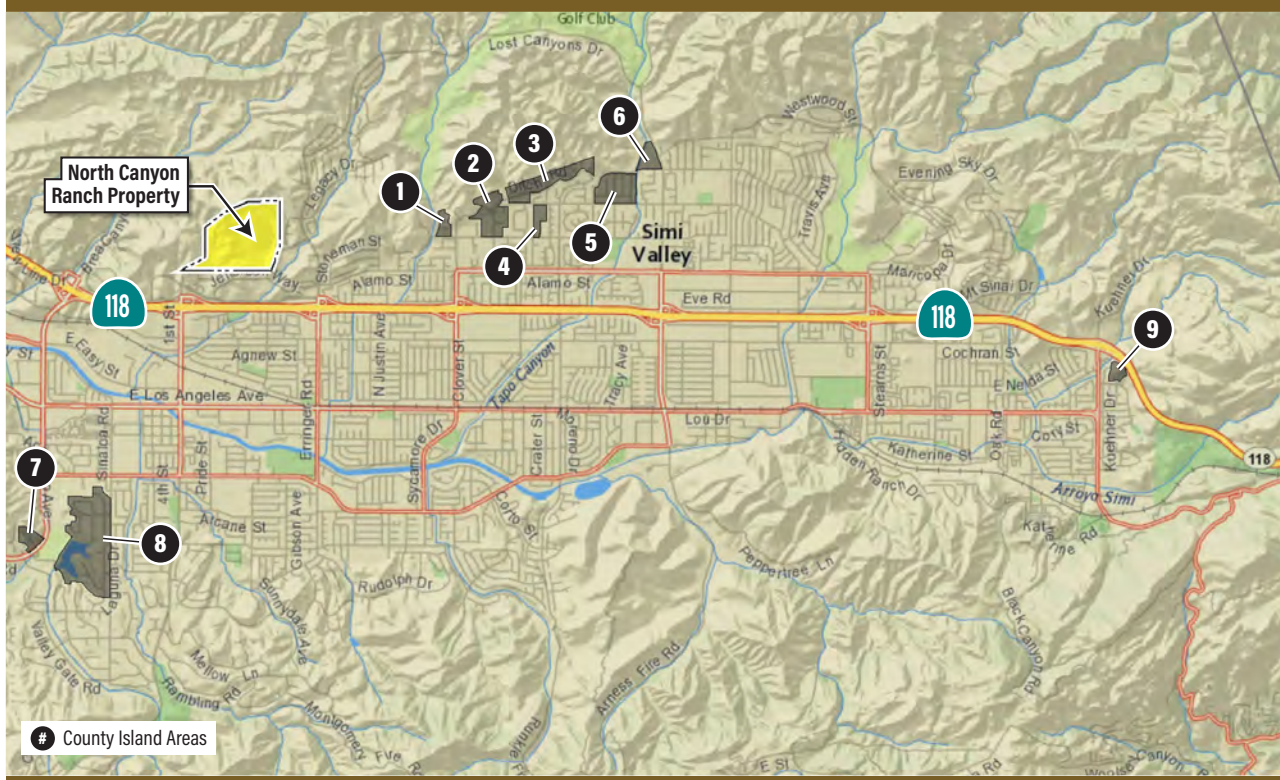


Draft Environmental Impact Report

North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations

Project Case Nos: ANX-0077, GPA-0073, Z-S-0613, PD-S-1054, TT-5658-A



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April 2024

NORTH CANYON RANCH & REQUIRED ISLAND ANNEXATIONS

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Project Case No(s): ANX-0077, GPA-0073, Z-S-0613, PD-S-1054, TT5658-A

Lead Agency:

CITY OF SIMI VALLEY

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	• C&C Sewer Study Feb 19, 2019
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ACRONYMS

AA	Administrative Action
AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
AAQS	Ambient Air Quality Standards
AB	Assembly Bill
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ACOE	Army Corps of Engineers
ACS	American Community Survey
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
AFY	acre feet per year
AHA	Affordable Housing Agreement
ANX	Annexation
APN	Assessor Parcel Number
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
Basin	South Central Coast Air Basin
BAU	Business As Usual
BIOS	Biogeographic Information and Observation System
BIOS	Biogeographic Information and Observation System
BMP	best management practices
C&D	construction and demolition
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
Cal EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
Cal-OSHA	California Occupational Safety and Health Administration
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CalGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
California ESA	California Endangered Species Act
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CALVENO	California-specific vehicle noise (curves)
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CAPCOA	California Air Pollution Control Officers Association
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CAS	Climate Adaptation Strategy
CBSC	California Building Standards Code
CBC	California Building Code
CBIA v. BAAQMD	California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District
CC&R	Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CCRC	Continuing Care Retirement Center
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDMG	California Division of Mines and Geology
CEC	California Energy Commission
CEQA	California Environmental Impact Report
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFC	California Fire Code
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
cfs	cubic feet per second

CGP	Construction General Permit
CGS	California Geological Survey
CH ₄	Methane
City	City of Simi Valley
CKH Guide	Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act
CMA	Congestion Management Agency
CMP	Congestion Management Program
CMU	Concrete Masonry Unit
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	Community Equivalent Noise Level
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CO ₂ e	CO ₂ Equivalents
COVID 19	Coronavirus
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
CTF	Cleaner Technology And Fuels
CUP	Conditional Use Permit
CURB	City Urban Restriction Boundary
CWA	Clean Water Act
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plan
DA	Development Agreement
dB	decibels
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DBH	diameter at breast height
DHS	Department of Health Services
DPW	Department of Public Works
Draft EIR	Draft Environmental Impact Report
DU or du	dwelling unit
du/ac	dwelling unit/acre
EB	Eastbound
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
Envicom	Envicom Corporation
EO	Executive Order
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EV	Electric Vehicle
F	Fahrenheit
F&G	Fish and Game
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FHRP	Fire Hazard Reduction Program
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FPP	Fire Protection Plan
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GHGRP	Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program
GPA	General Plan Amendment
GPD	gallons per day

gpm	gallons per minute
GWDR	General Wastewater Discharge Requirement
GWMP	Groundwater Management Plan
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HCWD	Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridor
HFCS	Hydrofluorocarbons
HFRA	Healthy Forest Restoration Act
HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan
HOA	Homeowners Association
HVAC	Heating Ventilation and Cooling
iADAM	Air Quality Data Statistics
IBC	International Building Code
ICU	Intersection Capacity Analysis
in/sec	inches per second
IRPS	Integrated Resource Plans
IWMP	Integrated Waste Management Plan
LAFCo	Local Agency Formation Commission
LARWQCB	Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
LCFS	Low Carbon Fuel Standard
Ldn	Day-Night Average Level
Leq	continuous equivalent noise level
LEV	Low Emission Vehicle
LID	Low Impact Development
Lmax	maximum noise level
LOS	Level of Service
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MCLs	Maximum Containment Levels
MERV	Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value
mgd	million gallons a day
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MOD	Modification
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MSL	Mean sea level
MT	Metric Tons
MW	Megawatts
MWD	Metropolitan Water District
MY	Model Year
N ₂ O	Nitrous Oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NF ₃	Nitrogen Trifluoride
NGO	non-governmental organization
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NO	Nitric Dioxide
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NO _x	Nitrogen Oxides
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

NPPA	Native Plant Protection Act
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
O ₃	Ozone
OES	Office of Emergency Services
OHP	California Office of Historic Preservation
OHWM	ordinary high water mark
OPR	Office Of Planning And Research
OS	Open Space
PD	Planned Development
PFCS	Perfluorocarbons
PHEV	Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle
PM	Particulate Matter
POU	Publicly Owned Utility
ppm	Parts per million
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code
QIs	Quaternary Landslide Debris
RACT SIP	Reasonably Available Control Technology State Implementation Plan
RCNM	Roadway Construction Noise Model
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RE	Residential Estate Density
RFP	Reasonable Further Progress
RFS	Renewable Fuel Standard
RL	Residential Low Density
RM	Residential Medium
RMod	Residential Moderate Density
ROG	Reactive Organic Gas
RPS	Renewables Portfolio Standard
RRU	Remote Radio Unit
RSRPD	Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SF ₆	Sulfur Hexafluoride
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SO ₂	Sulphur Dioxide
SOAR	Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SQUIMP	Stormwater Quality Urban Impact Mitigation Plan
SR-118	State Route 118
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SRRE	Source Reduction and Recycling Element
SSD	Sanitation Services Division
SSMP	Sewer System Management Plan
SVLRC	Simi Valley Landfill and Recycling Center

SVMC	Simi Valley Municipal Code
SVPD	Simi Valley Police Department
SVUSD	Simi Valley Unified School District
SWIS	Solid Waste Information System
SWP	State Water Project
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	Toxic Air Contaminants
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Officers
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TP	Tentative Parcel
TM	Tentative Map
U.F.	Usage Factor
U.S. EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
UBC	Uniform Building Code
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VCAPCD	Ventura County Air Pollution Control District
VCFD	Ventura County Fire Protection District, or Ventura County Fire Department
VCLIP	Ventura County Locally Important Plant Species
VCTC	Ventura County Transportation Commission
VdB	vibration decibels
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound
W	Wireless Application
WB	Westbound
WEAP	Worker Environmental Awareness Plan
WSA	water supply assessment
WSCP	Water Shortage Contingency Plan
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant
WTP	Wireless Telecommunications Permit
WUI	wildland urban interface
Z	Zone Change
µg/m ³	micrograms per cubic meter

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SECTIONS

ES EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ES.1 INTRODUCTION

This Executive Summary encapsulates the contents and findings of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR), which was prepared by the City of Simi Valley (City) as lead agency for the proposed project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)¹ and the CEQA Guidelines.²

Section 15123 of the CEQA Guidelines,³ describes the requirements for the Summary section of an EIR as follows:

- “(a) An EIR shall contain a brief summary of the proposed action and its consequences. The language of the summary should be as clear and simple as reasonably practical.
- (b) The summary shall identify:
- (1) Each significant effect with proposed mitigation measures and alternatives that would reduce or avoid that effect;
 - (2) Areas of controversy known to the lead agency including issues raised by agencies and the public; and
 - (3) Issues to be resolved, including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigate significant effects.
- (c) The summary should normally not exceed 15 pages.”

ES.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations Draft EIR is a project EIR prepared pursuant to CEQA, to address the potential environmental impacts of multiple properties to be annexed to the City, including:

- 1) **North Canyon Ranch** – Development and annexation of a 207-unit (157 single family homes and 50 townhomes) residential project (project), proposed by SVJV Partners, LLC. Development.
- 2) **Required Island Annexations** – Annexation of nine developed County areas within or adjacent to City boundaries, referred as County Islands, required by the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo).

Both of these components (collectively “the project”), require the LAFCo annexation process, as neither is within the City’s jurisdiction. LAFCo requires that the Required Island Annexations be annexed before or concurrently with annexation of the North Canyon Ranch property. LAFCo considers discontinuous County Island areas to be contrary to LAFCo’s goal for the orderly development of land. One Draft EIR was prepared because the annexations are proposed within the same timeframe and a single EIR will provide a composite analysis that foresees any combined impacts of the proposals. Both components of the project are County unincorporated lands within the City’s Sphere of Influence (SOI) boundary and within the City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB) adopted in the General Plan.⁴

¹ Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq., California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

² 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15000, et seq., (CEQA Guidelines).

³ CEQA Guidelines Section 15123.

⁴ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, as amended by the Simi Valley 2030 General Plan Update, June 2012.

ES.2.1 Project Overview

Please refer to Section 2.0 Project Description of this Draft EIR for additional detail, including tables and figures describing the proposed project components.

North Canyon Ranch

The North Canyon Ranch project site is located in the northwestern portion of the City, north of the 118 Freeway and west of Erringer Road. The site would be served by the North Canyon Ranch project's extension of Falcon Street from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west. The 160.32-acre North Canyon Ranch project site is currently vacant and undeveloped, with some previously modified areas, which include some graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, two debris basins that protect urban areas to the south from stormwater and debris flows, and man-made ditches which were constructed in the past to direct stormwater flows around the perimeter of previously graded areas.

The project Tentative Map (TM) would subdivide the current site and the project would construct 157 single family homes and 50 multi-family units, for a total of 207 residential units. The project site is currently unincorporated Ventura County territory that falls within the City's SOI and CURB boundaries adopted in the General Plan.

Island Annexations

Islands 1-9 are unincorporated areas proposed for annexation to the City along with the North Canyon Ranch project property. The Islands are currently unincorporated Ventura County territory that fall within the City's SOI and CURB boundaries adopted in the General Plan.

These County Island areas consist of 444 parcels totaling 326.06 acres, most of which are developed with single family homes, with several properties vacant or in other uses, such as Sinaloa Lake, a park and a plant nursery. While no physical changes are proposed, each analysis Section of the Draft EIR nevertheless evaluates the potential for the impacts from these annexations.

ES.3 Project Objectives

The project objectives for the North Canyon Ranch component of the project are as follows:

- Construct a variety of housing types to expand the City's housing stock (i.e., both single family and multi-family housing) and help to meet the City Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) projections.
- Provide new housing designed and built to modern energy-efficient standards.
- Establish open space areas within the subdivision to provide for aesthetic and health benefits of the future project and surrounding area residents.
- Construct the extension of Falcon Street, from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west, fulfilling a City General Plan component that promotes mobility within the City for use by automobiles, busses, and bicycles.

The objectives for the Required Island Annexation component of the project are as follows:

- Incorporate County Island areas, which are within and adjacent to the City boundaries in order to provide for orderly growth and development and land use oversight, in compliance with the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.

- Establish more efficient and logical geographic boundaries for planning and zoning purposes.
- Provide for a more logical jurisdictional arrangement for the efficient provision of public services.

ES.4 Required Approvals/Uses of the EIR

This Draft EIR addresses the proposed approval of the North Canyon Ranch project and the Required Island Annexations. Implementation of the project requires approvals which are expected to include but may not be limited to those shown in **Table ES-1, Project Approval Requests**.

Table ES-1
Project Approval Requests

Approval / Permit	Agency
North Canyon Ranch Property	
Annexation to the City (ANX-0077)	LAFCo
General Plan Amendment – (GPA-0073) From: Residential Medium Density (3.6 - 5 du/acre) and Residential Moderate Density (5.1-10 du/acre), and Open Space. To (Reconfigure): Residential Medium and Residential Moderate and Open Space	City
Zone Change – (Z-S-0613) From: Un-zoned by City (County Zoned OS). To: Residential Medium (RM), RMod (Residential Moderate), and OS (Open Space)	City
Tentative Map (TT 5658-A)	City
Planned Development Permit (PD-S-1054)	City
Grading and Building Permits	City
Biological Resource Regulatory Approvals	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and L.A. Regional Water Quality Control Board
Annexation to County Waterworks District No. 8 for potable water service	LAFCo
Island Annexation Areas	
Annexation to the City	LAFCo
Annexation to County Waterworks District No. 8 for potable water service	LAFCo
Detachment from County Service Area No. 32 which provides oversight of private septic systems in the unincorporated areas of the County.	LAFCo
General Plan Amendment	City
Zone Change	City

ES.5 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Table ES-2, Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures, lists the project’s environmental impacts by issue area and provides the measures identified to reduce potentially significant impacts. The table identifies the significance of impacts before and after the implementation of mitigation. For conciseness, North Canyon Ranch (NCR) and Required Island Annexations (RIA) are abbreviated in Table ES-2. The mitigation measures presented are those required to reduce project impacts to less than significant, after the application of standard regulatory compliance. Many laws that provide environmental protections are

required of new development, as described in the environmental analysis sections within Chapter 4.0, Impact Analysis. In addition, conditions of approval will be placed on the North Canyon Ranch TM, to specify development requirements to define the form, safety, and functionality of the proposed development.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
AGRICULTURE AND OPEN SPACE (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.2)			
4.2.3.1 Convert Farmland			
<p>NCR: The NCR site does not contain California Department of Conservations, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, is not in agricultural use, and is not zoned for agricultural land use. Although FMMP-designated as Grazing Land, the project site is not used for current or recent grazing or other agricultural uses and is not enrolled in a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, the project would not convert farmland.</p>	<p>No Impact.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>No Impact.</p>
<p>RIA: Annexation Area 6 contains land classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland by the FMMP, and is pre-zoned as Residential Moderate Density (RMod) and Residential Low Density (RL), similar to surrounding lands. The County Assessor lists approximately 11.3 acres of Annexation Area 6 as “orchards (mixed) and vineyards,” though based on available aerial photos, even less of the site is currently in active agricultural use. No development is proposed by this project; however, indirectly the re-zoning of this area could result in an eventual conversion of FMMP-designated important agricultural land to non-agricultural use. If so, this conversion would be small in relation to the total agricultural land in Ventura County and the state, and this combined with the isolated location of the site makes it less viable for agricultural use.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
4.2.3.2 Disorderly Conversion of Open Space or Farmland			
<p>NCR: The City has for some time planned for the orderly development of the site by including the North Canyon Ranch property within its SOI and CURB boundaries, assigning pre-planned General Plan land use designations, and including plans for the extension of Falcon street on the site. Based on City plans and the proposed subdivision layout, development would be an orderly extension of City-developed land and there would be no direct or indirect impact regarding disorderly development.</p>	No Impact.	None required.	No Impact.
<p>RIA: Annexation Area 6 contains land classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland by the FMMP, and is pre-zoned as Residential Moderate Density (RMod) and Residential Low Density (RL), similar to surrounding lands. The County Assessor lists approximately 11.3 acres of Annexation Area 6 as “orchards (mixed) and vineyards,” but based on available aerial photos, even less of the site is currently in active agricultural use. Although no development is proposed by this project; indirectly the re-zoning of this area could result in an eventual conversion of FMMP-designated agricultural land to non-agricultural use. If so, this conversion would be small in relation to the total agricultural land in Ventura County and the state, but the conversion would result in a more orderly, residential land use pattern in the site vicinity and residential use is intended by the City General Plan.</p>	No Impact.	None required.	No Impact.
<p>Annexation Area 9 is designated as Community Park in the City General Plan, though has never been developed as a park. The larger the two component parcels is 7.90 acres, owned by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, County-zoned OS-160. The smaller parcel is 1.14 acres, is in private ownership, is County-zoned OS-10. Both parcels are proposed to be City-</p>			

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
zoned Residential Estate (RE), similar to but less dense than the adjacent land use, and the project proposal would not result in disorderly conversion.			
AIR QUALITY (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.3)			
4.3.3.1 Conflict with Air Quality Management Plan			
NCR: The proposed North Canyon Ranch development would not generate growth exceeding the projected population growth forecast for the City and would not be in conflict with the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District’s (VCAPCD’s) Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). Updates to the General Plan and AQMP going forward would reflect the development of the project site.	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
RIA: Five undeveloped lots within the RIA areas could potentially be developed with single-family dwelling units, although no physical changes within these properties is proposed at this time. However, should it occur, development of five single-family homes would be a minimal air quality impact, considering the 207-unit NCR project impacts would be below VCAPCD thresholds.	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
4.3.3.2 Emissions of Criteria Pollutants			
NCR: Using VCAPCD approved modeling methods, the NCR project impacts would fall below significance thresholds for both the construction and operational periods.	Less than Significant.	None required; however, the following Project Design Feature is assumed in the analysis and will be required: <u>PDF AQ-1: Tier 4 Grading Equipment</u> During site preparation and grading activities, all diesel-powered earthmoving equipment used on-site for excavation and grading shown with an asterisk in <u>Table 4.3-4</u> , Conceptual Construction Equipment Fleet and Duration, of the Draft EIR must meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Tier 4 emissions standards.	Less than Significant.
RIA: The City’s annexation of the RIA would not result in additional emissions of pollutants, as no development is proposed at this time. However,	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
should it occur, development of five single-family homes would be a minimal air quality impact, considering the 207-unit NCR project impacts would be below VCAPCD thresholds.			
4.3.3.3 Sensitive Receptors			
<p>NCR: Project construction activities would be dispersed across the approximately 86-acre grading area, and thus a relatively small portion of the project's overall grading and construction emissions would occur near the existing adjacent residential uses. The project's potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during temporary construction would be less than significant. Compliance with VCAPCD Rule 55 for dust suppression is assumed. VCAPCD recommended best management practices to avoid Valley Fever are required (MM AQ-1).</p>	Potentially Significant.	<p><u>MM AQ-1: Valley Fever (Construction Only)</u></p> <p>To reduce the potential for exposure to Valley Fever impacts during construction, the project must, to the extent feasible, implement the following construction best management practices, which are based upon measures recommended in the VCAPCD's Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (2003):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer construction employees coccidioidin skin tests (since those with positive tests can be considered immune to reinfection). • Hire crews from local populations where possible, since it is more likely that they have been previously exposed to the fungus and are therefore more likely immune. • Require crews to use respirators during project clearing, grading, and excavation operations in accordance with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Regulations. • Require that the cabs of all grading and construction equipment be air-conditioned. • Require crews to work upwind from excavation sites where feasible. • Pave construction roads. • Where acceptable to the Ventura County Fire Protection District, control weed growth by mowing instead of disking, thereby leaving the ground undisturbed and with a mulch covering. • During rough grading and construction, the access way into the project site from adjoining paved roadways should be paved or treated with environmentally safe dust control agents. 	Less than Significant.
RIA: No development is proposed with the project. The City's annexation of the County Islands would not result in physical changes, and thus additional emissions of pollutants that could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
concentrations would not occur. Future development of 5 single-family dwelling units could result in minimal potential impacts.			
4.3.3.4 Other Emissions/Odors			
NCR: The project is a residential development. Neither construction nor operations would generate substantial odors.	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
RIA: No physical change in the RIA is proposed, and no substantial odors would be expected with potential future development of the five vacant lots.	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.4)			
4.4.3.1 Candidate, Sensitive, and Special Status Species			
<p>NCR: Project grading would impact three special-status plant species that are on the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) watch list: Catalina mariposa lily (<i>Calochortus catalinae</i>), Plummer's mariposa lily (<i>Calochortus plummerae</i>), and small-flowered morning glory (<i>Convolvulus simulans</i>). Although project impacts to these watch-list species would be adverse, these species are not rare, are secure locally, and do not meet criteria to be considered locally significant. Therefore, impacts to these three special status plant species would be less than significant.</p> <p>Special-status wildlife species that could be directly impacted with varying probabilities ranging from moderate to very low, include: the coast horned lizard (<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>), coast patch-nosed snake (<i>Salvadora hexalepis virgulata</i>), California glossy snake (<i>Arizona elegans occidentalis</i>), California legless lizard / southern California legless lizard (<i>Anniella</i> sp. / <i>A. stebbinsi</i>), San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (<i>Lepus californicus bennetii</i>), San Diego desert woodrat (<i>Neotoma lepida</i>), western spadefoot (<i>Spea hammondi</i>), American badger (<i>Taxidea taxus neglecta</i>); and the Crotch bumble-bee</p>	Potentially Significant.	<p><u>MM BIO-1: Biological Monitor</u></p> <p>Before the Building Official issues a grading permit, the permittee must retain a qualified lead biologist (see qualifications below) subject to the approval of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), if applicable. The lead biologist must ensure that impacts to all biological resources are minimized or avoided and conduct (or supervise) pre-project field surveys and routine monitoring for species that may be avoided, affected, or eliminated as a result of grading or any other site preparation activities. The lead biologist must also conduct a pre-project environmental education program for all personnel working at the site, which is focused on conditions and protocols necessary to avoid and minimize potential impacts to biological resources. The lead biologist must also ensure that daily monitoring reports (e.g., survey results, protective actions, results of protective actions, adaptive measures) are prepared, and make these monitoring reports available to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW at their request.</p> <p>The qualified lead biologist must meet the following minimum qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, botany, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology or environmental biology; 	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
<p><i>(Bombus crotchii)</i> (candidate). The habitat loss associated with the project would not significantly impact a population of any of these species, given the amount of remaining suitable habitat in the surrounding area, and within the project proposed open space. Direct impacts to these species including injury and mortality would be potentially significant but mitigable impact.</p> <p>The site is also within U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) designated Critical Habitat for the California gnatcatcher (within Ventura County and Los Angeles County Unit 13), and gnatcatchers and their habitat exist onsite. Impacts would be potentially significant but mitigable.</p> <p>With mitigation disallowing use of anticoagulant rodenticides, the project would not result in a significant impact to mountain lions. Mitigation is also required to reduce potential impact to nesting birds and the western spadefoot toad to less than significant.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an up-to-date subscription to and experience using the California Natural Diversity Database/BIOS; • Be able to map survey findings in GIS; • Be at a senior level with a high-level of local biological experience and proficiency in evaluating compliance with federal and state regulations, policies, and procedures applicable to biological resources and jurisdictional waters and riparian habitat; • Have at least four years of experience as a lead biologist supervising biological monitoring projects; • Have at least four years of experience performing botanical and wildlife surveys within the region (e.g., Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and/or Los Angeles Counties); and • Possess any necessary permits and memoranda of understanding with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CDFW for handling potentially occurring special-status species. <p><u>MM BIO- 2: Protection Measures During Construction Activities</u></p> <p>The following measures must be implemented during the construction phase to avoid impacts to native habitats adjacent to or in the vicinity of the limits of disturbance, as well as special-status flora and fauna that could potentially be associated with these habitats.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Before any ground disturbing and construction activities, the permittee must demarcate the project limits of disturbance with temporary exclusionary fencing to prevent encroachment of project activities into adjacent native habitats and jurisdictional waterways, and to dissuade wildlife from entering the construction area. The fencing must be marked with highly visible flagging. Temporary signs must be posted or placed at regular intervals along the fencing prohibit access beyond the project limits. The Environmental Services Director, or designee, must verify fencing was correctly installed before to the start of ground disturbance or construction activities. The temporary fencing must be routinely inspected and maintained in functional condition for the duration of project construction. b. The monitoring biologist must conduct routine surveys to locate and remove wildlife within the work site. c. No construction and maintenance activities may occur during nighttime hours, except in an emergency or if authorized by the Environmental Services Director, or designee. 	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>d. If construction lighting is required, then lighting must be pointed away from native habitats and be pointed downward and shielded to the extent practicable.</p> <p>e. To the extent feasible, the following measures to avoid excessive construction noise must be implemented at the construction site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction equipment must be properly maintained per manufacturer’s specifications and fitted with noise suppression devices (e.g., mufflers, silences, wraps). • Impact tools must be shrouded or shielded, and intake and exhaust ports on power equipment must be muffled or shielded. • Low-noise emission equipment must be used. • Construction equipment must be shut down when not in use and must not idle for extended periods of time. • Work areas such as stationary construction noise sources must be situated so louder activities occur as far from native habitats as possible. • Noise pads or dampers must be used, where necessary. • The use of generators must be minimized. • Construction activities must not occur during nighttime hours. <p>f. No pets are allowed on the project site.</p> <p>g. Trash must be disposed of in closed-containers, and all food-related trash must be disposed of in closed animal-proof containers. The permittee must provide sufficient containers on-site during construction.</p> <p>h. Standard measures to control fugitive dust shall be implemented at the construction site, including sufficient watering of disturbed areas and reduced vehicle speeds below 15 m.p.h.</p> <p>i. All trenches must be filled within the same day or escape ramps for animals will be constructed if trenches are to be left open overnight.</p> <p>j. All project related equipment and vehicles must be cleaned and decontaminated of weeds and soils before entering the project site to reduce the potential for the spread and introduction of invasive and noxious weeds.</p> <p>k. The project must obtain and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to prevent discharge and runoff of pollutants into streams and riparian habitats as well as the natural habitats adjacent to the construction footprint.</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>The City or City-approved construction monitor must conduct site inspections to ensure these construction phase measures are implemented. The construction monitor must maintain a record of monitoring notes including construction activities and observations for submittal to the City, when requested.</p> <p><u>MM BIO-3: Pre-Construction Surveys for Special-Status Wildlife</u></p> <p>Before the Permittee commences ground or vegetation disturbing activities including, without limitation, grading and fuel modification, pre-construction surveys must be conducted by qualified wildlife biologist(s) (see qualifications below) approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW (if applicable) to determine the presence/absence of the following ground dwelling special-status wildlife species at the site: coast horned lizard (<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>) [SSC], coast patch-nosed snake (<i>Salvadora hexalepis virgulata</i>) [SSC], California glossy snake (<i>Arizona elegans occidentalis</i>) [SSC], California legless lizard / southern California legless lizard (<i>Anniella sp. / A. stebbinsi</i>) [SSC], San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (<i>Lepus californicus bennetii</i>), San Diego desert woodrat (<i>Neotoma lepida</i>), western spadefoot (<i>Spea hammondi</i>) [SSC], American badger (<i>Taxidea taxus neglecta</i>) [SSC], and Crotch bumble-bee (<i>Bombus crotchii</i>) [Candidate CE]. These special-status species are potentially occurring within the grading and fuel modification zones and could be susceptible to potential impacts, if they are present. At a minimum, one survey must be conducted within 14 days before commencing activities that will disturb the ground or vegetation and a second survey must be conducted within three days before commencing ground or vegetation disturbing activities. The pre-construction surveys must incorporate appropriate methods and timing to detect the species that may potentially occur at the site. If a special-status species is found, avoidance is the preferred option (e.g., waiting for the animal(s) to leave the grading/construction footprint or the use of exclusionary devices to prevent the animal(s) from entering the grading/construction footprint). If avoidance is not feasible, with notification to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW, the animal(s) may be captured and transferred to appropriate habitat and location where they would not be harmed by project activities, preferably to open space habitats in the vicinity of the project site. If a federally or State listed species is found, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CDFW, as</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>applicable, and the Environmental Services Director, or designee, must be consulted before the start of project activities. A letter report summarizing the methods and results of the surveys and relocation efforts, if applicable, must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, CDFW, and USFWS, as applicable, before commencement of project activities.</p> <p>The qualified wildlife biologist(s) must meet the following minimum qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, botany, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology or environmental biology; • Have an up-to-date subscription to and experience using the California Natural Diversity Database/BIOS; • Be able to map survey findings in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map survey findings in GIS; • Have at least four years of experience performing wildlife surveys within the region (e.g., Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and/or Los Angeles Counties); and, • Possess the necessary permits and memoranda of understanding with USFWS and CDFW before handling potentially occurring special-status species. <p><u>MM BIO-4: California Gnatcatcher</u></p> <p>Within one year after the Building Official issues a grading permit, the applicant must retain a City and USFWS-approved biologist authorized under Section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act to conduct protocol surveys for the California gnatcatcher, in accordance with the USFWS’s “Coastal California Gnatcatcher Presence/Absence Survey Guidelines” (February 28, 1997). The survey area must include the entire project site. The applicant must provide the protocol survey report to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and USFWS. In addition to all standard protocol survey requirements, the survey report shall include maps depicting the extent and acreages of occupied habitat, which includes the breeding territories and/or home ranges of the birds.</p> <p>The applicant must initiate consultation with USFWS and if required by USFWS the applicant must implement one of the following procedures:</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>a. If the project involves federal permitting or funding (collectively, “federal nexus”), then the applicant must complete consultation with the relevant federal agency and USFWS pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act; or</p> <p>b. If the project does not involve a federal nexus but may result in the take of coastal California gnatcatcher, the applicant must apply to the USFWS for an Incidental Take Permit, pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act. To qualify for the Incidental Take Permit, the applicant must submit an application to the USFWS together with a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that describes (at a minimum) how the impacts of the proposed taking of coastal California gnatcatcher are minimized and mitigated, and how the plan will be funded.</p> <p>The applicant must submit the following to the Environmental Services Director, or designee:</p> <p>a. If the project involves federal permitting or funding, the applicant must submit a copy of one of the following documents: (a) a Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS; or (b) a written concurrence letter from the USFWS stating the project is unlikely to adversely affect the California gnatcatcher; or</p> <p>b. If the project does not involve federal permitting or funding, the applicant must submit a copy of one of the following documents: (a) an Incidental Take Permit and HCP or (b) a written concurrence letter from the USFWS stating that the project is unlikely to adversely affect the California gnatcatcher.</p> <p>Compensatory mitigation requirements will be addressed in the Biological Opinion or HCP. Compensatory mitigation for project impacts to the California gnatcatcher must include the following, or as otherwise required by USFWS:</p> <p>a. For permanent impacts to occupied California gnatcatcher habitat including habitat permanently removed, modified, or degraded, the applicant shall restore and/or enhance and permanently preserve by conservation easement or deed restriction suitable onsite California gnatcatcher habitat at a 2:1 mitigation-to-impact ratio, and/or permanently preserve currently unprotected suitable California gnatcatcher habitat offsite at a 3:1 mitigation-to-impact ratio. In addition, a minimum 100-foot vegetated buffer around the suitable mitigation habitat</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>shall also be preserved to minimize potential edge effects of existing or future urban development on the mitigation habitat. Performance standards for restoration, enhancement, and establishment shall be based on conditions at high-quality reference sites of the habitats being mitigated. The applicant shall provide an endowment for the long-term management of mitigation lands that are permanently preserved.</p> <p>b. The permittee must mitigate for any temporary impacts to occupied California gnatcatcher habitat by in-kind restoration and re-vegetation within the temporarily disturbed area at a 1:1 ratio. Performance standards for restoration and re-vegetation shall be based on conditions at high-quality reference sites of the habitats being mitigated.</p> <p>c. If grading for the project is to occur outside of the one-year survey timeframe, the applicant will be required to obtain a new survey report and consultation with USFWS before the Building Official issues a grading permit.</p> <p><u>MM BIO-5: Anticoagulant Rodenticides</u></p> <p>Rodenticides containing any anticoagulant compounds including, without limitation, Warfarin, Brodifacoum, Bromadiolone, or Diphacinone may not be used in public areas associated with the project, including fuel modification zones, public streets, detention basins, landscaping lots, and pocket parks. The permittee must maintain a record of rodenticides used at the project site including their labels for review by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, when requested.</p> <p><u>MM BIO-6: Creation and/or Restoration of Western Spadefoot Breeding Habitat</u></p> <p>The permittee must retain a qualified herpetologist approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW to prepare a Western Spadefoot Habitat Mitigation Plan, which includes creation of spadefoot breeding habitat within suitable areas onsite. The breeding habitat impacted must be replaced at a minimum 2:1 ratio. Two mitigation pools must be created at disparate locations to off-set the loss of the existing breeding pool. The mitigation pools and a minimum 50-foot buffer around the pools must be preserved as permanent open space in a manner approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee. The pools must be as far as feasible</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>from existing and proposed development. The Western Spadefoot Habitat Mitigation Plan must include at a minimum the breeding pool locations and design, an implementation plan, success criteria, maintenance activities, a monitoring program, and contingency measures. The mitigation pools must be designed such that they only support standing water for several weeks following seasonal rains to reduce the ability of aquatic predators (e.g., fish, bullfrogs, and crayfish) to become established. Terrestrial habitat surrounding the mitigation pools must be similar in type, aspect, and density as the location of the existing pool, as feasible. Success criteria include verifiable evidence of toad reproduction at the mitigation pools. If suitable locations are not available onsite, the impact must be mitigated by creation and/or restoration of offsite spadefoot breeding habitat at a 2:1 ratio within the Calleguas Creek watershed.</p> <p>The Western Spadefoot Habitat Mitigation Plan must be approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW and implemented before the Building Official issues a grading permit. The existing breeding pool may not be impacted during the spadefoot breeding season (January to May), and the existing breeding pool, a buffer, and a movement corridor connecting the existing pool to the natural habitats to the north of the proposed development may not be impacted until creation of the mitigation pools is complete.</p> <p>The qualified herpetologist must monitor the mitigation pools for five years, which involves annual monitoring during and immediately following peak breeding season such that surveys can be conducted for adults as well as for egg masses and larval and post-larval toads. Survey data must be provided to CDFW following each monitoring period. Five years after project start, a final report must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW, which (at a minimum) discusses the implementation, monitoring, and management of the project over the five-year period, and determine whether the project met the success criteria, which include replacement of breeding habitat at a minimum 2:1 ratio, including two mitigation pools created at disparate locations, and verifiable evidence of spadefoot toad reproduction at the mitigation pools. The spadefoot toad mitigation effort must be extended if the success criteria are not met at the end of the five-year period to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW.</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>The qualified herpetologist must meet the minimum qualifications listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology or environmental biology; • Be at a senior level and have specialized education and experience in herpetology; • Be able to map mitigation sites in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map mitigation sites in GIS; • Experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and implementation of at least three mitigation plans for western spadefoot and/or other special-status amphibians; and, • Possess any necessary permits and memoranda of understanding with USFWS and CDFW for handling western spadefoot or other special-status species, if applicable. <p><u>MM BIO-7: Nesting Bird Surveys</u></p> <p>Not earlier than 30 days before ground or vegetation disturbing activities that would occur during the nesting/breeding season of native bird species potentially nesting on the site (typically February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW (if applicable) must perform four field surveys to determine if active nests of any bird species protected by the state or Federal Endangered Species Acts (FESA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), and/or the Fish and Game (“F&G”) Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, or 3511 are present in the disturbance zone or within 200 feet of the disturbance zone for songbirds or within 500 feet of the disturbance zone for raptors and special-status bird species. The nesting bird survey must be performed weekly with the last survey conducted within three days of the start of ground or vegetation disturbing activities. A letter report summarizing the methods and results of the surveys must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW (if applicable) before commencement of project activities. Should an active nest be found within the survey area, site preparation, construction, and fuel modification activities must stop until after consultation with the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and when applicable CDFW and USFWS, is conducted and an appropriate setback buffer can be established. The buffer must be demarcated and project activities within the buffer</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>must be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biologist, until the nest is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist, and there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting. Project activities must be postponed and the Environmental Services Director, or designee, CDFW and USFWS, when applicable, must be consulted if there is an active nest of a special-status species at the site.</p> <p>The qualified biologist(s) must meet the minimum qualifications listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology or environmental biology; • Have an up-to-date subscription to and experience using the California Natural Diversity Database/BIOS; • Be able to map survey findings in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map survey findings in GIS; and, • Have at least four years of experience performing nesting bird surveys within the region (e.g., Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and/or Los Angeles Counties). 	
RIA: The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time.	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
4.4.3.2 Sensitive Natural Communities			
NCR: Grading for the proposed project would result in the removal of areas of natural plant communities considered rare and/or sensitive by the CDFW the California Brittlebush (<i>Encelia californica</i>) Shrubland Alliance, California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat (<i>Encelia californica – Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>) Shrubland Association, California Brittlebush – Black Sage (<i>Encelia californica – Salvia mellifera</i>) Shrubland Association, Sawtooth Goldenbush (<i>Hazardia squarrosa</i>) Shrubland Alliance, Coast Prickly-Pear (<i>Opuntia littoralis</i>) Shrubland Alliance, and Blue Elderberry (<i>Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea</i>) Shrubland Association on portions of the site, which are considered to be rare and/or sensitive	Potentially Significant.	<p><u>MM BIO-8: Sensitive Plant Communities</u></p> <p>Grading and fuel modification impacts to the California Brittlebush (<i>Encelia californica</i>) Shrubland Alliance, the California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat (<i>Encelia californica – Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>) Shrubland Association, the California Brittlebush – Black Sage (<i>Encelia californica – Salvia mellifera</i>) Shrubland Association, the Sawtooth Goldenbush (<i>Hazardia squarrosa</i>) Shrubland Alliance, the Coast Prickly-Pear (<i>Opuntia littoralis</i>) Shrubland Alliance, and the Blue Elderberry (<i>Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea</i>) Shrubland Association must be compensated for at a 2:1 ratio by creation and/or restoration of in-kind habitat in an area(s) to be preserved as permanent open space. To the extent possible, this must be accomplished onsite. If suitable onsite mitigation sites are not available, compensation for impacts to these sensitive plant</p>	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
<p>plant communities by the CDFW. These impacts are potentially significant.</p> <p>Additional impacts from fuel modification for fire suppression purposes occur to the following plant communities: California Brittlebush (<i>Encelia californica</i>) Shrubland Alliance, California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat (<i>Encelia californica – Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>) Shrubland Association, Sawtooth Goldenbush (<i>Hazardia squarrosa</i>) Shrubland Alliance, California Brittlebush – Black Sage (<i>Encelia californica – Salvia mellifera</i>) Shrubland Association, and Blue Elderberry (<i>Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea</i>) Shrubland Association. Off-site fuel modification for the proposed project would impact the following: California Brittlebush (<i>Encelia californica</i>) Shrubland Alliance, California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat (<i>Encelia californica – Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>) Shrubland Association, Sawtooth Goldenbush (<i>Hazardia squarrosa</i>) Shrubland Alliance, and California Brittlebush – Black Sage (<i>Encelia californica – Salvia mellifera</i>) Shrubland Association. With the exception of the removal of deadwood and non-native vegetation, fuel modification that requires the removal, thinning, or mowing of trees, shrubs, and/or native understory vegetation within these natural communities would be potentially significant.</p> <p>Additionally, the introduction of invasive plant species through project and resident landscaping and other human activity would be a potentially significant impact.</p>		<p>communities may at the discretion of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW be accomplished by creation and/or restoration of out-of-kind sensitive habitats on-site; creation and/or restoration of in-kind habitats off-site; or by purchase of mitigation credits from a habitat mitigation bank or contribution to an in-lieu fee program approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW. Off-site mitigation must be compensated for at a minimum 5:1 replacement ratio, or as recommended by CDFW. Mitigation credits or in-lieu fees must be for creation and/or restoration of in-kind habitats.</p> <p>The Ventura County Fire Protection District (VCFD) must be consulted to determine if fuel modification within rare and sensitive plant communities can be avoided. To the extent possible, fuel modification within rare and sensitive plant communities must be avoided. If impacts cannot be avoided, before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project, the limits of fuel modification must be mapped, and a qualified restoration ecologist must determine the final acreage of fuel modification impacts to the rare and sensitive plant communities at the site.</p> <p>A Mitigation and Monitoring Plan must be developed by a qualified restoration ecologist and approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project. Broadly, the plan must at a minimum include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the project/impact and mitigation site • Specific objectives • Success criteria • Plant palettes • Implementation plan • Maintenance activities • Monitoring plan • Contingency measures <p>Success criteria is (at a minimum) evaluated based on percent cover of native species, and control of invasive plant species within the mitigation area. The performance standards for the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan are (at a minimum) the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-native species in the treated area must be less than 15% relative cover by the end of the third year of treatment and less 	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>than 5% relative cover by the end of the fifth year of treatment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within five years after introducing native plants and seeds to the mitigation site, the absolute cover of native species for each natural community must be not less than the absolute cover of native species found at high quality reference sites occurring onsite or in the surrounding area. <p>Habitat creation and restoration will be considered successful after the success criteria have been met for a period of at least two years without any maintenance or remediation activities other than invasive species control.</p> <p>The mitigation program must be initiated before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project and be implemented over a minimum five-year period. The mitigation program must incorporate an iterative process of annual monitoring and evaluation of progress, and allow for adjustments to the plan, as necessary, to achieve desired outcomes and meet success criteria. Annual reports discussing the implementation, monitoring, and management of the project must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW. Five years after project start, a final report must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW. At a minimum, the City officials and CDFW officials must (at a minimum) discuss the implementation, monitoring, and management of the project over the five-year period, and determine whether the project has been successful based on established success criteria. The project must be extended if success criteria have not been met at the end of the five-year period to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW.</p> <p>If impacts are mitigated by purchasing credits from a mitigation bank or by contribution to an in-lieu fee program, the permittee must provide evidence of purchase of mitigation credits or payment of the in-lieu fee before the Building Official issues a grading permit. The in-lieu fee is based on the cost per acre to create and/or restore in-kind habitat and the acreage of the plant community impacted. In-lieu fees shall be used for creation and/or restoration of in-kind habitat.</p> <p>The qualified restoration ecologist(s) must meet the minimum qualifications listed below:</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in restoration ecology, biology, botany, horticulture, landscape architecture, soil sciences, conservation biology, environmental biology, or a related field; • Be able to map restoration sites in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map restoration sites in GIS; • Be at a senior level with local restoration experience with the plant communities being restored; and, • Have experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and the successful implementation of at least three habitat restoration and monitoring plans for plant communities in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles Counties. <p><u>MM BIO-9: Invasive Plant Species in Landscaping</u></p> <p>Before the Building Official issues a grading permit, a Landscaping Plan must be reviewed and approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, to ensure that only non-invasive ornamental plant species or appropriate native plant species are used in landscaping in future development of the project site. The review must include, without limitation, the most current versions of the California Invasive Plant Inventory Database (California Invasive Plant Council), the California Invasive Plant Council Watchlist, the Federal Noxious Weed List, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture Pest Ratings of Noxious Weed Species and Noxious Weed Seed. The Landscaping Plan must include all plant species that would be planted as part of the proposed project. The Environmental Services Director, or designee, will conduct site inspections to confirm the appropriate plant materials have been planted.</p> <p><u>MM BIO-10: Invasive Plant Species Management</u></p> <p>An Invasive Plant Species Management Plan that emphasizes eradication and control of invasive plant species within public spaces associated with the project including fuel modification zones, detention basins, landscaping lots, and pocket parks must be prepared by a qualified restoration ecologist. The Plan should emphasize control of novel introductions and species likely to invade wildlands. The Plan must be approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project. Implementation of the Plan within fuel modification</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>zones must be to the satisfaction of the VCFD. Broadly, the Plan must at least include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific objectives; • Target species and problem areas; • Prioritization of threats; • Success criteria; • Management strategies that would result in eradication and/or control of problem species; • Implementation plan; • Monitoring plan; and • Contingency measures. <p>The following success criteria must be incorporated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eradication or the substantial reduction in cover and the control of invasive plant species, and prevention of the spread of invasive plant species from the project site to surrounding natural areas. Total cover of all targeted invasive species in treated areas shall be less than 25% by the end of the first year of treatment, less than 10% by the end of the second year of treatment, and less than 5% thereafter. <p>The target species as well as methods for evaluating whether the project has been successful at meeting the above-mentioned success criteria must be determined by the qualified restoration ecologist and included in the Invasive Plant Species Management Plan.</p> <p>Implementation of the Plan must begin with commencement of ground disturbance for the project and continue until development of the project is completed, and for an additional five years after the Building Official issues the final certificate of occupancy for the last structure on the project site. The Plan must allow for adaptation of management strategies, as necessary, and include annual monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of progress. Annual reports must be prepared by the qualified restoration ecologist and submitted by December 31 of each year to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, for review. A final report must be prepared and submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, at the end of the invasive species removal project that documents methods, treatments, and monitoring, and evaluates the implementation of the plan and whether success criteria have been met. The invasive plant</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>species removal requirement shall be extended, as necessary, until success criteria are met to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee.</p> <p>The qualified restoration ecologist(s) must meet the minimum qualifications listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in restoration ecology, biology, botany, horticulture, landscape architecture, conservation biology, environmental biology, or a related field; • Be able to map invasive species in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map invasive species in GIS; • Have at least four years of experience performing botanical surveys within Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles Counties; • Have at least four years of professional experience in the management of invasive plant species; and, • Have experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and the implementation of invasive species management plans for sites in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles Counties <p>Have experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and the implementation of invasive species management plans for sites in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles Counties.</p>	
<p>RIA: The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>4.4.3.3 Protected Wetlands, Waters, and Riparian Habitat</p>			
<p>NCR: Project grading and construction would permanently impact a total of 4.49 acres of jurisdictional features, including drainages, debris basins, and ditches. Of this, all 4.49 acres are CDFW jurisdictional habitat, 4.11 acres are ACOE “non-wetland” waters of the U.S. and 4.11 acres are “non-wetland” RWQCB waters of the State. Beyond the project grading footprint, onsite project fuel modification would permanently impact an additional 0.20 acres of CDFW</p>	<p>Potentially Significant.</p>	<p><u>MM BIO-11: Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program</u></p> <p>The project must implement the requirements of the final approved Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program, which mitigates for permanent impacts to 4.59 acres / 7,733 linear feet of CDFW jurisdictional habitat, 4.11 acres / 6,716 linear feet of ACOE “non-wetland” waters of the U.S., and 4.11 acres / 6,716 linear feet of “non-wetland” RWQCB waters of the State at a 2:1 ratio. Due to the overlap of the jurisdictional areas that would be permanently impacted, a total of 4.49 acres consisting of 4.11 acres of “non-</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
<p>jurisdictional habitat. These impacts are potentially significant.</p>		<p>wetland” waters of the United States / RWQCB waters of the State / CDFW jurisdictional habitat, and 0.48 acres of habitat solely under CDFW jurisdiction must be mitigated.</p> <p>The Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program must mitigate for permanent impacts to jurisdictional areas by the creation and/or restoration of degraded in-kind jurisdictional habitats, or by purchase of mitigation bank credits or by contribution to an in-lieu fee program approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW. To the extent possible, this must be accomplished on-site. If the mitigation will be performed off-site, to the extent feasible the mitigation sites should be implemented within the Calleguas Creek watershed. Off-site mitigation must be compensated for at a minimum 5:1 replacement ratio, or as recommended by CDFW. To the extent feasible, in-lieu fees must be used for the creation and/or restoration of in-kind jurisdictional habitat within the Calleguas Creek watershed.</p> <p>The Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program must be developed by a qualified restoration ecologist (see qualifications below) approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW, in compliance with the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, CWA Sections 401 and 404, and Fish and Game Code 1602 and supporting regulations, before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project. Broadly, this Program (at a minimum) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the project/impact and mitigation sites; • Specific objectives; • Success criteria; • Plant palette; • Implementation plan; • Maintenance activities; • Monitoring plan; and • Contingency measures. <p>Success criteria is (at a minimum) evaluated based on appropriate survival rates and percent cover of planted native species, as well as eradication and control of invasive plant and animal species within the restoration area.</p> <p>The target species and native plant palette, as well as the specific methods for evaluating whether the project was successful at meeting</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>the above-mentioned success criteria shall be determined by the qualified restoration ecologist and included in the mitigation program.</p> <p>To the extent possible, the mitigation project, the purchase of mitigation bank credits, or contribution to an in-lieu fee program must be initiated before development of the project. The mitigation project must be implemented over a five-year period and incorporate an iterative process of annual monitoring and evaluation of progress and allow for adjustments to the program, as necessary, to achieve desired outcomes and meet success criteria. Annual reports discussing the implementation, monitoring, and management of the mitigation project must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW. Five years after project start, a final report must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW, which (at a minimum) discusses the implementation, monitoring and management of the mitigation project over the five-year period, and indicate whether the mitigation project has, in part, or in whole, been successful based on established success criteria. Habitat creation and restoration will be considered successful after the success criteria are met for a period of at least two years without any maintenance or remediation activities other than invasive species control. The mitigation project must be extended if success criteria have not been met at the end of the five-year period to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW.</p> <p>The qualified restoration ecologist(s) must meet the following minimum qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in restoration ecology, biology, botany, horticulture, landscape architecture, soil sciences, conservation biology, environmental biology, or a related field; • Be able to map habitat restoration sites in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map habitat restoration sites in GIS; • Be at a senior level with local restoration experience with the jurisdictional habitats being restored; and, <p>Have experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and the successful implementation of at least three restoration and</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		monitoring plans for jurisdictional habitats in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles Counties.	
4.4.3.4 Wildlife Movement, Wildlife Corridors, and Wildlife Nursery Sites			
<p>NCR: The project site is not within a recognized wildlife movement corridor, though local wildlife including the California gnatcatcher and the western spadefoot toad (which also breed onsite), pass through the site, and local dispersal from the site to the north and west and northeast into natural habitats occurs, the site not within an area that has been specifically identified as important to wildlife movement, such as a regional-scale habitat linkage or wildlife movement corridor. The project would develop the southern portion of the site, the northern portion of the site would remain undeveloped and adjacent to additional natural habitats to the west, north, and northeast of the site where habitat for wildlife and opportunities for wildlife movement through the area occur. Impact 4.4.3.4 is less than significant. California gnatcatcher and the western spadefoot toad are addressed in Biological Resources Impact 4.3.3.1 (above).</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
<p>RIA: The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
4.4.3.5 Local Policies and Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources			
<p>NCR: Five trees at the project site meet criteria for protection as mature trees under the City’s Mature Tree Preservation regulations, including two native Mexican elderberries (<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>), two native Pacific willows (<i>Salix lasiandra</i>), and one non-native Peruvian pepper (<i>Schinus molle</i>). Project grading activities would remove all five Protected Trees and 11 additional trees that do not qualify as Protected Trees under the SVMC. No historic trees would be impacted by the project.</p>	Potentially Significant.	<p><u>MM BIO-12: Tree Protection During Construction</u> During construction, protected trees to be preserved, relocated or newly planted onsite must be fenced and monitored periodically by a qualified arborist throughout grading and construction to reduce the chance of adverse impacts. Changes in soil compaction, irrigation, plantings, and other conditions may diminish the health of existing trees to remain. BMPs must be identified on the landscaping and preservation plan, which must address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil compaction. • Lack of water or changes in the site hydrology. 	Less than Significant

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of grade in the root zone. • Physical damage to tree roots and structure. • Dumping of potentially toxic construction wastes. • Lack of pest control and other care. • Dust. Construction creates large amounts of dust, and the oaks and any other trees to be preserved will need to be kept clean. Dust reduces photosynthesis on all trees. Strict dust control measures must be implemented during construction to minimize this impact, and an occasional rinsing with a solution of water and insecticidal soap will help control pests. • Human error. Dripline fencing must be erected that is visible and structurally sound enough to deter foot traffic and preclude the storing of equipment under tree canopies. The landscaping and preservation plan must specify that such fencing be placed a minimum of 1 foot in radius from the tree per 1 inch of diameter at breast height. • Raising or lowering the grade in the root zone of trees can be fatal or ruin the health of trees for years to come. Grade change and soil compaction force out the oxygen and literally press the life out of the soil. A retaining wall can be used to minimize the amount of the root zone that is affected, but it is essential that the footing is not continuous. Gravel and aeration pipes should be placed inside the retaining wall before the fill is placed. Consult with a qualified civil engineer for proper design calculations. • Trenching within the protection zone must be avoided wherever possible. Most of the roots are in the top 1 to 2 feet of soil, and trenching can sever a large percentage of roots. • Oil from construction equipment, cement, concrete washout, acid washes, paint, and solvents are toxic to tree roots. Signs should be posted on the fencing around trees notifying contractors of the fines for dumping. Portable latrines that are washed out with strong detergents can damage the fine roots of the trees. Portable latrines should not be placed near trees, nor where frequent and regular foot traffic to them will compact the soil below the trees. 	
<p>RIA: The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
CULTURAL, TRIBAL CULTURAL, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.5)			
4.5.3.1 Historical Resources			
NCR: Given that no historic resources have been identified on the site, the project would result in no impact on a historical resource.	No Impact.	None required.	No Impact.
RIA: No new development is proposed and there are no designated historic resources in the annexation areas.	No Impact.	None required.	No Impact.
4.5.3.2 Archaeological Resources			
The findings from the Envicom Cultural Report of the project property were, negative for known cultural resources. The cultural resource context of the project area, however, was determined moderately sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources due to clusters of prehistoric cultural resources along seasonal stream terraces to the east and west, which were of concern.	Potentially Significant.	<p><u>MM CUL-1: Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan</u></p> <p>To reduce the impact of ground-disturbing activities on any potentially present archaeological or paleontological resources, the permittee must retain a qualified archaeologist and a qualified paleontologist to develop an Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan that covers the unexpected discovery of archaeological or paleontological resources. To be considered qualified, archaeological staff must meet the educational and/or experience requirements outlined in the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716, Sept. 29, 1983).” To be considered qualified, paleontological staff are recommended to meet the educational and/or experience requirements outlined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. This Plan must establish a communication plan for unexpected archaeological or paleontological resource discovery. The Plan must clearly identify who will be called and in what order in the case of discovery of archaeological or paleontological resources, as well as the daily and weekly duties of field monitor(s). This Plan must include a Worker Environmental Awareness Plan (WEAP) for all construction team members. The permittee must prepare the Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the Building Official issues a grading permit.</p> <p><u>MM CUL-2: Archaeological Monitoring</u></p> <p>To reduce the impact of ground-disturbing activities on any potentially-present archaeological resources in a region of moderate sensitivity for prehistoric cultural resources with prehistoric site</p>	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>clusters to the east and west of the property, the permittee must retain a field monitor overseen by a qualified archaeologist and qualified paleontologist (as defined in MM CUL-1) for grading of the top 1.5-feet of native soils within the proposed project grading limit shown on the approved entitlement plan set. The field monitor must observe grading to the edge of the grading limit, however, not be within previously disturbed areas of the site shown on and clearly depicted on the approved site plan. Field monitoring must take place during all grubbing and clearing tasks, as well as during all earth moving of the native soil layer (assumed to be 1.5-feet in depth). If the archaeological monitor determines that potential native soils exist below 1.5-feet in depth, then the monitor can recommend to the compliance team that additional monitoring should take place. Additional monitors must be used if the distance between active construction teams limits an individual monitor from observing subsurface impacts. The permittee must submit a final site plan clearly depicting previously disturbed areas and identify qualified archaeological and paleontological monitors, including any field monitors at their direction, for review by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the Building Official issues a grading permit.</p> <p><u>MM CUL-3 Final Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Report</u></p> <p>To document compliance with archaeological and paleontological protection measures, the permittee must draft and submit a Final Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Report to the Lead Agency as proof of compliance. This report must summarize monitoring tasks and findings and provide a log of all daily monitoring activities. If artifacts or fossils are recovered from disturbed contexts during monitoring, those artifacts or fossils must be professionally cleaned, organized, analyzed, and submitted to an authorized curatorial facility, at the expense of the project proponent. The permittee must submit the Final Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Report at the conclusion of finish grading for review by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the Building Official issues a building permit.</p>	

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
		<p><u>MM CUL-4: Archaeological or Paleontological Discovery Protocol</u></p> <p>To reduce the impact of ground-disturbing activities on any buried materials of potential-archaeological or paleontological significance discovered within an undisturbed context associated with the proposed project, then all work in that area must be halted or diverted away from the discovery to a distance of 50-feet until a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist (as defined in MM CUL-1) can evaluate the nature and significance of the find(s). The communication plan established in the Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan and the City of Simi Valley as Lead Agency must be immediately notified of the discovery. Construction may not resume in the locality of the discovery until without clearance by the Environmental Services Director.</p> <p>If a cultural or paleontological resource deemed of significant value to a qualified senior archaeologist or paleontologist is discovered during earth-moving, complete avoidance of the find is preferred. If the resource cannot be avoided, the Environmental Services Director, or designee, may require further survey work, evaluation tasks, or data recovery of the significant resource.</p>	
RIA: No development and no change would occur in the RIA.	No Impact.	None required.	No Impact.
4.5.3.3 Paleontological Resources			
<p>NCR: Implementation of the NCR project would result in vegetation clearance and grading of portions of the site associated with the Sespe Formation geologic unit, which has produced vertebrate fossils in locations within one-quarter mile of the project site. Although no known paleontological resources were identified on the site during the Cogstone Cultural Report in 2007 or the Envicom Cultural Report in 2017, ground disturbance activities could result in uncovering of unknown paleontological resources.</p> <p>RIA: No development and no change would occur in the RIA.</p>	<p>Potentially Significant.</p> <p>No Impact.</p>	<p><u>MM CUL-1, MM CUL-3, and MM CUL-4 (above).</u></p> <p><u>MM CUL-5: Paleontological Monitoring</u></p> <p>To reduce the impact of ground-disturbing activities on any potentially-present paleontological resources in a region of sensitivity for paleontological resources, the permittee must retain a paleontological resource monitor for grading past the top 1.5-feet of native soils within the entire project grading limit. Additional monitors shall be used if the distance between active construction teams limits a single monitor from observing subsurface impacts.</p> <p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>No Impact.</p>

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
4.5.3.4 Human Remains			
<p>NCR: The Cogstone Cultural Report concluded no archaeological materials were observed on the surface nor produced by subsurface shovel tests. No major features or substantial sites such as villages are known within one mile of the project boundaries. With respect to the cultural resource context of the project area, however, the Envicom Cultural Report determined the project site to be moderately sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources, mostly due to clusters of prehistoric cultural resources along seasonal stream terraces to the east and west.</p>	Potentially Significant.	<p><u>MM 4.4-6 Human Remains Discovery Protocol</u></p> <p>In the event human remains are discovered, no further disturbance may occur until the County Coroner has made a determination as to the origin and disposition of the remains pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The Coroner must be notified of the find immediately, together with the City and the property owner.</p> <p>If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner must notify the California Native American Heritage Commission, which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD should complete the inspection of the site within 48 hours of notification and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials and an appropriate re-interment site. The Lead/Permitting Agency and a qualified archaeologist (i.e., with qualifications determined acceptable to the City) may establish additional appropriate mitigation measures for further site development, which may include archaeological and Native American monitoring or subsurface testing. All responses to the discovery of human remains shall be outlined in a Recovery and Management Plan submitted to the Lead Agency. Any required monitoring must be outlined in a Construction Phase Monitoring Plan, which must also be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the recommencement of ground-disturbance activities.</p>	Less than Significant.
<p>RIA: No new development is proposed in the RIA at this time. There is a future potential for the future development of five single-family lots, which are dispersed through the City and are located within previous subdivided and developed areas. Where future development may occur, the City would review the project proposal and determine if further CEQA analysis would be required.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
4.6.3.5 Erosion			
<p>NCR: Natural slope gradients on the site generally range from 5:1 to 2:1 (horizontal: vertical). Removal of ground cover in preparation for construction could result in erosion within the disturbed area. However, adherence to the geotechnical report, compliance with the California State Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-2009-DWQ as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ), and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would include best management practices (BMP) for erosion and sediment control during construction, would suffice reduce the potential for erosion and loss of topsoil.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
<p>RIA: No development in the RIA is proposed at this time. Annexation Area 2 contains hillsides at the northern edge of the valley. Annexation Areas 3 and 9 are located on hillsides at the northern and eastern edges of the valley, respectively. Future development if it were to occur would be reviewed by the City and required to comply with similar regulatory requirements as the NCR project, but appropriate and scaled to the proposed RIA site.</p>	No Impact.	None required.	No Impact.
4.6.3.6 Geologic Stability			
<p>NCR: The Ventura County General Plan Subsidence Zones Map does not identify the project site as being located in an area where subsidence is probable. However geotechnical studies of the property determined that found that portions of the onsite alluvial soils are subject to hydroconsolidation and subsidence.</p>	Potentially Significant.	MM GEO-1, GEO-2, and GEO-3 (above).	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.7)			
4.7.3.1 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Generation			
<p>NCR: The project would result in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, expressed in Carbon Dioxide equivalents (CO₂e), which including amortized construction emissions are estimated at 2,264 MT CO₂e per year. As there is no adopted State regional or local agency numeric threshold of significance, the “extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b)). As shown in Section 4.7.3.2, the project would be consistent with such plans.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
<p>RIA: No development is proposed in the RIA; however, the development of five single-family residents on vacant lots, if implemented, would be consistent with planning and zoning requirements as well as applicable building code regulations that reduce emissions. Thus, such development would be consistent with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
4.7.3.2 GHG Emissions Reduction Plans and Policy			
<p>NCR: The project was found consistent with applicable policy in the 2020-2045 Southern California Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy, State 2008 Scoping Plan; 2017 Scoping Plan Update, and the 2012 Simi Valley Climate Action Plan.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
<p>RIA: No development is proposed in the RIA at this time; however, the development of five single-family residences on vacant lots, if implemented, would be consistent with planning and zoning, and would be consistent with applicable policies in the above mentioned plans.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
4.8.3.3 Alteration of Existing Drainage Pattern			
<p>NCR: The project has been designed so that the existing drainage patterns would not be substantially altered, and so that the improved detention ponds and proposed debris basins perform adequately and in accordance with the standards set forth by Ventura County.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>RIA: No changes in hydrology or water quality conditions would result as a part of the proposed project.</p>	<p>No Impact.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>No Impact.</p>
4.8.3.4 Conflict with a Water Quality Control or Sustainable Groundwater Plan			
<p>NCR: To control water quality and to reduce runoff and provide adequate groundwater infiltration, consistent with state and local regulations, the project would be required to comply with the MS4 Permit for Ventura County, which requires the project to capture, treat, retain and infiltrate runoff from storm events in which stormwater runoff will be limited to five percent of the site’s effective impervious area, which will be demonstrated in a project LID plan to be reviewed and approved by the City Department of Public Works, prior to project grading. The project will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater plan.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>RIA: No changes in hydrology or water quality conditions would result as a part of the proposed project.</p>	<p>No Impact.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>No Impact.</p>

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
LAND USE AND PLANNING (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.9)			
4.9.3.1 Divide a Community			
<p>NCR: The site is within the City’s SOI and CURB boundaries, and thus is within an area previously contemplated for City development. No division of a community would occur.</p> <p>RIA: No development is proposed in the RIA. However, should the five vacant parcels be developed in the future for single-family homes, the units would be located within established residential communities, and would thus be compatible with neighboring properties.</p>	<p>No Impact.</p> <p>No Impact.</p>	<p>None required.</p> <p>None required.</p>	<p>No Impact.</p> <p>No Impact.</p>
4.9.3.2 Conflict with Plans or Policies			
<p>NCR: The NCR project was found to not conflict with applicable policy in the Simi Valley General Plan and Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act Policy Act, which guides LAFCo actions.</p> <p>RIA: The RIA project component was also found to not conflict with applicable policy in the Simi Valley General Plan and Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act Policy Act, which guides LAFCo actions.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p> <p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>
NOISE (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.10)			
4.10.3.1 Ambient Noise in Excess of Applicable Standards			
<p>NCR: Applicable standards would not be exceeded during construction or operations.</p> <p>RIA: No RIA development is proposed. However, if future development of the five vacant single-family properties occurred, that development would be subject to Simi Valley Municipal Code restrictions on noise.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p> <p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
4.11.3.2 Displacement of People or Housing			
NCR: The site is vacant and thus no displacement would occur.	No Impact.	None required.	No Impact.
RIA: No changes are proposed and no displacement would occur even if the future vacant parcels were to be developed in the future.	No Impact.	None required.	No Impact.
PUBLIC SERVICES (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.12)			
<p><u>Physical Impacts to Fire Protection Service Facilities</u></p> <p>NCR: The North Canyon Ranch site, located at the wildland-urban interface, is designated within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Regulation (CAL FIRE) and the Ventura County Fire Protection District (or Fire Department or VCFD). With approval of the project, the SRA designation will change to a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) designation.</p> <p>Construction of the proposed residences would increase demand for fire protection and emergency services. However, the project is located in close proximity to an existing VCFD fire station and VCFD resources; would be required to provide final development plans for review and approval by VCFD to ensure regulatory compliance; would incorporate project features and subdivision conditions to ensure fire protection; would require a project-specific Fire Protection Plan, pursuant to Chapter 49 of the CFC, which is also to be reviewed and approved by the City and VCFD; and would not substantially increase population service demand in the VCFD and ambulance (American Medical Response, AMR) service area.</p> <p>As a project on the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), fire protection is of particular importance,</p>	Potentially Significant.	<p><u>MM FIRE-1: Final Fire Protection Plan Including Fuel Modification</u></p> <p>Before the Building Official issues a grading permit, the permittee must demonstrate compliance with the North Canyon Ranch Final Fire Protection Plan (FPP), including adherence to the specifications of the FPP's Fuel Modification Zone requirements, Construction Standards, Fire Infrastructure, Homeowner Education, and Mandated Inclusions in the Homeowner's Association (HOA) and Lot Owner Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs).</p>	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
and compliance a project- FPP is required. The proposed North Canyon Ranch FPP and Fuel Modification Plan map were reviewed and deemed acceptable to the VCFD.			
<p>RIA: All of the Required Island Annexations are located within an LRA. The entirety of Required Island Annexation areas 1, 3, 6, 7 and 9 and portions of area 2 are located within a VHFHSZ.</p> <p>The Required Island Annexation areas currently receive fire protection services from the VCFD and ambulance services from AMR. Thus, no change in demand would occur. Should development occur on five vacant single-family lots the increase would be minimal, as the lots are already within developed subdivisions and all of the RIA are currently served. Therefore, the potential impacts of the Required Islands Annexations regarding fire and emergency protection services, and thus physical impacts on facilities, would be less than significant.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
<p><u>Physical Impacts to Police Department Facilities</u></p> <p>NCR: As the project would not cause a significant increase in officer to population ratio or adversely affect the Simi Valley Police Department (SVPD) response times, and would provide design features consistent with crime prevention through environmental design, the project's potential impact regarding provision of police facilities would be less than significant.</p> <p>RIA: The future Island Annexations may require additional City police protection services from the SVPD. However, the potential minor increase in future development would not contribute to substantial growth and would not create physical impacts to police facilities.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
4.13.3.2 Construction of Recreation Facilities			
<p>NCR: The project would provide recreational amenities within the project site consisting of 70.82 acres of open space, two pocket parks totaling 0.45 acres, and additional landscaping amenities. Provision of these open space areas within the proposed project would not result in adverse physical effects on the environment.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
<p>RIA: No development is proposed; however, five single-family lots could be developed in the future. This number is minimal and would not result in the increase of park usage enough to result in the need for new facilities that would in turn create environmental impacts.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.14)			
4.14.3.1 Conflict with the Circulation System			
<p>NCR: The project would include the extension of Falcon Street through the NCR property, as anticipated in the City General Plan, thus implementing the General Plan's local circulation policy. The Falcon Street extension is designed with a Complete Streets concept. Considering project features as well as the Complete Streets features of Falcon Street, the project would encourage walking, public transit, and bicycling. Supporting facilities include sidewalks, bus turnouts, and Class II bicycle lanes on both sides of Falcon Street. The bikeway design would be consistent with the Simi Valley Bicycle Master Plan, which has a planned Class II bikeway on the Falcon Street extension. The project would also accommodate local transit service with bus turnouts along both sides of the roadway.</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.
<p>RIA: The Island Annexation areas were developed as County unincorporated areas and thus were not required to be developed to City standards, which may differ. There are currently no City plans or funding to change or improve the roadway infrastructure for these areas, so no</p>	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
reasonably foreseeable physical change would occur, and therefore no environmental impacts would occur. Any future changes would be subject to City review for potential CEQA analysis.			
4.14.3.2 Vehicle Miles Traveled			
<p>NCR: Based on the City’s Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis, the peak modeled VMT for the project was 9.9 VMT per capita for home-based trips. This would not exceed the City’s threshold of 16.15 VMT/capita for home-based trips, which is five percent less than the background VMT per capita of 17.0 for home-based trips.</p> <p>RIA: No development is proposed; thus, no additional VMT would be generated. The potential five additional single-family units that may be developed in the future at some unknown time would be minimal and below VMT screening thresholds of analysis.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p> <p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>
4.14.3.3 Design Hazards			
<p>NCR: All of the roads would be constructed in conformance with City standards and the site plans would be reviewed and approved by the VCFD.</p> <p>RIA: The RIA are not proposed for further development at this time. Further, potential future development would be required to adhere to City design standards.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>No Impact.</p>	<p>None required.</p> <p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>No Impact.</p>
4.14.3.4 Emergency Access			
NCR: All roads through the project site would be constructed in conformance with City standards and the site plans would be reviewed and approved by the VCFD, which will assure ample ingress and egress and access to all structures by VCFD equipment. As such, the plan review and compliance with City standards would ensure adequate emergency access.	Less than Significant.	None required.	Less than Significant.

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
<p>RIA: No RIA development is proposed at this time. Potential minor additional development, comprised of five dwelling units, may occur in but within an existing developed street system and all undeveloped parcels would be reviewed for adequate emergency access by the Fire Department.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.15)</p>			
<p>4.15.1.3.1 New or Expanded Water Facilities</p>			
<p>NCR: The project would connect to district 8's water supplies. District 8, which receives its water from the Calleguas Municipal Water District, which in turns receives Metropolitan Water District (MWD) supplies. All three have Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) showing adequate supplies to serve the project.</p> <p>RIA: No development is proposed. However, the potential for five additional single-family homes to be developed could be accommodated within the existing UWMP supplies.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p> <p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>4.15.1.3.2 Water Supplies</p>			
<p>NCR: The applicable UWMPs for water service to the site showing adequate supplies to serve the project.</p> <p>RIA: No development is proposed. However, the potential for five additional single-family homes to be developed could be accommodated within the existing UWMP supplies.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p> <p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p> <p>Less than Significant.</p>

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
<p>RIA: No development is proposed; however, the solid waste generation from five potential single-family homes could be accommodated by the SVLRC.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>4.15.3.3.2 Solid Waste Regulatory Compliance</p>			
<p>NCR: The project will be required to comply with all solid waste regulations.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>RIA: No development is proposed; however, any future development would be required to comply with all solid waste regulations.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>WILDFIRE (SEE DRAFT EIR SECTION 4.16)</p>			
<p>4.16.3.1 Substantially Impair Emergency Response or Evacuation Plan</p>			
<p>NCR: The most accessible regional emergency access route would be the SR-118, located just south of the project site. The project would not interfere with movement of emergency vehicles on the existing local street network or the SR-118. Further, the project would provide a critical road network connection with the extension of Falcon Street through the project site.</p> <p>As a project on the WUI, fire protection is of particular importance, and compliance a project-specific Fire Protection Plan (FPP) is required. The proposed North Canyon Ranch FPP and Fuel Modification Plan map were reviewed and deemed acceptable to the VCFD.</p>	<p>Potentially Significant.</p>	<p>MM FIRE-1 (above).</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>RIA: No development of the RIA is proposed. Development of the five vacant single-family properties would not substantively impact emergency response or evacuation, and such development could occur with or without the currently proposed annexation action.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>

Description of Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
<p>RIA: No development in the RIA is proposed. Further, development of the potential five single-family homes would be within existing neighborhoods and with building code compliance would not be expected to contribute to substantial growth or infrastructure development needs.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>4.16.3.4 Post Wildfire Indirect Impacts</p>			
<p>NCR: Project grading and hydrology design, as well as compliance with the construction and operational regulations discussed in Hydrology and Water Quality above, would reduce post-wildfire indirect impacts such as flooding and erosion.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>RIA: No development in the RIA is proposed. Further, the less than significant wildfire impact of the development of five potential single-family homes would need to comply with grading and hydrology design that avoids flooding and erosion, which is subject to City review and approval.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>

ES.6 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Required Island Annexations

The purpose of evaluating alternatives is to examine ways to reduce the project's significant impacts, yet the Required Island Annexations have no significant impacts. The proposed action is to change the jurisdiction of the Island areas from unincorporated County territory to property within and fully a part of the City, as required by LAFCo. No development is proposed at this time. The purpose of the annexation is to create a more organized jurisdictional pattern, and orderly development, which allows for more efficient governance of the properties now known as County Islands. For these reasons, an analysis of specific alternatives is not meaningful. The following discussion provides additional exploration of alternatives for the Annexation Areas.

A no project alternative would retain the County Islands in County jurisdiction. Consequently, the LAFCo requirement would not be fulfilled, resulting in a policy conflict with LAFCo land use policy. The no project alternative would propose no development, but neither does the proposed project. Thus, other issues and impacts of the proposed project would be identical for the Required Island Annexations.

A reduced project alternative is not plausible since the proposed project would result in no physical change in the environment and thus no significant impacts. Even a reduction of land use would require demolition of existing development, which would result in demolition impacts which are greater than with the proposed project. Again, no physical change in the environment is proposed in the Required Island Annexations. Therefore, no further exploration of Required Island Annexation alternatives would provide useful analysis under CEQA.

North Canyon Ranch

Several alternatives to the North Canyon Ranch portion of the proposed project were evaluated in order to explore ways in which to reduce the project's significant impact, while still meeting most of the project's objectives (see Section ES.3):

- Alternative 1: No Project (no development).

The North Canyon Ranch project site is comprised of Assessor Parcel Number (APN), 615-0-500-0075, and totals approximately 160.32 acres of unincorporated Ventura County territory, within the City's SOI and CURB. Under this No Project Alternative, no development would occur. The site would remain vacant and undeveloped. The existing, previously modified areas onsite would remain as they are. These include some graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, and two debris basin that protect urban areas to the south from stormwater and debris flows. The remainder of the site would stay in its current undeveloped condition, without any of the proposed project features. Thus, no housing would be constructed and the extension of Falcon Street through the property would not occur. Because no development would be proposed, none of the project entitlements would be proposed.

- Alternative 2: General Plan Alternative (full buildout of existing General Plan designations established for the North Canyon Ranch site, as an area within Simi Valley's CURB and SOI).

Another type of no project alternative for a project that requires a General Plan Amendment is to consider the development that could occur if the amendment were not granted. The General Plan alternative is a scenario where up to the maximum units allowed by the General Plan within the North Canyon Ranch project site would be developed. The current General Plan designations for the site are Open Space (1 du/40 ac), Residential Medium Density (3.6-5.0

du/ac), and Residential Moderate Density (5.1 – 10.0 du/ac). The General Plan alternative would fully develop these planned areas for a total of 406 units, consisting of 355 townhomes within the Moderate Density area on the east, and 51 single family homes within the Medium Density area on the west.

Alternative 3: Reduced Units and Reduced Footprint (same land use types but in differing amounts).

The Reduced Units and Reduced Footprint alternative (Reduced alternative) consist of similar development from the project but with fewer residential dwelling units and a smaller development footprint. In this alternative scenario, construction would consist of 130 dwelling units, comprised of 50 townhome dwelling units and 80 single-family residences, with proportionally adjusted parking and amenity space. The architectural style, design, and landscaping would be similar to the proposed project. The development footprint of the project would change since the project would not develop the moderate density designated zone in the middle of the project site that the project proposes, and Falcon Street would not be connected from Erringer Road to First Street in this alternative scenario. The Reduced alternative would be designed in a way to avoid wildlife areas and add an extra 100 feet fuel modification buffer, where possible).

The key project characteristics and impacts of each of the alternatives are compared with those of the project in **Table ES-3, Comparison of the Project and the Alternatives**. A code for the abbreviations used is provided at the bottom of the table. Impacts that are marked less than significant, also require compliance with design features, tentative map conditions, and regulatory compliance measures.

Table ES-3
Comparison of the Project and the Alternatives

	Project	1 - No Project	2 – General Plan	3 – Reduced
Project / Alternative Characteristics				
Residential Units/Type	207 (157 single-family and 50 townhomes)	0	406 (51 single-family and 355 townhomes)	130 (80 single-family and 50 townhomes)
Disturbance Area	Approx. 89.02 ac.	No Disturbance	Somewhat Less	Less
Extension of Falcon Street from Erringer to First per GP	Yes	No	Yes	No
Meets the Project Objectives?	Yes	No (not at all)	Yes (and meets GP and RHNA projections to a greater degree)	Yes (but to a lesser degree)
Project / Alternative Impacts				
Aesthetics	LTS	NI	LTS +	LTS -
Agriculture and Open Space	LTS	NI	LTS	LTS
Air Quality	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM -
Biological Resources	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM -
Cultural, Tribal Cultural and Paleontological Resources	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (slightly -)	LTSAM (-)
Geology and Soils	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM	LTSAM

	Project	1 - No Project	2 – General Plan	3 – Reduced
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Hydrology and Water Quality	LTS	NI	LTS	LTS
Land Use and Planning	LTS	NI ^(c)	LTS (-) ^(a)	LTS (+) ^(a)
Noise	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM (-)
Population and Housing	LTS	NI ^(c)	LTS (-) ^(a)	LTS (+) ^(a)
Parks and Recreation	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Public Services				
Fire	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM (+)
Police	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Schools	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Transportation	LTS	NI ^(c)	LTS (+)	LTS (+) ^(b)
Utilities				
Water Supply	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Wastewater	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTS (-)
Solid Waste	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Wildfire	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM (+)
SUMMARY	12 LTS 8 LTSAM	20 NI (however 3 are less beneficial)	12 LTS (incl. 8 more adverse and 2 less adverse than the project) 8 LTSAM (incl. 6 more adverse and 1 slightly less adverse than the project)	13 LTS (incl. 3 more adverse and 8 less adverse than the project) 7 LTSAM (incl. 4 less adverse and 2 more adverse than the project)
Key to Impact Determination Notations: NI = No Impact; LTS = Less than Significant Impact; LTSAM = Less than Significant After Mitigation; SU = Significant Unavoidable. Plus and Minus Markings identify where the alternative has the same impact conclusion as the project, but the impact is greater or reduced compared to the project. ^(a) Impacts are considered less or more adverse than with the project in relation to RHNA numbers. ^(b) Impacts are considered less or more adverse than with the project in relation to implementing the Falcon Street connection as envisioned in the General Plan. ^(c) Although there would be No Impact, the alternative would also not help to meet RHNA numbers or extend Falcon Street.				

Comparison Summary

The number of issues in each impact category are identified in the last portion of the table and discussed below. Note that the comparison is based on an equal weighting of each of major environmental impact topics:

Project Impact Summary

- 12 Less than Significant
- 8 Less than Significant After Mitigation

The proposed project would have no significant impacts after mitigation. The impacts that would require mitigation are as follows: Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural, Tribal Cultural and Paleontological Resources; Noise; Fire Service, Wastewater, and Wildfire.

No Project Impact Summary

- 20 No Impact

None of the impacts of the project would occur. Also, the project would not help meet the City General Plan and RHNA goals or construct the extension of Falcon Street envisioned in the General Plan.

General Plan Alternative Impact Summary

- 12 Less than Significant (including 8 more adverse and 2 less adverse than the project)
- 8 Less than Significant After Mitigation (including 6 more adverse and 1 slightly less adverse than the project)

The primary considerations compared to the project would be that the General Plan alternative would have increased impacts with regard to Air Quality, GHG, Noise, VMT, Public Services, Parks and Recreation, Utilities, and Wildfire due to the increase in units and population. Increased impacts would also be projected for Biological Resources, because the alternative would avoid somewhat larger portions of sensitive habitats that support the gnatcatcher and/or spadefoot toad near the southern boundary from the center of the boundary to the eastern edge of the property. Land Use and Planning impacts as well as Population and Housing impacts would be considered less adverse than the project because more units would be provided to satisfy City General Plan and RHNA goals. The Falcon Street extension would be included, satisfying the General Plan vision for the roadway network, which would facilitate access and evacuation, similar to the project. This alternative would meet the project objectives and would actually go further in meeting the City General Plan and RHNA goals.

Reduced Units and Reduced Footprint Alternative Impact Summary

- 13 Less than Significant (including 3 more adverse and 8 less adverse than the project)
- 7 Less than Significant After Mitigation (including 4 less adverse and 2 more adverse than the project)

The primary considerations compared to the project would be that the Reduced Project alternative would have increased (more adverse) impacts with regard to Land Use and Planning impacts as well as Population and Housing, since it would provide fewer units to meet the City General Plan and RHNA goals. The alternative would have reduced impacts to Air Quality, GHG, most Public Services, Utilities, and Parks and Recreation, due to the smaller number of units. A greater number of vehicle miles would be added, but a similar VMT/Capita would occur. Wildfire and Fire Service impacts would be increased due to the lack of the Falcon Street extension through the project, which would make access and evacuation less efficient.

Environmentally Superior Alternative

Based on the analysis, the No Impact alternative would have no impacts, and thus, would be the environmentally superior alternative. After the No Project alternative, the Reduced Project alternative would have the least environmental impacts, and thus, would be the next environmentally superior alternative.

The Reduced Alternative would meet most of the project objectives. Like the project, the alternative would provide energy-efficient development and open space areas. However, the alternative would not provide as many units to expand the City's housing supply and help to meet the City's RHNA projections. The alternative would also not implement the General Plan-proposed extension of Falcon Street, and thus wouldn't provide the circulation and emergency access and evacuation benefits of the extension.

ES.7 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

Potential issues to be resolved or controversies based on comments received are summarized as follows:

- Whether or not to approve the project, including the annexation actions.
- Other non-CEQA issues, such as lifestyle and economic concerns associated with the annexations.

INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1.0

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Project Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) has been prepared by the City of Simi Valley (City) to assess the environmental consequences of the North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations (proposed project). The City is the lead agency for the proposed project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act¹ (CEQA).

1.1 STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Under CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines,² public agencies are required to evaluate proposed development projects for the anticipated effect on the physical environment and identify any feasible measures that would avoid or lessen significant environmental effects. This is intended to provide disclosure of the environmental consequences of a project to the public and agency decision makers before action is taken to approve project permits.

With exceptions not applicable here, all projects within the State of California are required to undergo environmental review to analyze the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the project in accordance with CEQA. The preparation of an EIR provides information to assist a lead agency in making decisions on the project but does not control the lead agency's exercise of discretion. Specifically, as noted in the State CEQA Guidelines:³

- (a) An EIR is an informational document which will inform public agency decision makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effect of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project. The public agency shall consider the information in the EIR along with other information which may be presented to the agency.
- (b) While the information in the EIR does not control the agency's ultimate discretion on the project, the agency must respond to each significant effect identified in the EIR by making findings under Section 15091 and if necessary by making a statement of overriding considerations under Section 15093.
- (c) The information in an EIR may constitute substantial evidence in the record to support the agency's action on the project if its decision is later challenged in court.

1.2 TYPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

As provided for in CEQA, this EIR is considered a Project EIR prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15161, as it addresses a specific development project with the North Canyon Ranch Project and the proposed specific action (i.e., annexation to the City) of the County Islands, although there is no development or physical changes proposed within the Islands.

1.3 ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

The content of this Draft EIR was determined by CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines and City policy and procedures, including the CEQA processes of early consultation and public review and comment. The organization of the EIR is as follows:

¹ California Public Resources Code, Division 13, Environmental Quality, Section 21000 et seq., California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

² California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15000 et seq., (State CEQA Guidelines).

³ California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15121.

Executive Summary (ES), provides a summary of the existing setting, proposed project, identified significant impacts of the proposed project, and mitigation measures. Alternatives that were considered to avoid significant effects of the project are identified in the ES. In addition, the ES identifies areas of controversy known to the City, including issues raised by agencies and the public. The ES includes a list of the issues to be resolved, including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigate significant effects of the project.

Chapter 1.0, Introduction (this chapter), includes information related to the purpose, scope of the EIR, environmental review process, and the organization and content of the EIR.

Chapter 2.0, Project Description, provides the precise location and boundaries of the proposed project, statement of objectives, a description of the technical, economic, and environmental characteristics of the project, considering the principal engineering proposals and supporting public service facilities. The project description identifies the intended uses of the EIR, including a list of agencies that are expected to use the EIR in their respective decision-making processes, indicating the related discretionary actions (permits and approvals) required to implement the proposed project, and any related environmental review and consultation requirements required by federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or policies.

Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Project, describes the CEQA requirements for cumulative analysis and explains the cumulative assumptions for the EIR, including a list of the past, present and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects in the project vicinity area. Where applicable for individual analysis sections, general plan buildout or a list of related projects may be utilized (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15130). Each analysis provides a cumulative impact analysis subsection that discusses cumulative assumptions and impacts relevant to the issue area being addressed.

Chapter 4.0, Impact Analysis, includes for each environmental issue area the existing conditions, regulatory setting, significance thresholds, impacts, mitigation measures, residual impacts (i.e., the level of significance after implementation of mitigation measures), and cumulative impact analysis. This portion of the EIR is organized by the applicable environmental topics resulting from the analysis undertaken in the Initial Study and Notice of Preparation (NOP) scoping phase.

Chapter 5.0, Alternatives, describes and evaluates a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project or to the location of the proposed project, including an evaluation of the no project alternative. CEQA requires that the EIR explore potentially feasible alternatives that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the proposed project.

Chapter 6.0, Other CEQA Considerations, addresses several CEQA-required requirements: “Significant Environmental Effects that Cannot be Avoided if the Proposed Project Is Implemented,” which summarizes the significant effects of the proposed project; “Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes,” which evaluates potential uses of nonrenewable resources and potential irreversible changes that may occur during the course of the proposed project; and “Growth-Inducing Impacts,” which evaluates the potential for the proposed project to foster economic growth or population growth, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Chapter 6 also discusses Effects Found Not to be Significant and Mandatory Findings, applicable to the State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist.

Chapter 7.0, Preparers of the EIR, Organizations and Persons Consulted, and References, provides a list of federal, state, county and local agencies, other governmental agencies and organizations and private individuals consulted during the preparation of this EIR; provides a list of key personnel writing, managing and providing technical analysis, including the private consulting firm preparing this EIR with the City of

Simi Valley; and a list of references that includes sources, communications, and correspondence used in the preparation of this EIR.

Appendices. The Table of Contents lists the appendices and their general subject matter. The appendices contain the Initial Study, Notice of Preparation, Public Comments, the Cumulative Projects report, and other data and reports supporting the EIR analysis. The appendix materials have been attached to, and are incorporated as a part of, this EIR.

1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

An NOP concerning the EIR for the proposed project was circulated for a 30-day State Clearinghouse review period that began on August 12, 2022 and closed on September 12, 2022. An Initial Study was prepared to identify the environmental issues to be analyzed in the EIR. Copies of the NOP and IS were made available during the review period and posted with the California Office of Planning and Research, the state clearinghouse for CEQA.

A public scoping meeting was held, pursuant to state and City requirements as follows:

Date and Time: August 18, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Location: Simi Valley Public Library Community Room
 2969 Tapo Canyon Road
 Simi Valley, CA 93063

The comments submitted in response to the NOP and Initial Study are provided in **Appendix A, Notice of Preparation/Initial Study, NOP Scoping Comments, Cumulative Projects**. The issues raised in these comments are summarized briefly below in **Table 1-1, Comment Matrix – Comments Received in Response to the NOP**, which also indicates where the relevant issues are addressed within the EIR.

Table 1-1
Comment Matrix – Comments Received in Response to the NOP

Commenters	CEQA Issues(s)	Primary EIR Location Where Discussed
State and Local Public Agencies		
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), mixed-use, parking, and Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), walkability transit, impacts. – Some of the Annexation parcels are adjacent to Caltrans rights-of-way. – Permits are needed for oversized vehicles traveling on Caltrans roadways. <p>Note: Permits for oversized vehicles are routinely addressed through standard, ministerial, regulatory compliance.</p>	2.0 Project Description 4.14 Transportation 4.12.1 Fire Services 4.16 Wildfire

Commenters	CEQA Issues(s)	Primary EIR Location Where Discussed
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CDFW Role as a Trustee and Responsible Agency for the project. – Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on habitats and open space, including encroachment into sensitive habitats/open space and edge effects, including California Endangered Species Act (California ESA) related impacts. – Recent plant survey with appropriate content specified. – Reasonable range of alternatives, including alternatives that would not result in conversion of sensitive habitats/open space. – Avoidance, translocation, and compensatory mitigation. – If avoidance of impacts is not feasible, provide mitigation measures and provide justification of the effectiveness of those measures. – Discuss impact (critical habitat) the coastal California gnatcatcher (<i>Poliophtila californica californica</i>) and sensitive bird species, reptiles, and streambed alteration. – Landscaping should include no invasive plant material. – Identify if a take permit is needed pursuant to California Endangered Species Act (CESA, or California ESA). – Request that Project Description include purpose and need for the project as well as staging areas and access routes for construction and construction staging. – Report survey data to California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), where applicable. 	2.0 Project Description 4.4 Biological Resources 5.0 Alternatives
California Native American Heritage Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identifies the process for Native American tribal consultation under state Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18. Pursuant to AB 52, tribal consultation is required for projects undergoing CEQA preparation of a (Mitigated) Negative Declaration or an EIR. Pursuant to SB 18, General Plan Amendments also trigger tribal consultation. 	4.5 Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
Ventura County Air Pollution Control District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Consistency with the Air Quality Management Plan and the thresholds included in the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines. 	4.3 Air Quality
Ventura County Fire Protection District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides roadway / access, setback requirements and units served by one access limitations (i.e., 30 multi-family units). – Requests Preliminary Project Fire Protection Plan for the project. 	2.0 Project Description 4.12.1 Fire Services 4.16 Wildfire Note: Plans were revised to accommodate a secondary access

Commenters	CEQA Issues(s)	Primary EIR Location Where Discussed
Ventura County Public Works, Watershed Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage groundwater recharge (clarifies typo in Initial Study). - Requests evaluation of whether Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity would accommodate the project and treatment of water to avoid increased pollutants (total dissolved solids) in the groundwater. - Imported fill should be screened and assessed prior to placement – References the California Department of Toxic Substance Control's October 2001 Clean Imported Fill Material Information Advisory guidelines. 	4.6 Geology and Soils 4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality 4.15.1 Water Supply 4.16.2 Wastewater Treatment
Ventura County Resource Management Agency, Planning Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cumulative impacts to biological resources, including the coastal California gnatcatcher, Spadefoot Toad (<i>Spea hammondi</i>) and Bell's Sage Sparrow (<i>Artemisiospiza belli</i>). 	4.4 Biological Resources
Individuals or Organizations		
Calvin Schlotzhauer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valley Fever. - Transportation (congestion). - Water supply and drought. 	4.3 Air Quality 4.14 Transportation 4.15.1 Water Supply
Chris Gonzalez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address potential impacts to the environment (i.e., wildlife, natural resources), utilities. <p>Note: Non-CEQA issues were also raised (e.g., taxes and regulations regarding the animal keeping, physical changes within the Required Island Annexation areas, why the annexations are required). No physical changes are proposed within the Required Island Annexation Areas. Non-CEQA comments will also be included in the case record and considered in the project approval process.</p>	2.0 Project Description 4.4 Biological Resources 4.15 Utility and Service Systems
David Hardy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water supply and drought. - Water demands of landscaping. - Trees. - Hillside grading. - Odors from the neighboring waste management operation. <p>Note: With regard to existing odors, CEQA impacts are generally concerned with the project's impact on the environment. Existing odor issues are an enforcement issue outside of this EIR.</p>	2.0 Project Description 4.3 Air Quality 4.4 Biological Resources 4.6 Geology and Soils 4.15.1 Water Supply
Emily Walker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objects to the project, including removal of [natural] landscape and wildlife areas for the development of North Canyon Ranch. Project and the Required Island Annexations. - Water availability (water shortage for existing residents). - Other public services and utilities. 	4.4 Biological Resources 4.12 Public Services 4.15 Utility and Service Systems 4.6 Geology and Soils 4.12.1 Fire Services 4.16 Wildfire 4.3 Air Quality

Commenters	CEQA Issues(s)	Primary EIR Location Where Discussed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Earthquake fault (east west) in the vicinity. – Wildfires. – Public Health (Valley Fever). <p>Note: Non-CEQA issues were also raised (e.g., semi-rural quality of life/deterioration, animal keeping, opposition to Required Island Annexations). Non-CEQA comments will also be included in the case record and considered in the project approval process.</p>	
Jan Lew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Water availability. – Note: Non-CEQA issues were also raised (i.e., opposition to Required Island Annexations). Non-CEQA comments will also be included in the case record and considered in the project approval process. 	4.15.1 Water Supply
Mary Eral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Water availability. – Utilities (electrical grid overloaded). – Note: Non-CEQA issues were also raised (i.e., opposition to annexation of Island #3, Ditch Road, litigation with state of California, physical changes in the Required Island Annexation Areas). No physical changes in the Required Island Annexation Areas are proposed. Non-CEQA comments will also be included in the case record and considered in the project approval process. 	4.15.1 Water Supply 4.15 Utility and Service Systems
Sheila Kuntz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Does not want her property annexed. – Rural character and Animal Overlay. 	2.0 Project Description 4.9 Land Use and Planning
Theresa Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A Fire Safety Plan needed for the North Canyon Ranch housing development (as was done for the Big Sky Country Club Golf Course in 1997). – Water availability (drought). – Note: Non-CEQA issues were also raised (e.g., opposition to the project, Simi Valley Municipal Code or plan revisions regarding emergency preparedness and fire prevention). Non-CEQA comments will also be included in the case record and considered in the project approval process. 	4.12.1 Fire Services 4.16 Wildfire 4.15.1 Water Supply
Note: The NOP comment letters can be found in Appendix A.		

All NOP commenters will be placed on the list for notification announcing availability of the Draft EIR and list of notification for project hearings.

The Public review period for this Draft EIR will be 45 days. Comments should be sent by 5:00 p.m. on the closing date indicated on the Notice of Completion or Notice of Availability to:

Contact: City of Simi Valley
Environmental Services Department, Planning Division
2929 Tapo Canyon Road
Simi Valley, CA 93063-2199
Attn: Elizabeth Richardson, Senior Planner
Email: ERichardson@simivalley.org

Following receipt of the comments on the Draft EIR, the City will provide responses to all significant CEQA/environmental issues raised in such comments that are relevant to the EIR. The written comments and responses will be incorporated into the Final EIR.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

SECTION 2.0

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) is a project EIR prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), to review the potential environmental impacts of multiple properties to be annexed to the City of Simi Valley (City), including:

- 1) **North Canyon Ranch** – Development and annexation of a 207-unit (157 single family homes and 50 townhomes) residential project (project), proposed by SVJV Partners, LLC. Development.
- 2) **Required Island Annexations** – Annexation of nine developed County areas within or adjacent to City boundaries, referred as County Islands, required by the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo).

Both of these components require the LAFCo annexation process, as neither is within the City’s jurisdiction. LAFCo requires that the Required Island Annexations be annexed before or concurrently with annexation of the North Canyon Ranch property. LAFCo considers separate County island areas to be contrary to LAFCo’s goal for the orderly development of land. This Draft EIR was prepared, in part, because the annexations are proposed within the same timeframe and a single EIR will provide a composite analysis that foresees any combined impacts of the project. Both components of the project are County unincorporated lands within the City’s Sphere of Influence (SOI) boundary and within the City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB) adopted in the General Plan.¹

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

North Canyon Ranch

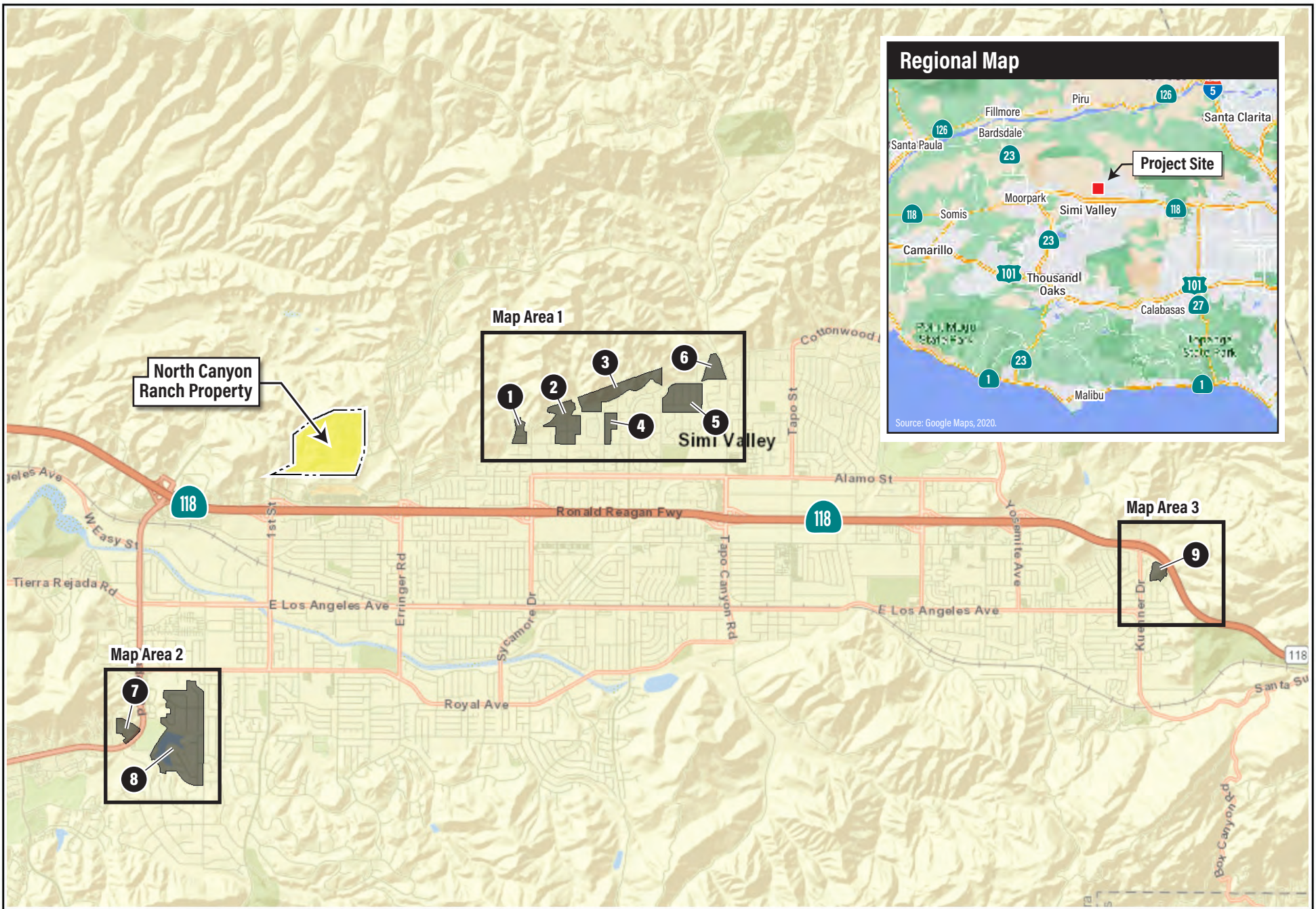
The North Canyon Ranch project site is located in the northwestern portion of the City, north of the 118 Freeway and west of Erringer Road, as shown in **Figure 2-1, North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexation Areas Regional Location Map**. The site would be served by the project’s extension of Falcon Street, from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west. The project Tentative Map (TM) No. 5658-A would subdivide the current site, which is currently one County Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN), 615-0-500-0075.² The North Canyon Ranch project site boundary encompasses an irregularly shaped land area measuring 160.32 acres (conservatively 161 acres, where rounded), as shown in Figure 2-1 and **Figure 2-2, North Canyon Ranch Tentative Map No. 5658-A**. The TM is also provided in **Appendix B, North Canyon Ranch Tentative Map and Island Annexation Maps**. The site is located just north of the existing multi-family development known as the “Avalon,” which is located on the north side of Jefferson Way, just north of the Simi Valley Town Center mall. The project site is currently unincorporated Ventura County territory which is proposed for annexation to the City. The project would construct a residential development of 157 single family homes and 50 multi-family (townhome) units, for a total of 207 dwelling units. Project approval requires certification of a Final EIR and the City’s approval of project entitlements, as well as Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) annexation approval.

Island Annexations

Nine unincorporated areas (Islands 1 – 9) currently under Ventura County jurisdiction are located within the City’s adopted SOI and CURB boundaries.

¹ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, also known as the Simi Valley 2030 General Plan Update, June 2012.

² Mancha, Manuel, applicant team email communication confirming APN, June 8, 2023.



Source: ESRI World Street Map Background Imagery, 2020.

NORTH CANYON RANCH & REQUIRED ISLAND ANNEXATIONS - EIR

North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexation Areas Regional Location Map



The Required Island Annexation Areas and their component APNs are shown on **Figure 2-3A, Required Island Annexation Areas 1, 2, 3 and 4; Figure 2-3B, Required Island Annexation Areas 5, 6 and 9;** and **Figure 2-3C, Required Island Annexation Areas 7 and 8.**

Appendix B, North Canyon Ranch Tentative Map and Island Annexation Maps, provides a series of maps showing the Island areas as follows: with an Aerial Base, Existing Development Footprints and Parcel Numbers, General Plan Designations, Slopes and Zoning. These areas are proposed for annexation to the City, along with the proposed incorporation of the North Canyon Ranch project property. The Required Island Annexation areas, depicted in Figures 2-3A-C, comprise 444 parcels, most of which are developed with single family homes; several duplexes; three open space lots; and five potentially developable, residential, vacant lots³ (at the time of preparation of this Draft EIR); for a total land area of 326.06 acres (rounded to 326 acres hereafter). The acreages, housing types, and number of parcels within each Island are described further below under Project Characteristics.

No physical changes are proposed at this time in the County Islands, and no foreseeable projects are proposed. The currently proposed change is only jurisdictional. There are five vacant residential parcels within older subdivisions that could be developed. These parcels are dispersed and would be of minimal change to the environment. Development of homes on these properties would require plan check and building permit review by the City, which are ministerial approvals. While nothing about the proposed annexation action would result in development of vacant annexation parcels, each analysis section of the Draft EIR evaluates whether the annexations would potentially result in physical impacts to the environment under CEQA. Annexation of these areas will require City approval, followed by the LAFCo annexation process.

