian species were considered to be possible occupants of the Project site and vicinity, the burrowing owl and loggerhead shrike. An intensive field survey for the burrowing owl was undertaken following protocols established by the state and federal governments. No observations of the owl were recorded, and no evidence of its presence was found. The habitat of the Project site was found to be unsuitable for the owl because of past grading, frequent human presence, and intense traffic noise on Washington Street. The biological report finds the site not important for other migratory birds due to a lack of shelter and food resources.

The loggerhead shrike, a state Species of Concern, was not observed or detected on or near the project site. The site is also considered unsuitable habitat for this species because of past grading, frequent human presence, and intense traffic noise on Washington Street.

Recorded mammals included the Palm Springs Ground squirrel, desert cottontail and coyote. No observations of the Palm Springs pocket mouse, a covered species was found. The Palm Springs ground squirrel is the only mammalian covered species discovered within the project boundaries and was detected five times (four burrows and one observation). It currently is not a listed species and has a much broader range than was previously thought. It is, therefore, unlikely that it will be listed in the foreseeable future. It is a covered species under the CVMSHCP and impacts to the squirrel are fully mitigated by the payment the Plan fee.

With the spur of the Santa Rosa Mountains immediately west of the Project site, an intensive effort was made to find evidence of bighorn sheep on or near the site. No evidence or observations of bighorn were recorded. The peninsular bighorn sheep is a subspecies of bighorn restricted to the desert slopes of the Peninsular Ranges of Southern California and Baja California. The population found in the United States is considered Endangered by the federal government and Threatened by the state government. Historical records indicate bighorn were occasionally present in the spur of the Santa Rosa Mountains immediately west of the Project site. The Project does not impinge upon the spur and bighorn are a covered species under the MSHCP and no current evidence of sheep presence was found during the field survey, no special mitigation is necessary or recommended for bighorn sheep.

Moreover, the Project's proximity to a high-volume roadway and surrounding development, as a result, it is nearly an ecological island with little significant biological interaction with natural habitats elsewhere in the Coachella Valley. No impacts to sensitive or special status species are expected as a result of project implementation.

- b) **No Impact.** Per the project-specific biological report, the property does not contain nor is it adjacent to any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS. The northeastern two-thirds of the site has been graded with soil stabilization for an informal parking area. As a result, the project site does not provide conditions that support natural vegetation communities or habitats including the presence of plant or animal species given special status by government agencies. The project shall adhere to all policies and protocols determined by the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), in which the project site lies. The CVMSHCP outlines policies for conservation habitats and natural communities and is implemented by the City of La Quinta. Moreover, there are no known significant biological resources on the project site and the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse impact on candidate, sensitive or special status species. No impacts are expected.

- c) **No Impact.** The project site does not contain federally protected wetlands, marshes or other natural drainage features. No blue-line stream corridors (streams or dry washes) are shown on U.S. Geological Survey maps for the project site and there are no botanical indicators of such corridors. As a result, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the direct removal, filling or other hydrological interruption to any of these resources. No impacts are expected.
- d) **No Impact.** Per the project-specific biological report, no migratory wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery sites are found on the project or adjacent properties. During the biological field survey, smoothing of surfaces to yield tracks was performed on each site visit to determine if important wildlife corridors existed on site. Tracks of roadrunners and coyotes were recorded, however; no discernable and routinely used corridors were found and none are expected. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.
- e) **No Impact.** The project site is vacant undeveloped land that has been partially graded and does not contain any protected biological resources. Project implementation would not result in demolition or tree removal. The project is consistent with the Goals and Policies set forth in the City of La Quinta Biological Resources chapter (Chapter III) of the General Plan. The project will comply with CVMSHCP through the payment of mitigation fees. There are no other unique local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources that would cause a conflict nor does the site support high value biological resources that could be affected. No impacts are expected.
- f) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** The project lies within the boundary of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) which outlines policies for conservation habitats and natural communities and is implemented by the City of La Quinta. The project site is not located within a Conservation Area under the CVMSHCP. However, the site's western boundary abuts the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area. The project, therefore, is subject to the CVMSHCP requirements regarding lands adjoining Conservation Areas. The proposed project will comply with all required plan provisions and pay the required new development mitigation fee in conformance with the CVMSHCP and City Ordinance. Additionally, the proposed project will not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Less than significant impacts are expected following the recommended mitigation measure listed below.

**Mitigation:**

**BIO-1:** The project developer shall adhere to the CVMSHCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines for projects adjacent to Conservation Areas. The following Land Use Adjacency Guidelines shall be considered by the Permittees in their review of individual public and private Development projects adjacent to or within the Conservation Areas to minimize edge effects and shall be implemented where applicable.

**4.5.1 Drainage**

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

**4.5.2 Toxics**

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

**4.5.3 Lighting**

For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be



incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.

#### **4.5.4 Noise**

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

#### **4.5.5 Invasives**

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

**BIO-2:** The Plan prohibits the planting of oleanders on sites adjacent to Conservation Areas. Existing oleanders shall be removed.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Mitigative Archaeological Excavation and Data Recovery Report, CRM Tech.

**Setting:**

The City of La Quinta has a rich history which includes Ancient Lake Cahuilla. Ancient Lake Cahuilla is a large intermittent freshwater lake created by the Colorado River. Its shorelines continually changed as the lake was filled and emptied by the river, and when it was full it attracted human settlement with its plentiful resources. Settlement along the lakeshore in the Coachella Valley was particularly intensive, with evidence of large-scale, multi-seasonal occupation.

The first known human inhabitants of the Coachella Valley included the Cahuilla Indians, whose occupancy spread from the Banning Pass to the Salton Sea. Anthropologists divided the Cahuilla into three groups based on their geographic setting: (1) the Pass Cahuilla of the San Geronio Pass-Palm Springs area; (2) the Mountain Cahuilla of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains; and (3) the Cahuilla Valley, and the Desert Cahuilla of the eastern Coachella Valley. The Cahuilla Indians developed a seasonal mobility system, which utilized the lake when it was full and benefited from the available terrestrial resources once the lake desiccated. They also migrated to higher elevations to utilize the resources and cooler temperatures.

The City and its Sphere of Influence have a rich and varied history. Many cultural resources, including prehistoric, historic, and paleontological resources have been catalogued in the area.

The project is located on developed land south of the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church building in the City of La Quinta. A project-specific Mitigative Archaeological Excavation and Data Recovery Report was prepared by CRM Tech (November 2021). The immediate objective of the mitigation program is to recover a representative sample of archaeological data from the portion of Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 that would be impacted by the project, including cremation remains first discovered at Site 33-002198 during an archaeological monitoring program in an adjacent portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church property in 2010. To accomplish this objective, CRM Tech completed a systematic resurvey of the site areas, the excavation of 29 data recovery units, and laboratory analysis of all cultural materials collected from both surface and subsurface contexts.

a,b,c) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** Between May 2020 and November 2021, CRM TECH performed an archaeological mitigation program at Sites 33-002198 (CA-RIV-2198) and 33-008415 (CA-RIV-6134), two prehistoric (i.e., Native American) sites lying partially within the boundaries of the proposed St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Expansion Project in the City of La Quinta. The project area consists of approximately five acres of vacant land located to the south of the existing church building.

The mitigation program is a part of the environmental review process for the proposed project, which entails the construction of two new buildings along with additional parking spaces and driveways. The purpose of the study is to mitigate potential project impacts on Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415, both of which were previously found to qualify as “historical resources,” as defined by CEQA, through data recovery.

Per the project-specific Mitigative Archaeological Excavation and Data Recovery report, Site 33-002198, is the primary focus of the mitigation program. It was originally recorded in 1972 and has been revisited,

surveyed systematically, and treated with test excavations. Meanwhile, the current project area was covered in its entirety by at least two standard Phase I cultural resources surveys in 1991 and 1998. A testing program conducted on 33-002198 in 1991 concluded that it was “unlikely that further research at this site would contribute substantially to our understanding of the lifeways of the prehistoric people of this area”. Subsequently, the 1998 survey found the site not to meet CEQA’s definition of a “historical resource”. Since the 1990s, however, shifting sands have been continuously altering the condition of Site 33-002198, burying some cultural remains while exposing others. During an archaeological monitoring program in an adjacent portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church property in 2010, Native American and archaeological monitors observed a newly exposed concentration of calcined bone fragments at the location of 33-002198, which were then determined by the Riverside County Coroner’s Office to be consistent with cremated prehistoric human remains. Because of the cultural/spiritual significance of the cremation remains to the local Native Americans, the site was recommended for the statutory status of a “historical resource” at that time

The immediate objective of the mitigation program is to recover a representative sample of archaeological data from the portions of Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 that would be impacted by the project, including cremation remains first discovered in 2010 at Site 33-002198 in the adjacent portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church property. To accomplish this objective, CRM TECH completed a systematic resurvey of the site areas, the excavation of 29 data recovery units, and laboratory analysis of all cultural materials collected from both surface and subsurface contexts.

In all, 1,578 artifacts were recovered during this study, 1,502 from Site 33-002198 and 76 from Site 33-008415. The artifact assemblage is consistent with past findings at these sites and include ceramic sherds, groundstone pieces, lithic debitage, fire-affected rocks, a shell bead, and small fragments of animal bone, as well as calcined bone fragments associated with the human cremation feature. Most of the items were recovered from the top 20 centimeters of the soil, and relatively few artifacts were found in the levels below that depth. This suggests that the sites represent mainly surface and near-surface deposits from the Late Prehistoric Period and do not appear to have a deeply buried component.

As a result of the archaeological investigations completed during this study, a representative sample of the cultural deposits from Site 33-002198, in particular the cremated human remains, have been recovered for the mitigation effort. Most of Site 33-008145 was previously treated with a similar data recovery program in 2001, and the relatively small number of artifacts recovered from that site during this study do not substantially alter its archaeological data potential or the previously established status of the site.

After being designated the Most Likely Descendant by the State of California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), Ernest Morreo, an elder from the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, visited the site and blessed the remains in 2010. The tribe decided that since the cremation remains were not being impacted at the time, they should be left in place. The proposed St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Expansion Project, however, will now impact the portion of 33-002198 containing the remains, which was not included in the previous testing program. As a result, the current mitigation program was developed and implemented at the site to reduce the project impacts to a level less than significant.

The second site treated during the mitigation program, 33-008415, was identified and recorded during the 1998 survey of the project area. The site was treated with a combined archaeological testing and mitigation excavation program in 2001. At the completion of that study, it was concluded that the site met CEQA’s definition of a “historical resource” but the potential impact of future development on the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church property to the component of the site known to be significant had been adequately mitigated through data recovery. During the current study, additional artifacts were discovered in an area near 33-008415, effectively expanding the boundary of the site. Therefore, Site 33-008415 was included in the scope of the mitigation program.

A third prehistoric archaeological site that once extended into the current project area, 33-008416 (CA-RIV-6135), was recorded to the east of 33-002198 and 33-008415 during the 1998 survey. That site was excavated in 1998-1999 but was found not to be a true archaeological site because the artifacts recovered during the excavation appeared to have been transported to this area with imported soil. As such, 33-008416 was determined not to qualify as a “historical resource” under CEQA provisions, and the small portion of the site lying within the current project boundaries was subsequently removed during the construction of the existing parking lot at the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church.

The archaeological fieldwork for this mitigation program was completed between June 3 and June 9, 2020 with the assistance of Robin Lawson, Tribal monitor for the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians. Before beginning excavations, the project area was resurveyed at an intensive level by walking a series of transects spaced approximately five to ten meters apart and oriented either in the north-south direction or, on steeper terrain, along the natural contour. The existing site maps generated from the earlier studies were used to help locate archaeological remains recorded in the past, including the cremation feature discovered in 2010.

Based on these considerations, CRM TECH concludes that mitigation of potential project impacts on Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 has been partially accomplished through the research procedures carried out during this study. The mitigation effort will be completed upon the proper repatriation of the cremation remains according to the wishes of the Most Likely Descendent and the elders representing the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians. Despite the extensive archaeological research to date, the project area continues to have a demonstrated sensitivity for buried prehistoric remains, especially since the shifting sands have revealed previously unknown portions of the site in the past. In addition to locating the cremation feature that was discovered during the 2010 cultural monitoring program, the resurvey found groundstone, ceramics, and faunal remains on the surface that had been revealed by blown and shifting sands.

Information recovered from Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 indicates that they were used during the Late Prehistoric Period. It is well known to archaeologists and ethnographers that Native people would spread out across the surrounding countryside from their villages to collect items for food, shelter, clothing, adornment, and social activities. The data from these two sites do not provide any new, important information regarding the people that used the area or their culture. However, the presence of cremation remains that were encountered elevate its interpretation and cultural/spiritual significance, especially to the nearby Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians.

Since both Site 33-002198 and Site 33-008415 were previously determined to meet CEQA’s definition of “historical resources,” the potential impact of the proposed St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Expansion Project on these sites would constitute “a significant effect on the environment,” and the current study was designed and implemented to mitigate the impact through archaeological data recovery in compliance with that provision.

As a result of the archaeological field procedures and laboratory analysis completed during this study, a representative sample of the cultural deposits from Site 33-002198, in particular the cremated human remains, have been recovered for the mitigation effort. Most of Site 33-008415 was previously treated with a similar data recovery program in 2001, and the relatively small number of artifacts recovered from that site during this study do not substantially alter its archaeological data potential or the previously established status of the site.

Based on these considerations, CRM TECH concludes that mitigation of potential project impacts on Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 has been partially accomplished through this study. The mitigation effort will be completed upon the proper repatriation of the cremation remains according to the wishes of the Most Likely Descendent and the elders representing the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians.

Despite the extensive archaeological research to date, however, the cultural materials recovered from the site, the presence of other prehistoric sites in the area, and the tendency of shifting sands to reveal previously

unknown archaeological deposits suggest the possibility that more prehistoric cultural remains may be present in subsurface deposits in the vicinity, possibly within project boundaries. Therefore, CRM TECH recommends that that all grubbing, grading, trenching, excavations, and/or other earth-moving operations associated with the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Expansion Project be monitored by a qualified archaeologist and a Native American monitor of Cahuilla heritage. Therefore, less than significant impacts are expected following the recommended mitigation measure as described subsequently.

**Mitigation:**

**CUL-1:** The presence of a qualified archaeologist shall be required during all project related ground disturbing activities, including clearing and grubbing. In the event that potentially significant archaeological materials are discovered, all work must be halted in the vicinity of the archaeological discovery until the archaeologist can assess the significance of the find, and its potential eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHC).

**CUL-2:** The presence of an approved Native American Monitor of Cahuilla heritage is required during any ground disturbing activities. Should buried cultural deposits be encountered, the monitor may request that destructive construction halt in the vicinity of the deposits, and the monitor shall notify a qualified archaeologist (Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines), within 24 hours, to investigate. Additional consultation with the tribes may be required.

6. ENERGY -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update; La Quinta Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, 2012; Saint Francis of Assisi Greenhouse Gas Analysis, Urban Crossroads, 2020.

Setting:

Energy sources are made available to the Coachella Valley by private and public agencies. Major energy providers include Southern California Edison (SCE), Imperial Irrigation District (IID), and the Southern California Gas Company (The Gas Company or SoCalGas). Electricity and natural gas are the primary sources of energy in the City of La Quinta and are provided by IID and The Gas Company, respectively. The project property lies within IID's and The Gas Company's service areas. IID delivers electricity throughout the City at 92 or 161 kilovolts and decreased 12 kilovolts for distribution to its customers. Natural gas is the primary source of energy used in the City for space and water heating, as well as cooking. The Gas Company has major supply lines in Washington Street and Highway 111.

There are more than 27 million registered vehicles in California, and those vehicles consumed an estimated 18.5 billion gallons of petroleum and diesel in 2014, according to the California Energy Commission (CEC). Gasoline and other vehicle fuels are commercially provided commodities and would be available to the project via commercial outlets. According to the CEC, transportation accounts for nearly 37 percent of California's total energy consumption. Petroleum-based fuels account for approximately 92 percent of California's transportation energy sources.

Technological advances, market trends, consumer behavior, and government policies could result in significant changes to fuel consumption by type and total. Various policies, rules, and regulations have been enacted to improve vehicle fuel efficiency, promote the development and use of alternative fuels, reduce transportation-source air pollutants and GHG emissions, and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), at the federal and State levels. Technological advances have made use of other energy resources or alternative transportation modes increasingly feasible, as market forces have driven the price of petroleum products steadily upward.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project proposes the development of a parish hall, administration offices, and associated parking spaces on approximately 4.43 acres in the south/southwest portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Church property. Currently, the project area operates as parking for the Church. The existing parking lot includes light fixtures to illuminate the parking spaces in the evening. Associated improvements include pedestrian walkways and sidewalks, and paved driveways.

Energy sources are made available to the City of La Quinta by private and public agencies. Major energy providers include Imperial Irrigation District (IID) and the Southern California Gas Company (The Gas Company or SoCalGas). Electricity and natural gas are the primary sources of energy in the City of La Quinta.

Title 24 of the California Administrative Code sets efficiency standards for new construction, regulating energy consumed for heating cooling, ventilations, water heating, and lighting. These building efficiency standards are enforced through the City's building permit process. The site currently operates as Church parking.

The project property is currently served with electricity, which powers the existing light fixtures in the parking lot. The project site does not consume natural gas resources, due to its current operation as a parking lot. However, the existing Church sanctuary north of the project site is served with electricity and natural gas. The project is proposed to connect to the Church's existing energy sources.

The project is expected to consume energy in the form of electricity, natural gas and petroleum during project construction and operation. Analysis of the project-related energy consumption was provided the project-specific Air Quality Analysis Report and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Analysis Report completed by Urban Crossroads in June 2020. These reports address both project-related impacts to air quality and GHGs, as well as project-related energy consumption. The consumption of energy may lead to an increased amount of GHGs emitted, and the decreased quality of air in an area; therefore, energy was evaluated in the reports and used in the analysis of this section. CalEEMod v2016.3.2 was utilized in the reports to calculate construction-source and operational-source criteria pollutant and GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources and quantify applicable air quality and GHG reductions achieved from mitigation measures. As determined in the project description, the proposed project will be developed in one phase. The GHG Analysis Report analyzed the project to be developed in one phase, which generates a conservative figure because it assumes that all of the construction activities will occur at one time instead of over a longer period of time. Project-related energy consumption, via electricity, natural gas, and petroleum, is discussed further below.

### **Electricity**

As previously stated, electricity is provided to the City of La Quinta and the project site by IID. IID delivers electricity throughout the City at 92 or 161 kilovolts and decreased 12 kilovolts for distribution to its customers. According to the La Quinta General Plan (LQGP) Environmental Impact Report (EIR), buildout of commercial uses in the General Plan area will result in electrical consumption of approximately 557,504,443.12 kWh/year. The City has committed to reducing its consumption of electricity through a number of programs listed in the General Plan.

### Construction

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

### Operation

The project proposes the operation of a parish hall and administration office building on approximately 4.43 acres south of the existing Church sanctuary building. The project would not result in the use of excessive amounts of fuel or electricity and would not result in the need to develop additional sources of energy. While energy use at the project would not be excessive, the project would incorporate several measures directed at minimizing energy use. These measures include applying energy efficient design building shells and building components, such as windows, roof systems, electrical lighting systems, and heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems to meet the most current Title 24 Standards which expects 30 percent less energy for non-residential buildings and 53 percent less energy for residential use due to energy efficiency measures combined with rooftop solar electricity generation. Therefore, reducing the use of electricity during project operation.

According to the CalEEMod calculations, provided in the Greenhouse Gas Report, the project is expected to generate the demand for approximately 228,520 kWh of annual electricity use for the Place of Worship

(i.e., parish hall and offices), and approximately 15,484 kWh of annual electricity use for the parking lot component, depicted in the table below.

**Table VI-1 Operational Electricity Demand**

	<b>Electricity Use</b>
<b>Land Use</b>	kWh/yr
Place of Worship	213,036
Parking Lot	15,484
<b>Total</b>	<b>228,520</b>

As previously stated, the LQGP EIR predicts that buildout of residential and commercial uses in the General Plan area, including the proposed project site, will result in electrical consumption of 1,088,371,637.12 kWh per year, where residential uses would consume 530,867,194 kWh/yr and commercial uses would consume 557,504,443.12 kWh/yr. The proposed project is anticipated to consume approximately 228,520 kWh/yr, which is approximately 0.21 percent of the City's residential and commercial electrical consumption at total buildout.

The IID planning area used approximately 1,248.4 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity in the commercial sector and 1,693.5 GWh of electricity in the residential sector, for a total of 2,941.9 GWh in 2019. IID estimates that electricity consumption within IID's planning area will be approximately 4,641,267 MWh annually by 2031. Based on the project's estimated new annual electrical consumption of 228,520 kWh (which is equivalent to 228.5 MWh), the project would account for approximately 0.005 percent of IID's demand in 2031. The project would result in the long-term consumption of electricity, however, the increase in demand for the resource would not be substantial.

### **Natural Gas**

The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas or the Gas Company) provides natural gas to the City of La Quinta. Natural gas is the primary source of energy used in the City for space and water heating, as well as cooking. The Gas Company has major supply lines in Washington Street and Highway 111. According to the LQGP EIR, at City build-out, residential units will use approximately 919,426,079 cubic feet of natural gas per year (cf/yr) and commercial uses will consume approximately 512,618,978.28 cf/year. SoCalGas has developed a wide range of energy management, conservation and equipment retrofit programs for its consumer base. Assistance in facilities planning and analysis is also provided by SoCalGas to maximize energy efficiency and cost-effective equipment purchases and operations.

### Construction

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

### Operation

The consumption of natural gas typically is consumed during building heating, water heating and cooking, which will occur during project operation. The project's expected natural gas consumption was calculated in Urban Crossroad's GHG Report using the CalEEMod default values. Based on the CalEEMod calculations, the project is estimated to consume approximately 606,336 thousand British thermal units (kBtu) of natural gas annually during operation of the place of worship. The parking lot use would not consume natural gas. This is displayed in Table VI-2, Operational Natural Gas Demand, below.