In addition, a few larger developed parcels could potentially be subdivided and redeveloped to add an additional residential unit, based on existing and proposed zoning. However, these larger parcels are already developed, and no development proposals were submitted to the City at this time. It would be too speculative to anticipate if and when they might be redeveloped, but it is not considered likely in the foreseeable future. Thus, redevelopment of larger parcels is not evaluated in this Draft EIR. A subdivision request would be a discretionary action, subject to City review for potential CEQA compliance requirements.

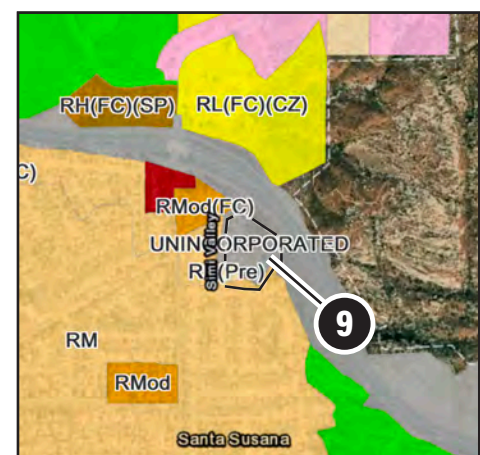
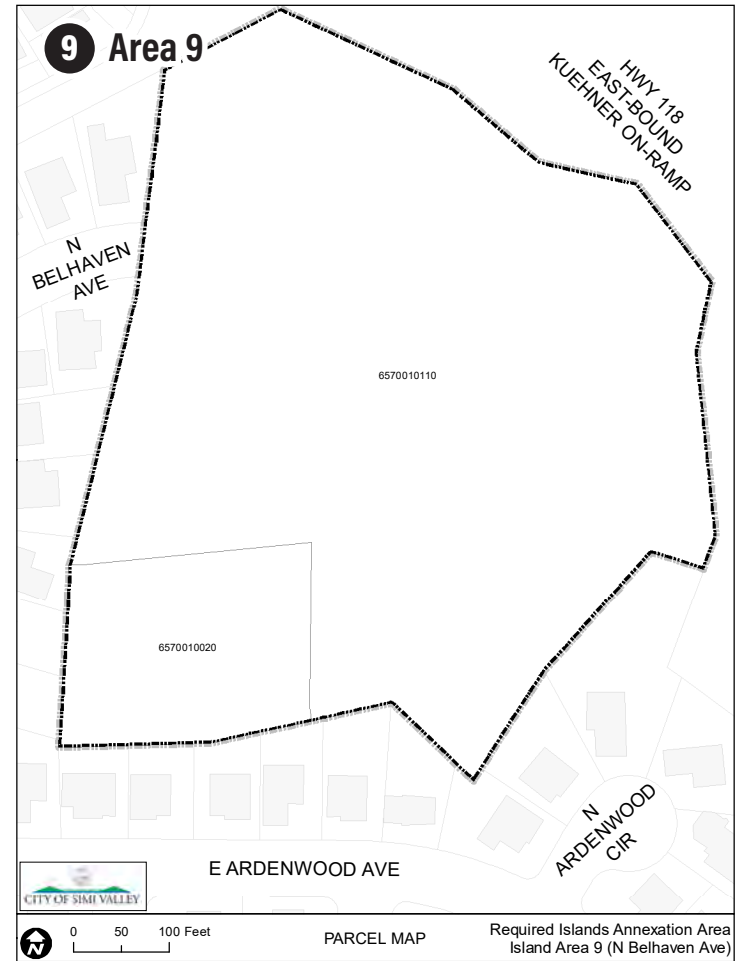
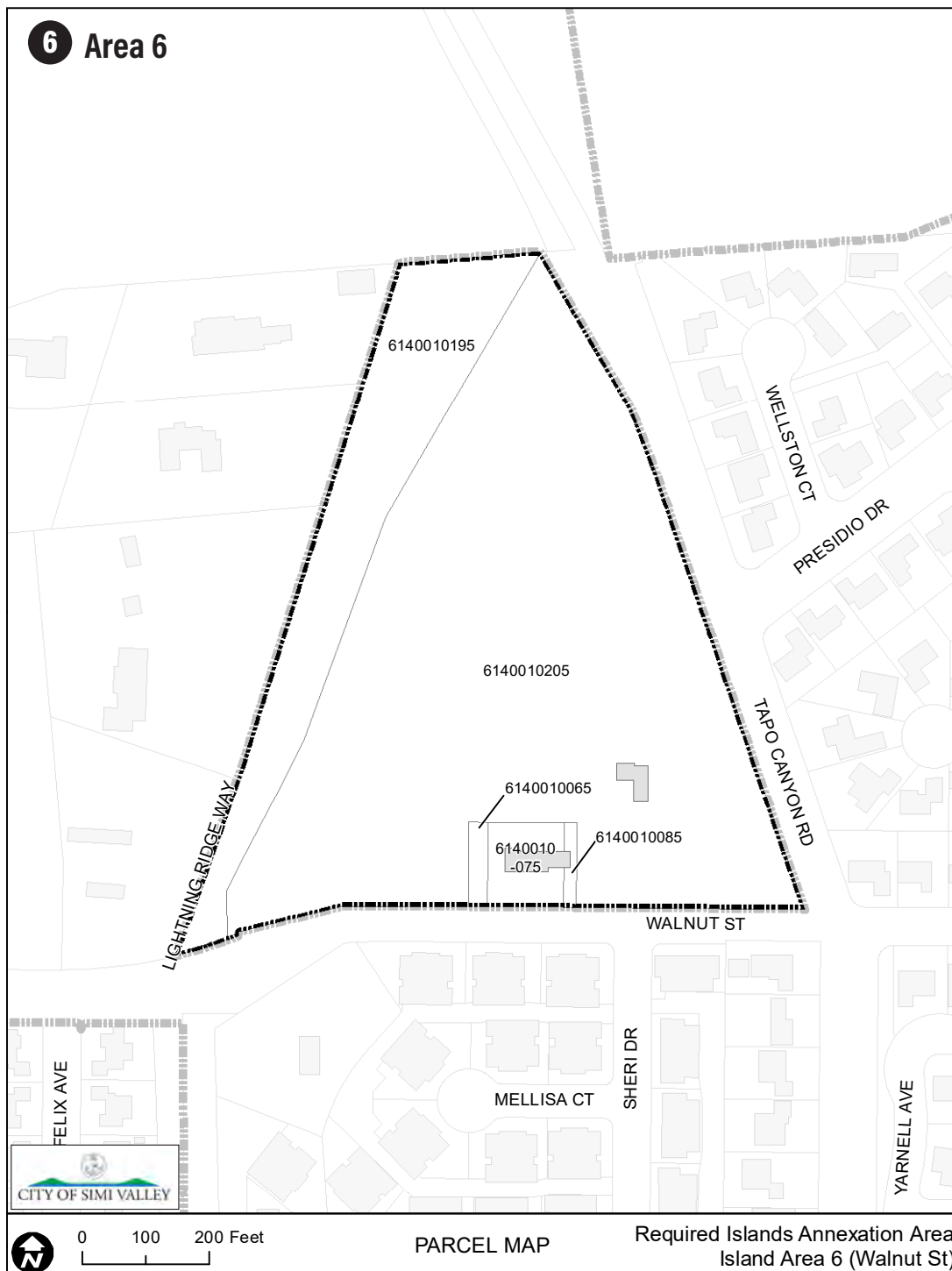
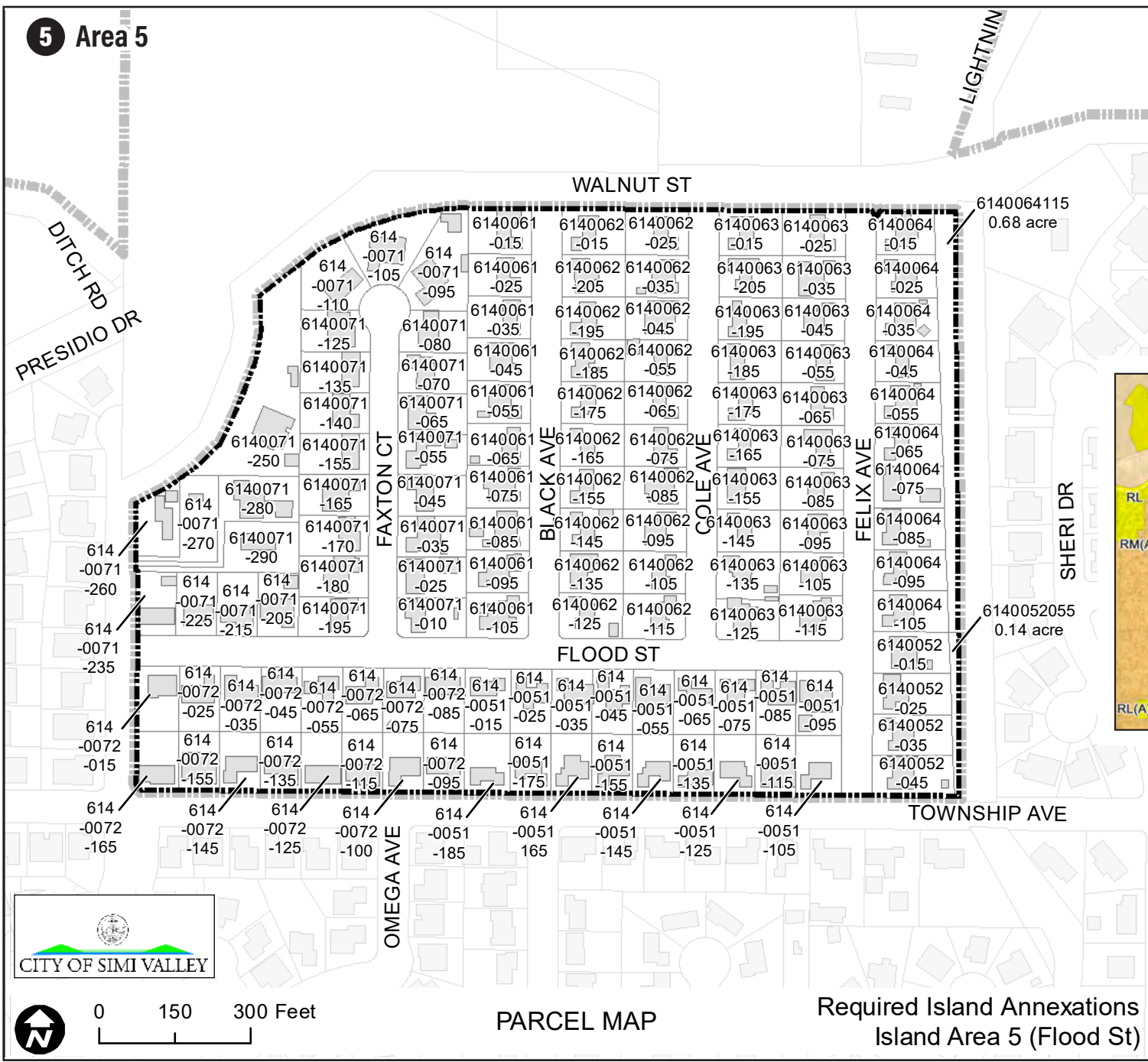
2.2 GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

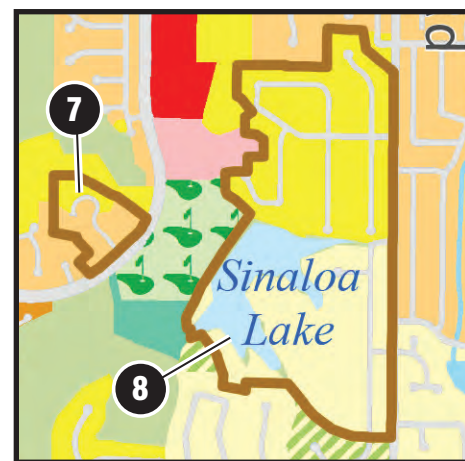
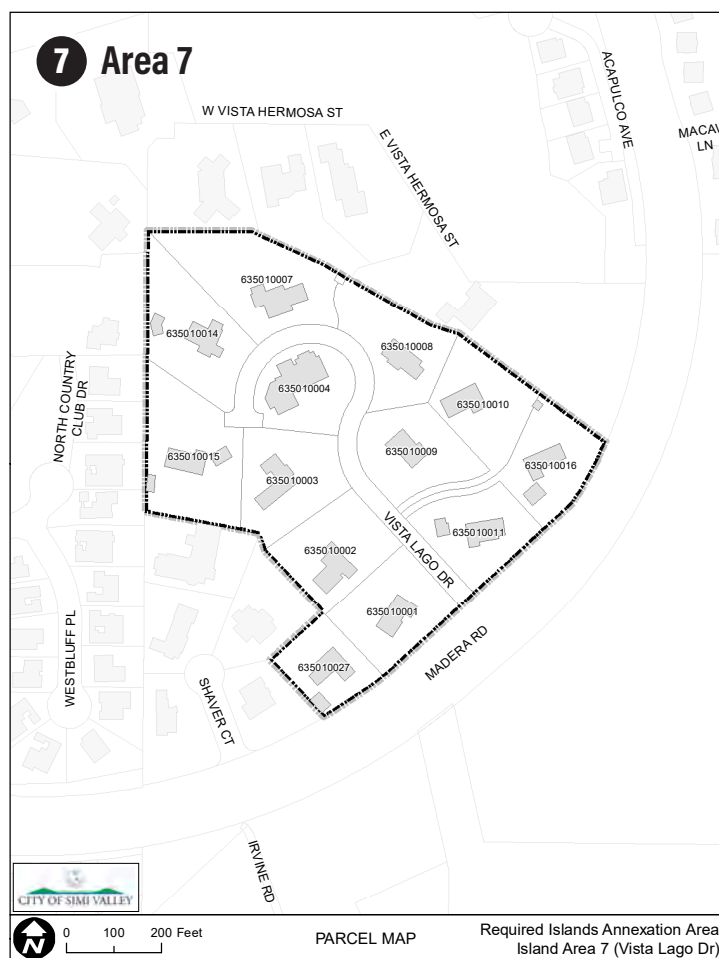
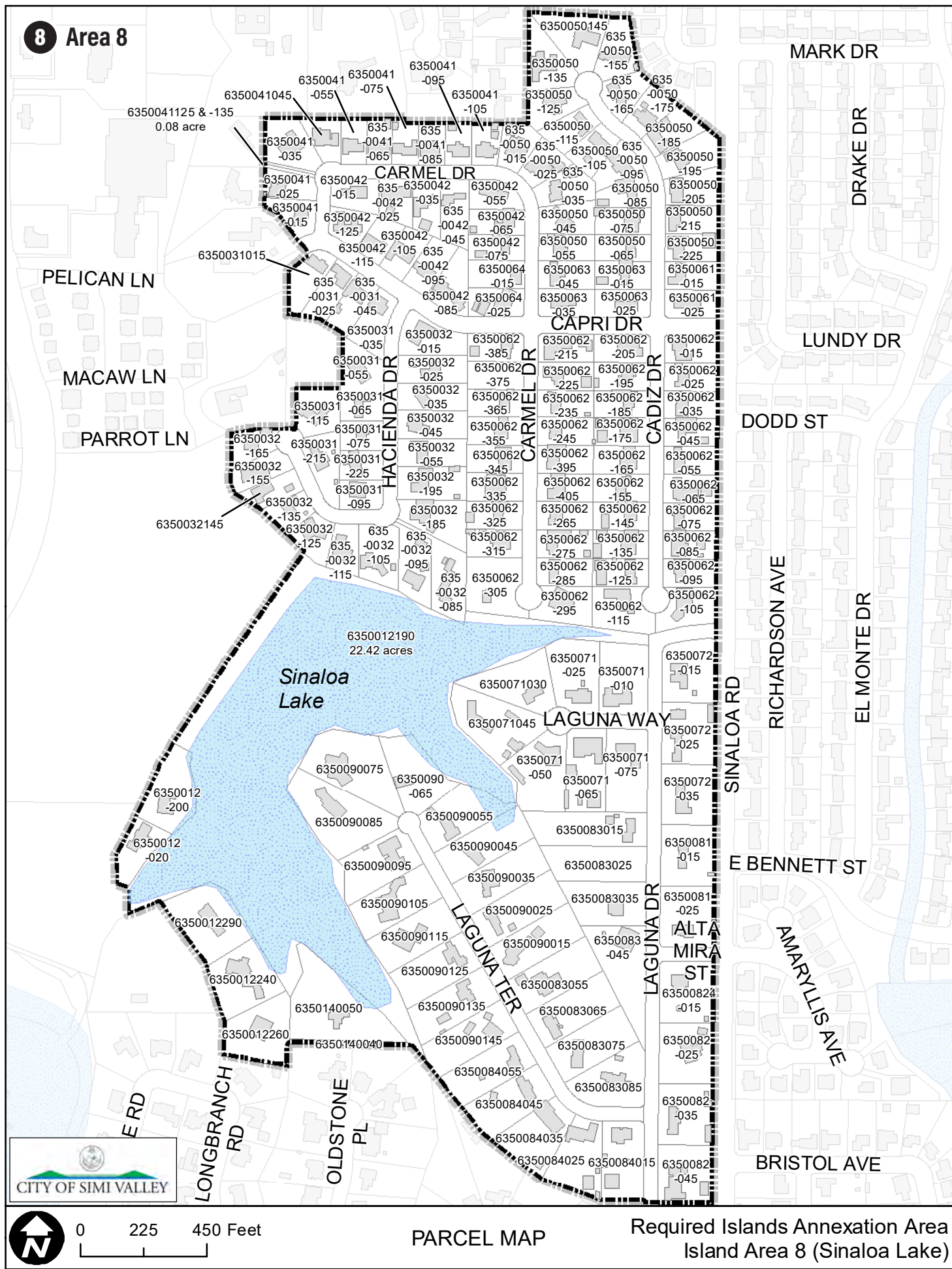
The environmental setting for the project is provided in more detail in the analysis sections of this Draft EIR (Chapter 4.0). This general setting briefly describes existing environmental conditions and City land use regulations pertinent to the project sites and surrounding areas.

North Canyon Ranch

The North Canyon Ranch project site is currently vacant and undeveloped, with some previously modified areas, which include some graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, and two debris basins that protect urban areas to the south from stormwater and debris flows. Artificial ditches were constructed to direct stormwater flows around the perimeter of previously graded areas. The artificial fill is reported to comprise exported soil from construction of the Simi Town Center Mall to the south, which opened in 2005. Currently Falcon Street dead-ends at the site's easterly boundary and First Street dead-ends near the western side of the property's southerly boundary (Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2).

³ APNs: 6110070390 in Area 2; 6110080045 and 6110080145 in Area 3; and 6350062375 and 6350083025 in Area 8.





Surrounding land uses consist of a multi-family residential project, business park/commercial uses west of that residential project, the Simi Valley Town Center Mall further south, residential subdivisions to the northeast, Ventura County Fire Station 47 to the east, undeveloped, hillside open space to the north, and a commercial business park and Simi Valley Landfill and Recycling Center to the west-southwest.

The project site is located at the base of the hills that surround western Simi Valley. It is mostly in a natural state, but there has been some grading, grazing and deposition of soil on the site. The project site's topographic elevation ranges from approximately 960 feet above mean sea level (MSL) in existing retention/detention basins at the property's southern boundary up to approximately 1,295 feet MSL at a location on the property's northern border. The site has two slight canyons, or draws, within its boundary. Project grading would directly disturb approximately 90.96 acres of the site and result in a net import of soil. The grading program is described in more detail in Section 2.3, Project Characteristics.

The vegetation at the project site consists of coastal sage scrub, small patches of cactus scrub, highly disturbed non-native grass/forb habitats, and riparian scrub at some locations along drainage courses and within debris basins. The majority of the natural habitats at the site are disturbed to varying degree by domestic animal grazing. Previously modified areas include some large, graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, fill dirt, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, and two debris basins, which protect urban areas to the south from stormwater and debris flows. Artificial ditches have been constructed to direct stormwater flows around the perimeter of previously graded areas. Some "two-track" roads traverse the north-south trending ridgelines, which continue off-site. There is also a fuel reduction zone along the eastern boundary, which protects the neighboring residential development. Three fires have burned the site since 1958. The Brea Canyon Fire of 1958 burned the western edge and the southwestern corner of the site, while the Clampitt Fire burned the entire site in 1970. The most recent fire to burn the site was the Simi Fire of 2003, which burned nearly the entire site leaving only the southeastern corner unaffected.

Island Annexation Areas

Islands 1-9 are largely subdivided and developed, as shown in Figures 2-3A, 2-3B, and 2-3C, thus the current environment is disturbed and urbanized. Most properties are developed as part of single family subdivisions, with several properties in other uses including Sinaloa Lake, undeveloped open space that was planned for a park, and a plant nursery.

There are five vacant residential parcels within older subdivisions that could be developed, and this potential is discussed throughout the Draft EIR. Further, any future development proposals in the Annexation Areas would require future City review to determine whether CEQA applies, and if so, determine the appropriate level of CEQA documentation would be required.

2.3 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

North Canyon Ranch

The North Canyon Ranch project is comprised of land use, streets, and open space components. A total of 160 single-family residences and 50 multi-family residences would be provided, as shown in **Table 2-1, North Canyon Ranch Land Use Summary**. Local public streets are proposed within the development to serve the project. Outside of the development housing parcels and streets, two pocket parks are proposed – one within each of the single-family development areas (east and west). The remainder of the project site would remain in open space, to be maintained by the Homeowners Association (HOA) and the Park District, upon approval of the project's proposed maintenance responsibilities map.

Table 2-1
North Canyon Ranch Land Use Summary

Land Use	Dwelling Units (du) (Lots)	Acreage
Single Family Residential	157 du (157 lots)	26.91
Multi-Family (Townhomes)	50 du (1 lot)	5.39
Streets (including ingress/egress)	(11 lots)	17.68
Open Space	(1 lot)	70.82
Pocket Parks	(2 lots)	0.45
Landscaping	(5 lots)	1.38
Drainage Basins	(2 lots)	13.93
Slopes	(2 lots)	23.76
Total	207 du	160.32

Source: Christiansen & Company, Tentative Map 5658-A, North Canyon Ranch, January 5, 2023.

Project grading would directly disturb approximately 90.96 acres (rounded to 91 acres hereafter), excavating 851,760 cubic yards of cut soil, filling 606,150 cubic yards and importing of 245,610 cubic yards used for remedial grading losses, in order to create roadways, lots, building pads and engineered stable slopes.⁴ The applicant and the City estimate the start of construction would occur in 2024, and completion of construction to occur in 2028. An estimate of the expected duration for each phase of construction, size of the on-site workforce, and equipment needed is provided in **Table 2-2, Conceptual Construction Equipment Fleet and Duration**.

Table 2-2
Conceptual Construction Equipment Fleet and Duration

Construction Activity	Duration (workdays)	Equipment Type and Quantity
Site Preparation	60	1 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes
		1 Rubber Tire Dozer
Grading	240	2 Excavators
		1 Grader
		2 Dozers
		3 Scrapers
		2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes
		1 Water Truck
Construction	415	3 Forklifts
		1 Generator Set
		1 Rough Terrain Forklift
		2 Skid Steer Loaders
		3 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes
Paving	110	1 Welder
		2 Pavers
		2 Rollers
Architectural Coating	275	2 Paving Equipment
		1 Air Compressor

⁴ Christiansen & Company, Revised Tentative Tract Map 5658-A, Master Grading Plan (40 Scale), North Canyon Ranch, Simi Valley, California, November 2017. Christiansen & Company communications indicates no substantive change to grading amounts, March 3, 2023.

Island Annexation Areas

The annexation areas are characterized in **Table 2-3, Required Island Annexation Areas Land Use Summary**, in terms of number of parcels, dwelling units, type of units, land area, and proposed City General Plan designation and zoning. Further detail on the proposed General Plan designations and zoning is provided in Section 4.9, Land Use and Planning.

Table 2-3
Required Island Annexation Areas Land Use Summary

Island No. (Street Reference Name)	Number of Parcels (APNs)	Number of Dwelling Units ^(a)	Number of Vacant Res. Parcels (i.e., potential new Dwelling Units)	Land Area	Land Area (gross acres – 2019 City data)	City General Plan Land Use Designation	City Zoning (Proposed Zoning and Pre-Zoning)
Area 1 (Anderson Drive)	29	29	0	8.5	10.67	Very Low Density	RL/RL(A)
Area 2 (Sharp Road)	56	57 ^(b)	1	37.66	38.74	Very Low Density	RE(A)/RVL(A)
Area 3 (Ditch Road)	28	24 ^(c)	2	43.92	44.05	Very Low Density / Open Space	RE(A)
Area 4 (Township Avenue)	12	12	0	10.45	10.50	Very Low Density / Low Density	RL/RL(A)
Area 5 (Flood Street)	128	125	0	32.14	39.78	Medium Density	RL
Area 6 (Walnut Street)	5	1	0	14.14	14.69	Low Density	RL/RMod
Area 7 (Vista Lago Drive)	13	13	0	12.28	13.15	Low Density / Medium Density	RE-1
Area 8 (Sinaloa Lake)	171	164	2	130.35	145.54	Very Low Density / Low Density	RL ^(f) /RVL ^(f) / OS ^(f) /RE ^(f)
Area 9(N. Belhaven Ave)	2	0	0	9.04	8.94	Community Park	RE/OS ^(f)
Total	444	425 ^(d)	5	298.47 ^(e)	326.06		

Source: Parcel Data from Rincon for City of Simi Valley, June 2020. Pre-Zoning, City data 2019/2020.

Key to General Plan Residential Designations (allowable density or size): Residential Estate (0-1 du/ac); Very Low Density (0-2 du/ac); Low Density (2.1-3.5 du/ac); Medium Density (3.6-5.0 du/ac); Community Park (typically range in size from a minimum of 20 acres to 200 acres or more).

Key to Zoning Districts (min lot size): RE = Residential Estate (1 ac); RVL = Residential Very Low (20,000 square feet); RL = Residential Low (2.1-3.5 du/ac); RMod = Residential Moderate (5.1-10 du/ac); OS = Open Space (1 du/40 ac); (A) = Animal Overlay Zone (allows Animal Keeping on residential lots, may require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) depending on animal type and use)

Notes: The APN column includes all Island Parcels with APNs. Not all APNs are residential lots. Some APNs encompass roadways, flood infrastructure, Sinaloa Lake, etc., and thus the next two columns do not sum to equal the APN column.

^(a) Some lots may include accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on one or more lots, which are not included in these totals.

^(b) Includes a parcel with one duplex and two detached single family homes.

^(c) Includes a parcel with three detached single-family homes and a parcel with two detached single-family homes.

^(d) Existing residential count was established using Assessor's records, supplemented with Google Earth and select site visits.

^(e) Total may not add exactly due to rounding.

^(f) Indicates proposed zoning; the sites have not yet been pre-zoned.

2.4 EXISTING AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING

North Canyon Ranch

The North Canyon Ranch project site is currently designated as Residential Medium Density (3.6 - 5 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) and Residential Moderate Density (5.1 - 10 du/acre), and Open Space – Urban Reserve (10-acre minimum lot size) in the Ventura County General Plan. The site is within the LAFCo-adopted SOI for the City, and within the CURB, as depicted in the City’s General Plan. In addition to annexation into the City, development of the site will require and a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change. Additional project approvals are shown in Section 2.6, Required Approvals / Uses of the EIR.

General Plan

The current General Plan designations for the site are: Open Space (1 du/40 ac), Residential Medium Density (3.6 – 5.0 du/ac), and Residential Moderate Density (5.1 – 10.0 du/ac). The General Plan Amendment would extend the Residential Medium Density and Residential Moderate Density plan designations over more of the project site.

Zoning

The site is zoned for open space in the Ventura County General Plan. The City has not pre-zoned the property, thus the applicant proposed the following zoning for the project site:

- **37.8 acres of Residential Moderate (RMod)**, which allows densities ranging from 5.1 to 10 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) - 14.3. Of this, 32.8 acres would be developed for single-family use and 5.0 acres for multi-family use.
- **14.3 acres of Residential Medium Density (RM)**, which allows development at densities ranging from 3.6 – 5.0 du/ac.
- **108.2 acres of Open Space (OS)**.

Island Annexation Areas

General Plan and Zoning

The Island Annexation areas are pre-designated in the General Plan and most have been pre-zoned with City zoning classifications. The Islands are within the LAFCo SOI and the CURB, as depicted in the City’s General Plan. The zone classifications were selected to correspond to existing uses. As shown in Table 2-2, the Island Areas are zoned for residential use, in zone districts ranging from Very Low Density (RVL) to Medium Density (RMod). Two parcels zoned Residential Estate (RE), which are the entirety of Annexation Area No. 9, are General Plan -designated and developed as a community Park. The City Council would consider adopting the General Plan and Zone Change to match these cited designations / classifications.

2.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project objectives for the North Canyon Ranch component of the project are as follows:

- Construct a variety of housing types to expand the City’s housing stock (i.e., both single family and multi-family housing) and help to meet the City Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) projections.
- Provide new housing designed and built to modern energy-efficient standards.
- Establish open space areas within the subdivision to provide for aesthetic and health benefits of the future project and surrounding area residents.

- Construct the extension of Falcon Street, from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west, fulfilling a City General Plan component that promotes mobility within the City for use by automobiles, busses, and bicycles.

The objectives for the Required Island Annexation component of the project are as follows:

- Incorporate County Island areas, which are within and adjacent to the City boundaries in order to provide for orderly growth and development and land use oversight, in compliance with the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.
- Establish more efficient and logical geographic boundaries for planning and zoning purposes.
- Provide for a more logical jurisdictional arrangement for the efficient provision of public services.

2.6 REQUIRED APPROVALS / USES OF THE EIR

This EIR addresses the proposed approval of the North Canyon Ranch project and the Required Island Annexations. Implementation of the project requires approvals which are expected to include but may not be limited to those shown in **Table 2-4, Project Approval Requests**.

Table 2-4
Project Approval Requests

Approval / Permit	Agency
North Canyon Ranch Property	
Annexation to the City (ANX-0077)	LAFCo
General Plan Amendment – (GPA-0073) From: Residential Medium Density (3.6 - 5 du/acre) and Residential Moderate Density (5.1-10 du/acre), and Open Space. To (Reconfigure): Residential Medium and Residential Moderate and Open Space	City
Zone Change – (Z-S-0613) From: Un-zoned by City (County Zoned OS). To: Residential Medium (RM), RMod (Residential Moderate), and OS (Open Space)	City
Tentative Map (TT 5658-A)	City
Planned Development Permit (PD-S-1054)	City
Grading and Building Permits	City
Biological Resource Regulatory Approvals	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and L.A. Regional Water Quality Control Board
Annexation to County Waterworks District No. 8 for potable water service	LAFCo
Island Annexation Areas	
Annexation to the City	LAFCo
Annexation to County Waterworks District No. 8 for potable water service	LAFCo
Detachment from County Service Area No. 32 which provides oversight of private septic systems in the unincorporated areas of the County.	LAFCo
General Plan Amendment	City
Zone Change	City

CUMULATIVE PROJECTS

SECTION 3.0

3.0 CUMULATIVE PROJECTS

3.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines require that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) address cumulative impacts, where the project's impacts are "cumulatively considerable." A project's impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Where a proposed project's incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable, an EIR need only briefly describe its basis for reaching this conclusion.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 defines the term "cumulative impacts" as two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. The following clarifications are also provided:

- “(a) The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.
- (b) The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.”¹

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 provides as follows:

- “(a) An EIR shall discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable.... Where a lead agency is examining a project with an incremental effect that is not "cumulatively considerable," a lead agency need not consider that effect significant, but shall briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable.
- (1) ...A cumulative impact consists of an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts. An EIR should not discuss impacts which do not result in part from the project evaluated in the EIR.
 - (2) When the combined cumulative impact associated with the project's incremental effect and the effects of other projects is not significant, the EIR shall briefly indicate why the cumulative impact is not significant and is not discussed in further detail in the EIR. A lead agency shall identify facts and analysis supporting the lead agency's conclusion that the cumulative impact is less than significant.
 - (3) An EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and thus is not significant. A project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact. The lead agency shall identify facts and analysis supporting its conclusion that the contribution will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable.

¹ Public Resources Code Section 15355.

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- (b) The discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion should be guided by standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact. The following elements are necessary to an adequate discussion of significant cumulative impacts:
- (1) Either:
 - (A) A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency, or
 - (B) A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or areawide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact. Any such planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.
 - (2) When utilizing a list... factors to consider when determining whether to include a related project should include the nature of each environmental resource being examined, the location of the project and its type. Location may be important, for example, when water quality impacts are at issue since projects outside the watershed would probably not contribute to a cumulative effect. Project type may be important, for example, when the impact is specialized, such as a particular air pollutant or mode of traffic.
 - (3) Lead agencies should define the geographic scope of the area affected by the cumulative effect and provide a reasonable explanation for the geographic limitation used.
 - (4) A summary of the expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects with specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available; and
 - (5) A reasonable analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects. An EIR shall examine reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects.
 - (c) With some projects, the only feasible mitigation for cumulative impacts may involve the adoption of ordinances or regulations rather than the imposition of conditions on a project-by-project basis.
 - (d) Previously approved land use documents such as general plans, specific plans, and local coastal plans may be used in cumulative impact analysis. A pertinent discussion of cumulative impacts contained in one or more previously certified FEIRs may be incorporated by reference pursuant to the provisions for tiering and program EIRs. No further cumulative impacts analysis is required when a project is consistent with a general, specific, master or comparable programmatic plan where the lead agency determines that the regional or areawide cumulative impacts of the proposed project have already been adequately addressed...in a certified EIR for that plan.

- (e) If a cumulative impact was adequately addressed in a prior EIR for a community plan, zoning action, or general plan, and the project is consistent with that plan or action, then an EIR for such a project should not further analyze that cumulative impact...”

3.2 CUMULATIVE PROJECT ASSUMPTIONS FOR THIS EIR

The term “cumulative impacts” refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. For use in evaluation of cumulative impacts for this Draft EIR, the following list in **Table 3-1, Cumulative Projects**, summarizes the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects in the project vicinity area at the time of the Notice of Preparation (NOP). The list is broken down in the table by Residential, Mixed-Use, and Commercial projects. The cumulative project locations are depicted in **Figure 3-1A, Cumulative Projects Map – Residential**, **Figure 3-1B, Cumulative Projects Map – Mixed-Use**, and **Figure 3-1C, Cumulative Projects Map - Commercial**. Each issue area analysis utilizes the appropriate cumulative project set for that issue area. For example, in some cases the entire General Plan buildout is the appropriate cumulative project set, with the Table 3-1 listed projects assumed as a subset of General Plan buildout. Where an issue area’s impacts would only combine in a very localized way, the closest projects within the list in Table 3-1 would be considered.

**Table 3-1
Cumulative Projects**

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
RESIDENTIAL					
1	North Canyon Ranch (Subject of EIR), see above.				
2	TT5585 PD-S-0964	Stow Villas	5496 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide into 16 lots for residential Development Construct 16 townhomes of which three will be moderate income residences with an Affordable Housing Agreement. 	Under Construction
3	PD-S-0930, PD-S0930-MOD#02, DA-2004-01-AMD#03, DA-2021-0001	Runkle Canyon	SOUTHERLY TERMINUS OF SEQUOIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct 298 single-family residences, 25 custom single-family homes, 138 senior condominium housing units and a recreational center with related improvements 	Under Construction
4	CUP-S-0713, CUP-S-0713-MOD#01, CUP-S-0713-AA#01, CUP-S-2021-0006	Archangel Michael Coptic Orthodox Church	1122 APPLETON RD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500-seat sanctuary, multi-purpose room, day care center, guest house, and convert existing religious institution to senior center, modify the approved multi-purpose building to include a 1,008 square-foot addition, Construct a 303-sq. ft free standing electrical enclosure, Relocate 11 Clean Air Vehicle Parking Stations. 	Under Construction
5	PD-S-0965-MOD#01, TT5886		1748 HEYWOOD STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide 2.31-acres for 40 townhomes. 	Under Construction

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
6	TT5734 PD-S-1021 PS-S-1021-TE#01 PD-S-1021-MOD#01	Lost Canyons	3301 LOST CANYONS DRIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subdivide 1,770 acres for 364 single-family residential lots, recreation commercial lots, and common area lots. • Master Planned Development to grade for 364 single-family lots, construct infrastructure, streets, and common area improvements, convert from public to private golf course, and related uses. • A 3-year extension of the expiration for PD-S-1021. • Changed to CD-S-1021-MOD#1 Design review. • House plotting for 184 of the total houses per Master PD and Tent. Map. 	In Plan Check
7	PD-S-1030 PD-S-1030-TE#1	Pinehurst	CANYON OAKS DRIVE AT NORTHEAST CORNER OF KUEHNER DRIVE AND 118 FREEWAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct 24 single- family residences. • Administrative Time Extension for the construction of the homes. 	Under Construction
8	CUP-S-0793 CUP-S-0793-TE#01	Meridian Assisted Living Facility	525 EAST LOS ANGELES AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a three-story, 106-bed assisted living facility. • Three-year time extension to construct the residential care facility. 	Approved/Unbuilt
9	PD-S-1041 TT5965 PD-S-1041MOD#1	Fountain Wood Estates	BETWEEN THE EASTERN TERMINUS OF PRESIDIO DRIVE AND DENTON AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacate right-of-way to the north, subdivide a 3.9-acre parcel for 13 single-family residences with a private cul-de-sac. • Modification to replace the single-story homes on Lots 5, 6 and 1 (which are part of the total 13). • Architectural changes to Plan 2. 	Under Construction

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
10	PD-S-1046 PD-S-1046-TE#01	River House	1424 PATRICIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a 28-unit senior apartment complex, including three affordable units with an Affordable Housing Agreement. Three-year administrative time extension. 	In Plan Check
11	PD-S-1050	Sueno Apartments	BUYERS STREET AND SHOPPING LANE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a 10-unit multi-family dwelling, including one affordable housing unit with an Affordable Housing Agreement. 	In Plan Check
12	TT5982 PD-S-1052	Nehoray Apartments	SOUTHEAST OF LOS ANGELES AND STOW STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide a 0.51- acre parcel for condominium purposes and construct 8 townhomes. 	In Plan Check
13	PD-S-1053	Sycamore Landing	1692 SYCAMORE DRIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a 311-unit apartment complex comprised of 212 market rate units and 99 senior affordable units with an Affordable Housing Agreement. 	Under Construction
14	TP-S-0689 Z-S-2021-0003	Salame Subdivision	310 ROYAL AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide a 1.0-acre parcel into three parcels for residential development of three single-family residences. Zone Change of RL to RM. 	Approved/ Unrecorded
15	PD-S-1057 TT6027	Mashihi	1392 & 1408 PATRICIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct 25 multi-family units including three affordable units with an Affordable Housing Agreement. Tentative Map for 25 condominiums. 	In Plan Check
16	PD-S-1061 TT6019	Forefront Homes	2145 CALLAHAN AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide a 1.97-acre parcel into 10 single-family residential lots. 	Under Construction
17	CUP-S-0661-TE#03	Patricia Place	1350 PATRICIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for a third three-year Time Extension for 12-unit senior assisted living care facility. 	Approved/Unbuilt

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
18	CUP-S-0822 TP-S-0695 PR-2022-0002	Hacienda Peppertree (To change to Enso Village)	SOUTHWEST CORNER OF TAPO CANYON ROAD AND GUARDIAN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original approval was for the construction of a 357-unit senior residential care facility. • Subdivide a 20.7-acre site into three parcels for a senior residential care facility. • Proposed Modification to CUP-S-0822 to reduce the request from a 357-unit senior residential care facility to a 332-unit Continuing Care Retirement. • Community CCRC within the Brandeis Bardin Specific Plan. • The Project will consist of independent living, assisted living, memory care and workforce housing. 	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed project is bisected by Meier Creek, which will remain as part of the project. • Three privately maintained bridges are proposed to cross-over the Creek to provide access, sufficient parking, landscape, and open space is also proposed. 	Approved/Unbuilt
19	PD-S-1065	Nikhoo Apartments	1740 PATRICIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a 6-unit apartment complex. 	Under Construction
20	PD-S-1066	Sycamore Grove aka The Enclave	3013 E COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a mixed-use project consisting of 164 residences (58 townhomes and 106 single-family residences), open space areas, and 6,000 sf (sf) of commercial space. 	Under Construction
21	PD-S-1067	Vantage Apartments	1260 AND 1270 PATRICIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a 54-unit apartment complex in a single building with four affordable units with an Affordable Housing Agreement. 	Completed/Closed

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
22	Z-S-0748 GPA-0106 PD-S-1071 TT6031	Ralston Meadow Estates	EAST OF RALSTON AVENUE, 475 FEET SOUTH OF LEEDS STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zone change from RVL to RM. • Change General Plan land use designation from Residential Very Low to Residential Medium. • Planned Development Permit to construct 6 single-family dwelling units and construction of 6 single-family dwelling units. 	Approved/Unbuilt
23	PD-S-1074	4610 Alamo LLC	4610 ALAMO STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subdivide existing 60,472 SF lot into three residential lots. • 20,000 SF minimum each lot with a 2,600 SF Single-family Residence • All three lots will have an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). 	Under Construction
24	PR-2021-0001		EMPTY LOT NEAR THE INTERSECTION OF KATHERINE RD AND ROCKINGHAM DR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Review for proposed two-story, four-unit residential apartment complex consisting of two buildings. 	Completed/Closed
25	PD-S-2021-0007	SIMI COUNTRY MOBILE HOME PARK SOLAR CANOPY	1550 RORY LN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned Development Permit for the installation of new solar panel canopy structures. 	Approved/Unbuilt
26	PD-S-2022-0001 Z-S-2022-0002	The Churchill Apartments	1850 HEYWOOD ST 1/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned Development Permit for an 83-unit multi-family apartment project on a 3.11-acre property. 	Approved/ Unrecorded
27	GPPS-2022-0001	City Ventures	1845 OAK RD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Plan Amendment Prescreening to change the General Plan designations from General Plan Commercial and Medium Density to High Density with concurrent filing of a request for a Zone Change from 	Approved/Unbuilt

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
				CPD and RM to RH. Number of units not yet determined.	
28	GPPS-2022-0002	Habitat for Humanity	3802 AVENIDA SIMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Plan Amendment Prescreening to change the existing General Plan Land use designation from Civic Center to Moderate Density to accommodate 10 affordable single-family detached houses (Habitat for Humanity). 	Approved/Unbuilt
29	TP-S-2022-0002 SP-S-2022-0001 PD-S-2022-0006	3068 Royal Avenue, 1 SFD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development at 3068 Royal Avenue. Planned Development Permit and Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide a 1.45-acre lot into three residential lots and construct 3 single-family residences. 	Deemed Incomplete
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal includes a Specific Plan Amendment to Sequoia Heights SP (SP-S-0003-AMD#02) to change designation of subject lot from Residential Estate (RE) to Residential Low Density (RL) and associated textual changes. Planned Development Permit and Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide a 1.45-acre lot into 3 residential lots and construct three single-family residences. Proposal includes a Specific Plan Amendment to Sequoia Heights SP (SP-S-0003-AMD#02) to change designation of subject lot from Residential Estate (RE) to Residential Low Density (RL) and associated textual changes. Planned Development Permit and 	

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
				Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide a 1.45-acre lot into three residential lots and construct 3 single-family residences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes a Specific Plan Amendment to Sequoia Heights SP (SP-S-0003-AMD#02) to change designation of subject lot from Residential Estate (RE) to Residential Low Density (RL) and associated textual changes. 	
30	TP-S-2022-0003	Barnard St Parcel Map	4850 BARNARD ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subdivide a 2-acre parcel into 3 parcels. 	Applied/Submitted
MIXED-USE					
1	PD-D-1045 TP-S-0685	Alamo/Tapo Mixed-Use	2804 TAPO STREET; 4415, 4487, 4473 ALAMO STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a Mixed-Use residential project with 278 apartments, 8,000 sf commercial, and 30% minimum of the total units will be affordable units, with an Affordable Housing Agreement. • Parcel Consolidation for residential project at the former Belwood Center. 	Under Construction
2	PD-S-2021-0005 TP-S-2021-0001	Santa Susana Mixed-Use Project	2196 O ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 280-Unit Mixed-Use Project and Parcel Map for Mixed-Use Project. 	Approved/Unbuilt

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
COMMERCIAL					
1	PD-S-1022 PD-S-2021-0002	The Gate Keeper	1874 PATRICIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow a contractor's office 3-year time extension for PD-S-1022, an approval to legalize the conversion of a single-family home to a 2,028-sf contractor's office and associated improvements, waiver of utility undergrounding, and a determination that the project is exempt from CEQA, located at 1874 Patricia Avenue. 	Approved/Unbuilt
2	TP-S-0680 TP-S-0680-TE#01 TP-S-2022-0001	Sycamore Village Plaza TP	2888 to 2986 EAST COCHRAN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide to create 3 new parcels in an existing shopping center for financial reasons (no net change in sf age). Administrative 3-year time extension to create 3 new parcels in an existing shopping center. Second administrative three-year time extension to create 3 new parcels in an existing shopping center for financial reasons. 	Approved/ Unrecorded
3	PD-S-0344-MOD#02 TP-S-0684	Griffin Plaza	NORTHWEST CORNER OF TAPO CANYON ROAD AND COCHRAN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shopping center remodel. Subdivide to create commercial lots. 	Under Construction
4	TP-S-0688 TP-S-0688 TE#01 CUP-S-2021-0003	Royal Plaza	1695 ROYAL AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-lot subdivision to make separate parcels for the gas station/market. Administrative Time Extension for 2 lot Parcel Map to subdivide the gas station/market from the rest of the Commercial Center. 	In Plan Check

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
		Royal Gas Pump/Canopy Extension		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of gas station fuel pumps from 4 to 8. • Extend existing fuel pump canopy from 729 sq ft. to 2,430 sq ft. • Includes alterations to landscaping and on-site traffic circulation to accommodate improvements. 	Deemed Incomplete
5	CUP-S-2021-0003	Simi Valley Community Church	2000 ROYAL AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate assembly space, add ADA restrooms, and remodel exterior of existing church. 	Under Construction
6	PD-S-0336-AA#01 PD-S-0336-AA#01-TE#01	Valley Plaza	2345 ERRINGER ROAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facade remodel of commercial shopping center and site improvements (no net change in sf age). • 3-year time extension for AA#1 for minor facade modifications. 	Approved/Unbuilt
7	CUP-S-0813	Mad Era Brewing Company	20 WEST COCHRAN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow a restaurant, microbrewery, and amplified music in the West End Specific Plan (no net change in sf age). 	Under Construction
8	CUP-S-0826	Tapo District Lofts	NORTHWEST CORNER OF TAPO STREET AND EILEEN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a 60 room micro-apartment (Single-room occupancy) complex. 	In Plan Check
9	CUP-S-0818	BMX Bike Park	998 WEST LOS ANGELES AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a BMX Bike Park on a 3.24-acre portion of a 21.01-acre parcel owned by the City. 	Deemed Complete
10	CUP-S-0819	Martinez Tinting & Detail	838 EAST LOS ANGELES AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a 2,302 sf commercial auto repair building on a vacant 0.14-acre lot. 	Approved/Unbuilt
11	CUP-S-0821	Wagner RV campground	6502 KATHERINE ROAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct and operate an RV campground. 	Completed/Closed
12	CUP-S-0825	Starbucks	2595 STEARNS ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a 2,000 sf drive-through coffeehouse and approve removal of an equestrian trail 	Completed/Closed

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
				easement on west property line.	
13	CUP-S-0400-MOD#01 Z-S-2021-0007 GPA-2021-0002	Islamic Society of Simi Valley	4343 TOWNSHIP AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed replacement/modification of existing religious institution. Adding second floor in 2 phases. Zone Change from RM to CPD General Plan Amendment from Neighborhood Park to General Commercial. 	Deemed Complete
14	CUP-S-0744-MOD#01	Fairfield Inn	2585 EAST COCHRAN STREET (BEHIND JUNKYARD CAFE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A modification to change the proposed hotel room count from 106 rooms to 98 rooms. Remove underground parking; modify hotel configuration; and change from 3 stories to 4 stories. A Text Amendment to reduce the parking space requirement. 	Approved/Unbuilt
15	CUP-S-0829	Starbucks	5821 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convert building to a coffee house and retail space with drive-thru lane. 	Completed/Closed
16	CUP-2864-MOD#02 CUP-1832-MOD#02	Simi Valley Hospital	2975 SYCAMORE DR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct solar carports in the parking lot and Simi Valley Hospital and to expand CUP boundary (no change in hospital room count). 	Completed/Closed
17	CUP-S-0159-AA#02	Rancho Simi Community Park	1765 ROYAL AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of 2 Modtech Modular buildings on the existing City Community Park Pool Deck. The use of the buildings will be for Royal High School for a locker room and a changing room. 	Completed/Closed
18	CUP-S-356 MOD#1	Mobil Gas Station	5195 COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to expand an existing convenience store and add a service bay. 	Deemed Incomplete

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
19	TP-S-0697	1070 Country Club	1070 COUNTRY CLUB DRIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condominium subdivision of 2.26-acre parcel into 1 parcel and 6 condo units. 	Approved/ Unrecorded
20	PD-S-2021-0001	El Patio - Township	4351 TOWNSHIP AV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Action for proposed 724 sq. ft. addition to exterior patio area at El Patio Restaurant. 	Deemed Incomplete
21	PD-S-2021-0003	Cronies- Simi Valley	2752 E COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a 1,170 sf outdoor dining area at an existing restaurant, located in the southwest corner of Sycamore Plaza. The project will consist of an 855 sf trellised patio cover, fence, and landscaped buffer to enclose the 1,170 sf outdoor dining area. 6 parking stalls and one mature tree will be removed to accommodate the proposed structure. 	Completed/Closed
22	CUP-S-2021-0008	Panera Bread Drive-Thru	2900 E COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conditional Use Permit for addition of Drive-Thru to existing Panera Bread at 2900 Cochran Street. 	Deemed Incomplete
23	CUP-S-2021-0010	Grace Church	2900 SYCAMORE DR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed shade structure at an existing church facility. 	Approved/Unbuilt
24	CUP-S-2022-0001	CRV Only Stores- Cochran Street	4318 E COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for the purpose of operating an indoor bottle and can recycling business within an indoor tenant space of an existing shopping center (no change in sf age). Note that this use was previously approved under PD-S-0118 AA#1. The original approval expired as a Zoning Clearance was never obtained. 	Denied

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
25	CUP-S-2022-0002	Dave Janssen's School of Music	875 E COCHRAN ST 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate a Music School with in-person and remote instruction, accessory minor sale of instruments and music supplies, storage of music equipment, music equipment rental (no change in sf age). 	In Plan Check
26	PD-S-2022-0003	Denny's Exterior Modification	5197 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Action to construct an outdoor patio and make minor exterior modifications to the building elevation at an existing building located at the southeast corner of 5197 E. Los Angeles Ave. 	In Plan Check
27	PD-S-2022-0005	SoCal Gas Addition	977 CHAMBERS LN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a new single story commercial 1,375 sq. ft. addition to the existing Southern California Gas Company building. Paint existing building. Pave new accessible parking stalls and construct a new vehicular entry and exit gate on Cochran Street to replace the existing gate. 	Approved/Unbuilt
28	CUP-S-2022-0005	Maronite Church	1059 ASHLAND AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition to existing religious institution and new detached canopy with BBQ. 1,000 sq. ft. addition to hall, 616 sq. ft. for two bathrooms and a storage area, new 336 sq. ft. open trellis, and a new 578 sq. ft. covered patio. New 770 sq. ft. detached canopy. 	Approved/Unbuilt
29	CUP-S-2022-0006	Simi Auto Spa and Speed Wash	1144 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacuum Stall Canopies Demolish 4,466 sq. ft. of vehicle service bays and construct 1,860 sq. ft. vacuum canopy in their 	Approved/Unbuilt

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
				place and another 1,530 sq. ft. vacuum canopy at an existing car wash.	
30	CUP-S-2022-0009	Chick-Fil-A Canopy Addition	2460 SYCAMORE DR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct one 1,028 sq. ft. steel canopy and another 455 sq. ft. canopy over an existing Chick-Fil-A drive thru. 	Deemed Incomplete
31	PR-2022-0003	Everhome Suites	1708 SIMI TOWN CENTER WAY 1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A development plan for an approximately 59,600 sq. ft, 4-story, 114 room Everhome Suites hotel with approximately 118 parking spaces. 	Applied/Submitted
Industrial					
1	CUP-S-0591-MOD#01	All Valleys RV Storage	850 WEST LOS ANGELES AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand an existing RV storage yard to the south portion of the lot. Add 64 new spaces to existing 385 spaces. 	Under Construction
2	CUP-S-0757	Premier RV and Boat Storage	131 WEST EASY STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow an indoor RV and boat storage facility inside an existing industrial building. 	In Plan Check
3	CUP-S-0778	Pre-con Recycling	240 WEST LOS ANGELES AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct and operate a concrete recycling and concrete product storage yard. 	Under Construction
4	PD-S-1034	Adams Bennett Concrete Batch	400 W LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant Ready-Mix and Precast Concrete products facility with related sand, gravel, portland cement and concrete mixtures storage with periodic recycling of concrete along with material deliveries into and out of facility. 	Under Construction
5	CUP-S-0289-MOD#03	Larry Ready Storage Yard	900 WEST LOS ANGELES AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convert an existing auto wrecking storage yard into a contractor storage yard. 	Deemed Incomplete
6	PD-S-1039 PD-S-1039-TE#01 PD-S-2022-0007	Smith Road Movie Studio Backlot	VACANT LOT WEST OF 6700 SMITH ROAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a movie studio backlot and Master Plan for future movie studio building. Administrative Time Extension 	Approved/Unbuilt
					Approved/Unbuilt
					Applied/Submitted

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
				<p>to PD-S-1039 for a movie studio backlot and Master Plan for future movie studio.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Time Extension to PD-S-1039 for a movie studio backlot and Master Plan for future movie studio. 	
7	TT6014 PD-S-0997-MOD#01	West Semi Business Center	903 QUIMISA DRIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Tentative Map since original Tentative Map TT5865 expired. • Increase site elevation by a maximum 14 feet 6 inches, revise tree replacement value, and revise oak woodland replacement requirement. 	Expired
8	CUP-S-0810	Big Brothers Studios	2251 WARD AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow an indoor entertainment facility with live music within an existing industrial building. 	Deemed Incomplete
9	PD-S-1060 TT6018 PD-S-2022-0002 TT-2022-0001	Xebec Easy Street	NORTH OF EASY STREET, EAST OF MADERA ROAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct 6 industrial buildings (approx. 508,838 SF) on a vacant lot. • Subdivide into 5 lots for industrial development. • Time Extension to Construct 6 industrial buildings on a vacant lot. 	Approved/Unbuilt
10	CUP-S-0817 CUP-S-0817-AA#1	ESI Ventures West Hill Ct	TERMINUS OF WESTHILLS COURT AT 118 FREEWAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct and operate a 56,992 sf general warehousing building. • Expansion, reconfiguration, and relocation of an approved 58,000 square-foot industrial building to 63,800 square feet. 	Completed/Closed
11	CUP-S-0820	Irons Contractor Storage	744 WEST LOS ANGELES AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-entitle expired contractor storage yard approval CUP-S-686 with wildlife movement corridor. 	Under Construction

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement construction will be in two phases: (1) the existing contractor yard and (2) the south contractor yard with wildlife movement corridor. 	
12	PD-S-1064	4M Precision Grinding	600 EAST EASY STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a 9,500 sf industrial building on a vacant lot. 	Under Construction
13	TP-S0692 CUP-S-0827	Extra Space Storage	4753 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide a 5.05-acre lot into 4 industrial parcels. Construct a self-storage facility and 3 industrial buildings to create an industrial complex. Industrial building would be 152,933 square feet. 	Under Construction
14	TP-S-0694 PD-S-1069	Guardian Industrial Building	4181 GUARDIAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide a 3.97-acre lot into 16 parcels for industrial units and construct a 49,980-sf single-story industrial building with 16 units. 	Under Construction
15	PD-S-1073	Industrial Building	2240 FIRST STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a 10,133 square-foot single story industrial building on a vacant lot. 	In Plan Check
16	PD-S-1075 TT-2021-0001	Tapo Canyon Commerce Center	1800 TAPO CANYON RD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of five light industrial buildings on an existing 18.05-acre lot. Consists of 356,349 sf of new construction and 275,000 of demolition 	Under Construction
17	CUP-S-2021-0004	The District Business Park	875 E COCHRAN ST #13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auto repair, office, and packing/shipping use within an existing industrial building. 	Completed/Closed

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
18	CUP-S-2021-0005	Golden Boys Entertainment	865 E COCHRAN ST #20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative action to operate a wood shop within an existing industrial building. Of the total 2,126 sq. ft., 1,700 sq. ft. will be used for the wood shop and 426 sq. ft. will be office/ reception use. 	Completed/Closed
19	PD-S-2021-0006	Parkinson Development	600 E COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a 37,324 sq. ft. single story concrete tilt up industrial building with 6,500 sq. ft. of mezzanine. 	Under Construction
20	CUP-S-2021-0007	Variety Wraps Use Permit	875 COCHRAN ST #21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Action for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a car wrap business inside an existing 2,156 sf space located in an existing industrial center. 	Approved/Unbuilt
21	CUP-S-2022-0003	Building Envelope Contractors	875 E COCHRAN ST #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General contracting business to occupy a brand new building constructed by others for truck/hand tool storage, office, and admin staff. 	Approved/Unbuilt
22	PD-S-2022-0004	Rexford Industrial	21 W EASY ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Action to remove existing landscaping and install new drought tolerant landscaping at existing industrial building. Irrigation will be converted to drip and smart controllers. 	Applied/Submitted
23	CUP-S-2022-0007	Rancho Simi Recreation and Park	4201 GUARDIAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Addition of a 5,040 sq. ft. mezzanine space and reconfiguration of recreational areas for Phase 3 of CUP-S-785. Mezzanine area would only be open after hours. Changes are limited to internal modifications. 	Approved/Unbuilt
24	CUP-S-2022-0010		791 CHAMBERS LN SUITE 110	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed wine tasting room for Nectar of The Dogs Wine. The 	Deemed Complete

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
				tasting room will occupy the front space of an existing 2,000 sq. ft. unit. An area of 660 sq. ft. will be used for the tasting room area and 240 sq. ft. for storage-office. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage will be used for pallets of wine. • No manufacturing of wine on-site. • The bars, tables & chairs will all be moveable fixtures, with no permanent structures in the space. • The applicant will occasionally host special events (e.g., wine club parties) with live acoustic music. 	
25	PD-S-2022-0008		555 E EASY ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a 17,000 sq. ft. addition to an existing industrial building. 	In Plan Check
26	CUP-S-2002-0011	The District Business Park	875 E COCHRAN ST #6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse with incidental Ice cream sales (Sub Zero Ice Cream). Change in use, no added sq. ft. 	Applied/Submitted
Wireless Telecommunications					
1	WTP-0064-MOD#02 WTP-2021-0003	Sprint -Cochran Street T-Mobile MOD @ 2720 Cochran St	2720 E COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6409(a) application for antenna upgrades to existing, roof-top antenna that are completely screened the roof parapet, for a Massive MIMO facility. Equipment is in a ground-floor room. 	Approved/Unbuilt
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed modification to an existing wireless facility. 	Under Construction
2	WTP-0086	Verizon - 5775 Los Angeles Avenue	5775 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wireless telecommunication facility consisting of a 60-foot- 	Approved/Unbuilt

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
				tall mono-pine.	
3	WTP-00520MOD#03	Verizon - Cochran Street	3200 COCHRAN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify an existing rooftop wireless telecommunication facility. 	Completed/Closed
4	WTP-0088	Verizon - Stargaze Place	NORTHERLY TERMINUS OF STARGAZE PLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wireless telecommunication facility consisting of a faux water tank. 	Deemed Incomplete
5	WTP-0046-MOD#04	AT&T - Cochran Street	255 1/2 COCHRAN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing rooftop wireless telecommunications facility. 	Under Construction
6	WTP-0093	Crown Castle - Patricia Avenue	NEAR 1624 PATRICIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install a wireless small cell facility on an existing 29' 3" wooden utility pole/streetlight. Consists of 2 Ericsson 2203 RRU's on 6-foot wooden extension arm. 	Completed/Closed
7	WTP-0092	Crown Castle – Third Street	2 ND WOOD POLE SOUTH OF LOS ANGELES AVENUE, ON THE EAST SIDE OF 3 RD STREET 3 RD ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wireless small cell node facility consisting of two RRU's on a 6-foot wooden extension arm of an existing 24' 3" wooden utility pole. 	Completed/Closed
8	WTP-0108	Crown Castle Small Cell	NEAR 1624 PATRICIA AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wireless telecommunication facility – Small Cell Wireless Facility, Strand-Mounted antennae. 	Completed/Closed
9	WTP-0038-MOD#01	Verizon – Tapo Street	2450 TAPO ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification of an existing rooftop wireless telecommunications facility. 	Expired
	WTP-0120	AT&T – 2450 Tapo Street		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of new antennas and RRU units for a roof-top mounted wireless telecommunication facility. 	Under Construction
10	WTP-0056-MOD#03	Verizon – 5134 Los Angeles Avenue	5145 1/2 EAST LOS ANGELES AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing wireless telecommunications facility within existing tower. 	Expired

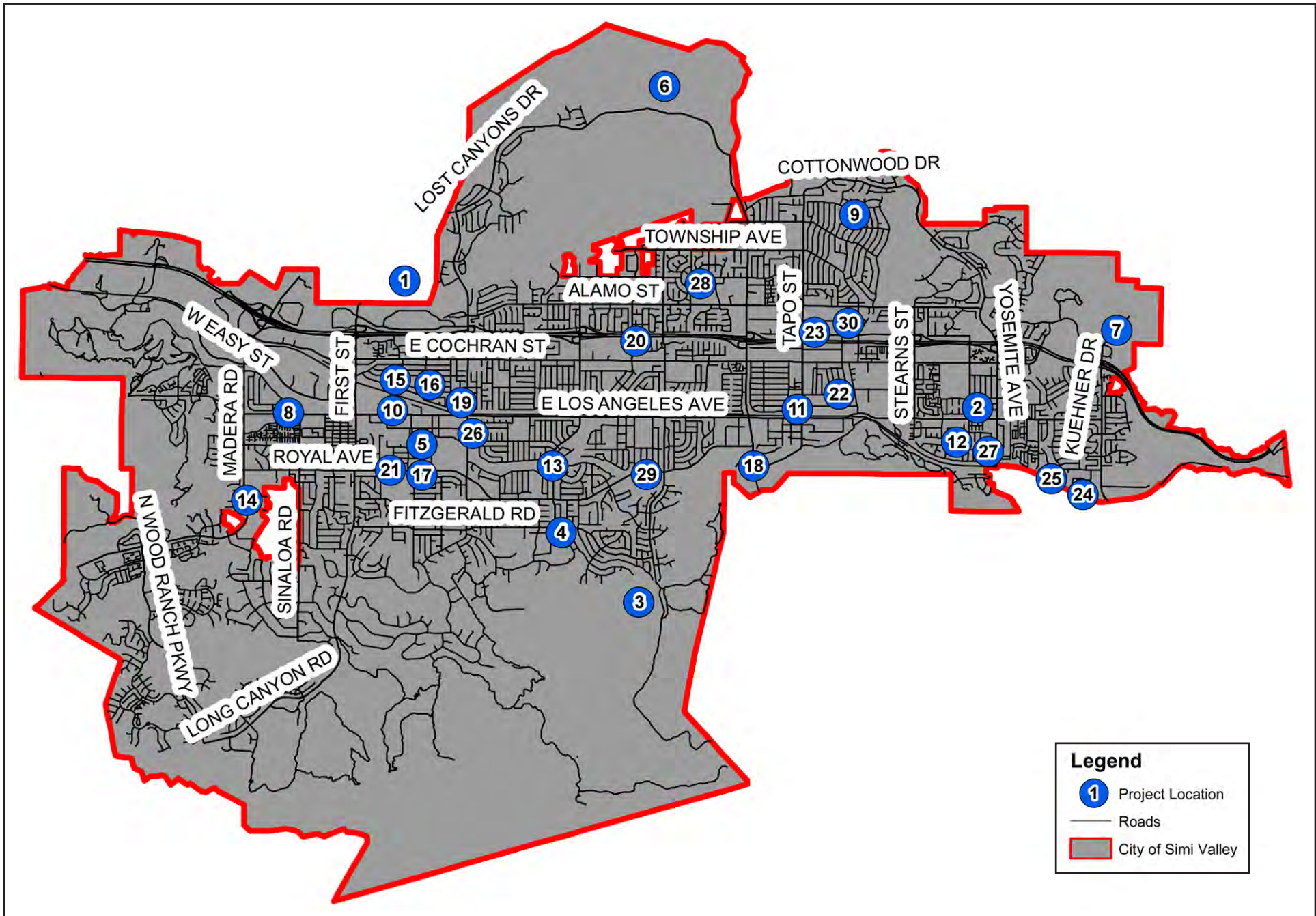
No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
11	WTP-0094-MOD#01 WTP-2021-0009	AT&T – 1350 Los Angeles Avenue	1350 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVMC section 6409 modifications to remove and replace antennas and RRU's. 	Deemed Incomplete
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing ATT wireless facility. 	Deemed Incomplete
12	WTP-0039-MOD#02	Verizon – Alamo Street	3695 ALAMO STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing wireless telecommunications facility on stairwell towers and rooftop. 	Under Constructed
13	WTP-0045-MOD#02	AT&T – Madera Road	1230 MADERA RD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove and replace antennas in an existing cupola. 	Under Construction
14	WTP-0002-MOD#03	Verizon- Erringer Road	2550 1/4 ERRINGER ROAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing wireless telecommunications facility within rooftop cupola. 	In Plan Check
15	WTP-0096-MOD#01	Verizon – 4427 Alamo Street	4427 ALAMO STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing monocypress wireless telecommunications facility. 	Approved/Unbuilt
16	WTP-0082-MOD#02	Verizon – Shasta Way	2350 SHASTA WAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification of an existing tower wireless telecommunications facility. 	Under Construction
17	WTP-0097	T-Mobile – Cochran Street	ADJACENT TO 4425 COCHRAN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wireless telecommunications facility – strand mounted small cell. 	Completed/Closed
18	W-0013-MOD#02 W-0012-MOD#01 W-2022-0001	Verizon – Mellow Lane AT&T – Mellow Water tank T-Mobile	1135 MELLOW LN 1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVMC Section 6409 modification to an existing wireless telecommunications facility at water tank site on a mono-pine. Remove and replace antennas at an existing monopine wireless telecommunication facility. Modification to an existing wireless facility at an existing City tank site property. 	Under Construction

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
19	WTP-0098 WTP-2021-0008	AT&T – Royal Avenue	2507 ROYAL AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install a new 48 feet tall monoeucalyptus wireless telecommunication facility. • Wireless application for a proposed Verizon modification to remove and replace antennae and related equipment. 	Approved/Unbuilt
20	WTP-0066-MOD#02	AT&T – 3208 Los Angeles	3208 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace six antennas and add six RRU's at an existing wireless telecommunications facility. 	Approved/Unbuilt
21	WTP-0062-MOD#02	Sprint – Presidential Drive	1197 PRESIDENTIAL DR 3/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace existing antennas and add antennas to existing antenna poles that are currently vacant. 	Approved/Unbuilt
22	WTP_0099-MOD#01		1900 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace existing antennas that are completely screened by the existing building parapet. 	Approved/Unbuilt
23	WTP-0081-MOD-#2	T-Mobile	1197 PRESIDENTIAL DR 3/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification to an existing telecommunication facility. 	Approved/Unbuilt
24	WTP-2021-0005	Wireless MOD at 1900 E. L.A. Ave	1900 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wireless MOD on an existing rooftop. 	Approved/Unbuilt
	WTP-2022-0001			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification for telecommunications facility (co-location) on existing commercial rooftop. 	Deemed Complete
25	CUP-S-0828 WTP-0100	Verizon – Stargaze Easy Street	120 WEST EASY STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request to exceed the 48-foot height limit for a 70-tall monopine (WTP-100) for Verizon. • Construct a 70-foot tall monopine wireless telecommunication facility. 	Deemed Incomplete

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
26	W-0011-MOD#01	AT&T – Lightning Ridge	3700 1/2 LIGHTNING RIDGE WAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing wireless telecommunications monopole consisting of Phase 1 – remove and replace 3 antennas and add RRU’s, Phase 2 – remove and replace 6 antennas and add RRU’s. 	Approved/Unbuilt
27	WTP-0065-MOD#2	Sprint – Los Angeles Avenue	4568 E LOS ANGELES AVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove and replace antennas and RRU units on an existing monopipe. 	In Plan Check
28	WTP-0102	Crown Castle Small Cell	FIRST WOOD POLE EAST OF PARKDALE AVENUE ON NORTH OF COCHRAN STREET NEAR 3611 COCHRAN STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wireless telecommunication facility – Small Cell Wireless Facility Strand-Mounted. 	Under Construction
29	W-0006-MOD#1	Sprint Antenna Upgrade at National Way Water Tank	400-1/2 NATIONAL WAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade antennas on existing pole mounts at a water tank site. 	Approved/Unbuilt
30	WTP-0118	Crown Castle Small Cell	1 ST WOOD POLE EAST OF VENICE STREET. ON THE NORTH SIDE OF ROYAL AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wireless telecommunication facility – Small Cell Wireless Facility, Strand-Mounted antennae. 	Under Construction
31	WTP-0121	New Telecommunication Facility	52 TIERRA REJADA ROAD TIERRA REJADA RD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wireless telecommunication facility within an existing cupola extension in an existing commercial building. 	Under Construction
32	WTP-0047-MOD#5 WTP-2021-0007	Wood Ranch Center, Clock Tower	525 COUNTRY CLUB DR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing wireless telecommunication facility within an existing clock tower. Wireless Telecommunication Application for a proposed T-Mobile Modification at an existing wireless facility. 	Approved/Unbuilt
33	WTP-0021-MOD-#2	Verizon	901 QUIMISA DR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing telecommunication facility. 	In Plan Check

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
34	WTP-0011-MOD#2 WTP-2022-0003	T-Mobile T-Mobile MOD	3998 E COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing wireless telecommunication facility on the rooftop of an existing commercial building. Modification to an existing T-Mobile Telecommunications Facility on an existing commercial rooftop. 	Completed/Closed
35	WTP-2021-0001	Faux Rock	1724 PEREGRINE CT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New T-Mobile facility located near an existing water tank surrounded by faux rock. Replacing an existing facility located at the former Macy's. 	Deemed Incomplete
36	WTP-2021-0006	Wireless MODs @ 2525 Stow St	2525 N STOW ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verizon Modification to existing faux chimneys. 	Approved/Unbuilt
37	CUP-S-2021-0009	Site Server	1700 TAPO ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of telecommunication facility with 10-meter satellite dish and support structures. 	Approved/Unbuilt
38	WTP-2022-0002	Dish Network – Rooftop	2498 STEARNS ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of a new rooftop wireless telecommunications facility on an existing commercial/hotel building. 	Deemed Incomplete
39	WTP-2022-0004		2550 ERRINGER RD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification to an existing wireless telecommunication facility on a commercial property. 	In Plan Check
40	WTP-2022-0007	Verizon MOD	3695 ALAMO ST #101	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Modification for existing Verizon telecommunications facility at an existing commercial building. 	Approved/Unbuilt
41	WTP-2022-0008	AT&T MOD	3190 E COCHRAN ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed AT&T wireless modification on an existing commercial roof 	Deemed Complete

No.	Case #	Project Name	Address	Description and Size	Status (As of the release of the Draft EIR)
42	WTP-2022-0009	Dish Network	2150 AGATE CT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collocation of new wireless antennas on existing monopole. 	Deemed Incomplete
<p>Source: City of Simi Valley, 2022 Second Quarter Development Report (i.e., report at the time of the NOP). See Appendix A (Note: project status in Appendix A is from 2022 Second Quarter).</p> <p><u>Abbreviation Key (Case #)</u></p> <p>AA Administrative Action AHA Affordable Housing Agreement CCRC Continuing Care Retirement Center CUP Conditional Use Permit DA Development Agreement GPA General Plan Amendment MOD Modification PD Planned Development RRU Remote Radio Unit SVMC Simi Valley Municipal Code TP Tentative Parcel TT Tentative Map Z Zone Change W Wireless Application WTP# Wireless Telecommunications Permit#</p>					



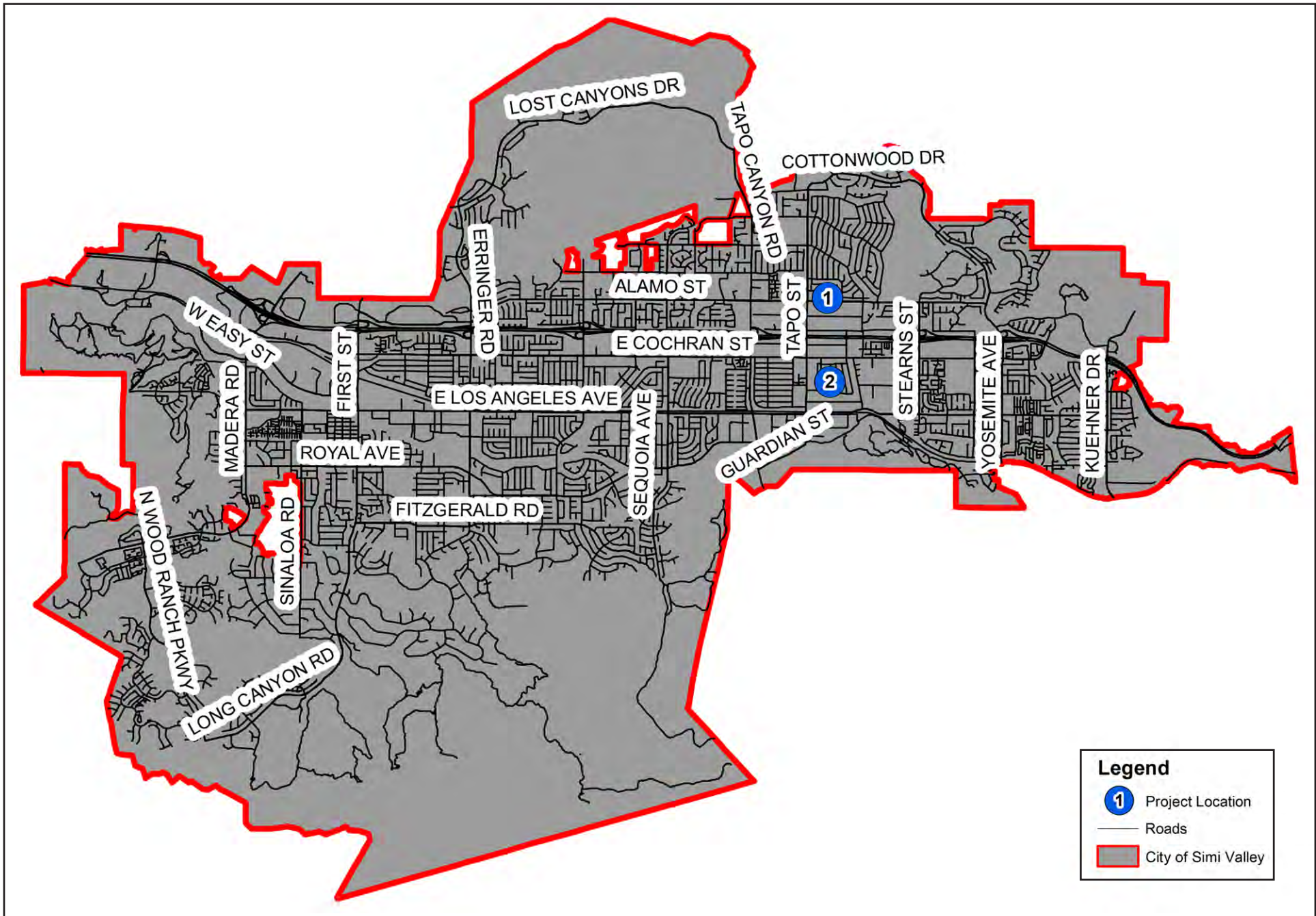
Source: City of Simi Valley, 2022 Second Quarter Development Report.

NORTH CANYON RANCH & REQUIRED ISLAND ANNEXATIONS - EIR

Cumulative Projects Map - Residential

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FIGURE 3-1A



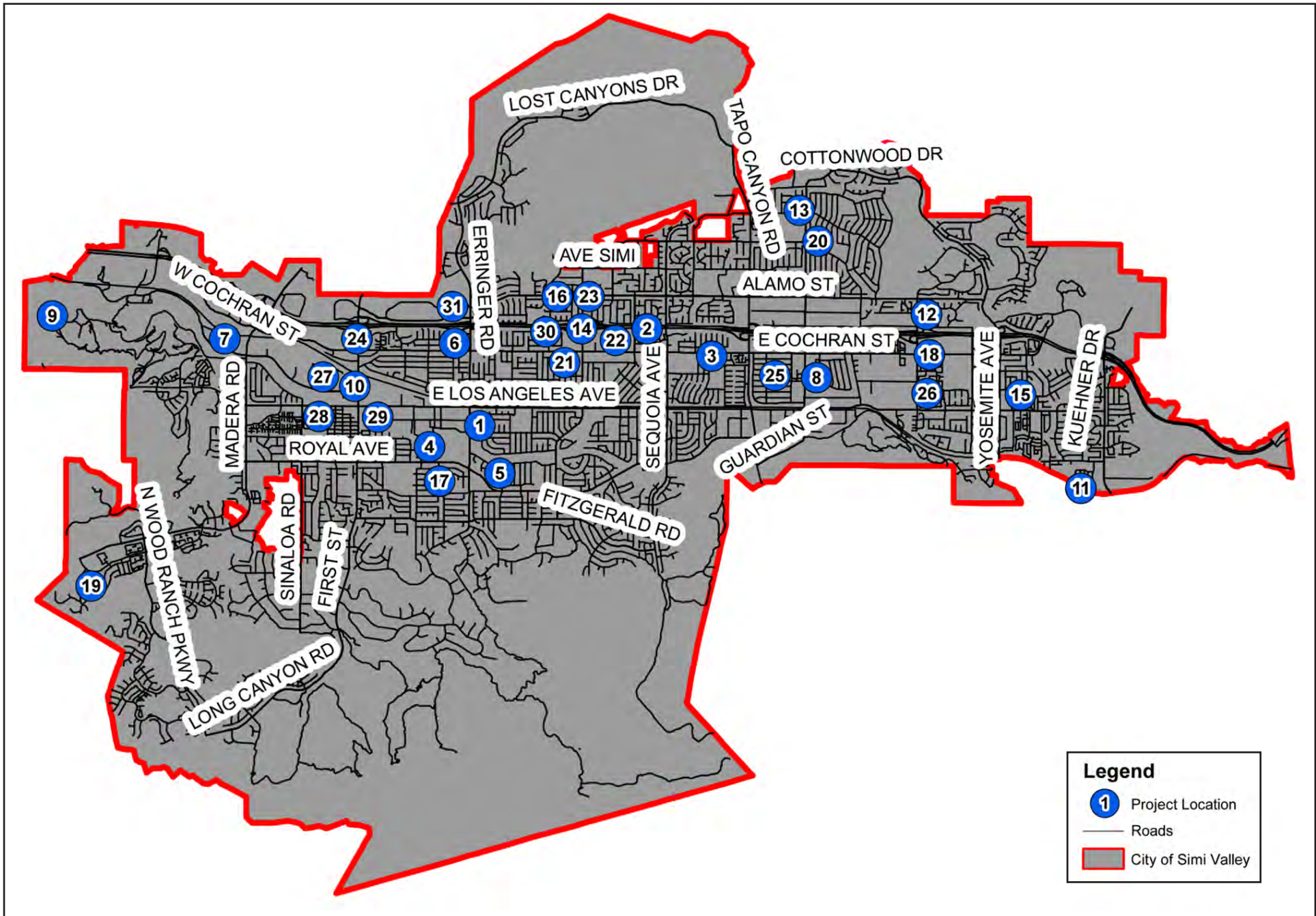
Source: City of Simi Valley, 2022 Second Quarter Development Report.

NORTH CANYON RANCH & REQUIRED ISLAND ANNEXATIONS - EIR

Cumulative Projects Map - Mixed Use

envicom

FIGURE 3-1B



Source: City of Simi Valley, 2022 Second Quarter Development Report.

NORTH CANYON RANCH & REQUIRED ISLAND ANNEXATIONS - EIR

Cumulative Projects Map - Commercial



IMPACT ANALYSIS

SECTION 4.0

4.0 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Chapter 4.0 of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) was prepared to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development and the Required Island Annexations – together the “project” – regarding issues identified through the Initial Study and Notice of Preparation scoping process (see **Appendix A, Initial Study/Notice of Preparation, NOP Scoping Comments, Cumulative Projects**), including consultation with regulatory agencies other than the City.

Based upon this process, the following issues are addressed in this Draft EIR, arranged by Section number:

- 4.1 Aesthetics
- 4.2 Agricultural and Open Space Resources
- 4.3 Air Quality
- 4.4 Biological Resources
- 4.5 Cultural, Tribal Cultural and Paleontological Resources
- 4.6 Geology and Soils
- 4.7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 4.9 Land Use and Planning
- 4.10 Noise
- 4.11 Population and Housing
- 4.12 Public Services
 - 4.12.1 Fire and Ambulance Services
 - 4.12.2 Police Services
 - 4.12.3 Schools
- 4.13 Parks and Recreation
- 4.14 Transportation
- 4.15 Utility and Service Systems
 - 4.15.1 Water Supply
 - 4.15.2 Wastewater
 - 4.15.3 Solid Waste
- 4.16 Wildfire

The analysis within each of these sections discusses the existing conditions (including environmental setting and regulatory setting), thresholds of significance, project impacts and mitigation measures, residual impacts (i.e., the level of significance after implementation of mitigation measures), and cumulative impacts related to the proposed project. These Draft EIR Sections provide citations to data sources, including plans and studies. A comprehensive list of sources is also provided in Section 7.3, References. All of the project plans and technical studies, most of which are included as Appendices to this Draft EIR are otherwise cited and are hereby incorporated by reference.

Several conventions were used in the Chapter 4.0 Analysis Sections. The first reference to a figure or a table have been bolded in each section, to indicate that the figure or table should follow shortly thereafter. Acronyms are also defined anew within the text of each section and a master Acronym list follows the

Table of Contents. In addition, acronyms are redefined starting again within each section's mitigation measures, so that when they are read independently there is no need to refer back.

4.1 AESTHETICS

SECTION 4.0

4.1 AESTHETICS

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts to aesthetic resources and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to aesthetic resources, where warranted.

This Section consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts is determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided in Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR.

4.1.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

Simi Valley is situated among a series of major and minor hills that visually frame the viewshed of the majority of the City's developed valley floor area. According to the City's General Plan EIR, "these hills constitute a significant natural topographical feature of the community because they are visible to persons traveling the major highway arteries as well as to citizens residing in and around the City." The physical characteristics of the City, in conjunction with the large amount of undeveloped land and open space in the surrounding area afford residents and visitors scenic opportunities.

Visual Resources

The City's General Plan EIR provides a list of scenic resources that exist within the viewshed of the City. Within the vicinity of the project site, the visual resources that are visible consist of distant mountains and ridgelines that frame the viewshed of Simi Valley.

Mountains and Rock Formations

Mountains define the boundaries of the viewshed with ridgelines, slopes, and canyons. Big Mountain and the Whiteface escarpment are the prominent landscape elements viewed from the valley floor. The Santa Susana Mountains are located to the north and east of Simi Valley, and the Simi Hills are located along the south of Simi Valley. The Whiteface escarpment, which is the most recognizable scenic resource on the northern side of Simi Valley is located approximately 2.1 miles northeast of the project site.

Ridgelines and Canyons

The ridgelines and canyons surrounding Simi Valley project into the lower foothills of the adjoining mountain ranges surrounding the City and provide a natural backdrop to the urban skyline.

Scenic Drives and Vistas

Scenic drives provide extended, sometimes-uninterrupted views of wide expanses of hillsides, ridgelines, woodlands, and other open spaces. There are no Officially Designated State or County Scenic Highways in

the City, although the California Scenic Highway Mapping System identifies the Ronald Reagan Freeway (SR-118, or the 118 Freeway) within the City as an Eligible State Scenic Highway.¹ In the project vicinity, the existing Simi Valley Town Center Mall is situated between the 118 Freeway corridor and the project site and substantially obscures views of the project site from freeway travel lanes.

Project Conditions and Surrounding Land Uses

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development project site is located within an approximately 160-acre undeveloped property in unincorporated Ventura County, adjacent to the City boundary of the northwestern portion of the City. The project site property is located within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) area, and the project is requesting that the project site be annexed into the City boundary.

The topography of the site is generally hilly with two slight canyons, or draws, that are oriented in a generally north to south direction situated within the project site boundary. Existing topographic elevations of the site range from approximately 960 feet above mean sea level (MSL) at the property's southern boundary up to approximately 1,295 feet MSL at a location on the property's northern border. Project grading would directly disturb approximately 90.96 acres of the site, primarily clustered within the southern portion of the property while the rest of the property would be avoided and retained as open space.

Although the project site is currently undeveloped, the site has previously been subject to grazing activities by domestic animals, and the southern portion of the site was subject to previous grading disturbance. Engineered slopes with concrete terrace drains are located within the site along the southern boundary above existing development to the south of the site. Additionally, export soils from grading of the Simi Valley Town Center Mall site to the south (completed in 2005) was placed within the site to create two graded pads, including an approximately four-acre area in the western portion of the site, and an approximately 12-acre area (bisected by a graded slope with a concrete terrace drain) in the eastern portions of the site. Previous grading of the site also included creation of two stormwater/debris basins within the property along the southern boundary at the southern extent of the two soil fill areas.

Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and "big box" stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, which substantially block public views of the project site from roadways in the project vicinity. Other adjacent land uses consist of single-family residences to the east, and open space to the north and west. The southwestern corner of the development area is located at the northern terminus of First Street, and the eastern side of the development area is located at the western terminus of Falcon Street, which the project would extend westerly through the project site to connect with First Street. An existing hiking trail extends northward from the western terminus of Falcon Street that generally follows along the project's eastern boundary between the project site and existing single-family residences to the east.

Required Island Annexations

The areas to be annexed to the City that are currently under Ventura County jurisdiction, which are referred to in Section 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR as County Islands are developed primarily with single-family residences and are not currently proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is to annex the County Island properties to the City. These County Island areas are generally located along the northern, western, and eastern extent of the currently developed portions of the City, at distances ranging from over one mile to over six miles

¹ Caltrans, List of Eligible and Officially Designated State Scenic Highways, Accessed January 21, 2024 at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>

from the proposed North Canyon Ranch development site. As no physical changes within the County Island Annexation Areas are proposed with this project, the remainder of this evaluation aesthetic effects will focus on potential impacts to visual resources that could result from physical changes associated with the proposed North Canyon Ranch development.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

No existing federal regulations pertain to the visual resources within the project site.

State

California Scenic Highway Program

California's Scenic Highway Program preserves and protects scenic state highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. State highways either can be officially designated as scenic highways or be determined to be eligible for designation. The status of a state scenic highway changes from eligible to officially designated when the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) approves the designation.

Regional and Local

City of Simi Valley General Plan

Chapter 6, Natural Resources of the City's General Plan,² contains several policies for visual resource protection that address: maintenance of natural topography; provision of trails, recreation areas, and viewing areas near significant visual resources; location and design of developments within visually sensitive areas; and development on hillsides.

Simi Valley Zoning Regulations

The Simi Valley Municipal Code (SVMC) governs residential uses that regulate aesthetics and visual resource protections by providing standards for setbacks, building heights, and other requirements.

4.1.2 Thresholds of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Section 15382 provides that a significant effect on the environment means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to aesthetics has been analyzed in relation to the threshold criteria below, which are based on the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact to aesthetics when the proposed project has potential to (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. (Scenic Vistas)
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. (Scenic Resources)
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. (Visual Character)

² Simi Valley General Plan Chapter 1, Introduction, Table 1, General Plan Topics, identifies the nexus between the plan chapters and the California legally required elements. As shown, General Plan Chapter 6 addresses the topic of visual resources, which is relevant to the legally required Conservation Element.

- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. (Light and Glare)

4.1.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The proposed project would construct a total of 157 single-family residences, 50 multi-family residences, and a paved roadway network with associated utility installation to serve the proposed residences. The proposed roadway network would include an extension of Falcon Street within the southern portion of the site that would connect with First Street at the southwestern corner of the site. Grading of the site would involve cut and fill activities to create individual building pads and the proposed roadways, stabilize slopes, and create several stormwater/debris basins that would be located throughout the site. An existing engineered slope with concrete terrace drains located at the northern terminus of First Street would be altered by grading to allow the roadway to extend along a curved path to the northeast into the project site. A gravity retaining wall with a total height of 60 feet, would be constructed along the new roadway connecting First Street to the proposed Falcon Street extension. Landscaping would be installed on each level of the proposed retaining walls at the north end of First Street and along all street frontages as well as on graded slopes and common areas. The proposed extension of Falcon Street through the project site would feature a series of raised medians planted with trees and consisting of alternating areas of landscaping and ornamental pavers. All proposed internal roadways would be tree-lined, with sidewalks and landscaping on both sides, with a wider meandering walkway path and landscaping area along the south side of the Falcon Street extension. The landscaping palette indicates that a wide variety of trees, shrubs, and groundcovers would be provided throughout the developed portions of the site, to be installed within the common areas of the development maintained by a homeowners' association (HOA), as identified on the Tentative Map. Areas currently expected to be maintained by the HOA would include the main parkway of Falcon Street, interior parkways and park, stabilized slopes, debris basin slopes, and fuel modification areas.

Site Visibility from Public Roadways/Locations

A general reconnaissance was conducted by driving on the 118 Freeway and other primary roadways in the City to characterize the visibility of the site from prominent public locations near the site.³ This work was supplemented by readily available aerial photographic imagery. Due to the Simi Valley Town Center Mall, which is situated at a higher elevation than 118 Freeway travel lanes in the project vicinity, the project site is substantially screened from views from the freeway as well as most other high volume public roadways in the area such as First Street and Simi Valley Town Center Way. Due to the elevated lanes of the 118 Freeway above the valley floor in the vicinity of Erringer Road, as well as the existing development and topography north of the freeway, the site is screened from views from Erringer Road in the project vicinity. The site would be visible from higher elevations on the southwest side of the City in southerly views from north/south trending roadways such as First Street, at distances of approximately two miles. Due to distance and surrounding development, the proposed project would appear as a minor extension of the existing development of the valley floor, including the Mall, and would not substantially affect such distant views. Views of the site from public roadways to the east are primarily blocked by existing topography and residential developments, with the exception of the western terminus of Falcon Street which currently ends at the project site boundary. There are currently no public parks with direct views that could be affected by the proposed development. There is a public trail that extends northward from the western terminus of Falcon Street and generally follows the project site's eastern boundary along a ridge between the site and adjacent residences to the east. Due to existing topography and existing development, views of portions of the proposed development area would appear as an extension of the existing surrounding development and would not substantially affect such distant views. Other arterials in the area are not

³ Reconnaissance survey conducted by Ron Stevens, Interacta, Inc., originally in 2020 and 2021.

positioned in a way to include substantial views of the project site, particularly considering foreground views from those arterials would already include views of existing development.

Visual Simulations

To assist in the following evaluation, visual simulations were prepared that depict the project as it would appear from public roadways in the project vicinity, that represent a range of viewing angles of the site. The simulated view locations were chosen to represent views from the nearby freeway and arterial roadway segments near the site where the project development area would be most likely to be visible. These view locations are depicted on **Figure 4.1-1, View Simulation Location Map**. The visual simulations, provided as **Figures 4.1-2 through 4.1-5, View Simulations**, have been created using photographs of the existing conditions which are also provided for comparison. The simulations were created using the project's site plans, grading plans, landscape plans, and sample residential architectural styles of similar heights, styles, and exterior materials and colors as existing residential developments in the area to reasonably depict the project as it would appear in context with the surroundings. In addition to evaluating view impacts depicted in the visual simulations, this analysis is also based on observations of the existing site conditions and of the vicinity in general.

The five vacant parcels within the Island Annexation areas are in dispersed areas throughout the Islands. The potential impact of development of these lots is also described below under each impact threshold heading.

4.1.3.1 Scenic Vistas

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed project would potentially have a significant impact to aesthetics if the project would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. For purposes of determining significance of impacts under CEQA, a scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. According to the City's General Plan EIR, scenic vistas may include views of a range of resources, whether natural or man-made.

To determine if the project's aesthetic impacts would be substantially adverse regarding scenic vistas, this analysis will be based on the extent that the project may obstruct a public view of valued visual resources; and/or dominate a scenic vista of a highly valued landscape. Distant scenic vista view opportunities in the project vicinity are generally limited to views of mountain ridgelines at the City's perimeters as seen from along roadway corridors. Existing views and simulated post-development views from roadways in the project vicinity are shown in Figures 4.1-2 through 4.1-5, Visual Simulations. The views depicted in these figures are described below:

- **Figure 4.1-2 View Simulation 1 - Falcon Street (Northwest View):** This figure shows a northwesterly view of the project site from near the current western terminus of Falcon Street at the project site boundary. As shown in Figure 4.1-2, the project would remove the existing berm at the end of Falcon Street, allowing views into the project site. With development of the project, views from this location would include single-family homes with landscaping, along with the proposed Falcon Street extension with street trees and a landscaped median.
- **Figure 4.1-3 View Simulation 2 - Simi Town Center Way (Northerly View):** This figure shows a northerly view from Simi Town Center Way. As seen in this figure, the existing mall and multi-family residences north of the mall provide substantial visual screening of the subject property, and post construction, very little of the project would be visible from this location. The portions of the project that could be seen from this location would consist of landscape trees to be planted on the



Aerial Source: GoogleEarth Pro, Oct. 2, 2016.

NORTH CANYON RANCH & REQUIRED ISLAND ANNEXATIONS - EIR



View Simulation Location Map



Current Conditions



Proposed Conditions*



Source: Interacta, Inc., Jul. 14, 2021.

* Simulated home styles are provided to depict conceptual location, elevation, and scale only, and do not represent actual architectural designs to be constructed as none have been proposed for the project at this time.

Current Conditions



Proposed Conditions*



Source: Interacta, Inc., Jul. 14, 2021.

* Simulated home styles are provided to depict conceptual location, elevation, and scale only, and do not represent actual architectural designs to be constructed as none have been proposed for the project at this time.

Current Conditions



Proposed Conditions*



Source: Interacta, Inc., Jul. 14, 2021.

* Simulated home styles are provided to depict conceptual location, elevation, and scale only, and do not represent actual architectural designs to be constructed as none have been proposed for the project at this time.

Current Conditions



Proposed Conditions*



Source: Interacta, Inc., Jul. 14, 2021.

* Simulated home styles are provided to depict conceptual location, elevation, and scale only, and do not represent actual architectural designs to be constructed as none have been proposed for the project at this time.

project's engineered slopes, and some rooftops visible above the mall buildings in the distance near the center of the frame.

- Figure 4.1-4 View Simulation 3 - 118 Freeway (Northerly View): This figure shows a northerly view from the eastbound lanes of the 118 Freeway. As shown in this figure, the existing mall and intervening topography and landscaping provide substantial visual screening of the subject property, and post construction, very little of the project would be visible from this location. The portions of the project that could be seen from this location would consist of landscape trees to be planted on the project's engineered slopes, and some rooftops visible above the mall buildings in the distance near the center of the frame. Views from westbound lanes of the 118 Freeway would be screened to an even greater degree as the existing slope on the north side of the Freeway would be even closer to the viewer.
- Figure 4.1-5 View Simulation 4 - First Street (Northeasterly View): This figure shows a northeasterly view of the project site from the intersection of First Street northbound lanes and the eastbound on-ramp for the 118 Freeway. As shown in this figure, the existing commercial development and intervening topography and landscaping provide substantial visual screening of the subject property. Post construction, very little of the project would be visible from this location. The portions of the project that could be seen from this location would consist of landscape trees to be planted on the project's engineered slopes, and some rooftops visible above the existing buildings and landscaping in the distance near the center of the frame.

As demonstrated, the existing topography, development, and landscaping on properties south of the project site reduces the expanse of distant ridgelines visible from along nearby local roadways in the vicinity. While views of distant ridgelines from public roadways are common throughout Simi Valley, such views are often obstructed or obscured by existing development and landscaping along roadways, which results in intermittent interruptions of such views from traveling vehicles and pedestrians.

The locations depicted in the simulations were chosen to represent views from public roadways where sightlines to the project site would be available in the vicinity based on elevations, distance, and gaps in existing development.

As the City is primarily located within a valley floor, roadways that extend into the surrounding hills south of the City, such as First Street, provide opportunities for sweeping vistas across the urban development areas of the City. However, due to the relatively small scale of the proposed project in comparison to the overall urban landscape of the City (of which the project would become a part), as well as topographical features such as intervening foothills and development, the proposed project would not be substantially discernible from such distant views. Accordingly, the project would not substantially obstruct public views or dominate the viewshed available from distant public viewing areas that provide scenic vistas across the City.

As described above, and as shown in Figures 4.1-3 through 4.1-5, the project site is substantially concealed in northerly views from nearby public roadways, including the 118 Freeway as well as the majority of the developed valley floor within the City, and would not substantially affect scenic vistas from those locations. As discussed above, the views depicted in Figure 4.1-3 through 4.1-5 were chosen to show where the project would be most visible from these area roadways. As documented in Figures 4.1-3 through 4.1-5, due to significant visual screening provided by existing development and topography, as described below.

The project development would be most visible from the public viewpoint shown in Figure 4.1-2, the current terminus of Falcon Street. The proposed development would alter the view from this location, which currently consists of a graded slope at the roadway end that disrupts interior views of the southern portion of the site, and views of undeveloped hills of the northern portion of the site. The simulated view shows

that with the project, the proposed eastern entrance to the project site will be visible, with homes, landscaping, and a landscaped median in the planned extension of Falcon Street. The City's General Plan anticipates extending Falcon Street as an arterial through the project site to connect with First Street. Consequently, the City would require the developer to provide this road extension. While the existing short segment of Falcon Street that terminates as a dead-end at the project site currently serves to provide access to a pocket park and a public trailhead, neither this location (from which the view shown in Figure 4.1-2 is depicted) nor any part of Falcon Street is designated as a scenic drive providing scenic views or vistas in either the City's General Plan or General Plan EIR. Although the view from this location would be altered by the project, due to the limited use of the dead-end roadway, and as this view is not a designated scenic view location, potential impacts on scenic vistas would be less than significant. Based on these considerations, the project site and nearby vicinity would not be considered to meet the definition of a scenic vista viewpoint as used in this analysis. Accordingly, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, and therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

Future development on approximately five vacant single-family parcels could occur going forward. However, the allowable development based on zoning and general plan designations for these few parcels would be similar to existing development of the neighborhoods in which the parcels are located, the parcels would not be in close proximity to the North Canyon Ranch site and thus would not combine to affect the same views, and to determine the development timeframe would be speculative. Impacts from the required annexations would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.1.3.2 Scenic Resources

The proposed project would potentially have a significant impact to aesthetics if the project would substantially damage scenic resources including, without limitation, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. There are no designated State Scenic Highways in the project vicinity, although the 118 Freeway is identified as eligible for a scenic highway designation. The project site is not generally visible from the 118 Freeway in the vicinity of the project site due to existing development and topography that substantially block views of the site from the freeway. Therefore, the project would not be visible from a state scenic highway and would not be substantially visible from an eligible scenic highway. The project site does not include rock outcroppings, or historic buildings. The project site has few trees for its size; however, 16 protected trees (including oaks and mature trees), including a few planted coast live oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*) on the manufactured slopes in the southern portion of the site, which will be fully mitigated under a Protected Tree Permit for the project, in compliance with the City Protected Tree Ordinance and the project Protected Tree Report. The site's trees are not visible from the 118 Freeway or from surrounding public vantage points, and thus do not substantively contribute to scenic resources. Therefore, development of the proposed project would not damage scenic resource visible from a scenic highway, and the project's potential impacts regarding damaging significant scenic resources within a scenic highway or to any other scenic resource would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

Future development on approximately five vacant single-family parcels could occur going forward. However, the allowable development on these few parcels would be similar to existing development of the neighborhoods in which the parcels are located, the parcels would not be in close proximity to the North Canyon Ranch site and thus would not combine to affect the same views, and to determine the development timeframe would be speculative. As such, impacts from the required annexations would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.1.3.3 *Visual Character*

The proposed project would potentially have a significant impact to aesthetics if the project would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Under existing conditions, adjacent land uses consist of multi-family residential uses and “big box” commercial uses to the south, and single-family residential development to the east. Adjacent lands to the north and west are currently undeveloped.

The project would construct multi-family residential two-story buildings along the southern project boundary, where existing multi-family residential buildings of up to three-stories in height are located on the adjacent land to the south. The project would also provide single-family homes on individual graded lots accessed by a network of paved roadways, some of which would terminate in cul-de-sacs, in the southeastern portion of the site, including along the eastern project boundary, where existing single-family homes are located on the adjacent land to the east. Additionally, the project would construct single-family homes within the southwest portion of the site, where adjacent uses to the south consist of “big box” commercial uses.

The project would provide landscaping throughout the developed portion of the site, including shrubs and trees along all project roadways and a parkway median along the Falcon Street extension, as well as graded slopes. The proposed homes would have earth tone exterior finishes similar to existing adjacent residential developments. As such, the project would be consistent with existing adjacent uses, and would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings, and impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

Future development on approximately five vacant single-family parcels could occur going forward. However, the parcels are in disperse locations and allowable development on these few parcels would be similar to existing development of the neighborhoods in which the parcels are located. The parcels would not be in close proximity to the North Canyon Ranch site and thus would not combine to influence visual character. As such, impacts from the required annexations would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.1.3.4 Light and Glare

The proposed project would potentially have a significant impact to aesthetics if it would create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. The proposed project would include exterior lighting for safety along the roadways and multi-family residential parking areas of the site. The project's exterior lighting would be required to comply with the SVMC for downward facing fixtures of low intensity with screening to prevent light spillover onto adjacent properties and would be similar to existing street lighting of existing residential developments to the east of the site.

Pursuant to SVMC Section 9-30.040, each single- and multi-family residential light fixture must be designed, constructed, and maintained to ensure that light is directed away from any adjacent use, and to ensure that there shall be no illumination or glare from the exterior lighting system onto adjacent properties or streets. Additionally, pursuant to SVMC Section 9-30.040(C)(1), the project would be required to provide the City with a photometric plan for all outdoor parking areas, depicting a point-by-point foot-candle layout extending a minimum of 20 feet outside the property lines. The plan must achieve the goals established by the SVMC in order to eliminate illumination or glare from the project onto adjacent properties or streets.

The project exterior would feature earth tone colors and would not include highly reflective metallic surfaces. All windows would have clear glazing with no reflective coatings that would not substantially differ from existing glass materials used for windows throughout the City. Compliance with City regulations to control potential lighting impacts to adjacent sensitive uses would also serve to preserve night sky views, to the extent that they are currently available, through control of outdoor lighting. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light and/or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views and impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

Future development on approximately five vacant single-family parcels could occur going forward. These parcels are in disperse locations and allowable development on these few parcels would be similar to existing development of the neighborhoods in which the parcels are located. No substantive changes in lighting would be anticipated. As such, impacts from the required annexations would be less than significant

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

The geographic context for cumulative visual impacts that would occur with the proposed project is the immediate vicinity of the project site from which the proposed structures would be clearly visible. There are no currently planned development projects that would be visible within the same viewshed of the immediate vicinity of the project site. Therefore, the project would not, in combination with other projects

result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to aesthetics impacts (i.e., scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character or light and glare) beyond the project itself, as evaluated above. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

Potential future development on the five vacant single-family parcels within the Island Areas could occur going forward. These parcels are in disperse locations and allowable development on these few parcels would be similar to existing development of the neighborhoods in which the parcels are located. The sites are not proximate to North Canyon Ranch and would not combine to increase the less than significant impacts of North Canyon Ranch. No cumulatively considerable contribution to aesthetics issues (i.e., scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character or light and glare) would occur. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

4.2 AGRICULTURAL AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

SECTION 4.0

4.2 AGRICULTURAL AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

This Draft EIR section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts to agricultural resources and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to biological resources, where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and other applicable law. Sources used in the analysis are cited where relevant to the analysis; comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this EIR.

4.2.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

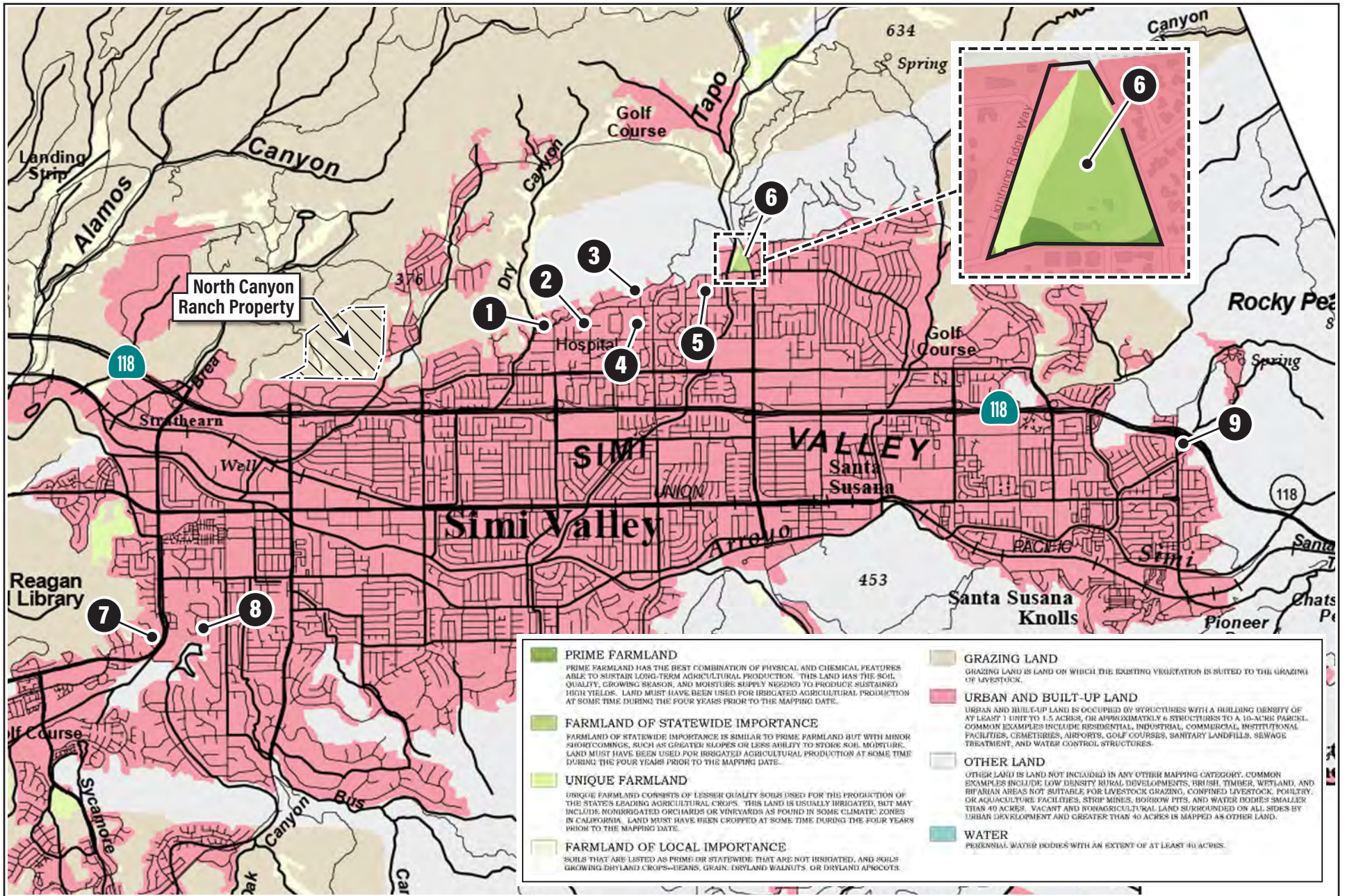
North Canyon Ranch

The project site is currently designated as Open Space in the Ventura County General Plan, and pre-designated as Residential Medium Density (3.6 - 5 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) and Residential Moderate Density (5.1-10 du/acre), and Open Space – Urban Reserve (10-acre minimum lot size) in the Simi Valley General Plan. The current City General Plan designations (pre-planned) for the site are: Open Space (1 du/40 ac), Medium Density Residential (3.6 – 5.0 du/ac), and Moderate Density Residential (5.1 – 10.0 du/ac). The project proposes to keep the same land use designations but in a different configuration, as shown in Section 4.9, Land Use and Planning.

The site is zoned Open Space (OS-160 ac) in the Ventura County General Plan. The applicant proposes that the property would be zoned as Residential Moderate Density (RMod), Residential Medium Density (RM), and Open Space (OS). Grazing activities have occurred over a majority of the site but ceased. The subject property has not been used for grading or irrigated agricultural production at any time during the past seven years.

Required Island Annexations

The vast majority of the Annexation areas are subdivided and developed with urban uses, with an occasional empty lot (up to five single-family homes spread across the City could hypothetically be added over time), and none of these vacant parcels are in existing agriculture or open space use. Only Annexation Areas 6 and 9, two largely undeveloped County Island areas, have land uses, General Plan designations or zoning that suggest agriculture or open space. Annexation Area 6, approximately 14.14 acres in size, is in the northeastern portion of the City, just within the City boundary, contains land classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland by the California Department of Conservations, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), as shown in **Figure 4.2-1, California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping**.



Source: California Department of Conservation Division of Land Resource Protection Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2018.

The most valued or important category in the FMMP mapping system is Prime Farmland, and only a very small portion of Area 6, along its southern boundary is so classified. The majority of the site is designated Farmland of Statewide Importance. A small sliver of land on the site’s western edge and an even smaller area on its northeastern edge is classified as Unique Farmland. Annexation Area 6 forms a polygon that is a roughly triangular, with the base of the triangle fronting on Walnut Street, Tapo Canyon Road on the east, Lightning Ridge Way on the west, and with the northern tip of the triangle cut at the City’s northerly boundary.

The FMMP classifies the bulk of the Area 6 as Farmland of Statewide Importance (estimated at 8.36 acres), with small portions classified as Unique Farmlands (estimated at 3.18 acres), and yet a smaller piece along Walnut Street as Farmland of Prime Farmlands (estimated at 1.72 acres). The remaining portion of the site is classified as Urban and Built-up Land (estimated at 0.88 acres). The County General Plan designation is Open Space – Urban Reserve and the site currently contains some nursery uses.

Annexation Area 6 is currently pre-zoned as RMod and Residential Low Density (RL), as shown in **Table 4.2-1, Annexation Areas 6 and 9 Land Use Designations and Zoning**. It is comprised of five Ventura County Assessor’s Parcels [Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 6140010195; 6140010205; 6140010065; 6140010075; and 6140010085]. One of these parcels is (all numbers approximate) 0.37 acres and listed as a single-family parcel; three totaling 2.39 acres are listed as vacant residential; and the 11.3-acre remaining parcel is listed in the “orchards (mixed) and vineyards,” pursuant to the Assessor’s existing land use code categories.

**Table 4.2-1
Annexation Areas 6 and 9 Land Use Designations and Zoning**

Area	General Plan Land Use Designation	Proposed Plan Land Use Designations	Existing County Zoning	Proposed City Zoning ^(a)
• Annexation Area 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OS- Urban Reserve • RL (2.1 – 3.5 du/ac) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Low Density 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OS-160 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMod • RL
• Annexation Area 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Park • Residential Estate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OS-160 and OS-10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.90 acres OS • 1.14 acres RE^(a)
Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., for City of Simi Valley; County of Ventura, Ventura County General Plan, Land Use and Community Character Element, 2020; and City of Simi Valley Data on Pre-Zoning, 2019/2020, and Claudia Pedroso, City of Simi Valley, 2023. ^(a) Portions designated with an “(a)” required a zone change to this designation; the others were previously pre-zoned.				

Annexation Area 9 is comprised of two APNs (657001011 and 657001002) that are designated as Community Park in the Ventura County General Plan. The larger parcel is 7.90 acres and is owned by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District; the smaller parcel is 1.14 acres and is in private ownership. The site is currently zoned as OS-160 acres OS-160 ac/Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridor (HCWC), and OS-10 ac by the County. The privately-owned portion of Area 9 is pre-zoned as Residential Estate Density (RE). Neither site is in use for agriculture, nor has it been in agricultural use in recent history.

Regulatory Setting

State

California Department of Conservation

The California Department of Conservation operates the FMMP. This program includes an Important Farmland Inventory that classifies farmland as "Prime Farmland," "Farmland of Statewide Importance," "Unique Farmland" or "Farmland of Local Importance."¹ To be shown on the FMMP's Important Farmland Inventory Maps as "Prime Farmland," or "Farmland of Statewide Importance," land must meet both of the following criteria:

- Land Use: Has been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the Important Farmland Map date. Irrigated land use is determined by FMMP staff by analyzing current aerial photos, local comment letters, and related Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, supplemented with field verification; and
- Soil: The soil must meet physical and chemical criteria for Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency within the United States Department of Agriculture. The NRCS compiles lists of which soils in each survey area meet the quality criteria. Factors considered in qualification of a soil by NRCS include:
 - Water moisture regimes, available water capacity, and developed irrigation water supply
 - Soil temperature range
 - Acid-alkali balance
 - Water table
 - Soil sodium content
 - Flooding (uncontrolled runoff from natural precipitation)
 - Erodibility
 - Permeability rate
 - Rock fragment content
 - Soil rooting depth

As discussed, land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years before the Important Farmland Map date and the soil must meet the physical and chemical criteria for Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance as determined by the NRCS.

- "Prime Farmlands" are those with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. Prime farmland has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Prime farmland must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years before the most recent mapping date (2020).
- "Farmland of Statewide Importance" is similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years before the most recent mapping date (2020).

¹ State of California, Department of Conservation, Important Farmland Categories, accessed January 25, 2024 at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Important-Farmland-Categories.aspx>.

- “Unique Farmland” contains lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Unique farmland must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date (2020).
- “Farmland of Local Importance” is determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee based on the local agricultural economy.
- The “Grazing Land” designation is intended for land upon which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.

As shown in **Figure 4.2-1, California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping**, the majority of Area 6 is designated by the Important Farmland Inventory as “Statewide Importance” while the northwestern edge of the site is “Unique Farmland”, and a small portion of the site at the southern edge is “Prime Farmland.” The California Department of Conservation goal is to update the important farmland maps every two years with the use of a computer mapping system, aerial imagery, public review, and field reconnaissance. However, the State Important Farmland 2020 map for Ventura County is the most recent map available.

Williamson Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, or Williamson Act, enables local governments to enroll or enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments lower than market value because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. Contract terms are either 10 or 20 years and are annually self-renewing unless a Notice of Non-Renewal is filed. The subject property is not enrolled in and thus not subject to a Williamson Act contract.² The nearest lands enrolled in a Williamson Act contract are located approximately one mile north of the project site.³ The proposed project will not affect this Williamson Act contract.

Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act

Under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) have the power to act on local agency boundary changes.⁴

Regional and Local

Ventura Local Agency Formation Commission

Annexation of Unincorporated Island Areas by Cities

Any approval of a proposal for a change of organization or reorganization will be conditioned to provide that proceedings will not be completed until and unless a subsequent proposal is filed with LAFCo initiating

² City of Simi Valley, General Plan EIR, June 2012, Section 4.2 Agricultural Resources, Figure 4.2-1: Important Farmland and Williamson Act Lands.

³ Ibid.

⁴ California Assembly Committee on Local Government, Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, December 2023. Accessed on January 24, 2024, at <https://calafco.org/resources/cortese-knox-hertzberg-act/ckh-reorganization-act-guide>.

proceedings for the change of organization or reorganization of all unincorporated Island areas that meet the provisions of Government Code Section 56375.3, provided all of the following criteria are applicable:⁵

- a) The approved proposal was initiated by resolution of a city that surrounds or substantially surrounds one or more unincorporated island areas.
- b) The territory in the approved proposal consists of one or more areas that are each 40 acres or more in area.
- c) The territory in the approved proposal consists of one or more areas that are each 40 acres or more in area.
- d) The territory in the approved proposal is not owned by a public agency or used for public purposes.

Agricultural and Open Space Preservation: Findings and Criteria for Prime Agricultural and Existing Open Space Land Conversion

Ventura LAFCo will approve a proposal for a change of organization or reorganization which is likely to result in the conversion of prime agricultural or existing open space land use to other uses only if the Commission finds that the proposal will lead to planned, orderly, and efficient development. For the purposes of this policy, a proposal for a change of organization or reorganization leads to planned, orderly, and efficient development only if all of the following criteria are met:⁶

- a) The territory is likely to be developed within 5 years and has been pre-zoned for non-agricultural or open space use. In the case of very large developments, annexation should be phased wherever possible.
- b) Insufficient non-prime agricultural or vacant land exists within the existing boundaries of the agency that is planned and developable for the same general type of use.
- c) The proposal will have no significant adverse effects on the physical and economic integrity of other prime agricultural or existing open space lands.
- d) The territory is not within an area subject to a Greenbelt Agreement adopted by a city and the County of Ventura. If a city proposal involves territory within an adopted Greenbelt area, LAFCo will not approve the proposal unless all parties to the Greenbelt Agreement amend the Greenbelt Agreement to exclude the affected territory.
- e) The use or proposed use of the territory involved is consistent with local plan and policies.

Greenbelt Agreements

The cities of Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Oxnard, San Buenaventura, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, and Thousand Oaks along with LAFCo, and the County have adopted greenbelt agreements between these jurisdictions to further the objectives of the County's Guidelines for Orderly Development by preserving agriculture and open space between urban areas. The purpose of a greenbelt is to establish a mutual agreement between these cities regarding the limit of urban growth for each city. Greenbelt agreements are voluntary between the County Board of Supervisors and one or more City Councils regarding development of agricultural or open space areas beyond city limits. They protect open space and agricultural lands and reassure property owners located within these areas that lands will not be prematurely converted to agriculturally incompatible uses. The project site is not within a designated greenbelt area.⁷

⁵ Ventura Local Agency Formation Commission, Commissioner's Handbook: Policies of the Ventura LAFCo, September 20, 2023, Accessed January 24, 2024 at: <https://www.ventura.lafco.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Ventura-LAFCo-Commissioners-Handbook-Revised-2023-09-20-with-Appendix-D.pdf>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ County of Ventura Planning Division, County of Ventura Greenbelts Map, July 2016. Accessed on January 25, 2024, at: https://docs.vcrma.org/images/pdf/planning/programs/greenbelts/Countywide_Greenbelt_Map.pdf

Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources “Measure C” Ordinance

In the County of Ventura and eight cities in the County (San Buenaventura, Camarillo, Oxnard, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Moorpark, Santa Paula, Fillmore) the voters approved the County-wide Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) initiative. The Simi Valley SOAR initiative was amended by voters in November 2016 and extended until 2050.⁸ The purpose of the SOAR initiatives is to ensure agricultural, open space, and rural lands located beyond urban boundaries are not prematurely or unnecessarily converted to other more intensive development uses, unless approved by a majority of voters within the SOAR area. The County SOAR initiative requires voter approval to allow urban development of lands with agricultural, open space, and rural land use designations. SOAR ordinances adopted by each of the eight cities establish a City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB). Where CURB boundaries are proposed to be changed, requesting a ballot initiative to adjust the SOAR boundary is the responsibility of the subdivider (however, this is not required for the project as all parts of the project are within the CURB). Section 1F of the County SOAR ordinance states: “Open space designations also include productive lands that are used for agriculture and grazing. These lands are important to the overall economy of the County and the long-term economic viability of these productive lands shall be supported.”

Ventura County Right-to-Farm Ordinance

Ventura County adopted the Right-to-Farm Ordinance in the late 1970s. It is administered by both the Planning Division through the Ventura County zoning regulations and by the County Agricultural Commissioner. The Right-to-Farm Ordinance is intended to support and provide a safeguard for existing agricultural and farming operations that could be threatened by encroaching residential development. This is achieved through mandatory disclosure notifications provided to property owners who will be developing residential uses adjacent or near existing agricultural operations. The disclosure informs people seeking to develop or purchase homes of the Right-to-Farm Ordinance and the potential impacts that may be generated by nearby farming operations. The Ordinance also protects farms from nuisance complaints associated with customary farming practices.

Simi Valley General Plan

The City’s General Plan contains several provisions that relate to open space and agricultural land uses. Chapter 3, Community Development and Chapter 6, Natural Resources, of the General Plan⁹ includes goals and policies that address open space preservation.

4.2.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to agricultural resources has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, based upon the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist and the LAFCo Handbook’s Findings and Criteria for Prime Agricultural and Existing Open Space Land Conversion. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact to biological resources when the proposed project has potential to:

- 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. (*Convert Farmland*)
- Convert existing Open Space land use to other uses in a way that will not lead to planned, orderly, and efficient development. (*Disorderly Conversion of Open Space or Farmland*)

⁸ SOAR website, Accessed January 21, 2024 at: <https://soarvc.org/communities/simi-valley/>

⁹ Simi Valley General Plan Chapter 1, Introduction, Table 1, General Plan Topics, identifies the nexus between the plan chapters and the California legally required elements. Relevant to this Draft EIR Section, General Plan Chapter 6 addresses the topic of open space, which is relevant to the legally required Open Space Element.

- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. (*Convert Farmland*)
- Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g)). (*See No Analysis Warranted, below*)
- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. (*See No Analysis Warranted, below*)
- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. (*Disorderly Conversion of Open Space or Farmland*)

No Analysis Warranted

None of the project sites contain forest land or timberland, and thus the fourth and fifth criteria as well as the forest land component of the sixth bullet are not relevant to the project and do not warrant further analysis. The remaining topics are covered in the two subheadings evaluated in in Section 4.2.3.

4.2.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

4.2.3.1 Convert Farmland

A significant impact may occur if the project would convert FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, to non-agricultural use, or would conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.

North Canyon Ranch

The project site does not contain FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance and is not zoned as an agricultural land use. Although FMMP-designated as Grazing Land, the project site is not used for current or recent grazing or other agricultural uses and the site is not enrolled in a Williamson Act contract.¹⁰ Therefore, the project would not result in the conversion of important farmland to a non-agricultural land use, conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur to FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Required Island Annexations

Of all the Required Island Annexations, only Area 6, one of the smaller County Islands within the City, contains FMMP-designated agricultural land that has current and/or recent agricultural uses, and no project properties are zoned for agricultural use. As shown on Figure 4.2-1, the entirety of Area 6 is designated in various FMMP farmland classifications. The area is relatively small, and as shown, is isolated from other FMMP-designated lands.

The five parcels within Area 6 are privately owned, and as recorded by the Ventura County Assessor, one of these parcels is 0.37 acres and listed as a single-family parcel, three totaling 2.39 acres are listed as vacant residential, and the 11.38-acre remaining parcel is listed in the “orchards (mixed) and vineyards,” pursuant to the Assessor’s existing land use code categories. Thus, according to the Assessor, the site is

¹⁰ City of Simi Valley, General Plan EIR, June 2012, Section 4.2 Agricultural Resources, Figure 4.2-1: Important Farmland and Williamson Act Lands.

only partly in agricultural use, and based on available aerial photos, even less of the site is currently in active agricultural use.

None of the parcels within Area 6 are zoned for agricultural use or enrolled in a Williamson Act contract.¹¹ The City has pre-zoned Area 6 for residential uses, but the project does not propose physical changes to this area at this time. Therefore, the annexation of this area would not result in direct conversion of important farmland to a non-agricultural land use, or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. No direct impacts to converting FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance would occur.

Indirectly, the previous pre-zoning of this area could result in an eventual conversion of FMMP-designated important agricultural land to non-agricultural use. However, the current FMMP acreage for the site is very small in comparison to the total agricultural uses in Ventura County and the state and this combined with the isolated location of the site makes it less viable for agricultural use. Further, only a small portion of the site (less than 11.3 acres) is currently in use for agriculture (orchards). In addition, based on analysis using the California Department of Conservation's Land Evaluation & Site Assessment (LESA) Model, the change in use would be less than significant.¹² Based on the above, the project's indirect impact on converting FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.2.3.2 Disorderly Conversion of Open Space or Farmland

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project would convert existing open space or FMMP-designated farmland to other uses in a way that that is counter to planned, orderly, and efficient development.

North Canyon Ranch

The project site is FMMP-designated as Grazing Land, which is relatively common in the statewide FMMP mapping. The subject property has not been used for grading or irrigated agricultural production at any time during the past seven years. The project site is considered undeveloped and County-zoned as Open Space. With development, some of the site will remain in City-designated Open Space zoning, and the portion proposed for development (the project footprint) has limited value as open space because some of it has been previously disturbed, containing large, graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, two debris basins with associated drainage ditches, and soil imported from off-site construction. The adjacent areas to the south and east of the project site are part of the City and are already developed with residential uses, parks, and roads.

The City planned for the orderly development of the site by including the North Canyon Ranch property within its SOI and CURB boundaries, assigning pre-planned General Plan land use designations, and including plans for the extension of Falcon street on the site. The planned land use pattern demonstrates a

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The California Department of Conservation's LESA Model is a point-based approach for rating the relative importance of agricultural land resources based upon specific measurable features.

proposed orderly development of the site in a way that would connect to adjacent to existing City land uses and roadways. The project's proposed Tentative Map (TM) implements the City's plans for the site. Its layout focuses land uses close to existing development, with remaining open space on the northerly portions of the site, away from the City. Based on City plans and the proposed TM layout, development would be an orderly extension of City-developed land and there would be no direct or indirect impact regarding disorderly development.

Required Island Annexations

Annexation Area 6

Annexation Area 6, approximately 14.14 acres in size, contains some FMMP-designated agricultural land and is privately owned. This annexation area is adjacent to existing development consisting of single family and multifamily residences and roads, within the current City limits. This annexation area forms a polygon that is a roughly triangular, with the base of the triangle fronting on Walnut Street, Tapo Canyon Road on the east, Lightning Ridge Way on the west, and with the northern tip of the triangle cut at the City's northerly boundary. The site is surrounded by residential property on three sides, and by open space on the smallest, northerly tip of the site, and is isolated from other agricultural lands. For the five-APN site, Ventura County Assessor records identify that one parcel is 0.37 acres and in single-family use, three parcels totaling 2.39 acres are vacant residential, and the 11.38-acre remaining parcel is listed as "orchards (mixed) and vineyards." The small size and isolation of the property, and the fact that it is entirely surrounded by non-agricultural land uses, presents an existing land use pattern (without the proposed project) that does not appear orderly.

Much of Area 6 is zoned as open space, but with the residential land uses surrounding the site on its three longest sides, the open space zoning is isolated and contrasting with the surrounding uses. Annexation of this area and the change to residential General Plan land use and zoning would also not result in a disorderly pattern of development, but instead would result in a more uniform pattern of development. Implementation of the proposed project would effectuate the City zoning and land use designations but would not directly propose development. Development of Area 6 consistent with the proposed zoning and land use designation would likely occur over time, but this indirect impact would not result in disorderly development, and thus there would be no direct in indirect impacts would occur regarding the disorderly conversion of FMMP-designated farmland or open space in Area 6.

Annexation Area 9

Area 9 is an undeveloped two-parcel area that does not contain FMMP-designated agricultural land or existing agricultural uses. The site is currently vacant, and is County zoned as OS-160 for the larger parcel and OS-10 for the smaller parcel. The City pre-planned land use designation is Community Park. Thus, a change to the zoning, planned land use designation, or actual land use would not affect agricultural lands. No impact to orderly development regarding agricultural land would occur.

Although the City pre-planned land use designation for Area 9 is Community Park, the site has never been developed as a community park. The larger of the site's two parcels is 7.90 acres and owned by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD), which would be consistent with a possible future park. The second, smaller parcel is privately owned and 1.14 acres in size and is located adjacent to single-family residential development. The proposed project would rezone a 1.14-acre portion of this site to Residential Estate (RE), similar to but less dense than the adjacent land use, which is RM. The remaining 7.90 acres that is in RSRPD ownership would stay in City OS zoning.

Area 9 is predominantly surrounded by existing residential development, and adjacent to the State Route 118 on the north/northeast side, limiting its value as natural open space due to discontinuity with other open

space areas. While a future community park could be theoretically possible, the location is problematic for development. The site is rocky and surrounded by single-family residential uses on most sides, with the areas adjacent to the site's north/northeast boundary includes the lanes of State Route 118 and related right-of-way areas adjacent to the eastbound lanes. Nevertheless, the proposed General Plan land use designation and zoning would permit future parkland use. The project does not propose any physical change to these parcels or any other within the annexation areas.

Indirectly, the annexation of this area would potentially result in the conversion of a relatively small amount of land (1.17 acres) from County open space zoning to other uses. However, given the small size of the property, its limited value and the most likely conversion to residential use, it would be compatible and consistent with adjacent uses. Thus, the change would not result in the disorderly conversion of open space, and no impact would occur regarding this issue.

Based on the above, no direct or indirect impacts would occur regarding the disorderly conversion of FMMP-designated farmland or open space in Area 9.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.2.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

The North Canyon Ranch project would have no impacts regarding conversion of FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance and no impact the disorderly conversion of open space or farmland. None of the related projects are adjacent to the North Canyon Ranch site, thus they would not contribute to shared impacts related to FMMP-designated or open space lands or to the orderly development of open space or farmland. Thus, the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable. In a broader cumulative sense, where future project areas are proposed on the open space parcels or in FMMP-designated lands, the lead agency would review the development applications of those future projects to determine if they could result in a significant environmental impact, and if a CEQA analysis is required. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The issue of impacts to FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance Required is only applicable to Area 6, where the project was found to have no direct impact regarding conversion of lands so-designated by the FMMP, and the indirect impact was found to be less than significant. Open space conversion is applicable to Areas 6 and 9, where no direct and indirect impacts regarding disorderly conversion of open space or farmland would occur. None of the related projects are adjacent to Areas 6 and 9, and thus they would not contribute to shared impacts related to FMMP-designated lands or open space lands, or to the orderly development of open space or farmland. Thus, the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable. In a broader cumulative sense, where future projects are proposed on the open space parcels or in FMMP-designated lands, the lead agency would review the development applications of those future projects to determine if they could result in a significant environmental impact, and if a CEQA analysis is required. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Combined Project Impacts

Considering the conclusions of both the North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexation impacts alone are less than significant without the need for mitigation, then combined, the project as a whole would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to FMMP-designated lands or open space lands, or to the orderly development of open space or farmland. Thus, the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable. As noted earlier, future projects would be assessed for potential impacts and for CEQA review by the lead agency, which would assure evaluation of future potentially significant impacts.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

SECTION 4.0

4.3 AIR QUALITY

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts to aesthetic resources and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to air quality, where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and other applicable law. Sources used in the analysis are cited where relevant to the analysis; comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this EIR. Emissions generated by the project during construction and operations were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2022.1.1.21. The CalEEMod output data sheets for the project are included in **Appendix C, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions**.

4.3.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development project site is located within an approximately 160-acre undeveloped property in unincorporated Ventura County, adjacent to the City of Simi Valley boundary of the northwestern portion of the City. The project site property is located within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) area, and the project is requesting that the project site be annexed into the City boundary. The proposed residential development would be clustered in the southern portion of the property, with a disturbance area of approximately 90.96 acres, while the rest of the property would be retained as open space. Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and "big box" stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, single-family residences to the east, and open space to the north and west. The southwestern corner of the development area is located at the northern terminus of First Street, and the eastern side of the development area is located at the western terminus of Falcon Street, which the project would extend westerly through the project site to connect with First Street.

The proposed residential development would consist of 157 single-family residences, 50 multi-family condominium/townhouse units, and a paved roadway circulation network in addition to the extension of Falcon Street. Previously, 159 single-family residences were proposed, which is the number of units evaluated in the air quality analysis. The analysis is therefore slightly conservative (i.e., slightly overstates project emissions). Construction of the project would require grading of the site to create level building pads, creation of debris basins at various locations throughout the development, and remedial grading for hillside stability. All cut and fill grading quantities would be balanced onsite, and no substantial offsite soil

export/import hauling is proposed. Construction of the project would also include installation of utility infrastructure and landscaping.

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated Island Annexation Areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation properties are located within the City limits boundary, although currently they are excluded from the City's jurisdiction, and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (consisting of single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project.

Local Climate and Meteorology

California's weather is heavily influenced by a semi-permanent high-pressure system west of the Pacific coast. The Mediterranean climate of the region and the coastal influence produce moderate temperatures year round, with rainfall concentrated in the winter months. The sea breeze, which is the predominant wind, is a primary factor in creating this climate and typically flows from the west-southwest in a day-night cycle with speeds generally ranging from 5 to 15 miles per hour.

The project site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (or "the Basin") and is under the jurisdiction of the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD). Air quality in the Basin is affected by the emission sources located in the region, as well as by three natural factors:

- A natural terrain barrier to emission dispersion north and east of the metropolitan Los Angeles area.
- A dominant on-shore flow transports and disperses air pollution by driving air pollution originating in industrial areas along the coast toward the natural terrain barrier, limiting horizontal dispersion. The effect of this onshore flow is a gradual degradation of air quality from coastal to inland areas.
- Atmospheric inversions limit dispersion of air pollution on a vertical scale. Temperature typically decreases with altitude. However, under inversion conditions temperature begins to increase at some height above the ground. The temperature increase continues through an unspecified layer after which the temperature change with height returns to standard conditions. The inversion layer is typically very stable and acts as a cap to the vertical dispersions of pollutants.

Air Quality Health Effects

The criteria pollutants for which federal and state standards have been promulgated and that are most relevant to air quality planning and regulation in the Basin are ozone, and fine suspended particulate matter (PM). These and other common criteria air pollutants are briefly described below.

- Ozone (O₃) is a gas that is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs)¹ and nitrogen oxides (NO_x), both byproducts of internal combustion engine exhaust, undergo slow photochemical reactions in the presence of sunlight. Ozone concentrations are generally highest during the summer months when direct sunlight, light wind, and warm temperature conditions are favorable to the formation of this pollutant. Individuals exercising outdoors, children, and people with preexisting lung disease, such as asthma and chronic pulmonary lung disease, are considered to be the

¹ The Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (October 2003) states that VOC is synonymous with reactive organic gases (ROG) and reactive organic compounds (ROC). These terms may be used interchangeably in this evaluation. <http://www.vcapcd.org/pubs/Planning/VCAQGuidelines.pdf>

subgroups most susceptible to O₃ effects. Short-term exposures (lasting for a few hours) to O₃ at levels typically observed in southern California can result in breathing pattern changes, reduction of breathing capacity, increased susceptibility to infections, inflammation of the lung tissue, and some immunological changes.

- Particulate Matter PM-10 and PM-2.5 consists of extremely small, suspended particles or droplets 10 microns and 2.5 microns or smaller in diameter, respectively, that can lodge in the lungs when inhaled. Some sources of particulate matter, like pollen and windstorms, are naturally occurring. However, in populated areas, most particulate matter is caused by road dust, diesel soot, combustion products, abrasion of tires and brakes, and construction activities. Inhaled particulate matter can contribute to respiratory problems and can cause permanent lung damage. Inhalable particulates can also have a damaging effect on health by interfering with the body's mechanism for clearing the respiratory tract or by acting as a carrier of an absorbed toxic substance.
- Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas produced by the incomplete combustion of fuels. CO concentrations tend to be the highest during the winter morning, with little to no wind, when surface-based inversions trap the pollutant at ground levels. Because CO is emitted directly from internal combustion engines, unlike ozone, motor vehicles operating at slow speeds are the primary source of CO in the Basin. The highest ambient CO concentrations are generally found near congested transportation corridors and intersections. CO is a health concern because it competes with oxygen, often replacing it in the blood and reducing the blood's ability to transport oxygen to vital organs. Hence, conditions with an increased demand for oxygen supply can be adversely affected by exposure to CO. Individuals most at risk include patients with diseases involving heart and blood vessels, fetuses, and patients with chronic hypoxemia (oxygen deficiency) as seen in high altitudes.
- Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a nitrogen dioxide compound that is produced by the combustion of fossil fuels, such as in internal combustion engines (both gasoline and diesel powered), as well as point sources, especially power plants. The principal form of nitrogen oxide produced by combustion is nitric oxide (NO), but NO reacts quickly to form NO₂, creating the mixture of NO and NO₂ commonly called NO_x, a major contributor to O₃ formation. NO₂ also contributes to the formation of PM-10. High concentrations of NO₂ can cause breathing difficulties and result in a brownish-red cast to the atmosphere with reduced visibility. There is some indication of a relationship between NO₂ and chronic pulmonary fibrosis. Some increase of bronchitis in children (2-3 years old) has been observed at concentrations below 0.3 parts per million (ppm).

Table 4.3-1, Criteria Pollutant Sources and Health Effects provides a summary of these major criteria pollutants of concern and their effects on public health.

Table 4.3-1
Criteria Pollutant Sources and Health Effects

Pollutants	Sources	Primary Health Effects
Ozone (O ₃)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor vehicles • Industrial emissions, • Consumer products <p>Note: These sources emit precursors, NO_x and Reactive Organic Gasses (ROG), that react with sunlight to form ozone in the atmosphere.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respiratory symptoms • Worsening of lung disease leading to premature death • Damage to lung tissue
Particulate Matter (PM-10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cars and trucks (especially diesels) • Fireplaces, woodstoves • Windblown dust from roadways, agriculture, and construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premature death & hospitalization, primarily for worsening of respiratory disease
Particulate Matter (PM-2.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cars and trucks (especially diesels) • Fireplaces, woodstoves • Windblown dust from roadways, agriculture, and construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premature death • Hospitalization for worsening of cardiovascular disease • Hospitalization for respiratory disease • Asthma-related emergency room visits, increased symptoms, increased inhaler usage
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any source that burns fuel such as cars, trucks, construction and farming equipment, and residential heaters and stoves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest pain in patients with heart disease • Headache • Light-headedness • Reduced mental alertness
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See carbon monoxide sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lung irritation • Enhanced allergic responses
Sources: California Air Resources Board, Sources of Air Pollution, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/sources-air-pollution , and Common Air Pollutants https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/common-air-pollutants .		

Ambient Air Quality Standards

National and State ambient air quality standards (AAQS)² are the air quality levels for common criteria pollutants that are considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health and welfare of “sensitive receptors,” which include the elderly, young children, the acutely and chronically ill (e.g., those with cardio-respiratory disease, including asthma), and persons engaged in strenuous work or exercise. Healthy adults can tolerate occasional exposure to air pollutant concentrations considerably above these minimum standards before adverse effects are observed. Recent research has shown, however, that chronic exposure to ozone (O₃), the primary ingredient in photochemical smog, may lead to adverse respiratory health, even at concentrations close to the ambient standard. **Table 4.3-2, Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards**, lists the current federal and state standards for regulated criteria air pollutants.

² California Air Resources Board, California and National Ambient Air Quality Standards, Accessed on January 12, 2024 at: https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/aaqs2.pdf?_ga=2.111850244.1417595818.1550763932-1724706578.1550763932.

Table 4.3-2
Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	Federal Standards	California Standards
Ozone (O ₃)	1 Hour	-	0.09 ppm
	8 Hour	0.07 ppm	0.07 ppm
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8 Hour	9.0 ppm	9.0 ppm
	1 Hour	35 ppm	20 ppm
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Annual	0.053 ppm	0.030 ppm
	1 Hour	0.10 ppm	0.18 ppm
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	Annual	-	-
	24 Hour	0.14 ppm	0.04 ppm
	1 Hour	0.075 ppm	0.25 ppm
Particulate Matter (PM-10)	Annual	-	20 µg/m ³
	24 Hour	150 µg/m ³	50 µg/m ³
Fine Particulate Matter (PM-2.5)	Annual	12 µg/m ³	12 µg/m ³
	24 Hour	35 µg/m ³	-
Lead (Pb)	30-Day average	-	1.5 µg/m ³
	3-Month Average	0.15 µg/m ³	-

ppm = parts per million
µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter
Source: California Air Resources Board, 2016.

Local Air Quality Monitoring

The monitoring station located closest to Simi Valley and most representative of air quality at the project site is the Simi Valley Station on the Simi Valley High School campus at 5400 Cochran Street³ approximately five miles southeast of the project site. **Table 4.3-3, Ambient Air Quality**, summarizes the air quality data measurements for the years 2018-2022 in the local airshed for the criteria pollutants of greatest concern in Ventura County.

As shown in Table 4.3-3, the ozone concentrations at the Simi Valley Monitoring Station exceeded the one-hour state standard for a combined 11 days for the five-year period of 2018 through 2022. The PM-10 concentrations did not exceed federal standards for any days during the five-year period of 2018 through 2022 and the number of days that State PM-10 standards were exceeded ranged from zero to six days within any of those five years. Information regarding CO concentrations is not available from any of the monitoring stations in the County as monitoring ceased in 2004 due to the low levels of CO recorded.

³ California Air Resources Board, Air Monitoring Sites - Interactive Map, Accessed January 12, 2024 at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/applications/air-monitoring-sites-interactive-map>

Table 4.3-3
Ambient Air Quality

Pollutant/Standard	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Ozone					
<i>Number of Days Standards Exceeded</i>					
1-Hour > 0.09 ppm (S)	2	0	5	0	0
8-Hour > 0.07 ppm (S)	14	9	25	8	11
<i>Maximum Observed Concentration</i>					
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.101	0.089	0.108	0.090	0.094
Max. 8-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.093	0.079	0.095	0.078	0.083
Nitrogen Dioxide					
<i>Number of Days Standards Exceeded</i>					
1-Hour > 0.18 ppm (S)	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Maximum Observed Concentration</i>					
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.043	0.045	0.042	0.035	0.046
Inhalable Particulates (PM-10)					
<i>Number of Days Standards Exceeded</i>					
24-Hour > 50 µg/m ³ (S)	6	4	*	3	0
24-Hour > 150 µg/m ³ (F)	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Maximum Observed Concentration</i>					
Max. 24-Hr. Conc. (µg/m ³)	107.6	124.3	90.1	101.5	44.1
Ultra-Fine Particulates (PM-2.5)					
24-Hour > 35 µg/m ³ (F)	0	0	0	0	0
Max. 24-Hr. Conc. (µg/m ³)	29.6	19.4	34.9	32.9	22.7
Source: California Air Resources Board, iADAM: Air Quality Data Statistics, Accessed at: https://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/index.html					
Notes: S = State; F = Federal; µg/m ³ = micrograms per cubic meter of air					
* insufficient data					

San Joaquin Valley Fever

San Joaquin Valley Fever (formally known as Coccidioidomycosis) is an infectious disease caused by the fungus *Coccidioides immitis*. Infection is caused by inhalation of *Coccidioides immitis* spores that have become airborne when dry, dusty soil or dirt is disturbed by wind, construction, farming, or other activities. The Valley Fever fungus tends to be found at the base of hillsides, in virgin, undisturbed soil and is found in the southwestern United States. In its primary form, symptoms appear as a mild upper respiratory infection, acute bronchitis, or pneumonia. The most common symptoms are fatigue, cough, chest pain, fever, rash, headache, and joint aches, although 60 percent of people infected are asymptomatic and do not seek medical attention. In the remaining 40 percent, symptoms range from mild to severe.

The VCAPCD indicates that the likelihood that the Valley Fever fungus may be present or be of concern increases with the number of factors listed below that would apply to any given site or project:

- Disturbance of the top soil of undeveloped land (to a depth of about 12 inches).
- Dry, alkaline, sandy soils.
- Virgin, undisturbed, non-urban areas.
- Windy areas.
- Archaeological resources probable or known to exist in the area (Native American midden sites).

- Special events (fairs, concerts) and motorized activities (motocross track, All Terrain Vehicle activities) on unvegetated soil (non-grass).
- Non-native population (i.e., out-of-area construction workers).

VCAPCD Guidelines provide recommendations for a lead agency to consider if a project is determined to represent a significant risk of causing Valley Fever. These VCAPCD recommendations focus on construction worker protections to prevent respiration of spores if present.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS)

Ambient air quality standards (AAQS) define clean air and are established to protect the health of the most sensitive groups in our communities (referred to as “sensitive receptors”). These standards identify levels of air quality for six “criteria” pollutants: ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter (both respirable particulate matter [PM-10] and fine particulate matter [PM-2.5]), and lead (Pb).⁴ The standards are considered to be the maximum concentration of ambient (background) air pollutants determined safe (within an adequate margin of safety) to protect the public health and welfare.

An air quality standard defines the maximum amount of a pollutant averaged over a specified period of time that can be present in outdoor air without any harmful effects on people or the environment. California ambient air quality standards (CAAQS) mandated by State law are often more stringent than national standards.⁵

Federal Clean Air Act

The Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) requires areas that are not attaining the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) to develop and implement a State Implementation Plan (SIP) emission reduction strategy demonstrating compliance with a series of CAA requirements to bring the area into attainment in a timely manner. The State of California also requires all feasible measures towards achievement of State of California ambient air quality standards (CAAQS or State standards) at the earliest practicable date.⁶

State

California Clean Air Act

The California Air Resources Board (CARB), a branch of the California Environmental Protection Agency, oversees air quality planning and control throughout California. It is primarily responsible for implementation of the California Clean Air Act (CCAA), responding to the federal CAA requirements, and for regulating emissions from motor vehicles and consumer products within the state.⁷ CARB also sets health-based air quality standards and control measures for toxic air contaminants (TACs). California, in coordination with the federal government, has established health-based air quality standards for six federal criteria air pollutants. Known as the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), the standards are more stringent than the NAAQS, and in the case of PM-10 and SO₂, far more stringent. These standards

⁴ California Air Resources Board, National Ambient Air Quality Standards, accessed January 12, 2024, at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/national-ambient-air-quality-standards>.

⁵ California Air Resources Board, California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), accessed January 12, 2024 at <https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/caaqs/caaqs.htm>

⁶ South Coast Air Quality Management District, 2022 Air Quality Management Plan, Adopted December 2, 2022

⁷ California Health and Safety Code Sections 39607, *et seq.* and 40001, *et seq.*

protect sensitive receptors with a margin of safety from adverse health impacts due to exposure to air pollution. CARB has also established CAAQS for sulfates, visibility-reducing particles, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride. Enacted in 1988, the CCAA established a legal mandate for air basins to achieve CAAQS by the earliest practical date.

The focus of most of CARB's research goes toward automobile emissions, the largest public concern regarding air pollution in California. CARB establishes new standards for vehicles sold in California and for various types of equipment available commercially. CARB also sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions.

Future development within the project area would be subject to compliance with federal and state air quality regulations during construction and operational phases.

California Health and Safety Code

CARB supervises and supports the regulatory activities of local air quality districts as well as monitors air quality itself. The Health and Safety Code requires CARB to establish and periodically review area designation criteria. These designation criteria provide the basis for CARB to designate areas of the state as "attainment," "nonattainment," or "unclassified" according to state standards. CARB will designate an area as nonattainment for a pollutant if monitoring data show that a CAAQS for a particular pollutant was violated at least once during the previous three years. The Health and Safety Code requires CARB to use the designation criteria to designate areas of California and to review designations annually.

CARB establishes policy and statewide standards and administers the state's mobile source emissions control program. In addition, CARB oversees air quality programs established by state statute. CARB makes area designations for the following pollutants: O₃, CO, NO₂, SO₂, PM-10, PM-2.5, sulfates, lead, hydrogen sulfide, and visibility-reducing particles.

Regional and Local

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) functions as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for six counties including Ventura County wherein the project area is located.⁸ As the designated MPO, SCAG is federally mandated to research and plan for transportation, growth management, hazardous waste management, and air quality. Although SCAG is not an air quality management agency, it is responsible for several air quality planning issues. Specifically, as the designated MPO for the Southern California region, it is responsible, pursuant to Section 176(c) of the 1990 amendments to the Clean Air Act, for providing current population, employment, travel, and congestion projections for regional air quality planning efforts. With respect to air quality, SCAG has prepared the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) as the basis for the transportation components of the VCAPCD AQMP that are utilized in the preparation of air quality forecasts and the consistency analysis included in the AQMP.

Ventura County Air Pollution Control District

In California, regional air pollution control districts have been established to oversee the attainment of air quality standards within air basins, as defined by the state. The districts have permitting authority over all stationary sources of air pollutants within their district boundaries, and act as the primary reviewer of environmental documents associated with air quality issues. The VCAPCD is the local air quality

⁸ Southern California Association of Governments, About Us, accessed January 12, 2024 at: <http://www.scag.ca.gov/about/Pages/Home.aspx>.

management agency. The local air quality management agency is required to monitor air pollutant levels to ensure that applicable air quality standards are met and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards.

2022 Ventura County Air Quality Management Plan

The Ventura County Air Pollution Control Board adopted the 2022 Ventura County Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) on December 13, 2022. The mission of the VCAPCD is to protect public health and agriculture from the adverse effects of air pollution by identifying air pollution problems and developing a comprehensive program to achieve and maintain state and federal air quality standards. To that end, pursuant to the federal Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the 2022 AQMP presents Ventura County's: 1) strategy to attain the 2015 federal 8-hour ozone standard; 2) attainment demonstration for the federal 8-hour ozone standard; and 3) reasonable further progress demonstration for the federal 8-hour ozone standard. The AQMP states that Ventura County's air quality has come a long way since the District was first created in 1968. However, the VCAPCD recognizes there is more work to do to alleviate the detrimental health effects of air pollution. The 2022 AQMP identifies a path forward to ensure clean air for County residents.

The AQMP presents Ventura County's strategy (including related mandated elements) to attain the 2008 federal 8-hour ozone standard by 2027, the attainment date for serious ozone nonattainment areas. In addition to showing attainment of the federal 8-hour ozone standard by 2027, the 2022 AQMP also must show steady progress (i.e., Reasonable Further Progress) towards attaining the 2015 federal 8-hour ozone standard by that date.⁹

4.3.2 Thresholds of Significance

Air quality impacts are considered significant if they cause clean air standards to be violated where they are currently met, or if they measurably contribute to an existing violation of standards. Substantial emissions of air contaminants for which there is no safe exposure, or nuisance emissions such as dust or odors, would also be considered a significant impact. Two sources were consulted during the development of thresholds of significance to evaluate the proposed project's potential impacts to air quality: Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, of the CEQA Guidelines, and the VCAPCD's Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines.¹⁰

CEQA Guidelines Significance Thresholds

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to air quality has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, as established in the State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact to air quality when the proposed project has potential to (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. (*Conflict with Air Quality Management Plan*)
- 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. (*Emissions of Criteria Pollutants*)
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. (Sensitive Receptors)

⁹ Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, 2022 Ventura County Air Quality Management Plan, Accessed November 15, 2023, at: <http://www.vcapcd.org/pubs/Planning/AQMP/2022/Final-2022-AQMP-with-appendices-20221130.pdf>.

¹⁰ Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines, October 2003.

- Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. (*Other Emissions/Odors*)

VCAPCD Significance Thresholds

In evaluating the project impacts against the CEQA thresholds above, the following Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines suggested threshold criteria are considered:

- Generate daily emissions exceeding 25 pounds of reactive organic compounds (ROG) or nitrogen oxides (NO_x).
- Cause an exceedance or make a substantial contribution to an exceedance of an ambient air quality standard.
- Be inconsistent with goals and policies of the Ventura County AQMP.
- Directly or indirectly cause population growth that would exceed population forecasts in the most recently adopted AQMP.
- Generate fugitive dust emissions in such quantities as to cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public.
- Create a human health hazard by exposing sensitive receptors to toxic air emissions.
- Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

According to the VAPCD Guidelines, projects that generate more than 25 pounds per day of ROG and NO_x may jeopardize attainment of the federal and State ozone standard, resulting in significant impact on air quality. The 25 pounds per day threshold for ROG and NO_x are not intended to be applied to construction emissions since such emissions are temporary. The VCAPCD has not established quantitative thresholds for particulate matter, which includes fugitive dust) for either operation or construction.

There is no VCAPCD recommended threshold to indicate if a project would result in a significant San Joaquin Valley Fever impact; however, the lead agency should consider the risk factors noted by VCAPCD that may be applicable to the project or the project site to determine if project activities may create a significant Valley Fever impact. VCAPCD Guidelines provide recommendations for a lead agency to consider if a project is determined to represent a significant risk of causing Valley Fever. These VCAPCD recommendations focus on construction worker protections to prevent respiration of spores if present, some of which would be required for compliance with VCAPCD Rule 55 for dust suppression during construction.¹¹

4.3.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following analysis is based in part on the project's emissions of criteria pollutants as estimated using CalEEMod.

4.3.3.1 Conflict with Air Quality Management Plan

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Ventura County AQMP. According to the VCAPCD Guidelines, Project consistency with the AQMP can be determined by comparing the actual population growth in the county with the projected growth rates used in the AQMP.

¹¹ Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, Rule 55 – Fugitive Dust (Adopted 6/1-0/08), accessed January 12, 2024, at: <http://vcapcd.org/Rulebook/Reg4/RULE%2055.pdf>.

North Canyon Ranch

The projected growth rates used in the AQMP indicate that the population within the VCAPCD is anticipated to increase from 861,000 in 2018 to 934,000 in 2040, which would be an increase of 73,000. As evaluated in Section 4.11, Population and Housing of this EIR, the average household size would be 2.98 persons per residential unit, using the higher City General Plan average household size for owner-occupied units. Therefore, 157 single-family units and 50 multi-family units would result in an estimated population of 617 people. Although the average household size for renter-occupied units is lower, the owner-occupied average was used for a conservative projection. By adding 617 people, the project would represent less than 0.9 percent of the projected growth estimates used in the AQMP. Based on the updated project, the impact would be slightly reduced.

Based on City-specific population projections at five year increments from the Demographic Growth Forecast Appendix to the Southern California Council of Governments 2020-2045 RTP/SCS,¹² the (interpolated) population of Simi Valley for the project buildout year (2028) is projected to be approximately 131,197 (increased population of approximately 341.4 persons per year). The approximate population of Simi Valley based the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS for 2022 is 129,148.¹³ Thus, with the forecasted growth per year, the projected 2028 population increase would be 2,048. The proposed project's addition of approximately 617 residents would represent less than 0.5 percent of the 2028 projected population for the City. Therefore, the proposed North Canyon Ranch development would not generate growth exceeding the projected population growth forecast for the City and would not be in conflict with the AQMP. As a result, impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. The project would not cause substantial development or population growth due to the Island Annexations. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would not contribute to substantial growth not anticipated within the AQMP, and the potential impacts of the Islands Annexations regarding consistency with the AQMP would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation as the project would not exceed population growth estimates used in developing the AQMP.

¹² Southern California Council of Governments (SCAG) 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Appendix.

¹³ Population data for the year 2022 (the baseline year) within the City is calculated based on a linear interpolation of the 2016 to 2045 projections in SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. Note: Notice of Preparation of this EIR was prepared in 2022, i.e., the baseline for the EIR.

4.3.3.2 Emissions of Criteria Pollutants

The proposed project could have a significant impact if it would 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. The following evaluation is primarily based on the project's emissions of air pollutants as estimated using CalEEMod, which is a statewide land use emissions computer model designed to provide a uniform platform for government agencies, land use planners, and environmental professionals to quantify potential criteria pollutant emissions associated with both construction and operations from a variety of land use projects. The model was developed for the California Air Pollution Officers Association (CAPCOA) in collaboration with the California Air Districts and quantifies direct emissions from construction and operation activities (including vehicle use), as well as indirect emissions, such as from energy use, solid waste disposal, vegetation planting and/or removal, and water use. The CalEEMod output data sheets for the project are provided in Appendix C of this Draft EIR.

North Canyon Ranch

Construction Emissions

Construction of the project would generate temporary air pollutant emissions associated with fugitive dust (PM-10 and PM-2.5) from soil disturbance, exhaust emissions from heavy-duty construction vehicles and material delivery trucks, and ROG emissions released primarily during application of architectural coatings. Construction phases would generally consist of site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. **Table 4.3-4, Conceptual Construction Equipment Fleet and Duration**, shows the anticipated duration of each construction activity phase and corresponding equipment type and quantity.

**Table 4.3-4
Conceptual Construction Equipment Fleet and Duration**

Construction Activity	Duration (workdays)	Equipment Type and Quantity
Site Preparation	60	4 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes*
		3 Rubber Tire Dozers*
Grading	155	2 Excavators*
		1 Grader*
		2 Dozers*
		3 Scrapers*
		2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes*
		1 Water Truck
Construction	565	3 Forklifts
		1 Generator Set
		1 Rough Terrain Forklift
		2 Skid Steer Loaders
		3 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes*
Paving	110	1 Welder
		2 Pavers
		2 Rollers
Architectural Coating	155	2 Paving Equipment
		1 Air Compressor

Source: CalEEMod 2022.1.1.21 default estimations as adjusted for project specific data provided via email and telephone communications with the City and project team in December 2020, and updated timeline telephone-mail communication with the City in March 2024.

* To minimize air quality construction emissions, the applicant is committed to utilizing Tier 4 diesel-rating construction off-road earthmoving equipment as a project design feature.

The applicant and the City have estimated the start of construction to occur in 2026, and completion of construction in 2030.¹⁴ The project's maximum daily pollutant emissions from project construction activities as estimated by CalEEMod are summarized in **Table 4.3-5, Maximum Daily Emissions (Construction)**.

As stated in the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines, construction-related emissions of ROG and NO_x are not counted towards VCAPCD significance thresholds since such emissions are temporary. The project's greatest emissions of fugitive dust would occur during the site preparation and grading phases, due to the use of earth-moving equipment. VCAPCD Rule 55 requires the implementation of fugitive dust control measures during construction to ensure construction emissions are not generated in such quantities as to cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which may endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such person or the public. Rule 55 dust reduction measures include actions such as securing tarps over truckloads of soil material, and watering exposed soil surfaces and bulk material stockpiles to minimize fugitive dust. Also, VCAPCD Rule 74.2 limits the VOC content for specific coating categories that may be used during construction. Therefore, impacts pertaining to temporary construction activities would be less than significant.

**Table 4.3-5
Maximum Daily Emissions (Construction)**

Construction Year	Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day) ^a			
	ROG	NO _x	PM-10	PM-2.5
2026	1.5	14.2	8.0	4.1
2027	1.2	8.1	1.7	0.6
2028	1.2	7.8	1.7	0.5
2029	22.6	6.5	0.4	0.3
2030	22.6	0.9	0.3	0.1
Maximum	22.6	14.2	8.0	4.1

Source: CalEEMod output sheets in Appendix C.
^a Summer or Winter season emissions, whichever is greater. Using grading equipment with Tier 4 emissions reduction technology, and watering of exposed soils twice daily.

To ensure use of Tier 4 earthmoving equipment during site preparation and grading as committed to by the applicant, the following Project Design Feature (PDF) is included.

PDF AQ-1: Tier 4 Grading Equipment

During site preparation and grading activities, all diesel-powered earthmoving equipment used on-site for excavation and grading shown with an asterisk in Table 4.3-4, Conceptual Construction Equipment Fleet and Duration, of the Draft EIR must meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Tier 4 emissions standards.

¹⁴ CalEEMod was used to estimate project emissions assuming construction would commence in the first quarter of 2026, with construction being completed in the first quarter of 2030. Should approval of the project be delayed beyond these dates, project impacts would be less. This is because over time the Air Districts anticipate reduced emissions from vehicles (construction and operations). This would be due to multiple factors including advances in fuel economy and other emission reductions from internal combustion vehicles, an increase in electric and other cleaner vehicles on the roads and at construction sites, and during operations.

Operational Emissions

CalEEMod was also used to estimate the project's operational emissions. During operations, the project would result in generation of emissions from mobile sources (vehicle use), energy sources such as offsite electricity generation, and area sources. Mobile source emissions associated with operation of vehicles were calculated based on trip generation estimates provided in the project's traffic impact report. Emissions attributed to energy use include natural gas consumption for space and water heating. Area sources of emissions include use of landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products and architectural coating for repainting and maintenance. **Table 4.3-6, Project-Related Operational Emissions**, shows the estimated total operational emissions for the proposed new development. To determine whether a regional air quality impact would occur, the increase in emissions were compared to the VCAPD's recommended regional thresholds for operational emissions. As shown in Table 4.3-6, the project's total emissions would not exceed VCAPCD thresholds of significance, and impacts would be less than significant.

**Table 4.3-6
Project-Related Operational Emissions**

Emissions Sources	Emissions (lbs./day) ^a				
	ROG	NO _x	CO	PM-10	PM-2.5
Mobile Sources	6.8	5.5	48.8	13.1	3.4
Area	13.3	0.1	12.3	0.0	0.0
Energy	0.1	2.1	0.9	0.2	0.2
Total	20.2	7.7	61.9	13.3	3.6
<i>VCAPCD Threshold</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Threshold Exceeded?</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Source: CalEEMod output sheets in Appendix C					
^a Summer or Winter season emissions, whichever is greater					
Note: Totals may appear not to sum due to rounding.					

As stated in the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines, the ROG and NO_x thresholds shown in Table 4.3-6 apply to development projects for determining if a project would jeopardize attainment of air quality standards individually and cumulatively. As such, project's that do not exceed these thresholds would not have a significant adverse impact on air quality in Ventura County. As shown in the above analysis, the project would not exceed the relevant VCAPCD thresholds, and potential impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located adjacent to existing development and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCO to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would not result in additional emissions of pollutants for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard, and potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation as emissions would not exceed applicable thresholds of the VCAPCD.

4.3.3.3 Sensitive Receptors

The proposed project could have a significant impact if it would expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Sensitive receptors are those most susceptible to respiratory distress, such as children under 14, elderly over 65, persons engaged in strenuous work or exercise, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Sensitive receptors near the project site include single-family residences and multi-family residences adjacent to the project site boundary to the east and south, respectively.

North Canyon Ranch

The project would grade and construct a residential development with associated roadways on a currently undeveloped property, resulting in emissions of air pollutants during construction and operations.

Construction Emissions

As discussed above, during construction the project would be required to implement dust controls pursuant to VCAPCD Rule 55 to ensure construction emissions are not generated in such quantities as to cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which may endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such person or the public. Rule 55 dust reduction measures include actions such as securing tarps over truckloads of soil material, and watering exposed soil surfaces and bulk material stockpiles to minimize fugitive dust. All off-road grading equipment used on the site would meet Tier 4 emissions reduction standards. As evaluated in Section 4.3.3.2, the project would not exceed applicable VCAPCD significance thresholds for pollutant emissions. Additionally, although existing residences are located near the site boundary, construction activities and equipment use would be dispersed across the approximately 86-acre grading area, and thus a relatively small portion of the project's overall grading and construction emissions would occur near these existing uses. Therefore, the project's potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during temporary construction would be less than significant.

Freeway Impacts

The CARB currently recommends that local agencies avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 500 feet of freeways or high-volume roadways due to concerns regarding the long-term effect of diesel exhaust particulates, a toxic air contaminant. According to CARB, high-volume roadways are urban roads with 100,000 vehicles per day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles per day.¹⁵ The nearest high-volume roadway to the project site is the 118 Freeway, which is located approximately 1,380 feet south of the nearest proposed residential unit. Therefore, the project would not conflict with CARB guidance regarding siting of sensitive land uses in proximity to freeways. Additionally, daily trips generated by the proposed residential project would not be anticipated to consist of a substantial number of diesel trucks, as such truck trips are typically associated with industrial, manufacturing, or warehouse uses. As the majority of the project's daily trips would not be anticipated to be diesel powered vehicles, the project would not have a substantial contribution to diesel particulates from vehicle emissions that could adversely affect sensitive receptors, and impacts would be less than significant.

¹⁵ California Air Resources Board, Air Quality and Land Use Handbook, 2005.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Hotspots

Concentrations of CO emissions are a function of vehicle idling time, meteorological conditions, and traffic flow. Areas with high vehicle density have the potential to create high concentrations of CO, known as CO hotspots. Because traffic congestion is highest at intersections where vehicles queue and are subject to reduced speeds, CO hotspots are generally associated with severely congested intersections of high-volume roadways. A project's localized air quality impact is considered significant if CO emissions create a hotspot where either the California one-hour standard of 20 ppm or the federal and state eight-hour standard of 9.0 ppm is exceeded. This could occur at severely congested intersections of high-volume roadways, which would not be present in the project vicinity under project buildout conditions, due to the project location and relatively intensity of existing and proposed development. Traffic generated by the project would not result in a CO hotspot that would expose existing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, and the project's potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations would be less than significant.

San Joaquin Valley Fever

There is no recommended threshold for a significant San Joaquin Valley Fever impact. As discussed above regarding construction emissions, the project would be required to reduce fugitive dust emissions during construction by spraying water on exposed soils and stabilizing access points for vehicles entering or exiting the site. However, as the project would grade undeveloped lands, the project does meet one of the risk factors for the potential presence of the Valley Fever fungus.

VCAPCD Guidelines provide recommendations for a lead agency to consider if a project is determined to represent a significant risk of causing Valley Fever, which focus on construction worker protections and dust control to prevent respiration of spores if present. The project would be required to implement dust controls pursuant to VCAPCD Rule 55 as discussed above in Impact 4.3.3.2, which would also reduce the risk of Valley Fever. As the project would be required to implement VCAPCD Rule 55 dust suppression measures, the project's potential to result in adverse environmental impacts regarding Valley Fever, should the potential exist, would be substantially reduced. While the presence of Valley Fever spores on the project site is not known, the VCAPCD Guidelines recommendations for reducing potential risks of Valley Fever are provided as Mitigation Measure AQ-1 to ensure potential environmental impacts would be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located adjacent to existing development and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCO to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. The five vacant lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of the project and it is speculative to say if and when these parcels may be developed. Further, a single-family home is very unlikely to exceed VCAPCD thresholds, and regardless, any future development would be subject to City review for potential environmental analysis under CEQA. The City's annexation of the Islands would not result in additional emissions of pollutants that could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, and potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM AQ-1: Valley Fever (Construction Only)

To reduce the potential for exposure to Valley Fever impacts during construction, the project must to the extent feasible implement the following construction best management practices, which are based upon measures recommended in the VCAPCD's Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (2003):

- Offer construction employees coccidioidin skin tests (since those with positive tests can be considered immune to reinfection).
- Hire crews from local populations where possible, since it is more likely that they have been previously exposed to the fungus and are therefore more likely immune.
- Require crews to use respirators during project clearing, grading, and excavation operations in accordance with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Regulations.
- Require that the cabs of all grading and construction equipment be air-conditioned.
- Require crews to work upwind from excavation sites where feasible.
- Pave construction roads.
- Where acceptable to the Ventura County Fire Protection District, control weed growth by mowing instead of disking, thereby leaving the ground undisturbed and with a mulch covering.
- During rough grading and construction, the access way into the project site from adjoining paved roadways should be paved or treated with environmentally safe dust control agents.

Residual Impacts

While it is unlikely the site would result in potential Valley Fever impacts, and VCAPCD Rule 55 would require dust suppression to reduce any potential, further VCAPCD precautions specified in MM AQ-1 would require best management practices at the construction site, to assure no significant impact after mitigation. All other areas of impact evaluation would be less than significant before without the need for mitigation. Thus, there would be no significant residual impacts.

4.3.3.4 Other Emissions/Odors

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project would result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. Odors can cause a variety of responses, depending on factors such as frequency (how often), intensity (strength), duration (in time), offensiveness (unpleasantness), location, and sensory perception.

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed project would construct a residential development on a currently undeveloped site that is bounded by open space to the north and west, residential uses to the east, and residential and commercial uses to the south. Land uses commonly associated with substantial odor impacts include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. Residential uses are generally not considered to generate objectionable odor impacts that affect a substantial number of people.

During construction, activities such as paving, and painting can generate odors that are typical of construction sites. Such construction odors would be localized, temporary and would be dispersed across

the approximately 86-acre development area. Therefore, temporary construction odors would not be a significant impact.

During operations, the project's proposed residential uses would have individual trash/recycling containers and regularly scheduled trash pick-up services typical of existing residential uses in the City, which would prevent nuisance odors from affecting offsite adjacent residential developments. Therefore, the project's potential to generate offensive odors that would affect a substantial number of people would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located adjacent to existing development and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCO to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future without implementation of the rest of the project. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would not result in additional emissions of pollutants that could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, and potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation as the project would not generate offensive odors that would affect a substantial number of people.

4.3.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

As discussed in Section 4.3.3.1, the project would be consistent with the projected growth in the City and thus would not conflict with the AQMP. As evaluated in Section 4.3.3.2, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable increase in air pollutants for which the VCAPCD has adopted relevant thresholds of significance. As evaluated in Section 4.3.3.3, with mitigation measure AQ-1, significant Valley Fever impacts, though not known to be present, would be avoided and would not add a cumulatively considerable impact, since there are no related projects adjacent to the site that could in combination with the proposed project generate substantial concentrations of pollutants or odors affecting the sensitive receptors adjacent to the project's eastern and southern boundary. Therefore, the North Canyon Ranch residential development would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to air quality impacts, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located adjacent to existing development include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCO to approve annexation of the Island

properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future without implementation of the rest of the project. As evaluated above, the annexation of the Island properties would not result in air quality plan conflicts, considerable net increases of criteria pollutants, impacts to sensitive receptors or odor impacts. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to air quality impacts, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Full Project

The construction and operations of the North Canyon Ranch project, as evaluated above, would not result in significant Air Quality impacts. The Island Annexation component areas could potentially have a very minimal amount of new development (five residential units) in the future, which is not proposed at this time and could occur regardless of the annexation. Therefore, the combined North Canyon Ranch development and the Island Annexations would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to air quality impacts, which would also be less than significant.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

SECTION 4.0

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and Required Island Annexations to result in impacts to biological resources and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to biological resources, where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, as well as other applicable law, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR. Project-related reports and materials to support this biological resources analysis are provided in **Appendix D, Biological Resources**, including the Biological Resources Inventory,¹ Jurisdictional Delineation,² Gnatcatcher Surveys,³ and Protected Tree Survey.⁴ Biological surveys to inventory the resources at the North Canyon Ranch site were conducted in Spring and Summer 2015, Spring, Summer, and Fall 2017, Spring 2019, and Spring 2023 by Envicom Corporation (Envicom); the results of these surveys is incorporated into this Draft EIR Section.

4.4.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

North Canyon Ranch

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

Literature Review and Field Surveys

The environmental setting is based on a literature review as well as field surveys of the project site.

Literature Review

The literature review included information available in standard biological references and relevant lists and databases pertaining to the status and known occurrences of sensitive and special-status biological resources. Other sources of information included aerial photographs, topographic maps, soil survey maps,

¹ Envicom Corporation, Biological Resources Inventory, North Canyon Ranch Residential Project, July 2023.

² Envicom Corporation, Jurisdictional Delineation, North Canyon North Canyon Ranch, Unincorporated Ventura County, June 25, 2015.

³ TW Biological Services, LLC, Presence/Absence Surveys for Coastal California Gnatcatcher on the North Canyon Ranch Project, Ventura County, California, Permit TE-19843C-0, July 11, 2023; Cooper Ecological Monitoring, Inc., Protocol Survey for California Gnatcatcher *Poliioptila californica* at “North Canyon Ranch,” Ventura County, California, May 18, 2017; and Cooper Ecological Monitoring, Inc., Protocol Survey for California Gnatcatcher *Poliioptila californica* at “North Canyon Ranch,” Ventura County, California, June 5, 2015.

⁴ CalPacific Sciences, Tree Survey and Arborist Report Update for North Canyon Ranch (TTM 5658-A) in Ventura County, California, February 7, 2024.

climatic data, relevant policy and planning documents, and previous biological studies of the site. The following sources were among those reviewed (for a complete list see Section 7.0, References):

- Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), data as of June 20, 2023.
- California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) Rarefind 5 report for the 7.5' USGS Simi quadrangle and eight surrounding quadrangles, CDFW, data as of June 20, 2023.
- Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California report for the 7.5' USGS Simi quadrangle and eight surrounding quadrangles, California Native Plant Society (CNPS), data as of June 20, 2023.
- Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special-Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities, CDFW, March 20, 2018.
- California Natural Communities List, CDFW, June 1, 2023.
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Critical Habitat Mapper, USFWS, data as of June 20, 2023.
- List of Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens, CDFW, April 2023.
- Special Animals, CDFW, April 2023.

The results of the literature review with respect to the status and known occurrences of sensitive and special-status biological resources at the site and in the surrounding area are discussed under relevant sections later in this section.

General Biological and Botanical Surveys

Biological surveys to inventory the resources at the site were conducted in Spring and Summer 2015, Spring, Summer, and Fall 2017, Spring 2019, and Spring 2023 by Envicom. Envicom also performed natural community mapping using high-resolution aerial imagery of the site. The dates and times as well as survey conditions are provided in the Biological Resources Inventory report in Appendix D.

The field surveys included a search for protected biological resources, including rare, threatened, and endangered plant and wildlife species, special habitats, and rare and sensitive natural communities, as well as an evaluation of the value of the site for wildlife movement. A comprehensive inventory of vascular plants was recorded with all species identified to the taxonomic level necessary to determine their status. Vascular plant species determinations were made using Baldwin B., et al. (2012).⁵ Vertebrate wildlife species were identified by direct observation, vocalization, or sign (e.g., tracks, scat, or burrows). Wildlife species identification relied upon Reid (2006),⁶ Sibley (2016),⁷ and Stebbins (2003).⁸

California Gnatcatcher Protocol Surveys

Focused surveys for the California Gnatcatcher (*Poliioptila californica*), a bird species listed as Threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), were conducted by Cooper Ecological Monitoring, Inc. in Spring 2015 and Spring 2017, and by TW Biological Services, LLC in Spring 2023. The survey methodology followed required USFWS protocols. The survey methodology including dates, times and

⁵ Baldwin, B. G., D.H. Goldman, D.J. Keil, R. Patterson, T.J. Rosatti, and D.H. Wilken, editors. 2012. The Jepson manual: vascular plants of California, second edition. University of California Press, Berkeley.

⁶ Reid, Fiona. A Field Guide to Mammals of North America, 4th ed., Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, New York, 2006.

⁷ Sibley, D.A., 2016. The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western North America, 2nd edition. A.A. Knopf, New York.

⁸ Stebbins, Robert C. (Robert Cyril). A Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians, 3rd ed., Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, New York, 2003.

conditions of each site visit are discussed in the California gnatcatcher survey reports, which are provided in Appendix D.

Jurisdictional Delineation

A jurisdictional delineation was conducted to satisfy the requirements of the ACOE under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under Section 401 of the CWA, and CDFW under California Fish and Game (“F&G”) Code section 1600, et seq. Before the delineation, Mr. Tyler Barns, Biologist/Environmental Specialist, reviewed relevant background reference materials such as historic and aerial photographs (Google Earth 2014, Microsoft 2015), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) web soil survey (USDA 2015), the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), and the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) (USFWS 2015). Following review of reference materials as well as a preliminary pre-field identification of potential wetland areas, Mr. Barns conducted field investigations on May 6 and 7, 2015 to delineate the extent of jurisdictional wetlands, waters, and riparian habitat. The field delineation was conducted in accordance with the *1987 ACOE Wetlands Delineation Manual* (ACOE 1987), the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (Version 2.0)* (ACOE 2008a), and *A Field Guide to the Identification of the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) in the Arid West Region of the Western United States* (ACOE 2008b), and *A Field Guide to Mapping Episodic Stream Activity* [where applicable] (Brady and Vyverberg 2013). The study area for the delineation included the entire subject property.

During the field investigation, potential jurisdictional areas were examined for Ordinary High Water Marks (OHWMs), riparian vegetation, and the wetland indicators of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology. The potential presence of wetlands was evaluated at test plots, and Wetland Determination Data Forms were used to record observations of vegetation, soils, and hydrology. A Trimble GEOXH 6000 Series GPS unit with sub-meter accuracy was used to geo-reference jurisdictional boundaries and the test plot locations. The results of the jurisdictional delineation are summarized later in this section. Also, the *North Canyon Ranch Jurisdictional Delineation* (Envicom, June 25, 2015) report for the project is provided in Appendix D.

Protected Tree Survey

An arborist survey and health assessment of protected trees within the project area was conducted by George J. Wirtes, ISA Certified Arborist, on June 4, 2022, and is incorporated into the CalPacific Sciences report. The assessment documented the health and stature parameters of each tree onsite, which included but was not limited to total diameter at breast height (DBH), canopy spread, tree height, apparent disease/decay, other signs of potential hazard, and pest damage. The subject trees were tagged with an aluminum tag containing a unique number. A potential risk assessment was also conducted with public safety in mind. The results of the survey are summarized later in this section. Also, the “Tree Survey and Arborists Report Update with Fuel Modification Zones for North Canyon Ranch (TTM 5658-A) in Ventura County, California” (CalPacific Sciences, February 7, 2024) report for the project is provided in Appendix D.

Natural Geographic Features

The site consists primarily of north to south trending ridges and ravines in the northern portion of the site and previously cleared or graded areas in the southern portion of the site. Elevations range from approximately 960 to 1,300 feet above mean sea level (MSL). The site is naturally vegetated and contiguous to the north and west with extensive areas of natural habitat. Portions of the site have been modified, which include cleared and graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, manufactured slopes, and two detention basins. The level, graded areas contain soils that were deposited on-site during development of the Simi Valley Town Center Mall. There are some “two-track” roads that follow the north-south trending ridgelines, and

these roads continue off-site. There is a fuel reduction zone along the eastern boundary of the site, which protects the adjacent residential development.

The natural vegetation at the site was substantially impacted by cattle grazing, and as a result the site consists predominately of open stands of disturbed native scrub and herb-dominated habitats that are infested with invasive weeds. The geology of the site consists of non-marine sedimentary rocks of the Sespe Formation as well as alluvial deposits along drainage courses.⁹ There are some rock outcrops associated with the steep slopes and ridgelines in the northern portion of the site, but the site is otherwise not notably rocky. The soils at the site consist of silty clay loams, shaly loams, gravelly loams, sandy loams, and river wash deposits derived from sedimentary rocks including sandstones, shales, mudstones, and conglomerates.¹⁰ The average high/low temperatures in the area in August are 97/57°F, the average high/low temperatures in December are 68/38°F, and precipitation is approximately 18 inches per year.¹¹

The project site is located within the Calleguas Creek watershed. Several ephemeral drainages and one intermittent drainage converge and flow southerly through the site and discharge to man-made ditches that surround the previously graded areas as well as the detention basins at the southern boundary of the site. Flows from the site ultimately discharge into the Arroyo Simi via storm drains, which is approximately 1.15 miles southwest of the site.

Three fires have burned the project site since 1958. The 1958 Brea Canyon Fire burned the western edge and the southwestern corner of the site and the 1970 Clappitt Fire burned the entire site. The most recent fire to burn the site was the Simi Fire of 2003, which burned all but the southeastern corner of the site.

Vegetation

The vegetation at the site consists of coastal sage scrub, small patches of cactus scrub, and non-native grass/forb habitats, as well as patches of riparian scrub along drainage courses and within detention basins. The majority of the natural habitats at the site have been disturbed to some extent by grazing. There are a few planted coast live oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*) on the manufactured slopes in the southern portion of the site, but there are no oak woodlands at the site. The vegetation and natural communities at the site are shown on **Figure 4.4-1, Vegetation and Special Status Species**. A discussion of the vegetation at the site is provided below, which is organized by habitat class.

Coastal Scrub and Cactus Scrub

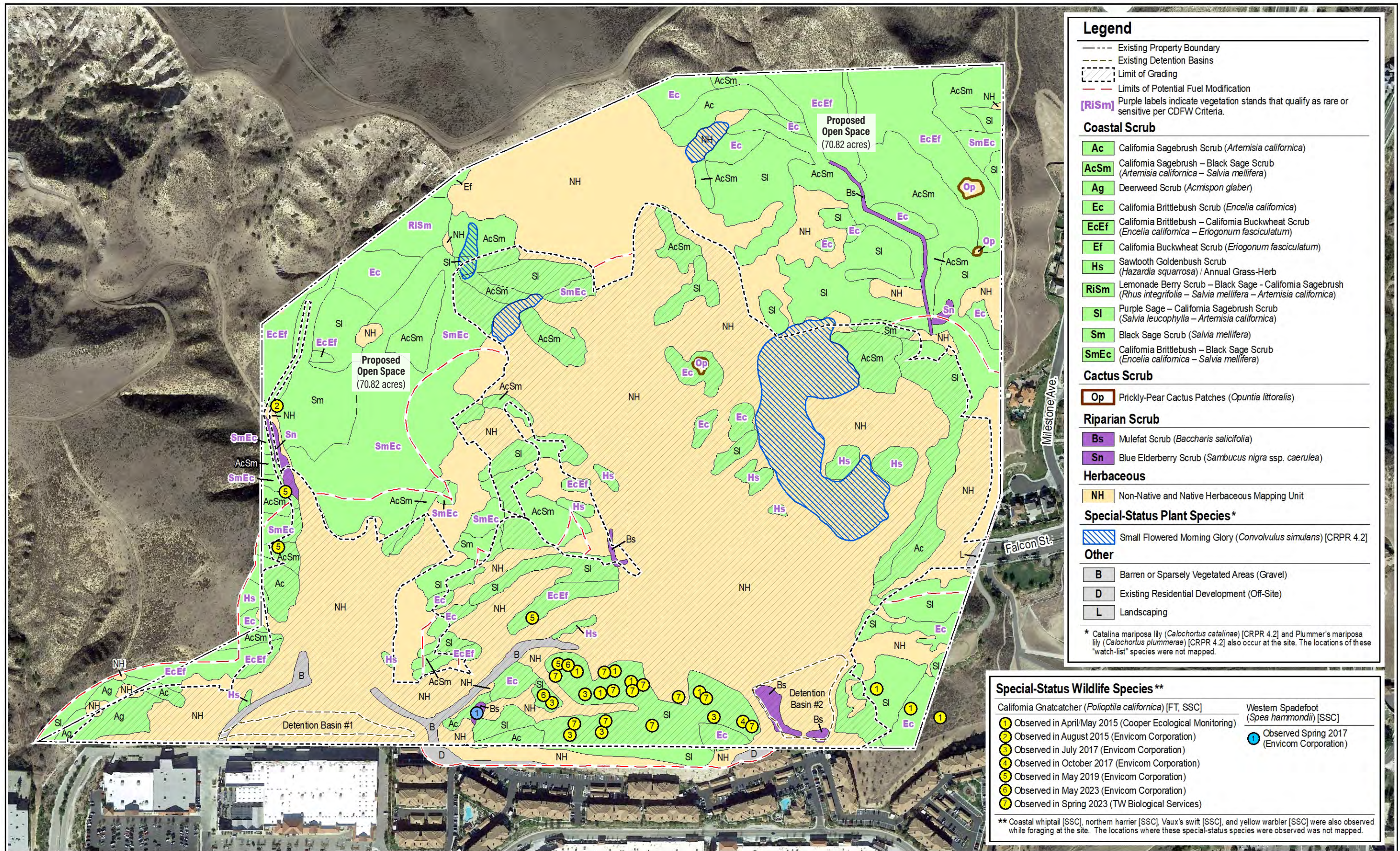
The ridgelines and hillsides at the site contain coastal sage scrub dominated or co-dominated by California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), California brittlebush (*Encelia californica*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), bush mallow (*Malacothamnus fasciculatus*), purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), or Palmer's goldenbush (*Ericameria palmeri*). The majority of these stands have been grazed over many years, and consequently the shrub canopies are often sparse, open, or intermittent. In a few areas the scrub has not been grazed, including a fenced-off patch near the southern boundary as well as on the steeper hillslopes in the northwestern and northeastern portions of the site.

California brittlebush, California buckwheat, black sage, and sawtooth goldenbush are in general more prevalent on the drier, exposed slopes at the site, while purple sage and California sagebrush occupy the more shaded slopes, including the north-facing slopes. On some of the more exposed slopes there are

⁹ United States Geologic Service, <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/mapview/?center=-118.766,34.288&zoom=15>

¹⁰ Web Soil Survey, <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

¹¹ The Weather Channel, www.weather.com



Legend

- Existing Property Boundary
- Existing Detention Basins
- Limit of Grading
- Limits of Potential Fuel Modification

[RiSm] Purple labels indicate vegetation stands that qualify as rare or sensitive per CDFW Criteria.

Coastal Scrub

- Ac** California Sagebrush Scrub (*Artemisia californica*)
- AcSm** California Sagebrush – Black Sage Scrub (*Artemisia californica* – *Salvia mellifera*)
- Ag** Deerweed Scrub (*Acmispon glaber*)
- Ec** California Brittlebush Scrub (*Encelia californica*)
- EcEf** California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat Scrub (*Encelia californica* – *Eriogonum fasciculatum*)
- Ef** California Buckwheat Scrub (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*)
- Hs** Sawtooth Goldenbush Scrub (*Hazardia squarrosa*) / Annual Grass-Herb
- RiSm** Lemonade Berry Scrub – Black Sage - California Sagebrush (*Rhus integrifolia* – *Salvia mellifera* – *Artemisia californica*)
- SI** Purple Sage – California Sagebrush Scrub (*Salvia leucophylla* – *Artemisia californica*)
- Sm** Black Sage Scrub (*Salvia mellifera*)
- SmEc** California Brittlebush – Black Sage Scrub (*Encelia californica* – *Salvia mellifera*)

Cactus Scrub

- Op** Prickly-Pear Cactus Patches (*Opuntia littoralis*)

Riparian Scrub

- Bs** Mulefat Scrub (*Baccharis salicifolia*)
- Sn** Blue Elderberry Scrub (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*)

Herbaceous

- NH** Non-Native and Native Herbaceous Mapping Unit

Special-Status Plant Species*

- [Blue Hatched]** Small Flowered Morning Glory (*Convolvulus simulans*) [CRPR 4.2]

Other

- B** Barren or Sparsely Vegetated Areas (Gravel)
- D** Existing Residential Development (Off-Site)
- L** Landscaping

* Catalina mariposa lily (*Calochortus catalinae*) [CRPR 4.2] and Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*) [CRPR 4.2] also occur at the site. The locations of these "watch-list" species were not mapped.

Special-Status Wildlife Species**

California Gnatcatcher (<i>Poliioptila californica</i>) [FT, SSC]	Western Spadefoot (<i>Spea hammondi</i>) [SSC]
1 Observed in April/May 2015 (Cooper Ecological Monitoring)	1 Observed Spring 2017 (Envicom Corporation)
2 Observed in August 2015 (Envicom Corporation)	
3 Observed in July 2017 (Envicom Corporation)	
4 Observed in October 2017 (Envicom Corporation)	
5 Observed in May 2019 (Envicom Corporation)	
6 Observed in May 2023 (Envicom Corporation)	
7 Observed in Spring 2023 (TW Biological Services)	

** Coastal whiptail [SSC], northern harrier [SSC], Vaux's swift [SSC], and yellow warbler [SSC] were also observed while foraging at the site. The locations where these special-status species were observed was not mapped.

Aerial Source: GoogleEarth Pro, Dec. 10, 2013.

NORTH CANYON RANCH & ADDITIONAL ANNEXATION AREAS – EIR

Vegetation and Special Status Species Map

patches or scattered elements of cactus scrub, which consists of coast prickly-pear cactus (*Opuntia littoralis*) and/or coastal cholla cactus (*Cylindropuntia prolifera*). However, there is not a substantial amount of cactus scrub at the site. Bush mallow is common in some areas of the site, mixing with coastal sage species such as purple sage or black sage. Bush mallow is a relatively short-lived plant and where common is often indicative of recent fire or other disturbance. Lemonade berry, an evergreen scrub species, is scattered at higher elevations in the northwestern portion of the site. Numerous cattle and other animal trails traverse the coastal sage scrub habitats at the site, and much of the scrub is infested with naturalized weeds, such as southern Russian thistle (*Salsola australis*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), hoary mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), wild oats (*Avena* spp.), and brome grasses (*Bromus* spp.).

Some of the other notable native species within the coastal sage scrub at the site are bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), bush lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), California matchweed (*Gutierrezia californica*), sessile-flower goldenaster (*Heterotheca sessiliflora*), narrowleaf bedstraw (*Galium angustifolium*), caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), common eucrypta (*Eucrypta chrysanthemifolia*), whispering bells (*Emmenanthe penduliflora*), white everlasting (*Pseudognaphalium microcephalum*), cardinal Indian pink (*Silene laciniata*), elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*), threadleaf woolly-star (*Eriastrum filifolium*), Turkish rugging (*Chorizanthe stericoides*), paintbrush (*Castilleja affinis*), golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*), and blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus* ssp. *capitatus*), coast melic grass (*Melica imperfecta*), crested needlegrass (*Stipa coronata*), and foothill needlegrass (*Stipa lepida*).

Riparian Scrub

Riparian scrub is not extensive at the site. Mulefat scrub (*Baccharis salicifolia*) occurs in small patches or in strips along incised drainages and the man-made drainage ditches as well as within the detention basins along the southern boundary, and blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) is also found within the drainages at a couple of locations. The mulefat and blue elderberry shrubs typically co-occur with coastal sage species rather than riparian or wetland species, which indicates the drainages on-site are relatively dry habitats.

Herbaceous

The herbaceous communities on-site, which are dominated by non-native grasses and forbs, include previously graded / cleared areas, heavily grazed hillslopes and valleys, and the fuel reduction zone along the site's eastern boundary. Many of the herbs in these areas are naturalized invasive plants. The most prevalent non-native invasive species throughout the site is southern Russian thistle (*Salsola australis*), which due to its spiny bracts and leaves has avoided grazing by herbivores. Other non-native herbs at the site include annual bursage (*Ambrosia acanthacarpa*), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), hoary mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), London rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*), goosefoot (*Chenopodium* sp.), bur-clover (*Medicago polymorpha*), sourclover (*Melilotus indicus*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), long-beaked filaree (*Erodium botrys*), small-flowered cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), wild oats (*Avena barbara*, *A. fatua*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), red brome (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*), and foxtail barley (*Hordeum murinum*). Although dominated by non-natives, native herbs and shrubs are also present in the herbaceous habitats at the site. Some of these native species include sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), common fiddleneck (*Amsinckia intermedia*), slender tarplant (*Deiandra fasciculata*), succulent lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), virgate wire-lettuce (*Stephanomeria virgata*), and turkey mullein (*Croton setiger*). The composition and cover of herbs varied somewhat year to year depending on climate conditions. For example, native succulent lupine was dominant throughout much of the previously graded areas in 2023, a year of high precipitation. In drier years these same areas were strongly dominated by non-native species.

Protected Trees

A tree survey was conducted for the project on June 4, 2022, which evaluated 16 trees located at the project site involving five distinct species, including native Englemann oak (*Quercus engelmannii*), Pacific willow (*Salix lasiandra*), and Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), and non-native black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and Peruvian pepper (*Schinus molle*). The black locust and Peruvian pepper are considered invasive by the California Invasive Plant Council. All 16 trees are within the proposed grading limits. There is also a patch of scrub oaks (*Quercus berberidifolia*) in the northeastern portion of the site. These scrub oaks are well outside the project grading limits and potential fuel modification zones. All trees in 2022 were in fair to good health with good vigor and limited signs of decay or disease. Simi Valley Municipal Code (SVMC) Chapter 9-80 establishes the following terms for the purposes of SCVMC Chapter 9-38, the Mature Tree Preservation regulations:

- Historic Tree. A living tree designated by resolution of the Council as an historic tree because of an association with some event or person of historical significance to the community, or because of special recognition due to aesthetic qualities, condition, or size.
- Mature Native Oak Tree. A living native oak tree with a cross-sectional area of all major stems, as measured four and one-half feet above the root crown, of 20 or more square inches.
- Mature Tree. A living tree with a cross-sectional area of all major stems, as measured four and one-half feet above the root crown, of 72 or more square inches. Mature trees shall not include stump regrowths.
- Native Oak Tree. A living tree of the genus *Quercus* and species *agrifolia*, *berberidifolia*, *lobata*, or hybrids thereof.
- Protected Trees. All historic trees, all mature native oak trees, or any mature trees which are associated with a proposal for urban development or are located on a vacant parcel.

Five of the 16 trees meet criteria are protected as mature trees under the SVMC and would require a permit by the Planning Director before removal. The five Protected trees at the project site include two Mexican elderberries, two Pacific willows, and a Peruvian pepper. A Garmin 64s handheld GPS device was used to record the locations of the trees within the site. The locations of the trees surveyed in 2022 are shown on maps in The Tree Survey and Arborists Report Update report in Appendix D, along with the methods and results of the survey.

Natural Communities of Special Concern

Natural Communities of Special Concern are communities that are of limited distribution statewide or within a county or region and are often vulnerable to the environmental effects of projects. They are also referred to as rare or sensitive plant communities. Natural Communities of Special Concern require special consideration and protection pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, specifically based on CEQA Thresholds Guidelines Appendix G Section IV.b.¹² Natural communities with global or state conservation status ranks of G1 through G3, or S1 through S3, respectively, or a “Sensitive” designation, are considered to be Natural Communities of Special Concern. The conservation status ranks and sensitive designations for natural communities in the state are provided in the *California Natural Communities List* (CDFW, June 1, 2023).¹³

¹² CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Biological Resources IV.b reads as follows: “would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?”

¹³ California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Natural Community List Accessed at: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=153398&inline>

The natural communities at the site were correlated with the *California Natural Communities List* and are mapped on Figure 4.4-1. Natural communities are classified based on plant species composition and abundance as well as underlying abiotic conditions, such as slope, aspect, or soil type. The acreages and conservation status ranks of the natural communities at the site are provided in **Table 4.4-1, Natural Communities at Project Site**, below.

**Table 4.4-1
Natural Communities at Project Site**

Habitat Class	Natural Community*	Conservation Status Rank	Study Area Acreage (On-Site)	Study Area Acreage (Off-site)
Coastal Scrub	Black Sage Shrubland Association (<i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [32.020.03]	G4S4	3.30	0.00
	California Sagebrush Shrubland Alliance (<i>Artemisia californica</i>) [32.015.00]	G5S5	2.82	0.19
	Lemonade Berry - Black Sage – California Sagebrush Shrubland Association (<i>Rhus integrifolia</i> - <i>Artemisia californica</i> – <i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [37.803.05]	G3S3; Sensitive	1.09	0.00
	California Sagebrush – Black Sage Shrubland Alliance (<i>Artemisia californica</i> – <i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [32.210.00]	G4S4	14.68	0.05
	Deerweed Shrubland Alliance (<i>Acmispon glaber</i>) [37.070.00]	G5S5	0.93	0.25
	California Brittlebush Shrubland Alliance (<i>Encelia californica</i>) [32.051.00]	G3S3	6.41	0.14
	California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat Shrubland Phase of California Brittlebush Shrubland Association (<i>Encelia californica</i> – <i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>)	G3S3; Sensitive	8.57	0.22
	California Buckwheat Shrubland Alliance (<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>) [32.040.00]	G5S5	0.14	0.00
	Sawtooth Goldenbush Shrubland Alliance (<i>Hazardia squarrosa</i>) [32.055.00]	G3S3	1.56	0.21
	Purple Sage – California Sagebrush Shrubland Association (<i>Salvia leucophylla</i> – <i>Artemisia californica</i>) [32.090.01]	G4S4	24.12	0.96
	California Brittlebush – Black Sage Shrubland Association (<i>Encelia californica</i> – <i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [32.050.05]	G3S3?; Sensitive	11.12	0.02
Cactus Scrub	Coast Prickly-Pear Shrubland Alliance (<i>Opuntia littoralis</i>) [32.150.00]	G4S3	0.20	0.00
Riparian Scrub	Blue Elderberry Shrubland Association (<i>Sambucus nigra</i> ssp. <i>caerulea</i>) [63.410.01]	Sensitive	0.38	0.00
	Mulefat Shrubland Alliance (<i>Baccharis salicifolia</i>) [63.510.00]	G5S4	0.80	0.00
Herbaceous	Non-Native and Native Herbaceous	Not ranked	82.82	1.34

Habitat Class	Natural Community*	Conservation Status Rank	Study Area Acreage (On-Site)	Study Area Acreage (Off-site)
Other Landcover	Barren or Sparsely Vegetated	n/a	1.16	0.00
	Existing Residential Development	n/a	0.00	0.47
	Landscaping	n/a	0.09	0.00
Total Acreages			160.19	3.85
<p>* Numbers in brackets are unique codes for each plant community, as provided in the <i>California Natural Communities List</i> (CDFW, June 1, 2023). Plant communities in bold type are CDFW Natural Communities of Special Concern (Rare or Sensitive Plant Communities).</p> <p>GLOBAL RANKING</p> <p>The global rank (G-rank) is a reflection of the overall status of a natural community throughout its global range. Both Global and State ranks represent a letter+number score that reflects a combination of Rarity, Threat and Trend factors, with weighting being heavier on Rarity than the other two. “?”- Denotes an inexact numeric rank due to insufficient samples over the full, expected range of the vegetation type, but existing information points to the rank given.</p> <p>G1 - Critically Imperiled—At very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer occurrences), very steep declines, or other factors.</p> <p>G2 - Imperiled—At high risk of extinction due to very restricted range, very few occurrences (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors.</p> <p>G3 - Vulnerable—At moderate risk of extinction due to a restricted range, relatively few occurrences (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors.</p> <p>G4 - Apparently Secure—Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.</p> <p>G5 - Secure—Common; widespread and abundant.</p> <p>STATE RANKING</p> <p>The state rank (S-rank) is assigned much the same way as the global rank, but state ranks refer to the imperilment status only within California’s state boundaries.</p> <p>S1 - Critically Imperiled—Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer occurrences) or because of factor(s) such as very steep declines making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state.</p> <p>S2 - Imperiled—Imperiled in the state because of rarity due to very restricted range, very few occurrences (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state.</p> <p>S3 - Vulnerable—Vulnerable in the state due to a restricted range, relatively few occurrences (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation from the state.</p> <p>S4 - Apparently Secure—Uncommon but not rare in the state; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.</p> <p>S5 - Secure—Common, widespread, and abundant in the state.</p>				

There are seven rare or sensitive natural communities at the site, including:

1. California Brittlebush Shrubland Alliance (*Encelia californica*)
2. California Brittlebush – Black Sage Shrubland Association (*Encelia californica* – *Salvia mellifera*)
3. California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat Shrubland Phase (*Encelia californica* – *Eriogonum fasciculatum*)
4. Coast Prickly-Pear Shrubland Alliance (*Opuntia littoralis*)
5. Blue Elderberry Shrubland Alliance (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*)
6. Lemonade Berry – Black Sage – California Sagebrush Shrubland Association (*Rhus integrifolia* – *Salvia mellifera* – *Artemisia californica*)
7. Sawtooth Goldenbush Shrubland Alliance (*Hazardia squarrosa*)

These rare or sensitive communities are indicated on the Figure 4.4-1 with purple labels, and in Table 4.4-1 by bold lettering. At many locations these rare or sensitive communities are open in structure and highly disturbed by non-native species, particularly in the central and southern portion of the site. The most highly disturbed stands are not quality examples of these habitats and are unlikely to recover by natural processes.

Plant Communities/Habitats Listed in CNDDDB

A review of the CNDDDB Rarefind 5 application reveals 13 Sensitive Plant Communities/Habitats have been reported in the Simi Quadrangle area or within adjacent quadrangles. These Sensitive Plant Communities/Habitats include California Walnut Woodland, Cismontane Alkali Marsh, Southern California Threespine Stickleback Stream, Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest, Southern Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forest, Southern Mixed Riparian Forest, Southern Riparian Forest, Southern Riparian Scrub, Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland, Southern Willow Scrub, Valley Needlegrass Grassland, Valley Oak Woodland, and Walnut Forest. None of these Sensitive Plant Communities/Habitats occur at the site. Psomas reported valley (purple) needlegrass grassland on a north-facing slope in the southern portion of the site in 2005, in an opening in purple sage and California sagebrush scrub.¹⁴ However, this area as well as the entire site was searched for native grassland in 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023 and no patches of native grassland were found. This patch of needlegrass grassland appears to be extirpated.

Plant Species

Plant Species Observed

A total of 219 vascular plant taxa were identified during the surveys of the site by Envicom in 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023 including two ferns or fern allies and 217 flowering plants, including 182 dicots and 35 monocots. Of these, 164 were naturally occurring native species and 55 were non-native or introduced, representing moderate diversity of native species for a 160-acre site and a moderate proportion of non-natives. A complete list of the vascular plant species observed within the survey area is provided in the Biological Resources Inventory in Appendix D.

Special-Status Plant Species

Special-status plant species either have unique biological significance, limited distribution, restricted habitat requirements, particular susceptibility to human disturbance, or a combination of these factors. For the purposes of this report, special-status plant species are those plants listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as Threatened or Endangered under the FESA; those listed or proposed for listing as Threatened or Endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA); those listed as Rare under the Native Plant Protection Act; and plants on the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants with a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1A (plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere), 1B (which includes plants considered to be rare, threatened, or endangered species in California and elsewhere), 2A (plants presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere), 2B (plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere), and 3 (plants about which more information is needed - a review list).

The term special-status also denotes species on the CNPS Inventory with a CRPR 4 that meet criteria to be considered locally significant. Plants with a CRPR of 4 are not rare, but rather are included on a “watch list” of species with limited distribution. However, while plants in this category cannot be called “rare” from a statewide perspective, and very few, if any, are eligible for state listing, many of them are significant locally. For this reason, CNPS strongly recommends that CRPR 4 plants be evaluated for consideration during preparation of environmental documents, which may be particularly appropriate for the type locality of a CRPR 4 plant; populations at the periphery of a species’ range; areas where the taxon is especially uncommon; areas where the taxon has sustained heavy losses; or populations exhibiting unusual morphology or occurring on unusual substrates.

¹⁴ Psomas, North Canyon Ranch Residential Development Bio Constraints and Opportunities, December 2006.

Species on the Ventura County's list of locally important species are also considered special-status.¹⁵ According to the County's General Plan, a Locally Important Species is a plant (or animal) that is not an endangered, threatened, or rare species, but is considered by qualified biologists to be quality example or unique species within the County and region. The County's list includes plant species that are declining throughout their range and have five or fewer occurrences in Ventura County, based on Consortium of California Herbaria records and other sources. Although the City is the lead agency for this project, Ventura County Locally Important Species are included as the site is currently in unincorporated Ventura County.

The status codes for special-status plants are described in **Table 4.4-2, Status Codes for Special-Status Plants**.

Table 4.4-2
Status Codes for Special-Status Plants

FEDERALLY PROTECTED SPECIES	
FE (Federal Endangered)	A species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
FT (Federal Threatened)	A species that is likely to become Endangered in the foreseeable future.
FC (Federal Candidate)	A species for which USFWS has sufficient information on its biological status and threats to propose it as Endangered or Threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but for which development of a proposed listing regulation is precluded by other higher priority listing activities.
STATE PROTECTED SPECIES	
CE (California Endangered)	A native species or subspecies which is in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion, of its range due to one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, overexploitation, predation, competition, or disease.
CT (California Threatened)	A native species or subspecies that, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an Endangered species in the foreseeable future in the absence of the special protection and management efforts required by this chapter. Any animal determined by the commission as "Rare" on or before January 1, 1985, is a "Threatened species."
CR (California Rare)	A species, subspecies, or variety of plant is rare under the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) when, although not presently threatened with extinction, it is in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become Endangered if its present environment worsens. Animals are no longer listed as Rare; all animals listed as Rare before 1985 have been listed as threatened.
CALIFORNIA RARE PLANT RANK (CRPR) (formerly CNPS Lists)	
CRPR 1A	Plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere.
CRPR 1B	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.
CRPR 2A	Plants presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere.
CRPR 2B	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere.
CRPR 3	A review list for plants for which there is inadequate information to assign them to one of the other lists or to reject them.
CRPR 4	A watch list for plants that are of limited distribution in California.

¹⁵ County of Ventura, Ventura County Planning Division 2022 Locally Important Plant List, Access at: <https://docs.verma.org/images/pdf/planning/conservation/2022-Locally-Important-Plant-List.pdf>

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY (CNPS) THREAT RANK	
The CNPS Threat Rank is an extension added onto the California Rare Plant Rank and designates the level of endangerment, as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.1-Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat) • 0.2-Fairly threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat) • 0.3-Not very threatened in California (<20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known) 	
LOCALLY IMPORTANT SPECIES	
VCLIP	Ventura County Locally Important Plant Species

Survey Results

No special-status plant species that are considered to be rare, threatened, or endangered were found at the site during surveys conducted by Envicom in 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023 or during prior surveys of the site by Psomas in May and August 2005.

Three CRPR 4 species were found during the surveys conducted by Envicom, including Catalina mariposa lily (*Calochortus catalinae*) [CRPR 4.2], Plummer’s mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*) [CRPR 4.2], and small-flowered morning glory (*Convolvulus simulans*) [CRPR 4.2]. Plummer’s mariposa lilies were also found during surveys conducted by Psomas in May and June 2005. At the time of Psomas’ surveys in 2005, the Plummer’s mariposa lily was considered a rare species with a CRPR 1B.2 but it has since been downlisted with CNPS reporting it is “not as rare as initially thought.”

The Catalina mariposa lily is a perennial bulbiferous herb in the lily family (Liliaceae) that occurs in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland in portions of coastal southern California. It is common in intact and grazed scrub and herbaceous habitats throughout the site, but generally absent from previously cleared or graded areas. Bulbs of this species emerged and bloomed in very high numbers estimated to be in the 10,000s in Spring 2017, when conditions were obviously very favorable. The majority of the bulbs remained dormant in 2015 and 2019, when this species bloomed in lower numbers, estimated to be in the 100s in 2015, and in the 1000s and 2019 and 2023. Due to the high numbers and wide distribution over the site as well as its non-protected status, the locations of this species were not mapped during the surveys.

The Plummer’s mariposa lily is a perennial bulbiferous herb in the lily family that is generally found in rocky habitats in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, lower montane coniferous forest, and valley and foothill grassland. It is also restricted to portions of southern California and is primarily found in the Los Angeles region. Plummer’s mariposa lily is uncommon at the site and occurs primarily on ridgelines and other exposed open areas with low shrub cover. Psomas documented 360 flowering Plummer’s mariposa lilies in 2005 while there were only two flowering plants in 2015; zero in 2017 or 2019; and 24 in 2023. The Plummer’s mariposa lily is a fire-follower and can be common where it occurs after a fire. The Psomas surveys were conducted two growing seasons after the 2003 Simi Fire, which burned nearly the entire site. This may account for the greater number of blooming plants found in 2005 when compared to the 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023 surveys. Due to its non-protected status, the locations of this species were not mapped during the surveys. This species was formerly considered a Ventura County Locally Important Plant, but it has since been removed from the County’s list.

The small-flowered morning-glory is an annual herb in the morning-glory family (*Convolvulaceae*) that occurs on clay substrates in chaparral, coastal scrub, and valley and foothills grassland habitats. It occurs at four general locations at the site primarily in herbaceous habitats but also in open scrub, and notably in

significant numbers in the understory of dense stands of non-native black mustard (*Brassica nigra*). At the time of surveys this species was considered a Ventura County Locally Important Plant, but it has since been removed from this list. The locations of this species are shown in blue hatch on Figure 4.4-1. This is an annual species with seed germination varying substantially each year depending on conditions. The number of plants observed at the site in 2017 in 2023 was estimated to be in the 1000s, and in much lower numbers in 2015 and 2019.