**Table VI-2 Operational Natural Gas Demand**

	<b>Natural Gas Use</b>
<b>Land Use</b>	kBTU/yr
Place of Worship	606,336
Parking Lot	0
<b>Total</b>	606,336

As previously stated, at General Plan build-out, residential units will use approximately 919,426,079 cubic feet of natural gas per year (cf/yr). For commercial uses, consumption will be approximately 512,618,978.28 cf/yr. At buildout, the City is expected to consume approximately 1,432,045,057.28 cf/yr in the residential and commercial sectors. This number is equivalent to 1,485,030,724.4 kBTU. According to Urban Crossroad’s GHG Analysis, the project is anticipated to consume approximately 606,336 kBTU/yr, which is approximately 0.42 percent of the City’s natural gas consumption at buildout of the City.

Based on the 2018 California Gas Report, the California Energy and Electric Utilities estimates natural gas consumption within SoCalGas’s planning area will be approximately 2,310 million cf per day in 2030. The project would consume approximately 0.00007 percent of the 2031 forecasted consumption in SoCalGas’s planning area.

As such, the project would result in a long-term increase in demand for natural gas. However, the project would be designed to comply with Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). Natural gas consumption would be appropriate and not place a significant burden on SoCal Gas services.

**Petroleum**

Petroleum is the largest U.S. energy source according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). Petroleum products are used to fuel vehicles and produce electricity. U.S. Petroleum consumption in 2017 was primarily used by the transportation sector (71 percent). The industrial sector accounted for 24 percent petroleum consumption, the residential sector consumed 3 percent, commercial consumed 2 percent, and finally, electric power consumed 1 percent. California is the largest consumer of both jet fuel and motor gasoline amount the 50 states and accounted for 17 percent of the nation’s jet fuel consumption and 11 percent of motor gasoline consumption in 2019.

According to CEC, transportation accounts for nearly 37 percent of California’s total energy consumption. Petroleum-based fuels account for approximately 92 percent of California’s transportation energy sources. Technological advances, market trends, consumer behavior, and government policies could result in significant changes to fuel consumption by type and in total. Various policies, rules and regulations have been enacted to improve vehicle fuel efficiency, promote the development and use of alternative fuels, reduce transportation-source air pollutants and GHG emissions, and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), at the federal and State levels. Technological advances have made use of other energy resources or alternative transportation modes increasingly feasible, as market forces have driven the price of petroleum products steadily upward.

Construction

Petroleum would be consumed throughout construction of the project. Fuel consumed by construction equipment would be the primarily energy resource expended over the course of construction, while VMT associated with the transportation of construction materials and construction worker commutes would also result in petroleum consumption. Heavy-duty equipment used for project construction would rely on diesel fuel, as would haul trucks involved in off-hauling materials from excavation. Construction workers are expected to travel to and from the project site in gasoline-powered passenger vehicles. There are no unusual

project characteristics or construction processes that would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive that is used for comparable activities or use of equipment that would not conform to current emission standards (and related fuel efficiencies).

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

Table VI-3, Construction Worker Gasoline Demand, illustrates the demand of gasoline fuel for construction worker trips to and from the site during each construction phase, and phase of development. Construction worker gasoline demand during each phase of development equals a total of 3,323.6 gallons of gasoline fuel.

**Table VI-3 Construction Worker Gasoline Demand**

Phase	Days	Trips	Miles	VMT	KgCO2e	Kg/CO2/Gallon	Gallons
Site Preparation	3	8	11	264	80.5	8.89*	9.1
Grading	20	10	11	2,200	670.4	8.89	75.4
Building Const.	220	38	11	91,960	28,023.7	8.89	3,152.3
Paving	10	15	11	1,650	502.8	8.89	56.6
Arch. Coating	10	8	11	880	268.2	8.89	30.2
<b>Total</b>							<b>3,323.6</b>

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

Table VI-4, Construction Vendor Diesel Demand (below), illustrates the demand of diesel fuel for construction vendor trips to and from the site. These trips are associated with the delivery of construction materials during the construction phase. Construction vendor demand equals a total of 3,346.9 gallons of diesel fuel.

**Table VI-4 Construction Vendor Diesel Demand**

Phase	Days	Trips	Miles	VMT	KgCO2e	Kg/CO2/Gallon	Gallons
Site Preparation	3	0	0	0	0	10.18*	0
Grading	20	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
Building Const.	220	38	5.40	4,149,144	34,071.9	10.18	3,346.9
Paving	10	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
Arch. Coating	10	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
<b>Total</b>							<b>3,346.9</b>

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

Table VI-5, Construction Equipment Diesel Demand, displays the demand of diesel fuel for construction vehicles on-site during the various construction phases. Construction equipment diesel demands equals a total of 29,481.9 gallons of diesel fuel.

**Table VI-5, Construction Equipment Diesel Demand**

Phase	Days	Equipment Units	KgCO2e	Kg/CO2/Gallon	Gallons
Site Preparation	3	4	3,668.8	10.18	360.4

<b>Grading</b>	20	6	23,766.3	10.18	2,334.6
<b>Building Const.</b>	220	9	263,597.8	10.18	25,893.7
<b>Paving</b>	10	6	7,813.8	10.18	767.6
<b>Arch. Coating</b>	10	1	1,278.8	10.18	125.6
<b>Total</b>					<b>29,481.9</b>

Table VI-6, Construction Hauling Diesel Demand, displays the demand of diesel fuel for the hauling of materials based on the CalEEMod calculations provided in the GHG Analysis. Hauling is to occur during project grading. Construction hauling diesel demands equals a total of 9,938.8 gallons of diesel fuel.

**Table VI-6 Construction Hauling Diesel Demand**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Days</b>	<b>Trips</b>	<b>Miles</b>	<b>VMT</b>	<b>KgCO2e</b>	<b>Kg/CO2/Gallon</b>	<b>Gallons</b>
<b>Site Preparation</b>	3	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
<b>Grading</b>	20	2,816	20	1,126,400	101,177.2	10.18	9,938.8
<b>Building Const.</b>	220	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
<b>Paving</b>	10	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
<b>Arch. Coating</b>	10	0	0	0	0	10.18	0
<b>Total</b>							<b>9,938.8</b>

Overall, the project is estimated to consume approximately 3,323.6 gallons of gasoline and 42,767.6 gallons of diesel fuel during the project’s construction phases. In total, the project will consume approximately 46,091.2 gallons of petroleum. Petroleum use is necessary to operate construction equipment. The US EPA applied a Tier 3 program in order to reduce the impacts of motor vehicles on air quality and public health. The vehicle emissions standards will reduce both tailpipe and evaporative emissions from passenger cars, light-duty trucks, medium duty passenger vehicles, and some heavy-duty vehicles. The construction equipment will utilize Tier 3 engines or higher, therefore would be newer off-road equipment units.

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

Operation

As previously mentioned, the project proposes a parish hall and administration office building for use of the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church facility. With the addition of new enclosed meeting spaces and offices, existing staff and activities will transfer from outside communal areas to the new and improved facilities. Paved parking surfaces will replace the existing unpaved parking lot. By providing paved parking and updated administrative and meeting spaces, the existing congregation will be better served. Operations will not change, and operating hours are anticipated to remain the same. Classrooms and administrative functions will be moved from outdated facilities to new improved spaces. Seating capacity and parking capacity of the project will remain unchanged. Additionally, it can be concluded that traffic conditions associated with the project will not change since growth of church attendee numbers is not anticipated. Due to the fact that traffic is not anticipated to increase as a result of the project, the petroleum consumed by vehicle trips would be negligible. For this reason, the project would not result in an increase in operational petroleum.

Over the lifetime of the project, the fuel efficiency of vehicles in use is expected to increase, as older vehicles are replaced with newer more efficient models. Therefore, it is expected that the amount of petroleum consumed due to the vehicle trips to and from the project site during operation would decrease

over time. Additional advancement of technology includes the use of plug-in hybrid and zero emission vehicles in California, which will also decrease the amount of future petroleum consumed in the state. With the foregoing, operation of the project is expected to use decreasing amounts of petroleum over time, due to advances in fuel economy. Additionally, the church facility is located in close proximity to existing residential homes, medical facilities, pharmacy, shopping center, and restaurants along Washington Street and Highway 111.

Finally, as stated in the project-specific GHG Report, the regional VMTs and associated vehicular-source emissions are reduced by the following project design features/attributes: pedestrian connections shall be provided to surrounding areas consistent with the City's General Plan. Providing a pedestrian access network to link areas of the project site encourages people to walk instead of drive. The project would provide a pedestrian access network that internally links all uses and connects to all existing or planned external streets and pedestrian facilities contiguous with the project site. The project would minimize barriers to pedestrian access and interconnectivity. Given these considerations, petroleum consumption associated with the project operation would not be considered excessive.

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

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The approximately 4.43-acre project proposes the development of a parish hall, administration offices, and paved parking spaces. As stated in the previous discussion, the project would provide indoor meeting and office spaces for the congregation. Currently, these meetings are held in outdoor spaces on the Church property. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to result in more members of the church and project development and operation are not anticipated to use an unnecessary amount of energy resources. To ensure the conservation of energy, the state of California and the City of La Quinta implements various regulations in order to be more energy efficient and reduce the amount of GHG emissions. Some of the State-wide and local regulations are listed below.

### **State Regulations**

#### *Assembly Bill 32*

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32) was signed in 2006 to establish and reduce the amounts of greenhouse gases being emitted on a state-wide level. Specifically, AB 32 requires a reduction of emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. It plans to do this by establishing an annual reporting program for significant sources. Energy efficiency goals listed in AB 32 includes maximizing energy efficiency building and appliance standards, and pursuing additional efficiency efforts including new technologies, and new policy and implementation mechanisms. The project will include a variety of building, water, and solid waste efficiencies consistent with the current CALGreen requirements, low-flow fixtures and efficient landscaping per State requirements. The project will also be required to recycle a minimum of 50 percent from construction activities and retail operations per State and City requirements. Therefore, the project is consistent with AB 32.

#### *Executive Order S-3-05*

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

#### *Senate Bill 32*

Senate Bill 32 (SB 32) requires the state to reduce statewide GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, a reduction target that was first introduced in EO B-30-15. The new legislation builds upon

the AB 32 goal of 1990 levels by 2020 and provides an intermediate goal to achieving S-3-05. The project proposes to reduce GHG emissions to the maximum extent feasible, by utilizing energy efficient practices stated in this discussion of energy resources.

*Title 20: Appliance Efficiency Standards*

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

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

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

## **City Regulations**

*La Quinta GHG Reduction Plan*

State-wide regulations, including previously mentioned AB 32 and Executive Order S-3-05, act as policy guides for the City of La Quinta to reduce the City's energy demand. The La Quinta GHG Reduction Plan, published in 2012, was established in compliance with AB 32 and EO S-3-05, in order to reduce the amount of GHG emissions produced in the City. Using AB 32 and EO S-3-05 as a guide, the GHG Reduction Plan established a baseline year of 2005 to lower City GHG emissions to, by creating policies and programs in order for the City to achieve the reduction expectations. According to the GHG Reduction Plan, new development is required to adhere to the latest building code standards, which assure energy efficiency and incorporate passive and active design features intended to benefit the overall operating efficiency of new buildings.

Transportation is the largest emitter of GHGs; therefore, the City recognizes that fuel efficiency standards, land use efficiencies, and reducing overall VMTs will result in the reduction of GHGs. The City established specific goals, policies, and programs to reduce emissions from the transportation sector at a local level. The policies and programs are intended to reduce dependence on personal motor vehicles and encourage alternative modes of transportation, such as public transit, cycling and walking. For example, implementation measure New Development (ND) 6, regarding transportation, requires that all new development in the City accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists by (1) including facilities for safe and convenient bicycle parking from non-resident and multi-family development, and (2) considering access routes for pedestrians and bicycles. The project is anticipated to conform to this implementation measure in the GHG Reduction Plan.

*La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update*

The City of La Quinta is committed to reducing energy demand and consumption within their City. According to the Livable Community Element in the La Quinta 2035 GPU, the conservation of energy resources is vital in the lifestyle of their residents. Since the production of electricity and natural gases requires the burning of fossil fuels, the increased demand for electricity in the City also increases air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions created in the City. Therefore, reducing energy consumption will contribute to reducing the amount of air pollutants and greenhouse gases generated by the production of electricity and natural gas.

Working in congruence with the GHG Reduction Plan, the La Quinta 2035 GPU also strives to reduce energy consumption in the City by requiring energy efficient and building design measures. The 2035 GPU outlines various goals, policies and programs for energy efficient buildings within their City. Energy efficiency is emphasized in the Circulation, Sustainable Community, Air Quality and Energy Elements in the GPU. The overall goal is to reduce energy consumption in the City to improve air quality, reduce GHG emissions, to increase the quality of life for the City's residents.

#### *La Quinta Municipal Code*

Similar to the GHG Reduction Plan and the 2035 GPU, the City's Municipal Code also includes provisions that encourage the use of alternative transportation means that reduce the use of non-renewable energy and the use of energy efficient appliances and building design standards. The following list includes some of these provisions:

- 8.14.010, Adoption of the California Energy Code of the La Quinta Municipal Code requires that new development implement energy efficiency building practices.
- 9.180, Transportation Demand Management, which is intended to protect the public health, safety and welfare by reducing air pollution, traffic congestion and energy consumption attributable to vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled.

The project property proposes development of a parish hall, administration offices, and parking lot associated with the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. The project occupies approximately 4.43 acres of the church property. As previously stated, the project will include a variety of building, water, and solid waste efficiencies consistent with the current CALGreen requirements, low-flow fixtures and efficient landscaping per State requirements. The project will also be required to recycle a minimum of 50 percent from construction activities per State and City requirements. The project will comply with state-implemented building standards such as those outlined in Title 20 and Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. As stated in the previous discussion, project-related petroleum consumption and VMTs during operation of the project is not anticipated to increase since the project would not result in more members of the church. Construction-related electricity, natural gas, and petroleum use, and operational electricity and natural gas consumption are not anticipated to be substantial. Construction activities would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive that is used for comparable activities. However, construction equipment will comply with the Tier 3 program engines or higher, therefore would be newer off-road equipment units.

The Church facility is located in close proximity to residential and commercial land uses along Washington Street and Highway 111. The project will provide a pedestrian access network that internally links all uses and connects to all existing or planned external streets and pedestrian facilities contiguous with the project site. The implementation of these project features will assist in reducing potential project-related VMTs.

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

**Mitigation:** None



7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating direct or indirect substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** California Department of Conservation; La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update; Sladden Engineering Geotechnical Investigation February 2019.

Setting:

*Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act*

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was enacted in 1972 to prohibit the location of developments and structures for human occupancy across the trace of active faults. To assist with this, the State Geologist delineates appropriately wide earthquake fault zones (Alquist-Priolo Zones) to encompass potentially and recently active traces, which are submitted to city and county agencies to be incorporated into their land use planning and construction policies. A trace is a line on the earth's surface defining a fault, and an active fault is defined as one that has ruptured in the last 11,000 years. The minimum distance a structure for human occupancy can be placed from an active fault is generally fifty feet.

*Seismic Hazard Mapping Act*

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (SHMA) of 1990 directs the Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey to identify and map areas prone to earthquake hazards of liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides and amplified ground shaking. The purpose of the SHMA is to reduce the threat to public safety and to minimize the loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating these seismic hazards.



The SHMA requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones (Zones of Required Investigation) and to issue appropriate maps (Seismic Hazard Zone maps). These maps are distributed to all affected cities, counties, and state agencies for their use in planning and controlling construction and development. Single family frame dwellings up to two stories not part of a development of four or more units are exempt from the state requirements. However, local agencies can be more restrictive than state law requires.

*California Code of Regulations, Title 24 (California Building Standard Code)*

The California Building Standards Commission operates within the Department of General Services and is charged with the responsibility to administer the process of approving and adopting building standards for publication in the California Building Standards Code (Cal. Code Regs., Title 24). These regulations include provisions for site work, demolition, and construction, which include excavation and grading, as well as provisions for foundations, retaining walls, and expansive and compressible soils. The California Building Code also provides guidelines for building design to protect occupants from seismic hazards.

The City of La Quinta Building Division currently uses the 2019 California Building Code (CBC) in the plan check process and in field inspections. The City's Building Division will use the latest CBC in effect at the time of application for building permits within the Travertine Specific Plan project site as applications within planning areas are submitted.

*South Coast Air Quality Management District*

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is the regulatory agency responsible for improving air quality for Orange County and portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties, including the Coachella Valley. SCAQMD is responsible for controlling emissions primarily from stationary sources of air pollution, including grading and construction sites. The main source of pollution from grading and construction activities is fugitive dust, which is particulate matter that is suspended in the air by direct or indirect human activities. Two South Coast AQMD rules were adopted with the purpose of reducing the amount of fugitive dust entrained as a result of human activities. Rule 403 applies to any activity capable of generating fugitive dust. Rule 403.1 is supplemental to Rule 403 and applies only to fugitive dust sources in Coachella Valley.

Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust) requires the implementation of best available dust control measures (BACM) during active operations capable of generating fugitive dust. This rule also requires activities defined as "large operations" to notify the South Coast AQMD by submitting specific forms. A large operation is defined as any active operation on property containing 50 or more acres of disturbed surface area; or any earth moving operation with a daily earth-moving or throughput volume of 5,000 cubic yards, three times during the most recent 365 day period.

Rule 403.1 (Supplemental Fugitive Dust Control Requirements for Coachella Valley Sources) is a supplemental rule to Rule 403 and is applicable to man-made sources of fugitive dust in Coachella Valley. The purpose of this rule is to reduce fugitive dust and resulting PM10 emissions from man-made sources in the Coachella Valley. Rule 403.1 requires a Fugitive Dust Control Plan approved by South Coast AQMD or an authorized local government agency prior to initiating any construction/ earth-moving activity. These requirements are only applicable to construction projects with 5,000 or more square feet of surface area disturbance.

A Geotechnical Report for the project site was conducted by LandMark Consultants, Inc. in December 2019 to update a 2006 Geotechnical Investigation produced by Sladden Engineering. The geotechnical analyses for the project site in order to evaluate the engineering properties of the subsurface materials and provide engineering recommendations and design criteria for the site preparation, foundation design, and the design of various site improvements.

*Paleontological Resources*

Paleontological resources are the fossilized remains of ancient plants and animals. They occur in older soils which have been deposited in the Valley over millions of years. Exhibit III-5, Paleontological Sensitivity Map in the 2035 La Quinta General Plan (LQGP), designates the project site in Lake Cahuilla Beds which has "undetermined" and "low" paleontological sensitivity.

- a) i. **Less than Significant Impact.** The City of La Quinta, similar to most of Southern California, is susceptible to earthquakes due to the various active faults that traverse the area. The La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update (GPU) notes four faults with the potential to have a severe impact in the City. These faults include the San Andreas, San Jacinto, Burnt Mountain and Elsinore Faults. Hazards such as landslide, structural damage or destruction, liquefaction, and settlement are a potential result of rupture and strong seismic ground shaking in the City of La Quinta.

To reduce losses from surface fault rupture on a statewide basis, the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act was passed in 1972. This act was formed after the destructive San Fernando earthquake occurred a year prior. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act is intended to ensure public safety by prohibiting the siting of most structures for human occupancy across traces of active faults that constitute a potential hazard to structures from surface fault or fault creep (California Department of Conservation). After consulting the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist, it was determined that the closest Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone to the project site is the San Andreas Fault, approximately 6.1 miles northeast of the subject property. Conclusively, the project site is not located on an active fault or within the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.

With the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Map and the La Quinta 2035 GPU, it can be concluded that although seismically induced ground shaking is expected in the City, rupture from an earthquake fault is not anticipated on the project site. There are no known active faults near or at the project site, and the project is not located in an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Therefore, impacts are expected to be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None

- ii. **Less than Significant Impact.** Seismically induced ground shaking is the most potentially significant geotechnical hazard, according to the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update (2035 GPU). Regional faults, including the San Andreas and San Jacinto fault zones, have the potential to generate moderate to severe ground shaking in the planning area. Factors that determine the effect of ground motion and the degree of structural damage that may occur include: intensity of the earthquake, distance between epicenter and site, soil and bedrock composition, depth to groundwater, presence of ridge tops, and building design and other criteria (La Quinta 2035 GPU).

As stated in the previous discussion, the project site is located approximately 6.1 miles southwest of the closest active fault zone, the San Andreas Fault. A Geotechnical Report for the project site was conducted by LandMark Consultants, Inc. in December 2019 to update a 2006 Geotechnical Investigation produced by Sladden Engineering. The 2019 Geotechnical Report states that the project site is considered likely to be subjected to moderate to strong ground motion from earthquakes in the region. Ground motions are dependent primarily on the earthquake magnitude and distance to the seismogenic (rupture) zone. Acceleration magnitudes are also dependent upon attenuation by rock and soil deposits, direction of rupture and type of fault, therefore, ground motions may vary considerably in the same general area.

With the foregoing, the proposed development will be constructed in a manner that reduces the risk of seismic hazards (Title 24, California Code of Regulations). According to the Geotechnical Report by LandMark and the 2019 California Building Code (CBC), Site Class D may be used to estimate design seismic loading for the structures onsite. The Site Class is based on the soil properties in accordance with Chapter 20 of ASCE 7. Site Class D is classified as “stiff soil.”

The project shall comply with the most current seismic design coefficients and ground motion parameters and all applicable provisions of the CBC, specifically Chapter 16 of the CBC, *Structural Design*, Section 1613, *Earthquake Loads*, as well as City Municipal Code Section 8.02.010. Section 8.02.010 adopts the 2019 CBC for regulating the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair,

equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal and demolition of every building or structure or any appurtenances connected or attached to such buildings or structures.