Potential for Occurrence – Special-Status Plant Species

An evaluation of the potential for occurrence at the site of special-status plant species known to occur in the region was undertaken through a search of the *CNPS Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants, 8th ed.* (CNPS 2023) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's CNDDDB Rarefind 5 application (CDFW 2023) for sensitive “elements” reported within the Simi quadrangle, and eight others that surround it: Calabasas, Fillmore, Moorpark, Newbury Park, Piru, Santa Susana, Thousand Oaks, and Val Verde. CRPR 4 species and Ventura County Locally Important Plant Species were not included in the analysis. Many of the special-status plant species known to occur in the region are precluded from occurring at the site due to lack of suitable habitat, and given the intensity and correct timing of the 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023 springtime field surveys, other than the CRPR 4.2 species discussed above, special-status species are considered absent from the site (see the Biological Resources Inventory report in Appendix D for additional information):

Wildlife Species

Wildlife Observed

Many wildlife species were observed during biological surveys of the site some of which are common or relatively common and others that are uncommon or rare in the region. A list of the species observed during surveys by Envicom and/or Cooper Ecological Monitoring is provided in the Biological Resources Inventory report in Appendix D. In addition to the species observed, many additional species can be expected to utilize habitats at the site for cover, foraging, and reproduction. Also, in general, the species observed include those that are more easily detected during daytime surveys. Several vertebrate species including many species of reptiles, birds, mammals can be expected to inhabit and reproduce at the site, and a wide range of additional species can be expected to utilize the site's resources routinely, such as foraging raptors, and medium to large-sized mammals, such as coyotes, bobcats, and skunks. Large burrows potentially attributable to coyotes were observed along the steep banks of the washes in the northeastern portion of the site, and the site's expansive area of open scrub and herbaceous habitats, which are contiguous with similar habitats to the west, north, and northeast, are highly suitable for foraging raptors. Numerous small mammal burrows were observed throughout the site. Of note were erodable rock substrates containing numerous small cavities in the southern portion of the site, which were inhabited by nesting rock wrens. These cavities may provide refuge for many other species as well. The bird species observed during the 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023 surveys consisted primarily of year-round residents, summer residents, and potential migrants. Several species of birds, particularly those that inhabit coastal scrub, non-native grassland, or sparse riparian scrub habitats, are expected to nest at the site in any given year.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

For the purposes of this report, special-status wildlife species are those species that are listed, proposed for listing, or that meet the criteria for listing as Endangered or Threatened under the FESA or CESA; and those that are listed on the CDFW's Special Animals list with a designation of SSC (California Species of Special Concern) or CFP (California Fully Protected). Mandatory special consideration or protection of these species is required pursuant to FESA, CESA, and/or CEQA. The status codes for special-status wildlife are described shown below in **Table 4.4-3, Status Codes for Special-Status Wildlife**.

Federal and State Listed Wildlife Species

The only species listed under FESA or CESA that has been observed at the site is the California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*). The California gnatcatcher is a small non-migratory blue-gray songbird that occupies coastal scrub habitats. It is listed as Threatened under the FESA and is considered a Species of Special Concern by the State of California.

USFWS protocol presence/absence surveys for the California gnatcatcher were conducted in Spring 2015 and Spring 2017 by Cooper Ecological Monitoring and by TW Biological Services in Spring 2023. Cooper Ecological Monitoring detected two California gnatcatchers during the 2015 protocol survey and zero California gnatcatchers during the 2017 protocol survey. TW Biological Services observed a breeding pair including an adult male and female and two juvenile California gnatcatchers during the 2023 protocol survey. The methods and results of the protocol surveys are discussed in separate reports by Cooper Ecological Monitoring and TW Biological Services.^{16, 17, 18.}

**Table 4.4-3
Status Codes for Special-Status Wildlife**

FEDERALLY PROTECTED SPECIES	
FE (Federal Endangered)	A species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
FT (Federal Threatened)	A species that is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.
FC (Federal Candidate)	A species for which USFWS has sufficient information on its biological status and threats to propose it as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but for which development of a proposed listing regulation is precluded by other higher priority listing activities.
FSC (Federal Species of Concern)	A species under consideration for listing, for which there is insufficient information to support listing at this time. These species may or may not be listed in the future, and many of these species were formerly recognized as “Category-2 Candidate” species.
STATE PROTECTED SPECIES	
CE (California Endangered)	A native species or subspecies which is in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion, of its range due to one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, overexploitation, predation, competition, or disease.
CT (California Threatened)	A native species or subspecies that, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future in the absence of the special protection and management efforts required by this chapter. Any animal determined by the commission as “rare” on or before January 1, 1985, is a “threatened species.”
SSC (California Species of Special Concern)	Animals that are not listed under the California Endangered Species Act, but which nonetheless 1) are declining at a rate

¹⁶ Cooper Ecological Monitoring, *Protocol survey for California gnatcatcher Polioptila californica at “North Canyon Ranch,”* June 5, 2015.

¹⁷ Cooper Ecological Monitoring, *Protocol survey for California gnatcatcher Polioptila californica at “North Canyon Ranch,”* May 18, 2017.

¹⁸ TW Biological Services, *Presence/Absence Surveys for Coastal California Gnatcatcher on the North Canyon Ranch Residential Project, Ventura County, California.* July 11, 2023.

	that could result in listing, or 2) historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist.
CFP (California Fully Protected)	This designation originated from the State's initial effort in the 1960's to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction. Lists were created for fish, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and birds. Most fully protected species have also been listed as threatened or endangered species under the more recent endangered species laws and regulations. California Fully Protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except for collecting these species for necessary scientific research and relocation of the bird species for the protection of livestock.
SA (Special Animal)	Species on CDFW's Special Animals list that is not listed under the FESA or CESA, or as Species of Special Concern or California Fully Protected.

As summarized in the 2015 report, “the survey determined that the California Gnatcatcher is present at the site, with an adult male detected on each visit, and a second bird, either an adult female or a young-of-the-year, seen on the last of six visits. While I observed the male engaged in likely territorial behavior (on the final visit only), I observed no nest-building or other breeding behavior by the end of the survey.” All detections during the 2015 protocol survey were made in areas of intact (i.e., ungrazed, and with a dense canopy structure) coastal sage scrub in the southern and southeastern portions of the site, as well as intact coastal sage scrub located off-site to the southeast. As stated, no California gnatcatchers were detected during the 2017 protocol survey.

As summarized in the 2023 report, “A single coastal California gnatcatcher pair was detected onsite during the 2023 surveys. This pair was located on the ridge along the southern boundary of the property, just north of the Avalon apartments. One or both adults were observed on each of the six survey dates and the pair was observed with juveniles on June 2.” The report also identifies approximately 14 acres of suitable coastal California gnatcatcher habitat at the following locations: “a ridge along the southern border just north of the Avalon apartments, a west facing slope in the southeastern corner, an east facing slope along the western border, an east facing slope in the northeast corner, and a bench in the canyon bottom above the incised drainage in the northeast part of the site.” These patches of suitable habitat are shown on maps in the 2023 survey report.

In addition to the detections by Cooper Ecological Monitoring and TW Biological Services, Envicom observed one California gnatcatcher in August 2015; two in July 2017; two in October 2017; three in May 2019; and three in May 2023 during biological surveys of the site. The locations of the detections by Cooper Ecological Monitoring, TW Biological Services, and Envicom are shown on Figure 4.4-1. The observations by Envicom in May 2023 included a male in breeding plumage foraging with two other birds, likely an adult female and a juvenile. Most of these observations were in the relatively intact coastal sage scrub in the southern portion of the property, in the same general location where the birds were detected during the 2015 protocol survey, as well as in suitable coastal sage scrub in the western portion of the site.

The site is nearly entirely within USFWS-designated Critical Habitat for the California gnatcatcher (specifically Ventura County and Los Angeles County Unit 13). Critical habitat is a term in the FESA that identifies geographic areas containing physical or biological features essential for the conservation of a Threatened or Endangered species. Critical habitat is considered essential for the long-term conservation and recovery of the species. The designation of critical habitat does not affect land ownership or establish

a refuge, wilderness, reserve, preserve, or other conservation area. Federal agencies that undertake, fund or permit activities that may affect critical habitat are required to consult with the USFWS to ensure such actions do not adversely modify or destroy designated critical habitat, but the designation does not affect purely private or state actions on private or state lands, nor require private or other non-federal lands to be managed for conservation.

California Species of Special Concern

Seven species that are considered Species of Special Concern by the State of California have been detected at the site. These species include the western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*), coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*), Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), and grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*). The California gnatcatcher is also a Species of Special Concern.

The western spadefoot is a terrestrial toad, which occurs in grasslands, oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, and chaparral. They use temporary pools for breeding, but they will also readily breed in artificial water bodies such as cattle ponds. This species bred in a small temporary pond near the southern boundary of the site in Spring 2017. Several hundred western spadefoot tadpoles were observed at the pond in March and April 2017, and numerous young toadlets, which had metamorphosed from tadpoles, were also observed buried in the sandy soils and moving through the scrub around the perimeter of the pond in April and May 2017. This species is only dependent upon aquatic habitats such as the small temporarily pond for breeding, and otherwise resides in terrestrial habitats. The juvenile spadefoot toads will have dispersed into the open grassland and scrub habitats at the site, where they will have become cryptic occupying refugia such as burrows and conducting most movements at night. The amount and timing of rainfall in 2017 was adequate for water to remain in the pond for a sufficient period to support the breeding requirements of this species. The pond did not fill for any notable duration in 2015 or 2019, which were lower rainfall years. It did fill for an extended period in 2023, and it was visited in March, April, May, and June 2023 but there were no spadefoot tadpoles. Based on review of historical aerials, this pond appears to be man-made or to be a result of prior land modifications at the site. The western detention basin at the site also pools in some years and may also be suitable breeding habitat for this species, but no significant pooling of any duration was observed in the eastern detention basin, including in 2017 or 2023. There is no other potential spadefoot breeding habitat on-site.

The coastal whiptail is an active, slim-bodied diurnal lizard that typically forages in openings near vegetative cover. It is found in a variety of habitats, but primarily in hot and dry areas with sparse foliage. A few of these lizards were observed in open scrub habitats during surveys of the site in 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023. This species is potentially present throughout much of site, especially within and near scrub habitats.

The yellow warbler is small migratory songbird that generally occupies riparian vegetation in close proximity to water along streams and in wet meadows. Yellow warblers were detected during surveys of the site in May 2015 and May 2017. Due to the lack of well-developed riparian habitats at the site, these individuals were probably migrants resting and/or foraging temporarily. This species would probably not nest in the riparian scrub at this particular site.

The Vaux's swift is a small, aerial forager, which is commonly seen as migrant in the region. Vaux's swifts were observed flying over the site in 2017. This species may forage overhead during migration but is not expected to roost or breed at the site.

The grasshopper sparrow is small, solitary bird, which is rare and declining in the region and is typically found on dry ground in large expanses of dense tall grass with scattered scrubs or weeds. A grasshopper

sparrow was heard vocalizing on two separate occasions in weedy non-native and native herbaceous habitats at the same location in the southwestern portion of the site in April 2023. This species may occur as a resident or may have been passing through during migration. This species could potentially nest at the site.

The northern harrier, which is a long-winged, low-flying migratory hawk, was observed at the site in 2005 or 2006, as well as in 2017. This species is an uncommon migrant and winter visitor to extensive open freshwater and saltwater marshes, grasslands, and agricultural fields in the Los Angeles region. This species is expected to forage at least occasionally if not routinely at the site as a winter visitor or migrant. As this species typically nests on the ground in marshes, it would not nest at the site. Also, breeding populations have been virtually extirpated from the coastal lowlands of the Los Angeles region. However, the site does provide good foraging habitat for this species, as well as several other common species of diurnal and nocturnal raptors that can be expected to occur.

Special Animals

A few additional species on CDFW's Special Animals list have been observed at the site by Envicom and/or Cooper Ecological Monitoring, including five birds on CDFW's Watch List: Bell's sage sparrow (*Artemisiospiza belli*), California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), and southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*). California horned lark, southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, and the Bell's sage sparrow were observed nesting at the site. Other Special Animals observed include rufous hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) [SA], Costa's hummingbird (*Calypte costae*) [SA], and Lawrence's goldfinch (*Spinus lawrencei*) [SA].

Other than the western spadefoot, the locations where Species of Special Concern and other Special Animals were observed were not mapped. However, most of these species could occur throughout or at many possible locations at the site.

Potential for Occurrence – Special-Status Wildlife Species

A number of additional special-status wildlife species that were not observed during the surveys have potential to occur at the site and in the vicinity of the site, even if in some cases only infrequently, in transit, or on a temporary basis. An analysis of the potential for occurrence of special-status wildlife at the site is presented in the Biological Resources Inventory report in Appendix D, which includes the species' protected status, primary habitat associations, and an assessment of their potential for occurrence (Observed, Potentially Present, Presumed Absent, or Absent). The potential for occurrence was undertaken through research of the CDFW Natural Diversity Database (CDFW 2023) using the Rarefind 5 application for special-status "elements" on the USGS 7.5' Simi quadrangle and eight adjacent quadrangles. The potential for occurrence analysis provides a speculative assessment of the potential for the occurrence of special-status animals on the basis of their known distribution and habitat requirements. Species listed under the FESA or CESA, Species of Special Concern, and California Fully Protected Species were included in the analysis. In addition to the western spadefoot [SSC], coastal whiptail [SSC], California gnatcatcher [FT, SSC], northern harrier [SSC], grasshopper sparrow [SSC], Vaux's swift [SSC], and yellow warbler [SSC], which were observed at the site, the following 22 special-status animals, including two (2) invertebrates, five (5) reptiles, seven (7) birds, and eight (8) mammals were determined to have at least some potential to occur at the site with varying probabilities ranging from high to very low depending on the species:

Invertebrates

Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) [Candidate CE]

Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus woottoni*) [FE]

Reptiles

- California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*) [SSC]
 California legless lizard (*Anniella* sp.) [SSC]
 Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) [SSC]
 Coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis virgultea*) [SSC]
 Southern California legless lizard (*Anniella stebbinsi*) [SSC]

Birds

- American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) [CPF]
 Bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*) [CT]
 Black swift (*Cypseloides niger*) [SSC]
 Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) [SSC]
 Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) [CFP]
 Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) [SSC]
 White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) [CFP]

Mammals

- American badger (*Taxidea taxus*) [SSC]
 Big free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*) [SSC]
 Mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) [Candidate CT - Southern California / Central Coast ESU]
 Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) [SSC]
 San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennetii*) [SSC]
 San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*) [SSC]
 Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*) [SSC]
 Western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) [SSC]

There are three potentially occurring wildlife species listed under the FESA or CESA, including the bank swallow, Riverside fairy shrimp, and mountain lion. The bank swallow has limited potential to forage rarely and temporarily over the site, but it would not reproduce at the site as the site does not contain preferred nesting habitat. However, the potential for occurrence of this species is low, even during migration because of its rarity. The federally Endangered Riverside fairy shrimp has low potential to occur at the small temporary pond at the site. Based on a review of historical aerials, the temporary pond is a relatively recent development and may be man-made or may have been induced by former land modifications at the site. Therefore, the pond is not expected to contain fairy shrimp. Also, with respect to water depth, ponding duration, and substrate characteristics the pond is probably not suitable for this species. However, the Riverside fairy shrimp occurs in large temporary ponds approximately 4 to 5 miles southwest of the site and could have been introduced to this pond by migratory birds, although the probability of this is low. The mountain lion is expected to forage within and move through the project site occasionally.

The Crotch's bumble bee is currently a Candidate for listing as Endangered under the CESA. The site contains suitable habitat for this species.

The potential use of the site by special-status wildlife species also includes a few species of reptiles, birds, and mammals listed as California Fully Protected or Species of Special Concern by the State of California. Many of these species would occur only rarely or occasionally. They include residents, migrants, and winter

visitors that may forage over the site, such as the American peregrine falcon, black swift, burrowing owl, golden eagle, white-tailed kite, and all of the bat species. Some of these species may also roost temporarily at the site. Several of the other special-status species with potential to occur on-site may be year-round or summer residents that have all or part of their home ranges or territories on the site and may routinely use all or a portion of the site to meet their life history requirements for refuge, breeding and/or foraging. These species include the California glossy snake, coast horned lizard, southern California legless lizard, silvery legless lizard, coast patch-nosed snake, loggerhead shrike, San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, San Diego desert woodrat, and American badger. For example, species with small home ranges or territories such as the coast horned lizard may spend their entire life within the confines of the site while other species such as the American badger may use the site for only a portion of their foraging habitat. Some of these species would have the potential for their entire home range or territory to be within the site; in this case the California glossy snake, coast horned lizard, coast patch-nosed snake, loggerhead shrike, silvery legless lizard, southern California legless lizard, and San Diego desert woodrat. However, these and other potentially occurring special-status species such as the American badger could also use adjacent off-site habitat within the surrounding area as resident and foraging habitat. For additional information, see the Biological Resources Inventory report in Appendix D.

Wildlife Movement

Habitat linkages are physical connections that allow wildlife to move between areas of suitable habitat in both intact as well as fragmented and disturbed landscapes. They can be critical at both the local and regional scale. Habitat linkages are necessary for wildlife not only to access essential resources, such as water sources or habitat for foraging, breeding, or cover, but also for dispersal and migration, to ensure the mixing of genes between populations, and so wildlife can respond and adapt to environmental stress, and thus are necessary to maintain healthy ecological and evolutionary processes. Wildlife corridors are areas of open space of sufficient width to permit the movement of larger, mobile species to move from one major open space region to another. Regional habitat linkages are larger wildlife corridors or regions of connectivity that are important for movement of multiple species and maintenance of ecological processes at a regional scale.

Wildlife crossings are generally small, narrow areas allowing wildlife to pass through an obstacle or barrier, such as a roadway to reach another patch of habitat. Examples of barriers or impediments to movement include housing and other urban development, roads, fencing, or open areas with little vegetative cover. Examples of wildlife crossings include culverts, drainage pipes, underpasses, and tunnels.

Habitat loss and fragmentation are the leading threats to biodiversity, both globally and in southern California. Efforts to combat these threats include identifying and conserving large “core” areas of habitat and well as habitat linkages between them.

Based on a review of the following documents the project site is not within an area that has been identified as important to wildlife movement, such as a regional-scale habitat linkage or a wildlife movement corridor:

- *City of Simi Valley 2030 General Plan Update* (June 2012).
- *South Coast Missing Linkages Project: A Linkage Design for the Santa Monica Mountains-Sierra Madre Connection* (Penrod, K. et. al., 2006).
- *California Essential Connectivity Project: A Strategy for Conserving a Connected California* (February 2010).

The nearest area identified as an important wildlife movement corridor is approximately 1.5 miles to the west of the site.

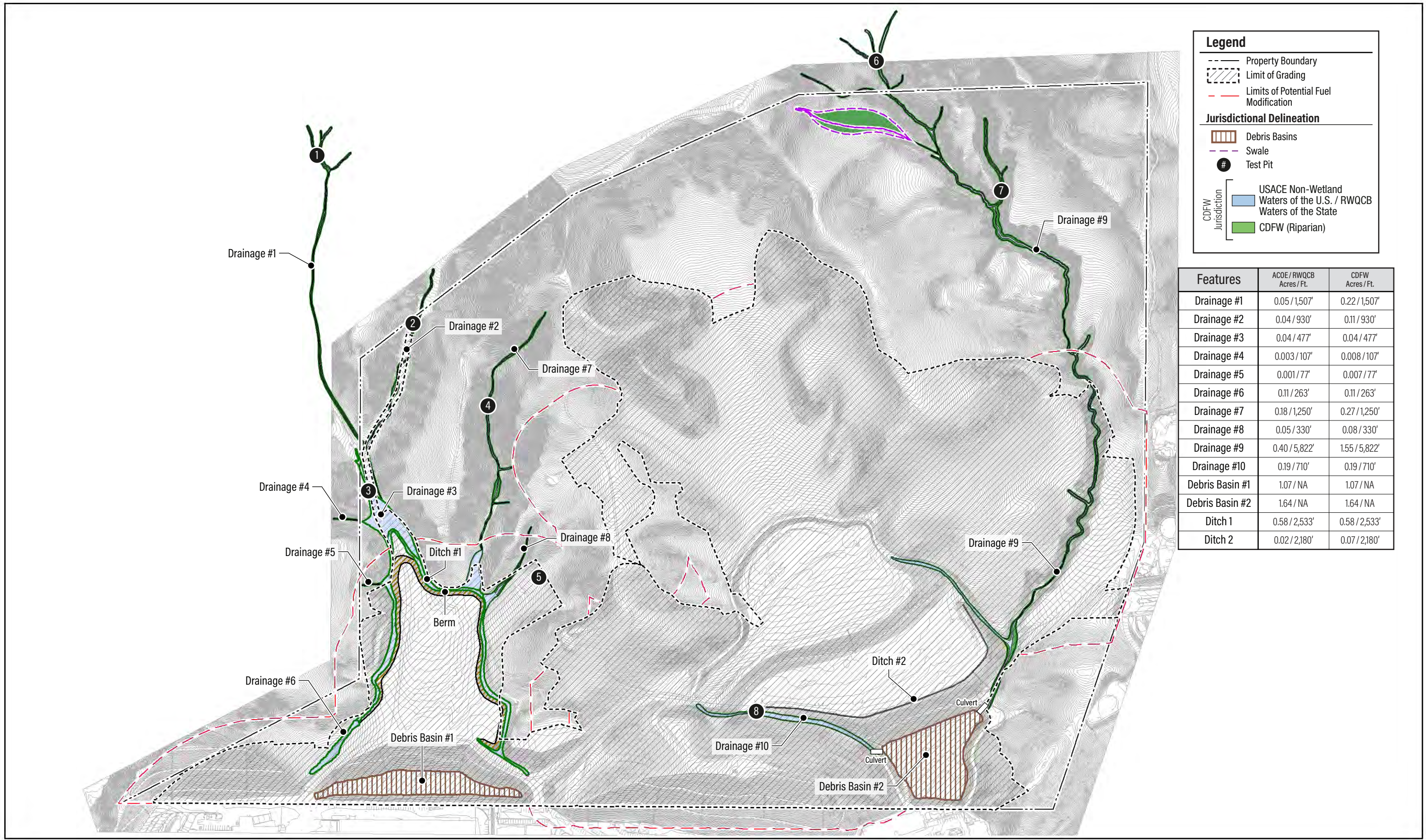
The potential importance of the project site to wildlife movement was also evaluated in the field and by reviewing recent aerial photographs of the site and the surrounding area. The project site provides vegetative cover and native habitats suitable for the movement for wildlife, and some wildlife species likely use the ridgelines and ephemeral drainages at the site for local movements and may move through the site to reach the water at the small ephemeral pond and western detention basin, when those features contain water. Also, western spadefoot toads can be expected to move through the site to access breeding habitats including the ephemeral pond and perhaps also the western detention basin. There are reported occurrences of western spadefoot in the CNDDDB reproducing in pools and cattle ponds to the north and northwest of the site, so there is a population of this species in this area of the Santa Susana Mountains and movement of spadefoot can be expected to occur between the suitable foraging and breeding habitats on-site and in the surrounding area. It is also likely that the site is used or may be used in the future by the Federally Threatened California gnatcatcher for dispersal movements to suitable coastal scrub habitats to the west and north, given its presence on-site, which include observations in the southern, southeastern, and western portions of the site.

Otherwise, the site does not contain particularly important habitats for forage, cover, or reproduction that are not also available in the surrounding area, and the project is situated adjacent to the northern margin of the City and is not situated within a habitat bottleneck. Therefore, the project would not fragment larger areas of habitat. The northern portion of the site would remain undeveloped and undeveloped natural habitats to the west, north, and northeast of the site would continue to provide habitat for wildlife and opportunities for wildlife movement through the area. Although they may potentially be used for local movements, the ephemeral drainages at the site are not regionally important wildlife movement corridors as the drainages terminate at the southern end of the property at detention basins, which then flow into storm drains.

Jurisdictional Waters and Habitat

Features under the jurisdiction of ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW at the site include natural intermittent and ephemeral streams as well as man-made debris basins and ditches. The jurisdictional delineation identified ten drainages, two debris basins, and two earthen ditches at the site, which are shown on **Figure 4.4-2, Jurisdictional Delineation Map**, and listed in **Table 4.4-4, Summary of Potential Jurisdictional Features in Survey Area**. As shown on Figure 4.4-2 and in Table 4.4-4, these features contain 4.37 acres / 16,216 linear feet of non-wetland waters of the U.S., 4.37 acres / 16,216 linear feet of waters of the State, and 5.99 acres / 16,216 linear feet of jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat. There are no wetland waters at the site.

The debris basins are located along the southern boundary of the site, north of the Simi Town Center. The basins detain flows and retain sediment from the drainages at the site, and ultimately connect to the Arroyo Simi. Both basins support some riparian vegetation. The drainages at the site are typically well-incised channels, although the lower reaches of ephemeral Drainages 3, 7, and 8 widen and flows become more diffuse. There are two man-made ditches at the site, both a result of former grading activities. Ditch 1 in the western portion of the site wraps around a formerly graded plateau area. It receives and then conveys waters from Drainages 1 through 5 via Drainage 6 and a culvert to Debris Basin 1. Ditch 2 in the eastern portion of the site also wraps around another formerly graded plateau area. This ditch is drained by a smaller southeast trending tributary of Drainage 9. Drainage 10 conveys waters from the southern portion of the site, and it also drains into Debris Basin 2.



Legend

- Property Boundary
- Limit of Grading
- Limits of Potential Fuel Modification

Jurisdictional Delineation

- Debris Basins
- Swale
- Test Pit

CDFW Jurisdiction

- USACE Non-Wetland Waters of the U.S. / RWQCB Waters of the State
- CDFW (Riparian)

Features	ACOE / RWQCB Acres / Ft.	CDFW Acres / Ft.
Drainage #1	0.05 / 1,507'	0.22 / 1,507'
Drainage #2	0.04 / 930'	0.11 / 930'
Drainage #3	0.04 / 477'	0.04 / 477'
Drainage #4	0.003 / 107'	0.008 / 107'
Drainage #5	0.001 / 77'	0.007 / 77'
Drainage #6	0.11 / 263'	0.11 / 263'
Drainage #7	0.18 / 1,250'	0.27 / 1,250'
Drainage #8	0.05 / 330'	0.08 / 330'
Drainage #9	0.40 / 5,822'	1.55 / 5,822'
Drainage #10	0.19 / 710'	0.19 / 710'
Debris Basin #1	1.07 / NA	1.07 / NA
Debris Basin #2	1.64 / NA	1.64 / NA
Ditch 1	0.58 / 2,533'	0.58 / 2,533'
Ditch 2	0.02 / 2,180'	0.07 / 2,180'

Table 4.4-4
Summary of Potential Jurisdictional Features in Survey Area

Feature	Latitude*	Longitude*	ACOE Non-Wetland Waters of U.S./RWQCB Non-Wetland Waters of the State (Acres/Linear Feet)	CDFW Streambed and Habitat (Acres/Linear Feet)
Debris Basins				
Debris Basin 1	34.286490	-118.775237	1.07/NA	1.07/NA
Debris Basin 2	34.286753	-118.768877	1.64/NA	1.64/NA
<i>Subtotal</i>			2.71/NA	2.71/NA
Ditches				
Ditch 1	34.289409	-118.775806	0.58/2,533	0.58/2,533
Ditch 2	34.288704	-118.769367	0.02/2,180	0.07/2,180
<i>Subtotal</i>			0.6/4,713	0.65/4,713
Drainages				
Drainage 1	34.293111	-118.776623	0.05/1,507	0.22/1,507
Drainage 2	34.291668	-118.775067	0.04/930	0.11/930
Drainage 3	34.289828	-118.776001	0.04/477	0.04/477
Drainage 4	34.289127	-118.775986	0.003/107	0.008/107
Drainage 5	34.288484	-118.775663	0.001/77	0.007/77
Drainage 6	34.287087	-118.775973	0.11/263	0.11/263
Drainage 7	34.291241	-118.773698	0.18/1,250	0.27/1,250
Drainage 8	34.288948	-118.77389	0.05/330	0.08/330
Drainage 9	34.294261	-118.769521	0.40/5,852	1.59/5,852
Drainage 10	34.287278	-118.771825	0.19/710	0.19/710
<i>Subtotal</i>			1.07/11,503	2.63/10,997
Total			4.47 acres/16,216 linear feet	5.99 acres/16,216 linear feet
* North American Datum 1983, California State Plane Zone V. GPS coordinates are given for the upstream origin of the drainage or ditch and center point of debris basins as accessed during field surveys and/or as digitized from aerial imagery.				

All the jurisdictional features have discernible beds, banks, and OHWMs, and they typically support upland vegetation, such as bush mallow, coastal sage scrub, and/or non-native upland herbs, although patches of riparian habitat such as mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) and blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) occur at some locations, including along Drainage 3, Drainage 9, and in the debris basins. At some locations in their upper reaches the drainages lack vegetation. In many instances, the drainages have been degraded to some extent by former cattle grazing activities.

For additional information on the jurisdictional features at the site, see the North Canyon Ranch Jurisdictional Delineation (Envicom, June 26, 2015) report for the project in Appendix D.

Required Island Annexations

This section discusses the results of a literature review and site visit to nine (9) County of Ventura “island” areas proposed for annexation to the City. The locations of these County Islands are provided on Figure 2-1, North Canyon Ranch and Island Annexation Properties Regional Location Map, and in greater detail in Figures 2-2 through 2-5, located in the Project Description Section of this Draft EIR. A description of general site conditions of each of the County Islands is provided below. The nine County Islands including the following:

- Island Area 1 (Anderson Drive)
- Island Area 2 (Sharp Road)

- Island Area 3 (Ditch Road)
- Island Area 4 (Township Avenue)
- Island Area 5 (Flood Street)
- Island Area 6 (Walnut Street)
- Island Area 7 (Vista Lago Drive)
- Island Area 8 (Sinaloa Lake)
- Island Area 9 (N. Belhaven Avenue)

Literature Review and Site Visits

The following sources were reviewed on June 20, 2023 to determine if special-status or sensitive biological resources have been reported at the annexation properties:

- *Biogeographic Information and Observation System*, CDFW.
- *CNDDDB Rarefind 5* report, CDFW.
- *National Wetlands Inventory*, USFWS.
- *Critical Habitat Mapper*, USFWS.

The sites were also visited in February 2021 by a biologist from Envicom. A walk-over was performed of Island Area 9. The remaining properties were not directly accessed but rather were viewed to the extent possible with binoculars from good vantage points from streets or adjacent properties.

General Site Conditions and Potential for Occurrence for Special-Status Species

The general site conditions and the potential for occurrence of special-status plants and animals to occur at each of the Island Areas is presented below, which is based on the species' known distribution and habitat requirements. For more information on potential for occurrence of special-status species see the Biological Resources Inventory report in Appendix D.

Island Area 1 (Anderson Drive)

Island Area 1 consists entirely of single-family residential development and public streets. The vegetation consists of ornamental landscaping typical of residential properties in the area. There are no undeveloped parcels, waterbodies, or native habitat. No special-status or sensitive biological resources have been reported to occur or expected to inhabit Island Area 1. There is a channelized stream directly west of Island Area 1, which the National Wetlands Inventory classifies as riverine habitat. There is natural habitat including coastal sage scrub and herbaceous habitats to the north of Island Area 1, and additional urban development to the east and south. As Island Area 1 consists entirely of urban development, including single-family residential development, ornamental landscaping, and public streets, there is no reasonable potential for occurrence of special-status or sensitive biological resources.

Island Area 2 (Sharp Road)

The southern portion of Island Area 2 south of Sharp Road consists entirely of single-family residential development and public streets. There are two vacant parcels in this area, but they are small ruderal lots without any native habitat. Two of the larger more rural parcels (APNs 6110070175 and 6110070455) within Island Area 2 to the north of Sharp Road contain slopes with small remnant patches of disturbed coastal scrub as well as fields of non-native grass-forbs, which appear to be routinely cut and mowed. No special-status or sensitive plants, animals, or natural communities have been reported to occur within Island Area 2. There is a channelized stream or ditch that runs parallel to Sharp Road, but it does not support

significant riparian habitat. The National Wetlands Inventory classifies this channelized drainage as riverine habitat. There is natural habitat including coastal sage scrub and herbaceous habitats to the north of Island Area 2, and residential development to the west, east and south.

Given there are a few acres of disturbed coastal scrub and non-native grass-forb habitats at APNs 6110070175 and 6110070455, which are contiguous with extensive areas of natural habitats to the north, the following special-status animals have potential to occur in natural habitats at APNs 6110070175 and 6110070455, with varying probabilities ranging from moderate to very low. Special-status plants are not expected to occur in these disturbed habitats due to prior vegetation clearance and maintenance.

Special-Status Wildlife

Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) [Candidate CE]
 California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*) [CT, SSC]
 Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*) [SSC]
 California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*) [SSC]
 Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) [SSC]
 Coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora haxalepis virgultea*) [SSC]
 Coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*) [SSC]
 Black swift (*Cypseloides niger*) [SSC]
 Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) [SSC]
 Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) [SSC]
 Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) [SSC]
 White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) [CFP]
 Big free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*) [SSC]
 Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) [SSC]
 Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*) [SSC]

There is no reasonable potential for occurrence of special-status or sensitive biological resources throughout the remainder of Island Area 2, which consists of urban development, ornamental landscaping, and public streets.

Island Area 3 (Ditch Road)

The southwestern portion of Island Area 3 consists of single-family residential development and ornamental landscaping typical of residential properties in the area. The remainder of Island Area 3 consists of relatively large rural parcels on sloped terrain, which contain single-family residences and some large ornamental trees. Some of these parcels have been entirely or nearly entirely cleared of native vegetation, but there are still several acres of relatively intact and disturbed coastal sage scrub as well as non-native grassland remaining in Island Area 3. As viewed by binoculars from Ditch Road, the coastal sage scrub in this area is comprised of California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), California brittlebush (*Encelia californica*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), and bush mallow (*Malacothamnus fasciculatus*). No special-status or sensitive plants, animals, or natural communities have been reported to occur at Island Area 3. There is a channelized stream or ditch that runs parallel to unpaved Ditch Road, which does not support significant riparian habitat. The National Wetlands Inventory classifies this channelized drainage as riverine habitat. There are natural habitats including coastal sage scrub and herbaceous vegetation to the north and east of Island Area 3, and residential development to the west and south.

Given there are several acres of natural habitats, which are contiguous with extensive areas of natural habitats to the north and east, the following special-status plants and animals have potential to occur in native habitats at Island Area 3 with varying probabilities ranging from moderate to very low.

Special-Status Plants

Braunton's milkvetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*) [FE, CRPR 1B.2]
 San Fernando Valley spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*) [FC/CE]
 Chaparral nolina (*Nolina cismontana*) [CRPR 1B.2]
 Gerry's curly-leaved monardella (*Monardella sinuata* ssp. *gerryi*) [CRPR 1B.2]
 Malibu baccharis (*Baccharis malibuensis*) [CRPR 1B.1]
 Mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* var. *puberula*) [CRPR 1B.1]
 Ojai navarretia (*Navarretia ojaiensis*) [CRPR 1B.1]
 Parry's spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *parryi*) [CRPR 1B.1]
 Slender mariposa-lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*) [CRPR 1B.2]
 Southern curly-leaved monardella (*Monardella sinuata* ssp. *sinuata*) [CRPR 1B.2]
 White rabbit-tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum*) [CRPR 2B.2]

Special-Status Wildlife

Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) [Candidate CE]
 California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*) [CT, SSC]
 Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*) [SSC]
 California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*) [SSC]
 Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) [SSC]
 Coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora haxalepis virgulata*) [SSC]
 Coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*) [SSC]
 Black swift (*Cypseloides niger*) [SSC]
 Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) [SSC]
 Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) [SSC]
 Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) [SSC]
 White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) [CFP]
 San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*) [SSC]
 Big free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*) [SSC]
 Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) [SSC]
 Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*) [SSC]
 Western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) [SSC]

Island Area 4 (Township Avenue)

Island Area 4 consists of single-family residential development and public streets although the largest property, which is in the northeast portion of Island Area 4, contains a few rows of citrus trees as well as a ruderal field. The vegetation consists of ornamental landscaping typical of residential properties in the area. There are no waterbodies or native habitats. No special-status or sensitive biological resources have been reported to occur or are expected to inhabit Island Area 4. Island Area 4 is surrounded on all sides by residential development. Given that Island Area 4 lacks native habitat and consists largely of single-family residential development and public streets, as well as because the orchard and ruderal field are relatively

small and surrounded by urban development there is no reasonable potential for occurrence of special-status or sensitive biological resources.

Island Area 5 (Flood Street)

Island Area 5 consists entirely of single-family residential development, public streets, and ornamental landscaping typical of residential properties in the area. There are no undeveloped parcels, waterbodies, or native habitat. No special-status or sensitive biological resources were reported to occur or expected to inhabit Island Area 5. There is a large, channelized stream directly to the east of Island Area 5, which the National Wetlands Inventory classifies as freshwater emergent wetland habitat. There is natural habitat including coastal sage scrub and herbaceous vegetation to the north of Island Area 5, and additional urban development to the west, east, and south. As Island Area 5 consists entirely of urban development, including single-family residential development, ornamental landscaping, and public streets, there is no reasonable potential for occurrence of special-status or sensitive biological resources.

Island Area 6 (Walnut Street)

Island Area 6 consists predominately of a large, ruderal field. There are some structures and rows of trees concentrated in the southcentral portion of the property. There are some native coast live oak trees on this property, which primarily occur along roadsides, but otherwise there is no native habitat. Although some special-status birds and bats could forage and roost temporarily at Island Area 6, no special-status or sensitive biological resources have been reported to occur or are expected to inhabit Island Area 6. There is a large, channelized stream directly to the west of Island Area 6, which the National Wetlands Inventory classifies as freshwater emergent wetland habitat, but this section of the stream does not contain significant riparian habitat. There is residential development to the west, east, and south, and riparian and disturbed scrub and herbaceous habitats to the north of Island Area 6.

Given Island Area 6 consists of a large, ruderal field at the urban-wildland interface, which includes some large trees including some native trees, as well as a stream, disturbed native scrub, and riparian habitat adjacent, the following special-status animals have potential to occur at Island Area 6 with varying probabilities ranging from moderate to very low (there is no potential for occurrence of special-status plants at the site):

Special-Status Animals

Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) [SSC]

Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) [SSC]

Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) [SSC]

Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) [SSC]

White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) [CFP]

Big free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*) [SSC]

Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) [SSC]

Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*) [SSC]

Western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) [SSC]

Island Area 7 (Vista Lago Drive)

Island Area 7 consists of single-family residential development and public streets. The vegetation includes ornamental landscaping typical of residential properties in the area, including many large trees. There are no undeveloped parcels, and no waterbodies or native habitat. No special-status or sensitive biological

resources have been reported to occur or are expected to inhabit Island Area 7. Island Area 7 is surrounded on three sides by residential development, and it is bordered on the southeast by Madera Road. There is a golf course on the opposite side of Madera Road. As Island Area 7 consists entirely of urban development, including single-family residential development, ornamental landscaping, and public streets, there is no reasonable potential for occurrence of special-status or sensitive biological resources.

Island Area 8 (Sinaloa Lake)

Island Area 8 consists predominately of single-family residential development, public streets, and ornamental landscaping typical of residential properties in the area, and it also contains private Sinaloa Lake reservoir, which is approximately 22 acres. The reservoir was not accessed during the site visit, although recent aerial imagery from June 2, 2023 of the reservoir was reviewed on Google Earth. There is a walking path around the reservoir, and a dam along its western edge. The National Wetlands Inventory classifies the reservoir as freshwater pond habitat and a stream extending from the southwestern end of the reservoir as riverine habitat. Much of the lake and stream appear to be bordered by riparian habitat and may also be bordered in some areas by wetland habitat. There are also some undeveloped upland areas adjacent to the reservoir with several large trees. There may be native oak trees in this area, but this has not been confirmed. No special-status or sensitive biological resources have been reported to occur at Sinaloa Lake or at residential areas within Island Area 8, although the least Bell's vireo, a bird that is listed as Endangered under FESA and CESA, has been reported in riparian habitats approximately 0.3 miles southwest of Sinaloa Lake as well as along the Arroyo Simi, which is approximately 1 ¼ miles north of Sinaloa Lake. This species has potential to occur in riparian habitats surrounding the lake. No special-status or sensitive biological resources are expected to inhabit any of the residential properties within Island Area 8. There is a golf course to the west of Sinaloa Lake. Otherwise, Island Area 8 is surrounded on all sides by residential development.

The following special-status animals have potential to occur at the lake and associated riparian habitats, with varying probabilities ranging from moderate to very low (there is no potential for occurrence of special-status plants at the site):

Special-Status Animals

Bank swallow (*Riparian riparia*) [CT]

Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) [FE, CE]

Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax trailii extimus*) [FE, CE]

Western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus* spp. *occidentalis*) [FT, CE]

Two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*) [SSC]

Western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*) [SSC]

Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*) [CT]

Summer tanager (*Piranga rubra*) [SSC]

Yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia brewsteri*) [SSC]

Western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) [SSC]

There is no reasonable potential for occurrence of special-status or sensitive biological resources throughout the remainder of Island Area 8, which consists of urban development, ornamental landscaping, and public streets.

Island Area 9 (N. Belhaven Avenue)

Island Area 9 is an undeveloped hill with native chaparral, coastal scrub, and herbaceous habitats as well as numerous large sandstone outcrops. Some of the more common native shrubs at the site include chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*), yerba santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolius*), and deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*). There are also a few native coast live oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*). The herbaceous layer contains a mixture of native and non-native grasses and forbs, and bedrock slabs and shaded, rocky areas support assemblages of non-vascular plants. There are no stream channels and no riparian habitat. Island Area 9 burned in the Peak Fire in November 2018. The only special-status species that may have been reported within Island Area 9 is the southern California rufous-crowed sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), which is a CDFW Watch List species. This bird is reported to occur in the CNDDDB within a non-specific area that includes Island Area 9 as well as the rocky naturally vegetated slopes to the north of the 118 Freeway. Although it was not observed during the site walkover, this species is expected to occur at the site. There are naturally vegetated slopes and the 118 Freeway to the north and east of Island Area 9, and residential development to the west and south.

The following special-status plant and animals have potential to occur in native habitats at Island Area 9 with varying probabilities ranging from moderate to very low:

Special-Status Plants

Braunton's milkvetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*) [FE, CRPR 1B.2]
 San Fernando Valley spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*) [FC/CE]
 Santa Susana tarplant (*Deinandra minthornii*) [CR]
 Chaparral nolina (*Nolina cismontana*) [CRPR 1B.2]
 Gerry's curly-leaved monardella (*Monardella sinuata* ssp. *gerryi*) [CRPR 1B.2]
 Malibu baccharis (*Baccharis malibuensis*) [CRPR 1B.1]
 Mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* var. *puberula*) [CRPR 1B.1]
 Ojai navarretia (*Navarretia ojaiensis*) [CRPR 1B.1]
 Parry's spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *parryi*) [CRPR 1B.1]
 Slender mariposa-lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*) [CRPR 1B.2]
 Southern curly-leaved monardella (*Monardella sinuata* ssp. *sinuata*) [CRPR 1B.2]
 White rabbit-tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum*) [CRPR 2B.2]

Special-Status Wildlife

Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) [Candidate CE]
 California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*) [CT, SSC]
 Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*) [SSC]
 California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*) [SSC]
 Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) [SSC]
 Coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora haxalepis virgulata*) [SSC]
 Coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*) [SSC]
 Black swift (*Cypseloides niger*) [SSC]
 Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) [SSC]
 Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) [SSC]
 Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) [SSC]

White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) [CFP]
 San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*) [SSC]
 Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) [SSC]
 Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*) [SSC]
 Western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) [SSC]

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Endangered Species Act of 1973

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and implementing regulations, 16 United States Code (USC) Section 1531, et seq. and 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 17.1, et seq., impose regulations for protecting and managing federally listed Threatened or Endangered plants and animals and their designated critical habitats. FESA defines an “Endangered species” as “any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range” and a “Threatened species” as “any species which is likely to become an Endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.” FESA also provides the framework for protection of “Candidate species,” species for which there is sufficient supporting scientific information for listing. There are two classes of candidate species. The first class is composed of species that have been proposed for listing. The second class is composed of species for which there is sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threat(s) to list, but the listing process has not begun or is in some preliminary stage.

According to FESA, it is unlawful to “take” any listed species. “Take” is defined as “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” Further, the USFWS, through regulations, has interpreted the terms “harm” and “harass” to include certain types of habitat modification as forms of “take.” A “take” is determined on a case-by-case basis and often varies from species to species. If a project requires a permit from a federal agency and the project could affect a federally listed plant or animal species, the property owner and the federal agency must consult with the USFWS.

FESA requires a permit to take Threatened or Endangered species during lawful project activities on federal land or involving a federal action, and also provides a method for permitting incidental take resulting from state or private action. The administering agency is the USFWS for terrestrial, avian, and most aquatic species; marine and anadromous species (e.g. steelhead) are administered by the NMFS. FESA also addresses the protections afforded to listed plants. FESA also discusses recovery plans and the designation of critical habitat for listed species.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) (16 U.S.C. 661, et seq.) directs USFWS to investigate and report on proposed Federal actions that affect any stream or other body of water and to provide recommendations to minimize impacts on fish and wildlife resources. The FWCA requires federal agencies that construct, license or permit water resource development projects to first consult with the USFWS (and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in some instances) and state fish and wildlife agencies regarding the impacts on fish and wildlife resources and measures to mitigate these impacts. The FWCA requires that fish and wildlife resources receive equal consideration as other project features. In the case of the proposed project, a potential Federal action requiring consultation with USFWS under FWCA would be if federal agency ACOE issues a permit for the project under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. Sections 703 – 711) protects migratory birds, including the non-permitted take of migratory birds, under the authority of the USFWS and CDFW. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act defines “take” as “to pursue, hunt, capture, collect, kill or attempt to pursue, hunt, shoot, capture, collect or kill, unless the context otherwise requires.” Most birds are considered migratory under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S. Code Section 668) prohibits the take or commerce of any part of these species. The USFWS administers both Acts and reviews federal agency actions that may affect species protected by the Acts.

Clean Water Act of 1977, Section 404 and Section 401

The ACOE and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into “waters of the U.S.,” including wetlands, under Section 404 of the CWA (codified at 33 U.S.C. §§ 1251, *et seq.*). “Waters of the U.S.” are defined as “rivers, creeks, streams, and lakes extending to their headwaters and any associated wetlands.” Wetlands are defined as “areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.” Activities in “waters of the U.S.” regulated under Section 404 include fill for development, water resource projects (such as dams and levees), infrastructure developments (such as highways and airports) and mining projects. Section 404 of the CWA requires a permit before dredged or fill material may be discharged into “waters of the U.S.,” unless the activity is exempt from Section 404 regulation (e.g., certain farming and forestry activities).

Section 401 of the CWA, 33 U.S.C. Section 1341, requires an applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity that may result in a discharge of a pollutant into “waters of the U.S.” to obtain a certification from the state in which the discharge originates or would originate that the discharge will comply with the applicable effluent limitations and water quality standards. In California, before the ACOE will issue a CWA Section 404 permit, an applicant must obtain a “water quality certification” under Section 401 from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) or one of the nine RWQCBs in California.

The final “Revised Definition of Waters of the United States” rule is codified at 40 CFR 120.2(a). Under that rule the term “waters of the U.S.” means:

1. Waters which are:
 - i. Currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;
 - ii. The territorial seas; or
 - iii. Interstate waters, including interstate wetlands;
2. Impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the United States under this definition, other than impoundments of waters identified under paragraph (a)(5) of this section;
3. Tributaries of waters identified in paragraph (a)(1) or (2) of this section:
 - i. That are relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water; or
 - ii. That either alone or in combination with similarly situated waters in the region, significantly affect the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of waters identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section;
4. Wetlands adjacent to the following waters:
 - i. Waters identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section; or

- ii. Relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water identified in paragraph (a)(2) or (a)(3)(i) of this section and with a continuous surface connection to those waters, or
 - iii. Waters identified in paragraph (a)(2) or (3) of this section when the wetlands either alone or in combination with similarly situated waters in the region, significantly affect the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of waters identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section;
5. Intrastate lakes and ponds, streams, or wetlands not identified in paragraphs (a)(1) through (4) of this section;
- i. That are relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water with a continuous surface connection to the waters identified in paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(3)(i) of this section; or
 - ii. That either alone or in combination with similarly situated waters in the region, significantly affect the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of waters identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

State

California Endangered Species Act of 1984

The California Endangered Species Act (“CESA”) and implementing regulations in F&G Code §§ 2050, *et seq.* include regulations for the protection and management of plant and animal species listed as endangered or threatened, or designated as candidates for such listing. CESA defines an “Endangered species” as “a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant which is in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion, of its range due to one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, overexploitation, predation, competition, or disease.” California defines a “Threatened species” as “a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant that, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an Endangered species in the foreseeable future in the absence of the special protection and management efforts.” California defines a “Candidate species” as “a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant that the commission has formally noticed as being under review by the department for addition to either the list of Endangered species or the list of Threatened species, or a species for which the commission has published a notice of proposed regulation to add the species to either list.”

CESA includes a consultation requirement “to ensure that any action authorized by a State lead agency is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any Endangered or Threatened species...or result in the destruction or adverse modification of habitat essential to the continued existence of the species” (F&G Code Section 2090). Plants of California declared to be Endangered, Threatened, or Rare are listed within 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 670.2.¹⁹ Animals of California declared to be Endangered or Threatened are listed at 14 CCR Section 670.5. 14 CCR Section 15000, *et seq.* describes the types and extent of information required to evaluate the effects of a project on biological resources of a project site.

California Fish and Game Code

The F&G Code provides specific protection and listing for several types of biological resources, including:

- Fully Protected species;
- Streams, rivers, sloughs, and channels;
- Significant Natural Areas; and
- Designated Ecological Reserves.

¹⁹ The “Rare” designation is discussed under the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977 heading.

Fully Protected Species are listed in F&G Code Section 3511 (Fully Protected Birds), F&G Section 4700 (Fully Protected Mammals), F&G Section 5050 (Fully Protected Reptiles and Amphibians), and F&G Section 5515 (Fully Protected Fishes). California law prohibits taking of species designated as Fully Protected. Under the F&G Code, Fully Protected species “may not be taken or possessed at any time and no provision of this code or any other law shall be construed to authorize the issuance of permits or licenses to take any Fully Protected species,” although take may be authorized for necessary scientific research. This language makes the “Fully Protected” designation the strongest and most restrictive regarding the “take” of these species.

F&G Code Section 1602 requires a Streambed Alteration Agreement for any activity that may “substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of, or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of, any river, stream, or lake, or deposit or dispose of debris, wastes or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake.” Typical activities that require a Streambed Alteration Agreement include excavation or fill placed within a channel, vegetation clearing, structures for diversion of water, installation of culverts and bridge supports, cofferdams for construction dewatering, and bank reinforcement. A Streambed Alteration Agreement includes measures to protect the affected resource.

The term “stream,” which includes creeks and rivers, is defined in the CCR as “a body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and supports fish or other aquatic life. This includes watercourses having a surface or subsurface flow that supports or has supported riparian vegetation” (14 Cal. Code of Regulations § 1.72). In addition, the term “stream” can include ephemeral streams, dry washes, watercourses with subsurface flows, canals, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, and other means of water conveyance if they support aquatic life, riparian vegetation, or stream-dependent terrestrial wildlife. “Riparian” is defined as “on, or pertaining to, the banks of a stream;” therefore, riparian vegetation is defined as “vegetation which occurs in and/or adjacent to a stream and is dependent on, and occurs because of, the stream itself.”

F&G Code Sections 1930 to 1940 designate Significant Natural Areas. These areas include refuges, natural sloughs, riparian areas, and vernal pools and significant wildlife habitats. An inventory of Significant Natural Areas is maintained by the CDFW Natural Heritage Division and is part of the NDDDB. F&G Code Section 1580 lists Designated Ecological Reserves. Designated Ecological Reserves are significant wildlife habitats to be preserved in natural condition for the general public to observe and study.

F&G Code Section 2081(b) and (c) allow CDFW to issue an incidental take permit for a State listed Threatened and Endangered species only if specific criteria are met. These criteria can be found in Title 14 CCR Section 783.4(a) and (b). F&G Code Section 2081(b) permit may authorize the take of “fully protected” species and “specified birds.” If a project is planned in area where a species or specified bird occurs, an applicant must design the project to avoid all take; the CDFW cannot provide take authorization under this act.

F&G Code Section 3503 prohibits taking, possessing, or needlessly destroying the nest of any bird, except as otherwise provided by applicable law. Additionally, F&G Code Section 3503.5 makes it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders *Falconiformes* or *Strigiformes* (birds-of-prey), to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest of any such bird, except as otherwise allowed by applicable law.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act) preserves, enhances and restores the quality of California’s water resources. The Act established the SWRCB and nine RWQCBs as the principal state agencies with the responsibility for controlling water quality in California. “Waters of the State” are

defined by the Porter-Cologne Act as “any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state.” The RWQCB protects all waters in its regulatory scope but has special responsibility for isolated wetlands and headwaters. These water bodies have high resource value, are vulnerable to filling, and may not be regulated by other programs, such as Section 404 of the CWA. “Waters of the State” are regulated by the RWQCB under the State Water Quality Certification Program, which regulates discharges of dredged and fill material under Section 401 of the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Act. Projects that require an ACOE permit, or fall under other federal jurisdiction, and have the potential to impact waters of the State are required to comply with the terms of the Water Quality Certification Program. If a project does not require a federal license or permit, but does involve activities that may result in a discharge of harmful substances to waters of the State, the RWQCB has the option to regulate such activities under its State authority in the form of Waste Discharge Requirements or Certification of Waste Discharge Requirements.

The SWRCB adopted Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Materials to Waters of the State (Procedures) on April 2, 2019, which went into effect on May 28, 2020. The Procedures ensure that the Water Boards’ regulation of dredge or fill activities will be conducted in a manner “to ensure no overall net loss and long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values” The Procedures also include procedures for the submission, review, and approval of applications for activities that could result in the discharge of dredged or fill material to any waters of the State.

The Procedures include a state wetland definition and wetland delineation procedures that apply to all Water Board programs. The wetland definition encompasses the full range of wetland types commonly recognized in California, including some features not protected under federal law. Wetlands that meet the current definition, or any historic definition, of waters of the United States are also waters of the State. The Water Boards define an area as wetland as follows:

“An area is wetland if, under normal circumstances, (1) the area has continuous or recurrent saturation of the upper substrate caused by groundwater, or shallow surface water, or both; (2) the duration of such saturation is sufficient to cause anaerobic conditions in the upper substrate; and (3) the area’s vegetation is dominated by hydrophytes or the area lacks vegetation.”

The following wetlands are waters of the State:

1. Natural wetlands,
2. Wetlands created by modification of a surface water of the State, and
3. Artificial wetlands that meet any of the following criteria:
 - a. Approved by an agency as compensatory mitigation for impacts to other waters of the State, except where the approving agency explicitly identifies the mitigation as being of limited duration;
 - b. Specifically identified in a water quality control plan as a wetland or other water of the State;
 - c. Resulted from historic human activity, is not subject to ongoing operation and maintenance, and has become a relatively permanent part of the natural landscape; or
 - d. Greater than or equal to one acre in size, unless the artificial wetland was constructed, and is currently used and maintained, primarily for one or more of the following purposes (i.e., the following artificial wetlands are not waters of the State unless they also satisfy the criteria set forth in 2, 3a, or 3b):
 - i. Industrial or municipal wastewater treatment or disposal,
 - ii. Settling of sediment,

- iii. Detention, retention, infiltration, or treatment of stormwater runoff and other pollutants or runoff subject to regulation under a municipal, construction, or industrial stormwater permitting program,
- iv. Treatment of surface waters,
 - v. Agricultural crop irrigation or stock watering,
 - vi. Fire suppression,
 - vii. Industrial processing or cooling,
- viii. Active surface mining – even if the site is managed for interim wetlands functions and values,
- ix. Log storage,
 - x. Treatment, storage, or distribution of recycled water, or
- xi. Maximizing groundwater recharge (this does not include wetlands that have incidental groundwater recharge benefits), or
- xii. Fields flooded for rice growing.

The Procedures require the permitting authority to rely on any wetland area delineation from a final aquatic resource report verified by the ACOE for the purposes of determining the extent of wetland waters of the United States. A delineation of any wetland areas potentially impacted by the project that are not delineated in a final aquatic resource report verified by the ACOE shall be performed using the methods described in federal ACOE Wetlands Delineation Manual and Regional Supplement to determine whether the area meets the state definition of a wetland as defined above, with the exception that lack of vegetation does not preclude the determination of such an area that meets the definition of wetland.

CEQA

CEQA requires public agencies to analyze and publicly disclose the environmental impacts to biological resources from projects they approve, and adopt feasible alternatives and mitigation measures to mitigate for the significant impacts they identify. The Lead Agency for CEQA in this case is the City.

Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977

The Native Plant Protection Act of 1977 is codified in F&G Code Section 1900, *et seq.*, and designates rare and endangered native plants and provides specific protection measures for identified populations. The NPPA directs the CDFW to “preserve, protect, and enhance rare and endangered plants in this State.” The NPPA gives the California F&G Commission the power to designate native plants as Endangered or Rare, and to require permits for collecting, transporting, or selling such plants. In 1984 the CESA expanded on the original NPPA and enhanced legal protection for plants by creating the categories of “Threatened” and “Endangered” species. Plants that were listed as “Endangered” under the NPPA are protected as “Endangered” species under the CESA, but the CESA does not provide protection for species listed as “Rare” under the NPPA. There are currently 64 species, subspecies, and varieties of plants that are protected and designated as “Rare” under the NPPA. A native plant is “Rare” when “although not presently threatened with extinction, it is in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become endangered if its present environment worsens.” The NPPA prohibits take of plants that are protected as Endangered or Rare, but includes some exceptions for agricultural and nursery operations; emergencies; and after properly notifying CDFW for vegetation removal from canals, roads, and other sites, changes in land use, and in certain other situations.

CDFW Special Animals List

“Special Animals” is a general term that refers to all of the taxa the CNDDDB tracks, regardless of their legal or protection status. The CDFW considers the taxa on this list to be those of greatest conservation need. The species on this list generally fall into one or more of the following categories: (1) officially listed or proposed for listing under CESA or FESA; (2) State or Federal candidate for possible listing; (3) taxa which meet the criteria for listing, even if not currently included on any list, as described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15380; (4) taxa considered by the CDFW to be a Species of Special Concern; (5) taxa that are biologically rare, very restricted in distribution, declining throughout their range, or have a critical, vulnerable stage in their life cycle that warrants monitoring; (6) populations in California that may be on the periphery of a taxon’s range, but are threatened with extirpation in California; (7) taxa closely associated with a habitat that is declining in California at an alarming rate (e.g., wetlands, riparian, old growth forests, desert aquatic systems, native grasslands, vernal pools); and (8) taxa designated as a special status, sensitive, or declining species by other state or federal agencies, or a non-governmental organization.

California Native Plant Society

CNPS publishes and maintains an Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, which is currently in its 8th edition. The inventory assigns plants to the following Rare Plant Ranks:

- 1A – Presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere.
- 1B – Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.
- 2A – Presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere.
- 2B – Rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere.
- 3 – Plants for which more information is needed – a review list.
- 4 – Plants of limited distribution – a watch list.

Additional endangerment codes are assigned to each taxon as follows:

- 1 – Seriously endangered in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened/high degree of immediacy of threat).
- 2 – Fairly endangered in California (20–80 percent occurrences threatened/moderate degree and immediacy of threat).
- 3 – Not very endangered in California (< 20 percent of occurrences threatened or no current threats known).

Plants assigned to Rare Plant Ranks 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, and 3 of the CNPS Inventory consist of plants that may qualify for listing and are given special consideration under CEQA during project review. Although plants assigned to Rare Plant Rank 4 have little or no protection under CEQA, they are usually included in the project review process.

Species of Special Concern

“Species of Special Concern” are broadly defined as animals not listed under FESA or CESA, but which are nonetheless of concern to the CDFW because they are declining at a rate that could result in listing or historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist. This designation is intended to result in special consideration for these animals by the CDFW, land managers, consulting biologists, and others, and is intended to focus attention on the species to help avert the need for costly listing under FESA and CESA and cumbersome recovery efforts that might ultimately be required. This designation is also intended to stimulate collection of additional information on the biology, distribution, and status of poorly known at-risk species, and focus research and management attention on them. Although

these species generally have no special legal status, they are given special consideration under CEQA during project review.

Sensitive Vegetation Communities

Sensitive vegetation communities are natural communities and habitats that are either unique, of relatively limited distribution in the region, or of particularly high value to wildlife. These resources have been defined by federal, state, and local conservation plans, policies or regulations. The CDFW ranks sensitive communities and has tracked occurrences of some sensitive communities in its CNDDDB. Sensitive vegetation communities are also identified by the CDFW on its *California Natural Communities List*. Impacts to sensitive natural communities and habitats identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by federal or state agencies must be considered and evaluated (CEQA Guidelines Appendix G).

Regional and Local

City of Simi Valley General Plan Natural Resources Element

The City of Simi Valley General Plan Natural Resources Element adopted June 2012 guides future development within the City and its sphere of influence with respect to the protection of water, biological species and habitat, urban forest, air, energy, and scenic amenities. General goals of the Natural Resource Element related to biological resources include the preservation and enhancement of plant and wildlife habitat as well as the protection of wildlife movement corridors. The Natural Resources Element includes specific policies related to preservation of trees and native vegetation, protection of wetlands and other sensitive habitats, maintenance of habitat connectivity, installation of wildlife crossing structures, compatibility of trails with sensitive habitats, biological site assessment, and collaboration with resource and conservation agencies and organizations.

City of Simi Valley Mature Tree Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 9-38)

The City considers trees a uniquely valuable natural resource. SVMC Chapter 9-38 (Tree Preservation, Cutting, and Removal) applies to Protected Trees within the City limits, and requires protection and preservation of trees to the greatest extent possible in order to protect the health, safety, or welfare of the citizens of the City. The following terms and phrases are defined in SVMC Chapter 9-80 for the purposes of implementing SVMC Chapter 9-38:

- Protected Trees. All historic trees, all mature native trees, or any mature trees which are associated with a proposal for urban development, or are located on a vacant parcel.
- Historic Tree. A living tree designated by resolution of the Council as an historic tree because of an association with some event or person of historical significance to the community, or because of special recognition due to aesthetic qualities, condition, or size.
- Mature Native Oak Tree. A living oak tree with a cross-sectional area of all major stems, as measured four and one-half feet above the root crown, of 20 or more square inches.
- Mature Tree. A living tree with a cross-sectional area of all major stems, as measured four and one-half feet above the root crown, of 72 or more square inches. Mature trees shall not include stump regrowths.
- Native Oak Tree. A living tree of the genus *Quercus* and species *agrifolia*, *berberidifolia*, *lobata*, or hybrids thereof.

According to SVMC Chapter 9-38, no Protected Tree may be removed, cut down, relocated, or otherwise destroyed except as provided for in SVMC Sections 9-38.070 (Tree Removal Permits) through 9-38.090 (Exceptions).

4.4.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to biological resources has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, based upon the state CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact to biological resources when the proposed project has potential to:

- Substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (*Candidate, Sensitive, and Special Status Species*)
- Substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service. (*Sensitive Natural Communities*)
- Substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, without limitation, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. (*Protected Wetlands, Waters, and Riparian Habitat*)
- 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. (*Wildlife Movement, Wildlife Corridors, and Wildlife Nursery Sites*)
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. (*Local Policies and Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources*)
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. (*See No Analysis Warranted, below*)

No Analysis Warranted

There are no Habitat Conservation Plans, Community Conservation Plans, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plans that are applicable to the project site. Therefore, the project would have no impact with respect to that issue, and no further analysis in this Draft EIR is required.

4.4.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The impact analysis for the North Canyon Ranch project relies on the Master Grading Plan for Tentative Map No. 5658-A prepared by Christiansen and Company, dated January 5, 2023, and the Conceptual Landscape and Fuel Modification Plan prepared by Land Arq, Inc., dated November 29, 2023. The project limits of disturbance including grading and potential fuel modification are shown overlain on the site's biological resources on Figure 4.4-1, Vegetation and Special-Status Species Map, and on Figure 4.4-2, Jurisdictional Delineation Map.

The North Canyon Ranch project site consists of one (1) parcel totaling approximately 160 acres. The proposed project limits of disturbance would total 106.92 acres, including 89.02 acres of on-site grading, 14.10 acres of potential on-site fuel modification that would extend beyond the grading footprint, and 3.80 acres of off-site fuel modification would extend beyond the grading footprint. All proposed utilities and landscaping would be within the grading limits. Approximately 71 acres of the site on Parcel L to the north of the proposed development would be designated as open space. Portions of Parcel L would be subject to fuel modification to protect the residential development. A total of approximately 57 acres of habitat on Parcel L (the proposed open space lot) and Parcel N (a detention basin lot) would be preserved and would not be subject to project grading or fuel modification.

The Annexation Islands are developed and are not currently proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is to annex the Island properties to the City. Any future development proposals in the annexation areas would require City review to determine whether CEQA applies, and if so, determine the appropriate level of CEQA documentation would be required.

4.4.3.1 Candidate, Sensitive, and Special Status Species

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to 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 CDFW or USFWS.

Impacts to Special-Status Plant Species

This evaluation of impacts to special-status plants considers those species that require mandatory special consideration and/or protection pursuant to FESA, CESA, and/or CEQA. Ventura County Locally Important Species are also considered as well as CRPR 4 species if they meet criteria to be locally significant. Botanical surveys of the project site were conducted in Spring 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2019, and Spring 2023. No rare, threatened, or endangered plant species or Ventura County Locally Important Plant species were found during surveys of the project site. Therefore, impacts to rare, threatened, and endangered plant species and Ventura County Locally Important Species would be less than significant.

Three special-status plant species on the CNPS watch list occur at the project site, Catalina mariposa lily (*Calochortus catalinae*) [CRPR 4.2], Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*) [CRPR 4.2], and small-flowered morning glory (*Convolvulus simulans*) [CRPR 4.2]. These species are not rare but are of limited distribution in California. Catalina mariposa lily is common in scrub and herbaceous habitats throughout the site, but generally absent from previously cleared or graded areas. Tens of thousands of bulbs of this species bloomed at the project site in 2017, and thousands of bulbs bloomed in 2019 and 2023. Project grading would remove several thousand bulbs of this species, and several thousand bulbs would remain undisturbed and preserved on the 71-acre proposed open space parcel. Plummer's mariposa lily is uncommon at the project site and occurs at the site primarily along ridgelines. A total of 24 Plummer's mariposa lily bulbs bloomed in 2023, and two Plummer's mariposa lily bulbs bloomed in 2015. These plants occur outside of the project grading limits and potential fuel modification zones, and all would be preserved on the open space parcel. Small-flowered morning-glory occurs at four locations at the project site primarily in herbaceous habitats but also in open scrub, and notably in significant numbers in the understory of dense stands of non-native black mustard (See Figure 4.4-1, Vegetation and Special-Status Species Map). Thousands of small-flowered morning-glory plants were observed site in 2017 and 2023, and hundreds of plants were observed in 2015 and 2019. Small-flowered morning glory is an annual species, and the four colonies including their seed banks occupy an estimated 6.29 acres. A total of 5.66 acres of occupied small-flowered morning glory habitat would be removed by project grading, and the remaining 0.63 acres of occupied small-flowered morning glory habitat would be preserved on the open space parcel. Although project impacts to these CNPS watch-list species would be adverse, these species are not rare, are secure locally, and do not meet CNPS criteria to be considered locally significant. Therefore, impacts to Catalina mariposa lily, Plummer's mariposa lily, and small-flowered morning glory would be less than significant.

No other special-status plant species have been found at the site. As discussed in the potential for occurrence analysis for special-status plant species earlier in this section, many of the special-status species known to occur in the region have no reasonable potential to occur due to lack of suitable habitat or because the site

is outside of the species known range or distribution. Also, the remaining special-status plant species known to occur in the region are presumed absent from the site, as they were not detected during the spring botanical surveys conducted in 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023, and this impact would be less than significant.

Impacts to Special-Status Wildlife Species

This assessment of impacts to special-status wildlife considers those species that are listed, proposed for listing, or that meet the criteria for listing as Endangered or Threatened under the FESA or CESA; and those with a designation of SSC (California Species of Special Concern) or CFP (California Fully Protected), as mandatory special consideration and/or protection of these species is required pursuant to the FESA, CESA, and/or CEQA. Wildlife species considered Locally Important by the County of Ventura are also considered.

Surveys of the project site, which included general wildlife observations, were conducted in Spring 2015, Summer 2015, Spring 2017, Summer 2017, Fall 2017, Spring 2019, and Spring 2023. As discussed earlier in this section, seven special-status wildlife species have been observed during surveys of the project site, including the California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*) [FT, SSC], western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*) [SSC], coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*) [SSC], grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*) [SSC], yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*) [SSC], Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) [SSC], and northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*) [SSC], and several additional special-status wildlife species are potentially occurring. The site is also within USFWS-designated Critical Habitat for the California gnatcatcher, specifically Ventura County and Los Angeles County Unit 13.

Many of the special-status wildlife species that may potentially occur at the site are capable of escaping harm during project development (e.g., foraging birds that would not nest at the site and foraging bats that would not roost at the site), including grading or fuel modification, while others are vulnerable to direct impacts including injury and mortality. In this case, the special-status species that could be directly impacted with varying probabilities ranging from moderate to very low depending on the species include potentially occurring land dwelling animals, including the coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) [SSC], coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis virgultea*) [SSC], California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*) [SSC], California legless lizard / southern California legless lizard (*Anniella* sp. / *A. stebbinsi*) [SSC], San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennettii*), and the San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*); two burrowing animals, the western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*) [SSC] and American badger (*Taxidea taxus neglecta*) [SSC]; and one insect that may nest in burrows, the Crotch bumble-bee (*Bombus crotchii*) [Candidate CE]. The habitat loss associated with the project would not significantly impact a population of any of these species, given the amount of remaining suitable habitat in the surrounding area, much of which is proposed to be protected as open space. Direct impacts to these special-status wildlife species including injury and mortality would be potentially significant but mitigable impact. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-1**, **BIO-2**, and **BIO-3**, which require biological monitoring during grading and construction, implementation of protective measures during grading and construction, and pre-construction surveys for special status wildlife species would reduce these potential impacts to less than significant. Impacts to nesting birds, including nesting special-status bird species, are addressed under the Impacts to Nesting Birds heading, below.

California Gnatcatcher

California gnatcatchers were observed at the project site in 2015, 2017, and 2019, and a pair nested at the site in Spring 2023. The project footprint intersects the breeding territory of the pair that was observed in 2023, which included the relatively intact coastal sage scrub in the southern portion of the project site. Although the California gnatcatcher is strongly associated with low growing coastal sage scrub communities that occur on moderate slopes, this resident species also uses adjacent communities year-round for foraging, as the young disperse from the nest, and during the hot summer months. Most of the project

site is also designated as California gnatcatcher Critical Habitat. The project site contains approximately 14 acres of coastal sage scrub that are suitable breeding habitat for this species, the locations of which are shown on maps in the California gnatcatcher survey report by TW Biological Services in Appendix D. Of the 14 acres of suitable breeding habitat, 7.7 acres would be within the project footprint and the remaining 6.3 acres would be preserved in the proposed open space parcel. The other habitats at the site could also be used by the species for foraging and dispersal movements during the non-breeding season. The loss of suitable coastal scrub habitat at the project site including the breeding territories and home ranges of this species would be significant, but mitigable impact. The loss of designated critical habitat is also potentially significant. In addition to the direct loss of habitat potentially occupied by this species, as well as potential direct loss of individuals if nesting, potentially significant and indirect impacts could also occur due to edge effects including increased human presence and pets, noise, and artificial night lighting. The presence of this federally listed species requires USFWS consultation and potentially take authorization under FESA with the USFWS, which would consist of obtaining an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) and implementation of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to avoid, minimize, and reduce impacts to this species. The applicant will be required to submit documentation from USFWS and other Federal and State agencies to the City Planning Division that the ITP has been obtained or that an ITP was not required. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1, BIO-2, **BIO-4**, and **BIO-7**, which require biological monitoring during grading and construction, implementation of protective measures during grading and construction, nesting bird surveys, consultation with USFWS, obtaining an ITP from USFWS if required, and restoration and/or enhancement and protection of occupied habitats would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Mountain Lion

The project site provides suitable habitat for mountain lions, and mountain lions may pass through the project site occasionally. The listing petition²⁰ for the mountain lion Southern California – Central Coast Evolutionary Significant Unit details the factors that were identified as relevant to the decline of this species, which include the following: low genetic diversity and inbreeding depression; vehicle strikes; depredation and illegal kills; intraspecific strife; abandonment; poisoning from rodenticides and other environmental toxicants, wildfires, and climate change. As discussed below, except for the potential for poisoning from anticoagulant rodenticides, if anticoagulant rodenticides are used in association with the project, the project would not result in a potentially significant impact to mountain lions. The project would not contribute directly or indirectly to adverse effects on mountain lions caused by low genetic diversity, inbreeding depression, or intraspecific strife as the project would not fragment or result in substantial loss of mountain lion habitat, restrict habitat connectivity, or disrupt wildlife movement corridors (see the wildlife movement analysis under the Wildlife Movement heading, below). Also, the project would not be a contributing factor to adverse effects on mountain lions caused by wildfires or climate change as the project would be constructed in accordance with applicable State, County and/or City Fire and Building Codes, such that the project would not represent a particular fire hazard or otherwise be a cause of increased wildfire frequency, and the project would comply with applicable State and County policies adopted for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The project would not involve containment of livestock or other animals in outdoor areas, and therefore the project would not potentially result in conflicts between mountain lions and animals that could necessitate depredation permits that could result in the death of a mountain lion. With respect to vehicle strikes on mountain lions, the potential for the project to result in vehicle strikes on mountain lions is low given mountain lions generally avoid areas of human activity and the project would be at the edge of an extensive urban area and therefore mountain lions would not be

²⁰ Center for Biological Diversity and Mountain Lion Foundation, CESA Petition for Southern California Central Coast Mountain Lions, Accessed at: (<https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/mammals/California-mountain-lion/pdfs/CESA-petition-for-Southern-California-Central-Coast-Mountain-Lions.pdf>).

inclined to enter the proposed development and it would not be necessary for mountain lions to cross the roads within the proposed development to reach other suitable habitat.

The use of anticoagulant rodenticides in association with the project could indirectly result in loss or harm to mountain lions as well as other potentially occurring special-status and common wildlife species in natural habitats the surrounding area, which would be a potentially significant impact. The potentially significant impact of anticoagulant rodenticides to the mountain lion and other species would be reduced to a less than significant impact with mitigation measure **BIO-5**, which prohibits the use of anticoagulant rodenticides in public areas in association with the project, such as at pocket parks and landscaping lots.

Western Spadefoot

Western spadefoot bred in the small temporary pond near the southern boundary of the site in Spring 2017, and is therefore expected to occur in the grassland and scrub habitats within the project footprint where they would occupy refugia such as burrows and conduct most movements at night. The small temporary pond appears to be man-made or perhaps is a result of prior grading at the site. The western detention basin at the site also pools in wet years and may also be suitable breeding habitat for western spadefoot, although spadefoot have not been observed in the western detention basin during the surveys of the site. No pooling of adequate duration for spadefoot breeding has been observed in the eastern detention basin, including in years with high rainfall. There are no other potential spadefoot breeding habitats at the project site. The proposed project would remove the temporary pond, modify the western and eastern detention basins, and potentially impact an unknown number of western spadefoot toads potentially occurring in terrestrial habitats within the project footprint, which would be a significant and mitigable impact. Potential direct impacts could result from ground disturbance, vegetation clearing, and trampling or crushing from construction equipment, vehicles, and foot traffic. Impacts would result from the loss of known suitable breeding habitat. The detention basins would remain, although with development of the project the basins would be separated from the remaining natural habitats to the north by paved roads and residential properties and it would therefore be unlikely these basins even if suitable for breeding would be used by spadefoot. The potentially significant impact would be reduced to a less than significant with mitigation measures **BIO-1**, **BIO-2**, **BIO-3**, and **BIO-6**, which would require biological monitoring during grading and construction, implementation of protective measures during grading and construction, pre-construction surveys of terrestrial habitats to locate and move western spadefoot individuals within the project footprint, and creation, restoration, and/or preservation of suitable western spadefoot breeding habitat onsite or in the Calleguas Creek watershed.

The proposed open space parcel would preserve approximately 71 acres of terrestrial habitats that would be suitable for cover, foraging, and movement for western spadefoot. The open space parcel would be connected to additional terrestrial western spadefoot habitats to the north of the project site, and ultimately to known spadefoot breeding habitats reported in the CNDDDB approximately one mile to the north and northwest of the project site in upper Brea Canyon and at the Simi Landfill and Recycling Center.

Nesting Birds

The Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the California F&G Code (Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, 3513 and 3800) protect most native birds. In addition, the federal and state Endangered Species Acts protect some bird species listed as Threatened or Endangered. Project-related impacts to birds protected by these regulations could occur during the breeding season, because unlike adult birds, eggs and nestlings are unable to escape impacts.

F&G Code Section 3513 upholds the MBTA by prohibiting any take or possession of birds that are designated by the MBTA as migratory nongame birds except as allowed by federal rules and regulations

promulgated pursuant to the MBTA. In addition, there are F&G Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3800, which further protect nesting birds and their parts, including passerine birds, raptors, and state “fully protected” birds.

Ground and vegetation disturbing activities including but not limited to grading and fuel modification if conducted during the nesting bird season (February 1 to August 31) would have the potential to result in the loss of trees and shrubs that could contain active bird nests. In addition, these activities would also affect herbaceous vegetation that could support and conceal ground-nesting species. Project activities that result in the loss of bird nests, eggs, and young, would be in violation of one or more of F&G Code sections 3503 (any bird nest), 3503.5 (birds-of-prey), or 3511 (Fully Protected birds). In addition, removal or destruction of one or more active nests of any other birds listed by the MBTA, whether nest damage was due to vegetation removal or to other construction activities, would be considered a violation of the MBTA and F&G Code Section 3511. The significant impact of loss of protected bird nests, eggs, or young due to project activities would be reduced to a less than significant impact with mitigation measure BIO-7, which requires preconstruction nesting bird surveys.

Required Island Annexations

The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is to annex the Island properties to the City. Any future development proposals in the annexation areas would require City review to determine whether CEQA applies, and if so, determine the appropriate level of CEQA documentation that would be required. As no physical changes within the Annexation Islands are proposed with this project that could potentially impact candidate, sensitive, or special-status species, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-1: Biological Monitor

Before the Building Official issues a grading permit, the permittee must retain a qualified lead biologist (see qualifications below) subject to the approval of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), if applicable. The lead biologist must ensure that impacts to all biological resources are minimized or avoided and conduct (or supervise) pre-project field surveys and routine monitoring for species that may be avoided, affected, or eliminated as a result of grading or any other site preparation activities. The lead biologist must also conduct a pre-project environmental education program for all personnel working at the site, which is focused on conditions and protocols necessary to avoid and minimize potential impacts to biological resources. The lead biologist must also ensure that daily monitoring reports (e.g., survey results, protective actions, results of protective actions, adaptive measures) are prepared, and make these monitoring reports available to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW at their request.

The qualified lead biologist must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, botany, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology or environmental biology;
- Have an up-to-date subscription to and experience using the California Natural Diversity Database/BIOS;
- Be able to map survey findings in GIS;

- Be at a senior level with a high-level of local biological experience and proficiency in evaluating compliance with federal and state regulations, policies, and procedures applicable to biological resources and jurisdictional waters and riparian habitat;
- Have at least four years of experience as a lead biologist supervising biological monitoring projects;
- Have at least four years of experience performing botanical and wildlife surveys within the region (e.g., Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and/or Los Angeles Counties); and
- Possess any necessary permits and memoranda of understanding with USFWS and CDFW for handling potentially occurring special-status species.

MM BIO- 2: Protection Measures During Construction Activities

The following measures must be implemented during the construction phase to avoid impacts to native habitats adjacent to or in the vicinity of the limits of disturbance, as well as special-status flora and fauna that could potentially be associated with these habitats.

- a. Before any ground disturbing and construction activities, the permittee must demarcate the project limits of disturbance with temporary exclusionary fencing to prevent encroachment of project activities into adjacent native habitats and jurisdictional waterways, and to dissuade wildlife from entering the construction area. The fencing must be marked with highly visible flagging. Temporary signs must be posted or placed at regular intervals along the fencing prohibit access beyond the project limits. The Environmental Services Director, or designee, must verify fencing was correctly installed before to the start of ground disturbance or construction activities. The temporary fencing must be routinely inspected and maintained in functional condition for the duration of project construction.
- b. The monitoring biologist must conduct routine surveys to locate and remove wildlife within the work site.
- c. No construction and maintenance activities may occur during nighttime hours, except in an emergency or if authorized by the Environmental Services Director, or designee.
- d. If construction lighting is required, then lighting must be pointed away from native habitats and be pointed downward and shielded to the extent practicable.
- e. To the extent feasible, the following measures to avoid excessive construction noise must be implemented at the construction site:
 - Construction equipment must be properly maintained per manufacturer's specifications and fitted with noise suppression devices (e.g., mufflers, silences, wraps).
 - Impact tools must be shrouded or shielded, and intake and exhaust ports on power equipment must be muffled or shielded.
 - Low-noise emission equipment must be used.
 - Construction equipment must be shut down when not in use and must not idle for extended periods of time.
 - Work areas such as stationary construction noise sources must be situated so louder activities occur as far from native habitats as possible.
 - Noise pads or dampers must be used, where necessary.
 - The use of generators must be minimized.
 - Construction activities must not occur during nighttime hours.

- f. No pets are allowed on the project site.
- g. Trash must be disposed of in closed-containers, and all food-related trash must be disposed of in closed animal-proof containers. The permittee must provide sufficient containers on-site during construction.
- h. Standard measures to control fugitive dust shall be implemented at the construction site, including sufficient watering of disturbed areas and reduced vehicle speeds below 15 m.p.h.
- i. All trenches must be filled within the same day or escape ramps for animals will be constructed if trenches are to be left open overnight.
- j. All project related equipment and vehicles must be cleaned and decontaminated of weeds and soils before entering the project site to reduce the potential for the spread and introduction of invasive and noxious weeds.
- k. The project must obtain and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to prevent discharge and runoff of pollutants into streams and riparian habitats as well as the natural habitats adjacent to the construction footprint.

The City or City-approved construction monitor must conduct site inspections to ensure these construction phase measures are implemented. The construction monitor must maintain a record of monitoring notes including construction activities and observations for submittal to the City, when requested.

MM BIO-3: Pre-Construction Surveys for Special-Status Wildlife

Before the Permittee commences ground or vegetation disturbing activities including, without limitation, grading and fuel modification, pre-construction surveys must be conducted by qualified wildlife biologist(s) (see qualifications below) approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW (if applicable) to determine the presence/absence of the following ground dwelling special-status wildlife species at the site: coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) [SSC], coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis virgulata*) [SSC], California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*) [SSC], California legless lizard / southern California legless lizard (*Anniella sp. / A. stebbinsi*) [SSC], San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennetii*), San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*), western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*) [SSC], American badger (*Taxidea taxus neglecta*) [SSC], and Crotch bumble-bee (*Bombus crotchii*) [Candidate CE]. These special-status species are potentially occurring within the grading and fuel modification zones and could be susceptible to potential impacts, if they are present. At a minimum, one survey must be conducted within 14 days before commencing activities that will disturb the ground or vegetation and a second survey must be conducted within three days before commencing ground or vegetation disturbing activities. The pre-construction surveys must incorporate appropriate methods and timing to detect the species that may potentially occur at the site. If a special-status species is found, avoidance is the preferred option (e.g., waiting for the animal(s) to leave the grading/construction footprint or the use of exclusionary devices to prevent the animal(s) from entering the grading/construction footprint). If avoidance is not feasible, with notification to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW, the animal(s) may be captured and transferred to appropriate habitat and location where they would not be harmed by project activities, preferably to open space habitats in the vicinity of the project site. If a federally or State listed species is found, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CDFW, as applicable, and the Environmental Services Director, or designee, must be consulted before the start of project activities. A letter report

summarizing the methods and results of the surveys and relocation efforts, if applicable, must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, CDFW, and USFWS, as applicable, before commencement of project activities.

The qualified wildlife biologist(s) must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, botany, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology or environmental biology;
- Have an up-to-date subscription to and experience using the California Natural Diversity Database/BIOS;
- Be able to map survey findings in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map survey findings in GIS;
- Have at least four years of experience performing wildlife surveys within the region (e.g., Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and/or Los Angeles Counties); and
- Possess the necessary permits and memoranda of understanding with USFWS and CDFW before handling potentially occurring special-status species.

MM BIO-4: California Gnatcatcher

Within one year after the Building Official issues a grading permit, the applicant must retain a City and USFWS-approved biologist authorized under Section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act to conduct protocol surveys for the California gnatcatcher, in accordance with the USFWS's "Coastal California Gnatcatcher Presence/Absence Survey Guidelines" (February 28, 1997). The survey area must include the entire project site. The applicant must provide the protocol survey report to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and USFWS. In addition to all standard protocol survey requirements, the survey report shall include maps depicting the extent and acreages of occupied habitat, which includes the breeding territories and/or home ranges of the birds.

The applicant must initiate consultation with USFWS and if required by USFWS the applicant must implement one of the following procedures:

- a. If the project involves federal permitting or funding (collectively, "federal nexus"), then the applicant must complete consultation with the relevant federal agency and USFWS pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act; or
- b. If the project does not involve a federal nexus but may result in the take of coastal California gnatcatcher, the applicant must apply to the USFWS for an Incidental Take Permit, pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act. To qualify for the Incidental Take Permit, the applicant must submit an application to the USFWS together with a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that describes (at a minimum) how the impacts of the proposed taking of coastal California gnatcatcher are minimized and mitigated, and how the plan will be funded.

The applicant must submit the following to the Environmental Services Director, or designee:

- a. If the project involves federal permitting or funding, the applicant must submit a copy of one of the following documents: (a) a Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS; or (b) a written concurrence letter from the USFWS stating the project is unlikely to adversely affect the California gnatcatcher; or

- b. If the project does not involve federal permitting or funding, the applicant must submit a copy of one of the following documents: (a) an Incidental Take Permit and HCP or (b) a written concurrence letter from the USFWS stating that the project is unlikely to adversely affect the California gnatcatcher.

Compensatory mitigation requirements will be addressed in the Biological Opinion or HCP. Compensatory mitigation for project impacts to the California gnatcatcher must include the following, or as otherwise required by USFWS:

- a. For permanent impacts to occupied California gnatcatcher habitat including habitat permanently removed, modified, or degraded, the applicant shall restore and/or enhance and permanently preserve by conservation easement or deed restriction suitable onsite California gnatcatcher habitat at a 2:1 mitigation-to-impact ratio, and/or permanently preserve currently unprotected suitable California gnatcatcher habitat offsite at a 3:1 mitigation-to-impact ratio. In addition, a minimum 100-foot vegetated buffer around the suitable mitigation habitat shall also be preserved to minimize potential edge effects of existing or future urban development on the mitigation habitat. Performance standards for restoration, enhancement, and establishment shall be based on conditions at high-quality reference sites of the habitats being mitigated. The applicant shall provide an endowment for the long-term management of mitigation lands that are permanently preserved.
- b. The permittee must mitigate for any temporary impacts to occupied California gnatcatcher habitat by in-kind restoration and re-vegetation within the temporarily disturbed area at a 1:1 ratio. Performance standards for restoration and re-vegetation shall be based on conditions at high-quality reference sites of the habitats being mitigated.
- c. If grading for the project is to occur outside of the one-year survey timeframe, the applicant will be required to obtain a new survey report and consultation with USFWS before the Building Official issues a grading permit.

MM BIO-5: Anticoagulant Rodenticides

Rodenticides containing any anticoagulant compounds including, without limitation, Warfarin, Brodifacoum, Bromadiolone, or Diphacinone may not be used in public areas associated with the project, including fuel modification zones, public streets, detention basins, landscaping lots, and pocket parks. The permittee must maintain a record of rodenticides used at the project site including their labels for review by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, when requested.

MM BIO-6: Creation and/or Restoration of Western Spadefoot Breeding Habitat

The permittee must retain a qualified herpetologist approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW to prepare a Western Spadefoot Habitat Mitigation Plan, which includes creation of spadefoot breeding habitat within suitable areas onsite. The breeding habitat impacted must be replaced at a minimum 2:1 ratio. Two mitigation pools must be created at disparate locations to off-set the loss of the existing breeding pool. The mitigation pools and a minimum 50-foot buffer around the pools must be preserved as permanent open space in a manner approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee. The pools must be as far as feasible from existing and proposed development. The Western Spadefoot Habitat Mitigation Plan must include at a minimum the breeding pool locations and design, an implementation plan, success criteria, maintenance activities, a monitoring program, and contingency measures. The mitigation

pools must be designed such that they only support standing water for several weeks following seasonal rains to reduce the ability of aquatic predators (e.g., fish, bullfrogs, and crayfish) to become established. Terrestrial habitat surrounding the mitigation pools must be similar in type, aspect, and density as the location of the existing pool, as feasible. Success criteria include verifiable evidence of toad reproduction at the mitigation pools. If suitable locations are not available onsite, the impact must be mitigated by creation and/or restoration of offsite spadefoot breeding habitat at a 2:1 ratio within the Calleguas Creek watershed.

The Western Spadefoot Habitat Mitigation Plan must be approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW and implemented before the Building Official issues a grading permit. The existing breeding pool may not be impacted during the spadefoot breeding season (January to May), and the existing breeding pool, a buffer, and a movement corridor connecting the existing pool to the natural habitats to the north of the proposed development may not be impacted until creation of the mitigation pools is complete.

The qualified herpetologist must monitor the mitigation pools for five years, which involves annual monitoring during and immediately following peak breeding season such that surveys can be conducted for adults as well as for egg masses and larval and post-larval toads. Survey data must be provided to CDFW following each monitoring period. Five years after project start, a final report must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW, which (at a minimum) discusses the implementation, monitoring, and management of the project over the five-year period, and determine whether the project met the success criteria, which include replacement of breeding habitat at a minimum 2:1 ratio, including two mitigation pools created at disparate locations, and verifiable evidence of spadefoot toad reproduction at the mitigation pools. The spadefoot toad mitigation effort must be extended if the success criteria are not met at the end of the five-year period to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW.

The qualified herpetologist must meet the minimum qualifications listed below:

- Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology or environmental biology;
- Be at a senior level and have specialized education and experience in herpetology;
- Be able to map mitigation sites in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map mitigation sites in GIS;
- Experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and implementation of at least three mitigation plans for western spadefoot and/or other special-status amphibians; and,
- Possess any necessary permits and memoranda of understanding with USFWS and CDFW for handling western spadefoot or other special-status species, if applicable.

MM BIO-7: Nesting Bird Surveys

Not earlier than 30 days before ground or vegetation disturbing activities that would occur during the nesting/breeding season of native bird species potentially nesting on the site (typically February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW (if applicable) must perform

four field surveys to determine if active nests of any bird species protected by the state or Federal Endangered Species Acts (FESA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), and/or the Fish and Game (“F&G) Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, or 3511 are present in the disturbance zone or within 200 feet of the disturbance zone for songbirds or within 500 feet of the disturbance zone for raptors and special-status bird species. The nesting bird survey must be performed weekly with the last survey conducted within three days of the start of ground or vegetation disturbing activities. A letter report summarizing the methods and results of the surveys must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW (if applicable) before commencement of project activities. Should an active nest be found within the survey area, site preparation, construction, and fuel modification activities must stop until after consultation with the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and when applicable CDFW and USFWS, is conducted and an appropriate setback buffer can be established. The buffer must be demarcated and project activities within the buffer must be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biologist, until the nest is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist, and there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting. Project activities must be postponed and the Environmental Services Director, or designee, CDFW and USFWS, when applicable, must be consulted if there is an active nest of a special-status species at the site.

The qualified biologist(s) must meet the minimum qualifications listed below:

- Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology or environmental biology;
- Have an up-to-date subscription to and experience using the California Natural Diversity Database/BIOS;
- Be able to map survey findings in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map survey findings in GIS; and,
- Have at least four years of experience performing nesting bird surveys within the region (e.g., Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and/or Los Angeles Counties).

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

As discussed in the impact analysis above, mitigation measure BIO-1 through BIO-7 have been designed to reduce impacts to the affected species to a level of less than significant. Impacts would be less than significant within implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1 through BIO-7.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

4.4.3.2 Sensitive Natural Communities

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to have a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFW or US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The acreages of on-site direct, permanent impacts to natural communities and other land cover that would result from project grading, construction, and fuel modification are shown in **Table 4.4-5, Natural**

Communities Impacted and Preserved Onsite. Table 4.4-6, Natural Communities Impacted by Offsite Fuel Modification includes the potential fuel modification impacts to natural communities that would occur off-site. Fuel modification impacts in Tables 4.4-5 and 4.4-6 include the fuel modification that would extend beyond the grading limits.

**Table 4.4-5
Natural Communities Impacted and Preserved Onsite**

General Habitat Class	Natural Community or Other Land Cover*	Status Rank	Total Acreage at Project Site	Grading and Construction Impacts	Onsite Fuel Modification Impacts	Preserved in Parcel L and Parcel N
Coastal Scrub	Black Sage Shrubland Association (<i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [32.020.03]	G4S4	3.30	0.40	0.28	2.62
	California Sagebrush Shrubland Alliance (<i>Artemisia californica</i>) [32.015.00]	G5S5	2.82	1.74	0.09	0.99
	Lemonade Berry - Black Sage – California Sagebrush Shrubland Association (<i>Rhus integrifolia</i> - <i>Artemisia californica</i> – <i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [37.803.05]	G3S3; Sensitive	1.09	0.00	0.00	1.07
	California Sagebrush – Black Sage Shrubland Alliance (<i>Artemisia californica</i> – <i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [32.210.00]	G4S4	14.68	4.14	1.38	9.11
	Deerweed Shrubland Alliance (<i>Acmispon glaber</i>) [37.070.00]	G5S5	0.93	0.79	0.13	0.00
	California Brittlebush Shrubland Alliance (<i>Encelia californica</i>) [32.051.00]	G3S3	6.41	1.91	0.10	4.48
	California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat Shrubland Phase of California Brittlebush Shrubland Association (<i>Encelia californica</i> – <i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>)	G3S3; Sensitive	8.57	1.15	0.74	6.46
	California Buckwheat Shrubland Alliance (<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>) [32.040.00]	G5S5	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.12
	Sawtooth Goldenbush	G3S3	1.56	1.41	0.17	0.01

General Habitat Class	Natural Community or Other Land Cover*	Status Rank	Total Acreage at Project Site	Grading and Construction Impacts	Onsite Fuel Modification Impacts	Preserved in Parcel L and Parcel N
	Shrubland Alliance (<i>Hazardia squarrosa</i>) [32.055.00]					
	Purple Sage – California Sagebrush Shrubland Association (<i>Salvia leucophylla</i> – <i>Artemisia californica</i>) [32.090.01]	G4S4	24.12	11.49	2.04	10.59
	California Brittlebush – Black Sage Shrubland Association (<i>Encelia californica</i> – <i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [32.050.05]	G3S3?; Sensitive	11.12	1.31	3.42	6.49
Cactus Scrub	Coast Prickly-Pear Shrubland Alliance (<i>Opuntia littoralis</i>) [32.150.00]	G4S3	0.20	0.06	0.00	0.14
Riparian Scrub	Blue Elderberry Shrubland Association (<i>Sambucus nigra</i> ssp. <i>caerulea</i>) [63.410.01]	Sensitive	0.38	0.17	0.04	0.18
	Mulefat Shrubland Alliance (<i>Baccharis salicifolia</i>) [63.510.00]	G5S4	0.80	0.47	0.07	0.25
Herbaceous	Non-Native and Native Herbaceous	Not ranked	82.82	62.73	5.62	14.66
Other Landcover	Barren or Sparsely Vegetated	n/a	1.16	1.16	0.00	0.00
	Landscaping	n/a	0.09	0.09	0.02	0.00
Total Acreages			160.19	89.02	14.10	57.07**

* Numbers in brackets are unique codes for each plant community, as provided in the *California Natural Communities List* (CDFW, June 1, 2023). Plant communities in bold type are CDFW Natural Communities of Special Concern (Rare or Sensitive Plant Communities).

** Preserved acreage includes habitat outside the grading limits and/or fuel modification zones on Parcel L (Open Space) and Parcel N.

GLOBAL RANKING

The global rank (G-rank) is a reflection of the overall status of a natural community throughout its global range. Both Global and State ranks represent a letter+number score that reflects a combination of Rarity, Threat and Trend factors, with weighting being heavier on Rarity than the other two. “?”- Denotes an inexact numeric rank due to insufficient samples over the full, expected range of the vegetation type, but existing information points to the rank given.

G1 - Critically Imperiled—At very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer occurrences), very steep declines, or other factors.

G2 - Imperiled—At high risk of extinction due to very restricted range, very few occurrences (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors.

G3 - Vulnerable—At moderate risk of extinction due to a restricted range, relatively few occurrences (often 80 or fewer), recent and

General Habitat Class	Natural Community or Other Land Cover*	Status Rank	Total Acreage at Project Site	Grading and Construction Impacts	Onsite Fuel Modification Impacts	Preserved in Parcel L and Parcel N
<p>widespread declines, or other factors. G4 - Apparently Secure—Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors. G5 - Secure—Common; widespread and abundant.</p> <p>STATE RANKING The state rank (S-rank) is assigned much the same way as the global rank, but state ranks refer to the imperilment status only within California’s state boundaries.</p> <p>S1 - Critically Imperiled—Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer occurrences) or because of factor(s) such as very steep declines making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state. S2 - Imperiled—Imperiled in the state because of rarity due to very restricted range, very few occurrences (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state. S3 - Vulnerable—Vulnerable in the state due to a restricted range, relatively few occurrences (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation from the state. S4 - Apparently Secure—Uncommon but not rare in the state; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors. S5 - Secure—Common, widespread, and abundant in the state.</p>						

**Table 4.4-6
 Natural Communities Impacted by Offsite Fuel Modification**

General Habitat Class	Natural Community or Other Land Cover	Status Rank	Off-Site Fuel Modification Impacts
Coastal Scrub	California Sagebrush Shrubland Alliance (<i>Artemisia californica</i>) [32.015.00]	G5S5	0.18
	California Sagebrush – Black Sage Shrubland Alliance (<i>Artemisia californica</i> – <i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [32.210.00]	G4S4	0.05
	Deerweed Shrubland Alliance (<i>Acmispon glaber</i>) [37.070.00]	G5S5	0.25
	California Brittlebush Shrubland Alliance (<i>Encelia californica</i>) [32.051.00]	G3S3	0.13
	California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat Shrubland Phase of California Brittlebush Shrubland Association (<i>Encelia californica</i> – <i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>)	G3S3; Sensitive	0.22
	Sawtooth Goldenbush Shrubland Alliance (<i>Hazardia squarrosa</i>) [32.055.00]	G3S3	0.21
	Purple Sage – California Sagebrush Shrubland Association (<i>Salvia leucophylla</i> – <i>Artemisia californica</i>) [32.090.01]	G4S4	0.95
	California Brittlebush – Black Sage Shrubland Association (<i>Encelia californica</i> – <i>Salvia mellifera</i>) [32.050.05]	G3S3?; Sensitive	0.02
Herbaceous	Non-Native and Native Herbaceous	Not ranked	1.33
Other Landcover	Existing Residential Development / Landscaping	n/a	0.46
Total Acreage			3.80

Impacts to Sensitive Natural Communities

Grading for the proposed project would result in the removal of 1.91 acres of the California Brittlebush (*Encelia californica*) Shrubland Alliance, 1.15 acres of the California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat (*Encelia californica* – *Eriogonum fasciculatum*) Shrubland Association, 1.31 acres of the California Brittlebush – Black Sage (*Encelia californica* – *Salvia mellifera*) Shrubland Association, 1.41 acres of the Sawtooth Goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*) Shrubland Alliance, 0.06 acres of the Coast Prickly-Pear (*Opuntia littoralis*) Shrubland Alliance, and 0.17 acres of the Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) Shrubland Association at the site, which are considered to be rare and/or sensitive plant communities by the CDFW. On-site fuel modification for the proposed project would also impact 0.10 acres of the California Brittlebush (*Encelia californica*) Shrubland Alliance, 0.74 acres of the California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat (*Encelia californica* – *Eriogonum fasciculatum*) Shrubland Association, 0.17 acres of the Sawtooth Goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*) Shrubland Alliance, 3.42 acres of the California Brittlebush – Black Sage (*Encelia californica* – *Salvia mellifera*) Shrubland Association, and 0.04 acres of the Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) Shrubland Association. Off-site fuel modification for the proposed project would impact 0.13 acres of the California Brittlebush (*Encelia californica*) Shrubland Alliance, 0.22 acres of the California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat (*Encelia californica* – *Eriogonum fasciculatum*) Shrubland Association, 0.21 acres of the Sawtooth Goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*) Shrubland Alliance, and 0.02 acres of the California Brittlebush – Black Sage (*Encelia californica* – *Salvia mellifera*) Shrubland Association. With the exception of the removal of deadwood and non-native vegetation, fuel modification that requires the removal, thinning, or mowing of trees, shrubs, and/or native understory vegetation within these natural communities would be a significant, but mitigable impact. Grading of these natural communities would also be a significant, but mitigable impact. As such, the project would incorporate mitigation measure **BIO-8**, which would require restoration and/or enhancement and preservation of California Brittlebush Scrub, California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat Scrub, California Brittlebush – Black Sage Scrub, Sawtooth Goldenbush Scrub, Coast Prickly-Pear Scrub, and Blue Elderberry Scrub at a 2:1 ratio. Impacts related to these natural communities would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Impacts to Natural Communities from Invasive Species

Development and operation of the project could facilitate the introduction and/or spread of non-native, invasive plant species. Invasive plant species at the project site could be dispersed by stormwater, wind, wildlife, or by various other means to native habitats in the surrounding area. Invasive species could compete with native plants for resources and disrupt normal ecological processes, reducing biological diversity and potentially threatening the quality of native habitats. Also, if invasive, non-native plant species are used in project landscaping, these invasive species could be dispersed to the surrounding area.

The introduction and spread of non-native, invasive plant species could have a substantial adverse effect on native habitats at the project site and in the surrounding area. Introduction of invasive plant species would be a potentially significant impact. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-9** and **BIO-10**, which would require implementation of an Invasive Plant Species Management Plan and review of the project's proposed Landscaping Plan to ensure invasive species are not planted at the site, would reduce potential impacts to surrounding habitats to a less than significant level.

Required Island Annexations

The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is to annex the Island properties to the City. Any future development proposals in the annexation areas would require City review to determine whether CEQA applies, and if so, determine the appropriate level of CEQA documentation that would be required. As no physical changes within the Annexation Islands are proposed

with this project that could potentially impact sensitive plant communities, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-8: Sensitive Plant Communities

Grading and fuel modification impacts to the California Brittlebush (*Encelia californica*) Shrubland Alliance, the California Brittlebush – California Buckwheat (*Encelia californica* – *Eriogonum fasciculatum*) Shrubland Association, the California Brittlebush – Black Sage (*Encelia californica* – *Salvia mellifera*) Shrubland Association, the Sawtooth Goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*) Shrubland Alliance, the Coast Prickly-Pear (*Opuntia littoralis*) Shrubland Alliance, and the Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) Shrubland Association must be compensated for at a 2:1 ratio by creation and/or restoration of in-kind habitat in an area(s) to be preserved as permanent open space. To the extent possible, this must be accomplished onsite. If suitable onsite mitigation sites are not available, compensation for impacts to these sensitive plant communities may at the discretion of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW be accomplished by creation and/or restoration of out-of-kind sensitive habitats on-site; creation and/or restoration of in-kind habitats off-site; or by purchase of mitigation credits from a habitat mitigation bank or contribution to an in-lieu fee program approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW. Off-site mitigation must be compensated for at a minimum 5:1 replacement ratio, or as recommended by CDFW. Mitigation credits or in-lieu fees must be for creation and/or restoration of in-kind habitats.