Site work will be conducted in accordance with the geotechnical and soils analyses required with the submittal of grading and building plans. Foundation and structural design of the site would reduce exposure of people or structures to adverse effects to the greatest extent possible. Sladden Engineering recommended, in their 2006 Geotechnical Investigation of the St. Francis of Assisi Church site, that existing vegetation, slabs, foundations, abandoned underground utilities or irrigation lines should be removed, and grading of the site would include the overexcavation and compaction of soil. Stripping areas of vegetation, associated root systems, and debris, overexcavating and compacting throughout building and foundation areas will remove soils and materials that are incompatible for development or materials with insufficient load-bearing capacity to support the onsite structures. With the implementation of appropriate building codes and recommendations provided in the project geotechnical and soil analyses, impacts related to strong seismic shaking at the project site will be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None

- iii. **Less than Significant Impact.** The Soils and Geology Element of the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update indicates that liquefaction occurs when ground shaking of relatively long duration and intensity over 0.2 g occurs in areas of loose, unconsolidated soils with relatively shallow groundwater depths (50 feet or less). The sudden increase in water pressure in pores between soil grains may substantially decrease soil shear strength, and the soil takes on the qualities of a liquid or a semi-viscous substance. This loss of soil strength can result in ground settlement, ground undulation, lateral spreading or displacement, and flow failures. Structures may sink or tilt as bearing capacity decreases, causing substantial damage (La Quinta 2035 GPU).

The Seismic Hazards Map (Exhibit IV-3), in the La Quinta 2035 GPU, indicates that areas of the southeastern portion of the City are highly and moderately susceptible to liquefaction. This is due to the shallow groundwater (between 30 to 50 feet below the ground surface) and the youthful, unconsolidated sediments found in that area. However, Sladden Engineering, in their Geotechnical Investigation of the St. Francis of Assisi Church site conducted in 2006 and updated in 2017, stated that several of the factors required for liquefaction to occur are absent onsite. Sladden stated that groundwater was not encountered within the bore tests, which extended to a depth of approximately 50 feet below the ground surface (bgs). Due to the lack of shallow groundwater onsite, Sladden Engineering concluded that the potential for liquefaction affecting the site is considered negligible.

Although the project property is not expected to be impacted by liquefaction, the project site shall adhere to the most recent standard design requirements stated in the California Building Code (CBC) and the City's building standards to ensure the safety of the project against seismically induced hazards. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- iv. **Less than Significant Impact.** As discussed previously, the City of La Quinta, like most of Southern California, is susceptible to seismic ground shaking due to the multiple faults in the region. As a result of seismic ground shaking, secondary effects such as slope failures, rockfalls and landslides may occur in the City, especially throughout elevated areas. According to the La Quinta General Plan, landslides and rockfall can occur when unstable slope conditions are worsened by strong ground motion caused by seismic events. Typically, landslides have been recorded after periods of heavy rainfall, and rockfalls are associated with slope failure during drier periods. Conditions that lead to landslide vulnerability include high seismic potential, and rockfall and rockslides are common on very steep slopes.

The project site is located south of the existing sanctuary building for the St. Francis of Assisi Church. The Church property lies adjacent to the slope of the Santa Rosa Mountains. Due to the project's proximity to

the Santa Rosa Mountain slopes, the project site is susceptible to rockfalls, soil block slides and soil slumps, as designated by the Seismic Hazards Map (Exhibit IV-3) in the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update.

The project does not propose building structures to be located immediately adjacent to the slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountains. Similar to the existing sanctuary building on the St. Francis of Assisi Church site, the project will develop a paved vehicular driveway between the slopes and the proposed buildings. The building setback from the mountain will continue to protect the structures from landslides or rockfalls. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** According to the La Quinta General Plan, erosion is influenced by factors such as climate, topography, soil and rock types, and vegetation. The Coachella Valley is subject to infrequent but often powerful storms that generate high rates of erosion, especially in areas where the soil is not stabilized by vegetation due to natural causes (i.e. wildfire), or man-made causes (i.e. site clearing and grading). Particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter, classified as PM10, typically includes suspended particles of dust, sand, metallic and mineral substances, road-surfacing materials, pollen, smoke, fumes, and aerosols. Erosion, especially in the form of PM10, is a concern in the Coachella Valley because it leads to sediment transport and re-deposition as well as health issues and property damage. Windborne, waterborne and human erosion are all attributes of PM10 emissions in the region, and if not mitigated, it can potentially result in serious health problems.

As stated previously, the project property is located on approximately 4.43 acres of land at the southwest portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Church property. The project proposes a parish hall, administration offices and parking spaces on the property. Development of the project will also include paved driveways and associated improvements, landscaped features, and pedestrian walk-ways. The Wind Erosion Susceptibility Map (Exhibit IV-5) in the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update specifies that the project site is located in an area with a high and very high Wind Erodibility Rating, likely contributed to the combination of the orientation of hill and mountains, the nature of the bedrock, slope and orientation of the valley floor, and the hot, arid climate and sparse vegetation.

The project site has been previously graded and operates as parking (paved and unpaved) for the Church. The construction of this project will involve ground disturbing activities, such as the clearing and grubbing of existing landscaping, and grading of the property. These activities may increase the potential of soil erosion at the time of development. Therefore, in order to mitigate the effect of erosion at the project site, the project shall implement the Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan (PM10 Plan), otherwise identified by the City of La Quinta as the Fugitive Dust Control Plan. The purpose of this plan is to reduce the amount of particulate matter entrained in the ambient air as a result of anthropogenic fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent, reduce or mitigate fugitive dust emissions. The Fugitive Dust Control Plan requires the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) such as the use of perimeter fencing, applying adhesive dust suppressant, or watering the project site. The project property shall implement the BMPs outlined within their project-specific PM10 Plan during construction of the project site. Refer to the Air Quality section of this environmental document for further information on the Fugitive Dust Control Plan.

In addition to the Fugitive Dust Control Plan, projects one acre in size or larger are required to comply with the most current Construction General Permit (CGP) (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ). Compliance with the CGP involves the development and implementation of a project-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which is designed to reduce potential adverse impacts to surface water quality during the period of construction. The required plan will identify the locations and types of construction activities requiring BMPs and other necessary compliance measures to prevent soil erosion and stormwater runoff pollution. The plan will also identify the limits of allowable construction-related disturbance to prevent any exceedances or violations.

Waterborne erosion and the City's Standard Conditions associated with the topic are thoroughly discussed in the Hydrology and Water Quality Section of the document.

The implementation of the Fugitive Dust Control Plan, and the SWPPP (outlined above, and further discussed in the Air Quality and Hydrology Sections of this document) will ensure that impacts from erosion created from the project site will be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** According to the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Web Soil Survey Map, the project's soil types primarily consist of Myoma fine sand (MaD). Myoma fine sand (5 to 15 percent slopes) are somewhat excessively drained with a very low runoff class. This knowledge of the project's soil types is essential for new development regarding potential hazards.

As discussed previously, in section a) iii., liquefaction occurs when ground shaking of relatively long duration and intensity causes loose, unconsolidated soils to act like a liquid and lose strength. For liquefaction to occur in an area, the groundwater would have to be within 50 feet of the surface. Effects of liquefaction include a loss of bearing strength, ground oscillations, and lateral spreading or displacement. The La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update declares that the project site is not located in an area susceptible to liquefaction due to the lack of shallow groundwater. Since the approximate depth to groundwater is greater than 50 feet below the site, the potential for liquefaction and lateral spreading is low. Additionally, geotechnical reports provided for the project area did not encounter groundwater at depths of 50 feet below ground surface (bgs) during boring tests. Due to the lack of shallow groundwater, impacts are anticipated to be less than significant.

As discussed in portion a) iv. of this Geotechnical Section, the project site's western boundary is located east of the Santa Rosa Mountains. Therefore, the City of La Quinta, in Exhibit IV-3 of the 2035 GPU, designates the project site to be located adjacent to an area susceptible rockfalls, soil block slides and soil slumps. As previously stated, the parish hall and administration buildings will be separated from the slopes of the hillsides by paved driveways, similar to the existing sanctuary building north of the proposed project. Therefore, impacts from landslides or rockfall are expected to be less than significant.

Ground subsidence is the gradual settling or sinking of the ground surface with little or no horizontal movement. It is caused by both human activities (i.e. groundwater extraction) and natural activities (i.e. earthquakes) and can cause regional damage. According to the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update, the only recorded subsidence induced fissures in the Coachella Valley occurred in La Quinta in 1948, near the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains, at the south end of the City. The Safety Element in the Riverside County General Plan indicates that the project site is situated in an area susceptible to ground subsidence due to regional withdrawal of groundwater. The potential for area ground subsidence is a regional issue that could possibly impact the City of La Quinta; however, monitoring conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), CVWD and others shows that subsidence rates in the Coachella Valley have been increasing rapidly over the past several decades. CVWD has implemented a variety of measures, such as groundwater recharge, imported water, and water conservation techniques and programs to minimize the extraction of groundwater. Although subsidence has been recorded in La Quinta, the Geotechnical Report indicates that no fissures or other surficial evidence of subsidence were observed at the subject site.

Grading plans and structural engineering plans will be reviewed and approved by the City. The project will be conditioned to comply with the current California Building Code (CBC) standards, City requirements, and recommendations stated within the geotechnical report and investigation to reduce the impacts of potentially unstable soils; therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- d) **No Impact.** Expansive soils, as defined by the Riverside County General Plan, have a significant amount of clay particles which can give up water (shrink) or take on water (swell). The change in volume exerts stress on buildings and other loads placed on these soils, making them potentially hazardous. These soils can also be widely dispersed, occurring in both hillside areas and low-lying alluvial basins.

Sladden Engineering, in the Geotechnical Investigation for the St. Francis of Assisi Church property (2006), indicates that because of the prominence of “very low” expansion category soil near the surface, special expansive soil design criteria should not be a controlling factor in the design of the foundations and concrete slabs on grade. The mixing of surface soil that may occur during the recommended remedial grading may result in changes of the expansion potential. Therefore, final design criteria and slab reinforcement should be established by the Structural Engineer based upon post grading test results. The project shall comply with the recommendations established within the geotechnical reports conducted for the property to ensure the foundational safety of the project site. Therefore, impacts will be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None

- e) **No Impact.** The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) provides the City of La Quinta with sanitary sewer collection and treatment, and according to the 2035 General Plan Update, most of the City is served by sewer. The proposed 4.43-acre project is located on the St. Francis of Assisi Church property, which is currently served by water and sewer and connects to existing infrastructure. The project will not use septic systems. The project proposes to connect with the existing sewer infrastructure to provide sewer to the additional church buildings (i.e., parish hall and administration offices). For further discussion, consult the Utilities Section of this document. Sepic tanks are not proposed, and no impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

- f) **Less than Significant Impact.** According to the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update, paleontological resources are the fossilized remains of ancient plants and animals. They occur in older soils which have been deposited in the Valley over millions of years. Exhibit III-5, Paleontological Sensitivity Map in the 2035 GPU, designates that the project site is located in an area with an “undetermined” amount of paleontological sensitivity. However, Exhibit III-5 also determines that recent dune sand is the primary soil type that is present at the project site. Regional winds deposit the recent dune sands present at the project site. Dune sand varies in depth and could overlay older alluvium at depth. This soil type has a low potential for paleontological resources due to its recent transport into the area.

Per the Riverside County Land Information System, the project site is recognized as having “high” potential for Paleontological Sensitivity. Areas recognized for having “high” potential is based on geologic formations or mappable rock units that are rocks that contain fossilized body elements, and trace fossils such as tracks, nests and eggs. These fossils occur on or below the surface.

The approximately 4.43-acre project area currently operates as a parking lot for the St. Francis of Assisi Church. The site has been graded since at least 2010, while the existing church facility was developed in 1984. The proposed project occurs north of the historic boundary of ancient Lake Cahuilla, which is the only paleontologically sensitive geologic feature in the City. The soils outside the boundary of the ancient lake are too young geographically, and are composed of sands and fine sands, which are not conducive to fossilization. Additionally, the site has been subject to previous grading activities and has operated as a parking facility for the St. Francis of Assisi Church. As a result, no impacts to paleontological resources are expected as a result of the proposed project.

**Mitigation:** None

8. <b>GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS --</b> Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: *Saint Francis of Assisi Greenhouse Gas Analysis, June 30, 2021*; *Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP)*, by SCAQMD, March 2017; *Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan (CVSIP)*, by SCAQMD, August 2003; *Analysis of the Coachella Valley PM10 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan*, by the California Air Resources Board, February 2010; California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2020.4.0. California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2017, Trends of Emissions and Other Indicators, 2019 Edition, California Air Resources Board; Release No. 18-37 & 19-35, California Air Resources Board Press Release, July 2018 and August 2019.

Setting:

*Summary of Greenhouse Gas Fundamentals and Regulatory Framework:*

Greenhouse gases (GHG) are a group of gases that trap solar energy in the Earth’s atmosphere, preventing it from becoming too cold and uninhabitable. Common greenhouse gases in the Earth’s atmosphere include water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), ozone, and chlorofluorocarbons to a lesser extent. Carbon dioxide is the main GHG thought to contribute to climate change. Carbon dioxide reflects solar radiation back to Earth, thereby trapping solar energy and heat within the lower atmosphere. Human activities (such as burning carbon-based fossil fuels) create water vapor and CO<sub>2</sub> as byproducts, thereby impacting the levels of GHG in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) is a metric used to compare emissions of various greenhouse gases. It is the mass of carbon dioxide that would produce the same estimated radiative forcing as a given mass of another greenhouse gas. Carbon dioxide equivalents are computed by multiplying the mass of the gas emitted by its global warming potential. Global Climate Change (GCC) is defined as the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, precipitation, and storms. GCC is currently one of the most controversial environmental issues in the United States, and debate exists within the scientific community about whether or not GCC is occurring naturally or as a result of human activity.

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

On July 11, 2018, CARB announced in a press release (No. 18-37) that greenhouse gas pollution in California fell below 1990 levels for the first time since emissions peaked in 2004, an achievement roughly equal to taking 12 million cars off the road or saving 6 billion gallons of gasoline a year. Moreover, according to the CARB report on California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2017 (published in 2019), which tracks the trends of GHG emissions, California’s GHG emissions have followed a declining trend between 2007 and 2017. In 2017, emissions from GHG emitting activities statewide were 424 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e), 5 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e lower than 2016 levels and 7 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e below the 2020 GHG Limit of 431 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e. The largest reductions are attributed to the electricity sector, which continues to see decreases as a result of the state’s climate policies. The transportation sector remains the largest source of GHG emissions in the state, but saw a 1 percent increase in emissions in 2017, the lowest growth rate over the previous 4 years.

On August 12, 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced in a press release (No. 19-35) that GHG emissions in California continued to fall ahead of schedule in 2017 as the state's economy grew ahead of the national average, according to the California Air Resources Board's latest state inventory of climate-changing emissions. The data also shows that for the first time since California started to track GHG emissions, the state power grid used more energy from zero-GHG sources like solar and wind power than from electrical generation powered by fossil fuels. The press release also included the following highlights:

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

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

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

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** At the project-specific level, the analytical and quantitative findings are based on the *Saint Francis of Assisi Greenhouse Gas Analysis* (GHGA), completed by Urban Crossroads on June 30, 2021. The purpose of the GHGA was to evaluate project-related construction and operational emissions and determine the level of GHG impacts as a result of constructing and operating the proposed project. The GHGA methodology took into account the project's facility dimensions (building areas, parking spaces, landscaping, etc) as inputs to the CalEEMod software for quantifying the GHG emissions and compare them against the applicable thresholds. The currently applicable GHG thresholds for local lead agency consideration are referenced from the SCAQMD Working Group Threshold supporting documentation, which establishes an interim tiered approach. Under this guidance, a screening threshold of 3,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>) per year applies to the project.

The proposed project will incorporate design features and operational programs considered to be energy-saving and sustainable. Because these features/attributes are integral to the project, and/or are regulatory requirements, they are not considered to be mitigation measures.

- Regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and associated vehicular-source emissions are reduced by the following Project design features/attributes:
  - Pedestrian connections shall be provided to surrounding areas consistent with the City's General Plan. Providing a pedestrian access network to link areas of the Project site encourages people to walk instead of drive. The Project would provide a pedestrian access network that internally links all uses and connects to all existing or planned external streets and pedestrian facilities contiguous with the project site. The Project would minimize barriers to pedestrian access and interconnectivity.
- The project will design building shells and building components, such as windows; roof systems; electrical and lighting systems; and heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems to meet 2019 (or the most current version at the time of construction) Title 24 Standards which expects 30% less energy for non-residential buildings and 53% less energy for residential use due to energy efficiency measures combined with rooftop solar electricity generation.
- To reduce water demands and associated energy use, subsequent development proposals within the project site would be required to implement a Water Conservation Strategy and demonstrate a minimum 20% reduction in indoor and outdoor water usage when compared to baseline water



demand (total expected water demand without implementation of the Water Conservation Strategy)<sup>1</sup>.

- The project is required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 445, which prohibits the use of wood burning stoves and fireplaces in new development.
- In order to reduce the amount of waste disposed at landfills, the project would be required to implement a 50% waste diversion as required by AB 939.

Based on the GHGA, the project-related GHG emission levels are displayed below in Table VIII-1.

**Table VIII-1 Total Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Unmitigated Emission Source	Emissions (metric tons per year)
	Total CO2E
Annual Construction Emissions Amortized Over 30	15.50
Area, Energy, Mobile Sources, Waste, and Water Usage	280.31
Total CO2E (All Sources)	295.81
SCAQMD Threshold for Industrial Projects	3,000
<b>Threshold Exceeded?</b>	<b>NO</b>

As shown in VIII-1 resulting from the CalEEMod calculations, the project is expected to generate approximately 295.81 MTCO2e per year from construction, area, energy, mobile sources, waste, and water usage sources. Therefore, the project GHG emissions would not exceed the threshold of significance set at 3,000 MTCO2e per year. Having been evaluated against the regionally accepted thresholds, which are part of the State’s regulations aimed at addressing climate change, the project is not expected to interfere with the plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

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

<sup>1</sup> Reduction of 20% indoor and outdoor water usage is consistent with the current CalGreen Code performance standards for residential and non-residential land uses. Per CalGreen, the reduction shall be based on the maximum allowable water use per plumbing fixture and fittings as required by the California Building Standards Code.

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

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

#### *City of La Quinta Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan*

In 2012, the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan was prepared as part of the City's General Plan Update, drawing input from utility providers and various technical studies to conduct the community wide and government specific greenhouse gas inventory. The inventory established a baseline year of 2005, then projected future year emissions based on 2005 emission levels. The reduction targets identified in the Plan are consistent with AB 32 and a goal to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions to 10 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2035.

The La Quinta GHG Reduction Plan was established in compliance with AB 32 and EO S-3-05, in order to reduce the amount of GHG emissions produced in the City. Using AB 32 and EO S-3-05 as a guide, the GHG Reduction Plan established policies and programs in order for the City to achieve the reduction expectations. According to the GHG Reduction Plan, new development is required to adhere to the latest building code standards, which assure energy efficiency and incorporate passive and active design features intended to benefit the overall operating efficiency of new buildings.

Transportation is the largest emitter of GHGs; therefore, the City recognizes that fuel efficiency standards, land use efficiencies, and reducing overall VMTs will result in the reduction of GHGs. The City established specific goals, policies, and programs to reduce emissions from the transportation sector at a local level. The policies and programs are intended to reduce dependence on personal motor vehicles and encourage alternative modes of transportation, such as public transit, cycling and walking. For example, implementation measure New Development (ND) 6, regarding transportation, requires that all new development in the City accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists by (1) including facilities for safe and convenient bicycle parking from non-resident and multi-family development, and (2) considering access routes for pedestrians and bicycles. The project is anticipated to conform to this implementation measure.

Emissions and emission reductions were calculated for both municipal activities and community wide activities. The proposed project falls into the Community Wide Activities category. The baseline inventory completed for the project includes GHG emissions from the use of energy for both the residential and commercial sectors, fuel combustion from transportation, and the disposal of solid waste associated with residents' and businesses' activities within the City of La Quinta. The communitywide GHG trend under business-as-usual conditions for the 2005 baseline level is 460,946 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e, the 2020 reduction target of 414,852 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e, and the 2035 reduction target of 331,881 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e.

In summary, the project is expected to result in GHG emissions totaling 295.81 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year from construction, area, energy, mobile sources, waste, and water usage sources, which is considerably below the accepted threshold of 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year in compliance with AB 32, EO S-3-05, and the City's GHG Reduction Plan. As a result, the project is not expected to conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS - - Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** Department of Toxic Substances Control, EnviroStor 2021; Enforcement and Compliance History Online, 2021; La Quinta Police Department website; State Water Resources Control Board, GeoTracker, 2021; Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Locally Responsible Areas, CALFIRE, accessed 2021.

**Setting:**

*Hazardous Materials*

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR Title 40, Part 261) defines hazardous materials based on ignitability, reactivity, corrosivity, and/or toxicity properties. The State of California defines hazardous materials as substances that are toxic, ignitable, or flammable, reactive and/or corrosive, which have the capacity of causing harm or a health hazard during normal exposure or an accidental release. As a result, the use and management of hazardous or potentially hazardous substances is regulated under existing federal, state, and local laws.

*Hazardous Waste*

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) simply defines hazardous waste as a waste with properties that make it dangerous or capable of having a harmful effect on human health or the environment. Hazardous waste is generated from sources ranging from industrial manufacturing process wastes to batteries and may come in many forms, including liquids, solids, gases, and sludges. These can include everyday commercial products, such as pesticides, cleaning fluids, and household sprays, as well as byproducts of manufacturing processes. The EPA has classified hazardous waste into four categories:

- Listed wastes – wastes from common manufacturing and industrial processes, waste from specific industries such as petroleum refining or pesticide manufacturing, and discarded commercial products;
- Characteristic wastes – non-listed wastes that exhibit ignitability, corrosively, reactivity, and toxicity;
- Universal wastes – batteries, mercury-containing equipment, and fluorescent lamps and bulbs; and
- Mixed wastes – radioactive and hazardous waste components.

A hazardous material may become hazardous waste upon its accidental release into the environment. All hazardous wastes must be discharged into a Class I landfill. No Class I landfill is currently operated within Riverside County. Hazardous Waste generated within Riverside County and disposed of in Kern County or Santa Barbra County, where active Class I landfills are located. Some waste is also transported out of the State.

Many types of businesses can be producers of hazardous waste. Small businesses such as dry cleaners, auto repair shops, medical facilities or hospitals, photo processing centers, and metal plating shops are usually generators of small quantities of hazardous wastes. Generators of large quantities of hazardous waste include chemical manufacturers, large electroplating facilities, and petroleum refineries. All significant spills, releases or threatened releases of hazardous materials must be immediately reported.

In the City of La Quinta, hazardous materials are limited to small quantity generators (those generating less than 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste per month), ranging from individual households to service stations and medical clinics. Household hazardous waste can be disposed of properly through Household Hazardous Waste disposal events, or at a network of “ABOP” facilities operated by the Riverside County Waste Management Department. An ABOP – or Antifreeze, Batteries, Oil, Paint – facility is located in Palm Springs, at 1100 Vella Road, and accepts these materials, as well as electronic waste. Household Hazardous Waste disposal events are held periodically at varying locations throughout the County, including cities in the Coachella Valley. Adverse environmental impacts can occur when household hazardous materials are disposed of in unlined sanitary landfills, where these materials may leach through the soil and contaminate groundwater.

In addition to businesses, development activities have the potential to encounter previously unknown hazardous materials contamination from historical use of a property. However, such contamination can be mediated by existing federal, State, and local policies and procedures implemented by the designated local enforcement agency.

Hazardous wastes require special handling and disposal methods to reduce their potential to damage public health and the environment. Manufacturer’s specifications dictate the proper use, handling, and disposal methods for the specific substances. All hazardous waste poses a threat to humans and the environment, and therefore is regulated by federal, State, and local programs. In most cases, it is a violation of federal or State law to improperly store, apply, transport, or dispose of hazardous materials and waste.

#### *Local Schools*

The project site is located within the boundary of the Coachella Valley Unified School District. The closest school is the La Quinta High School, located approximately 0.75 miles northeast of the project site at 79255 Blackhawk Way.

#### *Public Airports/Private Airstrips*

The Palm Springs International Airport is located approximately 13.70 miles to the northwest of the project, and the Bermuda Dunes Airport is located approximately 3 miles northeast of the project. Additionally, the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport is located approximately 8.80 miles southeast of the project site.

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

#### Construction

Construction of the proposed project is expected to involve the temporary management and use of oils, fuels and other potentially flammable substances. The nature and quantities of these products would be limited to what is necessary to carry out construction of the project. Some of these materials would be transported to the site periodically by vehicle and would be stored in designated controlled areas on a short-term basis. When handled properly by trained individuals and consistent with the manufacturer's instructions and industry standards, the risk involved with handling these materials is considerably reduced. The contractor will be required to identify a controlled staging area within the project limits for storing materials and equipment. The contractor will also be required to implement best management practices (BMPs) to ensure that impacts are minimized and that any minor spills are immediately and properly remediated.

Furthermore, to prevent a threat to the environment during construction, the management of potentially hazardous materials and other potential pollutant sources will be regulated, in part, through the implementation of measures required in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the project. The SWPPP requires a list of potential pollutant sources and the identification of construction areas where additional control measures are necessary to prevent pollutants from being released on-site or into the surroundings. Best management practices (BMPs) are necessary for proper material delivery and storage; material use; and spill prevention and control. These temporary measures outline the required physical improvements and procedures to prevent impacts of pollutants and hazardous materials to workers and the environment during construction. For example, all construction materials, including paints, solvents, and petroleum products, must be stored in controlled areas and according to the manufacturer's specifications. In addition, perimeter controls (fencing with wind screen), linear sediment barriers (gravel bags, fiber rolls, or silt fencing), and access restrictions (gates) would help prevent temporary impacts. With such standard measures in place, less than significant impacts are anticipated during construction.

#### Operation

The project proposes the development of a parish hall, administration office building and parking spaces on approximately 4.43 acres south/southwest of the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church in the City of La Quinta. The nature of church-related facilities is not expected to involve, as a primary activity, the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials in quantities or a manner that would pose a threat to the project and its surroundings or create a significant hazard through a foreseeable accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. The regular operation of the proposed project does not intend to use copious amounts of hazardous materials. The handling, application, and storage of cleaning agents, building maintenance products, paints, solvents and other related substances is expected to occur within the project in order to carry out the necessary operations in each facility or use. However, these materials would not be present in sufficient quantities to pose a significant hazard to public health and safety, or the environment.

Project construction and operation is expected to result in less than significant impacts.

**Mitigation:** None

- c) **No Impact.** The project site is not located within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed school. The closest school to the project site is La Quinta High School, located approximately 0.75 miles northeast of the project. Therefore, no impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

- d) **No Impact.** As previously discussed, the project proposes to develop a parish hall, administration building and parking spaces on approximately 4.43 acres south of the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. The project site currently operates as paved overflow parking associated with the Church. Pursuant to Government Code 65962.5 and its subsections, record searches on the project property were performed

within multiple database platforms. The resources consulted included GeoTracker, EnviroStor and the EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO).

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

EnviroStor is a database maintained by the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). The EnviroStor database identifies sites with known contamination or sites for which there may be reasons to investigate further. It includes the identification of formerly contaminated properties that have been released for reuse; properties where environmental deed restrictions have been recorded to prevent inappropriate land uses; and risk characterization information that is used to assess potential impacts to public health and the environment at contaminated sites.

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

In October 2021, a search was performed on all three database platforms. The three consulted databases did not list any facilities related to the project site. The three databases, however, recorded sites within one mile of the project property. The results are described below.

The GeoTracker database listed two registered Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Cleanup Site within one mile of the project site. One registered LUST Site is listed as Simon Motors located at 78611 Highway 111, approximately 0.60 miles north of the project site. The second registered LUST Cleanup Site is Arco AM/PM #5419 and Arco #5896, located at 46150 Washington Street, approximately 0.70 miles north of the project property. Each registered site is listed as “Completed, Case Closed” as of 2001 and 2003, respectively. The registered facilities will not affect the project site due to their distances from the project, and their statuses of “Completed-Case Closed.”

The search results in the EnviroStor database did not identify any records on the project site, however, the database listed one School Investigation site within a mile of the project property. The School Investigation site includes the La Quinta High School Expansion, approximately one-mile northeast of the project site. The facility has a cleanup status of “No Further Action” since 2010, according to the EnviroStor database. The EnviroStor database did not identify any Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Cleanup Sites, Land Disposal Sites, Military Sites, DTSC Hazardous Waste Permits, DTSC Cleanup Sites, or Permitted Underground Storage Tanks on or around the project property.

The ECHO database listed eleven facilities within a one-mile radius of the project site. The closest registered facility is Walgreens #7765, located at 47900 Washington Street. This site lies approximately 0.70 miles southeast of the project site and is registered in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) as an active very small quantity generator (VSQG). The site currently does not have any violations. ECHO listed ten additional sites within a mile of the project property, however, they are all listed within the database as not having an identified violation within the recorded three-year history. Therefore, the listed sites are not anticipated to impact the project. The table below indicates the ten registered sites.

**Table IX-1 ECHO Registered Sites**

Registered Facility	Address	Distance from Project	Listed	Status
Simon Motors, Inc.	78611 Highway 111	0.48 miles NE	RCRA - Active SQG*	No violation
Autozone #5560	78792 Highway 111	0.50 miles NE	RCRA - Active Other	No violation

Point Happy Estates	78360 Heritage Way	0.50 miles N	CWA Minor General Permit Covered Facility – Expired	No violation/undetermined
Bed Bath and Beyond #1030	79110 Highway 111	0.67 miles NE	RCRA - Active Other	No violation
La Quinta Dry Cleaners	78279 Highway 111	0.68 miles N	RCRA - Active SQG	No violation
Emerald Desert Cleaners	78580 Highway 111	0.69 miles N	RCRA - Active SQG	No violation
Mazda Superstore	79225 Highway 111	0.74 miles E	RCRA - Active SQG	No violation
PetSmart #1230	79375 Highway 111	0.92 miles E	RCRA - Active Other	No violation
Marshalls 0014	79395 Highway 111	0.92 miles E	RCRA - Active Other	No violation
Express Cleaners	79410 Hwy 111 #105	0.94 miles NE	RCRA - Active Other	No violation

\*SQG – Small Quantity Generator

After the search of the three databases, it can be concluded that the registered facilities are not anticipated to affect the project site due to their distance to the site and their status as “Completed-Case Closed” or no violations. Overall, no impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- e) **No Impact.** The project is not located within an airport land use plan or private airstrip. The Palm Springs International Airport is located approximately 13.70 miles to the northwest of the project, and the Bermuda Dunes Airport is located approximately 3 miles northeast of the project. Additionally, the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport is located approximately 8.80 miles southeast of the project site. As a result, the project is located outside each of the airports’ influence and planning area. Flights approaching and departing the Palm Springs International Airport, Bermuda Dunes Airport and Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport may fly over the City and the project site with an intermittent frequency, however, it is not anticipated to result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area. No impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

- f) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Emergency Services Element of the La Quinta 2035 GPU addresses multiple components of the City’s public safety services, including police and fire service, emergency medical response and emergency preparedness. The City of La Quinta is contracted for police services from the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department. According to the La Quinta Police Department website, there are two police departments contracted with the City. These include the La Quinta Police Department at 78495 Calle Tampico, and the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department at 86625 Airport Boulevard in Thermal. The La Quinta Police Department is approximately 1.85 miles south of the proposed site. This Department provides service to an area of over 33 square miles and a population of over 38,075 residents.

Fire services in the City of La Quinta are provided by three fire stations in the City including: Fire Station #32 at 78111 Avenue 52, Station #70 at 54001 Madison Street, and Station #93 at 44555 Adams Street. Station #32 is located approximately 2.25 miles south of the project, while Station #93 is located approximately 1.50 miles northeast of the project. Response times for fire services in the City are five minutes or less 90 percent of the time. Fire protection service is provided to the City by the Riverside County Fire Department. Paramedic service is provided to the City of La Quinta and the project area by Springs Ambulance Service. Paramedic staff is located at Station #70. The Police and Fire Departments within the City relies on mutual aid agreements with neighboring jurisdictions to provide additional services when necessary.



According to the City of La Quinta 2035 GPU, the City's primary tool in preparing for emergencies is its adopted Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP establishes procedures and responsibilities for City personnel and acts as a guide for the City's response to emergencies. The EOP is managed by the Emergency Services Division Manager who is responsible for both planning and implementation of emergency response efforts and preparedness in the City. The Division coordinates with other local jurisdictions and the County of Riverside in emergency response training. The City also participates in the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) program, and FEMA's National Incident Management System (NIMS). Volunteer groups such as the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) all participate in emergency response during disasters or emergency situations.

The St. Francis of Assisi Church property is currently served by police and fire services, however, the project will be reviewed by City and Fire officials to ensure adequate fire service and safety as a result of project implementation. Moreover, as a standard condition, the project will implement its own emergency evacuation plan for each applicable area of the project. Regional emergency evacuation routes for the Coachella Valley include the Interstate 10 freeway and Highway 111. Project implementation is not expected to interfere with the critical facilities, emergency transportation and circulation, emergency preparedness coordination. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- g) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site, located south of the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church building, west of Highway 111 and east of the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains. Currently, the project property operates as paved overflow parking. Existing land uses that surround the project includes St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church and parking lot to the north, followed by a low-density residential community, a paved parking lot, followed by Highway 111 and commercial uses to the east, vacant open space (designated as low density residential) to the south, and open space and the Santa Rosa Mountains to the west. According to CALFIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsible Areas Map, the project site is not located in a Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. In addition, CALFIRE's Very Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) in Locally Responsible Areas (LRAs) Map indicates that the project is located in a Local, State/Federal non-VHFHSZ area. Therefore, impacts of exposing people or structures to a significant risk involving wildland fires are expected to be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None

10. <b>HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY --</b> Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?				
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Flood Insurance Rate Map # 06065C2233H, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Effective August 28, 2008; *Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region*, January 2019; *2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan*, June 2021; *Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulics Report for St. Francis of Assisi Church Expansion*, February 2020; *Project Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) for St. Francis of Assisi Church Expansion*, February 2020.

**Setting:**

*Hydrology and Water Quality Fundamentals and Relevant Regulatory Framework:*

Hydrology refers to the occurrence, distribution, and movement of surface water, including water found in rivers and stormwater drainage systems. Stormwater particularly refers to the surface runoff and drainage resulting from rain events. Stormwater runoff and surface drainage patterns are determined by the soil conditions, topography, and associated gradients of the land. Surface water quality refers to selected physical, chemical, or biological conditions found in stormwater in relation to existing standards. Groundwater is the water found underground in the voids in soil, sand, and rock. It is stored in and moves slowly through aquifers. Groundwater supplies are naturally replenished, or recharged, by precipitation that seeps into the land’s surface and artificial replenishment efforts by local water agencies.

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

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code section 13000 et seq.) is the principal law governing water quality regulation for surface waters in California, thus effectuating the delegated provisions of the federal CWA and its NPDES program. It has set forth a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses applicable to surface waters, wetlands, and ground water and to point and nonpoint sources of pollution. The Porter-Cologne Act establishes that, as a matter of policy, all the waters of the State shall be protected; all activities and factors affecting the quality of water shall be regulated to attain the highest water quality within reason; and that the state must be prepared to exercise its full power and jurisdiction to protect the quality of water in the state from degradation. The Porter-Cologne Act established the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs), including Region 7, Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board, which has jurisdiction in the City of La Quinta and project site.

Under this framework, the Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) serves as the guiding document prepared, adopted, and maintained to identify the existing and potential beneficial uses of waters of the State and establish water quality objectives to protect these uses. It is worth noting that as defined in Section 13374 of the California Water Code (CWC), the term "Waste Discharge Requirements" (WDRs) is equivalent of the term "permits" and is therefore attained through a regulatory compliance process. Compliance with WDRs is achieved through the appropriate permit registration process under the applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) programs described later in this section.

At the regional level, the project is located within the Whitewater River Watershed, which is an arid desert region encompassing approximately 1,645 square miles. Within this watershed, an area of approximately 367 square miles (22 percent) is regulated under the established Whitewater River Region Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit (MS4 Permit). The Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCFC&WCD), Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), and the incorporated Coachella Valley cities, including La Quinta, have joint permittee responsibility for coordinating the regional MS4 Permit compliance programs and other activities aimed at reducing potential pollutants in urban runoff from land development construction, municipal, commercial, and industrial areas to the maximum extent possible. These public entities are generally in charge of stormwater management plan approvals and enforcement within their jurisdiction. At the City level, hydrology and stormwater standards required for the control of drainage and floodwater flows are established in Section 13.24.120 (A) of the La Quinta Municipal Code and in La Quinta Engineering Bulletin #06-16 (Hydrology and Hydraulic Report Criteria for Storm Drain Systems). The City's stormwater regulations are designed to align with the MS4, NPDES, and CWA programs respectively. The City's engineering review process ensures that improvement plans are reviewed for compliance with the City's requirements pertaining to grading, hydrology, and stormwater management prior to issuance of grading permits.

*Existing Drainage Conditions:*

The project site involves partially improved land generally located south of the existing St. Francis of Assisi worship center and west of its primary parking lot. In its existing condition, northernmost portion of the project site is a paved parking lot, followed by an unpaved overflow parking area toward the center of the site and a vacant area at the southwest portion. The unpaved parking lot area is absent of any formal storm drain improvements other than the graded slopes generally directed toward the primary paved parking lot. The project site is part of a larger area deemed tributary to one existing surface retention basin located southeast of the primary parking lot. According to the hydrology report, the existing retention facility is a landscaped basin with 3-to-1 side slopes, a design depth of 12 feet, and volumetric capacity of 4.8 acre-feet (AF), which is equivalent to approximately 209,088 cubic feet. The existing tributary stormwater runoff volume to the basin resulting from the controlling 100-year, 24-hour storm event is calculated at 4.22 AF, which occupies a stormwater depth of 11.2 feet out of the 12-foot basin design depth. After accounting for the existing drainage conditions, the retention facility is deemed to have a surplus capacity of 0.58 AF. The existing retention basin also includes two drywell facilities, which are typically implemented to accept and infiltrate low-flow runoff volume. As a result, since the project site is part of the larger existing tributary area to the receiving retention basin, it is deemed to be accounted for in the existing hydrologic conditions. The receiving basin is privately operated and maintained by the project proponent.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** During construction and life of the project (operation) the proposed development will be required to comply with CWA, NPDES, state, and local regulations designed to prevent violations or impacts to surface water quality standards and waste discharge requirements pertinent to surface or ground water quality. As explained below, this is achieved through the preparation of applicable compliance plans and permit registration documents that must obtain agency approval prior to issuance of a grading permit and ground disturbance. As proposed, the project does not seek any permitting concessions that would vary from the established requirements.

During the period of construction, the project proponent must comply with the State's most current NPDES Construction General Permit (CGP), Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-006-DWQ. Compliance with the CGP requires the preparation of a Notice of Intent (NOI) and a project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), designed to prevent potential adverse impacts to surface water quality, including erosion and siltation, during the period of construction. The NOI and SWPPP are submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for approval and permit coverage. The SWPPP a site-specific compliance plan required to identify a strategy of storm water Best Management Practices (BMPs) in accordance with Section XIV (SWPPP Requirements) of the CGP. Storm water BMPs refer to a schedule of activities, prohibitions, practices, maintenance procedures, and other management practices to avoid, eliminate, or reduce the pollution of the receiving waters, primarily focused on preventing erosion, siltation, illicit discharge, and contamination. The SWPPP will include such measures as erosion control, sediment control, storm drain inlet protection, proper waste management and pollution prevention. The SWPPP must be prepared concurrently with final engineering design and must meet all elements of the City of La Quinta Public Works Department – SWPPP (Erosion Control) Review Checklist prior to grading permit issuance. The City's review and approval process ensures that all responsible parties and compliance plan elements are properly demonstrated. Compliance of this plan during construction will be regulated and enforced as part of the local agency site inspection protocols.

During construction, the project will also be required to comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) Rule 403 and 403.1 and the City's Fugitive Dust Control Regulations (Chapter 6.16 – Fugitive Dust Control). Implementation of Fugitive Dust Control Plan primarily pertains to air quality, but also supports water quality protection through the requirement of soil stabilization measures that also prevent sediment erosion and track-out. The concurrent deployment of the required SWPPP and Dust Control Plan plans will prevent the potential construction-related impacts to water quality, including erosion and siltation, at the site and its surroundings, therefore, resulting in less than significant impact.

During the life of the project (operation), the project proponent is required to implement an approved Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to comply with the most current standards of the *Whitewater River Region Water Quality Management Plan for Urban Runoff* and the *Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit*. A Project Specific WQMP has been prepared for this project in order to meet the City's engineering approval requirements. The WQMP takes into account the existing and proposed drainage conditions based on the project specific hydrology report and improvement plans (precise grading).

As currently written, the WQMP approach relies on the local retention requirements and existing facilities as the primary basis for MS4 compliance. Since the project site is part of the existing tributary area to the existing basin that is privately maintained by the project applicant, the WQMP analyses how the existing basin will accommodate the incremental increase in stormwater runoff resulting from the new impervious ground cover (buildings, parking lots, hardscape). As previously introduced, the existing retention basin has a design depth of 12 feet and volumetric capacity of 4.8 acre-feet (AF) with a surplus capacity in terms of depth and volume. The WQMP and Hydrology reports conclude that the increase in impervious ground cover resulting from the project is expected to result in an incremental increase in runoff of 0.28 AF during the worst-case 100-year, 24-hour storm event. Therefore, with project implementation, the total combined runoff volume to the surface basin will increase to 4.5 AF, which is still below the existing basin capacity of 4.8 AF. The incremental increase in stormwater runoff volume represents a stormwater surface depth increase of 0.4 feet (from 11.2 to 11.6 feet) in the existing basin, therefore not expected to result in any physical depth exceedances. As a result, project runoff will be completely contained within the project

proponent's facilities and will not result in discharge capable of resulting in downstream hydrologic modifications or a contribution of urban runoff pollutants that would affect surface water quality. As a requirement, all elements of the WQMP implementation, including maintenance, must be documented during the life of the project. The project's engineering plans, hydrology report, and WQMP will be subject to City review and approval to validate MS4 compliance.

In summary, during construction and operation, project implementation will require plan-based compliance with CWA, NPDES, and local regulations to prevent impacts to water quality standards and the beneficial uses assigned to local receiving waters. As proposed, through the use of existing properly sized retention facilities, the stormwater capture and management strategy for project runoff will not result in waste discharge violations. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site and entire City of La Quinta are located within the domestic water service area of Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), which covers approximately 1,000 square miles, serving approximately 110,000 homes and businesses. The Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin is the primary groundwater source for the project region's domestic water purveyors, including CVWD. Based on the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin has an approximate storage capacity of 39.2 million acre-feet (AF) of water within the upper 1,000 feet and is divided into four subbasins: Indio, Mission Creek, Desert Hot Springs, and San Geronio. The project site is specifically underlain by the Indio Subbasin, which is also known as the Whitewater River Subbasin. DWR has estimated that the Indio Subbasin contains approximately 29.8 million AF of water in the first 1,000 feet below the ground surface, representing approximately 76 percent of the total groundwater in the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin.