The Ventura County Fire Protection District (VCFD) must be consulted to determine if fuel modification within rare and sensitive plant communities can be avoided. To the extent possible, fuel modification within rare and sensitive plant communities must be avoided. If impacts cannot be avoided, before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project, the limits of fuel modification must be mapped, and a qualified restoration ecologist must determine the final acreage of fuel modification impacts to the rare and sensitive plant communities at the site.

A Mitigation and Monitoring Plan must be developed by a qualified restoration ecologist and approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project. Broadly, the plan must at a minimum include:

- Description of the project/impact and mitigation site
- Specific objectives
- Success criteria
- Plant palettes
- Implementation plan
- Maintenance activities
- Monitoring plan
- Contingency measures

Success criteria is (at a minimum) evaluated based on percent cover of native species, and control of invasive plant species within the mitigation area. The performance standards for the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan are (at a minimum) the following:

- Non-native species in the treated area must be less than 15% relative cover by the end of the third year of treatment and less than 5% relative cover by the end of the fifth year of treatment.
- Within five years after introducing native plants and seeds to the mitigation site, the absolute cover of native species for each natural community must be not less than the absolute cover of native species found at high quality reference sites occurring onsite or in the surrounding area.

Habitat creation and restoration will be considered successful after the success criteria have been met for a period of at least two years without any maintenance or remediation activities other than invasive species control.

The mitigation program must be initiated before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project and be implemented over a minimum five-year period. The mitigation program must incorporate an iterative process of annual monitoring and evaluation of progress, and allow for adjustments to the plan, as necessary, to achieve desired outcomes and meet success criteria. Annual reports discussing the implementation, monitoring, and management of the project must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW. Five years after project start, a final report must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW. At a minimum, the City officials and CDFW officials must (at a minimum) discuss the implementation, monitoring, and management of the project over the five-year period, and determine whether the project has been successful based on established success criteria. The project must be extended if success criteria have not been met at the end of the five-year period to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, and CDFW.

If impacts are mitigated by purchasing credits from a mitigation bank or by contribution to an in-lieu fee program, the permittee must provide evidence of purchase of mitigation credits or payment of the in-lieu fee before the Building Official issues a grading permit. The in-lieu fee is based on the cost per acre to create and/or restore in-kind habitat and the acreage of the plant community impacted. In-lieu fees shall be used for creation and/or restoration of in-kind habitat.

The qualified restoration ecologist(s) must meet the minimum qualifications listed below:

- Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in restoration ecology, biology, botany, horticulture, landscape architecture, soil sciences, conservation biology, environmental biology, or a related field;
- Be able to map restoration sites in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map restoration sites in GIS;
- Be at a senior level with local restoration experience with the plant communities being restored; and
- Have experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and the successful implementation of at least three habitat restoration and monitoring plans for plant communities in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles

MM BIO-9: Invasive Plant Species in Landscaping

Before the Building Official issues a grading permit, a Landscaping Plan must be reviewed and approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, to ensure that only non-

invasive ornamental plant species or appropriate native plant species are used in landscaping in future development of the project site. The review must include, without limitation, the most current versions of the California Invasive Plant Inventory Database (California Invasive Plant Council), the California Invasive Plant Council Watchlist, the Federal Noxious Weed List, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture Pest Ratings of Noxious Weed Species and Noxious Weed Seed. The Landscaping Plan must include all plant species that would be planted as part of the proposed project. The Environmental Services Director, or designee, will conduct site inspections to confirm the appropriate plant materials have been planted.

MM BIO-10: Invasive Plant Species Management

An Invasive Plant Species Management Plan that emphasizes eradication and control of invasive plant species within public spaces associated with the project including fuel modification zones, detention basins, landscaping lots, and pocket parks must be prepared by a qualified restoration ecologist. The Plan should emphasize control of novel introductions and species likely to invade wildlands. The Plan must be approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project. Implementation of the Plan within fuel modification zones must be to the satisfaction of the VCFD. Broadly, the Plan must at least include:

- Specific objectives;
- Target species and problem areas;
- Prioritization of threats;
- Success criteria;
- Management strategies that would result in eradication and/or control of problem species;
- Implementation plan;
- Monitoring plan; and
- Contingency measures.

The following success criteria must be incorporated:

- Eradication or the substantial reduction in cover and the control of invasive plant species, and prevention of the spread of invasive plant species from the project site to surrounding natural areas. Total cover of all targeted invasive species in treated areas shall be less than 25% by the end of the first year of treatment, less than 10% by the end of the second year of treatment, and less than 5% thereafter.

The target species as well as methods for evaluating whether the project has been successful at meeting the above-mentioned success criteria must be determined by the qualified restoration ecologist and included in the Invasive Plant Species Management Plan.

Implementation of the Plan must begin with commencement of ground disturbance for the project and continue until development of the project is completed, and for an additional five years after the Building Official issues the final certificate of occupancy for the last structure on the project site. The Plan must allow for adaptation of management strategies, as necessary, and include annual monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of progress. Annual reports must be prepared by the qualified restoration ecologist and submitted by December 31 of each year to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, for review. A final

report must be prepared and submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, at the end of the invasive species removal project that documents methods, treatments, and monitoring, and evaluates the implementation of the plan and whether success criteria have been met. The invasive plant species removal requirement shall be extended, as necessary, until success criteria are met to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee.

The qualified restoration ecologist(s) must meet the minimum qualifications listed below:

- Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in restoration ecology, biology, botany, horticulture, landscape architecture, conservation biology, environmental biology, or a related field;
- Be able to map invasive species in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map invasive species in GIS;
- Have at least four years of experience performing botanical surveys within Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles Counties;
- Have at least four years of professional experience in the management of invasive plant species; and,
- Have experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and the implementation of invasive species management plans for sites in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles Counties.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Impacts would be less than significant within implementation of mitigation measure BIO-8 through BIO-10.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

4.4.3.3 Protected Wetlands, Waters, and Riparian Habitat

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (including, without limitation, marsh, vernal pool, and coastal) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

A delineation of jurisdictional waters and habitat was conducted in May 2015 to satisfy the requirements of the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) under Section 404 of the CWA, the RWQCB under Section 401 of the CWA, and CDFW under California F&G Code sections 1600, et seq. The jurisdictional delineation identified ten drainages, two debris basins, and two earthen ditches at the site. These features contain 4.37 acres / 16,216 linear feet of non-wetland waters of the U.S., 4.37 acres / 16,216 linear feet of waters of the State, and 5.99 acres / 16,216 linear feet of jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat. There are no wetlands at the site.

The jurisdictional areas that would be permanently impacted by the project are shown on Figure 4.4-2, Jurisdictional Delineation Map. The acreages and linear footages of jurisdictional features including streams, ditches, and debris basins, that would be impacted are shown below in **Table 4.4-7, Grading and Construction Impacts to ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW Jurisdictional Areas** and **Table 4.4-8, Fuel Modification Impacts to CDFW Jurisdictional Drainages**.

Table 4.4-7
Grading and Construction Impacts to ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW Jurisdictional Areas

Jurisdictional Feature	ACOE Non-Wetland Waters of United States (Acres / Linear Ft.)	RWQCB Waters of the State (Acres / Linear Ft.)	CDFW Riparian (Acres / Linear Ft.)
Drainage #1	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0
Drainage #2	0.02 / 313	0.02 / 313	0.04 / 385
Drainage #3	0.25 / 365	0.25 / 365	0.25 / 365
Drainage #4	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0
Drainage #5	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0
Drainage #6	0.11 / 263	0.11 / 263	0.11 / 263
Drainage #7	0.08 / 90	0.08 / 90	0.08 / 90
Drainage #8	0.04 / 160	0.04 / 160	0.06 / 160
Drainage #9	0.19 / 1,920	0.19 / 1,920	0.38 / 1,920
Drainage #10	0.19 / 710	0.19 / 710	0.19 / 710
Debris Basin #1	1.07 / --	1.07 / --	1.07 / --
Debris Basin #2	1.64 / --	1.64 / --	1.64 / --
Ditch #1	0.49 / 1,805	0.49 / 1,805	0.49 / 1,805
Ditch #2	0.02 / 1,090	0.02 / 1,090	0.07 / 1,090
Total Jurisdictional Acreage	4.11 / 6,716	4.11 / 6,716	4.39 / 6,788

Table 4.4-8
Fuel Modification Impacts to CDFW Jurisdictional Drainages

Jurisdictional Feature	CDFW Riparian (Acres / Linear Ft.)
Drainage #1	0 / 0
Drainage #2	0 / 0
Drainage #3	0 / 0
Drainage #4	0 / 0
Drainage #5	0.01 / 79
Drainage #6	0 / 0
Drainage #7	0.05 / 165
Drainage #8	0.01 / 148
Drainage #9	0.04 / 193
Drainage #10	0 / 0
Debris Basin #1	0 / 0
Debris Basin #2	0 / 0
Ditch #1	0.09 / 360
Ditch #2	0 / 0
Total Jurisdictional Acreage	0.20 / 945

Project grading and construction would permanently impact a total of 4.49 acres / 6,788 linear feet of jurisdictional features, including drainages, debris basins, and ditches. Of the 4.49 acres / 6,788 linear feet that would be impacted, 4.11 acres / 6,716 linear feet are ACOE “non-wetland” waters of the United States, 4.11 acres / 6,716 linear feet are “non-wetland” RWQCB waters of the State, and all 4.49 acres / 6,788 linear feet are CDFW jurisdictional habitat. Also, project fuel modification would permanently impact a

total of 0.20 acres / 945 linear feet of CDFW jurisdictional habitat located outside the project grading footprint.

The project would have a substantial adverse effect on riparian habitat identified by the CDFW and federally and state protected waters as defined by Section 404 and Section 401 of the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, which would be a significant but mitigable impact. Implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-11**, which would require implementation of a final approved Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

Required Island Annexations

The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is to annex the Island properties to the City. Any future development proposals in the annexation areas would require City review to determine whether CEQA applies, and if so, determine the appropriate level of CEQA documentation that would be required. As no physical changes within the Annexation Islands are proposed with this project that could potentially impact wetlands, waters, or riparian habitat, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-11: Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program

The project must implement the requirements of the final approved Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program, which mitigates for permanent impacts to 4.59 acres / 7,733 linear feet of CDFW jurisdictional habitat, 4.11 acres / 6,716 linear feet of ACOE “non-wetland” waters of the U.S., and 4.11 acres / 6,716 linear feet of “non-wetland” RWQCB waters of the State at a 2:1 ratio. Due to the overlap of the jurisdictional areas that would be permanently impacted, a total of 4.49 acres consisting of 4.11 acres of “non-wetland” waters of the United States / RWQCB waters of the State / CDFW jurisdictional habitat, and 0.48 acres of habitat solely under CDFW jurisdiction must be mitigated.

The Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program must mitigate for permanent impacts to jurisdictional areas by the creation and/or restoration of degraded in-kind jurisdictional habitats, or by purchase of mitigation bank credits or by contribution to an in-lieu fee program approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW. To the extent possible, this must be accomplished on-site. If the mitigation will be performed off-site, to the extent feasible the mitigation sites should be implemented within the Calleguas Creek watershed. Off-site mitigation must be compensated for at a minimum 5:1 replacement ratio, or as recommended by CDFW. To the extent feasible, in-lieu fees must be used for the creation and/or restoration of in-kind jurisdictional habitat within the Calleguas Creek watershed.

The Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program must be developed by a qualified restoration ecologist (see qualifications below) approved by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW, in compliance with the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, CWA Sections 401 and 404, and Fish and Game Code 1602 and supporting regulations, before the Building Official issues a grading permit for the project. Broadly, this Program (at a minimum) include:

- Description of the project/impact and mitigation sites;
- Specific objectives;

- Success criteria;
- Plant palette;
- Implementation plan;
- Maintenance activities;
- Monitoring plan; and
- Contingency measures.

Success criteria is (at a minimum) evaluated based on appropriate survival rates and percent cover of planted native species, as well as eradication and control of invasive plant and animal species within the restoration area.

The target species and native plant palette, as well as the specific methods for evaluating whether the project was successful at meeting the above-mentioned success criteria shall be determined by the qualified restoration ecologist and included in the mitigation program.

To the extent possible, the mitigation project, the purchase of mitigation bank credits, or contribution to an in-lieu fee program must be initiated before development of the project. The mitigation project must be implemented over a five-year period and incorporate an iterative process of annual monitoring and evaluation of progress and allow for adjustments to the program, as necessary, to achieve desired outcomes and meet success criteria. Annual reports discussing the implementation, monitoring, and management of the mitigation project must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW. Five years after project start, a final report must be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW, which (at a minimum) discusses the implementation, monitoring and management of the mitigation project over the five-year period, and indicate whether the mitigation project has, in part, or in whole, been successful based on established success criteria. Habitat creation and restoration will be considered successful after the success criteria are met for a period of at least two years without any maintenance or remediation activities other than invasive species control. The mitigation project must be extended if success criteria have not been met at the end of the five-year period to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW.

The qualified restoration ecologist(s) must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Have an undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in restoration ecology, biology, botany, horticulture, landscape architecture, soil sciences, conservation biology, environmental biology, or a related field;
- Be able to map habitat restoration sites in GIS or have access to an individual or firm with the ability to map habitat restoration sites in GIS;
- Be at a senior level with local restoration experience with the jurisdictional habitats being restored; and,
- Have experience as the primary author and director in the preparation and the successful implementation of at least three restoration and monitoring plans for jurisdictional habitats in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, or Los Angeles Counties.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure BIO-11.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

4.4.3.4 Wildlife Movement, Wildlife Corridors, and Wildlife Nursery Sites

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to 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. The project would be situated at the northern edge of the City adjacent to existing urban development and would not be situated within a habitat bottleneck. Also, the project site is not within an area that has been specifically identified as important to wildlife movement, such as a regional-scale habitat linkage or wildlife movement corridor. The nearest recognized wildlife movement corridor is approximately 1.5 miles to the west of the site.

The project site does however contain natural habitats suitable for wildlife movement, and animals can be expected to pass through the site or to utilize the ridgelines and drainages at the site for local movements, such as to access additional foraging habitat or the small temporary pond and detention basins when those features contain water. Although the project would develop the southern portion of the site, the northern portion of the site would remain undeveloped and additional natural habitats to the west, north, and northeast of the site would also continue to provide habitat for wildlife and opportunities for wildlife movement through the area. Although the drainages at the site may be used for local movements, they are not regionally important wildlife movement corridors as the drainages terminate at the southern end of the property at detention basins, which then flow into storm drains within urban areas.

The small temporary pond in the southern part of the site is known breeding habitat for the western spadefoot, and some individuals from the western spadefoot population in the surrounding area can be expected to move through the site to access the temporary pond for breeding. The site would also be used by juvenile western spadefoot to disperse from the breeding pond to terrestrial habitats both on and offsite. The federally Threatened California gnatcatcher, which also breeds at the site, has been observed moving between the coastal sage scrub patches in the southern portion of the site and coastal sage scrub habitat located to the east of the site. California gnatcatchers have been observed at the western edge of the site, and the site is likely also used by California gnatcatchers for dispersal movements to other suitable coastal scrub habitats offsite to the west and north. The site therefore has value for dispersal movements of at least two special-status wildlife species.

The project would interfere with western spadefoot access to the breeding pond in the southern portion of site. However, as discussed in Section 4.4.3.1, the breeding pond would be removed by the project, and this impact would be mitigated by mitigation measure BIO-6. BIO-6 requires creation of additional spadefoot breeding habitat onsite to offset the loss of the breeding pond. The 71 acres of habitat that would be preserved as open space in the northern portion of the site provides suitable cover and foraging habitat, and it would continue to be of value to the population of western spadefoot in the area. Breeding habitat if created in this open space area could be accessed by spadefoot occurring onsite as well as in habitats to the north of the site.

Currently, California gnatcatchers can move unimpeded through the southern portion of the site to other suitable habitats to the east, west and north, and development of the project would be a significant impediment to movement of California gnatcatchers through the southern portion of the site. However, the species is mobile and can potentially cross over developed areas to reach other suitable habitats, and with development of the project the possibility would also remain for California gnatcatchers located offsite to the east to move into and occupy the northern portion of the site, which would remain undeveloped and contains suitable habitat for breeding, foraging, and dispersal. California gnatcatchers located offsite to the west could also move unimpeded into the northern portion of the site.

For the above reasons, although the project would adversely affect wildlife movement, wildlife corridors, or nursery sites, impacts to wildlife movement would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is to annex the Island properties to the City. Any future development proposals in the annexation areas would require City review to determine whether CEQA applies, and if so, determine the appropriate level of CEQA documentation that would be required. As no physical changes within the Annexation Islands are proposed with this project that could potentially impact wildlife movement, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Impacts would be less than significant without the need for mitigation.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

4.4.3.5 Local Policies and Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

Simi Valley Mature Tree Preservation (SVMC Chapter 9-38)

Five trees at the project site meet criteria for protection as mature trees under the City's Mature Tree Preservation regulations, including two native Mexican elderberries (*Sambucus mexicana*), two native Pacific willows (*Salix lasiandra*), and one non-native Peruvian pepper (*Schinus molle*). Project grading activities would remove all five Protected Trees and 11 additional trees that do not qualify as Protected Trees under the SVMC. The locations and descriptions of these trees are provided in the *Tree Survey and Arborists Report Update* report in Appendix D. No historic trees would be impacted by the project. Compliance with SVMC Chapter 9-38 and implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-12**, which would

protect Protected Trees during construction, would reduce impacts to Protected Trees to a less than significant level.

Required Island Annexations

The Annexation Islands are developed and are not proposed for any changes in land use or infrastructure at this point in time. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is to annex the Island properties to the City. Any future development proposals in the annexation areas would require City review to determine whether CEQA applies, and if so, determine the appropriate level of CEQA documentation that would be required. Also, future development proposals would be subject to all applicable local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources. As no physical changes within the Annexation Islands are proposed with this project that could potentially conflict with a local policy or ordinance protecting biological resources, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-12: Tree Protection During Construction

During construction, protected trees to be preserved, relocated or newly planted onsite must be fenced and monitored periodically by a qualified arborist throughout grading and construction to reduce the chance of adverse impacts. Changes in soil compaction, irrigation, plantings, and other conditions may diminish the health of existing trees to remain. BMPs must be identified on the landscaping and preservation plan, which must address the following:

- Soil compaction.
- Lack of water or changes in the site hydrology.
- Change of grade in the root zone.
- Physical damage to tree roots and structure.
- Dumping of potentially toxic construction wastes.
- Lack of pest control and other care.
- Dust. Construction creates large amounts of dust, and the oaks and any other trees to be preserved will need to be kept clean. Dust reduces photosynthesis on all trees. Strict dust control measures must be implemented during construction to minimize this impact, and an occasional rinsing with a solution of water and insecticidal soap will help control pests.
- Human error. Dripline fencing must be erected that is visible and structurally sound enough to deter foot traffic and preclude the storing of equipment under tree canopies. The landscaping and preservation plan must specify that such fencing be placed a minimum of 1 foot in radius from the tree per 1 inch of diameter at breast height.
- Raising or lowering the grade in the root zone of trees can be fatal or ruin the health of trees for years to come. Grade change and soil compaction force out the oxygen and literally press the life out of the soil. A retaining wall can be used to minimize the amount of the root zone that is affected, but it is essential that the footing is not continuous. Gravel and aeration pipes should be placed inside the retaining wall before the fill is placed. Consult with a qualified civil engineer for proper design calculations.
- Trenching within the protection zone must be avoided wherever possible. Most of the roots are in the top 1 to 2 feet of soil, and trenching can sever a large percentage of roots.

- Oil from construction equipment, cement, concrete washout, acid washes, paint, and solvents are toxic to tree roots. Signs should be posted on the fencing around trees notifying contractors of the fines for dumping. Portable latrines that are washed out with strong detergents can damage the fine roots of the trees. Portable latrines should not be placed near trees, nor where frequent and regular foot traffic to them will compact the soil below the trees.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure BIO-12.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

4.4.4 Cumulative Impacts

For the purposes of biological resources, cumulative impacts consider where relevant buildout of the General Plan, the list of related projects in Chapter 3.0, and with regard to particular species and habitats, the range and status of those species and habitats.

North Canyon Ranch

The evaluation of proposed project impacts determined that multiple mitigation measures are required to assure that the project would have less than significant impacts to biological resources. These measures include the requirements for pre-construction nesting bird surveys and general surveys for special-status wildlife, protocol surveys and an incidental take permit for the California gnatcatcher, biological monitoring and reporting during construction, placement of exclusionary fencing to protect specified biological resources, a prohibition on anticoagulant rodenticides during construction, creation and/or restoration of western spadefoot breeding habitat, sensitive plant communities mitigation and monitoring, protected tree permit approval and implementation. These address multiple species including those with special status, that exist off-site but are by definition limited in range and/or numbers. Continued development within the regions these species inhabit will have the potential to adversely impact the species' welfare and survival.

As the proposed project is currently subject to lead agency and other regulatory agency's direction to conduct biological review and CEQA review, so would other development with these species' potential presence be similarly directed. This review would determine existing conditions, assess potential impacts, and require mitigation to reduce impacts. Mitigation measures would be appropriate to the site, its location, and its component or potential habitats. While it is speculative to determine all potential impacts without knowing all projects that may occur within a species' range, for example, the fact of listing of species and establishment of environmental review and permitting procedures, works toward the overall avoidance of further endangerment of listed species. Given the proposed project's mitigation to avoid significant impacts, and the review process required for future projects, cumulative biological resources impacts would be considered less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

No development of the Required Island Annexation areas is proposed at this time and any proposed development in these areas is unknown at this time. All future development is subject to lead agency review for potential significant environmental impacts. No significant cumulative impacts would occur.

4.5 CULTURAL, TRIBAL
CULTURAL AND
PALEONTOLOGICAL

SECTION 4.0

4.5 CULTURAL, TRIBAL CULTURAL, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts to cultural, tribal cultural, and paleontological resources and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts where warranted.

This section describes the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, summarizes the applicable regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, identifies thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, analyzes anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), provides mitigation measures to reduce impacts, and discusses residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts was determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR. This evaluation is based on multiple evaluations of the project site over the years, providing a robust database of information, including the following technical reports that are provided in **Appendix E, Cultural, Tribal Cultural, and Paleontological Resources**:

- Cultural Resources Reconnaissance of the Unocal Property, prepared June 1999 by RMW Paleo Associates, Incorporated (RMW Cultural Report).
- Paleontological and Archaeological Assessment Report for North Canyon Ranch, prepared August 2007 by Cogstone Resource Management Inc. (Cogstone Cultural Report).
- Cultural Resources Phase I Survey, prepared October 2017 by Envicom Corporation (Envicom Cultural Report).¹

Letters and emails sent and received in response to the City's most recent Native American Tribal consultation outreach effort for this Draft EIR are on file with the City of Simi Valley Planning Division. The letters and emails are from the following tribes: Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians.

The scope of the RMW Cultural Report was to provide a former landowner, Unocal, with planning data relative to the cultural resources existing on a large 2,800-acre study area within Simi Valley that includes the 160.2-acre project site. The RMW Cultural Report found 34 prehistoric sites, historic sites, and isolated finds. All sites were outside of the proposed project boundaries. As noted in the RMW Cultural Report, the purpose of the report was to provide general statements regarding probable site data potential and probable impacts for planning purposes only that may change as new data becomes available. Therefore, the following section relies on the findings of the project-specific Cogstone Cultural Report and Envicom Cultural Report of the North Canyon Ranch project site.

4.5.1 Existing Conditions

The following environmental setting establishes existing conditions at the project site and surrounding area. The environmental setting describes the existing physical conditions on the 160.2-acre project site (subject

¹ As no activities have occurred on the North Canyon Ranch site, no further site investigations have been conducted or deemed warranted. See analysis below for monitoring requirements during ground-disturbing activities.

property) and in the vicinity of the project site. These existing conditions establish the baseline against which project impacts are analyzed later in this section.

Environmental Setting

North Canyon Ranch

The environmental setting of the project site is the foothills of Big Mountain, south of the Santa Susana Mountain range within the City of Simi Valley (City). The Simi Valley area is a portion of the Pacific Plate within the California Geomorphic Province known as the Transverse Ranges, an east-west trending set of steep mountain ranges and valleys. The Transverse Ranges are oblique to the predominant north-west trend of coastal California mountain ranges, hence the name “Transverse.” Several low mountain ranges define the geographic extent of Simi Valley, namely the Simi Hills to the south, Big Mountain to the north, and the Santa Susana Mountains to the northeast and east. These mountain ranges separate Simi Valley geographically from the nearby San Fernando Valley accessed through the Santa Susanna Pass to the east, the Conejo Valley to the southwest, and the City of Moorpark and Santa Rosa Valley to the west. The original topography of the environmental setting consisted of rugged, rolling foothills with steep hillsides and smaller canyons. The existing condition of much of the lowermost foothills is presently developed with urban uses.

The Arroyo Simi to the south is the primary source of local surface water which drains into Calleguas Creek and the Pacific Ocean near Point Mugu. Many seasonal drains flow from the hillsides into Arroyo Simi, creating a series of canyons and ravines throughout the foothills. The Simi Valley area has always had a semi-arid landscape, covered by sparse vegetation dominated by perennial grasses, sage, buck weed, and yucca. Oaks and cottonwoods are located in valley areas that contain more moisture, but the majority of the hillsides are dominated by perennial grasses and short shrubs. Today, the subject property has extensive remnants of the original native landscape, with existing residential and commercial development completely abutting the property to the south and east.

The project site consists of four south-draining canyons with intervening ridgelines trending north-northwest. In the southern reaches of the site, these canyons merge into two primary south-flowing ephemeral drainages with previously constructed debris and detention basins at the southern boundary of the project site built during development of the Simi Valley Town Center project to the south. The project area is vegetated primarily by introduced grasses and herbs, with native shrubs along the drainages. The following introduces the historic, archaeological, and paleontological setting of the project site and surroundings, three types of cultural resources considered under CEQA.

Historic Setting

As noted in the Cogstone Cultural Report, the project area lies in the southern portion of the former Rancho San Jose de Simi, a land grant issue to the Pico Family in 1795 of 113,000 acres. In 1842, Jose de la Guerra, a Captain of the Santa Barbara Presidio purchased the ranch to raise cattle. By the mid 1860s, most of the ranch belonged to American speculators and was used for ranching of cattle and sheep. Settlement of the valley began in the late 1880s. Eventually four small settlements were established along the valley, including Simiopolis, later shortened to Simi. A railroad depot built east of Simi Valley rapidly became a center for expanding agriculture.

Archaeological Setting

The project area was the traditional territory of peoples of the tribe now known as the Chumash. The Chumash were based along the coast from Morro Bay to Malibu but also inhabited inland areas. Three

villages are known within the Simi Valley area, including Ta'apu at Tapo Canyon, which was the largest in the Valley, as well as Shimiya, precursor of the City, and Kimishax, precursor of the City of Moorpark.

During prehistoric periods, the project area would have provided a number of animal and plant resources for Native Americans to eat. The major plant resources were acorns from a number of oak tree species, chia, buckwheat, black sage, cattails, basket grass, and yucca. Deer can still be found in the area, and in the past, pronghorn, cougars, and black bear would have been present, as well as foxes and smaller predators. Numerous rabbits, squirrels, and other small mammals can still be found in the region, as can a number of reptile and bird species. Freshwater fish would have been available in sag and fault ponds and springs, which also would have attracted migrant birds to the general region.²

Cogstone's records search for known archaeological and historical resources in the vicinity of the project site determined that 39 previous archaeological studies have been performed on sites within 1.0 mile of the project site. The results of the records search indicated there are no recorded sites within the project boundaries. There are 36 prehistoric sites and 6 prehistoric isolates within a one-mile radius of the project. The known prehistoric resources are mostly small quarries or lithic scatters. None are identified as villages or other major features.

Paleontological Setting

Simi Valley is complex geologically, mainly due to extensive faulting and uplift of the original marine layers. Sedimentary rock is common, with many sandstone layers that contain fossils from marine contexts. The geologic units present on the project site include (from oldest to youngest materials) the Tertiary Sespe Formation, Quaternary older alluvial fan deposits (outside of the proposed development footprint), and Quaternary alluvium.

The Sespe Formation is the primary rock unit comprising most of the subject property. The Sespe Formation is a non-marine sandstone rock unit of roughly 25 to 45-million years in age³ named for Sespe Creek north of Fillmore, CA. In Brea Canyon, at a location approximately 1.25 miles west of the project site, the Sespe Formation is estimated to be approximately 7,470 feet thick. Sespe Formation materials have yielded vertebrate fossils of various mammals, reptiles, and fish. As noted in the Cogstone Cultural Report, fossils found in the Sespe Formation include numerous types of rare terrestrial animals from the late Eocene to the late Oligocene epochs. Vertebrates of the Sespe Formation include artiodactyls (early camels, deer-like animals, and other even-toed ungulates), primates, carnivores (dogs, cats, creodonts), insectivores, rabbits, rodents, marsupials, reptiles, and fish. Three fossil locations within Sespe Formation materials are known within one-quarter mile of the project site and more are known within a two-mile radius.

Erosion has created extensive areas of alluvial material, both older and newer in origin. Alluvial material includes poorly consolidated soils of eroding marine sediments of fine sands, silts, and gravel. Almost no bedrock can be found in the area, though sandstone formations are quite visible farther to the east. Older Quaternary alluvium deposits in the Simi Valley and the vicinity have yielded vertebrate fossils including a complete skeleton of mastodon. One fossil location within Older Alluvium is known within one-quarter mile of the project site, and others are known within approximately two miles. See Section 5.5, Geology and Soils and associated appendix for additional discussion of the underlying geologic units.

² U.S. Department of the Interior, *Recent Reverse Faulting in the Transverse Ranges, California: U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 1339*.

³ Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, *Geologic Profile of Simi Valley, Contributions in Science: 511: 30, November 2006*.

Good sources of volcanic toolstone, such as andesite, basalt, or rhyolite, with most such material being brought into the area from surrounding sources by the prehistoric occupants of the area are absent in the region. Examples of such imported regional material used by Native Americans included Monterey chert from the Pacific coast, fused shale from Grimes Canyon farther to the west, and rhyolite from the Antelope Valley far to the north. Asphaltum – naturally seeping petroleum – was also collected in a number of Santa Susana Mountain seeps and foothill locations. This natural petroleum was used to make baskets watertight, and to act as glue for attaching arrowheads to shafts and for other craft tasks.

Required Island Annexations

The project will include the annexation of nine Island annexation areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation areas are located within the City limits boundary, although currently they are excluded from the City’s jurisdiction, and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (consisting of single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as Amended (Public Law [PL] 89-665)

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires each state to appoint a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and authorizes Tribes to appoint Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO) to direct and conduct a comprehensive state or reservation-wide survey of historic properties and maintain an inventory of such properties. This act also created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), which provides both national oversight and dispute resolution. Further, the act established the NRHP and charged the National Park Service with maintaining the NRHP and promulgating various policies and guidelines for identifying, documenting, nominating, protecting, preserving and restoring historic properties that may be eligible for the NRHP. This act also has particular provisions for assuring the confidentiality of sensitive cultural resources information.

Sections 106 and 110 of this Act have specific bearing on federal agency historic preservation activities and the management of historic properties. Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and to afford the ACHP a reasonable opportunity to comment on those undertakings. Under Section 106, an undertaking collectively refers to all projects, activities, or programs funded in whole or in part under the direct or indirect jurisdiction of a federal agency, including those carried out by or on behalf of a federal agency, those carried out by federal financial assistance, and those requiring a federal permit, license, or approval. Federal agencies must meet their Section 106 responsibilities as set forth in the regulations (36 CFR Part 800).

Federal agencies must conduct the necessary studies and consultations to identify cultural resources that may be affected by an undertaking, evaluate cultural resources that may be affected to determine if they are eligible for the NRHP (that is, whether identified resources constitute historic properties), and assess whether such historic properties would be adversely affected.

Historic properties are resources listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP (36 CFR 800.16(1)(1)). A property may be listed in the NRHP if it meets criteria provided in the NRHP regulations (36 CFR 60.4).

Typically, such properties must also be 50 years or older (36 CFR 60.4[d]). The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess artistic value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. Some property types do not typically qualify for the NRHP, however these properties may qualify if they fall into one or more of the following considerations (36 CFR 60.4).”

Some property types do not typically qualify for the NRHP, however these properties may qualify if they fall into one or more of the following considerations (36 CFR 60.4):

- “A. A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- B. A building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- C. A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with the person’s productive life; or
- D. A cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
- E. A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- F. A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
- G. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

Section 106 defines an adverse effect as an effect that alters, directly or indirectly, the qualities that make a resource eligible for listing in the NRHP (36 CFR 800.5[a][1]). Consideration must be given to the property’s location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, to the extent that these qualities contribute to the integrity and significance of the resource. Adverse effects may be direct and reasonably foreseeable or may be more remote in time or distance (36 CFR 8010.5(a)(1)).

The federal agency is required to consult with SHPO(s)/THPO(s); Indian tribes (federally recognized) and Native Hawaiian organizations; representatives of local governments; applicants for federal assistance, permits, licenses, and other approvals; and additional interested parties (e.g., the public). These parties may participate in the entire Section 106 process, including identifying historic properties, assessing adverse effects, and resolving adverse effects. The California SHPO and the Advisory Council of Historic Preservation (ACHP) strongly suggest that Indian tribes that are not federally recognized be consulted as “other interested parties” under 36 CFR Section 800.2(c)(5) or as members of the public 800.2(d).

National Register of Historic Places

First authorized by the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) was established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as “an authoritative guide to be used by Federal, State, and local governments, private groups and citizens to identify the Nation’s cultural resources and to indicate what properties should be considered for protection from destruction or impairment.” The National Register recognizes properties that are significant at the national, state, and local levels.

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a resource must be significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. Districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of potential significance must also possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Four criteria have been established to determine the significance of a resource:

- It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- It yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. 3001-13)

This act establishes requirements for the treatment of Native American human remains associated and unassociated funerary objects sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony on federal and tribal land. The act defines the ownership of human remains and associated and unassociated funerary objects and objects of cultural patrimony, giving priority to lineal descendants and Indian tribes (43 CFR 10). In the event of an inadvertent discovery of remains or items, work shall stop in the immediate area and the inadvertent discovery be protected. The federal agency is required to notify and consult with tribes that are, or likely to be, culturally affiliated with the remains and/or associated funerary objects. Upon a valid repatriation request, the federal agency is required to return any such items to the lineal descendant(s) or specific tribe with whom such items are associated. The act and its implementing regulations contain similar noticing, consulting, and repatriation provisions for planned archaeological excavations (25 U.S.C. 3002(3)(c);43 CFR 10.3). The act also has particular provisions for assuring the confidentiality of sensitive cultural resources information.

State

California Office of Historic Preservation

The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), a division of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, implements the policies of the NHPA on a statewide level. The OHP also carries out the duties as set forth in the Public Resources Code and maintains the California Historic Resources Inventory and California Register of Historical Resources. The SHPO is an appointed official who implements historic preservation programs within the state.

California Register of Historic Resources

Assembly Bill 2881 created the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) in 1992. The California Register is “an authoritative listing and guide to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens in identifying the existing historical resources of the state and to indicate which resources deserve to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change.”

Eligibility criteria for the California Register are based upon National Register criteria. The California Register consists of automatically listed resources and those that must be nominated through an application and public hearing process. The California Register automatically includes the following:

- California properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and those formally Determined Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
- California Registered Historical Landmarks from No. 770 onward; and
- Those California Points of Historical Interest that have been evaluated by the OHP and have been recommended to the State Historical Resources Commission for inclusion on the California Register.

Resources that may be nominated to the California Register include:

- Individual historical resources;
- Historical resources contributing to historic districts;
- Historical resources identified as significant in historical resources surveys with significance ratings of Category 1 through 5 as defined on the California Department of Parks and Recreation’s Form 523; and
- Historical resources designated or listed as local landmarks, or designated under any local ordinance, such as an historic preservation overlay zone.

To be eligible for the California Register, a historic resource must be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the following four criteria:

- Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage;
- Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
- Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Additionally, a historic resource eligible for listing in the California Register must also retain its integrity. As defined in the Cogstone Cultural report, integrity is the authenticity of a historical resource’s physical identity as evidenced by the survival of characteristics or historic fabric that existed during the resource’s period of significance. Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of characteristics such as location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA requires a lead agency to analyze whether historic resources may be adversely impacted by a project. Under CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 21084.1), a “project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 the terms “historical resources” include the following:

- “A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register.

A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k) or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g) , is presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat such resources as significant for purposes of

CEQA unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.

- Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be 'historically significant' if the resource meets one of the criteria for listing on the California Register."

The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)), or identified in a historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g)) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource as defined in Public Resources Code Sections 5020.1(j) or 5024.1.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 defines a "[s]ubstantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource" to mean "physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired." Material impairment occurs when a project materially alters or demolishes in an adverse manner "those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion" in the California Register or a local historic registry or that justify its eligibility for inclusion.

Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g) defines "a unique archaeological resource" to be an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

- Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information;
- Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type; or
- Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

CEQA requires the lead agency to consider whether the project would have a significant effect on unique archaeological resources or resources eligible for listing in the California Register, and to avoid these resources when feasible or to mitigate any effects to less than significant levels. (Public Resources Code Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1). CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(4) notes that if an archaeological resource is neither a unique archaeological resource nor a historical resource, the effects of the project on those resources shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) provides procedures to be followed in the event of the accidental discovery of human remains. If remains are discovered, the county coroner examines the remains to determine the nature of the remains and cause of death. If the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the county coroner contacts the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which identifies the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descendant(s) of the deceased Native American. The most likely descendant may make recommendations for the excavation work and for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods. Under certain conditions, the landowner or his authorized representative may rebury the human remains

and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance. Native American burials in California are protected by Public Resources Code Sections 5097.9 – 5097.991 and Health and Safety Code Section 7050.

Paleontological resources are also afforded protection under CEQA. Appendix G (part V) of the CEQA Guidelines provides guidance relative to significant impacts on paleontological resources, which states, “a project will normally result in a significant impact on the environment if it will . . . disrupt or adversely affect a paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature, except as part of a scientific study.” Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 also specifies that any unauthorized removal of paleontological remains is a misdemeanor.

Tribal Cultural Resources and Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18

AB 52 amended PRC Section 5097.94 and added PRC Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3. The primary intent of AB 52 was to include California Native American tribes early in the environmental review process and to establish a new category of resources related to Native Americans, known as tribal cultural resources, that require consideration under CEQA. PRC Sections 21074(a)(1) and (2) define tribal cultural resources as either (1) “sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe that are either” included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) or included in a local register of historical resources, or (2) a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be a significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1 (i.e., criteria for listing a resource in the California Register). AB 52 led to an update of Appendix G (Initial Study Checklist) of the CEQA Guidelines to include questions related to impacts to tribal cultural resources.

Consultation is further discussed in AB-52 Section 21080.3:

- “(a) The Legislature finds and declares that California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with a geographic area may have expertise concerning their tribal cultural resources.
- (b) Prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report for a project, the lead agency shall begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project if: (1) the California Native American tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency through formal notification of proposed projects in the geographic area that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribe, and (2) the California Native American tribe responds, in writing, within 30 days of receipt of the formal notification, and requests the consultation. When responding to the lead agency, the California Native American tribe shall designate a lead contact person. If the California Native American tribe does not designate a lead contact person, or designates multiple lead contact people, the lead agency shall defer to the individual listed on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004. For purposes of this section and Section 21080.3.2, "consultation" shall have the same meaning as provided in Section 65352.4 of the Government Code.
- (c) To expedite the requirements of this section, the Native American Heritage Commission shall assist the lead agency in identifying the California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area.
- (d) Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead

agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section.

- (e) The lead agency shall begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving a California Native American tribe's request for consultation.”

Senate Bill (SB) 18⁴ requires California cities and counties to contact and consult with California Native American tribes before amending or adopting any general plan or specific plan or designating land as open space.^{5,6} The intent of SB 18 is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places. The purpose of involving tribes at these early planning stages is to allow consideration of cultural places in the context of broad local land use policy, before individual site-specific, project-level land use decisions are made by a local government. As the North Canyon Ranch project requests a General Plan Amendment, compliance with SB 18 is required.

Regional and Local

City of Simi Valley General Plan

The City of Simi Valley General Plan (2030 General Plan Update), Community Development Chapter, provides goals and policies for the protection of historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources, including protections that apply to new development or grading and excavation activities. See Draft EIR Section 4.9, Land Use and Planning a consistency analysis of the proposed project with applicable General Plan goals and policies.

4.5.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to cultural resources has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, which are based upon the state CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist.

Cultural Resources

The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact to cultural resources if the proposed project has potential to:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. (***Historical Resources***)
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. (***Archaeological Resources***)
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature. (***Paleontological Resources***)
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. (***Human Remains***)

Tribal Cultural Resources

The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact to tribal cultural resources if the proposed project has potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape

⁴ Civil Code Section 815.3; Government Code Sections 65040.2, 65092, 65351, 65352, and 65560, 65352.3, 65352.4, and 65562.5.

⁵ State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, General Plan Guidelines, 2017.

⁶ State of California, Tribal Cultural Consultation Guidelines, Supplement to General Plan Guidelines, November 14, 2005.

that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

- Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in the local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code § 5020.1(k). (*Tribal Cultural Resources Listed in or Eligible for the CRHR*).
- A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1, the lead agency must consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. (*Tribal Cultural Resources - Other Significant Tribal Cultural Resources*).

4.5.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This Draft EIR analysis of cultural resources for the North Canyon Ranch site is based upon multiple studies, creating a robust database on which to evaluate the project's potential impacts. Among the past investigations is the Cogstone Cultural Report for the North Canyon Ranch site, which included a pedestrian survey on June 19 and 20, 2007, and 13 shovel test pits within the project site in likely topographic locations. During this effort, no paleontological, archaeological, or historical resources were observed within the site, either on the surface or within the shovel test pits. Cogstone submitted record search requests to the South Central Coast Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University Fullerton and a search of the sacred lands inventory at the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC); these record searches determined there are no recorded sites within the project area. There are 36 prehistoric sites, six prehistoric isolates, and five historic sites within a 1.0 mile radius of the project.

The Envicom Cultural Report completed in July of 2017 included a cultural resource record search at the SCCIC and the NAHC. Additional databases examined include historic regional maps, historic United States Geological Survey maps, and historic Google Earth images. The record searches identified a single previously recorded cultural resource, P-56-001596 (CA-VN-1596), located within the extreme southwest corner of the proposed project property. This resource was described as a small prehistoric lithic and ground-stone scatter. A pedestrian survey of the subject property was completed from May 17 to May 19, 2017, which assessed previously identified cultural resources within the project area as well as surveyed the property for new cultural resources. Examination of the resource area (CA-VN-1596) in 2017 concluded that the cultural resource had been destroyed between the time of original recordation and the present. The Envicom pedestrian survey found no additional resources within the project property. In summary, the findings of the record searches and the pedestrian survey were that no cultural resources existed within the proposed project property. As no activities have occurred on the North Canyon Ranch site, no further site investigations have been conducted. (See analysis and mitigation measures below, which establish monitoring requirements for the site during ground-disturbing activities.)

4.5.3.1 *Historical Resources*

North Canyon Ranch

The project would potentially result in a significant impact if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 and discussed in the regulatory setting. The project site is undeveloped with the exception of existing stormwater detention basins along the southern site boundary associated with the development of the Simi Valley Town Center.

The Cogstone Cultural Report found no historical resources from a survey of the project site and no historical resources from record searches. The Envicom Report concluded that the subject property was not located in an area sensitive for historical cultural resources. A review of twelve historical local and United

States Geologic Survey maps indicated that no historical resources were located within the property boundary through the 1980s, indicating that there is little chance for significant historical cultural resources that are older than 50-years being encountered by the project. A review of historical satellite images through Google Earth showed little change to the project area from 1995 until 2004, when the project property was subject to extensive earth moving and grading concurrently with the construction of the Simi Valley Town Center shopping mall to the south. Given that no historical resources have been identified on the site, the project would result in no impact on a historical resource.

Required Island Annexations

These currently unincorporated areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. Where development or redevelopment may occur in the future within the annexation areas, the standard City review process would determine whether further CEQA analysis for potential historic resources would be required. As currently no new development is proposed and there are no designated historic resources in the annexation areas, no significant impact is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant without the need for mitigation.

4.5.3.2 Archaeological Resources

North Canyon Ranch

The project would potentially result in a significant impact if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section §15064.5 and discussed in the regulatory setting.

No archaeological materials were observed on the surface of the project nor produced by the shovel test pit program conducted for the Cogstone Cultural Report. Records searches for the Cogstone Cultural Report did not reveal any known archaeological resources within the site, although small archaeological resources consisting of lithic quarries and scatters are known within 1.0 mile of the project boundaries. No major features or substantial sites such as villages are known within 1.0 mile of the project boundaries.

The pedestrian survey concluded by Envicom was negative for observable cultural resources on the surface and did not find evidence of prehistoric cultural resource P-19-001595/CA-VN-1595 (a sparse lithic and ground stone scatter of artifacts), concluding the site had been destroyed since original recordation. The findings from the Envicom Cultural Report of the project property were, therefore, negative for known cultural resources. The cultural resource context of the project area, however, was determined moderately sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources due to clusters of prehistoric cultural resources along seasonal stream terraces to the east and west, which were of concern. Given that project grading could uncover previously unknown archaeological resources, implementation of mitigation measures **CUL-1** through **CUL-4** would reduce potential impacts to unknown archaeological resources to less than significant by requiring construction-phase monitoring, final reporting, and by establishing a protocol if buried materials of potential archaeological significance are accidentally discovered.

Required Island Annexations

These currently unincorporated areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. Where development or redevelopment may occur in the future within the annexation areas, the standard City review process would determine whether further CEQA analysis for potential archaeological resources would be required. As currently no new development is proposed in the annexation areas, no significant impact is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

North Canyon Ranch

MM CUL-1: Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan

To reduce the impact of ground-disturbing activities on any potentially present archaeological or paleontological resources, the permittee must retain a qualified archaeologist and a qualified paleontologist to develop an Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan that covers the unexpected discovery of archaeological or paleontological resources. To be considered qualified, archaeological staff must meet the educational and/or experience requirements outlined in the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716, Sept. 29, 1983).” To be considered qualified, paleontological staff are recommended to meet the educational and/or experience requirements outlined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. This Plan must establish a communication plan for unexpected archaeological or paleontological resource discovery. The Plan must clearly identify who will be called and in what order in the case of discovery of archaeological or paleontological resources, as well as the daily and weekly duties of field monitor(s). This Plan must include a Worker Environmental Awareness Plan (WEAP) for all construction team members. The permittee must prepare the Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan to the satisfaction of the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the Building Official issues a grading permit.

MM CUL-2: Archaeological Monitoring

To reduce the impact of ground-disturbing activities on any potentially-present archaeological resources in a region of moderate sensitivity for prehistoric cultural resources with prehistoric site clusters to the east and west of the property, the permittee must retain a field monitor overseen by a qualified archaeologist and qualified paleontologist (as defined in CUL-1) for grading of the top 1.5-feet of native soils within the proposed project grading limit shown on the approved entitlement plan set. The field monitor must observe grading to the edge of the grading limit, however, not be within previously disturbed areas of the site shown on and clearly depicted on the approved site plan. Field monitoring must take place during all grubbing and clearing tasks, as well as during all earth moving of the native soil layer (assumed to be 1.5-feet in depth). If the archaeological monitor determines that potential native soils exist below 1.5-feet in depth, then the monitor can recommend to the compliance team that additional monitoring should take place. Additional monitors must be used

if the distance between active construction teams limits an individual monitor from observing subsurface impacts. The permittee must submit a final site plan clearly depicting previously disturbed areas and identify qualified archaeological and paleontological monitors, including any field monitors at their direction, for review by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the Building Official issues a grading permit.

MM CUL-3: Final Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Report

To document compliance with archaeological and paleontological protection measures, the permittee must draft and submit a Final Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Report to the Lead Agency as proof of compliance. This report must summarize monitoring tasks and findings and provide a log of all daily monitoring activities. If artifacts or fossils are recovered from disturbed contexts during monitoring, those artifacts or fossils must be professionally cleaned, organized, analyzed, and submitted to an authorized curatorial facility, at the expense of the project proponent. The permittee must submit the Final Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Report at the conclusion of finish grading for review by the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the Building Official issues a building permit.

MM CUL-4: Archaeological or Paleontological Discovery Protocol

To reduce the impact of ground-disturbing activities on any buried materials of potential-archaeological or paleontological significance discovered within an undisturbed context associated with the proposed project, then all work in that area must be halted or diverted away from the discovery to a distance of 50-feet until a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist (as defined in CUL-1) can evaluate the nature and significance of the find(s). The communication plan established in the Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan and the City of Simi Valley as Lead Agency must be immediately notified of the discovery. Construction may not resume in the locality of the discovery until without clearance by the Environmental Services Director.

If a cultural or paleontological resource deemed of significant value to a qualified senior archaeologist or paleontologist is discovered during earth-moving, complete avoidance of the find is preferred. If the resource cannot be avoided, the Environmental Services Director, or designee, may require further survey work, evaluation tasks, or data recovery of the significant resource.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Impacts would be less than significant after mitigation because mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4 require construction-phase monitoring and reporting during ground-disturbing activities; mitigation measure CUL-3 specifically establishes an Archaeological or Paleontological Discovery Protocol for additional subsurface testing, evaluation of the find, or data recovery as appropriate, if buried materials of potential archaeological significance are accidentally discovered.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

4.5.3.3 Paleontological Resources

North Canyon Ranch

The project would potentially result in a significant impact if it would directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

Although no known paleontological resources were identified on the site during the Cogstone Cultural Report or the Envicom Cultural Report, ground disturbance activities could result in uncovering of unknown paleontological resources. Examination of paleontological maps indicated that the project area is moderately sensitive for paleontological resources. Implementation of the project would result in vegetation clearance and grading of portions of the site associated with the Sespe Formation geological unit, which has produced vertebrate fossils in locations within one-quarter mile of the project site and is considered a sensitive geological formation for fossil resources. Therefore, implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-3, CUL-4, and CUL-5 would reduce potential impacts regarding paleontological resources to less than significant through paleontological monitoring, reporting, and by establishing a discovery protocol if buried materials of potential paleontological significance are accidentally discovered.

Required Island Annexations

These currently unincorporated areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. Where development or redevelopment may occur in the future within the annexation areas, the standard City review process would determine whether further CEQA analysis for potential paleontological resources would be required. As currently no new development is proposed in the annexation areas, no significant impact is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

North Canyon Ranch

Mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-3, and CUL-4 apply, along with CUL-5, as follows:

MM CUL-5: Paleontological Monitoring

To reduce the impact of ground-disturbing activities on any potentially present paleontological resources in a region of sensitivity for paleontological resources, the permittee must retain a paleontological resource monitor for grading past (i.e., deeper than) the top 1.5-feet of native soils within the entire project grading limit. Additional monitors shall be used if the distance between active construction teams limits a single monitor from observing subsurface impacts.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Impacts would be less than significant after mitigation because mitigation measures CUL-1 and CUL-3 through CUL-5 require construction-phase monitoring and reporting during ground-disturbing activities; mitigation measure CUL-4 specifically establishes a Paleontological Discovery Protocol for additional subsurface testing, evaluation of the find, or data recovery as appropriate, if buried materials of potential paleontological significance are accidentally discovered.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

4.5.3.4 Human Remains

North Canyon Ranch

The project would potentially result in a significant impact if it would disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. The Cogstone Cultural Report concluded no archaeological materials were observed on the surface nor produced by subsurface shovel tests. No major features or substantial sites such as villages are known within 1.0 mile of the project boundaries. With respect to the cultural resource context of the project area, however, the Envicom Cultural Report determined the project site to be moderately sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources, mostly due to clusters of prehistoric cultural resources along seasonal stream terraces to the east and west. Mitigation measure **CUL-6** is provided for ground disturbance activities on the site in the unlikely event that unknown human remains are uncovered by the project. Implementation of mitigation measure CUL-6 would reduce to less than significant the potential inadvertent impact related to the disturbance of unknown human remains.

Required Island Annexations

These currently unincorporated areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. Where development or redevelopment may occur in the future within the annexation areas, the standard City review process would determine whether further CEQA analysis for potential human remains would be required. As currently no new development is proposed in the annexation areas, no significant impact is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

North Canyon Ranch

MM CUL-6: Human Remains Discovery Protocol

In the event human remains are discovered, no further disturbance may occur until the County Coroner has made a determination as to the origin and disposition of the remains pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The Coroner must be notified of the find immediately, together with the City and the property owner.

If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner must notify the California Native American Heritage Commission, which will determine and notify a Most

Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD should complete the inspection of the site within 48 hours of notification and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials and an appropriate re-internment site. The Lead/Permitting Agency and a qualified archaeologist (i.e., with qualifications determined acceptable to the City) may establish additional appropriate mitigation measures for further site development, which may include archaeological and Native American monitoring or subsurface testing. All responses to the discovery of human remains shall be outlined in a Recovery and Management Plan submitted to the Lead Agency. Any required monitoring must be outlined in a Construction Phase Monitoring Plan, which must also be submitted to the Environmental Services Director, or designee, before the recommencement of ground-disturbance activities.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

In the unlikely event that unknown human remains are uncovered during project ground-disturbing activities, impacts would be less than significant after mitigation because mitigation measure CUL-6 establishes a discovery protocol in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

4.5.3.5 Tribal Cultural Resources Listed in or Eligible for the CRHR

North Canyon Ranch

The project would potentially result in a significant impact if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource and that is listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in the local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k). The Envicom Cultural Resources Phase I Survey included an NAHC record search, which was negative for cultural resources, including Tribal Cultural Resources. Nevertheless, as required, the City as lead agency, conducted an outreach to multiple Native American tribal representatives for consultation in compliance with state law. Responses were received from the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, all of which requested to participate in consultation for the purpose of cultural resources (on file with the City). Mitigation measures discussed above, namely CUL-1 through CUL-4 for archaeological resources and CUL-6 for human remains are required, to assure potentially significant impacts are mitigated to below significance.

Required Island Annexations

As no development is proposed at this time, impacts to tribal cultural resources from the annexations would be less than significant.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, CUL-4, and CUL-6 apply. No additional mitigation measures would be required.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.5.3.6 Tribal Cultural Resources - Other Significant Tribal Cultural Resources

North Canyon Ranch

The project would potentially result in a significant impact if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource and that is a resource determined by the City, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in Public Resources Code § 5024.1(c), which defines historical resources. In applying the criteria set forth in that section (i.e.

The City of Simi Valley has conducted tribal outreach for Native American tribal consultation in accordance with California law. As noted above, responses were received from the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, the Fernandño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, all of which requested to participate in consultation for the purpose of cultural resources. Mitigation measures discussed above, namely CUL-1 through CUL-4 for archaeological resources and CUL-6 for human remains must be incorporated, to ensure potentially significant impacts would be mitigated to below significance.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation, as no development is proposed.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, CUL-4, and CUL-6 apply. As these measures require a monitoring plan, monitoring, and a final report, resources would be protected and properly assessed to avoid destruction of significant resources.

Required Island Annexations

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.5.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Under CEQA, a project's impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, for the issue of Cultural Resources, the General Plan buildout would be the overall cumulative project set. Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, provides a list of recent, currently proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects in the City, as a subset of General Plan buildout. With regard to cultural resources, projects of geographic range regarding the project site's potential historical, archaeological and unique paleontological concerns within the City would be considered. However, resources can often not be known until they are discovered. The City reviews proposed projects to determine CEQA review and Native American tribal consultation requirements and where future projects may have potential impacts, the City would require further analysis, and potentially CEQA documentation. Where warranted, such CEQA documentation would include appropriate mitigation to avoid significant impacts. With implementation of project mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-6, the project's contribution to potentially significant cumulative impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels. Cumulative impacts to cultural would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located adjacent to existing development and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCo to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. As evaluated above, the annexation of the Island Areas would not result in significant historic, archaeological or paleontological resources, significant impacts to human remains, or tribal cultural resources. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to cultural resources impacts or tribal cultural resources impacts, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Full Project

The combined impacts of all project components with mitigation would be less than significant for historic, archaeological or paleontological resources, significant impacts to human remains, or tribal cultural resources. No specific impacts of future projects to cultural or Tribal Cultural Resources are known at this time. Future projects in the City would also be assessed for potential impacts as part of the City's CEQA review process for projects. Tribal cultural outreach will continue to occur for all CEQA projects requiring Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, and EIRs. No significant cumulative impact would occur as a result of the project.

4.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

SECTION 4.0

4.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential subdivision and Required Island Annexations project to result in impacts with regard to geology and soils, and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts, where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR. The key project-related reports and materials to support this geology and soils analysis are provided in **Appendix F, Geotechnical Reports**^{1,2,3,4} with additional reports on file with the City.

As shown in **Table 4.6-1, Site-Specific Geology and Soils Reports**, updates, and addenda have been prepared to analyze the geologic and soil composition characteristics of the project site and in some cases document small changes in the project design over time. These multiple evaluations of the project site over the years provide a large body of information on which the City Engineer's review of the project design proposal is based, and later geology evaluations refer to and augment earlier ones. Unless noted otherwise, this Draft EIR Section is based on the Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation dated January 10, 2007 prepared by Geolabs-Westlake Village and the Update Geotechnical Report dated September 14, 2018, prepared by Geolabs-Westlake Village; these documents and the other asterisked ones in Table 4.6-1, are provided in Appendix F.

Table 4.6-1
Site-Specific Geology and Soils Reports

Preparer	Report Title	Date
Construction Testing & Engineering, Inc.	As-Graded Report, Mass Grading of Unocal Project Site, Ventura County, California, CTE Job No. 30-0599	September 26, 2005
Construction Testing & Engineering, Inc.	Addendum 1 to As-Graded Report, Mass Grading of Unocal Project Site, Ventura County, California, CTE Job No. 30-0599	October 15, 2006
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch	January 10, 2007
Construction Testing & Engineering, Inc.	Addendum 2 to As-Graded Report, Mass Grading of Unocal Project Site, Ventura County, California, CTE Job No. 30-0599	February 8, 2007

¹ GeoLabs, Update Geotechnical Report, Tentative Tract Map 5658-A, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, California, September 14, 2018.

² GeoDynamics, Inc., Approval of Geolabs-Westlake Village (2019b) Response #7 to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract Map 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California," W.O.: 8980, dated May 15, 2019, July 26, 2019.

³ GeoLabs, Offsite Slope South of TT 5658 North Canyon Ranch Project, City of Simi Valley, California, August 11, 2019.

⁴ GeoLabs, Draft CEQA Responses, April 8, 2022.

Preparer	Report Title	Date
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Response to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California	June 30, 2008
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Response to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California	January 29, 2010
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Response to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California	March 19, 2010
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Response to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California	November 24, 2010
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Evaluation of Geotechnical Feasibility, Proposed Apartment Construction, Portion TT 5658, City of Simi Valley, California	February 15, 2012
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Estimated Limits of Grading for Geotechnical Mitigation, Tentative Tract Map 5658, City of Simi Valley, California	September 5, 2012
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Update Geotechnical Report, Tentative Tract Map 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, California	March 24, 2016
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Response #5 to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California	July 29, 2016
*Geolabs-Westlake Village	Update Geotechnical Report, Tentative Tract Map 5658-A, North Canyon Ranch, Simi Valley, California	September 14, 2018
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Response #6 to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California	January 4, 2019
Geolabs-Westlake Village	Response #7 to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California	May 15, 2019
*GeoDynamics, Inc.	Approval of Geolabs-Westlake Village (2019b) Response #7 to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract Map 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California,” W.O.: 8980, dated May 15, 2019.	July 26, 2019
*Geolabs-Westlake Village	Offsite Slope South of TT 5658 North Canyon Ranch Project, City of Simi Valley, California	August 11, 2019
*Geolabs-Westlake Village	GeoLabs Draft CEQA Analysis	April 8, 2022
* Report provided in Appendix F of this Draft EIR.		

The issue of paleontological resources, listed under Geology and Soils in the current CEQA Checklist, is addressed in the project Cultural Resources reports (Appendix E), beginning when the topic of paleontological resources was included in the Cultural Resources portion of the Checklist. As the impacts and mitigation measures of those reports collectively address both issues, the issue of paleontological resources is addressed in Draft EIR Section 4.5, Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources.

4.6.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting of the vicinity is the Transverse Ranges geomorphic province of southern California. The Transverse Ranges are east-west trending elongate mountain ranges and valleys that are geologically complex. Structurally, the province reflects the north-south compressional forces resulting from a bend in the San Andreas Fault. As the Pacific Plate on the westerly side of the San Andreas Fault and the North American Plate on the easterly side of the fault move past one another along the fault line, the bend creates a deflection which allows for large accumulations of compressional energy. Some of these forces are spent in deforming the crust into roughly east-west trending folds and secondary faults. Typically, reverse or thrust faults are the most significant of these faults, which allow for the crustal shortening taking place regionally.

Various regional mapping identifies the bedrock at the subject site as late Eocene (56 million - 33.9 million years) to Oligocene (33.9 million to 23 million years) Sespe Formation. Based on field mapping and boring sample observations, the bedrock underlying the project site is likely the middle member of the Sespe formation as defined by Irvine, consisting predominately of non-marine sandstone and claystone. Sediments at the surface are late Holocene (the last 11,700 years of Earth's history) deposits consisting of alluvium, earth material deposited by flowing water, and colluvium, debris that accumulate at the base of a slope by mass wasting or sheet erosion, collectively labeled "Qal" on geologic maps.

Project Site

The project applicant has proposed Tentative Map (TM) 5658-A on a 160-acre site located north of State Highway 118 in Simi Valley, California. The site is bordered to the south by the existing Simi Valley Town Center Mall development to the south, vacant hillside property to the north, vacant hillside property to the west, First Street to the southwest, and the existing Big Sky Residential development to the east and northeast approximately 1,000 feet west of Erringer Road. The environmental setting of the project site consists of four prominent south-draining canyons with intervening ridgelines generally trending north-northwest. These canyons merge into two primary south-flowing drainages in the southern reaches of the site.

Previous disturbance of the site consists of compacted fill placed to construct large sheet-graded areas in the southernmost reaches of the canyons including areas adjacent to the Simi Valley Town Center, construction of two storm water basins for the two primary drainages abutting the Simi Valley Town Center site, grading of several cut slopes, and partial removal and re-compaction of a large landslide (Qs 1). All previous grading is related to development of the Simi Valley Town Center adjacent to the proposed project site. The proposed project site was used for the disposal of excess fill material generated by grading for the Simi Valley Town Center site. At the time of the grading, Geolabs-Westlake Village understands the fill was placed to approximate the future "planned" grade elevation anticipated at that time. The remainder of the proposed project site is predominately undisturbed with native plant cover. Natural slope gradients on the site generally range from 5:1 to 2:1 (horizontal to vertical) with local areas steeper than 1-1/2 to 1.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service National Cooperative Soil Survey identifies the site soils as Calleguas very channery loam, Los Osos clay loam, Nacimiento silty clay loam, Pico sandy loam, Rincon silty clay loam, Riverwash, San Andreas sandy loam,

Soper loam, and Soper gravelly loam.⁵ The North Canyon Ranch site is not located within a State of California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.^{6,7} Annexation Area 3 and portions of Annexation Areas 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 are within a State of California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, while Annexation Areas 7, 8, and 9 are not within a State of California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.^{8,9}

The site is underlain by non-marine sandstone rocks covered by surficial earth materials. The geologic units present on the site are Sespe bedrock, quaternary alluvium deposits, native soils derived from the bedrock consisting of sandy loam to silty clay loam, fill from past grading for the Simi Valley Town Center, and quaternary landslide debris. The geologic units are described as follows:

Fill (af)

Past extensive grading on site during construction of the Simi Town Center resulted in the presence of artificial fill.

Quaternary Alluvium Deposits

Alluvial deposits occupy the canyon bottoms on the site. Alluvium is weathered bedrock material that has eroded from natural ascending slopes and has accumulated in the generally flat lying areas. Alluvium primarily consists of sandy loam to silty clay loam.

Quaternary Landslide Debris (QIs)

The site contains existing landslides that were mapped by Geolabs-Westlake Village.

Tertiary Sespe Formation (Ts)

Bedrock exposed onsite and underlying the Holocene deposits is assigned to the Sespe Formation of the Late Eocene (56 million - 33.9 million years) to Oligocene (33.9 million to 23 million years). It consists of a non-marine sandstone rock.

Required Island Annexations

Island Annexation Areas 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are located on the valley floor and are relatively flat. Annexation Area 2 contains hillsides at the northern edge of the valley and some relatively flat areas of the valley floor. Annexation Areas 3 and 9 are located on hillsides at the northern and eastern edges of the valley, respectively.

Island Annexation Area 6 contains designated important farmland, as discussed in Section 4.2, Agricultural Resources and Open Space. Annexation Area 8 includes Sinaloa Lake, an artificial reservoir with an earthen dam. The majority of Annexation Area 9 (7.90 acres) is owned by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District and designated Community Park in the County General Plan, and the remainder (1.14 acres) is in private ownership and is pre-zoned as Residential Estate Density (RE). As Annexation Area 9 consists of

⁵ The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Cooperative Soil Survey Accessed on February 6, 2024 at:

https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/WssProduct/2a0elc0si20cenfrs55lytte/2a0elc0si20cenfrs55lytte/20240206_125648122_40_32_Soil_Map.pdf

⁶ California Geological Survey, April 7, 1997 & May 1, 1999; Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Simi Valley West Quadrangle, 1:24,000.

⁷ Ventura County, County View, Accessed on February 28 at: <https://maps.ventura.org/countyview/>

⁸ California Geological Survey, April 7, 1997 & May 1, 1999; Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Simi Valley West Quadrangle, 1:24,000.

⁹ Ventura County, County View, Accessed on February 28 at: <https://maps.ventura.org/countyview/>

hillside open space with prominent rock outcroppings and boulders, it is reasonable to assume that Annexation Area 9 could not likely be developed in the foreseeable future. No development of any of the parcels in the Islands is proposed at this time.

As depicted in the Ventura County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) viewer, the entirety of Island Annexation Area 3 and portions of Annexation Areas 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 are within the Simi/Santa Rosa Fault Zone.^{10,11} The two potentially developable parcels within Annexation Area 3 are within the Simi/Santa Rosa Fault Hazard Zone.¹² Portions of Annexation Areas 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 are within a liquefaction zone. Portions of Island Annexation Areas 1 and 6 are within known or potential landslide zones, as shown in the County GIS viewer.^{13,14} A portion of Annexation Area 8 generally corresponding to Sinaloa Lake, portions of Area 7, and portions of Area 9 are depicted within a liquefaction zone.^{15,16}

Regulatory Setting

Federal

There are no federal regulations that are applicable to the analysis of project geologic resources; impacts pertaining to geology and soils are reduced through compliance with the following state and local statutes and policies.

State

Geological Survey

The California Geological Survey (CGS) is a state agency within the Department of Conservation responsible for enforcing the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act and the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act described below.¹⁷

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, (formerly called the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act)¹⁸ is administered by the CGS, was enacted in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy, which are defined as any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use of occupancy that is expected to have a human occupancy rate of more 2,000 person-hours per year. The main purpose of the Act is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active state faults. The law requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones (known as Earthquake Fault Zones or Special Studies Zones) around the surface traces of active faults and to issue appropriate maps. The maps are distributed to all affected cities, counties, and state agencies for their use in planning and controlling new or renewed construction. Local agencies must regulate most development projects within the zones. Projects include all land divisions and most structures

¹⁰ City of Simi Valley, General Plan Safety and Noise Chapter, Updated 2021, Figure S-2: Seismic and Geological Hazards.

¹¹ County of Ventura, GIS Viewer, Hazards, Earthquake Fault Hazard, Accessed February 27, 2024. Viewer available at: <https://maps.ventura.org/countyview/>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ California Geological Survey, April 7, 1997 & May 1, 1999; Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Simi Valley East Quadrangle, 1:24,000.

¹⁵ City of Simi Valley, General Plan Safety and Noise Chapter, Updated 2021, Figure S-2: Seismic and Geological Hazards.

¹⁶ California Geological Survey, April 7, 1997 & May 1, 1999; Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Simi Valley West Quadrangle, 1:24,000.

¹⁷ California Geological Survey (CGS) was previously known as the California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG). The change in the agency name took place in January 2002.

¹⁸ Public Resources Code Section 2621, *et seq.* The Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act became effective in 1972. In 1994, it was renamed the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act.

for human occupancy. Single-family wood-frame and steel-frame dwellings up to two stories not part of a development of four units or more are exempt. In compliance with the California Building Standards Code (CBSC) (see below), before a project can be permitted, cities and counties must require a geologic investigation to demonstrate that proposed buildings will not be constructed across active faults. An evaluation and written report of a specific site must be prepared by a licensed geologist. If an active fault is found, a structure for human occupancy cannot be placed over the trace of the fault and must be set back from the fault (generally 50 feet).

The State of California designated the Simi–Santa Rosa fault as an active fault in 1999 with the establishment of an Earthquake Fault Zone following completion of a Fault Evaluation Report prepared by the CGS. Simi Valley recognizes this with a local “Fault Hazard Zone” designation along the Simi–Santa Rosa Fault; no structures are permissible on fault traces in this zone.^{19,20}

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The CGS’s Seismic Hazards Mapping Act²¹ directs the CGS, an agency within the California Department of Conservation, to identify and map areas prone to earthquake hazards of liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides and amplified ground shaking. The purpose of the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act is to reduce the threat to public safety and minimize the loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating seismic hazards. In accordance with the California Seismic Hazard Mapping Act, all development within the State-designated liquefaction hazard zones must perform site-specific geotechnical investigations before construction to assess the potential for liquefaction under strong earthquake conditions and provide mitigation measures as necessary.

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act governs the exercise of city, county, and state agency responsibilities to identify and map seismic hazard zones and to mitigate seismic hazards to protect public health and safety in accordance with the provisions of Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 2690, et seq. The intent of these regulations is to protect the public from the effects of strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, ground failure, or other hazards caused by earthquakes. In addition, the California Geological Survey’s Special Publications 117, “Guidelines for Evaluating and Mitigating Seismic Hazards in California,” provides guidance for the evaluation and mitigation of earthquake-related hazards for projects within designated zones of required investigations, including seismic hazard zones within the Simi Valley Planning Area.

California Building Standards Code

The State of California provides a minimum standard for building design through the CBSC. The 2022 CBSC is the latest version, and it is periodically updated. Proposed projects within the City must comply with the building code in effect at the time of review. The various CBSC requirements are based on the International Building Code (IBC), with some modifications. Construction activities are subject to occupational safety standards for excavation, shoring, and trenching as specified in California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA) regulations.²² Standard residential, commercial, and light industrial construction is governed by the CBSC, to which cities and counties may add amendments.

¹⁹ City of Simi Valley, General Plan Safety and Noise Chapter, Updated 2021, Figure S-2: Seismic and Geological Hazards.

²⁰ The fault trace is the location where a fault reaches the surface, and the term also refers to the line representing a fault that is shown on geological maps, as defined in United States Geological Survey, Earthquake Hazards Program, Earthquake Glossary, Accessed on April 18, 2022 at <https://earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/glossary/?term=fault%20trace>

²¹ Public Resources Code Section 2690, et seq.

²² California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 8, “California Historical Building Code.”

In addition, the CBSC regulates excavation, foundations, and retaining walls; contains specific requirements pertaining to site demolition, excavation, and construction to protect people and property from hazards associated with excavation cave-ins and falling debris or construction materials; and regulates grading activities, including drainage and erosion control. Construction activities are subject to occupational safety standards for excavation, shoring, and trenching as specified in the Cal-OSHA regulations.

Regional and Local

Simi Valley General Plan

The City's General Plan is comprised of nine elements, including a Safety and Noise Chapter (which fulfills the state requirements for General Plan Safety and Noise Elements), which includes the following policies for seismic and geotechnical hazards to reduce risk from natural and man-made hazards that would be applicable to the project:²³ Policy S 1-4.3 of the Safety and Noise Chapter requires geotechnical investigation for residential and commercial properties to identify construction methods to protect them from known seismic hazards. Ventura County's General Plan Safety Chapter identifies zones of earthquake induced liquefaction hazard within the project development area and zones of earthquake induced landslide hazard on the project site, but outside the project development area.²⁴

4.6.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to geology and soils has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, as established in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact related to geology and soils when the proposed project has potential to:

- Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known active fault trace. (***Fault Rupture Risk***)
 - Strong seismic ground shaking. (***Seismic Ground Shaking Risk***)
 - Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction and lateral spreading. (***Seismic Ground Failure Risk***)
 - Landslides. (***Landslide Risk***)
- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. (***Erosion***)
- 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. (***Geologic Stability***)
- Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. (***Expansive Soil***)
- Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater. (***Septic Tanks or Wastewater Disposal Systems***)

²³ City of Simi Valley, Safety and Noise Chapter, Updated 2021.

²⁴ City of Simi Valley, General Plan Safety and Noise Chapter, Updated 2021, Figure S-2: Seismic and Geological Hazards

As noted in the introduction to this section, please see Section 4.5, Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources, for a discussion of the issue of paleontological resources.

4.6.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The proposed project grading would disturb, displace, cover, remove, and compact the site's natural rock and soils and previously placed artificial fill materials to create stable pads for construction of the proposed residences, streets, and other improvements. The geological studies prepared for the property (Appendix F), include technical analysis of the soil materials and conditions of the site and provide recommendations for remediation actions with respect to ensuring stability and safety for residential occupation of the site, including under anticipated seismic activity.

4.6.3.1 *Fault Rupture Risk*

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake zones have been established throughout California by the CGS. These zones identify areas where potential surface rupture along an active fault could prove hazardous and identify where special studies are required to characterize the fault rupture hazard potential to habitable structures.²⁵ Known active faults near the subject site include the Simi-Santa Rosa fault system whose main trace²⁶ is approximately 1,200 feet south of the site. This fault is considered active, and a special studies zone has been established around the fault trace.²⁷ North of the main trace, eight subsidiary faults were defined during an investigation for the mall site,²⁸ located south of and adjacent to the subject site. Of these, two faults trend across the subject site. These faults were conclusively proven to be inactive faults on the mall site²⁹ and are therefore not a constraint to development of the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

As previously discussed, the entirety of Annexation Area 3 and portions of Annexation Areas 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 are within the Simi/Santa Rosa Fault Zone. The two potentially developable parcels within Annexation Area 3 are within the Simi/Santa Rosa Fault Hazard Zone. No development of the Annexation Areas is proposed at this time. Any new development in these areas would be subject to the provisions of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, such as setbacks. Geotechnical investigation would be required when and if development is proposed. As development of these areas is speculative and is not a part of this project, there would be no impacts as a result of the project.

²⁵ California Geological Survey, April 7, 1997 & May 1, 1999; Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Simi Valley West Quadrangle, 1:24,000.

²⁶ A fault trace is where a fault reaches the surface; the term also refers to the line representing the fault on geologic maps, as defined in U.S. Geological Survey – Earthquake Hazards Program: Earthquake Glossary: “fault trace”, accessed on April 18, 2022, at [https://earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/glossary/?term=fault trace](https://earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/glossary/?term=fault%20trace)

²⁷ California Geological Survey, 2018; Special Publication 42, Earthquake Fault Zones, A Guide for Government Agencies, Property Owners / Developers, and Geoscience Practitioners for Assessing Fault Rupture Hazards in California and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

²⁸ Bing Yen & Associates, Inc., February 21, 2003; Report of Feasibility-Level, Geotechnical Study, Proposed Simi Valley Town Center, Simi Valley, California, Vol. I and II, Project No. 49.25035.0074 and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

²⁹ Ibid.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.6.3.2 *Seismic Ground Shaking Risk*

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking.

The Simi-Santa Rosa fault could create substantial ground shaking if a seismic event occurred along the fault. Similarly, a strong seismic event on any other fault system in southern California has the potential to create considerable levels of ground shaking throughout the region. However, all new structures would be required to comply with all applicable provisions of the current CBSC. As a result, the exposure of people or structures to significant adverse effects resulting from strong seismic ground shaking would be less than significant for CEQA purposes.

Required Island Annexations

No development of the Annexation Areas is proposed at this time. Any potential new structures proposed in the Annexation Areas would be required to comply with all applicable provisions of the current CBSC. As development of these areas is speculative and not a part of this project, no impact would occur with regard to the exposure of people or structures to significant adverse effects resulting from strong seismic ground shaking.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant without the need for mitigation.

4.6.3.3 *Seismic Ground Failure Risk*

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.

Liquefaction is a condition where the soil undergoes continued deformation at a constant low residual stress due to the build-up of high porewater pressures. The possibility of liquefaction occurring at a given site is dependent upon the occurrence of a significant earthquake in the vicinity; sufficient groundwater to cause high pore pressures; and on the grain size, relative density, and confining pressures of the soil at the site.

Subsurface studies conducted at the site indicate groundwater is not present within the upper fifty feet of the soil profile in the alluvium.³⁰ As a result, the exposure of people or structures to significant adverse effects resulting from liquefaction would be less than significant.

Seismic compression is a condition where loose soils are rearranged into a denser packing by seismic ground shaking. The possibility of seismic compression occurring at a given site is dependent upon the

³⁰ Geolabs-Westlake Village, January 10, 2007; Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

occurrence of a significant earthquake in the vicinity; and on the grain size and relative density of the soil at the site. This condition can occur with or without liquefaction.

As discussed above, adverse effects resulting from liquefaction would be less than significant. Site specific studies have indicated the potential for significant seismic compression.³¹

To address these issues, the developers of the project would need to abide by the geologist's recommendations for various corrective measures, including, undocumented stockpile and fill removal, soil removal at prior grading area for a previously anticipated but not completed development project, and landslide removal (also discussed in Section 4.6.3.4). These recommendations, as may be modified in the final Geotechnical Study to be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer prior to project construction, are reflected in mitigation measures **GEO-1** and **GEO-2**. These mitigation measures that ensure compliance with the final Geotechnical Study will reduce the potential for significant adverse effects resulting seismic compression to less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

Portions of Island Annexation Areas 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 are within a liquefaction zone. A portion of Annexation Area 8 generally corresponding to Sinaloa Lake, portions of Area 7, and portions of Area 9 are within a liquefaction zone. One of the developable parcels within Area 3 is partially within a liquefaction zone. No development of the Annexation Areas is proposed at this time. When and if development is proposed, geotechnical investigation would be required where determined necessary by the Building Officer. As development of these areas is speculative and is not a part of this project, there would be no impacts as a result of the project.

Mitigation Measures

MM GEO-1: Removal and Recompaction Recommendation of Final Geotechnical Study

Recommendations presented in the final Geotechnical Study must be incorporated at the project site, as needed to the satisfaction of the City Engineer. These recommendations include removal of alluvial deposits extending to bedrock in the west and central valleys and to depths of 20 feet below ground surface in the east valley. This material must be replaced with compacted fill in accordance with the compaction standards and grading criteria for placement of engineered fill contained in the Geotechnical Study, and compliant with California Department of Toxic Substance Control's October 2001 Clean Imported Fill Material Information Advisory Guidelines.

MM GEO-2: Seismic Compression Recommendation of Final Geotechnical Study

Additional exploration and analyses must be conducted before a grading plan is submitted to the City Engineer for consideration to further characterize seismic compression potential. The City Engineer will identify recommendations from additional analysis and exploration that must be incorporated into the proposed project to mitigate geological hazards to a less than significant level.

³¹ Ibid.

Residual Impacts

Potential North Canyon Ranch impacts due to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, would be mitigated to a less than significant level once all recommendations contained in the final geotechnical study. Mitigation measures would reduce impacts to a less than significant impact based on the preliminary project engineering geotechnical analysis reviewed by the City thus far. No impact would occur in the Required Island Annexation Areas and thus no residual impact would occur.

4.6.3.4 *Landslide Risk*

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides.

North Canyon Ranch

During an earthquake event, the seismic shaking forces applied to native hillside areas can result in “seismically induced landslides.” These typically occur in areas of steeper hillsides, near the tops of ridges, where weathered surficial and bedrock materials are exposed on slopes, and in areas of prior landslides.

The Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Map for the Simi Valley West quadrangle includes portions of the onsite slopes in areas with a potential for earthquake induced landslides.³² Geolabs-Westlake Village conducted several geotechnical studies between 2005 and 2019 for the subject site that present findings, conclusions, and recommendations concerning the geotechnical conditions at the subject site, as shown in Table 4.6-1. These studies concluded that the natural slopes identified as areas with a potential for earthquake induced landslides have a potential to adversely impact the project that is less than significant. However, these studies identified two landslides and one queried landslide in the development area near the central valley that could potentially adversely affect the proposed project.³³ The studies also identified three landslides in the east valley that are onsite but outside the development area, and whose impact on the proposed project is less than significant.³⁴

To address these issues, the developers of the project would need to abide by the geologist’s recommendations for various corrective measures, including, landslide removal, undocumented stockpile and fill removal, and soil removal at prior grading area for a previously anticipated but not completed development project. These recommendations, as may be modified in the final Geology study to be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer prior to project construction, are reflected in mitigation measures **GEO-3**. The geologist recommendations reflected in mitigation measure GEO-1, GEO-2 are also assumed, to assure soil and manufactured slope stability. These mitigation measures reflect recommendations in these studies to reduce the potential for significant adverse effects resulting from landsliding to less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The Island Annexation Areas are not proposed for further development at this time. As no change in development would occur, no changes related to landslide hazard area would occur. Based upon this

³² California Geological Survey, April 7, 1997 & May 1, 1999, Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Simi Valley West Quadrangle, 1:24,000 and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

³³ Geolabs-Westlake Village, January 10, 2007, Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California; and Geolabs-Westlake Village June 30, 2008, Response #1 to Engineering Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California; and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

³⁴ Geolabs-Westlake Village, January 10, 2007, Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

information, landslide hazards would remain unchanged as a result of the annexations. While five of the vacant lots may be potentially developed in the future, and none contain landslide areas and no development of these lots is proposed at this time. Any future development would be regulated by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, and the CBSC. When and if development is proposed, geotechnical investigation would be required where determined necessary by the Building Officer. As development of these areas is speculative and is not a part of this project, there would be no impacts as a result of the project.

Mitigation Measures

In addition to mitigation measures GEO-1 and GEO-2, the following mitigation applies:

MM GEO-3: Slope Stability Recommendations of Final Geotechnical Study

Recommendations presented in the final geotechnical study as reviewed and approved by the City Engineer that address landslide potential and slope stability must be incorporated at the project site. These recommendations must include removal of landslide deposits extending to bedrock. Landslide deposits must be replaced with compacted fill in accordance with the compaction standards and grading criteria for placement of engineered fill acceptable to the Building Officer.

Residual Impacts

Potential North Canyon Ranch impacts due to landsliding would be mitigated to a less than significant level once all recommendations contained in the final Geotechnical Study. No physical changes are proposed in the Required Island Annexation Areas, and therefore no impacts and no residual impacts would occur.

4.6.3.5 Erosion

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

North Canyon Ranch

Erosion is a normal and inevitable geologic process whereby earth materials are loosened, worn away, decomposed, or dissolved and are then removed from one place and transported to another. Preparing land for construction can remove ground cover, exposing soils to wind erosion.

Site topography is hilly with total vertical elevation change from the low point to the high point of approximately 380 feet. Natural slope gradients on the site generally range from 5:1 to 2:1 (horizontal: vertical) with local areas steeper than 1.5:1. Removal of ground cover in preparation for construction in could result in erosion within the disturbed area. The proposed project would be required to comply with the California State Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-2009-DWQ as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ) and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would include best management practices (BMP) for erosion and sediment control during construction. Compliance with and adopted construction SWPPP and included BMPs would reduce impacts associated with soil erosion and the loss of topsoil to less than significant levels.

Required Island Annexations

Required Island Annexation Areas 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are located on the valley floor and are relatively flat. Annexation Area 2 contains hillsides at the northern edge of the valley and relatively flat areas of the valley floor. Annexation Areas 3 and 9 are located on hillsides at the northern and eastern edges of the valley,

respectively. No development of the Annexation Areas is proposed at this time. When and if development is proposed, geotechnical investigation would be required where determined necessary by the Building Officer. However, as development of these areas is speculative and is not a part of this project, there would be no impacts as a result of the project.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation for both the North Canyon Ranch Development and the Required Island Annexation Areas.

4.6.3.6 *Geologic Stability*

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to 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.

North Canyon Ranch

Subsidence refers to broad scale lowering of the elevation of the land surface with little or no horizontal movement. Subsidence is caused by a variety of events that include, without limitation, withdrawal of groundwater, pumping of oil and gas from underground, dissolution of limestone aquifers (sinkholes), collapse of underground mines, and initial wetting of dry soils (hydroconsolidation).³⁵

The Ventura County General Plan Subsidence Zones Map does not identify the project site as being located in an area where subsidence is probable.³⁶ There are no underground mines or limestone-bearing geological formations beneath the subject site. Geolabs-Westlake Village conducted a geotechnical study in 2007 evaluating the potential for hydroconsolidation to affect the subject site.³⁷ The study found that portions of the onsite alluvial soils are subject to hydroconsolidation. Mitigation measure GEO-1 discussed in Section 4.6.3.3, Seismically Ground Failure Risk, will reduce the potential for significant adverse effects resulting from subsidence to less than significant.

Lateral spreading is the horizontal movement or spread of soil toward an open face. The potential for failure from lateral spreading is highest in areas where the groundwater table is high and where relatively soft and recent alluvial deposits exist. Lateral spreading hazards may also be present in areas with liquefaction risks.

The project site is located on geologic units with low risk for liquefaction. The subject site would include slopes; however, they would be constructed in geologic units with a low potential for lateral spreading. Additionally, shallow groundwater is not present on the site.³⁸ Considering these factors, the exposure of people or structures to significant adverse effects resulting from liquefaction and lateral spreading would be less than significant for purposes of CEQA analysis.

The preliminary geotechnical studies, which will be finalized in the final Geotechnical Study, recommended mitigation of several proposed cut slopes to reduce the potential for significant adverse effects resulting from landsliding to less than significant. These include the use of appropriate factors of safety in designing

³⁵ Soil collapse, or hydroconsolidation, occurs when a loose clayey sand is exposed to water and the clay bonds break causing significant volume reduction.

³⁶ Ventura County, September 15, 2020; Ventura County 2040 General Plan and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

³⁷ Geolabs-Westlake Village, January 10, 2007, Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

³⁸ Ibid.

the cut slopes. All slopes that would affect the proposed development, natural and manufactured, are required to maintain the required factors of safety under both static and pseudo static loading conditions.³⁹ Mitigation measures GEO-1 through GEO-3 will address soil and slope stability as well as landsliding.

Required Island Annexations

Portions of Required Island Annexation Areas 1, 2, 3, and 6 are within a liquefaction zone, while parts of Annexation Areas 1 and 3 are within landslide zones. A portion of Annexation Area 8 generally corresponding to Sinaloa Lake is within a liquefaction zone. No development of the Annexation Areas is proposed at this time. However, When and if development is proposed, geotechnical investigation would be required where determined necessary by the Building Officer. As development of these areas is speculative and is not a part of this project, there would be no impacts as a result of the project.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures GEO-1 through GEO-3 are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts concerning on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse would be less than significant after mitigation for the North Canyon Ranch project, based on project engineering studies reviewed and measures approved by the City. The Required Island Annexations would have no impact and thus no residual impact with regard to this issue.

4.6.3.7 Expansive Soil

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to be located on expansive soil, , creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.

North Canyon Ranch

Expansive soils generally contain high percentages of clay. The Geotechnical Study identified the presence of onsite soils that range from non-expansive to highly expansive.⁴⁰ All development would be required to comply with relevant aspects of the Uniform Building Code (UBC) and the CBSC. Furthermore, the study provided recommendations for mitigating the expansiveness of soils at the project site. Compliance with building standards and incorporation of mitigation measures discussed below would reduce the potential for significant adverse effects resulting from expansive soils to less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

No development of the Annexation Areas is proposed and no future building plans are known at this time. However, the proponents of any potential new structures proposed in the Annexation Areas would be required to investigate the soil stability of the subject site and potential seismic-related ground failure issues and be subject to the requirements of the UBC and CBC. When and if development is proposed, geotechnical investigation would be required where determined necessary by the Building Officer. As development of these areas is speculative and is not a part of this project, there would be no impacts as a result of the project.

³⁹ Geolabs-Westlake Village, Foundation and Engineering Geology, Response #7 to Engineering and Geotechnical Engineering Review, Tentative Tract Map 5658, May 15, 2019.

⁴⁰ Geolabs-Westlake Village, January 10, 2007, Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation, Tentative Tract 5658, North Canyon Ranch, City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura, California and Geolabs-Westlake Village, April 8, 2022, CEQA Geology and Soils Responses.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measure GEO-1, Removal and Recomposition Recommendation of Final Geotechnical Study, is required.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch development impacts related to expansive soils would be less than significant after mitigation, as the final Geotechnical Study, prepared to the satisfaction of the Building Official, will provide project-specific design requirements to avoid impacts. The Required Island Annexations would have no impact and thus no residual impact with regard to this issue.

4.6.3.8 *Septic Tanks or Wastewater Disposal Systems*

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to 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. The proposed project would be serviced by the public sewer system and would not utilize septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.

Required Island Annexations

No development of the Annexation Areas is proposed at this time. Any potential septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems proposed in the Annexation Areas would require investigation of the soil stability of the site and the proposed system; however, development of these areas is speculative and is not a part of this project. Therefore, no impact would occur with regard to this issue.

Residual Impacts

No impacts would occur from any aspect of the project, and thus no residual impacts would occur.

4.6.4 Cumulative Impacts

There are no projects adjacent to, uphill from, or, downhill from both the project and a related project that could be potentially impacted by the geological and soils-related effects of both projects. The proposed project and any other proposed projects would be subject to seismic standards contained in the CBSC and any applicable geotechnical measures (mitigation measures GEO-1 through GEO-3). Therefore, the project's geology and soils impacts would not be cumulatively considerable, and no cumulative impacts related to geology and soils would occur.

No development of the Required Island Annexation Areas is proposed at this time and any proposed development in the Annexation Areas would also be subject to seismic standards contained in the CBC and any applicable geotechnical measures. When and if development is proposed, geotechnical investigation would be required where determined necessary by the Building Officer. Thus, the Island Annexation impacts related to geology and soils would not be cumulatively considerable and no cumulative impacts related to geology and soils would occur.

Combined the project components with mitigation would have less than significant impacts. Impacts of future project cannot be known at this time, but the potential for impacts would be considered upon submittal of project applications as part of the project and CEQA review process. No cumulatively significant impacts are known at this time.

4.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION

SECTION 4.0

4.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project to result in environmental impacts due to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts associated with GHG emissions where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR. Emissions generated by the project during construction and operations were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2020.4.0. The CalEEMod output data sheets for the project are included in **Appendix C, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions**.

4.7.1 Existing Conditions

The climate change and GHG overview, environmental setting, and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Overview

Climate refers to a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. It refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity. Natural changes in the climate can be caused by indirect processes such as changes in the Earth's orbit around the Sun or direct changes within the climate system itself (e.g., changes in ocean circulation). Human activities can affect the atmosphere through releasing carbon and other greenhouse gases (explained below) by burning fuel (e.g., coal, oil, and other gases) and changing the Earth's surface (e.g., by deforestation and urbanizing large swaths of land). Gas emissions affect the atmosphere directly by changing its chemical composition, while changes to the land surface indirectly affect the atmosphere by changing the way the Earth absorbs heat, light, and gases from the atmosphere. Evidence demonstrating that rapid climate change is occurring on Earth include:

- Rising of global surface temperatures by 1.3° Fahrenheit (F) over the last 100 years;
- Changes in precipitation patterns;
- Melting ice in the Arctic;
- Melting glaciers throughout the world;
- Rising ocean temperatures;
- Acidification of oceans; and
- Range shifts in plant and animal species.

Climate change is intimately tied to the Earth's greenhouse effect. The greenhouse effect is a natural occurrence that helps regulate the temperature of the planet. Without it, life as experienced by humans on Earth would not exist. Human activities since the beginning of the industrial revolution (approximately 150

years ago) have been adding to the natural greenhouse effect by increasing the gases in the atmosphere that trap energy, thereby contributing to an average increase in the Earth's temperature. Human activities that exacerbate the greenhouse effect are detailed below.

California Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 38505(g) defines GHGs as the following compounds: Carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), and nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃). Carbon dioxide, followed by CH₄ and N₂O, are the most common GHGs that result from human activity and are the GHGs of primary concern in this analysis. Fluorinated gases (HFCs, PFCs, SF₆, and NF₃) are synthetic, powerful GHGs that are emitted from a variety of industrial processes and are not of primary concern in this analysis. Descriptions of the GHG compounds of primary concern in this analysis and examples of sources that emit these GHGs are provided below.

- **Carbon Dioxide.** CO₂ is the primary GHG emitted through human activities. CO₂ enters the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels, solid waste, trees, and wood products, and as a result of other chemical reactions, such as the manufacturing of cement. Globally, the largest source of CO₂ emissions is the combustion of fossil fuels in power plants, automobiles, industrial facilities, and other similar sources. A number of specialized industrial production processes and product uses such as mineral production, metal production, and petroleum-based products also produce CO₂ emissions. CO₂ is removed from the atmosphere (or “sequestered”) as part of the biological carbon cycle. Billions of tons of atmospheric CO₂ are sequestered by oceans and growing plants (also known as “sinks”) and are emitted back into the atmosphere annually through respiration, decay, and combustion (also known as “sources”). When in balance, the total CO₂ sinks and sources from the entire carbon cycle are roughly equal. However, since the Industrial Revolution, human activities, such as the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, have increased CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere.
- **Methane.** CH₄ is emitted from a variety of human-related and natural sources. Human-related sources of CH₄ include fossil fuel production and transport, animal husbandry, rice cultivation, biomass burning, and waste management (as from the decay of organic waste in landfills). Natural sources of CH₄ include wetlands, gas hydrates, permafrost, termites, oceans, freshwater bodies, non-wetland soils, and wildfires. CH₄ emission levels from a source can vary significantly from one country or region to another, depending on many factors such as climate, industrial and agricultural production characteristics, energy types and usage, and waste management practices. For example, temperature and moisture have a significant effect on the anaerobic digestion process, which is one of the key biological processes that cause CH₄ emissions in both human-related and natural sources. Also, the implementation of technologies to capture and utilize CH₄ from sources such as landfills, coal mines, and manure management systems affects the emission levels from these sources. It is estimated that 60 percent of global CH₄ emissions are related to human activities.
- **Nitrous Oxide.** N₂O is emitted from a variety of human-related and natural sources. Human-related sources of N₂O include agricultural soil management, animal manure management, sewage treatment, combustion of fossil fuel and solid waste, adipic (fatty) acid production, and nitric acid production. N₂O is also produced naturally through sources associated with the biological nitrogen cycle, particularly microbial action in wet tropical forests. N₂O emission levels from a source can vary significantly from one country or region to another, depending on many factors such as industrial and agricultural production characteristics, combustion technologies, waste management practices, and climate. For example, heavy utilization of synthetic nitrogen fertilizers in crop production typically results in significantly more N₂O emissions from agricultural soils than that occurring from less intensive, low-tillage techniques. Also, the presence or absence of control

devices on combustion sources, such as catalytic converters on automobiles, can have a significant effect on the level of N₂O emissions from these types of sources. It is estimated that 40 percent of global N₂O emissions are related to human activities.¹

Individual GHGs have varying atmospheric lifetimes and heat-trapping properties. The atmospheric lifetime of a GHG is the average time the molecule stays stable in the atmosphere. Most GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes, staying in the atmosphere for hundreds or thousands of years. The potential of a gas to trap heat in the atmosphere is measured by its global warming potential (GWP). The GWP is defined as the cumulative radiative forcing effect of a gas over a specified time horizon resulting from the emission of a unit mass of gas relative to a reference gas. CO₂ is the reference gas used for GWP and has a GWP of one. **Table 4.7-1, Atmospheric Lifetimes and Global Warming Potentials**, identifies the atmospheric lifetimes and GWPs of the GHGs of primary concern in this analysis as reported in the California Air Resources Board's (CARB's) 2014 Scoping Plan Update.

Table 4.7-1
Atmospheric Lifetimes and Global Warming Potentials

GHG	Chemical Compound	Atmospheric Lifetime (Years)	100-Year ^a GWP
Carbon Dioxide	CO ₂	Varies ^b	1
Methane	CH ₄	12	25
Nitrous Oxide	N ₂ O	114	298

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Overview of Greenhouse Gases. Accessed on May 5, 2022 at: <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/overview-greenhouse-gases#CH4%20reference>.

^a The warming potential over a 100-year time frame relative to CO₂.

^b Atmospheric CO₂ is part of the global carbon cycle, and therefore its atmospheric lifetime is a complex function of geochemical and biological processes. Some of the excess carbon dioxide will be absorbed quickly (for example, by the ocean surface), but some will remain in the atmosphere for thousands of years, due in part to the very slow process by which carbon is transferred to ocean sediments.

GHG emissions generally are reported in metric tons (MT) of CO₂ equivalents (CO₂e) (MTCO₂e). A CO₂e is calculated using the mass emissions of an individual GHG multiplied by its GWP. The calculation of the CO₂e is a consistent methodology for comparing GHG emissions since it normalizes various GHG emissions to a consistent reference gas.

Projected Impacts of Climate Change in California

According to California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan climate change can drive extreme weather events such as coastal storm surges, drought, wildfires, floods, and heat waves, and disrupt environmental systems including our forests and oceans. A warming climate also causes sea level to rise, which will magnify the adverse impact of any storm surge and high waves on the California coast.

In 2009, California adopted a statewide Climate Adaptation Strategy (CAS) that summarizes climate change impacts and recommends adaptation strategies across seven sectors: Public Health, Biodiversity and Habitat, Oceans and Coastal Resources, Water, Agriculture, Forestry, and Transportation and Energy. The California Natural Resources Agency will be updating the CAS and is responsible for preparing reports to the Governor on the status of the CAS. The Natural Resources Agency has produced climate change assessments which detail impacts of global warming in California.² These include:

¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Overview of Greenhouse Gases. Available at: <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/overview-greenhouse-gases#CH4%20reference>. Accessed on May 5, 2022.

² State of California, Department of Justice. Office of the Attorney General, Climate Change Impacts in California. Accessed at: <https://oag.ca.gov/environment/impact>. Accessed on April 25, 2022.

- Sea level rise, coastal flooding and erosion of California’s coastlines would increase, as well as sea water intrusion.
- The Sierra snowpack would decline between 70 and 90 percent, threatening California’s water supply.
- Higher risk of forest fires resulting from increasing temperatures and making forests and brush drier. Climate change will affect tree survival and growth.
- Attainment of air quality standards would be impeded by increasing emissions, accelerating chemical processes, and raising inversion temperatures during stagnation episodes resulting in public health impacts.
- Habitat destruction and loss of ecosystems due to climate change affecting plant and wildlife habitats.
- Global warming can cause drought, warmer temperatures and saltwater contamination resulting in impacts to California’s agricultural industry.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

In an effort to evaluate and reduce the potential adverse impacts of global climate change, GHG inventories have been compiled to estimate the level of emissions and removals. The global, national, statewide, and Countywide inventories are summarized below.

Global

The Global Carbon Project releases an annual update of the global carbon budget and trends. According to the Global Carbon Budget 2021, the atmospheric CO₂ concentration in 2021 is 415 parts per million (ppm), 49 percent above the concentration at the start of the Industrial Revolution (about 277 ppm in 1750).³

United States

In 2020, total gross U.S. greenhouse gas emissions were 5,981.4 million metric tons of CO₂e (MMT CO₂e).^{4,5} Total U.S. emissions decreased by 7.3 percent from 1990 to 2020, down from a high of 15.7 percent above 1990 levels in 2007. Emissions decreased from 2019 to 2020 by 9.0 percent (590.4 MMT CO₂e). The sharp decline in emissions from 2019 to 2020 is largely due to the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic on travel and economic activity. However, the decline also reflects the combined impacts of long-term trends in many factors, including population, economic growth, energy markets, technological changes including energy efficiency, and the carbon intensity of energy fuel choices.

State of California

According to the CARB, California GHG Emission Inventory - 2021 Edition, total California GHG emissions were 418.2 MMT CO₂e in 2019, 7.2 MMT CO₂e lower than 2018 levels and almost 13 MMT CO₂e below the 2020 GHG Limit of 431 MMT CO₂e.⁶ Per capita GHG emissions in California have dropped from a 2001 peak of 14.0 metric tons of CO₂e (MT CO₂e) per person to 10.5 MT CO₂e per person in 2019, a 25 percent decrease. The major source of GHGs in California is transportation, contributing almost 40 percent of the State’s total GHG emissions in 2019, or over 50 percent if emissions from extracting, refining, and moving transportation fuels in California are included.

³ Global Carbon Project, Global Carbon Budget 2021, November 4, 2021, Accessed on April 28, 2022, at: https://www.globalcarbonproject.org/carbonbudget/21/files/GCP_CarbonBudget_2021.pdf

⁴ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2020.

⁵ The metric ton is a metric unit of mass equal to 1,000 kilograms. It is equivalent to approximately 2,204.6 pounds; 1.102 short tons, and 0.984 long tons.

⁶ California Air Resources Board, California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2019, July 28, 2021.

City of Simi Valley

The City adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) June 4, 2012, as an appendix to the General Plan. According to the City's CAP, the total Community GHG emissions for the City for the year 2006 was 1,186,126 MT CO₂e and were projected to be 1,515,088 MT CO₂e under a business as usual (BAU) model, and 1,838,426 in 2030 under a BAU model. However, the CAP also estimated that by implementing GHG Emissions Reduction Programs and Regulations outlined in the CAP, citywide GHG emissions for the year 2020 would be reduced to 1,113,977 MT CO₂e.⁷ The CAP does not provide estimates for a year 2030 scenario incorporating GHG Emissions Reduction Programs and Regulations.

Environmental Setting

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development project site is located within an approximately 160-acre undeveloped property in unincorporated Ventura County, adjacent to the City boundary of the northwestern portion of the City. The project site property is located within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) area, and the project is requesting that the project site be annexed into the City boundary. The proposed residential development would be clustered in the southern portion of the property, with a disturbance area of approximately 90.96 acres, while the rest of the property would be retained as open space. Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and "big box" stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, single-family residences to the east, and open space to the north and west. The southwestern corner of the development area is located at the northern terminus of First Street, and the eastern side of the development area is located at the western terminus of Falcon Street, which the project would extend westerly through the project site to connect with First Street. For this evaluation, the existing North Canyon Ranch site's contribution to GHG emissions is assumed to be zero.

Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated areas (Island Annexations) from the County of Ventura to the City, which are also within the City's SOI. The Annexation Areas are located within the City limits boundary, although currently they are excluded from the City's jurisdiction, and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (consisting of single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City and match existing zoning to the City's closest zoning, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. As such, this evaluation will assume that the existing GHG emissions contribution from the Island Annexations properties would continue as under existing conditions and would not change as a result of the proposed project.

Regulatory Setting

There are a number of plans, regulations, programs, and agencies that provide policies, requirements, and guidelines regarding GHG emissions at the federal, State, regional, and local levels, which include those described below.

⁷ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley Climate Action Plan, Adopted June 4, 2012.

Federal

Federal Clean Air Act

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is responsible for implementing federal policy to address GHGs. The United States Supreme Court (Supreme Court) ruled in *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency* (2007) 127 S. Ct. 1438 that CO₂ and other GHGs are pollutants under the federal Clean Air Act, which the U.S. EPA must regulate if it determines they pose an endangerment to public health or welfare. On December 7, 2009, the Administrator signed the following two findings regarding GHGs under Section 202(a) of the CAA, which were a prerequisite for implementing GHG emission standards for vehicles⁸:

- Endangerment Finding: The Administrator finds that the current and projected concentrations of six GHGs (CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF₆) in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations.
- Cause or Contribute Finding: The Administrator finds that the combined emissions of these GHGs from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the GHG pollution, which threatens public health and welfare.

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards regulate how far vehicles must travel on a gallon of fuel. NHTSA sets CAFE standards for passenger cars and for light trucks (collectively, light-duty vehicles), and separately sets fuel consumption standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks and engines. NHTSA, on behalf of the Department of Transportation, is finalizing revised fuel economy standards for passenger cars and light trucks for model years (MYs) 2024- 2025 that increase at a rate of 8 percent per year and increase at a rate of 10 percent per year for MY 2026 vehicles. NHTSA currently projects that the revised standards would require an industry fleet-wide average of roughly 49 mpg in MY 2026.⁹

Energy Independence and Security Act

Enacted in December 2007, the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) facilitates the reduction of national GHG emissions by aiming to improve vehicle fuel economy and reduce U.S. dependence on petroleum through:

- Increasing the supply of renewable alternative fuel sources by setting a mandatory Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), which requires transportation fuel sold in the U.S. to contain a minimum of 36 billion gallons of renewable fuels annually by 2022;
- Requiring transportation fuel sold in the U.S. to contain a minimum of 36 billion gallons of renewable fuels (biofuel) annually by 2022;
- Setting the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standard for passenger cars and light trucks by the year 2020 (see additional information, below); and
- Including grant programs to encourage the development of cellulosic biofuels, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), and other emerging electric vehicle (EV) technologies.

⁸ U.S. EPA. Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. Accessed November 8, 2021 at: <https://www.epa.gov/climate-change/endangerment-and-cause-or-contribute-findings-greenhouse-gases-under-section-202a>

⁹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Corporate Average Fuel Economy, Final Rule: CAFE Standards for MYs 2024-2026, Accessed April 25, 2022 at: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/laws-regulations/corporate-average-fuel-economy>.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the EISA is projected to reduce GHG emissions by nine percent by 2030.¹⁰

Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gases Rule

On September 22, 2009, the U.S. EPA issued a final rule for the mandatory reporting of GHG data and other relevant information from large sources in the US. This comprehensive, nationwide emissions data is intended to provide a better understanding of the sources of GHGs and guide development of policies and programs to reduce emissions. The mandatory reporting rule applies to direct GHG emitting sources; suppliers of fossil fuel, industrial gas, and other products that would result in GHG emissions if released, combusted, or oxidized; and facilities that inject CO₂ underground for geologic sequestration or other reasons. In general, facilities that emit 25,000 MTCO₂e or more per year of GHGs are required to submit annual reports to the U.S. EPA.¹¹

State

Senate Bill 1078 and Senate Bill 107, The California Renewables Portfolio Standard

The California Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) program (Public Utilities Code § 399, *et seq.*) requires retail sellers of electricity, including electrical corporations, community choice aggregators, and electric service providers, to purchase a specified minimum percentage of electricity generated by eligible renewable energy resources such as wind, solar, geothermal, small hydroelectric, biomass, anaerobic digestion, and landfill gas. The legislation set a target by which 20 percent of the State's electricity would be generated by renewable sources. The RPS requires each electrical corporation to increase its total procurement of eligible renewable energy resources by at least one percent per year so that 20 percent of its retail sales are procured from eligible renewable energy resources. If an electrical corporation fails to meet an annual target, it would be required to procure additional eligible renewable resources in subsequent years to compensate for the shortfall.

Assembly Bill 1493, The Pavley Standards

In 2002, the State enacted AB 1493, which directed the CARB to develop and adopt regulations that achieve the maximum feasible reduction of GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks, beginning with model year 2009. In 2004, pursuant to this directive, the CARB approved regulations to reduce GHG emissions from new motor vehicles beginning with the 2009 model year. These regulations created what are referred to as the Pavley Standards (or Pavley I Standards). In 2009, the CARB adopted amendments to the Pavley I Standards to reduce GHG emissions from new motor vehicles through the 2016 model year. These regulations created what are referred to as the Pavley II Standards. The Pavley Standards are intended to reduce GHG emissions from California passenger vehicles by about 34 percent below 2016 levels by 2025, as well as improve fuel efficiency and reduce motorists' costs.¹²

Executive Order S-3-05

Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 included the following GHG emission reduction targets: by 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels; by 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; and by 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels. To meet the targets, the Governor directed several State agencies to cooperate in the development of a CAP. The Secretary of the California Environmental Protection

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Energy. Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. Accessed April 25, 2022 at: <https://afdc.energy.gov/laws/eisa>.

¹¹ U.S. EPA. Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program (GHGRP). Accessed April 25, 2022 at: <https://www.epa.gov/ghgreporting/learn-about-greenhouse-gas-reporting-program-ghgrp>.

¹² California Air Resources Board (CARB). Advanced Clean Car Summary. Accessed on April 29, 2022 at: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/acc%20summary-final_ac.pdf.

Agency (Cal EPA) leads the Climate Action Team (CAT), whose goal is to implement global warming emission reduction programs identified in the CAP and to report biannually on the progress made toward meeting the emission reduction targets established in the EO.¹³

Assembly Bill 32, The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006

In 2006, the California State Legislature enacted the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Health and Safety Code Section 38500, *et seq.*), also known as AB 32. As required by AB 32, CARB was directed to determine statewide GHG emissions in 1990 and set that as a limit to be achieved statewide by 2020. AB 32 mandated CARB to establish a quantified emissions cap, institute a schedule to meet the cap, implement regulations to reduce statewide GHG emissions from stationary sources, and develop tracking, reporting, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that reductions are achieved.

Executive Order S-1-07, The California Low Carbon Fuel Standard

EO S-1-07, California's Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), was issued in 2007 and adopted in 2009. The LCFS program requires a minimum 10 percent reduction in the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by the year 2020. The LCFS was identified by CARB as a discrete early action item in the adopted Climate Change Scoping Plan (Scoping Plan) that complements other AB 32 measures and is a key part of achieving the State's 2030 petroleum reduction goals. The LCFS program was re-adopted in 2015 and amended in 2018. Under the LCFS program, the 2030 standard of a 20 percent carbon intensity decline will be imposed for all years post-2030.¹⁴

Senate Bill 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act

In 2008, SB 375 enacted the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 to encourage regional planning that integrates land use and transportation policy to reduce GHG emissions from driving, and ultimately lead to healthier, more efficient, and equitable communities. Under SB 375, the development and implementation of Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCSs) are required of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). The SCSs link transportation, land use, housing, and climate policy to reduce regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to reduce per capita GHG emissions. In consultation with MPOs, the CARB is required to provide each affected region with reduction targets for GHGs emitted by passenger cars and light trucks in the region for the years 2020 and 2035. CARB's regional GHG reduction targets must be updated every eight years but can be updated every four years if advancements in emissions technologies affect the reduction strategies to achieve the targets. CARB is also charged with reviewing each MPO's SCS for consistency with its assigned targets. If MPOs do not meet the GHG reduction targets, transportation projects will not be eligible for funding programmed after January 1, 2012.

Pursuant to SB 375, CARB set per-capita GHG emissions reduction targets from passenger vehicles for each of the State's 18 MPOs. For the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region, the current target is 19 percent below 2005 per capita emissions levels by 2035. This target has been incorporated into SCAG's 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Plan (2020-2045 RTP/SCS), also referred to as the "Connect SoCal" Plan).¹⁵

¹³ Executive Order S-3-05, June 1, 2005.

¹⁴ California Air Resources Board. Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Accessed on April 29, 2022 at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/basics-notes.pdf>.

¹⁵ Southern California Association of Governments, 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Adopted September 3, 2020.

Climate Change Scoping Plan

One of CARB's first steps in implementing AB 32 was to prepare a scoping plan that identified strategies for reducing GHG emissions. The initial Scoping Plan was adopted in 2008. The key elements of the strategy for achieving the 2020 GHG target include:

- Expanding and strengthening existing energy efficiency programs as well as building and appliance standards;
- Achieving a statewide renewables energy mix of 33 percent;
- Developing a California cap-and-trade program that links with other Western Climate Initiative partner programs to create a regional market system;
- Establishing targets for transportation-related GHG emissions for regions throughout California and pursuing policies and incentives to achieve those targets;
- Adopting and implementing measures pursuant to existing State laws and policies, including California's clean car standards, goods movement measures, and the LCFS; and
- Creating targeted fees, including a public goods charge on water use, fees on high GWP gases, and a fee to fund the administrative costs of the State's long-term commitment to AB 32 implementation.

The Scoping Plan differentiated between "capped" and "uncapped" strategies. Capped strategies are subject to the Cap-and-Trade Program. The Scoping Plan stated that the inclusion of these emissions within the Cap-and-Trade program will help ensure that the year 2020 emission targets are met despite some degree of uncertainty in the emission reduction estimates for any individual measure. Implementation of the capped strategies is calculated to achieve a sufficient amount of reductions by 2020 to achieve the emission target contained in AB 32. Uncapped strategies that would not be subject to the Cap-and-Trade emissions caps and requirements were provided as a margin of safety by accounting for additional GHG emission reductions.

The 2020 target of 427 MMTCO₂e required the reduction of 169 MMTCO₂e, or approximately 30 percent, from the State's projected 2020 emissions of 596 MMTCO₂e (BAU), and the reduction of 42 MMTCO₂e, or almost 10 percent, from 2002-2004 average emissions. The strategies listed in the Scoping Plan were expected to lead to emissions reductions from both sources within the capped sectors (146.7 MMTCO₂e) and from sources or sectors not covered by cap-and-trade (27.3 MMTCO₂e). The CARB estimated the largest reductions in GHG emissions would be from implementing the following measures and standards for capped sources:

- Improved emissions standards for light-duty vehicles (31.7 MMTCO₂e);
- Energy efficiency measures in buildings and appliances (26.3 MMTCO₂e);
- The RPS (21.3 MMTCO₂e); and
- The LCFS (15 MMTCO₂e).¹⁶

The First Update to the Scoping Plan (Update) was approved by the CARB in 2014. The Update builds upon the initial Scoping Plan with new strategies and recommendations and identifies opportunities to leverage existing and new funds to further drive GHG emission reductions through strategic planning and targeted low carbon investments. The Update defines near-term 2020 GHG limits but also sets the groundwork for achieving long-term GHG emission reductions.¹⁷ The Update established a broad framework for achieving emission reductions of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Consequently, the

¹⁶ California Air Resources Board, Climate Change Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change, December 2008.

¹⁷ California Air Resources Board, First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan, May 2014.

Update recalculated the 1990 GHG emissions level from 427 MMTCO_{2e} in the initial Scoping Plan to 431 MMTCO_{2e}. According to the Update, GHG reductions that average approximately 5.2 percent per year would be required after 2020 in order to reach the 2050 goal.

The CARB identified six key focus areas comprising major components of the State's economy to evaluate and describe the larger transformative actions that would be needed to meet the State's more expansive emission reduction needs by 2050. The focus areas included Energy, Transportation (Vehicles/Equipment, Sustainable Communities, Housing, Fuels, and Infrastructure), Agriculture, Water, Waste Management, and Natural and Working Lands. The final recommendations of the CARB called for a 2030 target of, at a minimum, 40 percent reduction from 1990 levels and a 2040 target of, at a minimum, 60 percent reduction from 1990 levels; a call for California to reduce its energy use and transition to 100 percent renewable energy; financial support for transportation in disadvantaged communities; and amendments to the Cap-and-Trade Regulation that would exclude direct allocation and offset credits.¹⁸

The Scoping Plan was updated again in 2017 (2017 Scoping Plan). The 2017 Scoping Plan identifies how the State can reach its 2030 climate target to reduce GHG emissions by 40 percent from 1990 levels and substantially advance toward the 2050 climate goal to reduce GHG emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels. The 2017 Scoping Plan builds on and integrates efforts that were already underway to reduce the State's GHG, criteria pollutant, and TAC emissions. Programs such as the LCFS and RPS are delivering cleaner fuels and energy; the Advanced Clean Cars Program has put more than a quarter million clean vehicles on the road; and the Sustainable Freight Action Plan will result in efficient and cleaner systems to move goods throughout the State. Enhancing and implementing these ongoing efforts puts California on the path to achieving the 2030 target. This Scoping Plan relies on these, and other, programs paired with a more stringent Cap-and-Trade Program, to deliver climate, air quality, and other benefits.¹⁹

The 2022 Scoping Plan was developed to continue to build upon the actions of the previous scoping plans to reduce the California's GHG, criteria pollutant, and toxic air contamination through clean technologies and fuels. The plan identifies feasible and cost-effective path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and also assessing the progress the state is making toward reducing its GHG emissions by at least 40 percent by 2030 levels, as targeted by SB 32 and the 2017 Scoping Plan.²⁰

Senate Bill X1-2

Effective in 2011, SB X1-2 establishes more aggressive statutory targets for renewable electricity, culminating in the requirement that 33 percent of the State's electricity come from renewable energy sources by 2020. This legislation applies to all electricity retailers in the State, including publicly owned utilities, investor-owned utilities, electricity service providers, and community choice aggregators. All of these entities must meet renewable energy goals of 20 percent of retail sales from renewables by the end of 2013, 25 percent by the end of 2016, and 33 percent by the end of 2020. The California Energy Commission (CEC) verifies the eligibility of renewable energy procured for Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) compliance periods by retail sellers and publicly owned utilities (POUs).²¹

The Advanced Clean Cars Program

In 2012, the CARB adopted the Advanced Clean Cars Program, which is aimed at reducing both smog-causing pollutants and GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks model years 2017-2025. The set of

¹⁸ California Air Resources Board, First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan, May 2014.

¹⁹ California Air Resources Board, California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, November 2017.

²⁰ California Air Resources Board, California 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan, December 2022.

²¹ California Energy Commission, Renewables Portfolio Standard, Accessed on April 29, 2022 at:

<https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/renewables-portfolio-standard/renewables-portfolio-standard>.

regulations focus on increasing the number of plug-in hybrid cars and zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) in the vehicle fleet and on making fuels such as electricity and hydrogen readily available for these vehicle technologies. The components of the Advanced Clean Cars Program are the Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) regulations that reduce criteria pollutants and GHG emissions from light- and medium-duty vehicles, and the ZEV regulation, which requires manufacturers to produce an increasing number of pure ZEVs (meaning battery electric and fuel cell EV), with provisions to also produce PHEVs in the 2018 through 2025 model years. The new standards will reduce GHG emissions by 34 percent in 2025.²²

Executive Order B-16-12

EO B-16-12 was issued in 2012 to implement a vision of a future in which ZEV would help the State meet its GHG reduction targets. EO B-16-12 directed the State government to accelerate the market for ZEVs in California through fleet replacement and EV infrastructure. The EO set the following targets:

- By 2015, all major cities in California will have adequate infrastructure and be ZEV ready;
- By 2020, the State will have established adequate infrastructure to support one million ZEVs in California;
- By 2025, there will be 1.5 million ZEVs on the road in California; and
- By 2050, virtually all personal transportation in the State will be based on ZEVs, and GHG emissions from the transportation sector will be reduced by 80 percent below 1990 levels.²³

California Green Building Standards Code

The California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) is Part 11 of the California Code of Regulations Title 24. The 2022 CALGreen Code became effective on January 1, 2023, and includes both voluntary and mandatory efficiency standards to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings having a reduced negative impact or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following five categories:

- Planning and design;
- Energy efficiency;
- Water efficiency and conservation;
- Material conservation and resource efficiency; and
- Environmental quality.

The part of the California Code of Regulations, the provisions of CALGreen are enforced through the building permit process.

Executive Order B-30-15

EO B-30-15 was issued in 2015 and created an interim statewide GHG emission reduction target to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The interim standard was established to ensure that California would meet its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.²⁴

²² California Air Resources Board, Facts About the Advanced Clean Cars Program, November 9, 2011.

²³ Executive Order B-16-2012.

²⁴ California Office of Planning and Research, Website News Page: Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. Governor Brown Establishes Most Ambitious Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target in North America, Accessed on May 5, 2022 at: <https://www.ca.gov/archive/gov39/2015/04/29/news18938/index.html>.

Executive Order B-55-18

EO B-55-18 was issued in 2018 to establish a statewide goal to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, but no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter. Based on this executive order, CARB would work with relevant State agencies to develop a framework for implementation and accounting that tracks progress towards this goal as well as ensuring future scoping plans identify and recommend measures to achieve the carbon neutrality goal.

Senate Bill 350

In 2015, the State enacted the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act, or SB 350. SB 350 increases the State's renewable electricity procurement goal from 33 percent by 2020 to 50 percent by 2030. This would increase the use of RPS-eligible resources, including solar, wind, biomass, and geothermal sources, among others. In addition, SB 350 requires the State to double its energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas end uses by 2030. To help ensure that these goals are met and that GHG emission reductions are achieved, large utilities will be required to develop and submit Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs) that detail how each utility will meet their customers resource needs, reduce GHG emissions, and increase the deployment of clean energy resources.²⁵

Senate Bill 100

SB 100 (The 100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018) sets a 2045 goal of powering all retail electricity sold in California and State agency electricity needs with renewable and zero-carbon resources, such as solar and wind energy, that do not emit climate-altering GHGs. SB 100 also updates the State's RPS to ensure that at least 60 percent of California's electricity is renewable by 2030. Under SB 100, the CEC, CPUC, and CARB are also required to use programs under existing laws to achieve 100 percent clean electricity and issue a joint policy report on SB 100 by 2021 and every four years thereafter.²⁶

Senate Bill 32

In 2017, SB 32 added Health and Safety Code Section 38566 requiring statewide GHG emissions reductions to 40 percent below those that occurred in 1990 by the year 2030.²⁷ As outlined in SB 32, achieving the required reductions involves increasing renewable energy use, imposing tighter limits on carbon content of gasoline and diesel fuel, increasing use of electric vehicles (EVs), improving energy efficiency, and reducing emissions from key industries.

Regional and Local

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

The SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, also referred to as Connect SoCal, demonstrates the region's ability to attain and exceed the State's GHG emission reduction targets. The RTP/SCS is a regional plan for integrating the transportation network and related strategies with an overall land use pattern to accommodate projected growth, housing needs, and transportation demands. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS has been found to meet the State targets for reducing GHG emissions from cars and light trucks, as it achieves per capita GHG emission reductions relative to 2005 levels of eight percent in 2020, and 19 percent in 2035, which meet the GHG reduction targets that were established by CARB for the SCAG region.²⁸

²⁵ California Energy Commission, Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act, SB 350 Overview. Accessed on May 10, 2021 at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/sb350/>.

²⁶ California Energy Commission, SB 100 Joint Agency Report, Accessed on May 28, 2021 at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/sb100>.

²⁷ California Legislative Information, Senate Bill No. 32. Accessed April 29, 2022 at: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB32.

²⁸ Southern California Association of Governments, 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Adopted September 3, 2020.

Simi Valley Climate Action Plan

The City of Simi Valley developed a Greenhouse Gas Inventory Policy to account for GHG emissions based on established GHG principles and a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which was adopted on June 4, 2012. The CAP was prepared to reduce and encourage reductions in GHG emissions from all sectors within the City by 15 percent by 2020 as compared to a 2006 baseline. The City compares and collects GHG emissions data for its municipal operations and tracks county-wide GHG emissions. An indicator of the success of these efforts is a measured reduction in GHG emissions using protocols discussed in the CAP. No specific GHG emission thresholds of significance are included in the CAP or GHG Inventory Policy.

4.7.2 Thresholds of Significance

As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7(a), a threshold of significance is an identifiable quantitative, qualitative or performance level of a particular environmental effect, non-compliance with which means the effect will normally be determined to be significant by the agency and compliance with which means the effect normally will be determined to be less than significant.

According to Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would result in a significant impact if it would:

- Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. (*GHG Emissions Generation*)
- Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. (*GHG Emissions Reduction Plans and Policy*)

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 provides guidance for determining the significance of impacts from GHG emissions. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a) specifies that a lead agency should make a good-faith effort, based on the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate the amount of GHG emissions resulting from a project. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a) further states that a lead agency shall have discretion to determine, in the context of a particular project, whether to:

- 1) Quantify GHG emissions resulting from a project; and/or
- 2) Rely on a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards.

In addition, the CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b) states that a lead agency should consider the following factors, among others, when assessing the significance of impacts from GHG emissions on the environment:

- 1) The extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting;
- 2) Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project; and
- 3) The extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a Statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 does not establish a threshold of significance for GHG emissions. Rather, the CEQA guidelines afford the lead agency with substantial discretion in determining an appropriate significance threshold on which to evaluate the effects of GHG emissions of a particular project, which may be quantitative, qualitative, or based on performance standards. In determining the significance of a project's greenhouse gas emissions, the lead agency should focus its analysis on the reasonably foreseeable incremental contribution of the project's emissions to the effects of climate change.

To date, VCAPCD has not established quantitative significance thresholds for evaluating GHG emissions in CEQA analyses for non-industrial development projects, and thus policy consistency is used as a threshold for these projects. Therefore, this analysis, the potential significance of the project's GHG emissions will be qualitatively evaluated based on the "extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b)). The proposed project would be required by the City to comply with applicable regulations or requirements adopted to implement statewide, regional, or local plans for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. The project's consistency with such plans is discussed in the Plan Consistency evaluation provided below.

4.7.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The vast majority of individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to create a project-specific impact to directly influence climate change; therefore, the issue of climate change typically involves an analysis of whether a project's contribution toward an impact is cumulatively considerable. CEQA Guidelines, Section 15355 states that "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects.

The analysis of impacts below focuses on the North Canyon Ranch project component. The component Island Annexations Areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling unit – a nominal number of homes compared to the entire City housing stock. Further, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction, and development of the five lots would be a nominal amount of increase compared to Citywide development. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for the Islands portion of the project is for the City to annex these properties and adjust the zoning to match the County's with the closest City equivalent, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. As such, the annexation portion of the project would not cause substantial development or population growth that would generate GHG emission as a result of the annexations. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would not contribute to substantial growth not anticipated within the AQMP, and the potential impacts of the Island Annexations regarding consistency with the AQMP would be less than significant.

4.7.3.1 GHG Emissions Generation

The proposed project would potentially have a significant impact if it would generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.

Implementation of the proposed project would contribute GHG emissions during short-term construction and long-term operations activities. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 requirements, which calls for a good-faith effort to describe and calculate emissions, the amount of GHG emissions resulting from the project's construction and operations have been estimated using CalEEMod Version 2020.4.0. The project proposes 157 single-family residences and 50 multi-family residences. Previously, 159 single-family residences were proposed, which is the number of units evaluated in the air quality analysis (CalEEMod). The analysis is therefore slightly conservative (i.e., slightly overstates project emissions).

Construction Emissions

During grading and construction, GHG emissions would result mainly from trip generation (mobile sources) and the use of heavy equipment and trucks. The proposed project's construction-related GHG

emissions were estimated using the CalEEMod 2022.1.1.21 emissions estimator model. The estimated total GHG emissions associated with construction of the project as shown in the CalEEMod output files provided in Appendix C of this report would be approximately 2,512 metric tons. As construction emissions occur for a limited period of a proposed project's lifetime, as a standard practice, GHG emissions from construction are amortized over a presumed project lifetime. A proposed project lifetime of 30 years is recommended by South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)²⁹ for amortizing construction related GHG emissions, which would be conservative for the project. The proposed project's amortized construction-related emissions would be 84 MT CO₂e. The amortized construction emissions have been added to the project's annual operational GHG emissions as shown in the following discussion.

Operational Emissions

During operations, the project would generate GHG emissions associated with area sources (e.g., landscape maintenance), energy and water usage, vehicle trips, and wastewater and solid waste generation. The estimated operational emissions as well as the amortized construction emissions based on the CalEEMod output files provided in Appendix B of this report are summarized in **Table 4.7-2, Greenhouse Gas Emissions**. As shown in Table 4.7-2, the project would generate an estimated 2,823 MT CO₂e per year including the amortized construction-related emissions. As future residents of the project generate GHG emissions where they currently reside and commute, which cannot be known, the estimated emissions shown in Table 4.7-2 conservatively do not reflect the net change in global, State, or regional GHG emissions that would result from implementation of the proposed project.

Table 4.7-2
Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Generation Source	MTCO ₂ e/year
Project Emissions	
Mobile Source	2,060
Area Sources	3
Energy Utilization	589
Water Consumption	36
Solid Waste Generation	51
Refrigerants	1
Construction (Amortized)	84
Total Project Operational Emissions^a	2,823
Source: CalEEMod output sheets in Appendix C.	
Note: Total may appear not to sum due to rounding.	

The proposed project's estimated emissions shown in Table 4.7-1 are provided pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a) for informational and disclosure purposes only. However, no numeric threshold for determining the potential significance of GHG emissions for a residential project, such as a mass emissions rate (bright line threshold), per capita emissions rate (efficiency threshold), or emissions reduction percentage below an unmitigated rate (performance threshold to be generated by a mixed-use project with residential and commercial uses) has been adopted by the City, VCAPCD, SCAQMD nor any other State, regional, or local agency with jurisdiction of the proposed project site. As there are no applicable numeric standards for determining if the proposed project's estimated emissions shown in Table 4.7-2 would cause a cumulatively considerable contribution to an environmental impact under CEQA, the significance of proposed project's GHG emissions will be determined based on the "extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b)). As

²⁹ The VCAPCD does not specify a presumed lifetime for development projects in the County.

shown in Section 4.7.3.2, the project would be consistent with such plans, and therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts would be less than significant, and therefore no mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation as there are no applicable numerical thresholds adopted for determining whether a residential project's GHG emissions would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to an environmental impact under CEQA, and as the project would be consistent with applicable statewide, regional, or local plans for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions.

4.7.3.2 GHG Emissions Reduction Plans and Policy

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

As discussed above, there is no adopted numeric threshold that would be applicable to the project, the significance of the project's GHG emissions is evaluated consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b) by considering whether the project complies with applicable plans, policies, regulations, and requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. For this project, as a land use development project, the most directly applicable adopted regulatory plan to reduce GHG emissions is the, which is designed to achieve regional GHG reductions from the land use and transportation sectors as required by SB 375 and the State's long-term climate goals. This analysis considers the project's consistency with the 2017 Scoping Plan,³⁰ the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS,³¹ and the City's CAP. This evaluation of consistency with such plans is the sole basis for determining the significance of the project's GHG-related impacts on the environment.

SCAG RTP/SCS

The SCAG 2020–2045 RTP/SCS, adopted September 3, 2020, is a long-range visioning plan that builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. The RTP/SCS plans to accommodate future growth through intensification of residential and commercial land uses in urban areas to reduce VMT, which would reduce emissions of GHGs in the transportation sector, the largest contributing sector to statewide GHG emissions. **Table 4.7-3, Project Consistency with SCAG RTP/SCS Strategies**, lists the relevant strategies identified in the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS that could be implemented to help achieve the State-mandated GHG emissions reduction targets and provides an analysis of project consistency with each strategy.

³⁰ California Air Resources Board. California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan. November 2017.

³¹ Southern California Association of Governments, 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Adopted September 3, 2020.

Table 4.7-3
Project Consistency with SCAG RTP/SCS Strategies

Connect SoCal Strategies	Consistency Analysis
<p>Focus Growth Near Destinations & Mobility Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize land use patterns that facilitate multimodal access to work, educational and other destinations • Focus on a regional jobs/housing balance to reduce commute times and distances and expand job opportunities near transit and along center-focused main streets • Plan for growth near transit investments and support implementation of first/last mile strategies • Promote the redevelopment of underperforming retail developments and other outmoded nonresidential uses • Prioritize infill and redevelopment of underutilized land to accommodate new growth, increase amenities and connectivity in existing neighborhoods • Encourage design and transportation options that reduce the reliance on and number of solo car trips (this could include mixed uses or locating and orienting close to existing destinations) • Identify way to “right size” parking requirements and promote alternative parking strategies (e.g., shared parking or smart parking) 	<p>Consistent. The project site is located near existing commercial and employment destinations including the adjacent Simi Valley Town Center, as well as nearby light industrial and commercial development in western Simi Valley. The site is located near an existing Simi Valley Transit bus stop at the adjacent Simi Valley Town Center and proposes to provide a new bus stop within the project site along the proposed Falcon Street/First Street extension. The proposed extension of Falcon Street to connect with First Street would increase connectivity from existing neighborhoods to commercial and employment destinations. As the site is located close to existing destinations, the project would encourage a reduction of solo car trips.</p>
<p>Promote Diverse Housing Choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and rehabilitate affordable housing and prevent displacement • Identify funding opportunities for new workforce and affordable housing development • Create incentives and reduce regulatory barriers for building context-sensitive accessory dwelling units to increase housing supply • Provide support to local jurisdictions to streamline and lessen barriers to housing development that supports reduction of GHG emissions 	<p>Consistent. The project would not eliminate existing housing, nor would it displace residents. The project would provide diverse housing choices by including single-family residences and townhome/condo units. The project would not impede SCAG’s ability to provide funding opportunities for new workforce and affordable housing development or to create incentives and reduce regulatory barriers for building accessory dwelling units or other housing.</p>
<p>Leverage Technology Innovations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote low emission technologies such as neighborhood EVs, shared rides hailing, car sharing, bike sharing and scooters by providing supportive and safe infrastructure such as dedicated lanes, charging and parking/drop-off space • Improve access to services through technology – such as telework and telemedicine as well as other incentives such as a “mobility wallet,” an app-based system for storing transit and other multi-modal payments • Identify ways to incorporate “micro-power grids” in communities, for example solar energy, hydrogen fuel cell power storage and power generation 	<p>Consistent. The project would be required to comply with Title 24 Part 11, the Green Building Code and would provide EV chargers and/or EV-ready parking spaces and solar panels and/or solar-ready roof area as required by Code. The project would also provide a bus stop within the site along the Falcon Street extension, providing residents and visitors access by bus. Providing a community micro-power grid is not within the purview of the proposed project.</p>

Connect SoCal Strategies	Consistency Analysis
<p>Support Implementation of Sustainability Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue funding opportunities to support local sustainable development implementation projects that reduce GHG emissions • Support statewide legislation that reduces barriers to new construction and that incentivizes development near transit corridors and stations • Support local jurisdictions in the establishment of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts, Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities, or other tax increment or value capture tools to finance sustainable infrastructure and development projects, including parks and open space • Work with local jurisdictions/communities to identify opportunities and assess barriers to implement sustainability strategies • Enhance partnerships with other planning organizations to promote resources and best practices in the SCAG region • Continue to support long range planning efforts by local jurisdictions • Provide educational opportunities to local decisions makers and staff on new tools, best practices and policies related to implementing the Sustainable Communities Strategy 	<p>No Conflict. The funding, support, and implementation of these sustainability policies and strategies is the responsibility of SCAG. The project would not impede SCAG’s ability to pursue these strategies.</p>
<p>Promote a Green Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of local climate adaptation and hazard mitigation plans, as well as project implementation that improves community resiliency to climate change and natural hazards • Support local policies for renewable energy production, reduction of urban heat islands and carbon sequestration • Integrate local food production into the regional landscape • Promote more resource efficient development focused on conservation, recycling and reclamation • Preserve, enhance and restore regional wildlife connectivity • Reduce consumption of resource areas, including agricultural land • Identify ways to improve access to public park space 	<p>No Conflict. The project would provide housing units on an undeveloped lot adjacent to commercial, dining, and employment destinations, including the Simi Valley Town Center. The project site, which is located within the City’s Sphere of Influence, would be annexed to the City. The proposed development would be clustered in the southern portion of the site and the project would retain over 70 acres of open space. Additionally, the project would incorporate pocket parks, landscape lots, a landscaped median along the Falcon Street extension, slope areas, and drainage basins. The project would also retain an existing trail easement along the eastern project boundary providing hiker access from Falcon Street to the open space areas to the north. These features would support policies for the reduction of urban heat islands, carbon sequestration, preservation of wildlife connectivity, and access to park space.</p>
<p>Source: Southern California Association of Governments, 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Adopted September 3, 2020.</p>	

Climate Change Scoping Plan

In 2008, the CARB adopted the Climate Change Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change (Scoping Plan), which establishes an overall framework for measures to reduce statewide GHG emissions for various sources/sectors to 1990 levels by 2020, consistent with the reduction targets of Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32).

Table 4.7-4, 2008 Scoping Plan Consistency, provides an analysis of project consistency with these strategies.

**Table 4.7-4
2008 Scoping Plan Consistency**

Strategy	Project Consistency
<p>California Cap-and-Trade Program Implement a broad-based California Cap-and-Trade Program to provide a firm limit on emissions. Link the California Cap-and-Trade Program other Western Climate Initiative Partner programs to create a regional market system to achieve greater environmental and economic benefits for California. Ensure California's program meets all applicable AB 32 requirements for market-based mechanisms.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The Statewide Cap-and-Trade Program is aimed at government agencies and does not apply directly to the project. Further, the goal of the Program is to reduce GHG emissions from major sources (covered entities), such as electricity generation and large stationary sources (including refineries, cement production facilities, oil and gas production facilities, glass manufacturing facilities, and food processing plants), rather than from private mixed-use development such as the project.</p>
<p>California Light-Duty Vehicle GHG Standards Implement the adopted Pavley Standards and the planned second phase of the program. Align zero emission vehicle (ZEV), alternative, and renewable fuel and vehicle technology programs with long-term climate change goals.</p>	<p>Consistent. The development and implementation of Statewide Pavley Standards is not the responsibility of individual development or the project. However, the proposed development would be near shopping, dining, and employment opportunities and would provide a bus stop within the site that would encourage pedestrian or transit travel. The project would also provide EV chargers and/or EV-ready parking spaces for future installation of EV chargers as required by code that would support ZEV phase in and alternative transportation options.</p>
<p>Energy Efficiency Maximize energy efficiency building and appliance standards, and pursue additional efficiency efforts, including new technologies and new policy and implementation mechanisms. Pursue comparable investment in energy efficiency from all retail providers of electricity in California.</p>	<p>Consistent. The project would comply with the performance standards of CALGreen and Title 24 building efficiency standards, including installation of Energy Star rated appliances, high-efficiency wall and/or roof insulation, and/or high efficiency LED lighting to maximize energy efficiency.</p>
<p>Renewable Portfolio Standard Achieve a 33 percent renewable energy mix Statewide.</p>	<p>No Conflict. The project would utilize energy supplied by SCE, which reports carbon-free resources comprised 43 percent of its power mix as of calendar year 2020.³² Additionally, the project would provide solar panels as required by code to supplement electrical energy demands.</p>
<p>Low Carbon Fuel Standard Develop and adopt the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), which would reduce the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by at least ten percent by 2020.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. Development and adoption of the LCFS would not be within the purview of the development project.</p>
<p>Regional Transportation-Related GHG Targets Develop regional GHG emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicles.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. Development of GHG targets for vehicles would not be within the purview of the project. However, the project would be near shopping, dining, and employment opportunities and would provide a bus stop within the site that would encourage pedestrian or</p>

³² Edison International, 2020 Sustainability Report, 2020, Accessed on May 4, 2022, at <https://www.edison.com/home/sustainability/sustainability-report.html>

Strategy	Project Consistency
	transit travel. The project would also provide EV chargers and/or EV-ready parking spaces for future installation of EV chargers as required by code that would support ZEV phase in and alternative transportation options. All of these features would reduce transportation related GHG emissions.
Vehicle Efficiency Measures Implement light-duty vehicle efficiency measures.	Not Applicable. The implementation of vehicle efficiency measures would not be within the purview of the project. However, as more efficient vehicles, including EVs become available, project residents and customers would likely begin utilizing more efficient vehicles.
Goods Movement Implement adopted regulations for the use of shore power for ships at berth. Improve efficiency in goods movement activities.	Not Applicable. The implementation of shore power for ships and improving the efficiency of goods movement would not be within the purview of the project.
Million Solar Roofs Program Install 3,000 megawatts (MW) of solar-electric capacity under California's existing solar programs.	Consistent. The project would install solar panels per code requirements, participating in this Statewide effort.
Medium/Heavy-Duty Vehicles Adopt medium and heavy-duty vehicle efficiency measures.	Not Applicable. The implementation of vehicle efficiency measures is the responsibility of State agencies and does not directly apply to the project.
Industrial Emissions Require assessment of large industrial sources to determine whether individual sources within a facility can cost-effectively reduce GHG emissions and provide other pollution reduction co-benefits. Reduce GHG emissions from fugitive emissions from oil and gas extraction and gas transmission. Adopt and implement regulations to control fugitive methane emissions and reduce flaring at refineries.	Not Applicable. The project does not include large industrial sources and therefore would not generate substantial emissions from industrial facilities.
High Speed Rail Support implementation of a high speed rail system.	Not Applicable. This measure does not directly apply to the project.
Green Building Strategy Expand the use of green building practices to reduce the carbon footprint of California's new and existing inventory of buildings.	Consistent. The project would comply with CALGreen building standards and would include sustainability features, such as low flow water fixtures and energy star appliances. The project would include photovoltaic panels, as required by the California solar mandate.
High GWP Gases Adopt measures to reduce high GWPs.	Not Applicable. This measure is addressed to government agencies and does not directly apply to the project.
Recycling and Waste Reduce methane emissions at landfills. Increase waste diversion, composting and other beneficial uses of organic materials, and mandate commercial recycling. Move toward zero-waste.	Consistent. The project is anticipated to comprise a small percentage of Citywide waste during operations and therefore would have a minimal impact on waste facilities. Additionally, during construction, the Simi Valley Municipal Code (SVMC) Section 4.408.1 requires that the project recycle and/or salvage for reuse a minimum of 75 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition debris. SVMC Section 9-35.050 provides standards for recyclable and discard collection containers that would apply to the proposed

Strategy	Project Consistency
	multi-family residential buildings for owners/tenants during operations. All single-family residences would include separate trash and recycling bins for sorting to facilitate diversion of recyclable items from the waste stream.
Sustainable Forests Preserve forest sequestration and encourage the use of forest biomass for sustainable energy generation.	Not Applicable. This measure does not directly apply to the project as it would develop a site that is not in or adjacent to a forest area, and thus would not reduce forest sequestration of carbon. The project would retain over 70 acres of open space, and would also include landscape lots as well as landscaped pocket parks and slope areas. The project would provide a net increase in trees and tree canopy on the North Canyon Ranch site.
Water Continue efficiency programs and use cleaner energy sources to move and treat water.	Consistent. The project would include low flow plumbing features and fittings, as well as drought resistant landscaping and efficient irrigation to reduce GHG emissions associated with water conveyance and wastewater processing.
Agriculture In the near-term, encourage investment in manure digesters and at the five-year Scoping Plan update, determine if the program should be made mandatory by 2020.	Not Applicable. The project does not contain agricultural facilities, and therefore this measure is not directly applicable.
Source: California Air Resources Board, Climate Change Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change, December 2008.	

The Scoping Plan was updated in 2014, 2017, and again in 2022. The 2017 update to the Scoping Plan proposes CARB’s strategy for achieving the State’s 2030 GHG reduction target as established in Senate Bill 32 (SB 32). **Table 4.7-5, 2017 Scoping Plan Update Consistency** and **Table 4.7-6 2022 Scoping Plan Update Consistency**, provides an analysis of the project’s consistency with Scoping Plan Update (2017) and the latest Scoping Plan Update (2022) policies and primary objectives.

Table 4.7-5
2017 Scoping Plan Update Consistency

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
SB 350	Reduce GHG emissions in the electricity sector through the implementation of the 50 percent RPS, doubling of energy savings, and other actions as appropriate to achieve GHG emissions reductions planning targets in the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) process.	Consistent. SCE would be the electricity provider for the project and would be responsible for meeting the applicable RPS standards. The project would support this policy and objective with energy saving features to meet or exceed performance standards prescribed by Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and Green Building Standards. Additionally, the project would install solar panels to supplement electricity supplied by SCE. Thus, the project would support efforts of the energy sector to achieve GHG emissions reduction planning targets.
Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS)	Transition to cleaner/less-polluting fuels that have a lower carbon footprint.	Consistent. The LCFS would reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels consumed in California, and it is generally the responsibility of fuel producers,

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
		importers, or dispensers to achieve applicable benchmarks. The project would install EV chargers and/or EV-ready parking spaces for future installation of charging equipment to encourage use of EVs which would reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector and thus not conflict with the LCFS program.
Mobile Source Strategy (Cleaner Technology and Fuels [CTF] Scenario)	Reduce GHGs and other pollutants from the transportation sector through transition to zero emission and (low emission vehicles (LEVs), cleaner transit systems and reduction of VMT.	Consistent. This objective would be the responsibility of public agencies. It is not the responsibility of the project to introduce ZEVs or LEVs. However, the project would install EV chargers and/or EV-ready parking spaces for future installation of charging equipment to encourage use of EVs which would reduce GHG emissions to support transition to ZEV and LEV use. In addition, the development would provide multi-family and single-family residences located near existing shopping, dining, and employment opportunities. As such, the project would support the objective of this policy.
SB 1383	Approve and Implement Short-Lived Climate Pollutant strategy to reduce highly potent GHGs	Not Applicable. This objective would be the responsibility of public agencies. The project would not be responsible for implementing a Short-Lived Climate Pollutant strategy to reduce highly potent GHGs.
California Sustainable Freight Action Plan	Improve freight efficiency, transition to zero emission technologies, and increase competitiveness of California's freight system.	Not Applicable. This objective would be the responsibility of public agencies. The project would not be responsible for improving freight efficiency, transitioning to zero emission technologies, and increasing the competitiveness of California's freight system. Additionally, the proposed residential uses would not be anticipated to generate substantial freight traffic.
Post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program	Reduce GHGs across largest GHG emissions sources	Not Applicable. This objective would be the responsibility of public agencies. The project would not be responsible for implementing a cap-and-trade program for large GHG emissions sources.
Source: California Air Resources Board, California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, November 2017.		

Table 4.7-6
2022 Scoping Plan Update Consistency

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
<p>AB 1279 The California Climate Crisis Act</p>	<p>AB 1279 establishes the policy of the state to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, but no later than 2045; to maintain net negative GHG emissions thereafter; and to ensure that by 2045 statewide anthropogenic GHG emissions are reduced at least 85 percent below 1990 levels. The bill requires CARB to ensure that Scoping Plan updates identify and recommend measures to achieve carbon neutrality, and to identify and implement policies and strategies that enable CO2 removal solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) technologies.</p> <p>This bill is reflected directly in this Scoping Plan.</p>	<p>Consistent. The project would utilize energy supplied by SCE. The project would support this policy by required compliance with Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and Green Building Standards for energy savings, as well as providing solar panels on rooftops and carports that would generate renewable electricity to supplement project demand. It would be the responsibility of SCE to achieve the applicable carbon neutrality. According to the SCE 2020 Annual Report approximately 38% of SCE's supply portfolio in 2019 came from renewable sources eligible under California's RPS. SCE estimates that approximately 35% of its supply portfolio in 2020 came from renewable sources eligible under California's RPS. California has set RPS targets which require California retail sellers of electricity to provide 60% of energy sales from renewable resources by 2030. California also requires sellers of electricity to deliver 100% of retail sales from carbon free sources by 2045. SCE anticipates it will meet California's requirements through 2045.</p>
<p>SB 905 Carbon Capture, Removal, Utilization, and Storage Program</p>	<p>SB 905 requires CARB to create the Carbon Capture, Removal, Utilization, and Storage Program to evaluate, demonstrate, and regulate CCUS and carbon dioxide removal (CDR) projects and technology.</p> <p>The bill requires CARB, on or before January 1, 2025, to adopt regulations creating a unified state permitting application for approval of CCUS and CDR projects. The bill also requires the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency to publish a framework for governing agreements for two or more tracts of land overlying the same geologic storage reservoir for the purposes of a carbon sequestration project.</p> <p>The Scoping Plan modeling reflects both CCUS and CDR contributions to achieve carbon neutrality.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. Creation of the statewide Carbon Capture, Removal, Utilization, and Storage Program is the responsibility of CARB and does not apply directly to the project.</p>

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
<p>SB 846 Diablo Canyon Powerplant: Extension of Operations</p>	<p>SB 846 extends the Diablo Canyon Power Plant’s sunset date by up to five additional years for each of its two units and seeks to make the nuclear power plant eligible for federal loans. The bill requires that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) not include and disallow a load-serving entity from including in their adopted resource plan, the energy, capacity, or any attribute from the Diablo Canyon power plant.</p> <p>The Scoping Plan explains the emissions impact of this legislation.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The Diablo Canyon Power Plant is operated by Pacific Gas and Electric, which does not serve southern California. The Project would be served by SCE, which does not receive power from Diablo Canyon Power Plant. The project would not affect the extension of operation of the units of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant.</p>
<p>SB 1020 Clean Energy, Jobs, and Affordability Act of 2022</p>	<p>SB 1020 adds interim renewable energy and zero carbon energy retail sales of electricity targets to California end-use customers set at 90 percent in 2035 and 95 percent in 2040.</p> <p>It accelerates the timeline required to have 100 percent renewable energy and zero carbon energy procured to serve state agencies from the original target year of 2045 to 2035. This bill requires each state agency to individually achieve the 100 percent goal by 2035 with specified requirements. This bill requires the CPUC, California Energy Commission (CEC), and CARB, on or before December 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, to issue a joint reliability progress report that reviews system and local reliability.</p> <p>The bill also modifies the requirement for CARB to hold a portion of its Scoping Plan workshops in regions of the state with the most significant exposure to air pollutants by further specifying that this includes communities with minority populations or low-income communities in areas designated as being in extreme federal non-attainment.</p> <p>The Scoping Plan describes the implications of this legislation on emissions.</p>	<p>Consistent. The project would utilize energy supplied by SCE. The project would support this policy by required compliance with Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and Green Building Standards for energy savings, as well as providing solar panels on rooftops and carports that would generate renewable electricity to supplement project demand. It would be the responsibility of SCE to achieve the applicable carbon neutrality. According to the SCE 2020 Annual Report approximately 38% of SCE's supply portfolio in 2019 came from renewable sources eligible under California's RPS. SCE estimates that approximately 35% of its supply portfolio in 2020 came from renewable sources eligible under California's RPS. California has set RPS targets which require California retail sellers of electricity to provide 60% of energy sales from renewable resources by 2030. California also requires sellers of electricity to deliver 100% of retail sales from carbon free sources by 2045. SCE anticipates it will meet California's requirements through 2045.</p>
<p>SB 1137 Oil & Gas Operations: Location Restrictions: Notice of Intention: Health protection zone: Sensitive receptors</p>	<p>SB 1137 prohibits the development of new oil and gas wells or infrastructure in health protection zones, as defined, except for purposes of public health and safety or other limited exceptions. The bill requires operators of existing oil and gas wells or infrastructure within health protection</p>	<p>Consistent. The project does not propose the development of oil and gas wells or infrastructure within health protection zones or otherwise.</p>

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
	<p>zones to undertake specified monitoring, public notice, and nuisance requirements. The bill requires CARB to consult and concur with the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) on leak detection and repair plans for these facilities, adopt regulations as necessary to implement emission detection system standards, and collaborate with CalGEM on public access to emissions detection data.</p>	
<p>SB 1075 Hydrogen: Green Hydrogen: Emissions of Greenhouse Gases</p>	<p>SB 1075 requires CARB, by June 1, 2024, to prepare an evaluation that includes: policy recommendations regarding the use of hydrogen, and specifically the use of green hydrogen, in California; a description of strategies supporting hydrogen infrastructure, including identifying policies that promote the reduction of GHGs and short-lived climate pollutants; a description of other forms of hydrogen to achieve emission reductions; an analysis of curtailed electricity; an estimate of GHG and emission reductions that could be achieved through deployment of green hydrogen through a variety of scenarios; an analysis of the potential for opportunities to integrate hydrogen production and applications with drinking water supply treatment needs; policy recommendations for regulatory and permitting processes associated with transmitting and distributing hydrogen from production sites to end uses; an analysis of the life-cycle GHG emissions from various forms of hydrogen production; and an analysis of air pollution and other environmental impacts from hydrogen distribution and end uses.</p> <p>This bill would inform the production of hydrogen at the scale called for in this Scoping Plan.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. Production of transportation fuel is not applicable to the project.</p>
<p>SB 1206 Hydrofluorocarbon gases: sale or distribution</p>	<p>SB 1206 mandates a stepped sales prohibition on newly produced high-global warming potential (GWP) HFCs to transition California's economy toward recycled and reclaimed HFCs for servicing existing HFC-based equipment. Additionally, SB 1206 also requires CARB to develop regulations to increase the adoption of very low-, i.e., GWP < 10, and no-GWP technologies in sectors that currently rely on higher-GWP HFCs.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The project would not sell HFC-based equipment. The project would install HVAC units that use HFC, and these HVAC units would comply with laws in place at the time.</p>

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
<p>SB 27 Carbon Sequestration: State Goals: Natural and Working Lands: Registry of Projects</p>	<p>SB 27 requires CNRA, in coordination with other state agencies, to establish the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy by July 1, 2023. This bill also requires CARB to establish specified CO₂ removal targets for 2030 and beyond as part of its Scoping Plan. Under SB 27, CNRA is to establish and maintain a registry to identify projects in the state Carbon Sequestration: State Goals: Natural and Working Lands: Registry of Projects that drive climate action on natural and working lands and are seeking funding.</p> <p>CNRA also must track carbon removal and GHG emission reduction benefits derived from projects funded through the registry.</p> <p>This bill is reflected directly in this Scoping Plan as CO₂ removal targets for 2030 and 2045 in support of carbon neutrality.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. Carbon removal targets and strategies are the responsibility of CNRA, CARB, and other state agencies.</p>
<p>SB 596 Greenhouse Gases: Cement Sector: Net- zero Emissions Strategy</p>	<p>SB 596 requires CARB, by July 1, 2023, to develop a comprehensive strategy for the state’s cement sector to achieve net-zero-emissions of GHGs associated with cement used within the state as soon as possible, but no later than December 31, 2045. The bill establishes an interim target of 40 percent below the 2019 average GHG intensity of cement by December 31, 2035. Under SB 596, CARB must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define a metric for GHG intensity and establish a baseline from which to measure GHG intensity reductions. • Evaluate the feasibility of the 2035 interim target (40 percent reduction in GHG intensity) by July 1, 2028. • Coordinate and consult with other state agencies. • Prioritize actions that leverage state and federal incentives. • Evaluate measures to support market demand and financial incentives to encourage the production and use of cement with low GHG intensity. <p>The Scoping Plan modeling is designed to achieve these outcomes.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The project does not produce cement.</p>

<p>Executive Order N-82-20</p>	<p>Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-82-20 in October 2020 to combat the climate and biodiversity crises by setting a statewide goal to conserve at least 30 percent of California’s land and coastal waters by 2030. The Executive Order also instructed the CNRA, in consultation with other state agencies, to develop a Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy that serves as a framework to advance the state’s carbon neutrality goal and build climate resilience. In addition to setting a statewide conservation goal, the Executive Order directed CARB to update the target for natural and working lands in support of carbon neutrality as part of this Scoping Plan, and to take into consideration the NWL Climate Smart Strategy.</p> <p>Executive Order N-82-20 also calls on the CNRA, in consultation with other state agencies, to establish the California Biodiversity Collaborative (Collaborative). The Collaborative shall be made up of governmental partners, California Native American tribes, experts, business and community leaders, and other stakeholders from across the state. State agencies will consult the Collaborative on efforts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a baseline assessment of California’s biodiversity that builds upon existing data and can be updated over time. • Analyze and project the impact of climate change and other stressors in California’s biodiversity. • Inventory current biodiversity efforts across all sectors and highlight opportunities for additional action to preserve and enhance biodiversity. <p>CNRA also is tasked with advancing efforts to conserve biodiversity through various actions, such as streamlining the state’s process to approve and facilitate projects related to environmental restoration and land management. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is directed to advance efforts to conserve biodiversity through measures such as reinvigorating populations of pollinator insects, which</p>	<p>Not Applicable. Compliance with the land conservation goals is the responsibility of state agencies. Nonetheless, the project will leave much of the subject property undeveloped.</p>
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Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
	<p>restore biodiversity and improve agricultural production.</p> <p>The Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy informs this Scoping Plan.</p>	
<p>N-79-20</p>	<p>Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-79-20 in September 2020 to establish targets for the transportation sector to support the state in its goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. The targets established in this Executive Order are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero-emission by 2035. • 100 percent of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles will be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible, and by 2035 for drayage trucks. • 100 percent of off-road vehicles and equipment will be zero-emission by 2035 where feasible. <p>The Executive Order also tasked CARB to develop and propose regulations that require increasing volumes of zero-electric passenger vehicles, medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, drayage trucks, and off-road vehicles toward their corresponding targets of 100 percent zero-emission by 2035 or 2045, as listed above.</p> <p>The Scoping Plan modeling reflects achieving these targets</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This executive order is the responsibility of the state and transportation sector. The project would provide EV infrastructure that would support the use of electric vehicles.</p>
<p>N-19-19</p>	<p>Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-19-19 in September 2019 to direct state government to redouble its efforts to reduce GHG emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change while building a sustainable, inclusive economy. This Executive Order instructs the Department of Finance to create a Climate Investment Framework that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a proactive strategy for the state’s pension funds that reflects the increased risks to the economy and physical environment due to climate change. • Provides a timeline and criteria to shift investments to companies and industry sectors with greater growth potential based on their focus of reducing carbon emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change. 	<p>Not Applicable. This directive applies to the state. The project would provide EV infrastructure that would support the use of electric vehicles.</p>

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns with the fiduciary responsibilities of the California Public Employees’ Retirement System, California State Teachers’ Retirement System, and the University of California Retirement Program. <p>Executive Order N-19-19 directs the State Transportation Agency to leverage more than \$5 billion in annual state transportation spending to help reverse the trend of increased fuel consumption and reduce GHG emissions associated with the transportation sector. It also calls on the Department of General Services to leverage its management and ownership of the state’s 19 million square feet in managed buildings, 51,000 vehicles, and other physical assets and goods to minimize state government’s carbon footprint. Finally, it tasks CARB with accelerating progress toward California’s goal of five million ZEV sales by 2030 by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing new criteria for clean vehicle incentive programs to encourage manufacturers to produce clean, affordable cars. • Proposing new strategies to increase demand in the primary and secondary markets for ZEVs. • Considering strengthening existing regulations or adopting new ones to achieve the necessary GHG reductions from within the transportation sector. <p>The Scoping Plan modeling reflects efforts to accelerate ZEV deployment.</p>	
<p>SB 576 Coastal Resources: Climate Ready Program and Coastal Climate Change Adaptation, Infrastructure and Readiness Program</p>	<p>Sea level rise, combined with storm-driven waves, poses a direct risk to the state’s coastal resources, including public and private real property and infrastructure. Rising marine waters threaten sensitive coastal areas, habitats, the survival of threatened and endangered species, beaches, other recreation areas, and urban waterfronts. SB 576 mandates that the Ocean Protection Council develop and implement a coastal climate adaptation, infrastructure, and readiness program to improve the climate change resiliency of California’s coastal communities, infrastructure, and habitat. This bill also instructs the State Coastal Conservancy to</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This law applies to the state. The project is not in a coastal area and would not be affected by sea level rise or storm-driven waves.</p>

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
	administer the Climate Ready Program, which addresses the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within the conservancy's jurisdiction.	
AB 65 Coastal Protection: Climate Adaption: Project Prioritization: Natural Infrastructure: Local General Plans	This bill requires the State Coastal Conservancy, when it allocates any funding appropriated pursuant to the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018, to prioritize projects that use natural infrastructure in coastal communities to help adapt to climate change. The bill requires the conservancy to provide information to the Office of Planning and Research on any projects funded pursuant to the above provision to be considered for inclusion into the clearinghouse for climate adaption information. The bill authorizes the conservancy to provide technical assistance to coastal communities to better assist them with their projects that use natural infrastructure.	Not Applicable. This law is applicable to the State Coastal Conservancy.
B-55-18	<p>Governor Brown signed Executive Order B-55-18 in September 2018 to establish a statewide goal to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, and to achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter. Policies and programs undertaken to achieve this goal shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to improve air quality and support the health and economic resiliency of urban and rural communities, particularly low-income and disadvantaged communities. • Be implemented in a manner that supports climate adaptation and biodiversity, including protection of the state's water supply, water quality, and native plants and animals. <p>This Executive Order also calls for CARB to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a framework for implementation and accounting that tracks progress toward this goal. • Ensure future Scoping Plans identify and recommend measures to achieve the carbon neutrality goal. <p>This Scoping Plan is designed to achieve carbon neutrality no later than 2045 and the</p>	Consistent. The project would utilize energy supplied by SCE. The project would support this policy by required compliance with Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and Green Building Standards for energy savings, as well as providing solar panels on rooftops and carports that would generate renewable electricity to supplement project demand. It would be the responsibility of SCE to achieve the applicable carbon neutrality. According to the SCE 2020 Annual Report approximately 38% of SCE's supply portfolio in 2019 came from renewable sources eligible under California's RPS. SCE estimates that approximately 35% of its supply portfolio in 2020 came from renewable sources eligible under California's RPS. California has set RPS targets which require California retail sellers of electricity to provide 60% of energy sales from renewable resources by 2030. California also requires sellers of electricity to deliver 100% of retail sales from carbon free sources by 2045. SCE anticipates it will meet California's requirements through 2045.

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
<p>SB 100 California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program: emissions of greenhouse gases</p>	<p>modeling includes technology and fuel transitions to achieve that outcome.</p> <p>SB 100 mandates that the CPUC, CEC, and CARB plan for 100 percent of total retail sales of electricity in California to come from eligible renewable energy resources and zero- carbon resources by December 31, 2045. This bill also updates the state’s Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) to include the following interim targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44% of retail sales procured from eligible renewable sources by December 31, 2024. • 52% of retail sales procured from eligible renewable sources by December 31, 2027. • 60% of retail sales procured from eligible renewable sources by December 31, 2030. <p>Under SB 100, the CPUC, CEC, and CARB shall use programs under existing laws to achieve 100 percent clean electricity. The statute requires these agencies to issue a joint policy report on SB 100 every four years. The first of these reports was issued in 2021. This Scoping Plan reflects the SB 100 Core Scenario resource mix with a few minor updates.</p>	
<p>AB 2127 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure: Assessment</p>	<p>This bill requires the CEC, working with CARB and the CPUC, to prepare and biennially update a statewide assessment of the electric vehicle charging infrastructure needed to support the levels of electric vehicle adoption required for the state to meet its goals of putting at least 5 million zero-emission vehicles on California roads by 2030 and of reducing emissions of GHGs to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. The bill requires the CEC to regularly seek data and input from stakeholders relating to electric vehicle charging infrastructure.</p> <p>This bill supports the deployment of ZEVs as modeled in this Scoping Plan.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. Compliance with bill is the responsibility of the CEC, CARB, and CPUC. The project would provide EV infrastructure that would support the use of electric vehicles.</p>
<p>SB 30 Insurance: Climate Change</p>	<p>This bill requires the Insurance Commissioner to convene a working group to identify, assess, and recommend risk transfer market mechanisms that, among other things, promote investment in natural infrastructure to reduce the risks of climate change related to catastrophic events,</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The implementation of this bill is the responsibility of the Insurance Commissioner.</p>

Policy	Primary Objective	Consistency
	create incentives for investment in natural infrastructure to reduce risks to communities, and provide mitigation incentives for private investment in natural lands to lessen exposure and reduce climate risks to public safety, property, utilities, and infrastructure. The bill requires the policies recommended to address specified questions.	
AB 2061 Near-zero-emission and Zero-emission Vehicles	Existing state and federal law sets specified limits on the total gross weight imposed on the highway by a vehicle with any group of two or more consecutive axles. Under existing federal law, the maximum gross vehicle weight of that vehicle may not exceed 82,000 pounds. AB 2061 authorizes a near-zero- emission vehicle or a zero-emission vehicle to exceed the weight limits on the power unit by up to 2,000 pounds. This bill supports the deployment of cleaner trucks as modeled in this Scoping Plan.	Not Applicable. Heavy vehicles operating on highways would be used during construction of the project for soil export. During operation, the residential uses and future industrial uses would indirectly use heavy vehicles through goods and services conveyed by these vehicles. The project would not affect heavy vehicle wight standards.
Source: California Air Resources Board,. California 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan,. December 2022.		

Simi Valley Climate Action Plan

The City of Simi Valley Climate Action Plan (CAP), which was adopted on June 4, 2012, was prepared to reduce and encourage reductions in GHG emissions from all sectors within the City by 15 percent by 2020 as compared to a 2006 baseline. **Table 4.7-7, Project Consistency with Simi Valley Climate Action Plan** summarizes the strategies and project-level measures identified within the CAP that could apply to a residential development. As shown in Table 4.7-7, the project would be consistent with the applicable GHG reduction measures of the CAP.

Table 4.7-7
Project Consistency with Simi Valley Climate Action Plan

Strategy	Project Consistency
<i>Energy Reduction Measures</i>	
R2-E1 – Residential Energy Efficiency Program This measure involves the adoption of a voluntary incentive program that facilitates energy efficient design for all new residential buildings.	Consistent. The project would be required to comply with the Title 24 standards for Building Energy Efficiency that are in effect at the time of development. These standards include actions such as insulation certified by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Bureau of Home Furnishing and Thermal Insulation to reduce energy necessary to regulate building temperature and natural gas systems only installed if they do not have a continuously burning pilot light, to save energy.

Strategy	Project Consistency
<p>R2-E8 – Water Use Reduction Initiative The City’s adoption of a water use reduction goal would introduce requirements for new development.</p>	<p>Consistent. The project would be required to comply with the City’s water use restrictions on time, area, frequency, and duration of specified allowable water usages. The project also includes drought tolerant landscaping throughout the common areas of the project site, which would further reduce water use.</p>
Solid Waste	
<p>R2-W1 – City Diversion Program This measure provides a list of waste reduction measures that can be implemented for municipal operations and within the community on an individual development project level which will further strengthen existing waste reduction and diversion programs. Project-level measures within R2-W1 that apply to residential and commercial development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reuse and recycle construction and demolition waste (including, but not limited to, soil, vegetation, concrete, lumber, metal, and cardboard) that meets or exceeds the mandatory 75% currently required by the City; and • Provide interior and exterior storage areas for recyclables and green waste at all buildings. 	<p>Consistent. The project would comply with current City of Simi Valley mandatory construction and demolition waste recycling percentages. The project would comply with solid waste diversion programs and include recycling infrastructure (recyclable storage areas) as part of the project.</p>
Transportation	
<p>R2-T – Anti-Idling Enforcement This measure involves the adoption and enforcement of an Anti-Idling Ordinance for heavy duty diesel trucks, including local delivery trucks and long-haul truck transport within the City.</p>	<p>Consistent. Current State law restricts diesel truck idling to five minutes or less. Diesel trucks operating from and making deliveries to the project site are subject to this state-wide law. Construction vehicles are also subject to this regulation.</p>
<p>R2-T8 – Expand Renewable Fuel/Low-Emission Vehicle Use New developments within the City will be required to provide the necessary facilities and infrastructure in all land use types to encourage the use of low or zero-emission vehicles (e.g., electric vehicle charging facilities and conveniently located alternative fueling stations).</p>	<p>Consistent. The project would be required to comply with Title 24 Part 11, the Green Building Code and would provide EV chargers and/or EV-ready parking spaces as required by Code.</p>

The proposed project would be consistent with the Scoping Plan and major goals of SCAG’s 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, as well as applicable policies of the City’s CAP. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts would be less than significant, and therefore no mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation as there are no applicable numerical thresholds adopted for determining whether a residential project’s GHG emissions would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to an environmental impact under CEQA, and as the project would be consistent with applicable statewide, regional, or local plans for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions.

4.7.4 Cumulative Impacts

No one source or project would generate enough GHG emissions to independently affect global climate. Rather, global climate change and associated impacts are the result of the combination of the accumulation of GHGs emitted worldwide. Due to the nature of the assessment of GHG emissions and the effects of global climate change, impacts are only analyzed from a cumulative context, which as evaluated above, would be less than significant. The North Canyon Ranch project, as evaluated above, would not result in significant GHG impacts. The component Island Annexation Areas could generate a very minimal amount of new development (five residential units), which is not proposed at this time and could occur regardless of the annexation. Implementation of the project would not add a substantial impact to global climate change to the project as a whole, and impacts would be less than significant.

4.8 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

SECTION 4.0

4.8 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations to result in hydrology and water quality impacts and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided in Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this EIR.

The analysis of the North Canyon Ranch component is based on the North Canyon Ranch Preliminary Drainage Report by Tetra Tech¹ and additional information from available publications and data from various regional and local sources. The TGA report includes calculations of the water runoff from within the proposed project site and describes proposed designs to meet flood control and water quality standards. Project-related reports and materials to support this analysis are provided in **Appendix G, Hydrology and Water Quality**.

4.8.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed project site is located in the northwest portion of the City of Simi Valley's Sphere of Influence, adjacent to the City boundary. The overall project site consists of approximately 160 acres and is bounded by the Simi Valley Town Center to the south, the Big Sky Ranch residential development to the east, and primarily undeveloped lands to the north and west. Some adjacent lands and portions of the project site have been previously used for livestock grazing. The proposed development plan's limits of disturbance would cover approximately 77.5 acres of the site, primarily in the southern portions, leaving the remainder of the site (roughly 82.5 acres) in its existing condition. Currently, the site is an undeveloped mountain/hillside area that generally slopes from north to south. The site is primarily drained by three watershed sub-drains that are separated by ridgelines generally aligned north to south within the subject property. The western sub-drain extends upslope to the west and north of the site onto adjacent property. The central and eastern sub-drains also extend off-site to the north onto adjacent undeveloped property, but to a lesser extent than the western sub-drain.

Although the subject property is currently undeveloped, under existing conditions the southern portion of the site has been previously altered somewhat in connection with development of the adjacent Simi Town Center Mall by placement of fill soil and construction of two temporary detention ponds located along the southern site boundary. Currently, a series of ditches, swales, and pipes help to convey stormwater flows

¹ Tetra Tech, North Canyon Ranch TTM5658 Preliminary Drainage Report, June 2023. Note: Mapping has been updated since the report and is included as Figure 4.8-2, Site Drainage Plan, in this EIR Section.

from undisturbed northern portions of the watershed to the two existing temporary detention ponds in the southern portion of the site.² The two temporary detention ponds currently intercept and capture stormwater flows from the site's watershed sub-basins. The western pond collects runoff from the western sub-drain, while the eastern pond collects runoff from the central and eastern sub-drains.

Stormwater flowing into these ponds is detained and peak discharges are attenuated. Currently, the western pond has a 36-inch RCP outlet pipe set at an invert elevation of 957 ft, while the eastern pond has a 48-inch RCP outlet pipe set at an invert elevation of 965 ft. These existing storm drain lines were designed to intercept and convey 100-year outflows from the existing basins. The pipes convey pond discharge outflows to the south through the Simi Valley Town Center Mall site.

Although natural drainages and ravines exist on the site, there are no perennial streams within the subject property. The northern portion of the site is primarily in its natural condition relative to drainage and hydrology, while man-made ditches and erosional features located in the southern portion of the site currently convey runoff around or across the previously filled-in areas to the two detention basins that have been constructed along the southern site boundary in connection with the existing development to the south. Existing drainage features of the site are shown on **Figure 4.8-1, Existing Hydrology**.

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine Island Annexation areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation areas are surrounded on at least three sides by City jurisdiction and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (i.e., single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. These lots are dispersed within the islands, and no specific development projects are known at this time. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. As such, no changes in hydrology or water quality conditions would result as a part of the proposed project.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

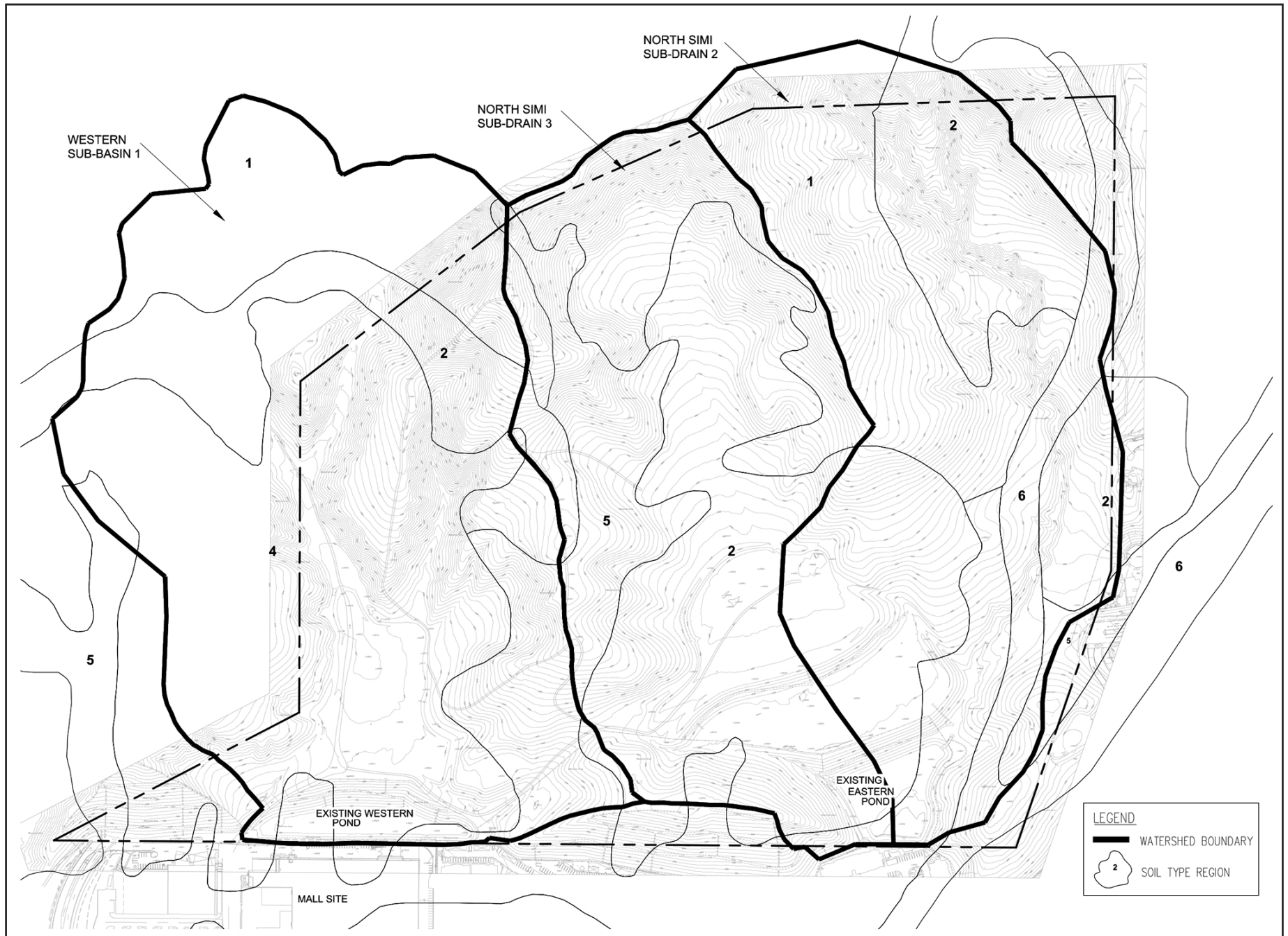
Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA)³ requires National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for the discharge of pollutants to waters of the United States from any point source. The CWA further requires the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) to establish regulations for permitting of municipal and industrial stormwater discharges under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. Final regulations for stormwater discharges include regulation of municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) discharges to surface waters through the NPDES permitting process.

In addition to regulating discharges, the Clean Water Act provides water quality standards and criteria based on a water body's designated beneficial uses. Water quality standards indicate the goals for a water body

² TGA Engineering, Inc., North Canyon Ranch Storm Drainage Report Prepared for the City of Simi Valley Department of Public Works and Ventura County, Updated June 2023, p. 8.

³ 33 U.S.C. section 1251, et seq.



Source: TGA Engineering, Inc., May 2016.

by designating its uses, setting criteria to protect those uses, and establishing provisions to protect water bodies from pollutants. Water quality criteria are adopted to protect those designated uses.

When beneficial uses of a particular receiving water body are compromised by water quality issues, Section 303(d) of the CWA requires identification and listing of that water body as impaired. Once a water body has been listed, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) must be developed for the impairing pollutant(s). The TMDL allocates the loads among current and future pollutant sources to the water body. In addition to trash and debris, common pollutants of concern having the potential to affect water quality generally fall into one of the following seven categories: sediments, nutrients, bacteria/viruses, oil/grease, metals, organic compounds, and pesticides.

State

California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

California's primary statute governing water quality and water pollution for both surface waters and groundwater is the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1970 (Porter-Cologne Act), codified in Water Code Sections 13000-14958. The Porter-Cologne Act grants the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) and one of the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) power to protect water quality through the adoption of appropriate plans and policies, the regulation of discharges of waste to surface and groundwater, regulation of waste disposal sites, and to the right to issue orders for the cleanup of discharges of hazardous materials and other pollutants. The Porter-Cologne Act also establishes reporting requirements for unintended discharges of any hazardous substance, sewage, or oil or petroleum product.

Each RWQCB must develop and adopt a Water Quality Control Plan ("Basin Plan") for its region. The Basin Plan must conform to the policies of the Porter-Cologne Act and those established by the SWRCB. To implement state and federal law, the Basin Plan lists beneficial uses for surface water and groundwater in the region and provides narrative and numeric water quality standards to protect those beneficial uses. The Porter-Cologne Act also allows a RWQCB to include water discharge prohibitions applicable to specific conditions, areas, or types of waste within its regional plan.

Construction General Permit

The SWRCB issued a statewide general NPDES Permit for stormwater discharges from construction sites (Water Quality Order 2009-0009-DWQ, originally adopted by the SWRCB in 2009 and modified by 2010-0014-DWQ [NPDES No. CAS000002]).⁴ Construction sites with a disturbed area of one or more acres are required to either obtain individual NPDES permits for stormwater discharges or be covered by the Construction General Permit (CGP). Coverage under the CGP is accomplished by preparing a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), a Construction Site Monitoring Program, and sediment basin design calculations. The primary objective of the SWPPP is to identify proper best management practices (BMPs) for construction sites to reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater discharges as well as authorized non-stormwater discharges from the site during construction. The SWPPP also outlines the monitoring and sampling program required for a construction site.

California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) creates a framework for sustainable, local groundwater management in California. SGMA directed the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to identify priority groundwater basins for the purpose of implementing SGMA. SGMA requirements to create sustainable groundwater management agencies and sustainable groundwater

⁴ State Water Resources Control Board, NPDES Order No. 2010-0014-DWQ, General Permit No. CAS000002, Accessed January 12, 2024 at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2010/wqo2010_0014dwq.pdf

management plans no later than 2022 applies only to high and medium priority basins. Local groundwater basins include the Simi Valley Groundwater Basin and Gillibrand subbasin. SGMA does not require a Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan for either the Simi Valley Basin or the Gillibrand subbasin, as they were not rated as inadequate or high or medium priority basins.⁵

Regional and Local

Ventura County Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems Permit

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) issued a NPDES Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements (Order No. R4-2021-0105, NPDES Permit No. CAS004004)⁶ under the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Act for discharges of urban runoff in public storm drains in Ventura County. The Permittees are the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, County of Los Angeles, 85 incorporated cities within the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles County, Ventura County Watershed Protection District, County of Ventura, and 10 incorporated cities within Ventura County (collectively “the Co-Permittees”). This permit regulates stormwater discharges from MS4s in the area of the project site. The NPDES permit provides requirements for new development and significant redevelopment, including implementation of treatment BMPs and flow control requirements. To implement the requirements of the NPDES permit, the County established development planning guidance and control measures that control and mitigate stormwater quality and quantity impacts to receiving waters as a result of new development and redevelopment. The County also implements other source detection and elimination programs (i.e., hydromodification controls) as well as maintenance measures.

Ventura County Storm Water Quality Urban Impact Mitigation Plan

The Ventura County Stormwater Quality Urban Impact Mitigation Plan (SQUIMP)⁷ was developed as part of the municipal storm water program to address storm water pollution from new development and redevelopment by the private sector. The Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program (Ventura Program) was established pursuant to Section 402(p) of the Federal Clean Water Act, which requires that all point source discharges of pollutants into waters of the United States, including discharges from municipal storm drain systems, be regulated by an NPDES permit.

The County SQUIMP was developed as part of the municipal storm water program to address storm water pollution from new development and redevelopment by the private sector. The SQUIMP contains a list of the minimum required BMPs) to be implemented by projects listed as subject to SQUIMP requirements, which includes home subdivisions of 10 or more units.

2020 Urban Water Management Plan for Waterworks District No. 8

The 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) is developed by Waterworks District No. 8 and the City of Simi Valley.⁸ The UWMP evaluates water supply over 25-year period in five-year increments, identifies and quantifies adequate water supplies, and implements conservation and efficient use of urban water supplies. The fundamental finding of the UWMP, based on conservative water supply and demand

⁵ California Water Resources Control Board, GIS Portal, Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Status Map, Accessed February 13, 20224 at:

<https://gispublic.waterboards.ca.gov/portal/apps/storymaps/stories/35d50036fbfe44e5ac3b1a6e8c1e8d21>

⁶ California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region, Regional Phase I MS4 NPDES Order Permit, Order No. R4-2021-0105, NPDES Permit No. CAS004004, Accessed February 13, 2024 at:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water_issues/programs/stormwater/municipal/public_docs/2022/1_Order\(ACC-RPSignature\).pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water_issues/programs/stormwater/municipal/public_docs/2022/1_Order(ACC-RPSignature).pdf)

⁷ Ventura County for the Ventura County Flood Control District, the County of Ventura, and the Cities of Ventura County, Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Urban Impact Mitigation Plan, July 27, 2000.

⁸ Kennedy Jenks for Waterworks District No. 8 and City of Simi Valley, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 1, 2021.

assumptions, it that the Waterworks District 8 anticipates adequate supplies in wet and dry years to meet customer demands.

Groundwater Management Plan Gillibrand Groundwater Basin

The Groundwater Management Plan (GWMP) is a monitoring and management plan for the Gillibrand Groundwater Basin, which is located in Tapo Canyon north of the City of Simi Valley and is one of the two main groundwater basins underlying the City. The City of Simi Valley is a primary pumper within the Gillibrand Groundwater Basin for irrigation and municipal supplies. The GWMP provides two goals: to provide a standard methodology for the collection of geohydrologic data within the basin and to provide a standard methodology for the regular analysis and reporting of geohydrologic data to enable informed management decisions for the basin.⁹

4.8.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to hydrology and water quality has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, in which are based upon the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact when the proposed project has potential to (shorthand title in parentheses:

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? (***Water Quality Standards, Discharge Requirements, and Surface or Ground Water Quality***)
- Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. (***Groundwater Supplies***)
- 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: (***Alteration of Existing Drainage Pattern***)
 - Result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.
 - Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;
 - 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
 - Impede or redirect flood flows?
- In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation. (***Inundation Impacts - Not Applicable***)
- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. (***Conflict with a Water Quality Control or Sustainable Groundwater Plan***)

The project site is not located in a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, as discussed in the project's Notice of Preparation. There are no special flood hazard areas mapped within the project site based on a review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Insurance Rate Map, Panel Number 06111C0842E (January 20, 2010). Additionally, according to the City's General Plan, the project site is not located in an area subject to potential inundation in the event of a dam failure. As such, there would be no impact regarding placement of housing or structures within a 100-year flood hazard area or exposure of people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam. Also, the project site is not located within a tsunami hazard area and

⁹ Geoscience, Groundwater Management Plan Gillibrand Groundwater Basin, May 21, 2007.

is not located near a substantial body of water subject to potentially damaging oscillations (sloshing) called seiches. According to the City's General Plan EIR, there is no history of substantial seiche in the City during earthquakes. As such, potential for inundation impacts due to these occurrences will not be evaluated further.

4.8.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

North Canyon Ranch

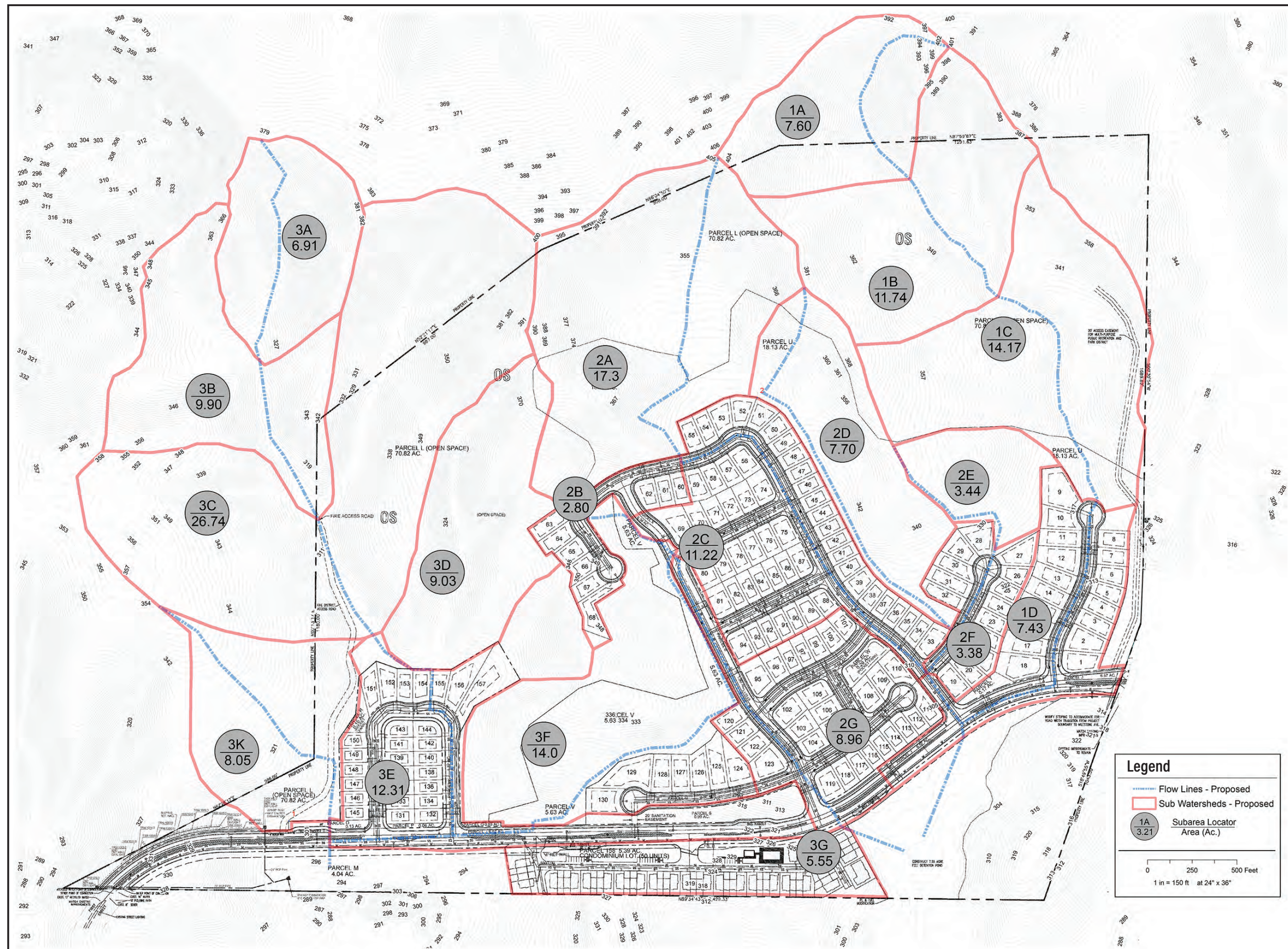
The proposed project would develop a residential community with single-family and multi-family units on approximately 75.5 acres of an approximately 160-acre site that is currently undeveloped. The project would include construction of streets for access and circulation within the site, a surface parking lot to serve the multi-family residential structures, installation of utilities and drainage structures, as well as landscaping. More detailed discussion of these and other project elements are discussed in Section 2.0 Project Description. **Figure 4.8-2, Site Drainage Plan**, shows the proposed drainage facilities including debris basins, surface and subsurface drainage conveyance infrastructure, and improvements to the existing temporary detention basins within the project site.

The project site is subject to requirements of the Simi Valley Hillside Ordinance that would reduce erosion and sedimentation impacts, including stabilization of slopes by creating steps on large cut or fill areas. All disturbed slopes will be stabilized by contour grading, and cut slopes will be further stabilized using "J" drains where applicable according to the City's hillside ordinance. All disturbed slopes will be vegetated following grading with native or drought tolerant plants to further reduce erosion.

As shown in Figure 4.8-2, the project would construct several debris basins at various points along the perimeter of the proposed development area to capture sediment and debris from the upslope portions of the site that would remain undeveloped. The design and capacity of the proposed debris basins would be based on the current Ventura County Technical Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Control Measures. The proposed site drainage plan would include inlets and conveyance infrastructure to collect stormwater runoff from the developed portions of the site, including hardscape areas and streets. The proposed site drainage plan would also connect with the constructed upslope debris basins to convey flows from undeveloped portions of the site that are not infiltrated within the debris basins.

The proposed storm drain system would convey flows to the south to discharge into the improved detention basins along the southern boundary of the site. As under current conditions, flows would leave the two detention basins via existing storm drain inlets that would be either protected in place or connected to the improved detention basin. The project would be subject to the LARWQCB MS4 Permit for Ventura County. As such, this project is required to capture, treat, retain and infiltrate runoff from storm events in which stormwater runoff will be limited to five percent of the site's effective impervious area. The western detention pond improvements would include placement of gravel and sand under 14,300 square feet of the basin bottom to allow for bio-infiltration of runoff, which would exceed the calculated infiltration area necessary to ensure compliance with the MS4 Permit conditions.

The project would be required to submit a SWPPP for approval by the City and the LARWQCB that will describe BMPs to be implemented during construction activities. BMPs would be designed to minimize sediment or other construction-related pollutants from being carried off-site by stormwater runoff. The SWPPP would indicate the general locations to employ BMPs during construction.



Source: Tetra Tech.

Required Island Annexations

No changes in hydrology or water quality conditions would result as a part of the proposed project. The LAFCo approval of annexation is the only action proposed.

4.8.3.1 Water Quality Standards, Discharge Requirements, and Surface or Ground Water Quality

A significant impact could occur if the project would violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality. To address potential water quality impacts during construction and operations, the project developer must prepare a project-level SQUIMP in accordance with section 402(p) of the Federal Clean Water Act.

North Canyon Ranch

Construction

Potential water quality impacts of development projects during construction typically are related to pollutants being carried offsite by stormwater runoff. The project's construction activities could generate pollutants that may include, but not be limited to, sediment from graded areas, petroleum product spills or leaks associated with construction equipment operation or maintenance, and concrete washout residue.

Construction activities during grading, including cut and fill activities, soil compaction and transport, excavation, and trenching, would result in disturbed soils that are susceptible to erosion from wind and rain. Erosion of disturbed soils could result in sediment transport via stormwater runoff from the project area. As stated in the City's General Plan EIR, erosion and sedimentation affect water quality through interference with photosynthesis, oxygen exchange, and the respiration, growth, and reproduction of aquatic species. Runoff from construction sites may include sediments and pollutants such as oils, fuels, paints, and solvents, which could contribute to a degradation of water quality.

The project's grading would disturb approximately 75.5 acres of the project site, avoiding disturbance of over half of the 160-acre subject property that would be left in its existing condition. Under existing conditions, all runoff from the site is captured in two temporary detention ponds at the southern portion of the site. These detention ponds would be retained and improved as part of the project, and would remain in place and operable throughout construction, retaining runoff within the site, which would trap sediment and potentially other pollutants before being released offsite to the existing storm drain system.

The project permittee must submit a SWPPP for approval by the City and the LARWQCB. The SWPPP shall reference BMPs to be implemented during the construction process to minimize erosion and sedimentation, as well as impacts of other construction-related pollutants. The submittal of the SWPPP to the LARWQCB shall be memorialized by a Notice of Intent (NOI), to be included in the SWPPP, and the issuance of a Waste Discharge Identification Number from the state. The SWPPP shall be accompanied by an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan that will indicate the general locations where the required BMP's will be employed, as well as staging areas where materials with the potential to pollute stormwater would be stored and provided secondary containment such as a berm. Throughout construction, the developer would be required to have the site inspected to insure that BMPs are adequate and maintained in compliance with SWPPP conditions.

Typical BMPs appropriate for construction activities address four major categories:

1. Erosion Control: Measures to prevent erosion and thus reduce sediment loads in stormwater.
2. Sediment Control: Measures to trap eroded sediments to prevent increasing sediment loads in the storm drain system or waterways.

3. Site Management: Measures to properly locate and maintain staging areas so that pollutants that may be spilled or leaked may be captured onsite and cleaned up without entering the storm drain system or waterways.
4. Materials and Waste Management: Measures to ensure waste materials and trash are properly enclosed and stored while awaiting removal from the site.

Because the CGP is a NPDES permit for construction activities, implementation of BMPs identified by the project's SWPPP required for project coverage under the CGP would comply with NPDES requirements and therefore would not violate applicable waste discharge requirements.

Although a SWPPP for the project construction has not been prepared or approved at this time, an approved SWPPP that enumerates specific BMPs to be implemented during construction to manage potential pollutants will be required for project approval.

With implementation of BMPs pursuant to an approved SWPPP, no substantial addition of pollutants would occur, and no violation of waste discharge requirements would occur. Compliance with regulations discussed above would reduce the risk of water degradation due to construction activities. Since violations of water quality standards would be minimized or eliminated by regulatory compliance, impacts to water quality from construction activities would be considered less than significant.

Operations

Development of the proposed project would create impervious surfaces on the currently undeveloped site, which could increase runoff from the site during operations. Runoff from urban development typically contains contaminants such as oil, grease, metals, and landscaping chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, etc.), which may be conveyed from the proposed streets and hardscape areas to the storm drain system and ultimately degrade water quality.

The project design incorporates features to conform with the City's Hillside Ordinance, which would reduce erosion on graded slopes during operations by use of contour grading for disturbed slopes, provision of "J" drains, and establishment of vegetation on disturbed areas. The project would retain and improve two stormwater detention basins that currently exist in the southern portion of the project site, where existing inlets allow flows to enter the City's storm drain system. During operations, all runoff from the project's drainage system would be discharged to either of these improved detention basins to attenuate flow volumes prior to leaving the site. The project would construct a series of debris basins at the upslope perimeter of the proposed development area, to capture and trap sediment and debris from undeveloped portions of the project site and associated sub-drain watersheds. The debris basins would be designed with capacities based on the current Ventura County Technical Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Control Measures. From the detention basins, stormwater would enter the proposed storm drain system that would convey flows to the south to discharge into the improved detention basins along the southern boundary of the site.

The project permittee would be required to comply with the MS4 Permit for Ventura County, which requires the project to capture, treat, retain and infiltrate runoff from storm events in which stormwater runoff will be limited to five percent of the site's effective impervious area, which will be demonstrated in a Low Impact Development (LID) plan to be reviewed and approved by the City of Simi Valley Department of Public Works, prior to grading. The project design has incorporated improvements to the western detention pond to accommodate and infiltrate runoff by placement of gravel and sand under 14,300 square feet of the basin bottom to allow for bio-infiltration of runoff, which would exceed the calculated infiltration area necessary to ensure compliance with the MS4 Permit conditions.

During operations, stormwater pollutants of concern would be treated by use of the extended detention basins, which would provide medium to high removal efficiency of sediment, nutrients, metals, trash, debris, oxygen demand, and toxic organics. The project would direct runoff from parking areas to landscape areas where possible to infiltrate for pre-treatment, and pervious pavers may be incorporated in portions of the site. Storm drain inlets will be stenciled with language such as “Don’t Dump! Drains to Ocean”, and all public access points along channels will have signs to prohibit illegal dumping. Additional features that would address potential stormwater pollution include providing trash storage areas for the multi-family residential use area that incorporate walls to prevent off-site transport of trash, and parking lot islands with drought tolerant or native vegetation.

Compliance with MS4 Permit conditions and regulations discussed above, and approval of a site-specific LID would reduce the risk of water degradation due to operations. Since violations of water quality standards would be minimized or eliminated by regulatory compliance, project impacts to water quality from operations would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

No changes in hydrology or water quality conditions would result as a part of the proposed project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.8.3.2 Groundwater Supplies

Simi Valley’s groundwater supply has been identified as impaired due to the presence of high levels of TDS and high chloride and nitrate concentrations, largely due to urban development and past agricultural activities. Accordingly, the majority of groundwater use in the City is for irrigation purposes. The project does not propose to construct water wells for production or dewatering, and so would not directly remove groundwater during construction or operations.

North Canyon Ranch

Construction

During construction, the project’s temporary use of water for dust control or other uses would be nominal on a regional basis, and would not be produced by removing groundwater onsite. As such, construction impacts would be considered to be less than significant.

Operations

The project would introduce impervious surfaces within the undeveloped project site, which could increase runoff, but would not substantially interfere with recharge to the underlying groundwater basin, which occurs from percolation of rainfall and irrigation runoff. According to the City’s General Plan EIR, the groundwater basin is not identified in overdraft condition. The proposed development area represents a small percentage of the total acreage of the groundwater basin, which underlies significant amounts of open space that would remain undeveloped. Thus, the project’s increase in impermeable surfaces would not substantially increase the overall impervious surfaces relative to the groundwater basin. Additionally, as discussed above, the project would retain two stormwater detention ponds at the southern portion of the site

and construct several debris basins at the upslope portions of the site as well, where infiltration of runoff would occur. Potable water uses and impacts on water supplies, which may include use of groundwater sourced from offsite locations, are evaluated in Section 4.15, Utility and Service Systems. As such, impacts regarding depletion of groundwater or interference with groundwater recharge would be considered to be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

No changes in hydrology or water quality conditions would result as a part of the proposed project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.8.3.3 Alteration of Existing Drainage Pattern

North Canyon Ranch

Construction

During construction activities, the project permittee would be required to implement a SWPPP and monitor the adequacy of BMPs to minimize erosion and siltation impacts. BMPs that address erosion and siltation could include, but not be limited to, sandbags, straw or fiber rolls, and stabilization of slopes after grading. Compliance with implementing BMPs per an approved SWPPP would be required by existing regulations. These regulatory requirements are designed to direct and manage runoff during construction, avoiding siltation or flooding and directing flows to infiltration areas or drain to existing drainage facilities. As such, construction impacts would be less than significant regarding erosion or siltation through altering drainage patterns in a way that would result in substantial erosion or siltation, flooding or impediment of flood flows, or runoff in exceedance of the capacity of the existing or planned drainage system.

Operations

Currently, drainage patterns within the site convey runoff from north to south, where flows are collected in two existing on-site detention ponds at the southern boundary of the site that were constructed to manage stormwater for the Simi Valley Town Center Mall development to the south. Stormwater flowing into these ponds is detained and peak discharges are attenuated. From the existing temporary detention ponds, stormwater outflows that leaves the site are conveyed to the south and west by existing stormwater drainpipes and drainage facilities to the Arroyo Simi. The proposed project would retain and improve the two existing detention ponds relatively near the existing locations of the temporary detention ponds. The proposed site drainage plan refers to the improved western pond as Pond A, and the improved eastern pond as Pond B. The improved detention ponds would continue to connect to offsite drainage facilities to the south of the project site.

An on-site storm drain system of inlets and drain pipes would be constructed throughout the development area to collect and convey stormwater runoff from the developed portions of the site including hardscape areas and streets. The on-site storm drain system would convey all flows collected from the site to be detained in Pond A or Pond B in the southern portion of the site, where all runoff from the site currently is collected.

In addition to the two detention ponds that would be retained in the southern portion of the site, several new debris basins would be constructed within the site along the upslope perimeter of the proposed development area to capture sediment or other debris carried by runoff from undeveloped portions of the site and graded slope areas. Runoff water not infiltrated within the debris basins would enter the project's storm drain system and conveyed to the two detention basins at the southern portion of the site. This proposed drainage system would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site and area as the existing drainage patterns onto the site and off of the site would be maintained.

The proposed new debris basins have been designed with sufficient capacity to comply with the current Ventura County Technical Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Control Measures. Pursuant to requirements of the MS4 Permit for Ventura County, the project's drainage system has been designed to capture, treat, retain and infiltrate runoff from storm events in which stormwater runoff will be limited to five percent (5%) of the site's effective impervious area. For this project, the required infiltration volume has been calculated to be 0.325 acre-feet or 14,157 cubic feet. Based on the Ventura County Technical Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Control Measures, the project would need to provide an infiltrating surface area of 13,308 square feet. The project proposes to line a portion of Pond A with gravel and sand to provide an infiltration surface area of 14,300 square feet, which would exceed the calculated requirement.

After development of the project, the peak discharge rates from Pond A and Pond B would be 92.5 cfs and 113.8 cfs, respectively. These release rates would represent a reduction in the release rates under existing conditions, and even more substantial reductions of approximately 63.6% and 65.9%, respectively compared to release rates of the affected watershed areas that existed prior to the construction of the temporary basins within the site and the Simi Valley Town Center Mall development.

The project has been designed so that the existing drainage patterns would not be substantially altered, and so that the improved detention ponds and proposed debris basins perform adequately and in accordance with the standards set forth by Ventura County. Inlets, headwalls, ditches, swales, and pipes have been preliminarily sized and designed per the project's Storm Drainage Analysis Preliminary Report, to be refined during final design. Water quality and first flush volumes would be adequately handled through the use of infiltration that intercept flows from disturbed and otherwise developed areas. As such, the project would have a less than significant impact related to erosion or siltation due to alteration of drainage patterns in a way that would result in substantial erosion or siltation, flooding or impediment of flood flows, or runoff in exceedance of the capacity of the existing or planned drainage system.

Required Island Annexations

No changes in hydrology or water quality conditions would result as a part of the proposed project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant without the need for mitigation.

4.8.3.4 Conflict with a Water Quality Control or Sustainable Groundwater Plan

A project could have a significant impact if it were to conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater plan.

North Canyon Ranch

Construction

As described in the Regulatory Setting section and in Impact Analysis Section 3.8.3.1, the permittee will be required to provide a project-level SQUIMP in accordance with section 402(p) of the Federal Clean Water Act, and consistent with the County SQUIMP, which requires that all point source discharges of pollutants into waters of the United States, including discharges from municipal storm drain systems, be regulated by an NPDES permit. The County SQUIMP contains a list of the minimum required BMPs to be implemented by projects listed as subject to the SQUIMP, which includes home subdivisions of 10 or more units.

The project (permittee) must also submit a SWPPP for approval by the City and the LARWQCB. The SWPPP shall reference BMPs to be implemented during the construction process to minimize erosion and sedimentation, as well as impacts of other construction-related pollutants. The submittal of the SWPPP to the LARWQCB shall be memorialized by an NOI, to be included in the SWPPP, and the issuance of a Waste Discharge Identification Number from the state. The SWPPP shall be accompanied by an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan that will indicate the general locations where the required BMP's will be employed, as well as staging areas where materials with the potential to pollute stormwater would be stored and provided secondary containment such as a berm. Throughout construction, the developer would be required to have the site inspected to insure that BMPs are adequate and maintained in compliance with SWPPP conditions.

Typical BMPs appropriate for construction activities address four major categories:

1. Erosion Control: Measures to prevent erosion and thus reduce sediment loads in stormwater.
2. Sediment Control: Measures to trap eroded sediments to prevent increasing sediment loads in the storm drain system or waterways.
3. Site Management: Measures to properly locate and maintain staging areas so that pollutants that may be spilled or leaked may be captured onsite and cleaned up without entering the storm drain system or waterways.
4. Materials and Waste Management: Measures to ensure waste materials and trash are properly enclosed and stored while awaiting removal from the site.

A compliant SWPPP for the project construction phase must be reviewed and approved by the City of Simi Valley Department of Public Works prior to project grading, enumerating which specific BMPs will be implemented to manage potential pollutants. As such, project regulatory compliance through the SWPPP review and approval process will assure the project will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater plan, and project impacts would be less than significant impact.

Operations

To control water quality and to reduce runoff and provide adequate groundwater infiltration, consistent with state and local regulations, the project permittee would be required to comply with the MS4 Permit for Ventura County, which requires the project to capture, treat, retain and infiltrate runoff from storm events in which stormwater runoff will be limited to five percent of the site's effective impervious area, which will be demonstrated in a project LID plan to be reviewed and approved by the City of Simi Valley Department of Public Works, prior to project grading. The project design has incorporated improvements to the western detention pond to accommodate and infiltrate runoff by placement of gravel and sand under 14,300 square feet of the basin bottom to allow for bio-infiltration of runoff, which would exceed the calculated infiltration area necessary to ensure compliance with the MS4 Permit conditions. Conflicts with water quality control

plans and sustainable groundwater plans are unlikely for typical development projects, given the extensive network of regulatory compliance documents and requirements, including UWMPs and Groundwater Management Plans, where they exist. Regulatory compliance through the LID review and approval process will assure the North Canyon Ranch project will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater plan, and project impacts would be less than significant impact.

Required Island Annexations

No changes in hydrology or water quality conditions would result as a part of the proposed project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

With regulatory compliance, impacts would be less than significant without the need for mitigation.

4.8.4 Cumulative Impacts

A project's impact under CEQA is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, considers buildout of the General Plan to be the overall cumulative project set, with specific known projects in the vicinity listed as a part of that related project set (Table 3-1). As the proposed project (the combined effects of North Canyon Ranch and the Required Island Annexations) would not result in a significant hydrology or water quality impact, it would not have a cumulatively considerable impact on any hydrology or water quality issues. Further, none of the related projects are located adjacent to the North Canyon Ranch site, which is the only project component where development is proposed, or would create a localized combined impact. The proposed project would abide by all regulations related to water quality standards, discharge requirements and surface or groundwater quality; would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or substantially alter existing drainage patterns; and would not conflict with a water quality control or sustainable groundwater plan. As such, the project would not contribute significantly to a cumulative impact.

4.9 LAND USE AND PLANNING

SECTION 4.0

4.9 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts to aesthetic resources and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts related to land use and planning, where warranted. This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR.

4.9.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions. For ease of understanding the planning designations and zoning classifications for the project site, the requested changes to these are listed as well.

Environmental Setting

The City of Simi Valley (City) is located in the southeast corner of Ventura County bordering the City of Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley to the east and Ventura County's Conejo Valley to the southwest. The City is surrounded by the Santa Susana Mountain range to the north and the Simi Hills to the south. The City is close to full build out, according to the Simi Valley General Plan Land Use and Community design element.

Project Site

North Canyon Ranch

The project site for this EIR analysis is comprised of the proposed North Canyon Ranch property plus the Required Annexation Areas. The Project Description is set forth in Section 2.0. The 160-acre property is currently vacant and undeveloped with some previously modified areas, which include some large, graded building pads, unimproved dirt roads, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, and two debris basins that protect urban areas to the south from stormwater and debris flows. Artificial ditches have been constructed to direct stormwater flows around the perimeter of previously graded areas. The graded areas contain fill from construction of the Simi Town Center Mall to the south, which opened in 2005. The portion of the site proposed for project grading and development is 91 acres in size. Surrounding land uses consist of the previously mentioned multi-family residential project, business park/commercial uses west of said residential project, the Simi Valley Town Center Mall further south, residential subdivisions to the northeast, Ventura County Fire Protection District Station 47 to the east, undeveloped, hillside open space to the north, and a commercial business park and Simi Valley Landfill and Recycling Center to the west-southwest.

Island Annexations

The additional Island Annexation Areas are subdivided and developed with streets, utilities and existing land uses. **Table 4.9-1, Required Island Annexation Areas Land Use Summary** (this table is also

provided in the Project Description as Table 2-3) characterizes the number of parcels, dwelling units, type of units, land area. They are County Islands, which are surrounding or adjacent to areas of City jurisdiction and have been previously disturbed and developed primarily as single family subdivisions, with several properties in other uses, including Sinaloa Lake, a park and a plant nursery.