In 2002, CVWD developed the *2002 Coachella Valley Groundwater Management Plan* in collaboration with other local stakeholders with a focus on reducing overdraft, preventing groundwater level decline, protecting groundwater quality, and preventing land subsidence. In 2010, the *2010 Coachella Valley Groundwater Management Plan Update* was prepared to document the accomplishments in reducing overdraft and address changed conditions since 2002.

In 2014, the California Legislature signed a three-bill legislative package into law, collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), allowing local agencies to manage groundwater resources in a sustainable manner. SGMA required that a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) or Alternative Plan to a GSP (Alternative Plan) be adopted for basins and subbasins designated by the DWR as medium- and high-priority basins. Basin prioritization is based on a variety of factors such as population, number of wells, and other information determined to be relevant by DWR. The Indio Subbasin was designated as a medium-priority subbasin by DWR.

CVWD, Coachella Water Authority (CWA), Desert Water Agency (DWA), and Indio Water Authority (IWA) collectively represent the Indio Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs). In January 2017, the GSAs submitted to DWR the 2010 Coachella Valley Water Management Plan (2010 CVWMP), accompanied by an Indio Subbasin Bridge Document, as a SGMA-compliant Alternative Plan. On July 17, 2019, DWR approved the Alternative Plan with a requirement to submit an Alternative Plan Update by January 1, 2022 and every five years thereafter. Based on the Indio Subbasin SGMA documentation, the combined strategies have resulted in significant groundwater storage increases across the subbasin, thus allowing the region to comply with the framework for sustainable management.

In 2019, the six urban water suppliers in the Coachella Valley, including CVWD, agreed to collaborate on the preparation of a 2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan (2020 RUWMP) with regional and individual agency content. The 2020 RUWMP describes the region's water supplies and anticipated demands through 2045, along with each agency's programs to encourage efficient water use.

In June of 2021 CVWD's Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) was prepared to outline each agency's actions that could be taken during a water shortage to reduce demands. According to the WSCP, drought conditions are not expected to affect CVWD's Colorado River water supply due to the agency's high priority allocation. Colorado River water is not a direct source of urban water supply; it is used for groundwater replenishment and non-potable uses. If a reduction in Colorado River water supply occurred, CVWD would initially reduce deliveries to groundwater replenishment projects. Drought conditions in the Sierra Nevada would have an effect on the SWP water allocation; thus reducing the SWP Exchange water received by CVWD and DWA. This water is used for replenishment of the groundwater basin and is not a direct source of urban water supply. Consequently, water use restrictions due to drought involving the SWP water supply would likely be implemented only as a result of a prolonged drought. During dry periods when less imported water is available, groundwater production is expected to exceed the amount of recharge, and the volume in storage will be reduced. However, these reductions can be reversed in years when additional imported water is available. The Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin is deemed to be a large basin which provides a buffer during dry periods, thus allowing the agencies to develop long-term plans and programs to manage regional water supplies.

CVWD collaborates with the operation and maintenance of three replenishment facilities serving the Indio Subbasin: Whitewater River Groundwater Replenishment Facility, the Thomas E. Levy Groundwater Replenishment Facility, and the Palm Desert Groundwater Replenishment Facility. Artificial replenishment, or recharge, is recognized by the water districts as one of the most effective methods available for preserving local groundwater supplies, reversing aquifer overdraft and meeting demand by domestic consumers. According to the CVWD web site on Groundwater Replenishment and Imported Water, local agencies have percolated over 650 billion gallons of water back into the aquifer. In the central part of the Coachella Valley, groundwater recharge is provided by the recently constructed first phase of the Palm Desert Groundwater Replenishment Facility, operated by CVWD. According to the CVWD web site, this facility is expected to add up to 25,000 acre-feet of Colorado River water annually into the aquifer. Combined with water conservation and efficiency requirements, individual development projects can contribute to groundwater sustainability by implementing the required stormwater runoff retention and infiltration facilities.

The proposed development is deemed consistent with the City's General Plan land use designation. The established groundwater replenishment facilities described above for the Indio Subbasin are not located near the project. Therefore, from the aspect of land use and location, project implementation is not deemed to be in conflict with any existing or planned groundwater recharge facility or associated infrastructure.

The proposed parish facilities and associated parking lot and landscaping improvements are expected to consume water. The proposed operation will be expected to implement water conservation measures, including the use of low-flow plumbing fixtures, drought-tolerant (native) outdoor landscaping, and water-efficient irrigation systems. As a standard condition for service connections, the project will be expected to furnish the appropriate payment to CVWD based on the meter size, ongoing flow charges, agency fees, and groundwater recharge fees.

Furthermore, the site plan will continue to utilize the existing infiltration basin that is sized to contain and infiltrate the existing drainage conditions and the incremental increases in runoff resulting from the proposed facilities. As a function of the WQMP, operation of the development will include the required non-structural and structural pollution source control measures that work toward the protection of groundwater quality during the life of the project and under the project owner's responsibility. Non-structural source control measures consist of site operations, activities, and/or programs to be finalized in the WQMP and implemented by the project operator to educate site managers, employees, and residents to prevent potential pollutants from being produced, coming into contact with the storm drain system, and impacting groundwater. Structural source control measures consist of physical facility design standards to prevent direct contact between potential pollutants and stormwater runoff. The project's structural measures will consist of stormwater screening and infiltration. Specifically, project runoff first be conveyed to a proposed storm drain inlet equipped with a filter insert designed to provide physical screening of gross

solids, trash, and debris with the use of a filter media and removal of petroleum hydrocarbons with the use of a sorbent media. Pre-treated runoff will then be conveyed into the existing retention basin, sized to infiltrate the required stormwater volume instead of allowing it to leave as runoff, therefore contributing to the locally accepted groundwater recharge efforts. As previously discussed, the incremental increase in stormwater runoff resulting from the project will be adequately handled for infiltration in the existing retention basin, thus contributing toward groundwater recharge instead of producing a condition of urban runoff discharge. The storm drain and basin system will be privately operated and maintained during the life of the project per a required WQMP agreement to be entered between the project proponent and the City. The proposed facilities are therefore not expected to violate or interfere with the groundwater quality. Regarding ground water quality, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- c) i) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project setting occurs east of a north-south trending ridge extending from the Santa Rosa Mountains. Specifically, project site involves partially developed land within the property boundary corresponding to the existing St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, being located south of the existing worship center and west of the primary parking lot. Based on the current USGS National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) and the historic USGS 7.5-Minute topographic map for La Quinta, California, the project site and its neighboring conditions are absent of any formally mapped naturally occurring drainage courses, such as those associated with washes, rivers, or streams. Runoff conditions resulting from storm events are deemed to follow the existing east-trending elevation gradients.

The existing site condition includes paved parking area at the north-end, an unpaved overflow parking area in the center, and a vacant portion on the southwest. Based on the project-specific hydrology report, the local topographic conditions and improvements place the entire project site within a larger drainage management area tributary to one existing surface retention basin within the project parcel, located southeast of the primary parking lot. As such, stormwater runoff from all improved and unimproved portions of the site are designed to drain into the existing retention basin and its corresponding volume has been accounted for in the existing hydrologic conditions. Since the project site is not fully improved or stabilized, the manner in which project runoff is conveyed to the existing basin is known to result in instances of erosion or siltation.

According to the hydrology report, the existing retention facility (privately operated by the project proponent) is a landscaped basin with 3-to-1 side slopes, a design depth of 12 feet, and volumetric capacity of 4.8 acre-feet (AF). The existing basin capacity of 4.8 AF is determined adequate to handle the worst-case stormwater volume generated under the existing conditions (approximately 4.22 AF).

The proposed manner in which project area drainage will be handled is determined by design factors from the hydrology report, WQMP, and precise grading plans, which in turn must meet the regional MS4 and local engineering requirements as part of the approval process. The current hydrology, WQMP, and grading plan documentation indicate that the proposed additions and improvements to the property will continue to rely on the existing retention basin as the receiving facility for project site stormwater runoff. The existing surplus capacity of 0.58 AF in the basin will be sufficient to contain the incremental increase in runoff calculated at 0.28 AF resulting from project implementation through the introduction of impervious surfaces (building footprints, hardscape, and parking lot pavement). All project-related runoff will be conveyed along engineered sheet flow or defined conveyances leading to the existing retention basin. This includes the building, landscaping, and parking lot area runoff. Per the WQMP, all engineered slopes east and south of the new parking lot area will be stabilized with landscaping and be subject to slope protection that must be maintained during the life of the project. Existing off-site flows from the hillside area to the west will continue to be routed toward the existing basin like the existing condition. In doing so, the project will improve the existing drainage, erosion, and siltation condition associated with the unpaved parking lot area. Less than significant impacts are anticipated regarding substantial erosion or siltation, on- or off-site.

**Mitigation:** None

- ii) **Less than Significant Impact.** According to findings from the project-specific hydrology report and WQMP, the proposed development will continue to use the existing retention basin, operated by the project proponent, as the receiving facility for project area runoff. The existing basin has a capacity of 4.8 AF, of which 0.58 AF are surplus since the controlling 100-year storm event runoff volume conveyed to this facility is 4.22 AF from the existing condition. The project's introduction of impervious surfaces in the form of building footprints, hardscape, and parking lot pavement is expected to result in an incremental increase in runoff volume of 0.28 AF resulting. In terms of stormwater depth, the project would result in a potential depth increase of 0.4 feet (from 11.2 to 11.6 feet) within the 12-foot basin design depth. Therefore, this incremental increase in stormwater runoff will be adequately handled by the existing on-site retention basin without resulting in exceedances or other forms of runoff contribution capable of resulting in flooding. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- iii) **Less than Significant Impact.** As previously discussed, the project-specific hydrology and WQMP report findings demonstrate that the existing retention basin within the project property can adequately accommodate the volumetric stormwater quantity contributed by proposed project condition. The project would result in an increase in runoff volume of 0.28 AF, contributing to a combined tributary runoff volume of 4.5 AF that is still within the basin capacity of 4.8 AF. By draining into the privately maintained facility, the project will prevent any routine contribution of urban runoff quantity into the public storm drain system.

The aspect of stormwater quality will be addressed as a function of the WQMP. Project area drainage will be conveyed into a proposed storm drain inlet equipped with a filter insert designed to provide physical screening of gross solids, trash, and debris with the use of a filter fabric and removal of petroleum hydrocarbons with the use of a sorbent media. Filtered runoff will subsequently be conveyed to the said retention basin, where the infiltration function will occur. The filter insert and basin will be privately maintained during the life of the project as a requirement for WQMP approval. Therefore, the proposed project will not contribute substantial additional sources of polluted runoff into the on-site basin or any publicly maintained stormwater facility. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

- iv) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project setting occurs at the base of a ridge extending from the Santa Rosa Mountains. The east-facing hillside occurs west of the project. Based on the current USGS National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) and the historic USGS 7.5-Minute topographic map for La Quinta, California, the project site and its neighboring conditions are absent of any formally mapped naturally occurring drainage courses, such as those associated with washes, rivers, or streams. Runoff conditions resulting from storm events are deemed to follow the existing east-trending elevation gradients. The proposed building, parking lot, hardscape and landscaping improvements will occur on a partially developed site. The proposed grading and hydrology design will allow for project runoff to be properly conveyed to the receiving on-site retention basin. Existing hillside tributary runoff will be conveyed along a controlled flow line around the parking lot into existing basin. Therefore, the proposed project will not result in a considerable modification, impedence, or redirection of flood flows. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- d) **Less than significant impact.** According to FIRM Panel Number 06065C2233H, effective April 19, 2017, the entire project is covered by Zone X, a designation that applies to areas of minimal flood hazard. Therefore, the project site is not considered to be in a floodplain or a special flood hazard area (SFHA). Moreover, the project is not located near any coastal areas and therefore is not prone to tsunami hazards. The project is not located near any body of water and therefore is not prone to seismic seiche hazards. The project's existing receiving retention basin will capture the tributary runoff



resulting from the controlling 100-year storm event. The project is not considered prone to resulting in a release of pollutants due to project inundation. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- e) **Less than significant impact.** As discussed above, the project proponent is required to implement a project-specific Final WQMP to comply with the most current standards of the Whitewater River Region Water Quality Management Plan for Urban Runoff, Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit. The WQMP, as described above, includes guidelines for facility maintenance and other operations aimed at complying with local surface water quality requirements. The WQMP will incorporate grading, hydrology, and other plans to document the site design and source controls with a required operation and maintenance program to comply with water quality objectives. Moreover, the project's storm water retention facilities will ensure that urban runoff is recharged into the ground via infiltration.

The project's use of stormwater retention and infiltration through use of the existing basin will contribute to groundwater recharge in a manner that is consistent with the stormwater capture methods that have been deemed beneficial to groundwater resources. Therefore, project implementation is not expected to conflict with the regional groundwater management strategies or with the Indio Subbasin Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update; La Quinta Municipal Code; State of California Government Code 65915.

Setting:

The project site is designated for Low Density Residential and Open Space land uses. The project is surrounded by residential, open space, and commercial land uses. Table XI-1 displays the surrounding land uses and zoning designations in relation to the proposed project.

**Table XI-1 Surrounding Land Uses**

Land Use	Jurisdiction	General Plan	Zoning	Existing Use
North	La Quinta	LDR	RL	Existing St. Francis of Assisi Church, Single Family Residential Neighborhood
South	La Quinta	LDR	RL	Vacant Land
East	La Quinta	CC	CC	Washington Street, Commercial
West	La Quinta	OS-N	OS	Natural Open Space

*Low Density Residential (Up to 4 units per acre)*

The Low Density Residential designation is appropriate for single family residential development, whether attached or detached. The density of individual parcels is further refined in the Zoning Ordinance. These lands are typically developed as subdivisions, country clubs developments, or master planned communities. Clustered housing projects, providing common area open space, appropriately scaled commercial development serving the project or amenities are also allowed under this designation, with the approval of a specific plan.

*Open Space – Natural*

This designation applies to areas of natural open space, whether owned by private parties or public entities. With the exception of trail or trailhead development, little development is permitted in this designation.

- a) **No Impact.** The project is proposing the construction of a parish hall and administration building associated with the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. Currently, the site operates as overflow parking for the existing Church located north of the approximately 4.43-acre project site. The project proposes buildings associated with the operation of the Church and therefore would not divide an established community. No impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site currently operates as paved parking and overflow parking associated with the St. Francis of Assisi Church. The project property occupies approximately 4.43 acres south of the existing Church building (sanctuary) and west of the Church’s parking lot. The project proposes to develop a parish hall, administration office building, and associated parking.

The project property previously underwent various entitlements associated with the Church facility. In 2002, the St. Francis of Assisi Church applied for an Environmental Assessment 2002-463, Conditional Use Permit 2002-463, and Site Development Permit 2002-755 to construct a temporary parking lot. The temporary parking lot, which was proposed in the project area, would be grass and allow a capacity of 207 vehicles. In 2003, City Council approved the applications for the temporary parking lot. The temporary grass lot was illuminated with 12-foot-high shoebox lighting fixtures, and utilized telephone poles to separate vehicles and define the parking area. Years later, the Church applied to construct a permanent parking lot over the temporary lot. The permanent parking lot would allow 220 paved parking spaces, a temporary overflow parking lot with a capacity of 134 gravel-surface parking spaces, a retention basin, and landscaping within the southern portion of the Church site. The completion of the permanent parking lot would allow a total parking capacity of 532 parking spaces. The plan was approved in 2010.

The project lies within the City of La Quinta's Low Density Residential General Plan designation, per the City's 2035 General Plan Update (GPU). The current zoning designation for the project site is also designated as Low Density Residential (RL). According to the La Quinta Municipal Code (LQMC) Title 9, Chapter 9.30.030, RL zones provide for the development and preservation of low density neighborhoods with one- and two-story single family detached dwellings on large or medium size lots and/or, subject to a specific plan, projects with clustered smaller dwellings, such as one- and two-story single family attached, townhome or condominium dwellings, with generous open space, however, churches are an allowable use within this designation with the approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The RL zone is compatible with the existing General Plan designation of Low Density Residential. Due to the site's previous association with the St. Francis of Assisi Church property, development and operation of the proposed project will not result in conflicts with any land use plan, policy, or regulation. Less than significant impact.

**Mitigation:** None

12. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update, 2013; Mineral Resources Land Classification Map.

Setting:

The State of California has recognized the importance of mineral resources for construction materials and other economic purposes. Mining and extraction of mineral resources continues to be threatened by urbanization and development in areas where important mineral resources exist. The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) addresses the loss of regionally significant mineral deposits to urban development.

The Act requires the Department of Conservation to create Production-Consumption Regions which are areas where significant mineral resources of statewide importance and regional significance are produced and consumed, and a classification system that identifies lands where significant mineral resource deposits are located. La Quinta is located in the Palm Springs Production-Consumption Region. The Palm Springs Production-Consumption Region covers approximately 631 square miles of the Coachella Valley, from near Cabazon to Thermal. Small portions of southern La Quinta, including lands south of Avenue 60, are located outside the Palm Springs Production-Consumption Region. Lands within the Production-Consumption Region are classified according to the presence of valuable mineral resources. La Quinta has two Mineral Resource Zones, MRZ-1 and MRZ-3. MRZ-1 are areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence. MRZ-3 are areas containing known or inferred mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.

a,b) **No Impact.** The mineral resources that form the Coachella Valley’s desert floor primarily consists of sand, gravel (aggregate) and other important mineral deposits that have eroded from the surrounding mountains and hills. To ensure the protection of important mineral resources, the SMARA developed mineral land classification maps and reports to identify the presence or absence of suitable sources of aggregate (sand, gravel or stone deposits), and organize them into Mineral Resource Zones. According to a Classification Map, the approximately 4.43-acre project site is designated within Mineral Resource Zone 1 (MRZ-1). This specific zone designates areas where geologic information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present or likely to be present.

Similar to the Mineral Resources Land Classification Map, the La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update also acknowledges the lack of significant mineral resources in their Mineral Resource Zone Map (Exhibit III-1). According to this map, there is no evidence proving that a significant mineral deposit is present at the project site. The area west of the project boundary, however, includes the slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountains, which is designated as an MRZ-3 zone. MRZ-3 zones are areas containing known or inferred mineral occurrences of undetermined significant mineral resources. Construction activities and project operation is not anticipated to disturb the west-lying property.

Moreover, the project site has been previously developed as a temporary grass parking lot, and then a paved parking lot associated with the St. Francis of Assisi Church facility. Conclusively, the project site is not recognized as a mineral resource recovery site delineated in the City of La Quinta 2035 GPU or the resource maps prepared pursuant to SMARA. No impacts are expected as a result of project implementation.

**Mitigation:** None

13. NOISE -- Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update, 2013; City of La Quinta General Plan Technical Noise Study, Urban Crossroads, Inc., 2011; La Quinta Municipal Code.

Setting:

Noise is simply defined as “unwanted sound.” Sound becomes unwanted when it interferes with normal activities, when it causes actual physical harm or when it has adverse effects on health. Noise is measured on a logarithmic scale of sound pressure level known as a decibel (dB). A-weighted decibels (dBA) approximate the subjective response of the human ear to broad frequency noise source by discriminating against very low and very high frequencies of the audible spectrum. They are adjusted to reflect only those frequencies which are audible to the human ear.

Environmental noise descriptors are generally based on averages, rather than instantaneous, noise levels. The most commonly used figure is the equivalent level (Leq). Equivalent sound levels are not measured directly but are calculated from sound pressure levels typically measured in dBA. The Leq represents a steady state sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given sample period and is commonly used to describe the “average” noise levels within the environment.

Peak hour or average noise levels, while useful, do not completely describe a given noise environment. Noise levels lower than peak hour may be disturbing if they occur during times when quiet is most desirable, namely evening and nighttime (sleeping) hours. To account for this, the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is utilized. The CNEL is the weighted average of the intensity of a sound, with corrections for time of day and averaged over 24 hours. The time of day corrections require the addition of 5 decibels to dBA Leq sound levels in the evening from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., and the addition of 10 decibels to dBA Leq sound levels at night between 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. These additions are made to account for the noise sensitive time periods during the evening and night hours when sound appears louder. CNEL does not represent the actual sound level heard at any time, but rather represents the total sound exposure. The City of La Quinta relies on the 24-hour CNEL level to assess land use compatibility with noise sources.

Noise transmission is affected by a variety of factors such as temperature, wind speed, wind direction, and the type of ground surface. Sound intensity reduced by surfaces, walls, vegetation or other material is called attenuation. Soft ground surfaces tend to reduce sound levels better than hard surfaces. A drop-off rate of 4.5 dBA per doubling of distance is typical across soft ground. In comparison, hard ground, such as concrete, stone, and hard packed earth reduce sound by 3.0 dBA per doubling distance. Effective noise barriers, such as walls or berms, can help reduce noise levels by 10-15 decibels. These types of barriers can provide relief from traffic noise. Vegetation, on the other hand, is less effective for reducing noise levels. In general, walls need to be high enough and long enough to block the view of a road to function as a noise barrier.

To limit population exposure to physically and/or psychologically damaging and intrusive noise levels, the federal government, the State of California, county governments, and most municipalities in California have established standards and ordinances to control noise. In most areas, automobile and truck traffic is the major source of environmental noise. Traffic activity generally produces an average sound level that remains constant with time. Air and rail traffic and commercial and industrial activities are also major sources of noise in some areas. Federal, state and local agencies regulate different aspects of environmental noise, where federal and state agencies generally set noise standards for mobile sources such as aircraft and motor vehicles, while regulation of stationary sources is left to local agencies.

According to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Transit Noise Impact and Vibration Assessment, vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. The rumbling sound caused by the vibration of room surfaces is called structure-borne noise. Sources of ground-borne vibrations include natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or human-made causes (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous, such as factory machinery, or transient, such as explosions. As is the case with airborne sound, ground-borne vibrations may be described by amplitude and frequency.