**Table 4.9-1
Required Island Annexation Areas Land Use Summary**

Island No. (Street Reference Name)	Number of Parcels (APNs)	Number of Dwelling Units ^(a)	Number of Vacant Res. Parcels (i.e., potential new Dwelling Units)	Land Area	Land Area (gross acres – 2019 City data)	City General Plan Land Use Designation	City Zoning (Proposed Zoning and Pre-Zoning)
Area 1 (Anderson Drive)	29	29	0	8.5	10.67	Very Low Density	RL/RL(A)
Area 2 (Sharp Road)	56	57 ^(b)	1	37.66	38.74	Very Low Density	RE(A)/RVL(A)
Area 3 (Ditch Road)	28	24 ^(c)	2	43.92	44.05	Very Low Density / Open Space	RE(A)
Area 4 (Township Avenue)	12	12	0	10.45	10.50	Very Low Density / Low Density	RL/RL(A)
Area 5 (Flood Street)	128	125	0	32.14	39.78	Medium Density	RL
Area 6 (Walnut Street)	5	1	0	14.14	14.69	Low Density	RL/RMod
Area 7 (Vista Lago Drive)	13	13	0	12.28	13.15	Low Density / Medium Density	RE-1
Area 8 (Sinaloa Lake)	171	164	2	130.35	145.54	Very Low Density / Low Density	RL ^(f) /RVL ^(f) /OS ^(f) /RE ^(f)
Area 9 (N. Belhaven Ave)	2	0	0	9.04	8.94	Community Park	RE/OS ^(f)
Total	444	425 ^(d)	5	298.47 ^(e)	326.06		

Source: Parcel Data from Rincon for City of Simi Valley, June 2020. Pre-Zoning, City data 2019/2020.

Key to General Plan Residential Designations (allowable density or size): Residential Estate (0-1 du/ac); Very Low Density (0-2 du/ac); Low Density (2.1-3.5 du/ac); Medium Density (3.6-5.0 du/ac); Community Park (typically range in size from a minimum of 20 acres to 200 acres or more).

Key to Zoning Districts (min lot size): RE = Residential Estate (1 ac); RVL = Residential Very Low (20,000 square feet); RL = Residential Low (2.1-3.5 du/ac); RMod = Residential Moderate (5.1-10 du/ac); OS = Open Space (1 du/40 ac); (A) = Animal Overlay Zone (allows Animal Keeping on residential lots, may require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) depending on animal type and use)

Notes: The APN column includes all Island Parcels with APNs. Not all APNs are residential lots. Some APNs encompass roadways, flood infrastructure, Sinaloa Lake, etc., and thus the next two columns do not sum to equal the APN column.

^(a) Some lots may include accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on one or more lots, which are not included in these totals.

^(b) Includes a parcel with one duplex and two detached single family homes.

^(c) Includes a parcel with three detached single-family homes and a parcel with two detached single-family homes.

^(d) Existing residential count was established using Assessor's records, supplemented with Google Earth and select site visits.

^(e) Total may not add exactly due to rounding.

^(f) Indicates proposed zoning; the sites have not yet been pre-zoned.

There are five vacant single family lots dispersed within the Annexation Areas (in Islands 2, 3, and 8), which are adjacent to other subdivided and developed areas. Thus, the entire Annexation Areas portion of the project site is disturbed and/or developed.

As shown in Table 4.9-1, the Islands comprise 444 parcels, most of which are developed with single family homes; several duplexes; three open space lots; and five potentially developable, residential, vacant lots; for a total land area of approximately 326 acres.

Existing Land Use Designations and Zoning

North Canyon Ranch

Figure 4.9-1, Existing & Proposed General Plan Land Use - North Canyon Ranch, provides existing and proposed general plan designations for the North Canyon Ranch property, which is within the City Sphere of Influence (SOI) and City Urban Boundary (CURB) areas. Ventura County's land use designation for the site is Open Space. The City pre-planned General Plan land use designations for the site, are Open Space (1 du/40 ac), Residential Medium Density (3.6 – 5.0 du/ac), and Residential Moderate Density (5.1 – 10.0 du/ac). The project would maintain the same land use designations on site, but in a different configuration that would match the proposed development. This change in configuration requires a City General Plan Amendment.

The Ventura County zoning for the site is Open Space (OS-160 ac). City pre-zoning for the site is Residential Moderate (RMod) and Open Space (OS), as shown in **Figure 4.9-2, Existing & Proposed Zoning - North Canyon Ranch**. While the City previously pre-zoned some properties within the SOI, the North Canyon Ranch project site was not yet pre-zoned. Thus, the project requires a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change to implement the proposed project (see Chapter 2.0, Project Description, and Section 4.9.3, Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures).

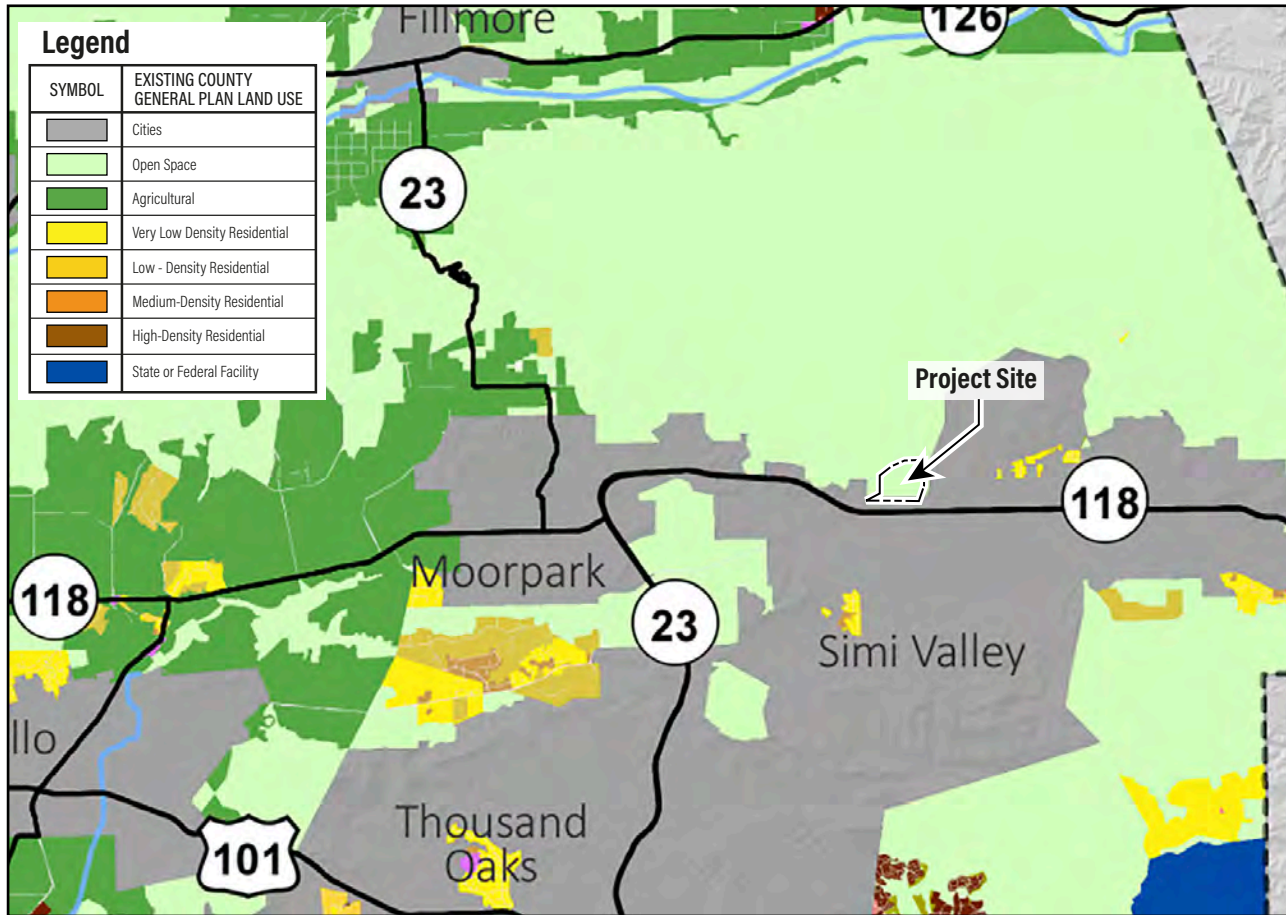
Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated Island areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The required annexation areas are depicted in detail in Chapter 2.0, Project Description, Figures 2-3a-c. The previously presented Table 4.9-1, Required Island Annexation Areas Land Use, lists the proposed City General Plan designation and zoning. The existing and proposed general plan land use designations for the Island Annexations are shown in **Figure 4.9-3A, Required Island Annexations General Plan/Land Use - Areas 1, 2, and 3**, **Figure 4.9-3B, Required Island Annexations General Plan/Land Use - Areas 4, 5, and 6**, and **Figure 4.9-3C, Required Island Annexations General Plan/Land Use - Areas 7, 8, and 9**.

The existing and proposed zoning classifications for the Island Annexations are shown in **Figure 4.9-4A, Required Island Annexations Zoning - Areas 1, 2, and 3**, **Figure 4.9-4B, Required Island Annexations Zoning - Areas 4, 5, and 6**, and **Figure 4.9-4C, Required Island Annexations Zoning - Areas 7, 8, and 9**.

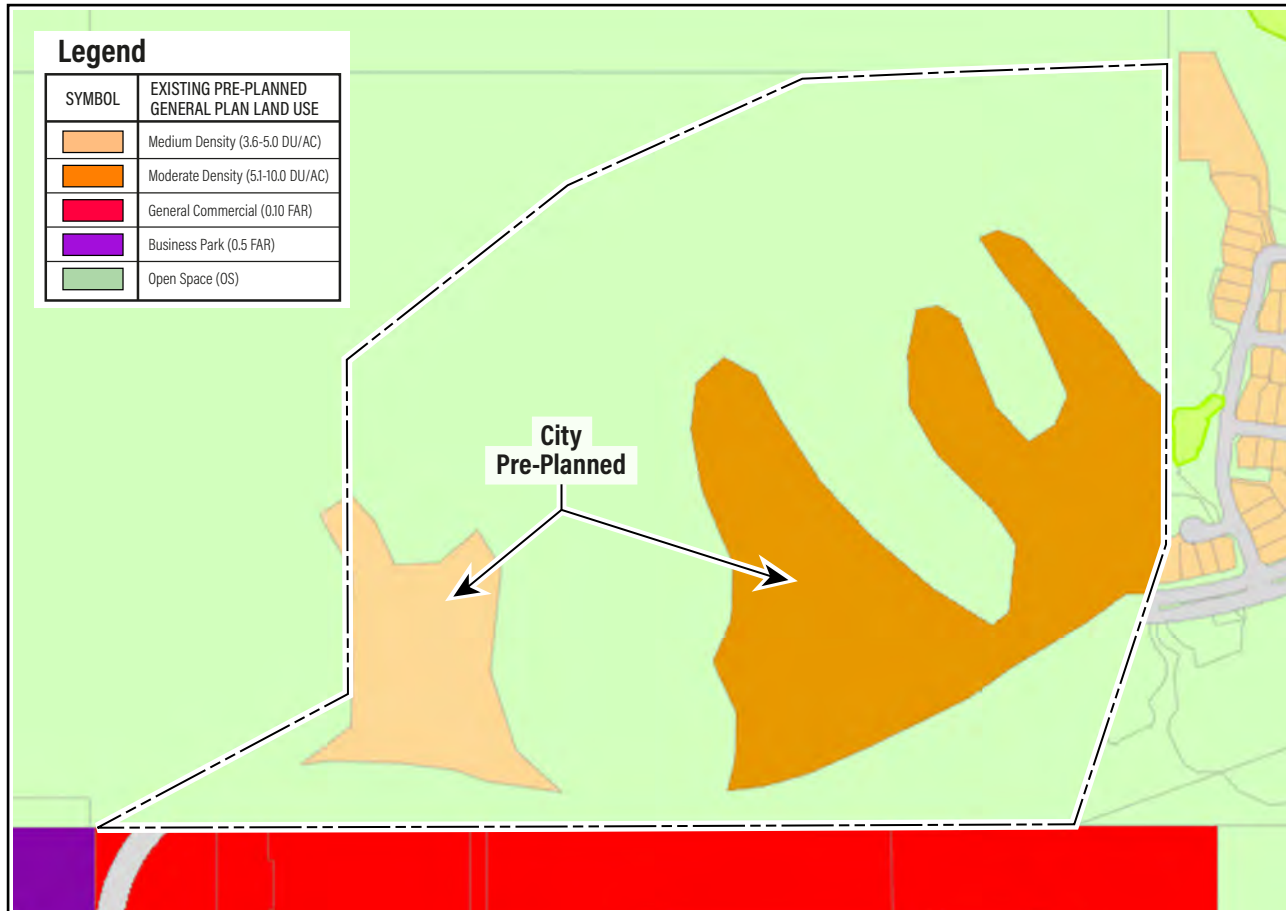
The annexation area includes five single-family residential parcels (together approximately 7.96 acres) that are part of long established tracts that could be developed with five single-family homes. No physical changes or changes in density are proposed for these sites.

Existing County General Plan Land Use



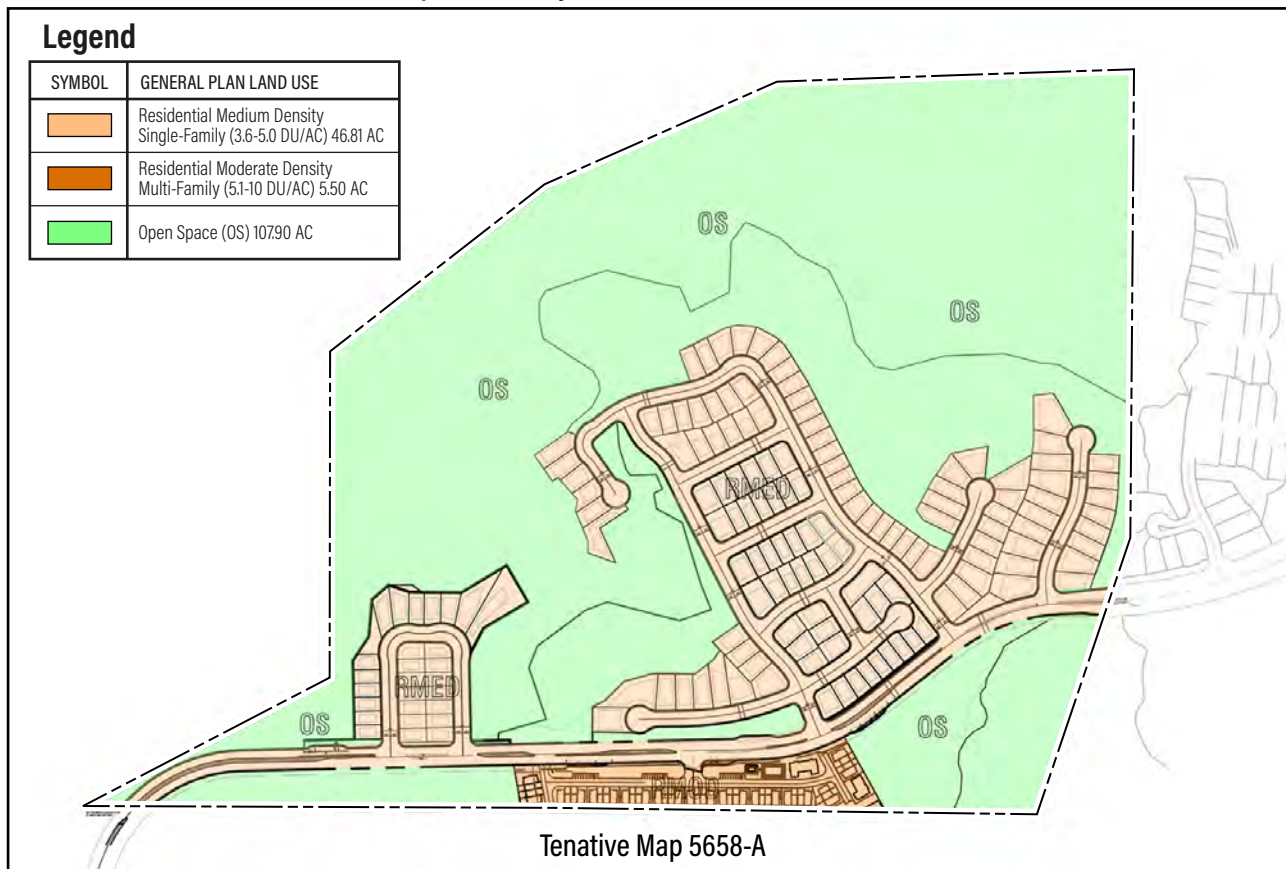
Source: Ventura County Resource Management Agency website accessed April 2023.

Existing City Pre-Planned General Plan Land Use



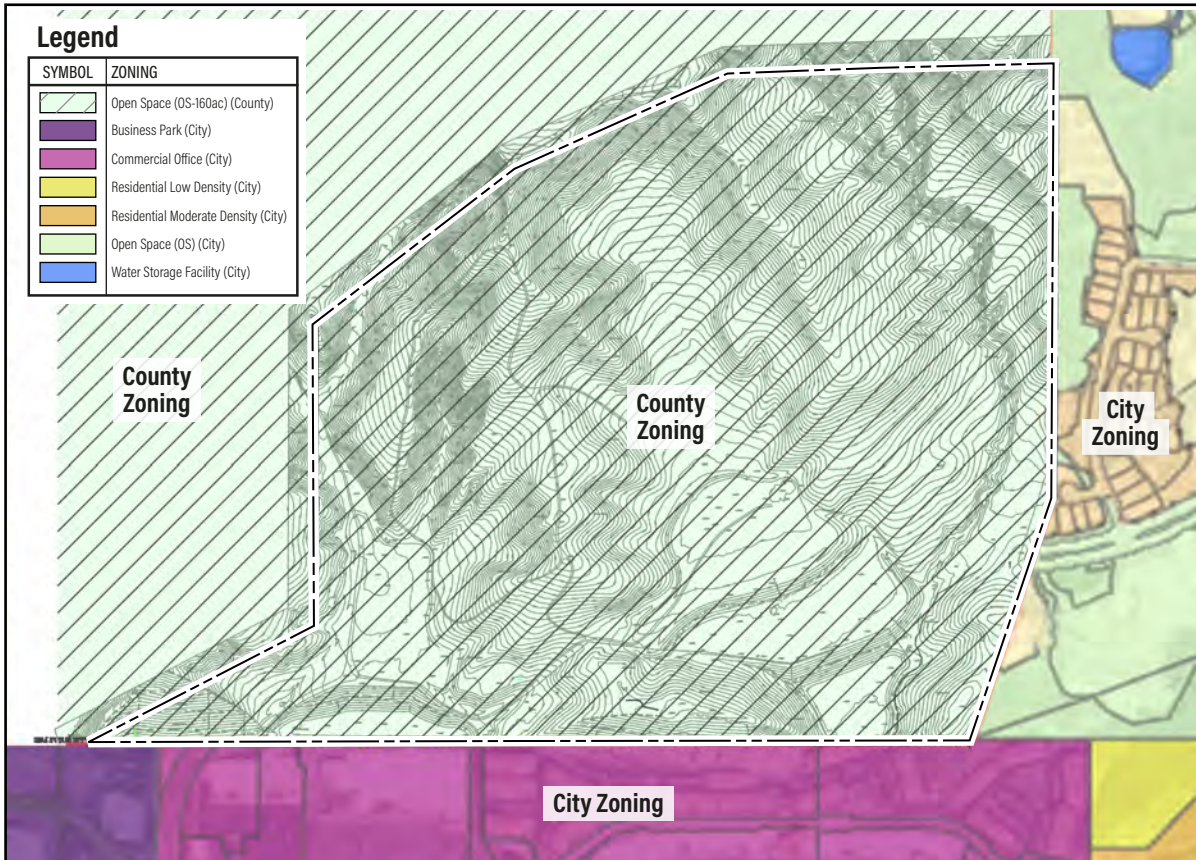
Source: City of Simi Valley, 2023.

Proposed Project General Plan Land Use



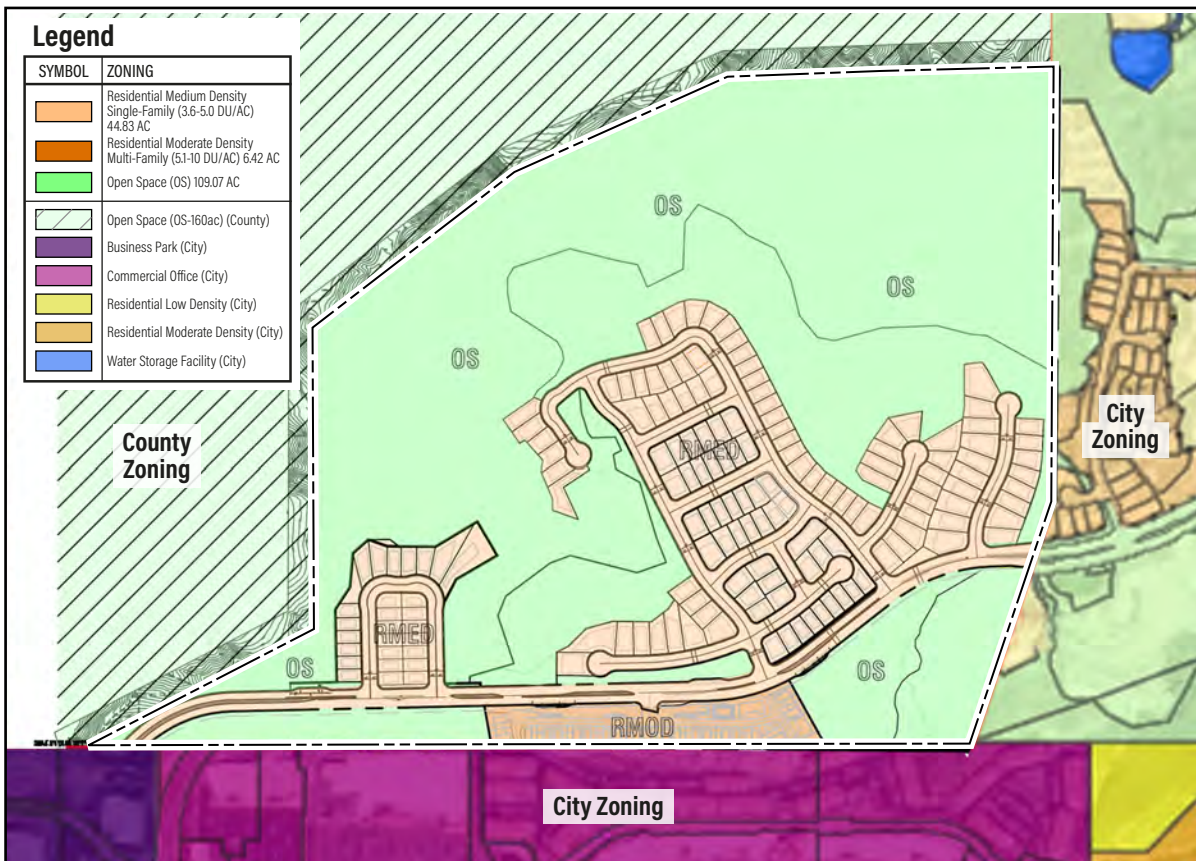
Source: Christiansen & Company, Mar. 6, 2023.

Existing County Zoning

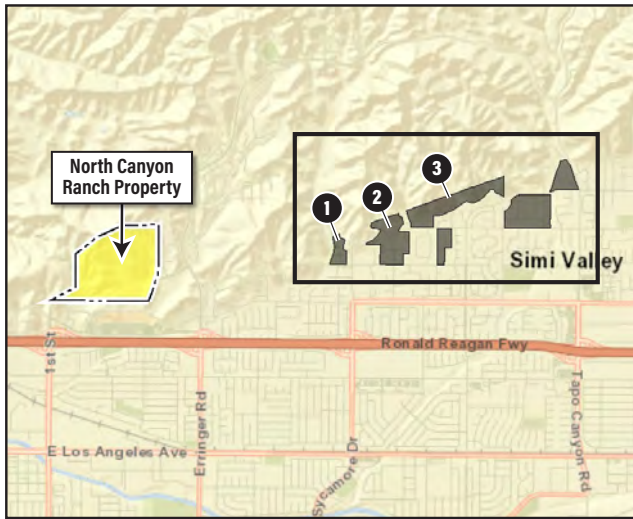


Source: Ventura County & City of Simi Valley, 2023.

Proposed Project Zoning

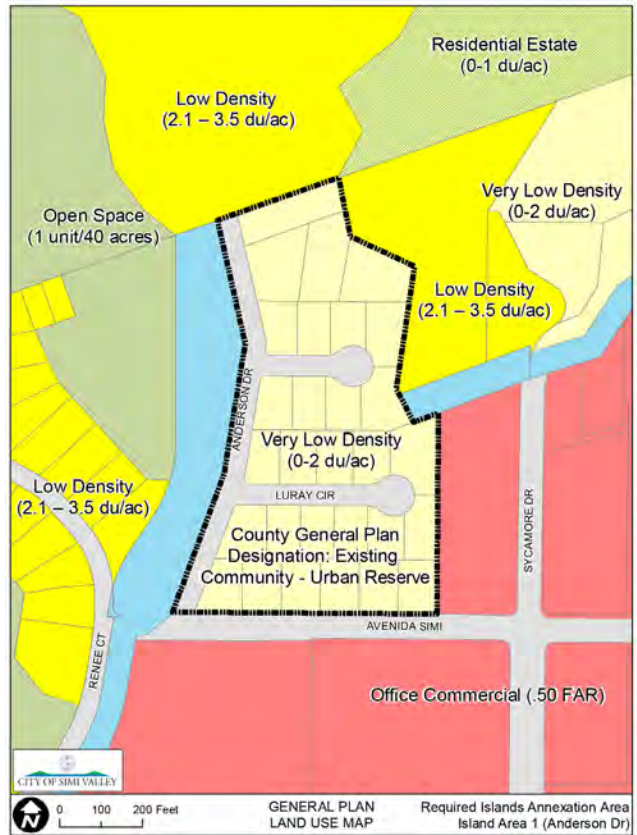


Source: Christiansen & Company, Mar. 6, 2023, and Ventura County & City of Simi Valley, 2023.



General Plan Designations Key Map

1 Area 1



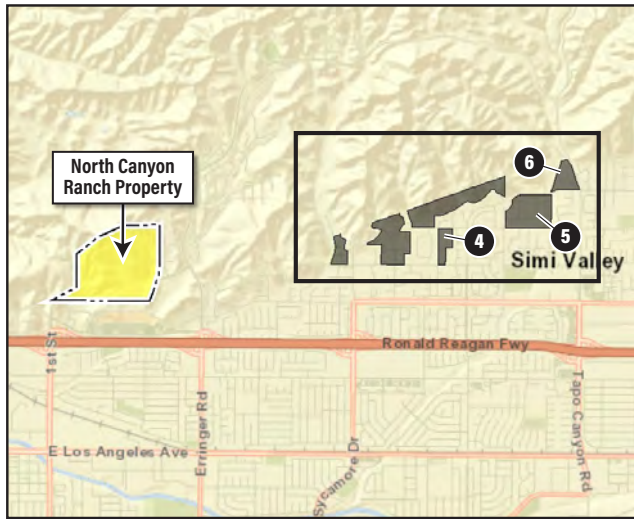
2 Area 2



Map Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., for City of Simi Valley.

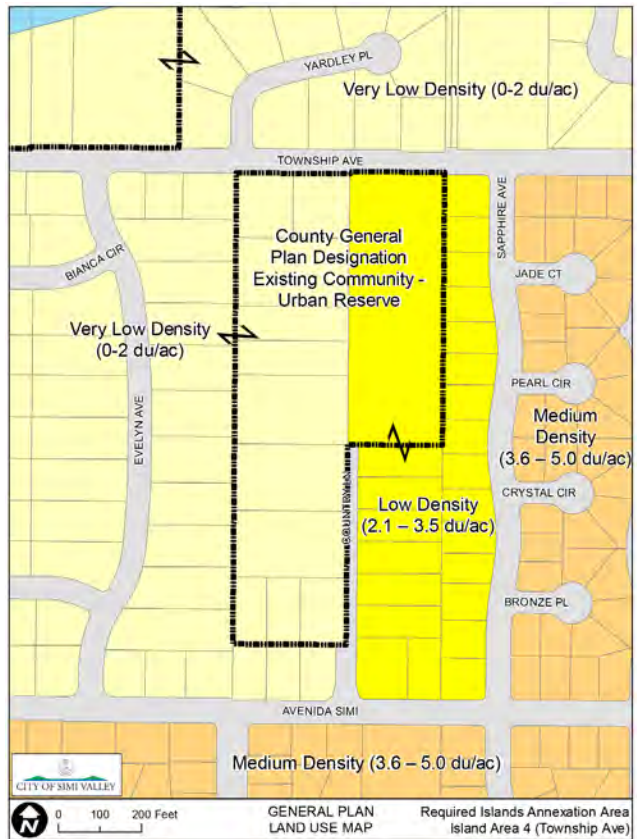
3 Area 3



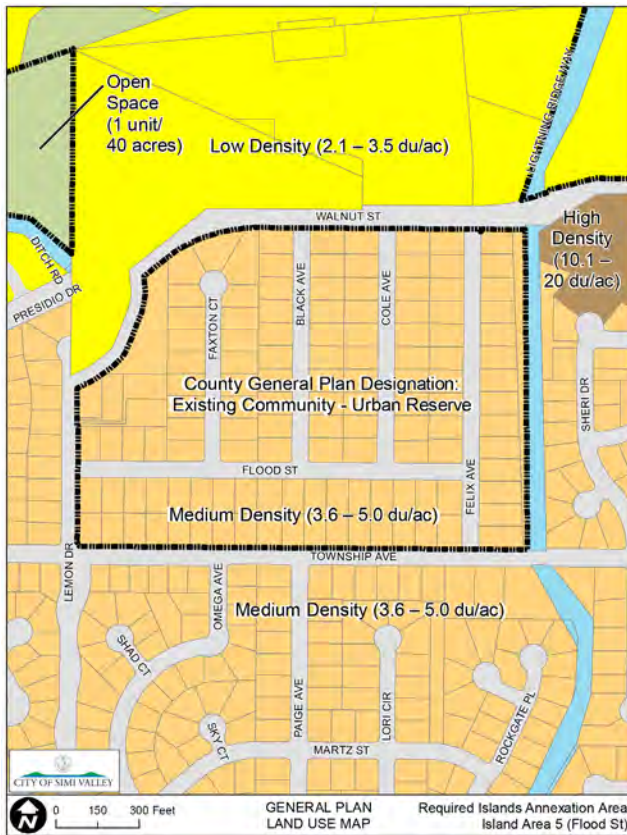


General Plan Designations Key Map

4 Area 4

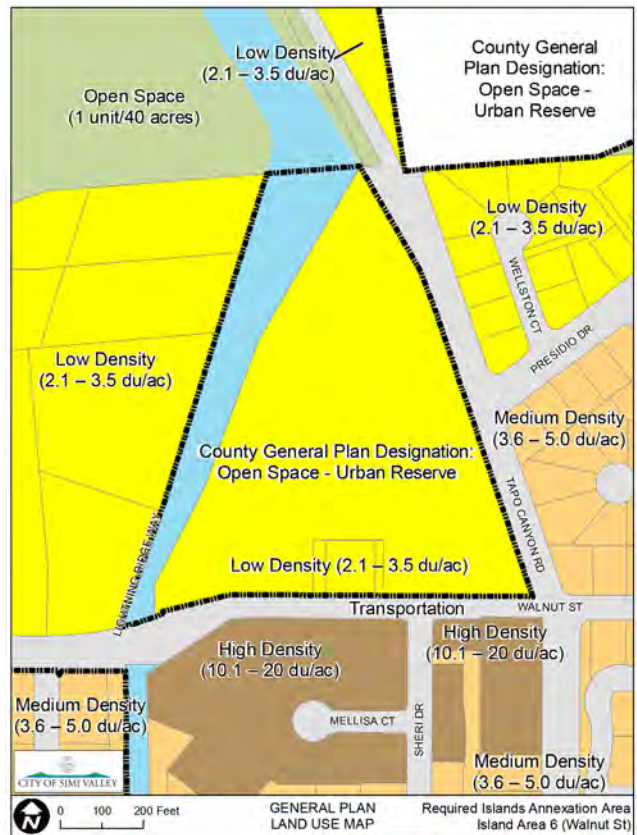


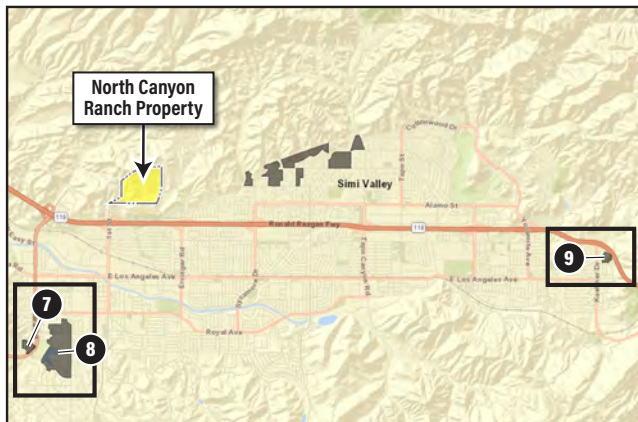
5 Area 5



Map Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., for City of Simi Valley.

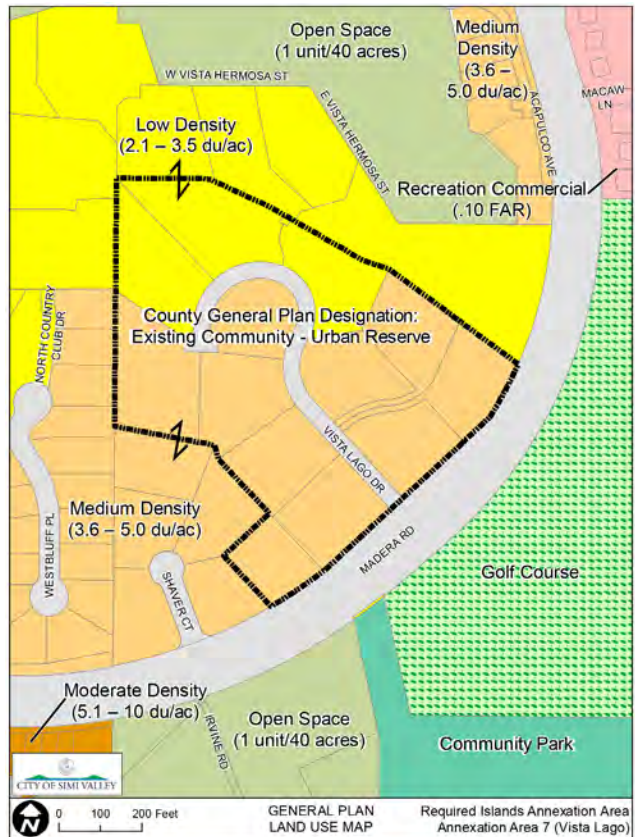
3 Area 6



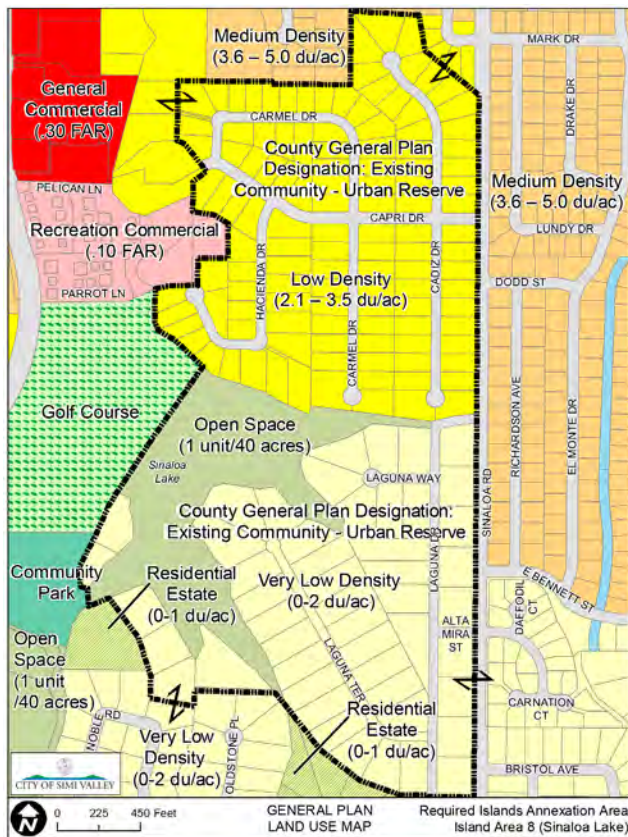


General Plan Designations
Key Map

7 Area 7

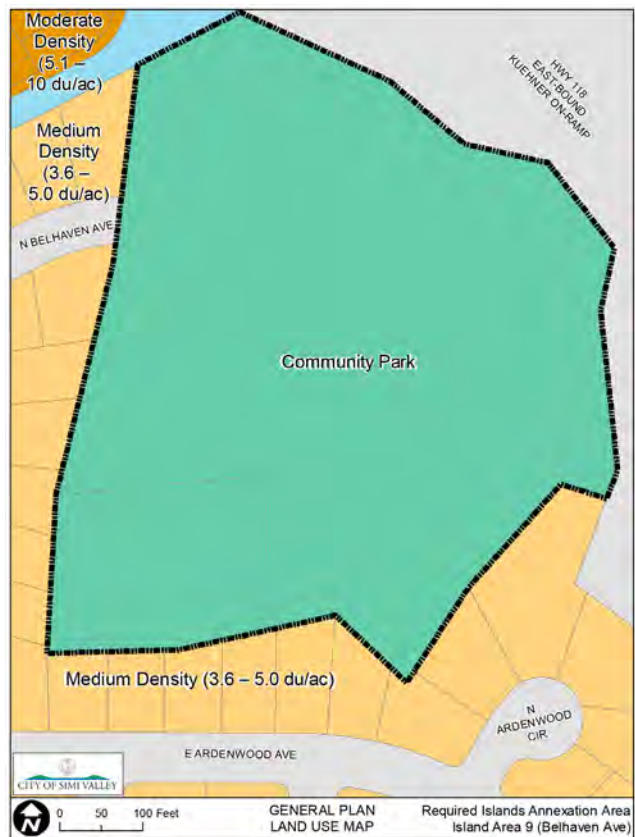


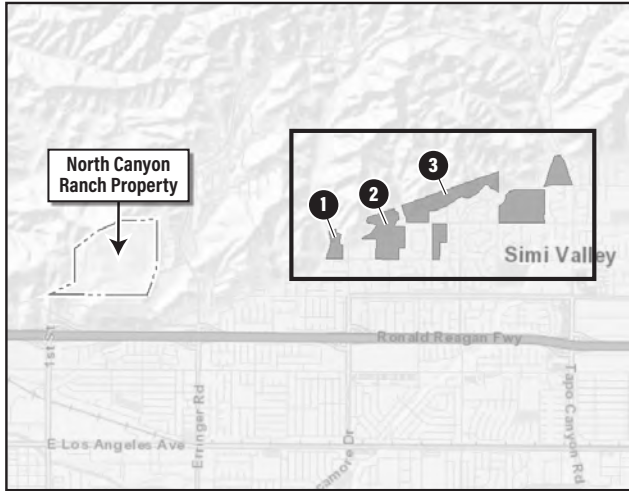
8 Area 8



Map Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., for City of Simi Valley.

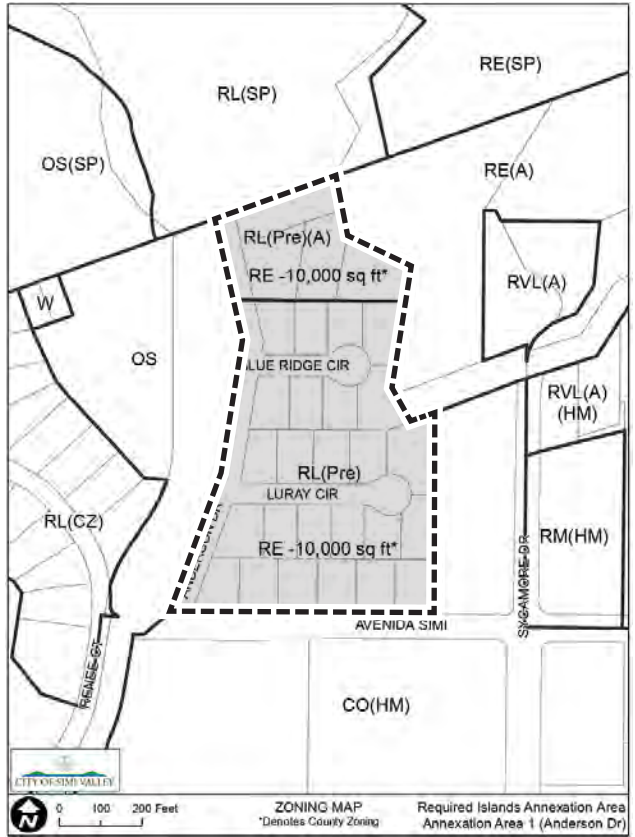
9 Area 9



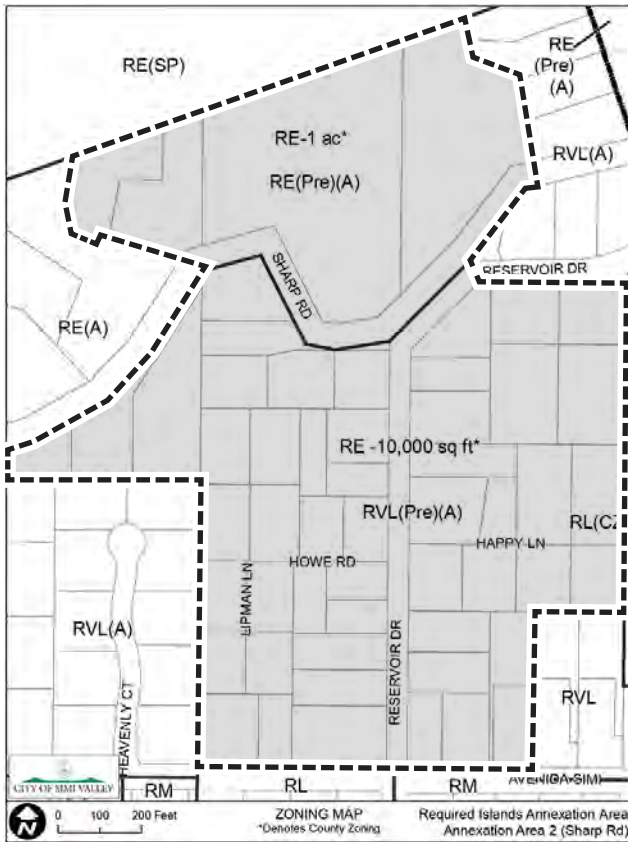


General Plan Designations
Key Map

1 Area 1

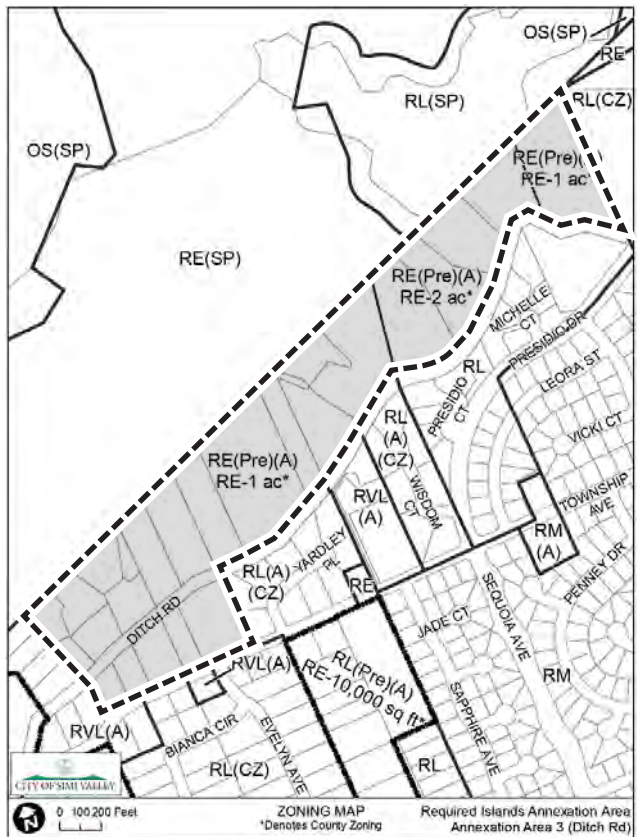


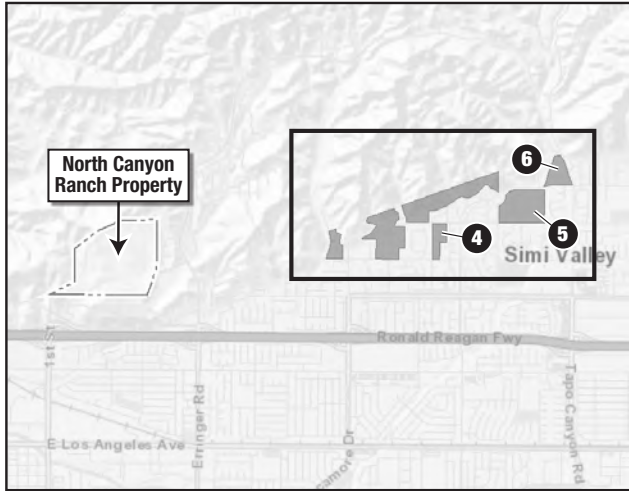
2 Area 2



Map Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., for City of Simi Valley.

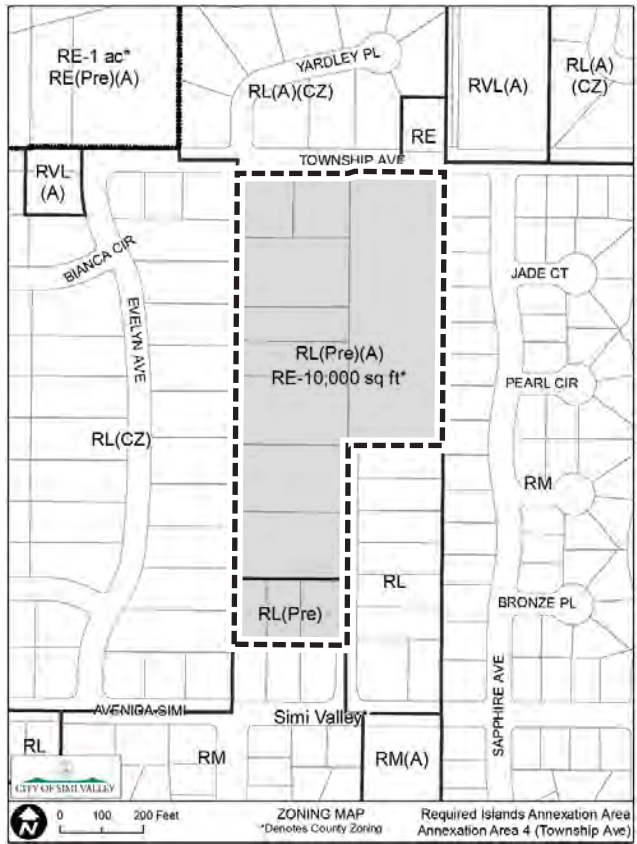
3 Area 3



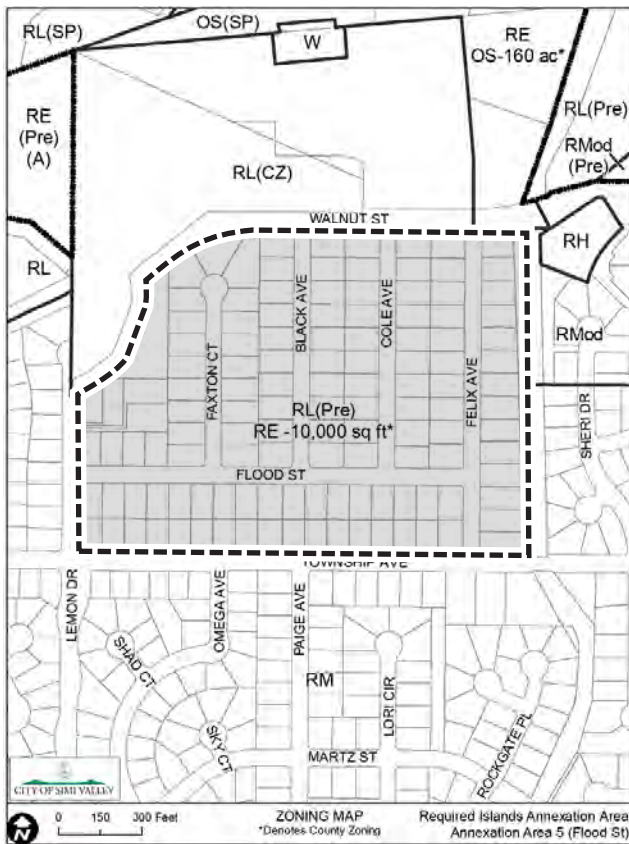


General Plan Designations Key Map

4 Area 4

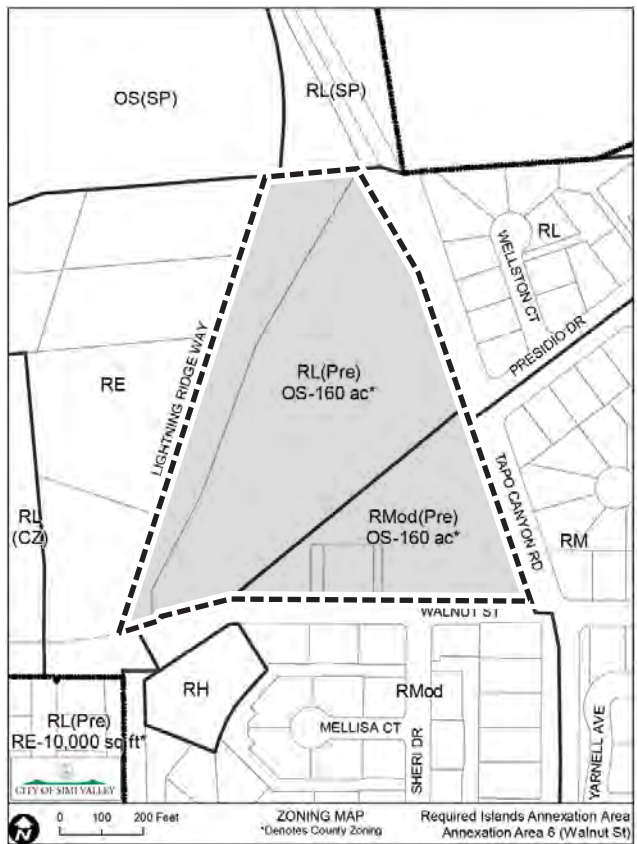


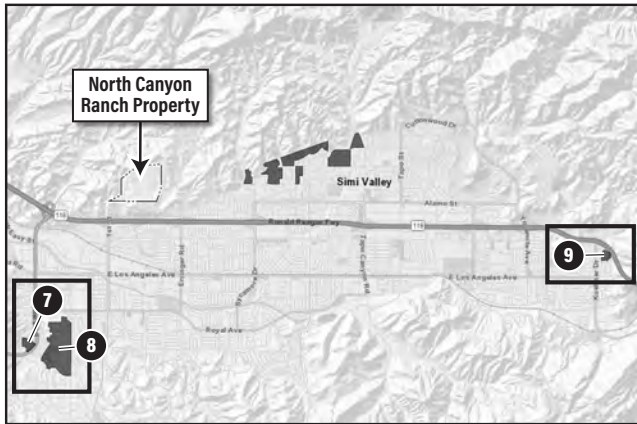
5 Area 5



Map Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., for City of Simi Valley.

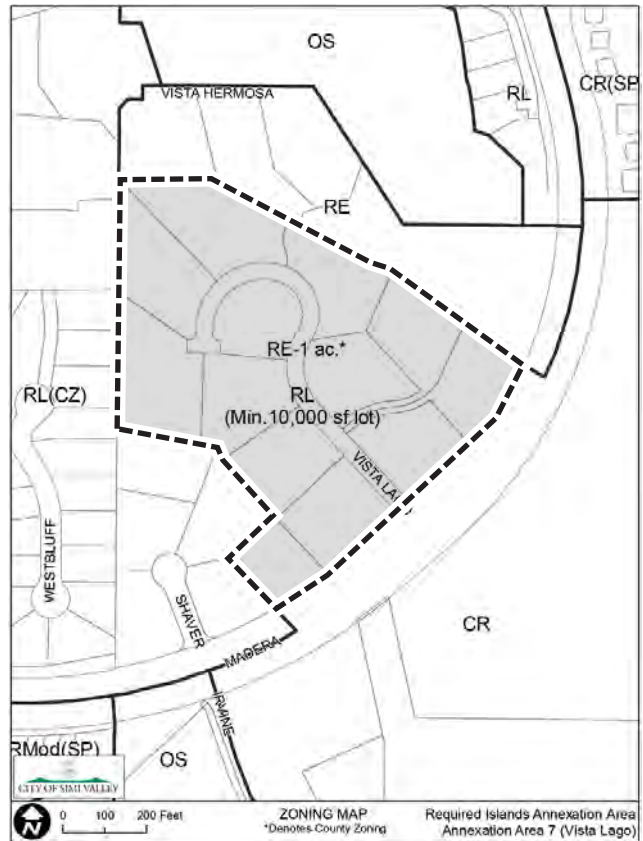
6 Area 6



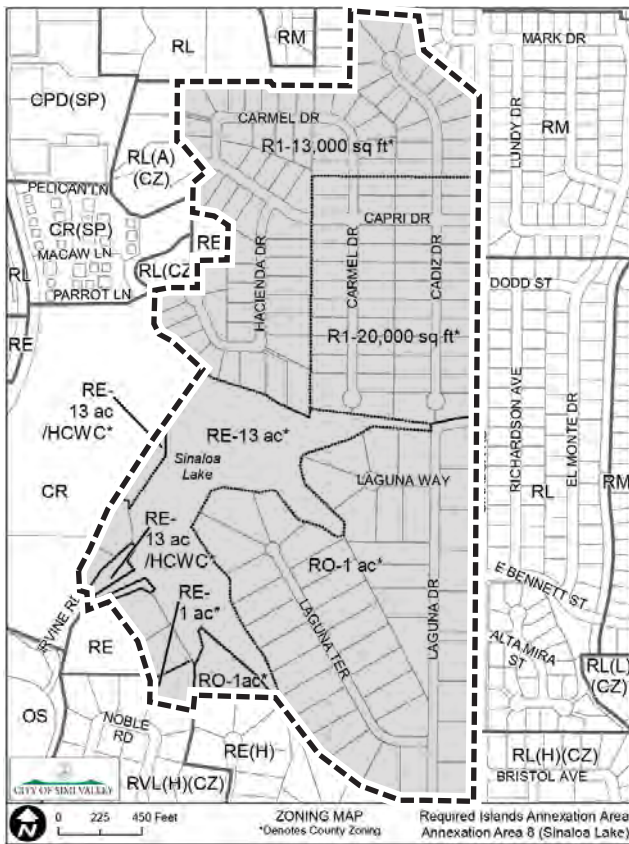


General Plan Designations
Key Map

7 Area 7

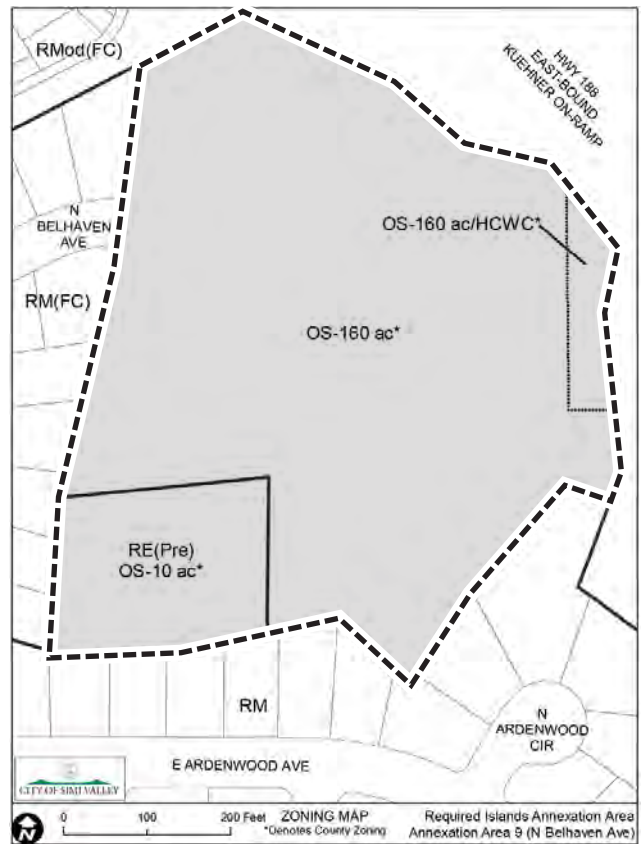


8 Area 8



Map Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., for City of Simi Valley.

9 Area 9



Regulatory Setting

Federal

Although various federal laws and spending may affect land use and planning. There are no federal regulations or plans that are critical to the evaluation of land use and planning issues for the proposed project components. Laws, regulations and planning relevant to environmental review of this project in the City are generated on the state, regional and local level.

State

Government Code Section 65302(f)

Government Code Section 65302 requires that public entities prepare a general plan that includes a statement of development policies, as well as text and diagrams that set forth objectives, principles, standards, and plan proposals. Required elements of a general plan include a land use element, circulation element, housing element, conservation element, open space element, noise element, and safety element.¹

A general plan land use element includes the general distribution, location, and extent of land to be designated for various land uses, including housing, business, industry, and open space, public facilities, and other categories of public and private uses of land. The land use element also provides standards of population density and building intensity recommended for various districts covered by the general plan.

Regional and Local

Local Agency Formation Commission

Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCo) have powers to encourage orderly development under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.² “LAFCos have numerous powers under the Act, but those of primary concern are the power to act on local agency boundary changes and to adopt SOIs for local agencies. Among the purposes of LAFCos are the discouragement of urban sprawl and the encouragement of the orderly formation and development of local agencies.”³

The act includes policies related to annexation of agricultural land and open space as well as annexation of Islands, reflected in the Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (CKH Guide)⁴. CKH Guide Section 56377 states that LAFCo review or approval of annexations, “...shall consider the following policies and priorities:

- (a) Development or use of land for other than open-space uses shall be guided away from existing prime agricultural lands in open-space use toward areas containing nonprime agricultural lands, unless that action would not promote the planned, orderly, efficient development of an area;
- (b) Development of existing vacant or nonprime agricultural lands for urban uses within the existing jurisdiction of a local agency or within the sphere of influence of a local agency should be encouraged before any proposal is approved which would allow for or lead to the development of existing open-space lands for non-open-space uses which are outside of the existing jurisdiction of the local agency or outside of the existing sphere of influence of the local agency.”

¹ California Legislative Information, Authority for and Scope of General Plans, Accessed on May 11, 2018 at: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=65302.

² Assembly Committee on Local Government, Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, November 2020.

³ Assembly Committee on Local Government, Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, November 2020, Cover letter signed by Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry, Chair, Assembly Committee on Local Government.

⁴ California Assembly Committee on Local Government, Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, December 2023.

The Ventura County LAFCo and the County Board of Supervisors adopted Guidelines for Orderly Development.⁵ These refine the guidelines originally adopted in 1969 and maintain the consistent theme that urban development should be located within incorporated cities whenever or wherever practical. The stated intent of these guidelines is to:

- Clarify the relationship between the Cities and the County with respect to urban planning,
- Facilitate a better understanding regarding development standards and fees, and
- Identify the appropriate governmental agency responsible for making determinations on land use requests.

The following policies are provided for areas within existing SOIs (such as the project areas evaluated in this EIR):

- Applicants for land use permits or entitlements for urban uses are encouraged to apply to the City to achieve their development goals and discouraged from applying to the County.
- The City is primarily responsible for local land use planning and providing municipal services.
- Prior to being developed for urban purposes or to receiving municipal services, land should be annexed to the City.
- Annexation to the City is preferable to the formation of new or expansion of existing County service areas.
- Land uses allowed by the County without annexation should be equal to or more strictive than land uses allowed by the City.
- Development standards and capital improvement requirements imposed by the County for new or expanding developments should not be less than those that would be imposed by the City.

As discussed in Section 2.1.4 of the Ventura LAFCo Commissioner's Handbook,⁶ CEQA compliance is required for LAFCo actions. As shown in Chapter 2.0, Project Description, this Draft EIR is intended to address the full project and all component actions, including the LAFCo Annexation actions. Ventura LAFCo is a responsible agency for the project and the Draft EIR.

Simi Valley General Plan

The City's General Plan is comprised of seven elements, including a Vision and Guiding Principles Element, which provides a framework for planning, to guide the formulation of goals and policies of the General Plan to address the role, character, and quality of the City's built and natural environment. The Guiding Principles direct how and where growth will be distributed throughout the City within the context of natural resource protection and neighborhood conservation.

The Community Development Element of the General Plan includes a Land Use and Community Design section, which provides goals and policies to direct physical development in an efficient and sustainable manner that is compatible with the established character of the community and the protection of its surrounding natural environment. The Land Use Plan conveyed in the Land Use and Community Design Section encourages substantial infill development within the existing footprint of the community's built

⁵ Ventura County, Resource Management Agency, Planning Division, Guidelines for Orderly Development, June 2018, Accessed June 10, 2020 at: <https://www.ventura.lafco.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2005-GuidelineOD-1.pdf>

⁶ Ventura LAFCo, Commissioner's Handbook, with updates through November 16, 2022, Accessed on January 24, 2024 at: <https://www.ventura.lafco.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Ventura-LAFCo-Commissioners-Handbook-Revised-2022-11-16-including-Appendix-D.pdf>

environment.⁷ The Community Development Element of the General Plan also addresses Community Subareas and Districts, and provides policies that “express specific intentions for use, design, character, and implementation that uniquely apply to and differentiate the area.”

4.9.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to land use and planning has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, which are based upon the state CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project may be considered to have a significant land use and planning impact if it would:

- Physically divide an established community. (*Divide a Community*)
- Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of the City (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. (*Conflict with Plans or Policies*)

4.9.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Proposed Development

North Canyon Ranch

The project would construct a residential development of 157 single family homes and 50 multi-family (townhome) units. Project approval requires certification of a Final EIR and approval of the project entitlement requests by the City, followed by LAFCo annexation approval. The project would also require a General Plan Amendment and a Zone Change. The current General Plan designations for the site are: Open Space (1 du/40 ac) , Residential Medium Density (3.6 – 5.0 du/ac), and Residential Moderate Density (5.1 – 10.0 du/ac). The General Plan Amendment would extend the Residential Medium Density and Residential Moderate Density plan designations over more of the project site, as shown in Figure 4.9-1, Existing and Proposed General Plan Amendment. The site is zoned for open space in the Ventura County General Plan. The City has not pre-zoned the property, thus the applicant is proposed the following zoning for the project site, as shown in Figure 4.9-2, Existing and Proposed Zoning Map:

- **37.8 acres of Residential Moderate (RMod)**, which allows densities ranging from 5.1 to 10 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) - 14.3. Of this, 32.8 acres would be developed for single-family use and 5.0 acres for multi-family use.
- **14.3 acres of Residential Medium Density (RM)**, which allows development at densities ranging from 3.6 – 5.0 du/ac.
- **108.2 acres of Open Space (OS).**

Island Annexations

No physical changes are proposed at this time in the County Islands, and no projects are proposed. There are five vacant residential parcels within older subdivisions that could be developed. These parcels are dispersed (Island Nos. 2, 3, and 8) and the future land use (single-family residential) would be the same as the predominantly surrounding urban properties, thus resulting in minimal change to the environment. Development of homes on these properties would require plan check and building permit review by the City, which are ministerial approvals. Should any substantive future proposal in these areas rise to the level of potential significant environmental impacts, it could be subject to further CEQA review by the City.

⁷ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 3, Community Development, June 2012.

4.9.3.1 Divide a Community

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to physically divide an established community. The project proposes to develop an undeveloped property surrounded by existing residential and commercial development, undeveloped open space and hillside to the north. The project would construct single-family and multi-family residences and public streets for these land uses. Rather, the development site is within the City's SOI and CURB boundaries, and thus is within an area previously contemplated for City development. The project would not physically divide an established community. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are required. No further evaluation of this topic in the EIR is required.

Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation nine unincorporated areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation area includes five lots (7.96 acres of land) that could potentially be developed with five single-family dwelling units. The potential dwelling units would be located within established residential communities, and would thus be compatible with neighboring properties. The Island Annexations would not physically divide the community.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation for the North Canyon Ranch Project and the Island Annexations.

4.9.3.2 Conflict with Plans or Policies

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were causing 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. Thus, the focus of this section is the project's consistency with applicable relevant adopted plans, policies, and regulations that govern land uses and environmental resources at the project site and its surrounding area. A project is generally found to be consistent with a policy or regulatory plan or program if it would further the implementation of the stated objectives, goals, or policies of applicable planning documents and/or not impede them to any substantive degree.

To aid in the determination of significance, the analysis considers whether potential inconsistency with a policy or regulatory plan or program would result in an identifiable physical, or environmental, impact. Further, because land use policies speak to many different situations and types of land uses, a project may be less than consistent with one or more policies, yet be consistent with most others, such that it would be considered to not substantially conflict with the body of policies and would not conflict in a way that would cause significant physical environmental impacts.

Local Policies

As noted above, complete consistency is not required, but the analysis looks for substantial consistency and that as a whole the project would not conflict with the body of policies and would not conflict in a way that would cause significant physical environmental impacts.

General Policy Direction

Several general growth and development policies point to the project components being consistency with, and not in conflict with, City desired land use development pattern:

- Both the North Canyon Ranch and the Required Island Annexation Areas fall within the designated CURB and SOI boundaries.
- The City has pre-zoned most of the Required Island Annexation Area lots and those that have not will be zoned as a part of the project).
- The City pre-planned residential land use designations for portions of the North Canyon Ranch site for: Residential Medium Density (3.6 – 5.0 du/ac), Residential Moderate Density (5.1 – 10.0 du/ac), and Open Space (1 du/40 ac).
- The General Plan Community Development Chapter⁸ Growth Diagram⁹ identifies the residentially pre-planned portions of the North Canyon Ranch Site as “Transformation-New Growth,” which is explained as follows: These existing vacant areas are expected to experience change as new development occurs over time.

Compatibility with these policies would facilitate a finding that the proposed project components are well suited to annexation to be part of the City.

Specific Policies

An analysis or the most closely relevant specific policies from the General Plan Community Development Chapter, which serves as the Land Use Element for the City, is presented in **Table 4.9-2, Potential to Conflict with Applicable General Plan Land Use Policies.**

**Table 4.9-2
Potential to Conflict with Applicable General Plan Land Use Policies**

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
Growth and Change	
<i>Goal LU-1, Growth and Change – Sustainable growth and change, achieved through orderly and well-planned development, meet the needs of existing and future residents and businesses, ensure the effective and equitable provision of public services, and efficiently use land and infrastructure.</i>	
<p>Policy LU-1.1 Building Intensity and Population Density. Accommodate the densities and intensities of land use development in accordance with the designations and standards of the SVMC. Development shall not exceed 58,438 housing units, 8,764,000 square feet of retail, 7,642,000 square feet of office uses, 5,743,000 square feet of business park uses, and 12,134,000 square feet of industrial uses.</p>	<p>With Adoption of General Plan Amendment, Would Not Conflict. Consistent with the pre-planning designations in the General Plan, the North Canyon Ranch development site outside the Open Space-Urban Reserve area would allow Residential Medium and Residential Moderate densities, which are 3.6 to 5.0 and 5.1 to 10.0 units per acre, respectively. The project General Plan Amendment would reconfigure the designations to coincide with the development as designed, allowing for the proposed construction of 207 dwelling units on the site (157 single-family homes and 50 townhomes). With the General Plan Amendment, the City Land Use mapping would be updated, and the project would be consistent. The land use totals used in the text of the General Plan are periodically changed to reflect updates.</p>

⁸ The General Plan Community Development Chapter addresses issues related to the Open Space Element required by California General Plan Guidelines as well as optional topics. See General Plan Introduction, Table 1, General Plan Topics, June 2012.

⁹ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 3, Community Development, June 2012, “Growth Diagram,” page 3-7.

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
	<p>Would Not Conflict. Required annexation of the County Islands would result in moving 425 existing single-family housing units from Ventura County housing totals to the City’s housing totals. The potential future development of five single-family dwelling units would be a small development potential that would in the future occur to the City rather than the County. The change would not result in actual local or regional growth in the number of units (the five potential new future units have been on lots legally subdivided for many years). This change would thus not affect regional projections and would be reflected in the City’s next Housing Element and Land Use Element update and in future County and SCAG documents.</p> <p>The result would not change building intensity or population density and is thus consistent with the intent of this policy. The numbers cited in the policy would be updated by the City with the next Land Use Element update.</p>
<p>Policy LU-1.2 Development Location. Limit development to lands within the Simi Valley City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB), as shown in Figure LU-1, thereby protecting existing agriculture, open space, viewsheds, wildlife, and watersheds surrounding the City from development impacts and limiting urban sprawl.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project site is within the CURB and would develop only a portion of the subject property (90.96 acres would be graded of a total of 160.32 acres, or approximately 56.74 percent of the site). The General Plan Amendment would assure reservation of the developed portions of the site in the appropriate land use designations. The Island Annexation areas are within the CURB. The project would not remove existing agriculture and would have minimal effects on open space, viewsheds, wildlife, and water sheds, with mitigation (see Section 4.4 Biological Resources).</p>
<p>Policy LU-1.3 Development Priorities. Prioritize future growth as infill and redevelopment of existing developed areas re-using and, where appropriate, intensifying development of vacant and underutilized properties within the CURB. Allow for growth on the immediate periphery of existing development in limited designated areas, where this is guided by standards to assure seamless integration and connectivity with adjoining areas and open spaces. The Growth Diagram below illustrates the locations in which new development will be permitted.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would be located on the immediate periphery of existing development and within the CURB. Furthermore, portions of the project site are currently planned for residential development and the project would provide connectivity to existing roadways as well as connecting Falcon Street to First Street. The North Canyon Ranch project area includes Transformation-New Growth areas roughly coinciding with the proposed development of residential uses on the site. The North Canyon Ranch project is requesting a General Plan Amendment to allow for reconfiguration of these designations to map the development design more closely. The Island Annexation areas are also within the CURB boundary and no development is proposed at this time. No conflict would occur.</p>

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy LU-1.5 Development and Services Concurrency. Work with applicable public entities and providers to assure that adequate public facilities are available at the time of occupancy.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. Adequate public services will be available for the North Canyon Ranch development, as discussed in Sections 4.12 Public Services and 4.15 Utilities and Service Systems, and no conflicts would occur.</p> <p>The Island Annexations will have no effect on public facilities as no physical change is proposed, and thus have no change in service requirements. No conflicts would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-1.6 Fair Share Costs of Development. Require new development to contribute its share of the cost of providing necessary public services and facilities through equitable fees and exactions.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The permitting and approval process for North Canyon Ranch will ensure that the project will contribute its share of the cost of providing necessary public services and facilities through equitable fees and exactions. No development is proposed at this time in the Island Annexation areas. No conflicts would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-1.7 Annexation Coordination. Coordinate with the County of Ventura, landowners, and pertinent service agencies to assure that development within the SOI complements and does not adversely compete with existing land uses in the City of Simi Valley.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project and the Island Annexation areas are located within the SOI and would be annexed as a part of the proposed action. The City will appropriately coordinate the annexation action with LAFCo, the County of Ventura, landowners and pertinent service agencies.</p>
<p>Policy LU-1.8 Consistency of Annexations with General Plan. Ensure that annexations to the City are consistent with the overall goals and policies of the General Plan and do not adversely affect the City’s fiscal viability, environmental resources, infrastructure, services, or quality of life.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The proposed annexation of the North Canyon Ranch project and the County Island areas would be consistent with the overall goals of the General Plan (as demonstrated in this Table) and would be consistent with the City need for additional housing, while assuring less than significant impacts to environmental resources, infrastructure and services (see Sections 4.4 Biological Resources, 4.12 Public Services and 4.15 Utilities and Service Systems, and no conflicts would occur. No physical change is proposed in the Island Annexation areas, and no conflict with resources, infrastructure, or services would occur. Fiscal analysis is not a CEQA matter.</p>
<p>Policy LU-1.9 Complementary Land Uses. Require that existing and future land uses in proposed annexation areas complement adjoining City uses and character.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The proposed North Canyon Ranch project would develop single family homes, consistent with adjoining single-family development to the east of the site, and the and multi-family portion of the project would be compatible in density with the nearby multi-family residences to the south of the site. The project would include landscaping and infrastructure, similar in character to development in the surrounding area. No physical change is proposed in the Island Annexation areas at this time, and thus there would be no change in character due to the project action. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Citywide Land Use and Urban Design</p>	
<p><i>Goal LU-2, Land Use Diversity and Choices for Residents – A mix of land uses is provided that meets the diverse needs of Simi Valley’s residents, offers a variety of employment opportunities, and allows for the capture of regional population and employment growth.</i></p>	
<p>Policy LU-2.1 Housing. Provide opportunities for a full range of housing types, locations, and densities to</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The proposed North Canyon Ranch project would provide new housing and contribute to a</p>

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
address the community's fair share of regional housing needs and to provide market support to economically sustain commercial land uses in Simi Valley. The mix, density, size, and location of housing shall be determined based on the projected needs specified in the Housing Element, as amended periodically.	variety of densities by including both single family and multi-family. These new residences would also provide support for nearby commercial uses at the Simi Town Center. No development is proposed in the Island Annexation areas is proposed with this action. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-2.2 Retail Services. Provide for, and encourage, the development of a broad range of uses in Simi Valley's commercial centers and corridors that reduce the need to travel to adjoining communities, and which subsequently capture a greater share of local spending.	Would Not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would construct residences near a shopping center, the Simi Town Center. Future residents of the project could use the shopping center, reducing the need to travel farther to adjoining communities. No development in the Island Annexation areas is proposed with this action. No conflict would occur.
<i>Goal LU-3, City Structure and Form – Land uses are located, designed, and scaled to respect Simi Valley's natural setting; maintain distinct and interconnected places for residents to live, shop, work, and play; and reduce automobile dependence.</i>	
Policy LU-3.1 Primary Contributor to Urban Form. Locate and design development to respect Simi Valley's environmental setting, concentrating development on the valley floor and configuring development to respect hillside slopes, topographic contours, and drainage corridors, when located in hillside areas.	Would Not Conflict. Although the North Canyon Ranch development would be located outside the valley floor, the project would minimize disturbance to existing topography and drainage corridors and would be located within the areas of the site closest to existing development, avoiding some of the steeper hillsides at the perimeter of the site, and reducing the amount of drainage impact area. These issues are further discussed in Section 4.6 Geology and Soils and Section 4.8 Hydrology. No physical change is proposed in the Island Annexations is proposed at this time. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-3.2 Citywide Development Pattern. Provide for an overall pattern of land uses that promotes efficient development; minimizes the impact of traffic congestion; reduces transportation distances, energy consumption, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions; ensures compatibility between uses; protects the natural hillsides, major watercourses, and trees; enhances community livability and public health; and sustains economic vitality.	Would Not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch site is adjacent to existing development and not far from the SR-118 freeway ramps at First Street and Erringer Road. The project would minimize alteration to existing natural topography and drainage corridors, as further discussed in Section 4.6 Geology and Soils and Section 4.8 Hydrology. No physical change is proposed in the Island Annexations is proposed at this time. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-3.3 Connected Open Space Network. Maintain and, where incomplete, develop a Citywide network of open spaces that is connected to and provides access for all neighborhoods and districts incorporating greenbelts, drainage corridors, parklands, bicycle and pedestrian paths, equestrian trails, and natural open spaces and coordinate with other agencies, such as Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.	Would Not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would focus development to areas adjacent and near existing development, retaining open space on the perimeter of the project site, which allows for a more contiguous open space layout. As discussed in Section 4.12 Public Services, all Tentative Tract Map approvals must either dedicate land for park facilities or pay Quimby fees, which are used for parks and recreation, offsetting impacts and assuring no significant impacts to parks or recreation would occur. No physical change or development of any kind is proposed in the Island Annexation areas as part of this action. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-3.4 Organization of Places. Maintain a development pattern of distinct residential neighborhoods oriented around parks, schools, and community meeting facilities that are connected with neighborhood-serving businesses. Provide business	Would Not Conflict. The project would construct residential units within a site located approximately 0.7 miles from an existing school and approximately 0.3 miles and 0.7 miles from existing parks that would serve the project. No changes in the Annexation Islands are

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
park/employment uses in centers and along the freeway corridor to minimize traffic congestion.	proposed, so no impact would occur for that component of the project. No conflict would occur.
<p>Policy LU-3.5 Development Scale. Encourage development on the valley floor to retain its low suburban profile. Limit structures taller than two stories to major commercial or industrial areas, mixed-use developments, or very high-density residential uses so as not to adversely impact the primary or daily activities of nearby residents.</p>	<p>Would Not Substantially Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch site is adjacent to a part of the City that is not characterized as the valley floor; however, the proposed development would be on the portion of the site closest to existing development, to avoid sprawl. The multi-family portion of the proposed project would include up to three-story residential buildings outside the valley floor, but at a relatively lower elevation of 1,025 feet above mean sea level (msl) or less. The hillsides behind the proposed development reach peaks of up to 1,250 feet msl. Further, the project multi-family component would be barely visible and difficult to discern from any distance away, as demonstrated in Section 4.1 Aesthetics. Visual simulations from the Simi Town Center Mall. Thus, while the multi-family component of the development would be taller than two stories, it would not result in visually noticeable or significant impacts. No changes in the Annexation Islands are proposed, so no impact would occur for that component of the project. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p><i>Goal LU-4, Development Shaped by Environmental Setting – Development is located to respect, work with, and complement the natural features of the land.</i></p>	
<p>Policy LU-4.4 Hillside Development. Locate and design development to maintain the existing visual character of the hillsides as a natural backdrop.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would develop only a portion of the subject property (90.96 acres would be graded of a total of 160.32 acres, or approximately 56.74 percent of the site). The developed portion has been sited so as to be of low visibility as seen from around the City (see Section 4.1 Aesthetics, which demonstrates no significant impact to views). The development allows views of hillsides and mountains behind the development to remain visible. Onsite hillsides behind the development would rise higher than 1,250 feet msl, which is well above the highest single-family residential pad at approximately 1,137 feet msl, and most pads would be significantly lower. More distant offsite ridgelines would remain visible as well. No development is proposed in the Island Annexation areas as a part of this action, and thus no physical changes would occur with that component of the project. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-4.5 Hillside Grading. Minimize terrain disruption and design grading using generally accepted principles of civil engineering with the objective to blend the project into the natural topography.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project site plan was revised multiple times to reduce the amount of grading, and the hilly, peripheral areas of the site would remain in open space. The City has reviewed the grading and found it to substantially conform to City requirements. No grading is proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-4.6 Hillside Development Density. Maintain land outside the valley floor having a slope of over 20 percent as permanent open space. Commercial and industrial development shall be limited to slopes of 10 percent or less, unless otherwise allowed under the Hillside Performance Standards of the Simi Valley Municipal Code, or approved by a specific plan that</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The City has reviewed the proposed project site and grading plans and determined that the project substantially complies with the Hillside Performance standards of the Simi Valley Municipal Code. The proposed action requires no immediate grading in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
justifies and provides appropriate design measures for the development of these areas, in which case development shall be limited to slopes of 20 percent or less.	
Policy LU-4.7 Development Compatibility with Hillside Character. Ensure the compatibility of proposed structures with the surrounding terrain in hillside areas by using varying setbacks, building heights, building forms, and other applicable features.	Would Not Conflict. See analysis of policy LU-4.4 Hillside Development, above. No setback changes would be needed since all components of the project would be consistent with policies addressing development character in relation to the surrounding hillsides. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-4.8 Architecture and Building Design. Design buildings to be architecturally integrated into the terrain and blend with the natural environment.	Would not Substantially Conflict. As discussed in the analysis of Policies LU-4.4, 5 and 7, the North Canyon Ranch site plan was revised several times to reduce the amount and effect of grading; the project will develop only 56.74 percent of the North Canyon Ranch site, leaving surrounding onsite and offsite hillsides visible and in open space; and the development types would be compatible with existing development of the same type to the east and west. No substantial Due to design constraints at the southwest corner of the project site, a tall retaining wall will be required to assure slope stability adjacent to where Falcon Street is proposed to connect to First Street. The design will be a gravity wall, expected to be “plantable,” such that vegetation can be grown to improve the wall’s appearance. Exact design details will be established during entitlement review and plan check, to the satisfaction of the Simi Valley Department of Environmental Services. No changes are proposed in the Island Annexation areas. Overall, no substantial conflict would occur with either portion of the project.
Goal LU-5, Land Use Compatibility – New development is located and designed to assure a compatible relationship with adjoining uses.	
Policy LU-5.1 Development Compatibility. Locate and design development to assure compatibility among land uses, addressing such elements as building orientation and setbacks, buffering, visibility and privacy, automobile and truck access, impacts of noise and lighting, landscape quality, and aesthetics.	Would not Conflict. The proposed residences would be adjacent to residential development to the southeast. The project would provide appropriate automobile and truck access as well as bus turnouts on the extension of Falcon Street. Lighting would be consistent with the SVMC for safety as well as limiting light trespass. The project landscape plan will require review and approval of the City. No physical changes are proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-5.2 Development Transitions. Incorporate transitions of development mass and building heights where districts with differing permitted densities and intensities are located adjacent to one another.	Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project dwelling unit types would be similar to and compatible with existing development of the same types to the east and west. See the consistency analysis with Policy LU-1.9 Complementary Land Uses, above. As discussed in Section 4.1 Aesthetics, the project would have less than significant impacts related to aesthetics. No physical changes are proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy LU-5.3 Residential Neighborhood Character. Respect the scale and character of the land uses and architecture within the neighborhoods when considering new development and renovation of buildings in existing neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. As discussed in the analysis of Policy LU-1.9 Complementary Land Uses, and LU-5.4 Development Transitions, above the project would be compatible with the character of surrounding development. No physical changes are proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-5.5 Development Adjacent to Single-Story Buildings. Locate single-story structures or extensive setbacks on the periphery of new development that is adjacent to existing single-story residential structures.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch single-family residences are designed to be similar to and compatible with the existing two-story single-family residences to the east. Thus, no additional set back is warranted. No development is currently proposed as a part of the Island Annexations. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-5.6 Residential Privacy. Respect the privacy of existing residents in the design of new development that abuts existing residential neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. Several (approximately eight) North Canyon Ranch lots would be placed near the project site's eastern edge, beyond which are existing single-family homes. These back yards of these lots would begin at a minimum approximately 50 feet from the property line, allowing for the existing Big Sky Trail Easement to remain in place, between the proposed development and the existing subdivision to the east. All of the existing homes to the east have a wall/fence or landscaping to define the back yards of their properties. As such, no privacy issues would occur. No development is proposed in the Island Annexation areas as a result of this action. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-5.7 Minimization of Noise Impacts. Protect noise-sensitive uses from the impacts of noise-generating sources by setbacks, building orientation, insulation, or other suitable techniques that maintain interior noise levels specified by the Safety and Noise Element.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. This policy addresses compliance with building codes that include insulation and other suitable techniques to maintain satisfactory interior noise levels. All construction in the City must comply with the codes in effect at the time of development. The proposed North Canyon Ranch houses would be developed to current building code specifications, which will assure acceptable noise levels in the existing and proposed homes. Further, the project's residential lots would not directly abut those of the adjacent homes, thus providing a further buffer. Further, as discussed in Section 4.10, Noise the project would comply with applicable local noise regulations and would employ a mitigation measure during grading to assure a less than significant impact (NOI-1 limiting large equipment use at the eastern edge of the property). No construction in the Island Annexation areas is proposed as a part of this action. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-5.8 Lighting Impacts. Design, locate, and direct lighting and signs so that they do not result in excessive spillover, illumination, and glare for adjacent uses.</p>	<p>Would Not Conflict. The proposed North Canyon project would include exterior lighting for safety along the street frontage areas, and along the perimeter driveway and parking areas of the site. The project's exterior lighting would be required to comply with for the SVMC regarding downward facing fixtures of low intensity with screening to prevent light spillover onto adjacent properties. No changes to lighting would occur in the Required Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy LU-5.10 Roof Equipment. Screen all roof equipment from view from adjacent parcels and rights-of-way, especially the freeway and elevated overpasses, by means that are architecturally integrated into the structure, where practical.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch development single-family and multi-family components would be of similar design to the corresponding development types to the east and south, respectively. There is nothing about the project that would differ in a way to require specialized roof equipment. As discussed in the policy analysis earlier in this table, and in Section 4.1 Aesthetics, the project would have a less than significant impact on views. No changes are proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p><i>Goal LU-6, Open Spaces – Open space lands are preserved to maintain the visual quality of the City, provide recreational opportunities, protect the public from safety hazards, and conserve natural resources and wildlife.</i></p>	
<p>Policy LU-6.2 Mature Trees. Continue to sustain mature trees, which are an integral part of the City’s character.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. No mature trees are found on the North Canyon Ranch site and thus none would be removed. No trees are proposed for removal in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-6.3 Creeks and Natural Drainages. Maintain and improve the form and health of resources and habitat in the City’s natural drainages. Explore restoration of those that have been degraded or channelized, such as the Arroyo Simi, as feasible, while continuing to maintain stormwater conveyance and property protection requirements.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. A wetland delineation was prepared for the North Canyon Ranch site. Site development shall be subject to all California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer’s regulations and permits required for the impact of such wetlands. No development is proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-6.4 Night Sky. Reduce the impacts of ambient outdoor lighting on the darkness of the night sky.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would install residential lighting fixtures on an undeveloped site. However, the site is adjacent to existing land uses with extensive lighting, including residential development and in the vicinity of the Simi Town Center shopping mall. As discussed in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, according to SVMC Section 9-30.040, each single- and multi-family residential light fixture must be designed, constructed, and maintained to ensure that light is directed away from any adjacent use, and to ensure that there is no illumination or glare from the exterior lighting system onto adjacent properties or streets. Additionally, pursuant to SVMC Section 9-30.040(c)(1), the project would be required to provide the City with a photometric plan for all outdoor parking areas (e.g., the townhomes parking areas), depicting a point-by-point foot-candle layout extending a minimum of 20 feet outside the property lines. The plan must achieve the goals established by this Municipal Code subsection in order to eliminate illumination or glare from the project onto adjacent properties or streets. No lighting changes are proposed for the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p><i>Goal LU-7, Viewsheds – Vistas of the hillsides, valley floor, City entrance areas, recreation areas, major open space areas, and viewsheds from the hills are maintained for the general public.</i></p>	
<p>Policy LU-7.2 Development in View Corridors. Design structures and site improvements constructed in highly visible locations to minimize their impacts on natural vistas.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would develop only a portion of the subject property (90.96 acres would be graded of a total of 160.32 acres, or approximately 56.74 percent of the site). The developed portion has been sited so as to be of low visibility as seen from around the City (see Section 4.1 Aesthetics, which demonstrates no significant impact to views). The</p>

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
	development allows views of hillsides and mountains behind the development to remain visible. Onsite hillsides behind the development would rise higher than 1,250 feet msl, which is well above the highest single-family residential pad at approximately 1,137 feet msl, and most pads would be significantly lower. More distant offsite ridgelines would remain visible as well. No development is proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.
<i>Goal LU-8, City Sustained and Renewed – Land development practices that sustain natural environmental resources, the economy, and societal well-being for use by future generations, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on climate change, are maintained.</i>	
Policy LU-8.2 Sustainable Building Practices. Promote sustainable building practices that utilize architectural design features, materials, interior fixtures and finishes, and construction techniques to reduce energy and water consumption, human exposure to toxic and chemical pollution, and disposal of waste materials.	Would not Conflict. The project would be required to implement sustainable building practices pursuant to current building codes, including the California Green Building Code’s mandatory requirements. These codes provide standards for building design, materials, fixtures, and construction techniques to reduce energy and water use and disposal of waste materials. No development is proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-8.4 Sustainable Land Development Practices. Promote land development practices that reduce energy and water consumption, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and disposal of waste materials incorporating such techniques as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration of uses and design of development to promote walking and use of public transit in lieu of the automobile • Capture and reuse of stormwater on-site for irrigation • Management of wastewater and use of recycled water, including encouraging the use of grey water • Orientation of buildings to maximize opportunities for solar energy use, daylighting, and ventilation • Use of landscapes that protect native soil, conserve water, provide for wildlife, reduce green waste, and reduce the risk of wildfires • Use of permeable paving materials or reduction of paved surfaces • Shading of surface parking, walkways, and plazas • Recycling and/or salvaging for reuse of construction and demolition debris 	Would not Conflict. The project would construct residences on an undeveloped site adjacent to existing residences, and in the vicinity of an existing shopping center, which would concentrate uses within an existing developed area. The site would add bus stops on the proposed extension of Falcon Street, to promote use of public transit. The project would be required to comply with applicable requirements regarding stormwater capture on-site, diversion of construction/demolition debris for recycling, and compliance with the California Green Building Code requirements for materials and fixtures for efficient energy and water use. No development is proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-8.9 Green Buildings. Require all new construction and/or retrofitting of structures to be built to an identified green building standard.	Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would be required to comply with the California Code of Regulations, Title 24 (California Buildings Standards Code), as adopted by the SVMC, including Part 11, California Green Building Standards (CALGreen Code). No building is proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
Goal LU-9, Fair and Equitable Access	
Policy LU-9.3 Housing Type Distribution. Promote an equitable distribution of housing types for all income groups throughout the City and promote mixed-income developments.	Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would contribute to a variety of housing types provide both multi-family and single family residences. No income data has been provided for the housing types; however, this is not required. No construction is proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-9.4 Jobs-Housing Balance. Encourage a balance between job type, the workforce, and housing development to reduce the negative impacts of long commutes and provide a range of employment opportunities for all residents.	Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project is a residential-only project, but it would be located close to the Simi Valley Town Center mall and other commercial uses, creating more of a mixed-use center in this part of Simi Valley. No construction is proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.
Citywide Land Use Neighborhoods and Districts	
Goal LU-10, Livable and Quality Neighborhoods – A City composed of neighborhoods with a variety of housing types, densities, and design, and that provide a mix of land uses, services, and amenities that support the needs of its residents.	
Policy LU-10.6 Neighborhood Connectivity. Maintain sidewalks or other means of pedestrian and bicycle connections to neighborhood commercial centers, parks, schools, work places, and other community activity centers.	Would not Conflict. The project would provide sidewalks along the extension of Falcon Street and internal roadways which would maintain neighborhood connectivity. The project would also construct Class II bicycle lanes on the extension of Falcon Street. No physical changes are proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-10.7 Complete Streets. Provide infrastructure consistent with the “Complete Streets” Program that accommodate multiple modes of transportation including the automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, and where appropriate, public transit.	Would not Conflict. Falcon Street would be constructed through the project site by the developer of North Canyon Ranch. The street will provide automobile, bus, bicycle and pedestrian travel. No physical changes are proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.
Goal LU-11, Neighborhood Urban Form – Encourage the siting of residential units to preserve open space and natural resources while maintaining the overall density.	
Policy LU-11.1 Placement of Residential Structures. Encourage the siting of residential units to preserve open space and natural resources while maintaining the overall density	Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch site plan would focus proposed development to the south and east, proximate to existing development, leaving open space remaining around the periphery of the site. Approximately 90.96 acres would be graded of a total of 160.32 acres, or approximately 56.74 percent of the site; leaving the remaining 69.93 acres, or 43.26 percent of the site, undeveloped. No development would occur in the Island Annexation areas as a result of the action. No conflict would occur.
Policy LU-11.3 Distribution of Density. Concentrate residential development on the valley floor, with overall densities decreasing in the outlying areas, in consideration of the following principles: a. Density should decrease as distance from arterials and commercial shopping increases. b. Overall density and intensity of development should decrease as the slope increases. c. The minimum parcel size for areas designated as Open Space or over 20 percent slope shall be 40 acres.	Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch site plan proposes higher densities to the south, just north of existing multi-family housing and the Simi Valley Town Center Mall and other commercial uses. Single-family lots, similar in size to the lots offsite to the west, are proposed north of the multi-family homes, and open space beyond that. The single-family homes have been proposed for a less steep areas of the site and preserved higher elevation hillsides beyond them. This provides the density pattern described in the policy. No development would occur in the Island Annexation areas as a result of the action. No conflict would occur.

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy LU-11.4 Density in Outlying Areas. Require that residential development in outlying areas, which is defined as new development located on the periphery of existing developed areas, be limited to single family, detached dwelling units with a maximum of 7 units per acre, except for the following types of projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Housing projects for senior citizens. b. Residential projects located on a parcel not visible from viewpoints from the valley floor and containing at least 25 percent of the units that are affordable for low-income and very low income households that meet state housing law. In no event shall these exceptions allow development on the areas with over 20 percent slope. 	<p>Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch single-family homes would be located on the periphery of the existing developed area, once the project is completed. These homes are proposed at an RM density of up to 5.0 du/ac, which would be below the maximum density identified in Policy LU 11.4. The townhome units are proposed at the southern end of the development, and not on the periphery of the existing developed area once the project is completed.</p> <p>The project will not be readily visible from nearby areas and not discernable from further away in the valley floor. No development would occur in the Island Annexation areas as a result of the action. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Goal LU-12, Neighborhood Identity – Residential neighborhoods are provided that are distinctly identified and differentiated from one another in consideration of geography, character, and lifestyle.</p>	
<p>Policy LU-12.2 Identity through Design. Promote the design of new development to provide a positive sense of uniqueness to aid neighborhood identity and also to be compatible with existing surrounding neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The proposed residences would be similar in scale to and compatible with existing neighborhoods to the south and east, creating an identity as an extension of the existing adjacent neighborhood. No changes are proposed in the Island Annexation area, so neighborhood identities in those areas would not be changed by the project. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Goal LU-13, Neighborhood Quality – Residential neighborhoods are provided that are desirable places to live, contribute to the quality of life, and are well maintained.</p>	
<p>Policy LU-13.2 Safety. Require that residential developments, including multi-family, be designed to facilitate and enhance neighborhood surveillance for safety.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The proposed North Canyon Ranch project streets will meet City design requirements and will provide the extension of Falcon Street through the project. Both features will assure adequate police surveillance in the future development area. No change would occur in the Island Annexation areas so no changes in access from existing conditions would occur. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy LU-13.6 Housing Maintenance. Maintain the City's housing stock as a high priority.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The project would develop a total of 207 dwelling units on an undeveloped site. As such, the project would increase the City's housing stock, providing needed housing. No changes are proposed in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Housing Element Goals and Policies</p>	
<p>Goal HE-1, Balanced Community – A balanced community with services and housing opportunities is created for all.</p>	
<p>Policy HE 1.1 Variety of Housing Types. Provide a wide choice of new housing featuring a range of styles, types, densities, and amenities to accommodate the needs of all socioeconomic segments of the community.</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The North Canyon Ranch project would provide a variety of housing types in the form of single-family and multi-family residences. No change in housing types would occur in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy HE 1.2 Workforce and Executive Housing. Coordinate residential development strategies with economic development efforts to provide housing not only for the general workforce but also to executives and business owners who could be instrumental in creating and retaining jobs in the community.</p>	<p>Consistent. The North Canyon Ranch project would construct both single-family and multi-family residences. The project would also be in the vicinity of the Simi Valley Town Center mall and the business parks to the southwest. No change in housing types would occur in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.</p>
<p>Policy HE 1.3 Housing on Underutilized Sites. Encourage the addition of new dwelling units (multifamily housing) on existing parcels in</p>	<p>Would not Conflict. The project would construct new multifamily dwelling units on a project site on an unused site within the City SOI and CURB, that is adjacent to</p>

Land Use Goals and Policies	Conflict/Consistency Analysis
underutilized residential areas of the City where supported by existing zoning and parcel sizes.	residential development and near the Simi Valley Town Center mall and the business parks to the southwest, making it a logical site for extension for development. The state of California is experiencing a housing shortage. The project would provide needed housing, which would assist the City in meeting its needed housing allocation. No change would occur in the Island Annexation areas. No conflict would occur.

Based on the analysis in Table 4.9-2, the proposed project would not be in conflict with or result in significant physical environmental impacts related to the applicable policies, and impacts would be less than significant.

LAFCo Policy

Portions of the CKH Guide¹⁰ LAFCo will be utilized in this analysis as policies for the purpose of land use policy analysis. The project is evaluated for potential policy conflict, considering the following two passages that provide the overarching purpose and intent of annexations.

- CKH Guide Section 56001: The Legislature recognizes that the logical formation and determination of local agency boundaries is an important factor in promoting orderly development and in balancing that development with sometimes competing state interests of discouraging urban sprawl, preserving open-space and prime agricultural lands, and efficiently extending government services.
- CKH Guide Section 56301: Among the purposes of a commission are discouraging urban sprawl, preserving open-space and prime agricultural lands, encouraging the efficient provision of government services, and encouraging the orderly formation and development of local agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances.

Would not Conflict. Incorporation of North Canyon Ranch and the Required Island Annexations to the City achieves the stated purpose of annexations as reflected in CKH Guide Section 56001. The North Canyon Ranch project is proposed adjacent to areas developed with single-family and multi-family residential land uses. Public services, utility connections, and supporting commercial development are nearby. The Simi Valley General Plan designated the project area within the SOI and CURB, anticipating future development. The project design would be a natural extension of adjacent single-family and multi-family uses, and the Falcon Street segment to be constructed by the project would be a natural extension and connection within the local street system (and specifically providing improved, secondary access to the Big Sky development). The North Canyon Ranch project represents an orderly extension of development and would not constitute sprawl. By contrast, if the project were developed to remain unincorporated, access to County public services would be cumbersome.

The County Island areas are also located within the City's SOI and CURB boundaries. In most cases, orderly development and governance occurs within contiguous land areas. The fact that the County Island areas are under separate jurisdiction, while surrounded (or in some cases surrounded on three sides only) by another jurisdiction, runs counter to the concept of orderly development. Governance within contiguous areas promotes the efficient extension and operation of government services.

¹⁰ California Assembly Committee on Local Government, Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, December 2023.

For the reasons discussed, the project would not conflict with LAFCo policy, and therefore no conflict and no significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant without the need for mitigation.

4.9.4 Cumulative Impacts

Divide a Community

As discussed above, the proposed project, including the North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations, would not cause a physical division of an established community. There are no related projects near the project sites that would contribute to physical division of an established neighborhood. Thus, there would be no cumulatively significant impact.

Conflict Plans or Policies

As detailed above, the proposed project, including the North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations, would not conflict with relevant City General Plan land use or housing policies or with the intent and purpose of LAFCo annexations. There are no related projects near the project sites that would in combination with these less than significant impacts create a conflict with a land use plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. For example, no other general plan amendments within the nearby SOI areas are proposed currently, and no combined cumulative impact would occur. The project's impact is less than significant, and there are no known cumulative issues with policy inconsistencies; thus, there would be no cumulatively significant impact.

4.10 NOISE

SECTION 4.0

4.10 NOISE

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project to result in impacts related to noise and vibration and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts related to noise and vibration, where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR.

4.10.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

Overview of Sound Measurement

For this analysis, noise is considered unwanted sound as perceived by a receptor. Sound is energy transmitted in waves through a compressible medium such as air. There are a variety of parameters that describe the rates of oscillation of sound waves: the distance between successive troughs or crests; the speed of propagation; and the pressure level, or energy content, of a given sound wave. Sound pressure level is the most common descriptor used to describe the perceived “loudness” of an ambient sound level. The standard measurement unit of sound pressure is called a decibel (dB).

Given that sound pressure levels can vary in intensity by over one million times within the range of human hearing, a logarithmic scale similar to the Richter Scale used to measure seismicity is used to keep sound intensity numbers convenient and manageable. The ear is not equally sensitive to all sound frequencies within the entire spectrum, so sound pressure levels at maximum human sensitivity are factored more heavily into sound descriptions in a process called “A weighting,” written as “dBA.” Subsequent references to decibels in this discussion written as “dB” should be understood as A weighted.

Variations in noise exposure over time are expressed in terms of a steady-state energy level equivalent to the energy content of the time period, called “Leq.” Because human receptors are more sensitive to unwanted noise intrusion during the evening and at night hours, additional dB increments are added to noise levels in a 24 hour noise descriptor: either the Day-Night Average Level (Ldn) or the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL). The Ldn metric adds a penalty of 10 dB for the nighttime hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., while CNEL adds both the 10 dB nighttime penalty and a penalty of 5 dB for the evening hours of 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Noise levels typically attenuate (or drop off) at a rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance from point sources (such as industrial machinery). Noise from line sources, such as roadways, typically attenuates at a rate of

4.5 dB per doubling of distance on a soft site (e.g., over soil or vegetation) and 3 dB per doubling of distance on a hard site. Noise levels may also be reduced by intervening structures. Generally, a single row of buildings between the receptor and the noise source reduces the noise level by about 5 dB, while a solid wall or berm that breaks the line-of-sight reduces noise levels by 5 to 10 dB.

Groundborne Vibration Characteristics

Vibration is an oscillatory motion through a solid medium in which the motion's amplitude can be described in terms of displacement, velocity, or acceleration. Vibration is normally associated with activities such as railroads or vibration-intensive stationary sources, but it can also be associated with construction equipment, such as jackhammers, pile drivers, and hydraulic hammers. Vibration displacement is the distance that a point on a surface moves away from its original static position. The speed at which a point on a surface moves is described as the velocity, and the rate of change of the speed is described as the acceleration. Each of these descriptors can be used to correlate vibration to building damage, and acceptable equipment vibration levels.

Construction activities generate groundborne vibration when heavy equipment travels over unpaved surfaces or when it is engaged in soil movement. The effects of groundborne vibration include discernible movement of building floors, rattling of windows, shaking of items on shelves or hanging on walls, and rumbling sounds. Vibration-related problems generally occur due to resonances in the structural components of a building because structures amplify groundborne vibration. Within the "soft" sedimentary surfaces of much of Southern California, ground vibration is quickly damped out. Groundborne vibration is almost never annoying to people who are outdoors.¹

Vibratory motion is commonly described by identifying the peak particle velocity (PPV) in inches per second (in/sec). PPV in/sec is generally accepted as the most appropriate descriptor for evaluating the potential for building damage and is suitable for evaluating the potential for vibration annoyance to humans.²

Existing Noise Environment

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed project site is located in unincorporated Ventura County within the City's sphere of influence, into which the project site would be incorporated as part of the project. The Simi Valley General Plan identifies three distinct noise sources in the City: State Route 118 (the 118 Freeway), major and minor arterial roads, and the Union Pacific Railroad lines. In addition to these distinct noise sources, there are various stationary noise sources in the City, such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units. The project site is vacant and undeveloped, except for an area of fill soil, which is exported soil from grading of the Simi Valley Town Center Mall site to the south. Adjacent land uses include a multi-family residential development to the south, business park/commercial uses west of said residential project, the Simi Valley Town Center Mall further south, residential subdivisions to the northeast, Fire Station 47 to the east, undeveloped hillside open space to the north, and a commercial business park to the west-southwest. The 118 Freeway is approximately 1,300 feet south of the project site, and the nearest railroad line is located approximately 3,400 to 5,000 feet (aligned diagonally) southwest of the project site. There are no substantial existing sources of noise within the project site. The main noise sources in the project vicinity are vehicular traffic along the 118 Freeway, Simi Town Center Way, and Erringer Way. The project site is not within a mapped 60+ dBA CNEL noise contour of any roadway in the Simi Valley General Plan Safety and Noise

¹ Federal Transit Administration, Office of Planning and Environment, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, September 2018.

² Ibid.