Vibration is quantified by various methods. The peak particle velocity (PPV) is defined as the maximum instantaneous peak of the vibration signal. The PPV is most frequently used to describe vibration impacts to buildings but is not always suitable for evaluating human response (annoyance) because it takes time for the human body to respond to vibration signals. Instead, the human body responds to average vibration amplitude often described as the root mean squared (RMS). The RMS amplitude is the average of the squared amplitude of the signal and is most frequently used to describe the effect of vibration on the human body. RMS is commonly measured by Decibel notation (VdB), which serves reduce the range of numbers used to describe human response to vibration. Typically, ground-borne vibration generated by man-made activities attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of the vibration. Sensitive receivers for vibration include structures (especially older masonry structures), people (i.e. residents, the elderly and sick), and vibration-sensitive equipment and/or activities.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project proposes a parish hall, administration office building and associated parking on approximately 4.43 acres south of the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church in the City of La Quinta. Currently, the project site operates as an overflow parking lot for the existing church, providing 219 paved and unpaved parking stalls. Analysis of project related noise impacts is based on traffic noise (on- and off-site), operational noise, and construction noise. Further discussion provided below.

#### Traffic Noise

As previously stated, the project proposes the development and operation of a parish hall, administration offices, and parking spaces associated with the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. The number of seats and the number of on-site parking spaces will not increase with the project improvements. With the addition of new enclosed meeting spaces and offices, existing staff and activities will transfer from outside communal areas to the new and improved facilities. Paved parking surfaces will replace the existing dirt parking lot. By providing paved parking and updated administrative and meeting spaces, the existing congregation will be better served. These improvements are not intended to add to the congregation, visitor, or staff numbers. Operations will not change and operating hours are anticipated to remain the same. Classrooms and administrative functions will be moved from outdated facilities to new improved spaces. Seating capacity and parking capacity of the project will remain unchanged. Therefore, off-site traffic conditions (i.e., trips to and from the site) will not change. Additionally, on-site traffic conditions will not change since growth of church attendees is not anticipated. Impacts will be less than significant.

#### Operational Noise

The project proposes additional church buildings consisting of a parish hall and administration offices to operate with the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church sanctuary, located north of the proposed project.

Operation of the project is anticipated to result in similar uses as the existing Church facility. According to Table IV-3 (Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments), acceptable noise levels for church uses are between 50 to 65 dBA CNEL, while conditionally acceptable noise levels for churches are between 60 to 65 dBA CNEL.

The project proposes to operate similarly to the existing church facility, apart from providing indoor office spaces and meeting areas. Additionally, the proposed project site improvements are not intended to result in an increased number of members, visitors, or staff to the site. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would result in similar noise levels compared to the existing facility and impacts will be less than significant.

Construction Noise

Construction of the proposed project would likely result in short-term noise associated with construction activities. Noise generated by the project construction equipment will include a combination of trucks, power tools, concrete mixers, and portable generators that when combined can reach high levels. The number and mix of construction equipment are expected to occur in the following stages: site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating.

Development of the proposed project will occur immediately south of the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. However, the project is an expansion of the church facility, therefore, construction-related noise impacts are anticipated to be less than significant when observed from the Church. Therefore, the closest off-site sensitive receptor to the project site includes a residential community located approximately 420 feet north of the project. Areas west of the project site are characterized by open space lands associated with the Santa Rosa Mountains foothills, while areas immediately south of the project are vacant and undeveloped. Areas east of the project site is occupied by a paved parking lot associated with the Church facility and Washington Street.

Per the Technical Noise Report completed for the La Quinta General Plan, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) compiled noise levels generated by specific types of construction equipment. Noise levels generated by heavy construction equipment can range from approximately 68 dBA to over 100 dBA when measured at 50 feet. However, the noise levels would diminish rapidly with distance from the construction site at a rate of approximately 6 dBA per doubling of distance. For example, a noise level of 68 dBA measured at approximately 50 feet from the noise source to the receptor, would be reduced to 62 dBA at 100 feet from the source to the receptor, and would be further reduced by another 6 dBA to 56 dBA at 200 feet from the noise source to the receptor.

Based on the EPA’s typical noise construction noise levels table (included below for reference), pile drivers result in the highest noise levels, reaching 100 dBA at 50 feet. The use of pile drivers is not proposed for the project, however, it is used as an example. If this piece of equipment was used at the project site, the noise level perceived by the closest off-site sensitive receptor north of the project would be approximately 82 dBA (based on the reduction of 6 dBA per doubling distance).

In order to reduce potential noise levels from construction of the project site, the City of La Quinta limits the hours in which construction activities are permissible. Section 6.08.050 of the City’s Noise Ordinance limits construction to the following hours:

October 1 <sup>st</sup> through April 30 <sup>th</sup>	Monday – Friday: 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday and Holidays: None
--	--



May 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>

Monday – Friday: 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday and Holidays: None

Additionally, the following noise reduction practices should be employed as applicable for all projects containing construction activities, including the proposed project, as determined by the Noise Report generated for the La Quinta General Plan:

- During all excavation and grading, the construction contractors shall equip all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, with properly operating and maintained mufflers, consistent with manufacturers' standards. The construction contractor shall place all stationary construction equipment so that emitted noise is directed away from the noise sensitive receptors.
- The construction contractor shall locate equipment staging in areas that will create the greatest distance between construction-related noise sources and noise sensitive receptors during all project construction.
- The construction contractor shall limit all construction-related activities that would result in high noise levels, according to the construction hours of the City.
- Finally, the construction contractor shall limit haul truck deliveries to the same hours specified for construction equipment. To the extent feasible, haul routes shall not pass sensitive land uses or residential dwellings.

These are considered standard conditions of new construction in the City. Therefore, with the implementation of the above conditions, project-related off-site traffic, on-site traffic, operational and construction noise created by the project are anticipated to be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** Vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. The rumbling sound caused by the vibration of room surfaces is called structure-borne noise. Sources of ground-borne vibrations include natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or human-made causes (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous, such as factory machinery, or transient, such as explosions. As is the case with airborne sound, ground-borne vibrations may be described by amplitude and frequency.

Per the Noise Report generated for the La Quinta General Plan (LQGP) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR), potential ground-borne vibration is associated with construction activities and vehicular traffic. Construction vibration is generally associated with pile driving and rock blasting, neither of which will occur at the project site. Occasionally large bulldozers and loaded trucks can cause perceptible vibration levels at close proximity. Construction activity can result in varying degrees of groundborne vibration, depending on the equipment and methods used, distance to the affected structures and soil type. The effects of groundborne vibration are not generally limited to movement of building floors, rattling of windows and objects, and rumbling sounds, resulting in annoyance.

In general, earth-borne vibrations associated with transportation and construction activities attenuate rapidly with distance from the source. Based on Caltrans data, vibration of trucks is characterized by peaks considerably high than those generated by automobiles. These peaks often last a fraction of a second and drop off fast with distance. Caltrans' truck vibration data suggests that at distances greater than 130 feet from the road the vibration levels are below the threshold of perception. The closest off-site use to the proposed project is the residential community north of the project site, situated approximately 420 feet from the project. Therefore, construction trucks traveling to the project site along Washington Street during construction of the project may result in brief vibrations perceived by the residents of the homes adjacent to Washington Street. Vibrations from onsite equipment are not anticipated to impact surrounding offsite uses since the project is separated by sensitive receptors by over 400 feet.

To further minimize the perceived vibration impacts, the City of La Quinta limits the exposure of noise sensitive land uses to construction areas by permitting construction activities to occur only during construction hours established by Section 6.08.050 of the City's Noise Ordinance. The allowable construction hours are provided in the table below.

October 1 <sup>st</sup> through April 30 <sup>th</sup>	Monday – Friday: 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday and Holidays: None
May 1 <sup>st</sup> through September 30 <sup>th</sup>	Monday – Friday: 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Saturday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday and Holidays: None

After construction, the nature of the proposed expansion of the church facility would not typically involve activities expected to generate excessive vibration or ground borne noise. All activities within the project will be required to adhere to the City's Noise Ordinance. Impacts of project-related vibration will be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is located approximately 3.0 miles southwest of the closest airport, the Bermuda Dunes Airport. The project does not lie within the airport's 70, 65 and 60 CNEL noise contours or within the airport's Land Use Plan area. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** La Quinta General Plan 2035, and 2014-2021 Housing Element; SCAG Local Profile 2018, Housing Type by Units: 2018. California Department of Finance, Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State 1990-2000 and 2011-2021.

**Setting:**

According to the Department of Finance (DOF), the City of La Quinta had a population of 37,467 people in 2010. The City’s population increased approximately 10.1 percent in 2021, for a population of 41,247 people. The City of La Quinta’s population accounts for approximately 1.66 percent of the County of Riverside’s total population. The median age in the City was 45.6 in 2010 (US Census data). The most recent Census data (2019) shows the median age in the City to be 48, compared to the median age in Riverside County (35) and the Nation (38). Additionally, the number of jobs in 2017 in La Quinta was 16,848; an approximately 101 percent increase in jobs since 2010 (SCAG).

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project involves the construction and operation of a parish hall, administration offices, and parking spaces on approximately 4.43 acres of the St. Francis of Assisi Church in the City of La Quinta. The project’s existing General Plan land use and zoning designation of Low Density Residential (RL) allows up to 4 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). Churches are allowable uses within RL designations with the approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The project site has operated as church use due to its association with the existing Church facility, which main building is located north of the site, and associated parking lot is located east of the project site.

The development of the proposed buildings is not intended to increase members or participants currently attending the Church. The proposed buildings are intended to accommodate meetings currently held in inadequate indoor spaces, outdoor gardens and courtyards onsite. Additionally, the number of parking spaces in the Church parking lot is intended to stay the same. Since the proposed project is not intended to increase the number of members of the Church, the proposed project would not induce unplanned direct or indirect population growth.

Furthermore, the project site is within an area that is served by existing infrastructure, public services and utilities, due to the existing urban context that surrounds the project site. As a result, the project would not cause potential growth inducing effects by extending utilities into an undeveloped area.

Therefore, approval and development of the proposed project is not expected to increase population growth in the City. No impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

- b) **No Impact.** The project site currently operates as paved and unpaved, overflow parking lot associated with the St. Francis of Assisi Church. The project proposes the development of a parish hall, administration buildings, and parking spaces as an extension to the existing Church facility. Currently, the project site does not provide residential housing. Therefore, development of the project site would not displace substantial

numbers of existing housing or people necessitating the construction of replacement housing. No impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

15. PUBLIC SERVICES –	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update, 2013; La Quinta 2035 General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report, 2013; Desert Sands Unified School District website.

**Setting:**

*Fire:*

The Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD), under contract with the City of La Quinta, provides 24-hour fire protection and emergency medical services to the City. There are three City-owned fire stations within the City of La Quinta, Fire Station 32, Station 70 and Station 93. Each station is staffed with full-time paid and volunteer firefighters.

Fire Station 32 is located at 78111 Avenue 52 and is approximately 2.9 miles from the proposed project site. This stations equipment includes a primary and reserve fire engine, volunteer squad, and rescue vehicles.

Fire Station 70 is located at 54001 Madison Street and is approximately 6 miles from the project site. This station is equipped with a primary engine, a brush fire engine, and a volunteer squad.

Fire Station 93 located at 44-555 Adams Street is located approximately 2 miles from the proposed project site and is equipped with a primary engine and a reserve engine.

The Riverside County Fire Department operates under a Regional Fire Protection Program, which allows all of its fire stations to provide support as needed regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. Per the La Quinta 2035 General Plan EIR, the average response times are between 5 and 7 minutes.

*Police:*

Law enforcement services are provided to the City of La Quinta through a contractual agreement with Riverside County Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's department provides 24-hour municipal police services associated with a City police department. The La Quinta police department operates out of the Thermal Station located at 86625 Airport Boulevard. There is also a Civic Center Community Policing Office, located at 78-495 Calle Tampico.

The Thermal station is approximately 12 miles from the project site. The City's police department patrols 7 days a week, 365 days a year and 24-hours a day. The department serves a population of approximately 41,204 residents and patrols over 33 square miles. The City also employs volunteers that assist the Sheriff's Department, through

a program known as “Citizens on Patrol” (COP). They are trained by the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department and assist and support the deputies of the La Quinta Police Department.

Per the 2035 General Plan EIR (adopted in 2013), the City has 51 sworn officers and 5 community service officers. The Riverside County Sheriff’s Department maintains a staffing ratio of 1.23 officers per 1,000 residents which is well above the standard and accepted ratio of one officer per 1,000 residents.

*Schools:*

The City of La Quinta is served by two school districts; Desert Sands Unified School District (DSUSD) and Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD). DSUSD serves the portion of the City west of Jefferson Street and north of Avenue 48, which includes the northern Sphere of Influence. CVUSD boundaries include the areas of Jefferson Street and east of Avenue 48. The proposed project site is within the boundary of the DSUSD; Harry S. Truman Elementary is the closest school to the proposed project and is 2.6 miles away. La Quinta Middle School is approximately 2.5 miles away and La Quinta High School is approximately 1.6 miles away.

*Parks:*

The City of la Quinta provides public and private parks, trails, open space and multi-city recreational facilities with various amenities. The City oversees 11 city parks, a civic center and three nature preserve areas. Per the 2035 La Quinta General Plan, the City has a policy of providing a minimum of 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents.

a) **Fire**

**Less than Significant Impact.** Development of the church expansion is not expected to result in an increase in demand for fire services. The existing church and surrounding development already receives fire services and the proposed project could be adequately served by fire protection services within the 5-minute response time and no new or expanded facilities would be required. Additionally, the project complies with the 2035 General Plan *Emergency Services Policy ES-1.2* in that all new development proposals are routed to the Fire Department to assure that project access and design provide for maximum fire life safety.

The project would be required to implement all applicable fire safety requirements, to include, installation of fire hydrants, and sprinkler systems. Moreover, the project would be required to comply with Development Impact Fees in place at the time of construction. The City enacts a development fee on all new development within the City to finance public facilities which goes towards the funding of fire services. Less than significant impacts are expected as a result of project implementation.

**Mitigation:** None

**Police**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed church expansion is not expected to increase the need for police services that would hinder the City’s ability to provide police services or create demands that would require the construction of a new police station or new facilities. The proposed church expansion would be constructed as part of the existing church that is surrounded by commercial and residential development, currently being served by the La Quinta Police Department. Additionally, the project complies with the 2035 General Plan *Emergency Services Policy ES-1.6* in that all new development proposals shall be continued to be routed to the Police Department to assure that the project access and design provide for a defensible space and maximum crime prevention while maintaining City design standards and codes.

The project would also be required to comply with Development Impact Fees in place at the time of construction. These fees on allow the City to continue to finance public facilities which goes towards the funding of various public services to include police. Development of the proposed project will result in less than significant impacts to police services.

**Mitigation:** None

**Schools**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The project is proposing an expansion of an existing church to include a new parish hall, administrative offices, and a parking lot on 5-acres. The proposed expansion would not generate any school age children. No new or additional school facilities need to be constructed as a result of the proposed project. Moreover, Assembly Bill 2926 and Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) allow school districts to collect “development fees” for all new construction for residential/commercial and industrial use. At the time of writing, DSUSD developer fees are \$4.08/sq.ft. for residential and \$0.66/ sq.ft. for commercial. All though the church expansion would not generate students, the District still requires developer fees to assist with offsetting impacts of employees generated by the project and the potential students that would be generated by employees. Monies collected are used for construction and reconstruction of school facilities. Less than significant impact to school services are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

### **Parks**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The City currently exceeds its level of service and the amount of parkland required by the QUIMBY Act. The City oversees 11 city parks, a civic center and three nature preserve areas. There are approximately 5,259 acres of open space areas set aside for recreational facilities in the City. These developed open space recreational areas include a variety of city owned and maintained parks and facilities, County owned parks, Desert Recreation District facilities, and public and private golf courses. In addition, there are approximately 6,933 acres of natural open space areas within the City offering hiking trails, equestrian trails, and other passive recreation opportunities. Within La Quinta, there are approximately 806.44 acres of parks. Per the 2035 La Quinta General Plan, the City has a policy of providing a minimum of 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents. Thus, the City provides approximately 19.55 acres per 1,000 residents. The proposed project would not significantly impact park facilities since the project will not introduce new attendees to the church facility. The project will also be required to comply with the City’s Development Impact Fees which includes a Park and Recreation fee. Less than significant impacts to parks are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

### **Other Public Facilities**

**No Impact.** No increase in demand for government services or other public facilities is expected beyond those discussed in this section.

**Mitigation:** None

16. RECREATION –	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: La Quinta General Plan, La Quinta General Plan Environmental Impact Report.

**Setting:**

The City of La Quinta offers a variety of passive and active recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the region. There are approximately 5,259 acres of open space areas set aside for recreational facilities in the City. These developed open space recreational areas include a variety of city owned and maintained parks and facilities, County owned parks, Desert Recreation District facilities, and public and private golf courses. In addition, there are approximately 6,933 acres of natural open space areas within the City offering hiking trails, equestrian trails, and other passive recreation opportunities. Within the City limits are five mini parks, including Eisenhower Park, Seasons Park, Saguaro Park, Desert Pride and Velasco Park. Neighborhood parks include Fritz Burns Park, Adams Park, Monticello Park, and Pioneer Park. The nearest park to the project is La Quinta Park, located approximately one mile northeast of the project site. The project will comply with the City’s parkland in lieu fee (Quimby) and other development impact fees in order to allow for the City’s maintenance of the public facilities.

The City also operates and maintains the La Quinta Wellness Center and La Quinta Museum which are located within the Village. The La Quinta Wellness Center provides fitness equipment and classes, and also provides services for senior residents. The La Quinta Museum provides residents with cultural activities, including art exhibits, programs, and events.

The Desert Recreation District provides park facilities and recreation programs throughout the Coachella Valley. Once known as the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District, the Desert Recreation District owns and operates the La Quinta Community Center and is proposing a Discovery Center near Lake Cahuilla.

The District operates the La Quinta Community Center and Park, located at 77865 Avenida Montezuma, includes a 6.5-acre park and 5,000 square foot community center. The 6.5-acre park includes ball fields, basketball courts, playground, picnic tables, barbecues, restrooms, an outdoor amphitheater, outdoor exercise facilities, and drinking fountains. The Community Center includes the La Quinta Fitness Center, kitchen, and concessions.

In addition to community parks, walking and hiking trails also exist within the City of La Quinta. Hiking occurs in the southern portion of the City, south of the Cove neighborhood. The trails include the 8.92-mile Boo Hoff Trail west of the project, the 2.41-mile Cove to Lake Trail northwest of the project, and the 4-mile Bear Creek Trail northwest of the project.

a-b) **No Impact.** The project would result in the addition of a 22,499-sf parish hall, a 4,835-sf administration office building, and associated parking to the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. The parish hall proposes a 7,012-sf parish hall room with 930-sf stage, a lobby, choral room, kitchen, pantry, maintenance room, restrooms, office, ten meeting rooms, storage, workroom, and additional miscellaneous rooms associated with the operation of the parish hall building. The administration office building is proposed to be located east of the parish hall and would include an administration lobby, reception area, counseling room, conference room, break room, ten office rooms, storage, and restrooms. The recreational rooms and spaces within the new parish hall and administration buildings would be available for the patrons of the Church.



The project would not result in more members to the Church since the proposed buildings are intended to accommodate meetings currently held in inadequate indoor meeting rooms, and outdoor gardens and courtyards. Therefore, development of the proposed project would not result in the deterioration of the public park facilities in the City of La Quinta since the proposed project will not increase members or attendees of the Church. The project would result in no impact.

**Mitigation:** None

17. <b>TRANSPORTATION</b> – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Net Trip Generation and Access Review, October 18, 2021.

Setting

The proposed project is located on existing partially paved overflow parking areas associated with the Saint Francis of Assisi Church at the southwest corner of Washington Street and the westerly terminus of Avenue 47 in the City of La Quinta. Access to the project site occurs at two locations from Washington Street. One access point is located at the Washington Street and Avenue 47 intersection, where traffic signal control is provided, while the second is at the Washington Street and Washington Street frontage road intersection, where one-way southbound traffic on the frontage road enters Washington Street north of the Lake La Quinta Drive intersection. Washington Street is improved to its ultimate lane width. Regional access to the site is provided by Interstate 10 to Washington Street south to Avenue 47. The property is surrounded by residential land uses to the north (north of Saint Francis of Assisi), parking lot uses to the east (residential and commercial uses are located on the east side of Washington Street), vacant property to the south and vacant mountainous property to the west.

*Project Summary*

Project development will include the construction of the proposed parish hall, administrative offices, walking paths, parking spaces, and associated infrastructure and landscaping. The 22,499-sf parish hall building is proposed to include a 7,012-sf parish hall with 930-sf stage. Additional rooms in the parish hall building would include a lobby, choral room, kitchen, pantry, maintenance room, restrooms, office, ten meeting rooms, storage, workroom, and additional miscellaneous rooms associated with the operation of the parish hall building. The 4,835-sf administration office building is proposed east of the parish hall and would include an administration lobby, reception area, counseling room, conference room, break room, ten office rooms, storage, and restrooms. The parish hall and administrative offices are proposed to occur in separate buildings. The proposed buildings and the existing sanctuary will be connected by pedestrians walking paths.

Currently, the Church does not have adequate indoor meeting spaces for the patrons. The meetings are currently held in small and old indoor spaces, that do not accommodate video or audio set up, or the number of attendees. The meetings typically overflow to outdoor gardens and courtyards surrounding the existing sanctuary building. The proposed project buildings and improvements are intended to accommodate meetings currently held in the insufficient indoor spaces and outdoor gardens and courtyards. Because the new buildings would replace the courtyard meeting spaces, the proposed project will not increase membership at the Church. Additionally, the proposed meeting rooms/event center will not be used at the same time as the sanctuary. With the addition of new enclosed meeting spaces and offices, existing staff and activities will transfer to new and improved facilities.

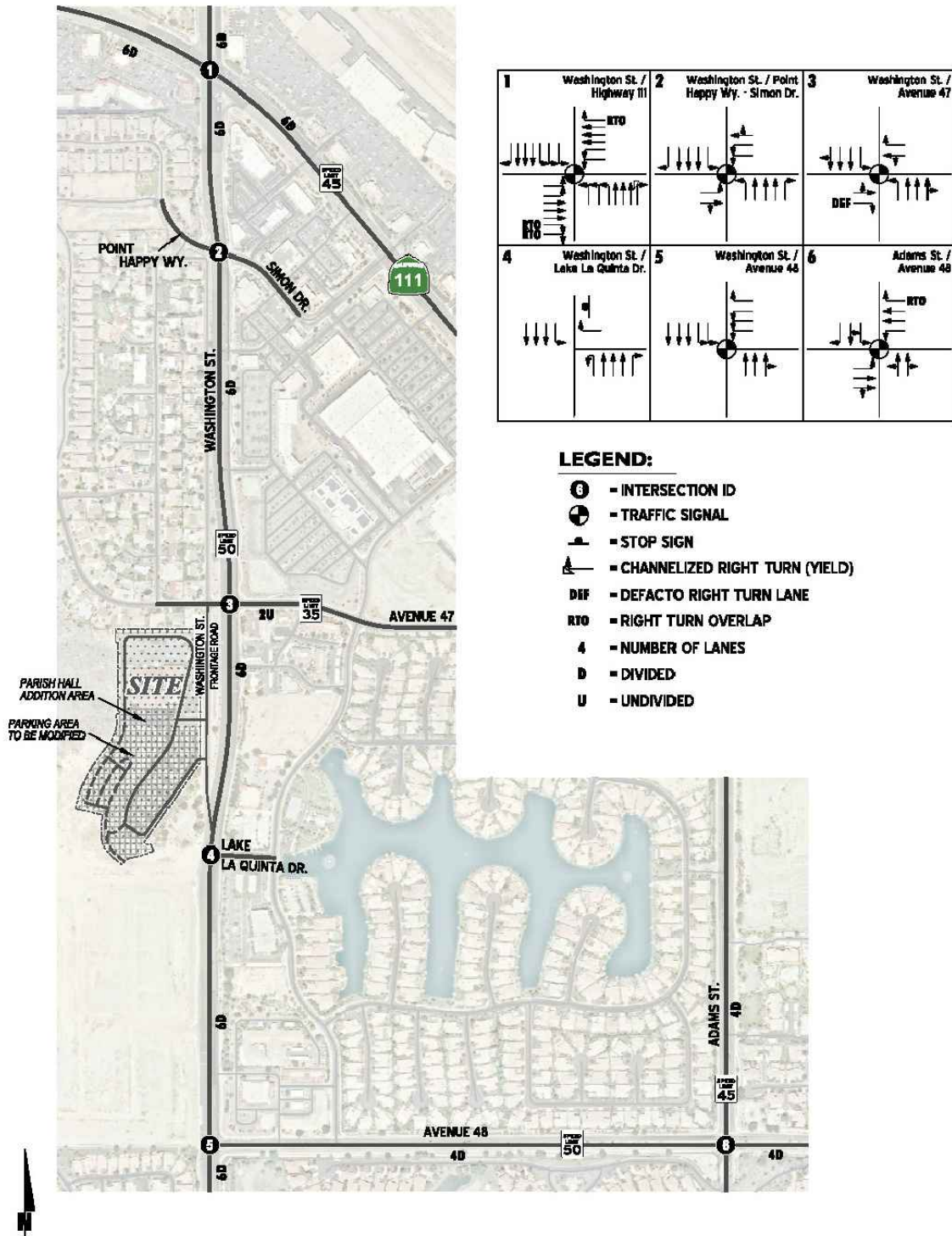
Access to the project site will continue to utilize the two locations on Washington Street:

- Washington Street/Avenue 47 (1)
- Washington Street/Washing Street Frontage Road (2)

The Washington Street and Avenue 47 intersection includes a traffic signal that provides access to the main Church parking lot. Traffic entering the site from the Washington Street and Avenue 47 intersection maneuvers onto the Washington Street frontage road and travels southbound to the Project Main Driveway. Traffic exiting the project site either returns northbound along the Washington Street frontage road to Avenue 47 or travels southbound along the Washington Street frontage road to enter Washington Street southbound travel lanes. The project does not propose changes to the existing access routes to and from the project site.

The traffic review study area and site plan is illustrated in **Exhibit 17-I** and **17-II**, respectively.

**EXHIBIT 1: SITE CONTEXT WITH EXISTING INTERSECTION TRAFFIC CONTROLS AND THROUGH TRAVEL LANES ON ADJACENT ROADWAYS**



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N.T.S.

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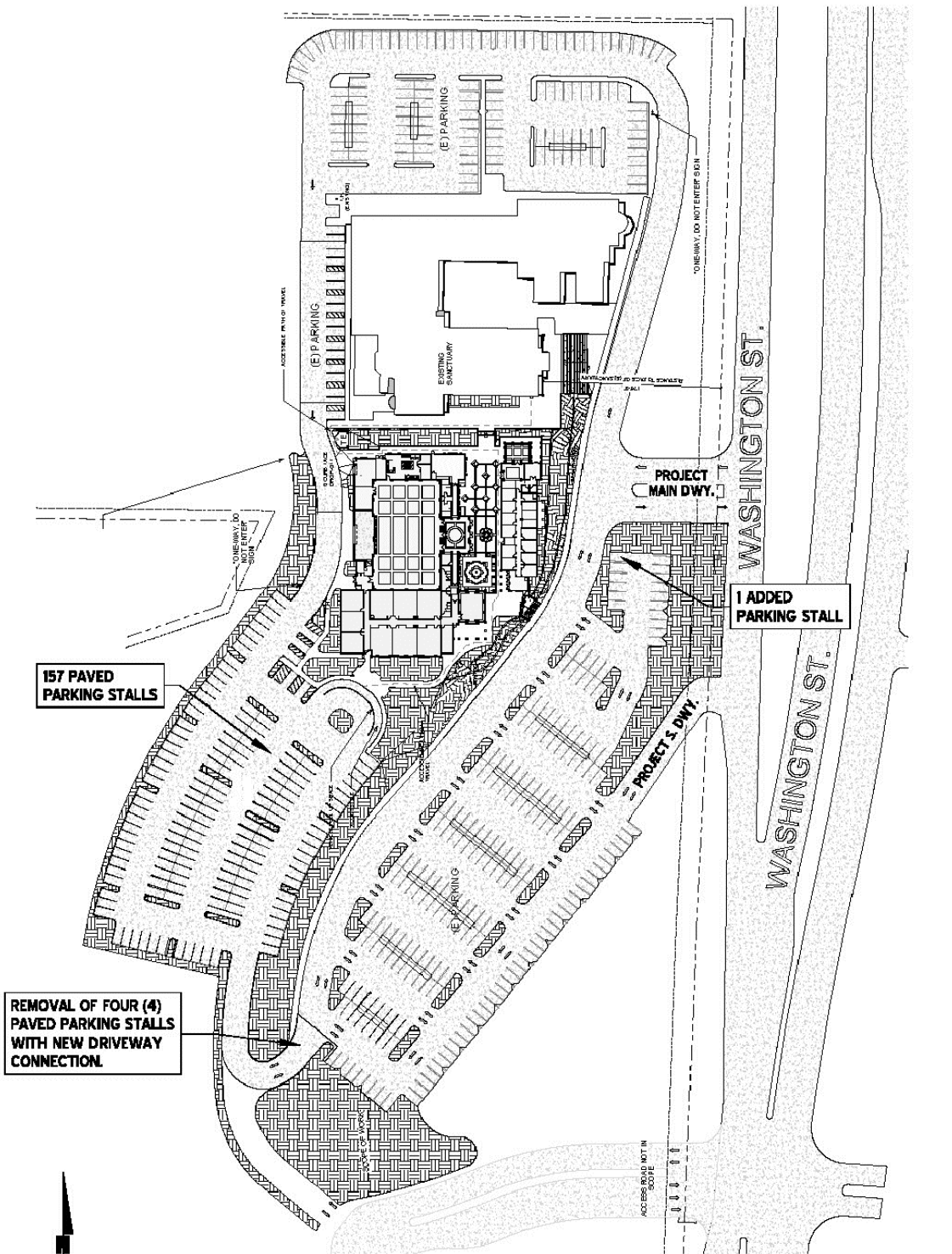
**SITE CONTEXT WITH EXISTING INTERSECTION TRAFFIC CONTROLS AND THROUGH TRAVEL LANES ON ADJACENT ROADWAYS**

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH EXPANSION**  
 MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

EXHIBIT

17-1

EXHIBIT 3: SITE PLAN - PARISH HALL ADDITION



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**SITE PLAN - PARISH HALL ADDITION**

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH EXPANSION**  
 MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

EXHIBIT

17-II

TIA Analysis Methodology

A Net Trip Generation and Access Review was prepared for the proposed project by Urban Crossroads, October 18, 2021. The traffic review was based upon an analysis of existing access conditions, proposed project improvements, seating and building capacity, trip generation characteristics and parking requirements. Project trips were generated based on the rates collected by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2021.

Seating and building capacity were calculated based on existing Pews/seats, individual family room seats and single individual seats within the existing sanctuary building. **Table XVII-1** illustrates that the existing sanctuary (2021) accommodates 904 people at full seating capacity.

**Table XVII-1 Existing Project Seated Capacity**

Seating Arrangement	Attendees
<b>Existing Sanctuary (2021)</b>	
57 @ 212" Long Pews, 18"/ seat	627
30 @ 92" Long Pews, 18"/ seat	150
Individual Family Room Seats	13
Single Individual Seats	114
<b>Seated Capacity</b>	<b>904</b>

Level of Service Standard

As required by SB 743, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) replaced the former metric used to analyze traffic impacts which was LOS. With the implementation of SB 743, intersection LOS is not calculated to determine transportation impacts, however it provides information regarding intersection capacity and general plan consistency for the City. The transportation assessment of LOS was conducted for consistency with the City of La Quinta General Plan and to evaluate the proposed project’s effect on the surrounding transportation network.

Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of transportation system performance based upon the ratio of traffic volume relative to the capacity of the roadway or intersection. The volume-to-capacity ratio (V/C) indicates the overall performance of the roadway segment or intersection and corresponds to a rating of A through F identifying its level of capacity utilization and relative level of congestion. LOS A represents free-flow traffic with little or no delay whereas LOS F represents a breakdown of traffic flow and a high incidence of delay.

**Table XVII-2 Level of Service  
Description Mid-Link and Uninterrupted Flow**

Level of Service	Volume/Capacity Ratio
A	0.00 – 0.60
B	0.61 – 0.70
C	0.71 – 0.80
D	0.81 – 0.90
E	0.91 – 1.00
F	Not Meaningful
Source: Highway Capacity Manual, Transportation Research Board – Special Report 209, National Academy of Science, Washington, D.C. 2000.	

According to the City of La Quinta Circulation Element, for roadway segment travel LOS is a measure of the flow of traffic, while for intersections, the LOS is based on the number of seconds the vehicle is delayed in passing through the intersection. The Element further states that although accepting a lower level of service (LOS E or even F) at certain intersections and segments during peak season may result in periodic congestion, once familiar with network constraints, travelers will seek alternative paths and traffic will be distributed to those parts of the network

with surplus capacity. The City of La Quinta has established LOS D as the minimum level of service for its street segments.

#### Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF)

The Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fees (TUMF) program identifies network backbone and local roadways that are needed to accommodate growth. The regional program was put into place to ensure that developments pay their fair share and that funding is in place for the construction of facilities needed to maintain an acceptable level of service for the transportation system. The TUMF is a regional mitigation fee program and is imposed and implemented in every jurisdiction in Western Riverside County.

#### Alternative Transportation

The City of La Quinta is served by the SunLine Transit Agency.

SunDial is a valley wide, origin-to-destination paratransit service designed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The purpose is to provide next day public transportation service for persons who are unable to use regular SunLine service. SunDial service is available within 3/4 of a mile on either side of any local SunLine route (not including Commuter Link 220 & Line 95).

Transit service is reviewed and updated by SunLine periodically to address issues such as budget, ridership and community demand. Changes in land use can affect these periodic changes, which could lead to enhanced service where appropriate.

#### Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

The current recommended metric in the CEQA guidelines for transportation impacts is Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita per SB 743. The legislative intent of SB 743 is to balance the needs of congestion management with statewide goals for infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

VMT is a measure of the amount of travel for all vehicles in a geographic region over a given period of time, typically a one-year period. The analysis of VMT (SB743) attributable to a project in CEQA went into full effect statewide on July 1, 2020. According to the Governor's office of Planning and Research (OPR) proposed CEQA Guideline Implementing SB 743, projects that decrease vehicle miles traveled in a project area compared to existing conditions should be considered to have a less than significant transportation impact. The California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) publishes a resource for Local Government to assess emission reductions from Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures. The CAPCOA report recognizes that land use planning provides the best opportunity to influence GHG emissions through a reduction in overall VMT.

Based on OPR's Technical Advisory, the City of La Quinta has prepared their Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis Policy (**City Guidelines**). The VMT analysis was prepared based on the adopted City Guidelines. The Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis Policy (June 2020, updated July 2021) (**La Quinta Guidelines**) are consistent with the VMT analysis methodology recommended by OPR. As outlined in the La Quinta Guidelines, a church expansion project such as the one proposed would be considered significant if it results in a net increase in the total existing VMT for the region.

#### Existing Transportation Conditions Summary

Washington Street – Washington Street is a north-south oriented roadway that has a variable width throughout the City. It is currently classified as a Major Arterial. The section that is located adjacent to the property has a right of way width of 128 feet with 6 driving lanes and a bicycle lane on both sides of the street. The 2013 GP EIR indicates that the existing ADT was 36,710 with a capacity of 59,300 ADT. The existing V/C Ratio – LOS was B. According

to the 2017 CVAG Coachella Valley Traffic Counts GIS, daily traffic was 48,977 ADT which results in a V/C of 0.83, which is a LOS of D.

General Plan consistency is analyzed in section a) below, while VMT is analyzed in b) of this Transportation discussion.

a) **Less Than Significant Impact.**

**Level of Service (LOS)**

Trip generation was calculated by land use type and was calculated using the reference Trip Generation, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition (2021) prepared by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). Trip Generation Rates for churches is determined based upon seats. Table XVII-3 illustrates the Trip Generations Summary for the project based on the ITE Land Use Classification.

**Table XVII -3  
Project Trip Generation Summary**

Trip Generation Rates <i>(note 1)</i>									
Land Use	ITE LU Code	Quantity	AM Peak Hour			MD Peak Hour			Daily
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Church	560	904 Seats	0.04	0.03	0.07	0.05	0.26	0.51	2.21

Trip Generation Results												
Land Use	ITE LU Code	Quantity	Weekday						Weekend			Daily
			AM Peak Hour			MD Peak Hour			Peak Hour			
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Church	560	904 Seats	38	25	63	41	50	814	226	235	461	1,998
<b>Total</b>			<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>1,998</b>

1. *Trip Generation Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation Manual, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition (2021).*

As shown in **Table XVII-3**, the Project is anticipated to generate a total of 814 two-way trips per day on a typical weekday, 63 AM peak hour trips, and 91 PM peak hour trips. On a typical weekend day, The Project is anticipated to generate a total of 1,998 two-way trips per day with 461 peak hour trips.

**Future Traffic Conditions**

As previously stated, the Church does not have adequate indoor meeting space for the patrons. The meetings are currently held in indoor areas, however, due to the age and size of these rooms, they are currently inadequate for functionality and number of attendees. Overflow typically occurs in outdoor gardens and outdoor courtyards surrounding the existing sanctuary building. The proposed project buildings and improvements are intended to accommodate meetings currently held in courtyards. Because the new buildings would replace the courtyard meeting spaces, the proposed project will not increase membership at the Church. Additionally, the proposed meeting rooms/event center will not be used at the same time as the sanctuary. With the addition of new enclosed meeting spaces and offices, existing staff and activities will transfer to new and improved facilities. Because the project is not proposing a change in the seating, trip generation is not anticipated to change with the addition of the project.

**Congestion Management Plan**

The County Congestion Management Plan (CMP) requires a LOS E or better for regional roadways. As noted previously the generation, distribution, and management of project traffic is not expected to conflict with the CMP; no CMP roadways occur in the vicinity of the project. The project and background traffic



will not exceed City level of service standards or travel demand measures, or other standards established by the City or Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) for designated roads or highways.

The Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fees (TUMF) program identifies network backbone and local roadways that are needed to accommodate growth.

The project proponent will be required to contribute development impact fees (e.g., traffic signal mitigation fees) and participate in the Traffic Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) program (further discussed in this section.) Following the payment of required fees such as TUMF and DIF, less than significant impacts are anticipated relative to the CMP.

### **Alternative Transportation**

Sunline Transit Agency provides public bus service throughout the Coachella Valley. Sunline Transit Agency provides bus services along Highway 111, Washington Street and Avenue 47 via Line 70. There is an existing bus stop for line 70 on the northwest corner of Washington Street and Avenue 48, adjacent to the southeast corner of the property. Transit service is reviewed and updated by Sunline periodically to address ridership, budget and community demand needs.

An existing off-street path (shared bike/pedestrian) is located along Washington Street, adjacent to the project. There is an existing sidewalk along the western side of Washington Street, along the project's eastern boundary. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in significant impacts to existing bike lanes. Temporary impacts may occur during construction; however, any bicycle access adjacent to the project will be restored to existing conditions.

The La Quinta General Plan Golf Cart/Neighborhood Electric Vehicle (NEV)/Multi-use Paths indicates that a Class III golf cart / NEV shared parking facility is shown along Washington Street from Avenue 47 to Avenue 48, apparently utilizing the Washington Street Frontage Road north of Lake La Quinta Drive.

The project would provide a pedestrian access network that internally links all uses and connects to all existing external streets and pedestrian facilities contiguous with the project site. The project would minimize barriers to pedestrian access and interconnectivity. The project includes sidewalk connections, particularly to / from the parking areas and church uses.

The proposed project is not anticipated to result in significant impacts to existing bike lanes. Temporary impacts may occur during construction; however, any bicycle access adjacent to the project will be restored to existing conditions.

The City of La Quinta implements a Development Impact Fee (DIF.) The proposed project is located within the City of La Quinta and will therefore be subject to the DIF. Eligible facilities for funding the City DIF program are identified on the County of Riverside's Public Needs List.

The project design will not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

### **Mitigation: None**

#### **b) Less Than Significant Impact.**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) procedures for determination of transportation impacts have recently changed to an evaluation of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) rather than vehicle delay or LOS, due to Senate Bill 743 (SB 743). Vehicle delay and level of service are still used in La Quinta traffic studies, as presented previously in this CEQA document.

To aid in the transition from LOS to VMT, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) released a Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (December of 2018) (**Technical Advisory**). Based on OPR's Technical Advisory, the City of La Quinta prepared their Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis Policy (**City Guidelines**). A Project specific VMT Screening has been prepared based on the adopted City Guidelines.

### **Methodology**

The City of La Quinta Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis Policy sets forth screening criteria under which projects are not required to submit detailed VMT analysis. This guidance for determination of non-significant VMT impact is primarily intended to avoid unnecessary analysis and findings that would be inconsistent with the intent of SB 743. VMT screening criteria for development projects include the following:

- **Project Type Screening:** Small projects and Local serving projects may be presumed to have a less than significant impact. Small projects and those with low trip generation per existing CEQA exemptions or result in 3,000 Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>) or less. Local serving projects are determined to shorten non-discretionary trips by putting goods and services closer to residents, resulting in an overall reduction in VMT.

### **Project Screening**

The project has been reviewed for VMT screening based on the criteria mentioned above and no further VMT analysis is needed. The proposed project will not increase the daily trips currently attributed to the existing facility, which meets screening criteria for small projects.

Additionally, based on the GHGA described previously in the Greenhouse Gases section of this CEQA document, the project-related GHG emission levels are anticipated to be 295.81 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> which is well below the CEQA threshold of 3,000 MTCO<sub>2e</sub>.

### **Conclusions**

The project is not anticipated to increase trip generation, and will not exceed the CEQA GHG emission threshold of 3000 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> therefore it is considered a small project. Trip generation changes mid-week would be nominal. Church uses are like park, day care, and government services in their use by local area residents. Therefore, changes to the church can be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. Therefore, the project will not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b). Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

### **Mitigation: None**

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project will be developed in accordance with City design guidelines and will not create a substantial increase in hazards due to a design feature. The project's access points will not be altered. Project-generated traffic will not change and is consistent with existing traffic in the area. The internal circulation system will provide adequate fire department access. Sharp curves are avoided by design guidelines.

A Traffic Control Plan may be required as a condition of approval to be implemented throughout all construction activities. This plan will work to reduce potential impacts that may arise due to conflicts with construction traffic. Impacts will be less than significant. The project's access points will be located with adequate sight distances, and project-generated traffic will be consistent with existing traffic in the area.

The project is not anticipated to increase hazards due to geometric design feature or incompatible uses. Following the review and approval process at the City of La Quinta, impacts are less than significant without mitigation. Therefore, less than significant project related impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Emergency Access: Regional access to the project site will be provided via primary arterials, secondary arterials and a variety of local roads.

Primary Project access will continue to be provided via the Project N Entry/Washington Street entrance. Emergency Access will be provided at the right in/right out only Project S. Driveway. Design guidelines further ensure that emergency access is incorporated into proposed project design.

Prior to construction, both the Fire department and Police department will review project plans to ensure safety measures are addressed, including emergency access. The proposed project will not result in inadequate emergency access. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	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 Resource Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local Register of historical resources as defined in Public Resource Code Section 5020.1(k), or;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Mitigative Archaeological Excavation and Data Recovery Report, CRM Tech; City of La Quinta 2035 General Plan Chapter III Natural Resources Element, 2013.

Setting:

The Coachella Valley is a historical center of Native American settlement, where U.S. surveyors noted large numbers of Indian villages and *rancherías* occupied by the Cahuilla people in the mid-19th century. The origin of the name “Cahuilla” is unclear, but it may have originated from their own word *káwiya*, meaning master or boss (Bean 1978). The Takic-speaking Cahuilla are generally divided by anthropologists into three groups, according to their geographic setting: the Pass Cahuilla of the San Geronio Pass-Palm Springs area, the Mountain Cahuilla of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains and the Cahuilla Valley, and the Desert Cahuilla of the eastern Coachella Valley.

The Cahuilla did not have a single name that referred to an all-inclusive tribal affiliation. Instead, membership was in terms of lineages or clans. Each lineage or clan belonged to one of two main divisions of the people, known as moieties, which were named for the Wildcat, or *Tuktum*, and the Coyote, or *Istam*. Members of clans in one moiety had to marry into clans from the other moiety. Individual clans had villages, or central places, and territories they called their own for purposes of hunting game and gathering raw materials for food, medicine, ritual, or tool use. They interacted with other clans through trade, intermarriage, and ceremonies.

Cahuilla subsistence was defined by the surrounding landscape and primarily based on the hunting and gathering of wild and cultivated foods, exploiting nearly all of the resources available in a highly developed seasonal mobility system. They were adapted to the arid conditions of the desert floor, the lacustral cycles of Holocene Lake Cahuilla, and the environments of the nearby mountains. When the lake was full or nearly full, the Cahuilla would take advantage of the resources presented by the body of fresh water, building elaborate stone fish traps. Once the lake had desiccated, they relied on the available terrestrial resources. Walk-in wells were dug by hand to utilize groundwater. The cooler temperatures and resources available at higher elevations in the nearby mountains were also taken advantage of.

Today, Native Americans of Pass or Desert Cahuilla heritage are mostly affiliated with one or more of the Indian reservations in and near the Coachella Valley, including Torres Martinez, Augustine, Cabazon, Agua Caliente, and

Morongo. There has been a resurgence of traditional ceremonies, and the language, songs, and stories are now being taught to the younger generations.

The project is located on developed land south of the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church building in the City of La Quinta. A project-specific Mitigative Archaeological Excavation and Data Recovery Report was prepared by CRM Tech (November 2021). The immediate objective of the mitigation program is to recover a representative sample of archaeological data from the portion of Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 that would be impacted by the project, including cremation remains first discovered at Site 33-002198 during an archaeological monitoring program in an adjacent portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church property in 2010. To accomplish this objective, CRM Tech completed a systematic resurvey of the site areas, the excavation of 29 data recovery units, and laboratory analysis of all cultural materials collected from both surface and subsurface contexts.

a i-ii) **Less than Significant with Mitigation.** As previously discussed in the Cultural Resources section of this document, the purpose of the Mitigative Archaeological Excavation and Data Recovery report study is to mitigate potential project impacts on Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415, both of which were previously found to qualify as “historical resources,” as defined by CEQA, through data recovery.

Site 33-002198 is the primary focus of the mitigation program. It was originally recorded in 1972 and has been revisited, surveyed systematically, and treated with test excavations. Meanwhile, the current project area was covered in its entirety by at least two standard Phase I cultural resources surveys in 1991 and 1998. A testing program conducted on 33-002198 in 1991 concluded that it was “unlikely that further research at this site would contribute substantially to our understanding of the lifeways of the prehistoric people of this area”. Subsequently, the 1998 survey found the site not to meet CEQA’s definition of a “historical resource”. Since the 1990s, however, shifting sands have been continuously altering the condition of Site 33-002198, burying some cultural remains while exposing others.

During an archaeological monitoring program in an adjacent portion of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church property in 2010, Native American and archaeological monitors observed a newly exposed concentration of calcined bone fragments at the location of 33-002198, which were then determined by the Riverside County Coroner’s Office to be consistent with cremated prehistoric human remains. Because of the cultural/spiritual significance of the cremation remains to the local Native Americans, the site was recommended for the statutory status of a “historical resource” at that time

As a result of the archaeological investigations completed during this study, a representative sample of the cultural deposits from Site 33-002198, in particular the cremated human remains, have been recovered for the mitigation effort. Most of Site 33-008145 was previously treated with a similar data recovery program in 2001, and the relatively small number of artifacts recovered from that site during this study do not substantially alter its archaeological data potential or the previously established status of the site.

After being designated the Most Likely Descendant by the State of California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), Ernest Morreo, an elder from the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, visited the site and blessed the remains. The tribe decided that since the cremation remains were not being impacted at the time, they should be left in place. The proposed St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Expansion Project, however, will now impact the portion of 33-002198 containing the remains, which was not included in the previous testing program. As a result, the current mitigation program was developed and implemented at the site to reduce the project impacts to a level less than significant.

The archaeological fieldwork for this mitigation program was completed between June 3 and June 9, 2020 with the assistance of Robin Lawson, Tribal monitor for the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians. Before beginning excavations, the project area was resurveyed at an intensive level by walking a series of transects spaced approximately five to ten meters apart and oriented either in the north-south direction or, on steeper terrain, along the natural contour. The existing site maps generated from the earlier studies were used to help locate archaeological remains recorded in the past, including the cremation feature discovered in 2010.

Based on these considerations, CRM TECH concludes that mitigation of potential project impacts on Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 has been partially accomplished through the research procedures carried out during this study. The mitigation effort will be completed upon the proper repatriation of the cremation remains according to the wishes of the Most Likely Descendent and the elders representing the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians. Despite the extensive archaeological research to date, the project area continues to have a demonstrated sensitivity for buried prehistoric remains, especially since the shifting sands have revealed previously unknown portions of the site in the past. In addition to locating the cremation feature that was discovered during the 2010 cultural monitoring program, the resurvey found groundstone, ceramics, and faunal remains on the surface that had been revealed by blown and shifting sands.

Information recovered from Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 indicates that they were used during the Late Prehistoric Period. It is well known to archaeologists and ethnographers that Native people would spread out across the surrounding countryside from their villages to collect items for food, shelter, clothing, adornment, and social activities. The data from these two sites do not provide any new, important information regarding the people that used the area or their culture. However, the presence of cremation remains that were encountered elevate its interpretation and cultural/spiritual significance, especially to the nearby Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians.

Since both Site 33-002198 and Site 33-008415 were previously determined to meet CEQA's definition of "historical resources," the potential impact of the proposed St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Expansion Project on these sites would constitute "a significant effect on the environment," and the current study was designed and implemented to mitigate the impact through archaeological data recovery in compliance with that provision.

As a result of the archaeological field procedures and laboratory analysis completed during this study, a representative sample of the cultural deposits from Site 33-002198, in particular the cremated human remains, have been recovered for the mitigation effort. Most of Site 33-008145 was previously treated with a similar data recovery program in 2001, and the relatively small number of artifacts recovered from that site during this study do not substantially alter its archaeological data potential or the previously established status of the site.

Based on these considerations, CRM TECH concludes that mitigation of potential project impacts on Sites 33-002198 and 33-008415 has been partially accomplished through this study. The mitigation effort will be completed upon the proper repatriation of the cremation remains according to the wishes of the Most Likely Descendent and the elders representing the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians.

To ensure that all significant Tribal Cultural Resources are identified and fully considered, the City of La Quinta initiated a 30-day government to government Tribal consultation period with local Tribes from April 22, 2022, to May 23, 2022.

During the consultation period one Tribe responded to consultation requests. The Tribe being the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (ACBCI). The ACBCI determined that although the project was not located within the boundaries of the ACBCI Reservation, the project is within the Tribe's Traditional Use Area. Additionally, a record check of the ACBCI's registry identified previous surveys in the area that were positive for the presence of cultural resources. Therefore, the ACBCI THPO requests formal government to government consultation (AB 52), all documentation regarding cultural resources associated with the project site, the presence of an archaeologist and an approved Agua Caliente Native American Cultural Resource Monitor during ground disturbing activities. These are indicated as Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3 and CUL-1 below. Therefore, less than significant impacts related to Tribal cultural resources are expected following the implementation of Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-4, and CUL-1 of this Initial Study.

**Mitigation:**

**TCR-1:** Formal government consultation under California Assembly Bill No. 52 (AB 52) shall commence between the City of La Quinta and the ACBCI.

**TCR-2:** Prior to any development activities, the project proponent shall provide a cultural resources inventory of the project area, conducted by a qualified archaeologist, a copy of the records search with associated survey reports and site records from the information center, and copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with the project.

**TCR-3:** The presence of an approved Agua Caliente Native American Cultural Resource Monitor(s) shall be required during any ground disturbing activities (including archaeological testing and surveys). Should buried cultural deposits be encountered, the Monitor may request that destructive construction in that area stop, and the Monitor shall notify a Qualified Archaeologist (Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines) to investigate and, if necessary, prepare a mitigation plan for submission to the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Agua Caliente Tribal Historic Preservation Office.

**CUL-1:** The presence of a qualified archaeologist shall be required during all project related ground disturbing activities, including clearing and grubbing. In the event that potentially significant archaeological materials are discovered, all work must be halted in the vicinity of the archaeological discovery until the archaeologist can assess the significance of the find, and its potential eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHC).

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonable foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: City of La Quinta 2035 General Plan, Chapter V, Public Infrastructure and Services, Riverside County EIR No. 52, Public Facilities, Section 4.17.

**Setting:**

CVWD provides domestic and wastewater service to the project vicinity and is largest provider of potable water in the Coachella Valley. It operates more than 100 wells and serves a population of 283,000 in its service areas. CVWD’s adopted 2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan has been developed to assist the agency in reliably meeting current and future water demands in a cost-effective manner. Additionally, CVWD treats nearly 6.3 billion gallons of wastewater a year. CVWD operates six water reclamation plants and maintains more than 1,000 miles of sewer pipeline and more than 30 lift stations that transport wastewater to the nearest treatment facility. No new water or wastewater treatment facilities are required as a result of the projects development.

The site is under the jurisdiction for power from IID, natural gas from Southern California Gas Company, and Frontier and Charter Communications for telecommunications. The site is currently connected to utility services located on Washington Street.

Groundwater is the primary source of domestic water supply in the Coachella Valley. CVWD is the largest provider of potable water in the Coachella Valley and currently provides potable water to the City of La Quinta. CVWD’s 2020 Regional Urban Water Management Plan and 2022 Indio Subbasin Water Management Plan have been developed to assist the agency in reliably meeting current and future water demands in a cost-effective manner. The comprehensive Water Management Plan guides efforts to eliminate overdraft, prevent groundwater level decline, protect water quality, and prevent land subsidence. The 2020 UWMP serves as a planning tool that documents actions in support of long-term water resources planning and ensures adequate water supplies are available to meet the existing and future urban water demands.

CVWD has developed a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) pursuant to the State Water Resources Control Board Order No. 2006-0003, Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) for Sanitary Sewer



Systems. The primary goal of the SSMP is to minimize frequency and severity of Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs). The SSMP will cover the management, planning, design, and operation and maintenance of the District's sanitary sewer system. The wastewater system serves approximately 265,000 customers. The system collects municipal waste from residential and commercial users, delivering the collected wastewater to one of six Wastewater Reclamation Plants. The system includes approximately 1,100 miles of sewer, 34 lift stations and approximately 17,000 manholes.

Solid waste disposal and recycling services for the City of La Quinta is provided by Burrtec. Solid waste and recycling collected from the proposed project will be hauled to the Edom Hill Transfer Station. Waste from this transfer station is then sent to a permitted landfill or recycling facility outside of the Coachella Valley. These include Badlands Disposal Site, El Sobrante Sanitary Landfill and Lamb Canyon Disposal Site. Cal-Recycle data indicates the Badlands Disposal site has 15,748.799 cubic yards of remaining capacity, the El Sobrante Landfill has a remaining capacity of 145,530,000 tons of solid waste, and Lamb Canyon Disposal has a remaining solid waste capacity of 19,242,950 cubic yards. As part of its long-range planning and management activities, the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources (RCDWR) ensures that Riverside County has a minimum of 15 years of capacity, at any time, for future landfill disposal. The 15-year projection of disposal capacity is prepared each year by as part of the annual reporting requirements for the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan. The most recent 15-year projection by the RCDWR indicates that no additional capacity is needed to dispose of countywide waste through 2024, with a remaining disposal capacity of 28,561,626 tons in the year 2024.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** As a standard requirement, the project site design will incorporate stormwater management by conveying site runoff into the project's sites existing retention facilities. The existing retention basin also includes two drywell facilities, which are typically implemented to accept and infiltrate low-flow runoff volume.

The site is currently connected to utility services located on Washington Street and the proposed expansion will not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, storm water drainage systems, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities. Therefore, less than significant impacts are expected as a result of project implementation.

**Mitigation:** None

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** To provide an adequate long-range forecast of future water demands, this 2022 Indio Subbasin Alternative Plan Update (Alternative Plan Update) uses a 25-year planning period from 2020 through 2045. Table 5-35 from the 2022 Indio Subbasin Water Management Plan presents the updated water demand projections for the Plan Area. Total water demand projected for 2045 is approximately 644,610 AFY. Projected water demand for 2045 is about 240,800 AFY lower than the 885,400 AFY originally projected for 2045 in the 2010 CVWMP Update. This reduction is a direct result of significantly reduced sociodemographic growth projections, along with conservation savings that have been achieved by Indio Subbasin water users over the last decade and are assumed for the future through passive conservation.

Per CVWD's Indio Subbasin Water Management Plan, the Indio Subbasin has both imported water and local water sources in its current water supply portfolio. This available water supply portfolio will be used to meet growing demands – municipal, agriculture, golf, and other demands.

The City's Municipal Code has several ordinances in place to ensure water supply and efficiency measures are in place. Additionally, the City has adopted CVWD's water-efficient landscape ordinance (in compliance with the Department of Water Resources Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance). This ordinance requires landscape design that incorporates climate appropriate plant material and efficient irrigation for all new and rehabilitated landscaping projects. Compliance with these ordinances will ensure that future development reduces water demand to meet target demands.

As previously discussed, the project site is currently graded and paved and used as overflow parking associated with the existing Church. Project development will include the construction of the proposed parish hall, administrative offices, walking paths, parking spaces, and associated infrastructure and landscaping. The project is currently tied into potable water through an existing 18-inch waterline on Washington Street and 8-inch waterlines serve the existing church, the proposed expansion will continue to connect to potable water through the existing 8-inch waterlines. The utilities will be further reviewed by the City and CVWD staff to ensure compliance with all current and applicable water requirements.

The expansion will be expected to implement water conservation measures to reduce impacts to the public water supply per the CVWD UWMP. Therefore, less than significant impacts to water supplies are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project will connect to the existing 10-inch sewer main currently serving the project. Flows would then be delivered to CVWDs Wastewater Reclamation Plant No.4 (WRP-4). WRP-4 has a plant capacity of 9.9 MGD located in Thermal. The annual average flow to this facility is approximately 4.75 MGD (5,300) AFY. The project will undergo additional review by CVWD and City staff to assure compliance with all current and applicable wastewater treatment requirements. Therefore, the project is not expected to exceed CVWD's wastewater capacity demand and less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation:** None

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

**Mitigation:** None

- e) **No Impact.** The project will comply with all applicable solid waste statutes, policies and guidelines. All development is required to comply with the mandatory commercial and multi-family recycling requirements of Assembly Bill 341. The project will also comply with the recycling requirements of Cal Green and develop a waste management plan that will include diverting at least 50% of construction and demolition material from landfills. No impacts are expected relative to applicable solid waste regulations.

**Mitigation:** None

20. <b>WILDFIRE</b> – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water resources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps; La Quinta General Plan; La Quinta General Plan Environmental Impact Report.

**Setting:**

A wildfire is an unplanned fire that burns in a natural area such as a forest, grassland, or prairie. Wildfires are often caused by humans or lightning and are exacerbated by steep slopes, dense vegetation (fuel), and dry and windy weather conditions. When these conditions are present, a wildfire can burn quickly and over a vast area, damaging hillsides, essential infrastructure, and homes and buildings.

The City of La Quinta is comprised of both urban and undeveloped uses. The northern and central portions of the City are primarily urbanized, with few remaining vacant areas. Meanwhile, the southern and western portions of the City are primarily occupied by vacant, undeveloped, and agricultural land uses, as well as the Santa Rosa Mountains, which are undeveloped, apart from the recreational uses (i.e. hiking trails) in this area. The undeveloped Santa Rosa Mountains in the southern portion of the City are characterized by steep topographic gradients that are typically conducive to spreading wildfires. Furthermore, the region’s hot, dry summer and autumn weather is considered ideal for generating the dry vegetation that fuel most wildfires. However, wildfires in the undeveloped local mountains adjacent to the Coachella Valley cities are not common due to the mountain’s natural terrain, which is steep, rocky, and dry. Furthermore, the Santa Rosa Mountains are made up primarily of Granitic rock and sparse desert vegetation. The topographic character of the Santa Rosa Mountains is not conducive for the growth of dense vegetation; and as a result, the amount of fuel available for wildland fires is limited. Additionally, the distance between the existing vegetation does not allow wildfires to spread easily.

In addition to the Granitic Santa Rosa Mountains, the flat urban and developed areas of the City of La Quinta are considered low wildfires areas, as indicated in the La Quinta General Plan Environmental Impact Report (LQGP EIR). Within the urban context of La Quinta, landscaped areas throughout the City are carefully maintained and watered regularly, creating conditions that limit the possibility for vegetation fires to ignite and spread.

A Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) is the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetation fuels. People and man-made structures in WUI areas are more susceptible to the impacts of wildfires due to their adjacency to areas that provide fuel to wildfires, such as forests with dense vegetation.

The City of La Quinta is situated at the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains, introducing an urban-wildland interface to the western and southern portions of the City. The project site is located in the southern portion of the City,

adjacent to the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains. As stated previously, the Santa Rosa Mountains are made up primarily of Granitic rock and sparse desert vegetation. These limited vegetative conditions in the City's western portion, are unlikely to cause a major wildfire. Additionally, the flat urban areas of the City are considered low wildfire areas, as indicated in the LQGP EIR.

- a-d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site currently operates as overflow parking for the existing St. Francis of Assisi Church. The project site sits within an urban and developed context within the City of La Quinta. Areas surrounding the project are defined by the existing St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church to the north of the project, the Church parking lot, Washington Street, and commercial structures to the east of the project, vacant land to the south of the project, and open space natural slopes associated with the Santa Rosa Mountains foothills west of the project.

According to CAL Fire's Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) in State Responsibility Areas (SRA) Map, the project site is not located in an SRA or located in an area classified as very high fire hazard severity zone. Per CAL Fire's map, the project property is located in a (incorporated) Local Responsibility Area (LRA) that is designated "non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" (VHFSZ). The project is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, therefore, no impacts are anticipated. Further discussion provided below.

Wildfire risk is related to a number of parameters, including fuel loading (vegetation), fire weather (winds, temperatures, humidity levels and fuel moisture contents) and topography (degree of slope). Steep slopes contribute to fire hazards by intensifying the effects of wind and make fire suppression difficult. Fuels such as grass are highly flammable because they have a high surface area to mass ratio and require less heat to reach the ignition point. Methods to address the hazard of wildland fires includes creating setbacks that buffer development from hazard areas, maintaining brush clearance to reduce potential fuel, use of low fuel landscaping, and use of fire resistant building techniques. Although the project site is located adjacent to the slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills, this area does not provide vegetative fuel that is conducive to wildfires, and the project's location within an urban and developed context within the City also reduces the project susceptibility to wildland fires. Therefore, the project site is not expected to expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire, and the project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.

The project will provide development of infrastructure (water, sewer, and storm drainage). Additionally, the project will be required to comply with building standards and guidelines to reduce potential impacts of fires. The proposed improvements would allow for decreased fire risk. The project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Access to the site currently exists via Washington Street, and the project does not propose changes to these existing access points. As a result, the project is not expected to require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

As stated previously, project site currently sits within an urban and developed context within the City of La Quinta. Areas surrounding the project are defined by the existing St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church to the north and east of the project, vacant land to the south of the project, and open space natural slopes associated with the Santa Rosa Mountains foothills west of the project. The slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills do not contain substantial vegetative fuel that would result in wildland fires. The vegetation that exists on the Santa Rosa Mountains is sparse and scattered, therefore, it is unlikely that wildland fires would occur along this area. Thus, downslope, downstream flooding, or landslides, as a result of runoff post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes would not occur. Overall, significant impacts are not anticipated.

**Mitigation:** None

21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

a) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** As concluded in the Biological and Cultural Resources sections of this document, the proposed project would result in no impacts or less than significant impacts with mitigation to these resources. The project is compatible with the City of La Quinta 2035 General Plan and Zoning and its surroundings. The project will not significantly degrade the overall quality of the region's environment, or substantially reduce the habitat of a wildlife species, case a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare of endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods or California history or prehistory. Based upon the information and mitigation measures provided within this Initial Study, approval and implementation of the project is not expected to substantially alter or degrade the quality of the environment, including biological, cultural or historical resources. Less than significant impacts with mitigation are expected.

**Mitigation:** See Biological Section IV and Cultural Section V.

a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project is surrounded by commercial and residential development and the proposed project and location, is found to be adequate and consistent with existing federal, state and local policies and is consistent with the City of La Quinta 2035 General Plan and surrounding land use. Approval and implementation of the proposed project will result in less than significant impacts related to cumulatively considerable impacts.

**Mitigation:** None

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

**Mitigation:** None