Element.³ The City's General Plan Mobility and Infrastructure Element maps Falcon Street as a Minor Arterial (Not Built) and it is listed in the Traffic Section of the General Plan EIR.^{4,5} However, the City's Safety and Noise Element and the noise section of the General Plan EIR modelled noise levels for the major roadways and did not evaluate traffic noise levels along the existing extent of Falcon Street.^{6,7}

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation areas include 7.96 acres of vacant/undeveloped land, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units, although no plans for development are proposed at this time.

Sensitive Receptors

Noise exposure thresholds vary depending on the land use reflecting the noise sensitivities associated with those uses. Noise sensitive land uses typically include residences, hospitals, schools, libraries, and places of worship. The predominant noise sensitive land uses in the area of the project site are residences, which are located on the eastern and southern sides of the project site. The closest noise-sensitive receptors are single-family residences located approximately 15 feet to the east of the limits of grading and the multi-family residences approximately 20 feet to the south of the project site boundary and limits of grading. Additional residences lie further to the east. Commercial buildings, which are not typically considered noise-sensitive, are located approximately 380 feet south of the project site boundary. Traffic on area roadways would be the predominant noise generator affecting sensitive uses in the project vicinity.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Under the authority of the Noise Control Act of 1972, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) established noise emission criteria and testing methods published in Parts 201 through 205 of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations that apply to some transportation equipment (e.g., interstate rail carriers, medium trucks, and heavy trucks) and construction equipment. In 1974, USEPA issued guidance levels for the protection of public health and welfare in residential areas of an outdoor Ldn of 55 dBA and an indoor Ldn of 45 dBA. These guidance levels are not standards or regulations and were developed without consideration of technical or economic feasibility. There are no Federal noise standards that directly regulate environmental noise related to the construction or operation of the Project. Moreover, the Federal noise standards are not reflective of urban environments that range by land use, density, proximity to commercial or industrial centers, etc.

State

Title 24

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations sets minimum noise insulation standards for new dwellings besides single-family units. It requires that habitable rooms in new dwellings contain noise insulation that keeps interior noise levels at or below 45 dBA from exterior noise sources. The building needs to meet these requirements for at least ten years following the building permit application.

³ City of Simi Valley, City of Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 8: Safety and Noise, June 2012.

⁴ City of Simi Valley, City of Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 5: Mobility and Infrastructure, June 2012

⁵ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Chapter 12: Noise, June 2012.

⁶ City of Simi Valley, City of Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 5: Mobility and Infrastructure, June 2012.

⁷ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Chapter 16: Traffic, June 2012.

Caltrans

In the absence of Local vibration standards, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) criteria will be used for the assessment of potential building damage and human annoyance impacts from vibration. There are no local standards for vibration. Although there are no officially adopted regulatory standards for the point at which ground-borne vibration levels could cause structural damage, Caltrans provides vibration guidelines for structural damage, found in **Table 4.10-1, Vibration Damage Criteria Guidelines**.

**Table 4.10-1
Vibration Damage Criteria Guidelines**

Structure and Condition	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
	Transient ¹	Intermittent ²
Extremely fragile historic buildings	0.12	0.08
Fragile buildings	0.2	0.1
Historic and some old buildings	0.5	0.25
Older residential structures ³	0.5	0.3
New residential structures	1.0	0.5
Modern industrial/commercial buildings	2.0	0.5

Source: California Department of Transportation, Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, April 2020, Table 19.

¹ Sources create a single isolated vibration event, such as blasting or drop balls.

² Frequent or intermittent sources include impact or vibratory pile drivers, pogo-stick compactors, crack-and-seat equipment, and vibratory compaction equipment.

³ The Caltrans guidance manual does not explicitly define older residences, but provides example analyses which categorize residences constructed in the 1940s as older.

For the construction activities to occur for the North Canyon Ranch project, the intermittent criteria would be applicable. As shown in Table 4.10-1, the criterion for structural vibration damage from intermittent sources is 0.5 PPV in/sec for new residential structures, which is the standards used in this analysis, as the nearest residences were built after 2004.

In terms of human response, groundborne vibration can range from severe to barely perceptible depending on whether the source is transient or intermittent, the distance between the source and receptor, and the composition of the ground material. Criteria for assessing human response is provided in **Table 4.10-2, Human Response to Groundborne Vibration Criteria**.

As shown in Table 4.10-2, human responses to ground-borne vibration vary from severe at 2.0 PPV in/sec for transient sources to barely perceptible at 0.01 PPV in/sec for intermittent sources. The Caltrans vibration criteria suggests human perception and annoyance are higher for transient vibration than for frequent or intermittent vibration. For this analysis, intermittent levels that could cause a strongly perceptible human response (i.e., 0.1 PPV in/sec) are the applicable standard.

Regional and Local

Simi Valley General Plan

The Simi Valley General Plan Safety and Noise Element provides noise exposure standards for various land use categories based on noise generated by mobile sources (e.g., automobiles, trucks, and trains) which are presented below in **Table 4.10-3, General Plan Interior and Exterior Noise Standards**. The General Plan Safety and Noise Element states that noise from non-transportation sources is regulated by the Simi Valley Municipal Code (SVMC).

Table 4.10-2
Human Response to Groundborne Vibration Criteria

Human Response	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
	Transient ¹	Intermittent ²
Severe	2.00	0.40
Strongly perceptible	0.90	0.10
Distinctly perceptible	0.25	0.04
Barely perceptible	0.04	0.01

Source: Caltrans, Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, April 2020, Table 20.
¹ Sources of transient vibration create a single isolated vibration event, such as blasting or drop balls.
² Frequent or intermittent sources include impact or vibratory pile drivers, pogo-stick compactors, crack-and-seat equipment, and vibratory compaction equipment.

Table 4.10-3
General Plan Interior and Exterior Noise Standards

Land Use Categories	Land Uses	Average L _{dn}	
		Interior ^a	Exterior ^b
Residential	Single-Family, Duplex, Multiple Family	45 ^c	63
	Mobile Home	45 ^d	63 ^d
Commercial/Institutional	Hotel, Motel, Transient Lodging, Hospital, School Classroom, Church, Library	45	-

Source: City of Simi Valley, General Plan, Chapter 8: Safety and Noise, June 2012.
^a Indoor environment includes bathrooms, toilets, closets, corridors.
^b Outdoor environment limited to the following: private yard of single-family; multi-family private patio which is served by a means of exit from inside; or mobile home park.
^c Noise level requirement with closed windows. Mechanical ventilating system or other means of natural ventilation shall be provided per the California Building Code.
^d Exterior noise level should be such that interior noise will not exceed 45 CNEL.

Simi Valley Municipal Code

As discussed in the General Plan Safety and Noise Element, the SVMC regulates noise from non-transportation sources, but does not establish maximum noise limits and instead provides restrictions on the operation of certain sources of noise such as construction and mechanical devices. SVMC Chapter 5-16 regulates allowable hours of certain noise generating activities, including construction.⁸

SVMC Section 5-16.02(i) prohibits the erection, excavation, demolition, alteration, construction, or repair of any structure or building, outside the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Further, SVMC sections 5-16.02 (d) and (h), restrict the operation of noise generating equipment such as mechanical devices and appliances that generate loud or unusual noise to the hours from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Sunday through Thursday and from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Friday or Saturday. Noise generated by construction or equipment operation during the established daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. is not considered a nuisance.

4.10.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to noise has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, which are based upon the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact related to noise when the proposed project has potential to:

⁸ SVMC Chapter 5-16: Noise.

- Generate 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. (*Ambient Noise in Excess of Applicable Standards*)
- Generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. (*Excessive Groundborne Vibration or Groundborne Noise*)
- For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use 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, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. (*Exposure to Aircraft Noise*)

The Simi Valley General Plan provides noise exposure standards for various land use categories, which were presented in Table 4.10-3 above, which further define operational noise thresholds by land use, and Caltrans vibration structural damage and human annoyance standards are used to further define vibration thresholds.

The CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist also identifies potential noise impacts associated with aircraft noise; however, because to the distance to the project site from the nearest airport (Van Nuys Airport) is approximately 16 miles, no further analysis of impacts from aircraft noise is warranted in this Draft EIR.

4.10.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This noise analysis considers the requirements of the SVMC and Safety Noise Element regarding noise and the vibration standards conveyed by Caltrans. The analysis addresses construction noise, roadway noise during operations, and groundborne vibration during construction and operations. The methodology for analyzing noise and vibration impacts associated with each of these aspects of the Project is described in greater detail below.

4.10.3.1 *Ambient Noise in Excess of Applicable Standards*

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project were to generate substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project site in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

North Canyon Ranch

Construction

During construction, noise would be generated on-site by heavy equipment used for demolition, grading, and other construction related activities. The typical peak noise levels associated with the various construction equipment types anticipated to be used on-site are listed in **Table 4.10-4, Typical Noise Levels Generated by Construction Equipment**. Peak noise levels associated with construction equipment types that would be anticipated to be used on-site range from approximately 74 to 85 dBA L_{max} (maximum noise level) at 50 feet from the source. The noise level at sensitive receptors in the area would vary throughout construction, as pieces of equipment move across the site, and as construction activities shift to various portions of the project site.

**Table 4.10-4
Typical Noise Levels Generated by Construction Equipment**

Phase	Equipment	Lmax 50 Ft (dBA) ^{2, 3}	Usage Factor (U.F.) ⁴	Hourly Leq at 50 ft (dBA)
Site Preparation	4 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	79	40	75
	3 Rubber Tire Dozers	82	40	78
Grading	2 Excavators	81	40	77
	1 Grader	85	40	81
	2 Dozers	82	40	78
	3 Scrapers	84	40	80
	2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	79	40	75
	1 Water Truck	74	40	70
Building Construction	3 Forklifts	75	20	68
	1 Generator Set	81	50	78
	1 Rough Terrain Forklift	78	40	74
	2 Skid Steer Loaders	78	40	74
	3 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	79	40	75
Paving	1 Welder	74	40	70
	2 Pavers	77	50	74
	2 Rollers	80	20	73
Architectural Coating	2 Paving Equipment	83	20	76
	1 Air Compressor	78	40	74

¹ Construction Equipment List is based on the CalEEMod model for the project.
² Lmax levels are maximum noise levels for individual equipment pieces. Each piece of equipment would operate at a distance from other equipment.
³ Source: Federal Highway Administration, Construction Noise Handbook, 2006, Ch. 9, Construction Equipment Noise Levels and Ranges.
⁴ Usage Factor (U.F.) is the portion of time equipment is operating at full power.

The nearest sensitive land uses are single-family residences located at a distance of approximately 15 feet to the east of the project's limit of grading and multi-family residences located approximately 20 feet to the south of the project boundary. Noise levels are based on the highest volume equipment noise and a standard attenuation rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance for a point source under hard site (worst case) conditions. These noise levels do not consider potential noise attenuation that may be provided by existing walls, buildings, and other structures such as parking shelters where they occur between the project site and the existing residences.

Construction noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptors were modeled using the FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM),⁹ as shown in **Appendix G, Noise Calculation Worksheets**. The RCNM identifies Lmax noise levels associated with quantity and type of construction equipment and provides an acoustical usage factor (U.F.) which estimates the fraction of time each piece of equipment is operating at full power during construction. The U.F. is a key input used to calculate sound levels averaged over time expressed as Leq. The maximum noise levels (Lmax) are adjusted using the U.F. published in the Federal Highway Administration Construction Noise Handbook. The sound level prediction equation is expressed as follows for the hourly average sound level (Leq) at the distance (D) between the source and receiver.

⁹ Federal Highway Administration, FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model User's Guide: Final Report, January 2006.

$$Leq = Lmax - 20 \cdot \log (D/50) + 10 \cdot \log (U.F./100) - I.L.$$

Where:

Lmax is the published reference noise level at 50 feet

U.F. is the acoustical usage factor for full power operation per hour

I.L. is the insertion loss for intervening barriers, when applicable

Construction noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptors to the east, the single-family residences north of Falcon Street, are shown on **Table 14.10-5, Construction Noise Levels at Single-Family Residences to the East.**

**Table 4.10-5
Construction Noise Levels at Single-Family Residences to the East**

Phase	Equipment Type ¹	Leq at 50 ft (dBA) ^{2,3}	Distance to Residences (ft) ⁴	Leq (dBA)
Site Preparation	4 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	75	15	85
	3 Rubber Tire Dozers	78	15	88
Grading	2 Excavators	77	15	87
	1 Grader	81	15	91
	2 Dozers	78	15	88
	3 Scrapers	80	15	90
	2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	75	15	85
	1 Water Truck	70	15	80
Building Construction	3 Forklifts	68	85	63
	1 Generator Set	78	85	73
	1 Rough Terrain Forklift	74	85	69
	2 Skid Steer Loaders	74	85	69
	3 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	75	85	70
	1 Welder	70	85	65
Paving	2 Pavers	74	110	67
	2 Rollers	73	110	66
	2 Paving Equipment	76	110	69
Architectural Coating	1 Air Compressor	74	85	69
¹ Construction Equipment List is based CalEEMod defaults. ² Noise levels are for individual equipment pieces. Each piece of equipment would operate at a distance from other equipment. ³ Source: Federal Highway Administration, Construction Noise Handbook, 2006, Ch. 9, Construction Equipment Noise Levels and Ranges. ⁴ The distance provided is between the boundary of a given construction activity and the nearest structure of the single-family residences north of Falcon Street to the east.				

Construction noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptors to the south, the multi-family residences on Jefferson Way, are shown in **Table 14.10-6, Construction Noise Levels at Multi-family Residences to the South.** As shown in Table 4.10-6, construction noise levels from the loudest equipment could reach a maximum hourly noise level of 91 dBA Leq at the nearest sensitive receptors, which are approximately 15 feet east of the project's limits of grading. As each piece construction equipment would operate at some distance from each other, the nearest source would have the greatest potential impact, given distance attenuation and the logarithmic nature in which multiple noise sources combine. In addition, construction equipment would move throughout the project site, and it is unlikely that more than one piece of equipment would simultaneously operate close to a given residence for a substantial amount of time. This noise level

would result in a 44.4 dBA increase above the existing ambient noise level of 46.6 dBA Leq.¹⁰ While this would be a large increase above existing ambient noise levels, it would only occur temporarily during non-sensitive daytime hours.

At the nearest of the multi-family residences to the south, which are approximately 20 feet south of the project site and the limits of grading, construction noise levels from the loudest equipment could reach a maximum hourly noise level of 89 dBA Leq. This noise level would result in a 37.8 dBA increase above the existing ambient noise level of 51.2 dBA Leq.¹¹ These maximum noise level at residences would only occur temporarily when the noisiest equipment types would operate within the minimum distance from a particular off-site residence.

**Table 4.10-6
Construction Noise Levels at Multi-family Residences to the South**

Phase	Equipment Type ¹	Leq at 50 ft (dBA) ^{2,3}	Distance to Residences (ft) ⁴	Leq (dBA)
Site Preparation	4 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	75	20	83
	3 Rubber Tire Dozers	78	20	86
Grading	2 Excavators	77	20	85
	1 Grader	81	20	89
	2 Dozers	78	20	86
	3 Scrapers	80	20	88
	2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	75	20	83
	1 Water Truck	70	20	78
	Building Construction	3 Forklifts	68	85
1 Generator Set		78	85	73
1 Rough Terrain Forklift		74	85	69
2 Skid Steer Loaders		74	85	69
3 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes		75	85	70
1 Welder		70	85	65
Paving	2 Pavers	74	75	70
	2 Rollers	73	75	69
	2 Paving Equipment	76	75	72
Architectural Coating	1 Air Compressor	74	75	70

¹ Construction Equipment List is based on CalEEMod 2020.4.0 default estimations as adjusted for project specific data provided via email and telephone communications with the City and project team in December 2020, and updated timeline in telephone communication with the City and project team on April 5, 2022.

² Noise levels are for individual equipment pieces. Each piece of equipment would operate at a distance from other equipment.

³ Source: Federal Highway Administration, Construction Noise Handbook, 2006, Ch. 9, Construction Equipment Noise Levels and Ranges.

⁴ The distance provided is between the boundary of a given construction activity and the nearest structure of the multi-family residences on Jefferson Way to the south.

¹⁰ Existing ambient noise level based on FHWA RD-77-108 modelled existing daytime noise level near Falcon Street, west of Erringer Road, shown on Table 4.10-7.

¹¹ Existing ambient noise level based on the FHWA RD-77-108 modelled existing daytime noise level from the 118 Freeway. Additional distance attenuation of 18.7 dBA was applied for a receptor approximately 1,450 feet from the centerline and 1,386 feet from the center of the outermost travel lane. A 7.5 dBA insertion loss was assumed from three intervening building rows based on the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Assessment Manual, September 2018. (I.e., 77.4 dBA Leq - 18.7 dBA - 7.5 dBA = 51.2 dBA Leq.)

The project would be required to comply with the SVMC Section 5-16.02(i), which limits the times of day in which construction activities are allowed to the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Therefore, because noise levels and temporary noise level increases from construction activity would occur only during daytime hours, construction noise would be less than significant.

Operation

Noise generated by the project during operations would be mainly from project-related vehicle trips increasing traffic noise on local roadways.

Off-Site Traffic Noise

The project would generate vehicle trips on roadways in the project vicinity. Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes for existing conditions on Falcon Street were provided by Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers.¹² The City of Simi Valley Department of Public Works provided traffic volumes for other roadways under existing conditions, the General Plan buildout year, and the General Plan buildout year with project.¹³ Existing (2020) traffic volumes on the 118 Freeway were obtained from the Caltrans Traffic Census Program¹⁴ and future (2030) traffic volumes on the 118 Freeway were estimated by applying a typical 1 percent annual growth rate to account for ambient traffic growth on the 118 Freeway that would be expected to occur between 2020 and 2030. The vehicle fleet mix on local roadways was obtained from the City's General Plan EIR noise model parameters,¹⁵ while the truck percentages on the 118 Freeway were obtained from the Caltrans Traffic Census Program.¹⁶ Existing noise levels in the vicinity of the project and nearby roadways were modeled using the FHWA RD-77-108 model¹⁷ with the California-specific vehicle noise (CALVENO) curves,¹⁸ as shown in Appendix G. **Table 4.10-7, Existing Year Traffic** shows the project-related traffic noise increases in the existing year (2020) and **Table 4.10-8, Future Year Traffic Noise** shows the project-related traffic noise increases in the General Plan buildout year 2030.

As Table 4.10-7 shows below, the project would increase noise levels on Falcon Street by 2.2 dBA CNEL and noise levels on other roadways by 0.1 dBA CNEL or less in the existing year (2020). In the future year (2030), the project would increase noise levels on Falcon Street by 0.3 dBA CNEL and noise levels on other roadways by 0.1 dBA CNEL or less, as Table 4.10-8 shows. These noise increases levels are less than 5 dB and would therefore not be readily perceptible. Therefore, the project's potential impacts associated with the generation of off-site traffic noise would therefore be less than significant. In addition, noise level increases below 3 dBA would not be readily perceptible to the human ear in an outdoor environment and noise level increases below 1 dBA are not perceptible even in a controlled laboratory environment.

¹² E-mail correspondence with Justin Link, PE, TE, QSD/P Principal Engineer – Traffic, City of Simi Valley, Department of Public Works, December 28, 2020, and January 27, 2021.

¹³ E-mail correspondence with Francesca Bravo, Senior Transportation Engineer, Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers, February 4, 2021.

¹⁴ Caltrans, Traffic Census Program, Traffic Volumes: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), 2020.

¹⁵ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Volume II, Appendix E: Noise Data, June 2012.

¹⁶ Caltrans, Traffic Census Program, Truck Traffic: Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic: 2020.

¹⁷ Federal Highway Administration, FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model, January 1, 1978.

¹⁸ Hendriks, Rudolf W., California Vehicle Noise Emission Levels, 1985.

**Table 4.10-7
Existing Year Traffic Noise**

Roadway Segment	Existing ADT	Existing Noise Level (dBA CNEL)	Existing With Project ADT	Existing With Project Noise Level (dBA CNEL)	Existing Project-Related Noise Increase (dBA CNEL)
Falcon Street, west of Erringer Road	309	47.6	509	49.8	2.2
Simi Town Center Way, east of First Street	8,900	62.2	9,000	62.2	0.0
Simi Town Center Way, west of Erringer Road	10,300	62.8	10,300	62.8	0.0
Erringer Road, from Falcon Street to Alamo Street	7,300	64.1	7,400	64.1	0.1
Erringer Road, from Alamo Street to Simi Town Center Way	17,800	68.0	18,100	68.0	0.0
118 Freeway (SR 118), from First Street to Erringer Road	112,000	78.5	112,600	78.6	0.1

Source: Envicom Corporation, September 2022, based on Federal Highway Administration, FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model, January 1, 1978.
Traffic Data Sources: Francesca Bravo, Senior Transportation Engineer, Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers, February 4, 2021 (email correspondence). Justin Link, PE, TE, QSD/P Principal Engineer – Traffic, City of Simi Valley, Department of Public Works, December 28, 2020, and January 27, 2021 (email correspondence) . Caltrans, Traffic Census Program, Traffic Volumes: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), 2020.
Note: Noise levels shown are 50 feet from the center of the outermost travel lane of the roadway.

**Table 4.10-8
Future Year Traffic Noise**

Roadway Segment	Future Without Project ADT	Future Without Project Noise Level (dBA CNEL)	Future With Project ADT	Future With Project Noise Level (dBA CNEL)	Future Project-Related Noise Increase (dBA CNEL)
Falcon Street, east of First Street ¹	6,600	60.9	7,000	61.2	0.3
Falcon Street, west of Erringer Road	6,600	60.9	6,800	61.0	0.1
Simi Town Center Way, east of First Street	12,700	63.7	12,800	63.8	0.1
Simi Town Center Way, west of Erringer Road	15,000	64.5	15,000	64.5	0.0
Erringer Road, from Falcon Street to Alamo Street	19,200	68.3	19,300	68.3	0.0
Erringer Road, from Alamo Street to Simi Town Center Way	21,500	68.8	21,800	68.8	0.0
118 Freeway (SR 118), from First Street to Erringer	123,700	79.0	124,300	79.0	0.0

Source: Envicom Corporation, September 2022 based on Federal Highway Administration, FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model, January 1, 1978.
Traffic Data Sources: E-mail correspondence with Francesca Bravo, Senior Transportation Engineer, Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers, February 4, 2021. E-mail correspondence with Justin Link, PE, TE, QSD/P Principal Engineer – Traffic, City of Simi Valley, Department of Public Works, December 28, 2020, and January 27, 2021. Caltrans, Traffic Census Program, Traffic Volumes: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), 2020.

¹ The extension of Falcon Street from its existing terminus to First Street is designated as a future arterial in the General Plan.
Note: Noise levels shown are 50 feet from the center of the outermost travel lane of the roadway.

On-Site Noise

Under CEQA, potential impacts of the environment on a proposed project are generally not required to be analyzed. As discussed above, the project would not contribute substantially to an increase in roadway noise, and therefore further evaluation of the existing noise environment's effect on the project would not be required under CEQA. However, the City requires that the proposed residential units be constructed to standards that provide adequate noise attenuation for residents pursuant to applicable codes. In addition, building codes require that the proposed residential structure be constructed with materials and techniques to meet acceptable noise exposure for indoor and outdoor environments. The design would be required to provide each residential unit with adequate noise attenuation from adjacent units and other noise sources within the project site.

The project would introduce new residential uses on the project site. The proposed residential units would represent new sensitive receptors in the vicinity and these residences would be located a minimum of approximately 1,570 feet from the roadway centerline of the 118 Freeway and approximately 1,250 feet from the centerline of Erringer Road. The noise model results shown in Tables 4.10-8 and 4.10-9 show that the project site is outside the 63 dB CNEL future with project noise contours for the 118 Freeway and Erringer Road. Noise levels below 63 dB CNEL are within the City's "normally acceptable" range for single-family and multi-family residential land uses, meaning that conventional construction without special noise insulation would be sufficient.¹⁹

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation properties include 7.96 acres of vacant/undeveloped land, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units. Construction and operational noise from stationary sources would be regulated by the SVMC. Five dwelling units would not generate enough vehicle trips to cause a substantial increase in traffic noise levels.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.10.3.2 Excessive Groundborne Vibration or Groundborne Noise

Project construction activities, including site grading, could result in groundborne vibration generated by large earthmoving equipment. A significant impact may occur if the proposed project would expose people to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. Construction activities generate ground-borne vibration when heavy equipment travels over unpaved surfaces or is engaged in soil movement. The effects of ground-borne vibration may include discernable movement of building floors, rattling of windows, shaking of items on shelves or hanging on walls, and rumbling sounds. Ground vibration is quickly damped out within the softer sedimentary surfaces of much of Southern California. Because vibration is typically not an issue, very few jurisdictions have adopted vibration significance thresholds. Federal and State transportation agencies have published vibration levels for public works construction projects that may potentially cause damage to structures or result in human annoyance.

¹⁹ City of Simi Valley, City of Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 8: Safety and Noise, June 2012.

A descriptor commonly used to determine vibration impacts is “PPV,” which is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration signal, usually measured in inches per second (in/sec). The applicable threshold for potential vibration damage is the 0.5 PPV in/sec criteria for new residential structures, as the nearest residences were constructed after December 2004,²⁰ and the applicable threshold for vibration annoyance is 0.1 PPV in/sec criteria for strongly perceptible vibration.

North Canyon Ranch

The predicted vibration levels generated by construction equipment, and potential associated structural damage, and potential human annoyance are provided in terms of PPV in/sec in **Table 4.10-9, Groundborne Vibration from Project Construction Equipment.**

**Table 4.10-9
Groundborne Vibration from Project Construction Equipment**

Construction Equipment	Reference Vibration Levels at 25 ft	Vibration Levels at Nearest Residential Structures		Vibration Damage Impact Assessment		Vibration Annoyance Impact Assessment	
	PPV in/sec at 25 ft	Distance (ft)	PPV in/sec	Vibration Damage Threshold (PPV in/sec)	Exceed-ance?	Vibration Annoyance Threshold (PPV in/sec)	Exceed-ance?
Large Bulldozers	0.089	15 ¹	0.191	0.5	No	0.1	Yes
Loaded Trucks	0.076	40 ²	0.038	0.5	No	0.1	No

Data Source: Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, September 2018.
¹ Distance from limits of grading to nearest residential structure.
² Estimated minimal distance from operation of loaded trucks on unpaved ground to nearest residential structure.

The on-site construction equipment used in construction of the project that would create the maximum potential vibration is a large bulldozer. As shown in Table 4.10-9, the estimated vibration level for such equipment is 0.089 PPV in/sec at 25 feet from the source. The closest buildings to the limits of grading are adjacent residences, the nearest of which is approximately 15 feet east of the project property boundary. Therefore, the highest expected construction equipment vibrations at buildings would be 0.191 PPV in/sec. These maximum vibrations levels would only occur at any single building temporarily for the amount of time that a large bulldozer may pass by or operate at the extreme project boundary in close proximity to the building, and vibration levels would diminish as the mobile equipment source moves away from the boundary and sensitive receptor. Project construction vibration levels at nearby residences would be below 0.5 PPV in/sec, which is the level that could cause physical structural damage to existing off-site residences. As the project’s vibration impacts would not result in structural damage, potential vibration damage impacts would be considered less than significant. As indicated in Table 4.10-9, vibration levels of up to 0.1 PPV in/sec would be above the criteria for strongly perceptible vibration from frequent or intermittent sources. Mitigation measure **NOI-1** has been required to assure that large bulldozers or similar equipment would not be permitted to operate within 24 feet of any off-site residence, with smaller equipment substituted within this distance. At this distance, vibration levels from large bulldozers would be reduced below 0.1 PPV in/sec, the criteria for strong perceptibility. Therefore, construction vibration annoyance impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

²⁰ Google Earth, Historic Aerial Imagery, Imagery dated December 2004.

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The Annexation Areas include 7.96 acres of vacant/undeveloped land, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units. Construction vibration would be typical of single-family or low to mid-rise multi-family residential construction. Such construction would be regulated by the SVMC and with regulatory compliance would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM NOI-1: Large bulldozers or similar equipment may not operate within 24 feet of any off-site residence, with smaller equipment substituted within this distance.

Residual Impacts

Mitigation measure NOI-1 would reduce the equipment size used proximate to existing residences during construction of the North Canyon Ranch Project, and thus the vibration impacts of construction would be reduced for the sensitive receptors. With the mitigation measure, vibration impacts would be less than significant.

4.10.3.3 Exposure to Aircraft Noise

North Canyon Ranch

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise level, if 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. The nearest airport, Van Nuys Airport, is approximately 16 miles from the project site. The site does not fall into the airport land use plan area, Influence Areas, or 65 dBA CNEL noise contour.²¹
²² Therefore, the project would not expose people living or working in the area to excessive levels of aircraft noise.

Required Island Annexations

None of the nine unincorporated Island Annexation areas are located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. None of the areas that would be annexed are within airport land use plan areas, Influence Areas, or 65 dBA CNEL noise contours. The undeveloped land within the annexation areas would not have the potential to be developed with a land use that would create aircraft noise, due to their limited size and surrounding development. Therefore, the island annexations would not expose people living or working in the area to excessive levels of aircraft noise.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Aircraft noise impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

²¹ Los Angeles County, Van Nuys Airport, Airport Influence Area, Accessed on August 6, 2021, at <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?layers=7cb3fb165b0143c3993eaf6748c7d2e1>

²² Los Angeles World Airports: Van Nuys Airport, California State Airport Noise Standards Quarterly Report: Third Quarter 2019, Noise Contour Map, November 8, 2019. Accessed on March 13, 2020, at <https://www.lawa.org/-/media/lawa-web/environment/files/vny---quarterly-noise-report/vny3q19-20191108-quarterly-report-map.ashx>.

4.10.4 Cumulative Impacts

Under CEQA, a project's impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, considers buildout of the current City of Simi Valley General Plan to be the overall cumulative project set, with specific known or reasonably foreseeable projects listed in Table 3-1 and shown in Figure 3-1.

Cumulative Construction Noise

There are no known projects in the vicinity of the North Canyon Ranch project site that would be constructed at the same time. It is therefore not anticipated that nearby residences would be affected by construction noise from another project occurring at the same time as construction noise from the project. There is no known proposed development in the annexation areas. Therefore, cumulative construction noise impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Operational Noise

North Canyon Ranch

Table 4.10-10, Cumulative Traffic Noise shows the cumulative traffic noise increase, based on a comparison of traffic volumes in the General Plan buildout year with the project to traffic volumes in the existing year volumes without the project.

Table 4.10-10 shows a cumulative noise increase of 13.4 dB CNEL on Falcon Street, west of Erringer Road and greater than 13.4 dB CNEL Falcon Street, east of First Street. A noise level increase of 10 dB or more would be perceived as at least a doubling of noise. However, these noise level increases would occur regardless of project implementation. As shown in Table 4.10-10, the project-related cumulative traffic noise increase on roadways is less than 5 dB, which would be less than a readily perceptible increase in an outdoor environment. Therefore, cumulative traffic noise impacts would be less than significant.

The single-family residences adjacent to the northern side of Falcon Street, west of Erringer Road are already shielded from traffic noise by existing concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls at the property lines of the residences. In addition: of these residential properties, the four with frontage on Elliston Court are elevated above the roadway, resulting in more effective shielding from the existing wall at the property line. It should be noted that an additional wall along the roadway would not reduce noise levels at these residences due to their substantially higher elevation above the roadway.

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation areas include 7.96 acres of vacant/undeveloped land, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units. Five potential future dwelling units would not generate enough vehicle trips to cause a substantial increase in traffic noise levels or substantively contribute to cumulative traffic noise increases.

Table 4.10-10
Cumulative Traffic Noise

Roadway Segment	Existing ADT	Existing Noise Level (dBA CNEL)	Future Without Project ADT	Future Without Project Noise Level (dBA CNEL)	Future with Project ADT	Future With Project Noise Level (dBA CNEL)	Future Project-Related Noise Increase (dBA CNEL)	Cumulative Increase (dBA CNEL)
Falcon Street, east of First Street ¹	n/a	n/a	6,600	60.9	7,000	61.2	0.3	>13.4
Falcon Street, west of Erringer Road	309	47.6	6,600	60.9	6,800	61.0	0.1	13.4
Simi Town Center Way, east of First Street	8,900	62.2	12,700	63.7	12,800	63.8	0.1	1.6
Simi Town Center Way, west of Erringer Road	10,300	62.8	15,000	64.5	15,000	64.5	0.0	1.7
Erringer Road, from Falcon Street to Alamo Street	7,300	64.1	19,200	68.3	19,300	68.3	0.0	4.2
Erringer Road, from Alamo Street to Simi Town Center Way	17,800	68.0	21,500	68.8	21,800	68.8	0.0	0.9
118 Freeway (SR 118), from First Street to Erringer Road	112,000	78.5	123,700	79.0	124,300	79.0	0.0	0.5

Source: Envicom Corporation, September 2022, based on Federal Highway Administration, FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model, January 1, 1978.

Traffic Data Sources: E-mail correspondence with Francesca Bravo, Senior Transportation Engineer, Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers, February 4, 2021. E-mail correspondence with Justin Link, PE, TE, QSD/P Principal Engineer – Traffic, City of Simi Valley, Department of Public Works, December 28, 2020, and January 27, 2021. Caltrans, Traffic Census Program, Traffic Volumes: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), 2020.

Note: Noise levels shown are 50 feet from the center of the outermost travel lane of the roadway.

¹ The extension of Falcon Street from its existing terminus to First Street is designated as a future arterial in the General Plan.
n/a = not applicable

4.11 POPULATION AND HOUSING

SECTION 4.0

4.11 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts associated with population and housing and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant population and housing impacts where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this EIR.

4.11.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based on these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

Ventura County is part of the larger Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), on the western end of the Counties that make up SCAG. The City of Simi Valley (City) is located in the eastern portion of Ventura County, bordering the City of Los Angeles to the east and Ventura County's Conejo Valley to the southwest. The City is surrounded by the Santa Susana Mountain range to the north and the Simi Hills to the south/southeast. Moorpark is the next city to the west. The Housing Element of the General Plan characterizes the City as a commuter bedroom community feeding the larger cities in Ventura County to the west and the Los Angeles area to the east.

Simi Valley was originally inhabited by Chumash Indians and then became one of the earliest Spanish colonial Ranchos in the Ventura and Santa Barbara County region, referred to as Rancho Simi. Until the late 19th century, Rancho Simi had a Spanish-speaking majority and was then settled by Anglo-Americans. The new settlers established farms, orchards, and groves, which dominated the landscape until the 1970s. The City incorporated in 1969 with approximately 10,000 residents, presently covers 42.42 square miles, offers a variety of residential types and job opportunities. According to the 2021 Census, the City is home to 125,975 residents as of July 1, 2021.¹

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development project site is located within an approximately 160-acre undeveloped property in unincorporated Ventura County, adjacent to the City boundary of the northwestern portion of the City. There are currently no housing units or permanent population on the project site. The project site property is located within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) area and within the City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB) identified in the Simi Valley General Plan, also known as the Simi Valley 2030 General Plan Update.² Development of SOI areas were not included in the City's

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Community Facts, Simi Valley, Accessed on August 29, 2022, at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/simivalleycitycalifornia>.

² City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan Land Use Map, June 2012.

population and housing projections during the 2030 General Plan update. The project applicant is requesting that the project site be annexed to the City. Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and “big box” stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, single-family residences to the east, and open space to the north and west. The southwestern corner of the development area is located at the northern terminus of First Street, and the eastern side of the development area is located at the western terminus of Falcon Street, which the project would extend westerly through the project site to connect with First Street.

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine Required Island Annexation Areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The Island Annexation Areas are located within the City limits boundary, although currently they are excluded from the City’s jurisdiction, and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (consisting of single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units, but no development plans are proposed. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

United States Bureau of the Census

The United States Bureau of the Census is an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce responsible for serving as the leading source of quality data about the nation’s people and economy. The 2010 Census provided the basis for population characteristics in the Housing Element of the City General Plan, re-adopted February 27, 2023, using 2010 Census data. The Bureau of the Census also provides updated survey data for communities with populations over 65,000 through the American Community Survey (ACS) process used to supplement Census Bureau data whenever possible.

State

California Government Code

The Government Code Section 65580 identifies the California Legislature’s statement that “attainment of decent housing and a suitable living environment for every Californian” as a “priority of the highest order.” The Government Code requires local jurisdictions to prepare General Plans, including a Housing Element to identify the City’s housing conditions and establish the goals, objectives, and policies that are the foundation of the City’s housing and growth strategy. Government Code Section 65583 identifies the requirements for housing elements of general plans.

Regional and Local

Southern California Association of Governments

Founded in 1965, SCAG is a legal entity formed under California law by counties, cities, and tribal powers. Under federal law, SCAG is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and under California law as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency and a Council of Governments.

On September 3, 2020, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted the Connect SoCal 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS meets federal and state requirements and is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. The RTP/SCS contains baseline socioeconomic projections that serve as the basis for SCAG’s transportation planning. It includes projections of population, households, and employment forecasted for the years 2020, 2030, 2035, and 2045 at the regional, county, and local jurisdictional levels.³ The Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report to the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS details growth in employment, population, and households at the regional, county, jurisdictional and sub-jurisdictional levels between 2016 and 2045.⁴

Simi Valley General Plan – Housing Element

The Housing Element of the Simi Valley General Plan (adopted February 27, 2023 by the City and certified May 18, 2023, by the California Department of Housing and Community Development) is the City's primary planning tool with respect to population and housing. Policies within the Housing Element are relevant to the proposed project because of the proposed housing units and resulting population increase. Section 4.9, Land Use Planning, of this Draft EIR provides an analysis of project consistency with relevant General Plan policies including those of the Housing Element. Although the project site is located outside the incorporated City limits, the site is located within the City SOI, a City Planning Area within which the most recent General Plan update included population projections. As noted in the General Plan, the City Planning Area comprises all properties located within the existing SOI for Simi Valley, including all properties within the current City limits.⁵

4.11.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to population and housing is analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, which are based upon the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. Impacts to population that are social or economic are not generally considered a significant effect on the environment under CEQA unless a social or economic change can be directly linked to a physical change in the environment. Impacts related to the project’s potential to induce growth are discussed in Section 6.5, Growth Inducing Impact, of this Draft EIR. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant population and housing impact when the proposed project has potential to (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- 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). (Unplanned Population Growth)
- Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. (Displacement of People or Housing)

4.11.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Development of the project would establish Tentative Tract Map No. 5658-A, a residential subdivision of 157 single-family and 50 multi-family units, with roadways, utilities, and open space on 160.32 acres. The project development would be accessed by the project-proposed westerly extension of Falcon Street, west of Erringer Road, in the northwest portion of the City, consistent with the City’s General Plan. The project

³ SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Adopted September 3, 2020.

⁴ SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Adopted September 3, 2020.

⁵ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 3, Community Development, pg. 3-2.

would also include the annexation of nine County Islands to the City, with no new development being proposed within the Islands. However, conservatively, our analysis assumes that five single-family homes could be constructed on residential lots that are currently without homes. The following analysis considers the impact of the project with respect to population and housing.

4.11.3.1 Unplanned Population Growth

A project could result in a potentially significant impact if it would result in substantial unplanned growth either directly (such as by proposing unplanned development) or indirectly (such as by extending roads or other infrastructure into areas not previously planned for development).

North Canyon Ranch

Buildout of the proposed project would add a total of 207 new residential units consisting of 157 single-family units and 50 multi-family units and associated roads and infrastructure to serve the proposed residences. The project site development is consistent with the General Plan in the sense that it is within the City SOI and CURB boundaries, but it will require a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change to realize the proposed project. An estimate of the population growth resulting from the new housing is provided in **Table 4.11-1, Proposed Housing and Estimated Population**.

**Table 4.11-1
Proposed Housing and Estimated Population**

Housing	Units Proposed	Average Household Size	Estimated Population
Single-family residential	157	2.98	468
Multi-family units	50	2.98	149
Total	207	--	617
Source for Household Size: City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Housing Element, Table H-9, Household Characteristics, May 2023.			

As shown in Table 4.11-1, the proposed 157 single-family units and 50 multi-family units would result in an increase of 209 additional residential units and an estimated population increase of 617 people based on the City's average owner-occupied household size, as shown in the General Plan. Although the average household size for renter-occupied units is lower, the average household size for owner-occupied units of 2.98 people was used for all project unities as a conservative projection.

As the federally designated MPO for a six-County region, SCAG prepared the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, which contains population and housing growth forecasts for SCAG's component counties and cities. **Table 4.11-2, Housing and Population Growth Projections**, provides growth projections including the projected 2022 baseline, 2028 project buildout year (extrapolated), and SCAG horizon year 2045 estimates for population and housing within the City and County.

Table 4.11-2
Housing and Population Growth Projections

Growth and Geographic Area	2022 Baseline	Project Buildout Year (2028)			SCAG Horizon Year (2045)		
		Projection	Growth from 2022	Percent Increase from 2022	Projection	Growth from 2022	Percent Increase from 2022
Population							
City of Simi Valley	129,148	131,197	2,048	1.6%	137,000	7,852	6.1%
County of Ventura	870,069	890,138	20,069	2.3%	947,000	76,931	8.8%
Housing							
City of Simi Valley	42,531	43,462	931	2.2%	46,100	3,569	8.4%
County of Ventura	278,241	285,483	7,241	2.6%	306,000	27,759	10%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.							
Note: Population and housing rate data for years 2022 (the baseline year) and 2028 (the anticipated buildout year of the Project) within the City and County are calculated based on a linear interpolation of the 2016 to 2045 projections in SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS.							
Note: Estimates are rounded.							

The contributions of the project to the local (City) and regional (County) population and housing growth projections are provided in **Table 4.11-3, Project Contributions to Local and Regional Population Growth**, and **Table 4.11-4, Project Contributions to Local and Regional Housing Growth**.

Table 4.11-3
Project Contributions to Local and Regional Population Growth

Geographic Area	Increase in Population Generated by the Project	Population Growth from 2022-2045	Project's Percentage of Population Growth from 2022-2045
City of Simi Valley	617	7,852	7.68%
County of Ventura	617	76,931	0.80%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.			

Table 4.11-4
Project Contributions to Local and Regional Housing Growth

Geographic Area	Increase in Housing Generated by the Project	Housing Growth from 2022-2045	Project's Percentage of Housing Growth from 2022-2045
City of Simi Valley	207	3,569	5.80%
County of Ventura	207	27,759	0.75%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.			

As shown in Table 4.11-3, the project's population is compared to the City and County projections for population from the project baseline year in 2022 to the SCAG horizon year in 2045. The Citywide population is anticipated to increase by 7,852 people from 2022 to 2045, and the proposed project would

account for only eight percent of the forecasted City population growth through 2045. The Countywide population is anticipated to increase by 76,931 people from 2022 to 2045, and the proposed project would represent a negligible amount (approximately 0.80 percent) of the projected regional population growth.

As shown in Table 4.11-4, the project's housing is compared to the City and County projections for housing from the project baseline year in 2022 to the SCAG horizon year in 2045. City housing is anticipated to increase by 3,569 households from 2022 to 2045, and the project would represent a negligible amount (six percent) of the housing growth forecast through 2045. In addition, the County housing is projected to increase by 27,759 households from 2022 to 2045, and the project would only represent 0.75 percent of the projected regional housing growth.

The proposed project increase in population and housing would thus be within current City projections. The project would require a General Plan Amendment (see Chapter 2.0, Project Description for approvals) to specify the project density and map the extent of the project development. However, the project is within the SOI and CURB boundaries and is consistent with existing General Plan policy (see Section 4.9, Land Use and Planning for a General Plan policy consistency analysis). Project-related growth would be included in the future City General Plan update, providing updated, adequate projections for the entire City. Based on the above, the project development would not result in unplanned growth, and the proposed project does not create an adverse direct population impact.

The proposed extension of Falcon Street within the project site was included in the 2030 General Plan roadway infrastructure plan as a planned but as-yet unbuilt Secondary Arterial, as shown Mobility and Infrastructure Element.⁶ The Falcon Street extension would serve the proposed project and improve the local roadway system by providing a desired connection between Erringer Road on the east and First Street on the west, and providing improved circulation system in the northwestern portion of Simi Valley. Considering the Falcon Street extension is in the General Plan and provides a connection between two existing streets in a way that would not open up additional lands for unplanned development following development of the North Canyon Ranch project, project approval would not result in an adverse indirect population growth impact. Based on the foregoing analysis, the project would not result in direct or indirect substantial unplanned population growth and the project would have a less than significant impact.

Required Island Annexations

The Islands are existing developed areas, where development is not proposed to be changed. For these areas, the existing housing and number of residents are assumed to remain the same as under current conditions. No physical changes are currently proposed. The existing development within the Annexation Islands is included in the current County population and housing projections, as they currently fall within County jurisdiction. With the annexation, these population and housing numbers would shift from the County to the City, which would be accounted for in the next City and County General updates. However, as the development is an existing condition and not new development, this change would be jurisdictional only and would not have a significant environmental impact in terms of real population and housing growth. Thus, for the developed portions of the islands, impacts with regard to a substantial unplanned growth in population growth would be less than significant impact.

The Island Annexation Areas also include five vacant/undeveloped lots that could potentially be developed with five single-family dwelling units. Assuming an average of 2.98 people per single-family household and rounding up, these five lots would potentially add 15 people to the population of Simi Valley, which would not result in a significant increase of the projected City and County household and population

⁶ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General, Chapter 5.0, Mobility and Infrastructure, Figure M-2, Functional Street Classification, June 2012.

projections. As such, the Required Island Annexations would not result in direct or indirect substantial unplanned population growth, and the project would have a less than significant impact.

North Canyon Ranch and Required Annexation Islands (Combined Growth)

The development of North Canyon Ranch project would incrementally contribute to cumulative projected growth within the local and regional setting by adding 209 new residential units and an estimated population increase of 617 people. Potential development of vacant/undeveloped lots within the required Annexation Islands would potentially add an estimated five residential units and 15 people, for a total combined project increase (project plus annexations) of 214 residential units and 632 people.

Table 4.11-5, Combined Project Contribution to Local and Regional Population Growth, provides an analysis of the combined project’s incremental impact on City and County projections.

Table 4.11-5
Combined Project Contribution to Local and Regional Population Growth

Geographic Area	Increase in Population Generated by the Combined Project	Population Growth from 2022-2045	Combined Project’s Percentage of Population Growth from 2022-2045
City of Simi Valley	632	7,852	8.05%
County of Ventura	632	76,931	0.82%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.			

Table 4.11-6
Combined Project Contribution to Local and Regional Housing Growth

Geographic Area	Increase in Housing Generated by the Combined Project	Housing Growth from 2022-2045	Combined Project’s Percentage of Housing Growth from 2022-2045
City of Simi Valley	212	3,569	5.94%
County of Ventura	212	27,759	0.76%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.			

As shown, the combined project components-related increase in population would represent approximately 8.06 percent of the City’s planned population growth and 5.9 percent of the City’s planned housing growth from 2022 to 2045. The combined project components increase in population would also represent approximately 0.82 percent of the County’s planned population growth and approximately 0.76 percent of the County’s housing growth from 2022 to 2045.

Therefore, combined project buildout would not result in a significant contribution to City or County impacts relating to housing or population growth in excess of projections envisioned in the RTP/SCS and would not result in a significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant, without the need for mitigation measures.

4.11.3.2 Displacement of People or Housing

A significant impact could occur if the project would displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing.

North Canyon Ranch

There are no existing houses or people on the project site; therefore, the project would have no impact regarding the displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing. As such, the project would not necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and the project would have no impact with regard to this issue.

Required Island Annexations

The existing development in the Island areas is not proposed to be changed. Thus, no housing or population would be removed. Potential new development on the approximately five vacant lots would not displace existing housing or population. The Island Annexations would therefore not displace existing people or housing or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and no impact would occur with regard to this issue.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant, without the need for mitigation measures.

4.11.4 Cumulative Impacts

A project's impact under CEQA is acumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, considers buildout of the General Plan to be the overall cumulative project set, with specific known projects in the vicinity listed as a part of that related project set (Table 3-1). As the proposed project (the combined effects of North Canyon Ranch and the Required Island Annexations) would not result in a significant population or housing impact with regard to unplanned population growth or displacement. The project would not contribute significantly to a cumulative impact. Each project evaluated by the City will be reviewed for General Plan compliance and environmental compliance. Where warranted additional environmental analysis would be required for future projects. No cumulatively significant impact would occur.

4.12 PUBLIC SERVICES

4.12.1 Fire and Ambulance Services

SECTION 4.0

4.12 PUBLIC SERVICES

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for the purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts to public services that would serve the project, and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to public services where warranted.

This analysis section is subdivided into three subsections for separate evaluations of potential impacts to Fire Services (4.12.1), Police Services (4.12.2) and Schools (4.12.3) that would serve the project. Potential impacts regarding park facilities are evaluated in Section 4.13, Recreation and Parks. The analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a description of existing fire services facilities, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined based on Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR.

Project Environmental Setting

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development project site is located within an approximately 160-acre undeveloped property in unincorporated Ventura County, adjacent to the City's northwest boundary. The project site property is located within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) and City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB) area, and the project applicant is requesting that the project site be annexed to the City. The proposed residential development would be clustered in the southern portion of the property, while the rest of the property would be retained as open space. Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and commercial uses associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, single-family residences to the east, and open space to the north and west. The southwestern corner of the development area is located at the northern terminus of First Street, and the eastern side of the development area is located at the western terminus of Falcon Street, which the project would extend westerly through the project site to connect with First Street. Although there is existing urban development to the east and south, the proposed project would be on the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated Island Annexation areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation areas are surrounded on at least three sides by City jurisdiction and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (i.e., single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units.

4.12.1 FIRE AND AMBULANCE SERVICES

Project-related reports and materials to support this analysis are provided in **Appendix J, Fire Protection**, including the project-specific Fuel Modification Plan map and Preliminary Fire Protection Plan (FPP) for North Canyon Ranch.¹

4.12.1.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

North Canyon Ranch

The North Canyon Ranch site, located at the wildland-urban interface, is designated within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Regulation (CAL FIRE)² and as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) by the Ventura County Fire Protection District (VCFD, or Fire Department), and reflected in the existing Simi Valley General Plan and the associated General Plan EIR.³ The VCFD provides fire protection services countywide, including within the City, including the project site. Ambulance services are provided citywide by American Medical Response (AMR), which is contracted through the County of Ventura. With approval of the project, the SRA designation will change to a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) designation.

Required Island Annexations

For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. The VCFD provides fire protection services to the sites, and would continue to do so following annexation, as the City is serviced by VCFD.

All of the Required Island Annexations are located within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA). The entirety of Required Island Annexation areas 1, 3, 6, 7 and 9 and portions of area 2 are shown within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) by CAL FIRE⁴ and on the Simi Valley General Plan Fire Hazard Figure and General Plan EIR Wildfire Hazard Area Figure.⁵ Islands 8 and 4, which are located further from the wildland-urban interface, are the only Required Island Annexation areas outside the VHFHSZ.

¹ FIREWISE 2000, LLC, North Canyon Ranch Preliminary Fire Protection Plan, Tentative Tract No. 5658. Simi Valley, California, Revised November 22, 2023. VCFD preliminary approval, December 18, 2023.

² FRAP, Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at: <https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/>.

³ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.8-Hazards and Hazardous Materials), Figure 4.8-1, Wildfire Hazard Area, June 2012; and City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Safety and Noise Element, Figure S-2, Fire Hazard, June 2012.

⁴ FRAP, Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at: <https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/>.

⁵ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.8-Hazards and Hazardous Materials), Figure 4.8-1, Wildfire Hazard Area, June 2012; and City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Safety and Noise Element, Figure S-2, Fire Hazard, June 2012.

Ventura County Fire Protection District

The VCFD provides fire prevention, fire suppression, and emergency services for over 480,000 residents of the cities of Fillmore, Simi Valley, Ojai, Moorpark, Port Hueneme, Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, Santa Paula, and the unincorporated areas of Ventura County. Fire protection for the County is provided by five battalions, which are comprised of 33 fire stations, staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Battalion 4 serves the cities of Simi Valley and Moorpark, and the surrounding unincorporated areas with seven fire stations providing fire and rescue response in the Battalion service area.

Six fire stations within the boundaries of the City are maintained by VCFD, as listed in **Table 4.12.1-1 Fire Stations in Simi Valley**. The nearest fire station to the project site is Station 47, which is located approximately 0.3 miles from the project site boundary. Table 4.13.1-1 provides a list of Fire Department stations in the project vicinity, available apparatus at each location, and the distance from the North Canyon Ranch project site.

**Table 4.12.1-1
Fire Stations in Simi Valley**

Station #	Address	Personnel	Apparatus	Distance from Project ^a
47	2901 Erringer Rd. Simi Valley, CA	3 firefighters	medic-engine; a reserve ladder truck; utility unit	0.3 mile
45	790 Pacific Ave. Simi Valley, CA	3 firefighters	engine; reserve engine; foam unit; dozer	2 miles
41	1910 Church St. Simi Valley, CA	1 chief 9 firefighters	engine; ladder truck; reserve engine; command vehicle, Rescue Ambulance	3 miles
46	3265 Tapo St. Simi Valley, CA	3 firefighters	engine; reserve engine	4 miles
44	1050 Country Club Dr. Simi Valley, CA	4 firefighters	rescue engine (Quint); reserve engine; reserve ladder truck	5 miles
43	5874 E. Los Angeles Ave. Simi Valley, CA	3 firefighters	medic-engine, brush engine, utility pickup	7 miles

Source: Ventura County Fire Department website, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at: <http://fire.countyofventura.org>.
^a Approximated driving distance (road miles).

Ambulance Transport Services

Ambulance transport service is provided in the City by American Medical Response, Inc. (AMR) under contract with the County of Ventura. All emergency ambulances in Ventura County are dispatched through the Ventura County Fire Communications Center. Ambulances are deployed countywide and are equipped with radios that allow all first responders and ambulance personnel to communicate.⁶ Daily AMR staffing includes 14-18 Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances and 2 ALS supervisors. In Ventura County AMR employs approximately 250 paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (also known as EMTs) and handles an average of 81,000 calls annually.⁷

Emergency Preparedness

The County of Ventura and the City both implement programs to facilitate emergency preparedness. Specifically, the County of Ventura's Office of Emergency Services (OES) administers the County's

⁶ Ventura County Health Agency, EMS Providers and Job Links, Accessed on September 22, 2022 at: <http://www.vchca.org/ems-providers-and-job-links>.

⁷ American Medical Response, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at <https://www.amr.net>.

disaster preparedness and response program and development of the County’s Emergency Response Plan. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a centralized location for coordinating countywide emergency response activities. The EOC is the coordination point between the cities, special districts and the State Office of Emergency Services. The EOC serves to support field operations and liaison with all public and private disaster response agencies at all levels of government. The EOC is activated in response to major events and disasters that are beyond the scope of normal day-to-day emergencies. The EOC also serves as one of the central points for activating the Emergency Alert System for broadcasting emergency information to residents.

The City of Simi Valley Emergency Services Program plans for, responds to, and coordinates the recovery from disasters. The program fulfills the following five major objectives: Emergency Planning, Emergency Management Training, Coordination for Emergency Response and Planning, Disaster Recovery, and Public Education. The City also partners with a number of organizations in the response to disasters, including the Simi Valley Unified School District, the VCFD, Southern California Edison, Simi Valley Hospital, Ventura County and California Offices of Emergency Services, Southern California Gas Company, American Red Cross, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Additionally, the City implements the Community Emergency Response Training (known as CERT) program, which is designed to provide residents and businesses with skills to become self-reliant and to assist others during disasters. Volunteers are trained in a variety of emergency response skills conducted by the VCFD in conjunction with the Simi Valley Office of Emergency Services.⁸

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Federal Emergency Management Agency

In March 2003, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA’s continuing mission within the new Department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any major national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

In 2000, the Disaster Mitigation Act amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Act of 1988. Among other things, this legislation reinforces the importance of pre-disaster infrastructure mitigation planning to reduce disaster losses nationwide by controlling and streamlining the administration of federal disaster relief and developing programs that promote hazard mitigation activities. Among the Act’s major provisions:

- Funding for pre-disaster mitigation activities
- Developing experimental multi-hazard maps to better understand risk
- Establishing state and local government infrastructure mitigation planning requirements
- Defining how states can assume more responsibility in managing the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- Adjusting ways in which management costs for projects are funded

⁸ Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.8-Hazards and Hazardous Materials), June 2012.

The mitigation planning provisions outlined in Section 322 of the Act establish performance-based standards for mitigation plans. The Act further requires states to provide for a public assistance program (Advance Infrastructure Mitigation [AIM]) to develop County government plans. Counties which fail to develop an infrastructure mitigation plan risk significant reduction in federal government assistance for repair/replacement of damaged facilities if that facility has been damaged on more than one occasion during the preceding 10-year period by a similar event.

State

Strategic Fire Plan

The California Strategic Fire Plan (2018) was developed in conjunction between the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (the Board) and CAL FIRE. In 2018, the Board adopted a new strategic fire plan to address fire prevention and natural resource management to maintain the state's forest as a resilient carbon sink to meet California's climate change goals and serve as important habitat for adaption and mitigation. The Board has adopted these Plans since the 1930s and periodically updates them to reflect current and anticipated needs as the environmental, social and economic landscape of California's wildlands changes over time. The 2018 Strategic Fire Plan emphasized the continued collaboration between local, state, federal, tribe and private partners to effectively manage a fire resilient WUI and natural environment.

The goals that are critical to achieving the 2018 Strategic Fire Plan's vision around fire prevention, natural resource management and fire suppression efforts include:⁹

- Improve the availability and use of consistent, shared information on hazard and risk assessment.
- Promote the role of local planning processes, including general plans, new development, and existing developments, and recognize individual landowner/homeowner responsibilities.
- Foster a shared vision among communities and the multiple fire protection jurisdictions, including county-based plans and community-based plans such as Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP).
- Increase awareness and actions to improve fire resistance of man-made assets at risk and fire resilience of wildland environments through natural resource management.
- Integrate implementation of fire and vegetative fuels management practices consistent with the priorities of landowners or managers.
- Determine and seek the needed level of resources for fire prevention, natural resource management, fire suppression, and related services.
- Implement needed assessments and actions for post-fire protection and recovery.

Government Code Section 51182

Once the project is annexed to the City, Government Code Section 51182 applies. This law sets fire-safety requirements for any person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains an occupied dwelling or occupied structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered land, shrub-covered land, grass-covered land, or land that is covered with flammable material, which area or land is within a VHFHSZ designated by the local agency pursuant to Government Code Section 51179. The fire-safety requirements include defensible space and fuel modification requirements.

⁹ State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California, August 22, 2018.

Public Resources Code Section 4290 & 14 California Code of Regulations Section 1270, et seq. (State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations)

This portion of the PRC establishes that the State Board of Fire Services adopt regulations implementing minimum fire safety standards related to defensible space that are applicable to SRA lands under the authority of the department, and to lands classified and designated as VHFHSZ. The State Board of Fire Services is an 18-member advisory board to the California State Fire Marshal, and is comprised of representatives of fire service labor, fire chiefs, fire districts, volunteer firefighters, city and county government, Office of Emergency Services, and the insurance industry. Regulations provided in 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 1270, et seq., known as the “State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations,” were promulgated for the purpose of establishing state minimum wildfire protection standards in conjunction with building, construction, and development in SRAs and VHFHSZs. These regulations provide for basic emergency access and perimeter wildfire protection measures, as well as standards for emergency access; signing and building numbering; private water supply reserves for emergency fire use; vegetation modification, fuel breaks, greenbelts, and measures to preserve undeveloped ridgelines.

Health and Safety Code

State fire regulations set forth in Health and Safety Code Section 13000, et seq. include regulations for building standards (as also set forth in the California Building Standards Code), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire suppression training.

Fire Code

The California Fire Code (CFC) contains regulations relating to construction and maintenance of buildings and the use of premises based portions of the International Fire Code (IFC). Topics regulated in the CFC include, fire hydrants, automatic sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire and explosion hazards safety, hazardous materials storage and use, provisions intended to protect and assist first responders, industrial processes, and many other general and specialized fire-safety requirements for new and existing buildings and premises. The CFC contains specialized technical regulations related to fire and life safety. CFC Chapter 49 addresses wildfire safety measures.¹⁰ The chapter includes mitigation strategies to reduce the hazards of fire originating within a structure spreading to wildland, as well as fire originating in wildland spreading to structures. These strategies are included in the following requirements: development of FPPs, development of landscape plans and long-term vegetation management, and creation and maintenance of defensible space to protect structures and subdivisions.

California Building Standards Code

The California Building Standards Code, as adopted by the SVMC (CBSC) contains multiples chapters addressing fire safety:

Chapter 7, Fire and Smoke Protection Features

CBSC Chapter 7 regulates materials, systems and assemblies used for structural fire resistance and fire-resistance-rated construction separation of adjacent spaces to safeguard against the spread of fire and smoke within a building and the spread of fire to or from buildings. CBSC Chapter 7 applies to all permitted structures.

¹⁰ California Fire Code, Chapter 49, Requirements for Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Areas.

Chapter 7A, Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure

CBSC Chapter 7A establishes minimum standards for the protection of life and property by increasing the ability of a building located in any FHSZ within SRAs or any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area to resist the intrusion of flames or burning embers projected by a vegetation fire and contributes to a systematic reduction in conflagration losses. CBSC Chapter 7A applies to new buildings located within a Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area, which includes those within an LRA VHFHSZ. The proposed project is located within a VHFHSZ and therefore will be required to meet the ignition-resistant construction standards of Chapter 7A.

California Energy Code

The California Energy Code regulates energy conservation requirements for building construction in California. The CEC is responsible for setting performance standards that allow for an energy budget. This allows builders to comply with these standards using different methods to meet performance standards.¹¹ Water conservation is important in that it allows for water to be available when needed for firefighting.

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

The team at the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) are dedicated to the fire prevention, fire protection and stewardship of over 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands. In addition, the Department provides varied emergency services in 36 of the state's 58 counties via contracts with local governments.

Preventing wildfires in the State Responsibility Area is a vital part of CAL FIRE's mission. While these efforts have occurred since the early days of the Department, CAL FIRE has adapted to the evolving destructive wildfires and succeeded in significantly increasing its efforts in fire prevention. We work to prevent wildfire through wildland pre-fire engineering, vegetation management, fire planning, education and law enforcement.

Regional and Local

Ventura County Fire Protection District Unit Strategic Fire Plan

The Ventura County Fire Protection District Unit Strategic Fire Plan (2023) is a component of the California Strategic Fire Plan used within the Fire Department and is established under the Healthy Forest Recovery Act protocol. The Fire Department seeks to achieve the same goals as the State Plan for a natural environment that is more fire resilient, buildings and infrastructure that are more fire-resistant, and a society that is more aware of and responsive to the benefits and threats of wildland fire, on a local level that works with stakeholders and cooperators to create programs, policies, and procedures that would make the residents of Ventura County safer. Another significant element of the plan is to identify and evaluate wildland fire hazards to minimize negative effects of a wildland fire on the natural and human environments.¹²

Ventura County Fire Protection District Ordinance No. 29

Effective January 1, 2017, Ordinance 29 of the VCFD known as the Ventura County Fire Apparatus Access Code, establishes the minimum cumulative design and maintenance standards for emergency fire access

¹¹ California Energy Commission, 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings, For the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.

¹² Ventura County Fire Protection District, Unit Strategic Fire Plan, May 2022.

roads within the jurisdictional boundaries of the VCFD. These provisions permit emergency resources to respond to an incident in a safe and effective manner.¹³

City of Simi Valley Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City is required to adopt and state and federally approved Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan under the regulations of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The overall intent of the Plan is to be a strategic planning tool for the reduction or prevention of injury and damage from hazards in Simi Valley. The City joined with Ventura County for the 2022 Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update. The plan documents the community's known natural hazards, capabilities, and vulnerabilities and identifies strategies to overcome those vulnerabilities.

Simi Valley Municipal Code

Title 4, Chapter 5 (Emergency Preparedness)

SVMC Chapter 4-5 regulates the preparation and carrying out of plans for the protection of persons and property within the jurisdiction of the City, Districts, Agency, and Authority in the event of an emergency: the direction of the Emergency Organization; and the coordination of the emergency functions of the City with all other public agencies, corporations, organizations, and affected private persons.

Title 8, Chapter 18 (Simi Valley Building Code)

SVMC Chapter 8-18 incorporates the 2022 California Building Standards Code with local amendments as the Primary Existing Building Code of the City.

4.12.1.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to fire services has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, as established in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact associated with fire services when the proposed project has potential to (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- 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 fire protection services. (*Physical Impacts to Fire Protection Service Facilities*)

4.12.1.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The North Canyon Ranch project applicant proposes to construct a residential development within a project site to be annexed to the City, which would result in an increase in demand for fire protection and emergency services provided by VCFD, which provides fire protection services to the City and the Required Annexation Islands. No development is proposed in the Islands.

According to the VCFD, it strives to achieve a response goal of 8.5 minutes 90 percent of the time from the receipt of the 9-1-1 call in the fire dispatch center. This equates to a 90-second dispatch time, 2:00 - minute company turnout time, and a 5:00 - minute drive time in the most populated areas.¹⁴ More specific to the

¹³ Ventura County Fire Protection District Ordinance No. 29, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at: <https://vcfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Ordinance-29-Adopted-Version-1.pdf>

¹⁴ Cagley, Corina, Fire Prevention Officer, VCFD, North Canyon Ranch & Required Island Annexations Preliminary Draft EIR Section review, October 27, 2023.

project, a response time of 3-5 minutes would be available from the closest fire station (Station #47), which is located approximately 0.3 miles from the project site.¹⁵ As all proposed development portions of the project site would be less than one mile from the nearest VCFD fire station, response times to the site would not be anticipated to exceed the VCFD goal.

The project applicant would develop residences within a state designated VHFHSZ. The project would retain an access route for Fire Department vehicles to enter through the proposed Falcon street extension to provide fire break maintenance or wildland fire fighting services if needed. This would increase vehicle circulation within the site vicinity and improve access by connecting Falcon Street on the east and the west, therefore providing improved vehicle movement. In the case of a wildland fire, CAL FIRE would also send resources to suppress the fires in the area.¹⁶ Additionally, development of the project would require VCFD review and approval of site plans for fire protection features including adequate fire apparatus access, roadway width, turnaround areas, adequate placement of hydrants with appropriate pressures to provide fire-flow for firefighting purposes, installation of sprinklers, and establishment of fuel modification zones for brush clearance adjacent to development. These features would be specified on project plans and specifically in the FPP and Fuel Modification Plan for the project site.

The proposed North Canyon Ranch Fuel Modification Plan map was reviewed and deemed acceptable to the VCFD. The map was developed based on analysis in the project-specific preliminary FPP for the North Canyon Ranch development, which was developed pursuant to Fire Code Chapter 49 (see Regulatory Setting) and was also reviewed and deemed acceptable to the VCFD. Together they are designed to minimize fire hazards and risks that may threaten life and property associated with the proposed residential development. In addition, the preliminary FPP establishes both short and long-term fuel modification actions to minimize any projected fire hazard and risk and assigns annual maintenance responsibilities for each of the recommended fuel modification actions. The FPP provides fuel treatment and construction feature direction for developers, architects, builders, the VCFD, and the individual lot owners to use in making the structures in the proposed project relatively safe from future wildfires. Additional information on the FPP is provided in Section 4.15, Wildfire.

4.12.1.3.1 Physical Impacts to Fire Protection Service Facilities

The proposed project would have a potentially significant impact if the proposed project would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the 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 fire protection services.

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed project, including compliance with the North Canyon Ranch Final FPP, would not substantially increase the demand for fire protection services that would significantly impact or cause the need for new facilities. Due to the site's close proximity to an existing fire station, emergency vehicles would be able to reach the project within the VCFD response time objective. Station #47 is located approximately 0.3 miles away from the project site, and the nearby proximity would allow for a quick response time in case of an emergency situation. The VCFD is able to provide facilities and personnel in the City with the appropriate equipment and ability to provide fire protection for a residential subdivision of 157 single-family and 50 multi-family homes with roadways, utilities and open space on 160.2 acres.¹⁷

¹⁵ Cagley, Corina, Fire Prevention Officer, VCFD, North Canyon Ranch & Required Island Annexations Preliminary Draft EIR Section review, October 27, 2023.

¹⁶ As confirmed by VCFD review (Corina Cagley and Larry Williams), October 2023.

¹⁷ Ibid.

A response time of three to five minutes would be available from the closest fire station (Station #47), which would match the Department's desired response times of between five to seven minutes for emergency calls, and nine to 12 minutes for non-emergency calls. Engines from other fire stations may be called upon, should the local ones be in use, or need additional support.

In addition, as required by standard procedure, the project Tentative Tract Map (TTM) was submitted to the VCFD for review and approval of the fire safety features in conformance with applicable codes including but without limitation, fire hydrant placement, street widths and fire lanes, fire flow water pressure, ingress and egress routes, alarms, sprinklers, extinguishers, and exit signage. Adjustments were incorporated into the site plan in response to VCFD comments, and have resulted in fire-safety design features, including a Fuel Modification Plan. In addition, as a matter of regulatory compliance, without project-specific mitigation requirements, the developer would be required to pay applicable VCFD facility fees. The VCFD uses the facility fees as part of an adopted program for development of additional fire protection facilities on an as needed basis. The project would not require new or expanded fire protection facilities in order to maintain adequate response times, and as such the project's potential impacts associated with provision of fire protection facilities would be less than significant.

As evaluated in Section 4.11, Population and Housing, the proposed project would account for a negligible amount of the forecasted City population growth to 2045 (eight percent) and of the Countywide population growth to 2045 (less than one percent). Thus, the proposed project would not substantially increase the City's population served by existing ambulance services. AMR paramedic response times were reported to be consistent with standards set by the Ventura County Public Health Emergency Medical Services Agency in 2016. The proposed project would not result in the need for new ambulance facilities to adequately meet performance objectives. As such, the project's potential impact regarding the provision of ambulance service facilities would be less than significant.

Construction of the proposed residences would increase demand for fire protection and emergency services. However, the project is located in close proximity to an existing VCFD fire station and VCFD resources; would be required to provide final development plans for review and approval by VCFD to ensure regulatory compliance; would require a final project-specific FPP, pursuant to Chapter 49 of the CFC, which is also to be reviewed and approved by the City and VCFD; and would not substantially increase population service demand in the VCFD and AMR service area. As a project on the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), fire protection is of particular importance and compliance with an adequate VCFD-approved final FPP is needed, mitigation measure **FIRE-1** is required. With mitigation, the project's potential fire protection service impacts, and thus the need for new or physically altered fire service facilities that may cause significant environmental impacts, would be reduced to less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. As such, the project would not cause substantial development or population growth due to the Required Island Annexations. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction. The Required Island Annexation areas currently receive fire protection services from the VCFD and ambulance services from AMR. Thus, no change in demand would occur and therefore, the potential impacts of the Required Islands Annexations regarding fire and emergency protection services would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM FIRE-1: Final Fire Protection Plan Including Fuel Modification

Before the Building Official issues a grading permit, the permittee must demonstrate compliance with the North Canyon Ranch Final Fire Protection Plan (FPP), including adherence to the specifications of the FPP's Fuel Modification Zone requirements, Construction Standards, Fire Infrastructure, Homeowner Education, and Mandated Inclusions in the Homeowner's Association (HOA) and Lot Owner Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs).

Residual Impacts

With implementation of mitigation measure FIR-1, which is designed to assure adherence with all aspects of the North Canyon Ranch Final FPP, fire hazards from the project would be reduced to less than significant. No development or physical changes would occur in the Islands, and thus no impact would occur there.

4.12.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Under CEQA, a project's impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, for the issue of fire protection services, the General Plan buildout would be the overall cumulative project set. Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, provides a list of recent, currently proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects in the City, as a subset of General Plan buildout. With regard to fire protection services, the project is located in close proximity to existing fire station located 0.3 miles away where adequate response times to emergency calls can be met. The project design would also be subject to Fire Department review and approval of fire protection features including, without limitation, fire lanes, access, hydrant spacing and fire flow pressure, sprinklers, alarms, extinguishers, and exit/evacuation routes. Mitigation requiring the final FPP and Fuel Modification Plan will assure that potential fire protection service impacts, and thus the need for new or physically altered fire service facilities that may cause significant environmental impacts.

Other projects that may be proposed in the area would independently be subject to similar Fire Department review and approval of design and fire protection features, which must be compliant with the above-noted fire-safe codes. The City considers proposed projects to determine CEQA review requirements and where future projects may have potential impacts, the City would require further analysis, and potentially CEQA documentation. Where warranted, such CEQA documentation would include appropriate mitigation to avoid significant impacts. Additionally, growth projection data published by the Southern California Associate of Governments (SCAG) and the City and County are available to public service agencies to establish future staffing and other service needs. The project's contribution to potentially significant cumulative impacts would be less than significant and no known significant impacts are anticipated from cumulative project development. As such, cumulative impacts to fire protection services would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated Island Annexation areas are located adjacent to existing development and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCo to approve annexation

of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. As evaluated above, the annexation of the Island Areas would not result in significant impacts to fire protection resources. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to fire protection resources impacts, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Full Project

The combined impacts of all project components would be less than significant with fire protection resources, project design features built into the TTM, including features that adhere to the above-noted fire-safe codes, as confirmed through City and VCFD review, and a project-specific Fire Protection Plan, pursuant to Chapter 49 of the CFC, which is also to be reviewed and approved by the City and VCFD. No specific significant impacts of future projects to fire services are known at this time. Future projects in the City would also be assessed for potential impacts as part of the City's CEQA review process for projects. Therefore, no significant cumulative impact would occur as a result of the project.

4.12 PUBLIC SERVICES
4.12.2 Police Services

SECTION 4.0

4.12.2 POLICE SERVICES

This section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project to result in impacts to police services and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to police services where warranted.

4.12.2.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

The North Canyon Ranch environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

Simi Valley Police Department

The Simi Valley Police Department (SVPD) provides police services, including crime prevention, peace preservation, city order and safety, and law enforcement services citywide, including the North Canyon Ranch project site. While the County Sheriff's Department provide policing services to the County Islands, the SVPD may often respond, due to proximity. With annexation all project properties would fall under the jurisdiction of the SVPD.

The SVPD is comprised of three divisions and further divided into units. The Operations Division is comprised of the Patrol and Traffic Units. These are the first responders to routine calls for service and life-threatening emergencies. The Investigative Services Divisions is comprised of the Detective Unit, Special Operations Unit, and Auxiliary Services Unit, which provide investigative support. The Civilian Division, or Critical Support and Logistics Division, is comprised of the Communications Center, Record Unit, Crime Analysis and Reporting Unit, Facility and Vehicle Maintenance Unit, and Fiscal Unit.¹⁸

The SVPD currently includes 118 police officers, with four in the academy, and has the capacity to staff up to 125 officers serving a population of 125,975 residents as of July 1, 2021 (approximate time of the NOP).¹⁹ Even at the lowest coverage of 118, the officer to population ratio is conservatively one officer per 1,068 residents. In addition, the Department also has a staff of over 40 citizen Volunteers and Explorers who supplement the daily efforts of the compensated staff.²⁰ The response time as of 2017 for emergency calls is 4.6 minutes anywhere in the City, and as the project site is centrally located, response times may be lower.²¹ The City is divided into six patrol beats, or patrol areas, with at least one officer assigned to each beat 24 hours a day. The SVPD operates from the local police station located at 3901 Alamo Street, which is located approximately 2.5 miles from the project site.

¹⁸ Simi Valley Police Department, Strategic Plan 2014-2018, Accessed on September 23, 2022 at: <http://www.simivalley.org/home/showdocument?id=13527>.

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Community Facts, Simi Valley, Accessed on August 19, 2022 at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/simivalleycitycalifornia>.

²⁰ Simi Valley Police Department, Strategic Plan 2014-2018, Accessed on January 10, 2018 at: <http://www.simivalley.org/home/showdocument?id=13527>.

²¹ Thomas Meyer, Simi Valley Police Department, Email to Envicom Corporation and the Simi Valley Department of Environmental Services, February 13, 2024 (email communication).

Regulatory Setting

Federal

There are no federal policies that are directly applicable to the project's police services within the City.

State

Penal Code

The Penal Code contains organizational and operating provisions for all law enforcement agencies within California. This code provides the authority, rules of conduct, and training for police officers. Pursuant to the state penal code, all sworn municipal police officers are peace officers of the state (Penal Code Section 830-832-830).

Regional and Local

Simi Valley Municipal Code

SVMC Chapter 4-5 governs emergency preparedness powers and duties. The declared purposes of this chapter are to provide for the preparation and carrying out of plans for the protection of persons and property within the City in the event of an emergency: the direction of the Emergency Organization; and the coordination of the emergency functions of the City with all other public agencies, corporations, organizations, and affected private persons.

4.12.2.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to police services has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, as established in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact associated with police services when the proposed project has potential to (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- 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 police protection services. (*Physical Impacts to Police Department Facilities*)

4.12.2.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The proposed project would develop a vacant site and is located within the City's SOI and CURB area. As such, the project and Required Island Annexations are proposed for annexation into the City and police services would be provided by the SVPD.

4.12.2.3.1 *Physical Impacts to Police Department Facilities*

The proposed project would have a potentially significant impact if the proposed project would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities related to police services, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection services.

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed project would be constructed in a predominantly undeveloped area to be annexed into the City and would add approximately 617 residents (assuming 2.98 persons per residence),²² as further discussion in Section 4.11, Population and Housing. The increase in population would incrementally expand the area needing police patrol and increase the number of police service calls in the City.

As stated above, the SVPD the officer to population ratio is conservatively one officer per 1,068 residents. The project increase of an estimated 617 residents would not substantially alter the officer to population ratio, which would be one officer per 1,072 residents. However, according to the Simi Valley General Plan EIR, the SVPD does not evaluate the need for services based on personnel to population ratios or standards because they do not consider this ratio to be an appropriate measure of the level of services needed.²³ Measures of police protection services that SVPD does consider include response times (emergency and non-emergency), traffic accident rates and ratios, crime rates, resident complaint to call ratios, and case clearance ratios.

The project is located near the Simi Valley Police Department (approximately 2.5 miles), and therefore would not adversely affect SVPD response times. Based on correspondence with the SVPD personnel, the average response time to emergency calls for service was approximately 4.6 minutes, these averages are currently meeting the Department's response time objectives, and the Department's call load and response times are appropriate and the SVPD is able to adequately perform policing duties for the proposed residential subdivisions. Response times for non-emergency calls was 13 minutes. SVPD confirmed that response time is the primary measure the SVPD uses for adequate level of service and that they have the ability to perform policing duties for the project.²⁴ As the project site is centrally located, response times to the project may be lower than the current emergency response time of 4.6 minutes. Therefore, addition of the project would not alter the SVPD's response times for emergency services within the City, and the project's potential impact regarding provision of police facilities would be less than significant.

The project has incorporated various design features consistent with the crime prevention through environmental design measures presented in the General Plan, that can reduce the potential for crime and thus, calls for police service. These features include gated entrances for the multi-family resident's garage area, appropriate lighting along the perimeter of Falcon Street and at central points of the proposed smaller streets, and location of open space areas for play and gathering on the second level of the building in view of residential units overlooking those areas. These project characteristics are shown to dramatically reduce the likelihood of crime.

As the project would not cause a significant increase in officer to population ratio, adversely affect SVPD response times, and provide design features consistent with crime prevention through environmental design, the project's potential impact regarding provision of police facilities would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is LAFCo annexation to the City, No physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed at this time. As such, the project would not

²² City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Housing Element, Table H-9, Household Characteristics, May 2023.

²³ City of Simi Valley, General Plan Environmental Impact Report, 2012.

²⁴ Thomas Meyer, Simi Valley Police Department, Email to Envicom Corporation and the Simi Valley Department of Environmental Services, February 13, 2024 (email communication).

cause substantial development or population growth due to the Island Annexations. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction. The future Island Annexations may require City police protection services from the SVPD. However, the potential minor increase in future development would not contribute to substantial growth and would not create physical impacts to police facilities. Therefore, the potential impacts of the Islands Annexations regarding police protection services would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.12.2.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Under CEQA, a project's impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, for the issue of police services, the General Plan buildout would be the overall cumulative project set. Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, provides a list of recent, currently proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects in the City, as a subset of General Plan buildout. With regard to police protection services, the project would add approximately 617 residents to the City, which would not constitute a substantial increase in the population served by SVPD. In addition, as stated by SVPD personnel, the SVPD maintains adequate response times for police emergencies in the City, and the SVPD is able to adequately perform policing duties for the proposed residential subdivision. As such, the project is not anticipated to create the need for new or modified facilities, nor is anticipated to decrease the ability to provide adequate police services to the rest of the City.

The City considers proposed projects to determine CEQA review requirements, and where future projects may have potential impacts the City would require further analysis, and potentially CEQA documentation. Where warranted, such CEQA documentation would include appropriate mitigation to avoid significant impacts. Additionally, growth projection data published by SCAG and the City and County are available to public service agencies to establish future staffing and other service needs. Although not determined to be needed currently, should long term additional police facilities, if needed, would constitute a project and would be similarly reviewed by the City for CEQA documentation needs.

Based on the analysis above, the project's contribution to potentially significant cumulative impacts would be less than significant and no known significant impacts are anticipated from cumulative project development and thus collectively would not result in cumulatively significant adverse physical impacts to the environment due to new or physically altered facilities. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to the project would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated Island Annexation areas are located adjacent to existing development and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCo to approve annexation

of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. As evaluated above, the annexation of the Island Areas would not result in significant impacts to police protection resources and would therefore not add a cumulatively considerable impact. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would result in less than significant cumulative impacts.

Full Project

The combined impacts of all project components would be less than significant for police protection resources. No specific significant impacts of future projects to police services are known at this time. Future projects in the City would also be assessed for potential impacts as part of the City's CEQA review process for projects. Therefore, no significant cumulative impact would occur as a result of the project.

PUBLIC SERVICES
4.12.3 Schools

SECTION 4.0

4.12.3 SCHOOLS

This section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project to result in impacts related to school services and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts related to school services where warranted.

4.12.3.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the operations of existing school facilities, including existing facilities that would serve the proposed project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

LAFCo

Simi Valley Unified School District

The Simi Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) provides public education facilities in the City, including the North Canyon Ranch project site and the Required Island Annexation areas. In addition to the public schools provided by SVUSD, there are 16 private schools located within Simi Valley²⁵ that also provide education opportunities for students at varying grade levels from kindergarten through high school. This evaluation will focus on the public school facilities only. As the project site is within the City's SOI and CURB, the project is proposed to be annexed into the City's boundaries and the SVUSD.

The SVUSD operates 18 elementary schools (grades K–6), three middle schools (grades 7–8), and four high schools (grades 9–12).²⁶ SVUSD schools that are within the project site vicinity include Atherwood Elementary School, Park View Elementary School, Sinaloa Middle School, Hillside Middle School, and Simi Valley High School, Royal High School.²⁷ As the project site falls between multiple school service boundaries, based on current SVUSD mapping, so there are multiple schools listed that would serve the project. The SVUSD is a School of Choice District, meaning most of the schools, including those that serve the project site, are open to any student within the boundaries of Simi Valley, space permitting.²⁸

During the 2022-2023 school year, approximately 15,075 students attended SVUSD schools for kindergarten through 12th grade.²⁹ The current capacity and enrollment at the three schools with service areas that include the project site are shown in **Table 4.12.3-1, School Enrollment and Capacities 2022-2023**.

²⁵ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.14-Public Services), Schools, June 2012.

²⁶ Guide to Simi Valley Schools 2021-2022, Accessed on September 22, 2022 at: <http://simi-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1500178971340/1400654158237/3878181595021775170.pdf>.

²⁷ Simi Valley Schools, School Boundary Maps, Accessed on September 22, 2022 at: <https://www.simivalleyusd.org/maps>.

²⁸ Guide to Simi Valley Schools 2021-2022. Accessed on November 21, 2022 at: <https://simi-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1500178971340/1400654158237/3878181595021775170.pdf>.

²⁹ Nieto, Maria, Facilities Secretary, Simi Valley Unified School District, Email correspondence with Envicom Corporation, October 27, 2022.

Table 4.12.3-1
School Enrollment and Capacities 2022-2023

School	Address	Grades	Capacity	Enrollment	Remaining Capacity
Atherwood Elementary School	2350 Greensward St.	K-6	569	502	67
Park View Elementary School	1500 Alexander St.	K-6	550	387	163
Sinaloa Middle School	601 Royal Ave.	7-8	1,276	774	502
Hillside Middle School	2222 Fitzgerald Rd.	7-8	1,443	899	544
Simi Valley High School	5400 Cochran St.	9-12	3,163	1,938	1,225
Royal High School	1402 Royal Ave.	9-12	3,104	1,982	1,122
Data Source: Nieto, Maria, Facilities Secretary, Simi Valley Unified School District, Email correspondence with Envicom Corporation, October 27, 2022.					

As indicated in Table 4.13.3-1, student enrollments are currently below the existing capacity at the SVUSD schools that would serve the project site. Specifically, Atherwood Elementary is at 88 percent of its capacity, Park View Elementary is at 70 percent capacity, Sinaloa Middle School is at 61 percent capacity, Hillside Middle School is at 62 percent capacity, Simi Valley High School is at 61 percent capacity and Royal High School is at 64 percent capacity.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

There are no federal education regulations that are directly applicable to the proposed project's impacts on schools.

State

State Assembly Bill 2926 (AB 2926)—School Facilities Act of 1986

AB 2926 was passed in 1986 and is known as the School Facilities Act of 1986. The Act authorizes imposition and collection of school facilities fees assessed against new construction by local districts to generate revenue for capital acquisitions and improvements. It also established that the maximum fees (adjustable for inflation) which may be collected under this and any other school fee authorization program.³⁰

Senate Bill 50 (SB 50—Leroy Green School Facilities Program (1998))

SB 50 (1998) defined the Needs Analysis process in Government Code Sections 65995.5–65998. Under the provisions of SB 50, school districts may collect fees to offset the costs associated with increasing school capacity as a result of development. The fees (referred to as Level One fees) are assessed based upon the proposed square footage of residential, commercial/industrial, and/or parking structure uses. The California Education Code authorizes the governing board of any school district to levy a fee, charge, dedication, or other requirement against any construction within the boundaries of the district for funding the construction or reconstruction of school facilities.³¹

³⁰ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.14-Public Services), Schools.

³¹ California Education Code, Section 17620.

SB 50 prohibited local agencies from denying either legislative or adjudicative land use approvals on the basis that school facilities are inadequate. Government Code Section 65996 also prohibits public agencies from using CEQA or “any other provision of state or local law” to deny approval of “a legislative or adjudicative act, or both, involving, but not without limitation, the planning, use, or development of real property or any change in governmental organization or reorganization” on the basis of the project’s impacts on school facilities. According to Government Code Section 65996, the development fees authorized by Senate Bill 50 are deemed to be “full and complete school facilities mitigation” for impact caused by new development.³²

Regional and Local

Simi Valley Unified School District

Developer Fee Justification Studies are prepared for each individual school district under the requirement of state law and provide specific fee amounts to be paid, as part of the development process, for the purpose of school funding. The reports provide justification for continuing to collect residential and commercial/industrial development fees, in accordance with state law. The SVUSD collects the full developer impact fee allowed by the State Allocation Board.

4.12.3.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to schools has been analyzed in relation to the threshold below, as established in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. For purposes of this analysis, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact if it would (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- Result in the need for new or physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable performance objectives for schools. (*Physical Impacts to School Facilities*)

4.12.3.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The assessment of project impacts on school services is based on the estimated number of students that may be generated by the proposed project compared to the existing capacity of schools that would serve the project site.

4.12.3.3.1 Physical Impacts to School Facilities

The proposed project would have a potentially significant impact if it would result in the need for new or physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable performance objectives for schools.

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed project would introduce 157 multi-family apartment units within the service area of the Atherwood Elementary School, Park View Elementary School, Sinaloa Middle School, Hillside Middle School, and Simi Valley High School, Royal High School. Based on student generation rates associated with multi-family apartments, as listed in the Simi Valley General Plan EIR, **Table 4.12.3-2, Project Student Generation**, shows the estimated numbers of students that would potentially attend the SVUSD schools that serve the area.

³² California Senate Bill 50, California Government Code Section 65996.

Table 4.12.3-2
Project Student Generation

Grade Level	Residential Units	Student Generation Rates ^a	Students Generated (Fractions rounded up to nearest whole number)
Elementary (K–6)	157 single-family units	0.32	51
	50 multi-family units	0.20	10
	Total		61
Middle School (7–8)	157 single-family units	0.03	5
	50 multi-family units	0.04	2
	Total		7
High School (9–12)	157 single-family units	0.15	24
	50 multi-family units	0.09	5
	Total		29

^a Student generation rates provided by the Simi Valley General Plan EIR, June 2012.

As shown in Table 4.13.3-2 the project would generate approximately 61 students in the elementary (K-6) grade level, seven students in the middle school (7-8) grade level, and 29 students in the high school (9-12) grade level range. **Table 4.9.3-3, Project Student Impacts**, evaluates the potential for project-related student generation to result in an over-capacity condition at area schools based on existing conditions.

Table 4.12.3-3
Project Student Impacts

School Name	Student Capacity	2022-2023 Enrollment	Currently Exceeds Capacity?	Project Generated Students	Enrollment with Project	Exceeds Capacity with Project?
Atherwood Elementary School	569	502	No	61	563	No
Park View Elementary School	550	387	No	61	448	No
Sinaloa Middle School	1,276	774	No	7	781	No
Hillside Middle School	1,443	899	No	7	906	No
Simi Valley High School	3,163	1,938	No	29	1,967	No
Royal High School	3,104	1,982	No	29	2,011	No

Source: Nieto, Maria, Facilities Secretary, Simi Valley Unified School District, Email correspondence with Envicom Corporation, October 27, 2022.

Based on the 2022-2023 school year enrollment and school capacity summarized in Table 4.13.3-3, with the addition of the proposed project the existing SVUSD schools would have adequate capacity to accommodate the project's expected student generation. The remaining excess student capacity at SVUSD schools after the addition of the proposed project's expected student generation would be six at Atherwood Elementary School, 102 at Park View Elementary School, 495 at Sinaloa Middle School, 537 at Hillside

Middle School, 1,196 at Simi Valley High School, and 1,093 at Royal High School. The school district would not need to construct additional or expanded facilities to adequately serve the project. As such, potential impacts regarding the need for new or expanded school facilities would be less than significant.

Additionally, to address the impact of students generated by new development on school facilities, development impact fees paid pursuant to Senate Bill 50 (Government Code Section 65996) are deemed full and complete mitigation for impacts to school facilities caused by new development. The amount of development impact fees is set forth in a school district's School Facilities Needs Analysis. The payment of the appropriate residential and commercial/industrial development impact fees in effect at the time of project approval will be a regulatory requirement for implementing projects pursuant to California Government Code. Revenues received from development impact fees would provide SVUSD funding for future school facility construction, operation, and maintenance to accommodate future enrollment. As a result, the project would have a less than significant impact regarding school facilities.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. These areas are currently served by SVUSD. A total of five single-family undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. As such, the project would not cause substantial development or population growth due to the Island Annexations. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction. The future Island Annexations may require City school services from the SVUSD. However, the potential minor increase in future development would not contribute to substantial growth, would not create physical impacts to school facilities, and would be required to contribute school fees. Therefore, the potential impacts of the Islands Annexations regarding school services would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant after mitigation.

4.12.3.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Under CEQA, a project's impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, for the issue of Cultural Resources, the General Plan buildout would be the overall cumulative project set. Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, provides a list of recent, currently proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects in the City, as a subset of General Plan buildout.

In addition to the proposed project, additional student generation would result from other new development in the City, in accordance with the General Plan, including the proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects listed. The SVUSD will continue to evaluate school facility needs associated school fees under SB 50

(Government Code Sections 65995.5–6599), as described in Regulatory Setting. The developer fees will continue to be assessed based upon the square footage of proposed projects. The Education Code authorizes the governing board of any school district to levy a fee, charge, dedication, or other requirement against any construction within the boundaries of the district for funding the construction or reconstruction of school facilities.³³

The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to impacts regarding provision of school facilities, and pursuant to Government Code Section 65996, required payment of cumulative project development fees are deemed to provide full and complete mitigation for impacts to school facilities caused by new development, cumulative impacts regarding provision of school facilities would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated Island Annexation areas are located adjacent to existing development and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes, which are currently served by the SVUSD. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units, which would be assessed developer fees for schools, should they be developed. However, for the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCo to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project, and no school demand would increase in the Islands as a result of this project. As such the Islands would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to school facilities impacts, new cumulative projects would be required to pay developer fees which are full and complete mitigation under CEQA, and thus cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Full Project

The combined impacts of all project components would be less than significant for school services. No significant impacts of the project plus future projects to schools would occur, based on the analysis above and the requirement of future development to pay developer fees. Therefore, no significant cumulative impact would occur as a result of the project.

³³ California Education Code, Section 17620.

4.13 PARKS AND RECREATION

SECTION 4.0

4.13 PARKS AND RECREATION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for the purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts to parks and recreation resources and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to recreation resources, where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR.

4.13.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development project site is located within an approximately 160-acre undeveloped property in unincorporated Ventura County, adjacent to the City boundary of the northwestern portion of the City. The project site property is located within the City's Sphere of Influence and City Urban Restriction Boundary area, and the project is requesting that the project site be annexed to the City. Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and commercial retail stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, single-family residences to the east, and open space to the north and west. The southwestern corner of the development area is located at the northern terminus of First Street, and the eastern side of the development area is located at the western terminus of Falcon Street, which the project would extend westerly through the project site to connect with First Street. There are multiple park and recreational facilities located near the proposed project site that fall under the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (Park District), as described further below.

Required Island Annexations

The project would also include the annexation of nine unincorporated County Island Areas into the City. The Annexation Areas are located within the City limits boundary, although currently they are excluded from the City's jurisdiction, and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (consisting of single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of approximately five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to approve annexation of the Island

properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project.

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District

All portions of the project are within the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District service boundaries.¹ The Park District is a special district that owns, operates, and maintains parks and open space areas in the City of Simi Valley and community of Oak Park, and other unincorporated areas in the vicinity.² It serves an area of approximately 113 square miles and an estimated population of 141,000 residents. The Park District maintains 1,212.3 acres of parklands within the City of Simi Valley and preserved over 5,000 acres of open space that is now used for hiking, biking, horseback riding and wildlife preservation.³ As described in the Simi Valley General Plan EIR, there are five main types of parks within the area: community, neighborhood, special use, natural, and mini parks. These are generally described as follows:⁴

- **Community** – Community parks are major recreational facilities that range in size from about 20-45 acres. They are generally centers of activity where individuals can find a variety of recreational activities, and generally serve a population of 15,000 to 25,000 people living within a 2-mile radius.
- **Neighborhood** – Neighborhood parks are designed to provide aesthetic value and allow active or passive recreation. They typically range from 2-20 acres and are intended to serve a population of 2,500-5,000 residents living within a 0.5-mile radius.
- **Special Use** – Special Use parks are provided for single purpose recreation activities, such as a golf course or equestrian center.
- **Natural** – Natural parks aim to preserve natural resources and provide space for informal play and passive enjoyment, such as hiking, biking, or equestrian use.
- **Mini** – Mini parks are generally less than an acre in size and are designed to serve a limited group or population living within a very short distance.

The Park District owns 124.4 acres of community parks, 204.7 acres of neighborhood parks, 577 acres of natural parks, 304 acres of special use parks and 1.7 acres of mini parks in Simi Valley, totaling 1,212.3.⁵ Table 4.13-1 summarizes the parks and facilities provided by the Park District within approximately 2.0 miles of the North Canyon Ranch project site, for a view of the closest parks to that larger portion of the proposed project. A listing of nearby parks, along with the address, amenities and distance from North Canyon Ranch site, are provided in **Table 4.13-1, Simi Valley Recreation and Parks Facilities Near North Canyon Ranch.**

The Park District provides a variety of recreational facilities, with areas available for organized sports, including baseball/softball diamonds, basketball courts, golf courses, soccer fields, tennis courts, and volleyball courts. The parks offer places for informal recreational activities including an amphitheater, barbecues, hiking and equestrian trails, bike paths, picnic pavilions, handicap accessible playgrounds, shuffleboard courts, and horseshoe pits. There are over 250 year-round recreation programs and classes offered to residents. Multiple community centers are also available for public use and contain amenities

¹ LAFCo, Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District map, Accessed February 9, 2024 at: https://www.ventura.lafco.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Rancho_Simi_Recreation_and_Park_District_8.5x11-1.pdf.

² Rancho Simi Recreation & Park District, Facts About Us, Accessed on September 20, 2022, at: http://www.rsprd.org/about_us/index.php.

³ Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Volume I, Chapter 4.15, Recreation, June 2012.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

such as swimming pools, multipurpose rooms, and tot lots. Additionally, the Park District maintains a system of hiking and equestrian trails and bikeways within the City’s jurisdiction and beyond.⁶

Table 4.13-1
Simi Valley Recreation and Parks Facilities Near North Canyon Ranch

Name	Address	Amenities	Distance from North Canyon Ranch Site
Mayfair Park	2550 Caldwell Ave.	Basketball court, handball court, playground, softball field, picnic tables	0.6 miles
Atherwood Park	2271 Alamo St.	Picnic tables, playground	0.8 miles
Citrus Grove Park	2100 N. Marvel Ave	Picnic tables, playground, walking path	1.1 miles
Willowbrook Park	1786 Willowbrook Ln.	Park benches, picnic tables	1.4 miles
Berylwood Park	1955 Bridget Ave.	Basketball court, picnic tables, playground, restrooms, volleyball court	1.5 miles
Big Sky Park	2151 Los Canyons Dr.	Basketball court, picnic tables, playground, restroom, softball field	1.6 miles
Arroyo Park	2105 Socrates Ave.	Playground, picnic tables, restroom	1.7 miles
Simi Dog Park	2251 Los Canyons Dr.	Gated areas for dogs, picnic tables, portable restrooms	1.8 miles
Frontier Park	2163 Elizondo Ave.	Park benches, playground	1.9 miles
Strathearn Historical Park	137 Strathearn Pl.	Museum, historical park grounds, restrooms	2.0 miles

Source: Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, Simi Valley Facilities, Accessed on September 20, 2022, at: https://www.rsprd.org/parks/simi_valley/parks/index.php
List includes those parks local, or close to, (selected as within 2.0 miles) the North Canyon Ranch site, which is the only portion of the project proposed to add population beyond existing conditions.

According to the City’s General Plan EIR, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) established a standard of five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents of “local or close to home open space.”⁷ The City was home to 129,148 residents as of 2022 (see Section 4.11, Population and Housing). Further, the California Quimby Act requires 3-5 acres of park area per 1,000 persons residing within a jurisdiction. As shown in **Table 4.13-2, Existing Parkland Ratio in Simi Valley**, the current ratio of parkland to residents in the City is 9.39 acres per 1,000 residents, which is substantially more parkland than the stated standards from NRPA and the Quimby Act.

Table 4.13-2
Existing Parkland Ratio in Simi Valley

Population (2022) ^a	Parkland (acres) ^b	Parkland per 1,000 Residents
129,148	1,212.3	9.39 acres

^a SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.
^b Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Volume I, Chapter 4.15, Recreation, June 2012.

Note: Population data for the year 2022 within the City was calculated based on a linear interpolation of the 2016 to 2045 projections in SCAG’s 2020-2045 RTP/SCS (see Section 4.11, Population and Housing).

⁶ Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Volume I, Chapter 4.15, Recreation, June 2012.

⁷ Ibid.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

There are no federal policies that are directly applicable to this analysis of parks and recreation services within the City of Simi Valley.

State

Quimby Act

The Quimby Act was enacted by the California legislature in 1965 to provide parks for the growing communities in California. The Act authorizes cities to adopt regulations addressing parkland and/or fees for residential subdivisions for the purpose of providing and preserving open space and recreational facilities and improvements. The Act requires 3-5 acres of park area per 1,000 persons residing within a jurisdiction, unless the amount of existing neighborhood and community park area exceeds that limit, in which case the City may adopt a higher standard not to exceed five acres per 1,000 residents. The Quimby Act also specifies acceptable uses and expenditures of such funds.

Regional and Local

Simi Valley Municipal Code Chapter 9-68

Simi Valley Municipal Code (SVMC) Title 10 (Parks and Recreation) applies to all public schools and open space areas which are now or which may hereafter be within the City, including all grounds, roadways, avenues, parks, buildings, campgrounds, swimming pools, equestrian trails, bicycle trails, hiking trails, school facilities when they are in use as recreational or educational facilities, and areas under the control, management, or direction of the Simi Valley Unified School District or the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. The regulations of this Chapter govern the use of all such public school facilities and recreation and park areas, and the observance of such provisions is a condition under which the public may use such recreation and park areas.

SVMC Chapter 9-68 (Dedication of Land for Park and Recreation Purposes) requires that for all developments requiring a tentative map, approval are required to dedicate land and/or payment of fees to the Rancho Simi Park and Recreation District for recreational purposes. The amount of land dedicated or amount of fee in lieu of dedication is determined based on the population generated and computed based on five acres per 1,000 persons.

4.13.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to recreation has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, as established in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact to recreation resources when the proposed project has potential to (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service rations, response times or other performance objectives for parks. (Use of Parks and Recreation Resources).
- 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. (Use of Parks and Recreation Resources).

- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. (Construction of Recreational Facilities).

4.13.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

4.13.3.1 Use of Parks and Recreation Resources

The proposed project would potentially have a significant impact to parks if it would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service rations, response times or other performance objectives for parks. Similarly, the project’s impact would potentially be significant if recreation resources of the project would 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. For purposes of this analysis, a determination of an adverse increase in use of existing parks and recreational resources will be based on the ratio of five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The project’s impact on parks within the City is evaluated, as the largest impact would occur locally, and if the project would have a less than significant impact on the City’s sub-set of Park District resources, then the project would have even less of an impact Park District-wide.

North Canyon Ranch

As discussed in Existing Conditions, the current ratio of parkland to residents within the City is 9.62 acres per 1,000 residents, which is far above the District and City’s minimum parkland standard of five acres per 1,000 residents. The proposed 157 single-family units and 50 multi-family units would result in an increase of 207 additional residential units and an estimated population increase of 617 people based on the City’s average owner-occupied household size, as shown in the General Plan. Although the average household size for renter-occupied units is lower, the average household size for owner-occupied units of 2.98 people was used for a conservative, worst-case scenario projection.⁸ **Table 4.13-3, Project Parkland Ratio in Simi Valley** shows the parkland ratio per 1,000 residents for the existing population in the City plus the population increase added by the project.

**Table 4.13-3
Project Parkland Ratio in Simi Valley**

Population (2022) ^a + Project	Current Parkland (acres) ^b	Parkland Ratio per 1,000 Residents
129,765	1,212.3	9.34 acres
^a SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020. ^b Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Volume I, Chapter 4.15, Recreation, June 2012. Note: Population data for the year 2022 within the City was calculated based on a linear interpolation of the 2016 to 2045 projections in SCAG’s 2020-2045 RTP/SCS (see Section 4.11, Population and Housing).		

As shown in Table 4.13-3, the anticipated population increase would result in an updated ratio of 9.34 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which would not substantially alter the ratio of parkland per resident within the City, and the parkland standards would still be met and exceeded. The impact on the total acres of parks Park District-wide would be even less. Additionally, pursuant to applicable law, development projects requesting tentative map approval are required to dedicate land or provide development fees to the Park District to offset potential increases in use of recreation resources. Park fees shall be deposited with the

⁸ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Housing Element, Table H-9, Household Characteristics, May 2023.

Park District prior to approval of the Parcel Map. As the project would not cause an increase in population that could result in a deficiency of parkland resources, and the project would provide onsite recreation resources, the project's potential environmental impacts regarding provision of recreation resources would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The Islands are existing developed areas, where development is not proposed to be changed. For the majority of these areas, the existing housing and number of residents are assumed to remain the same as under current conditions. The existing development within the Islands is included in the current County population and housing projections, and not the City population and housing projections. With annexation, these units would be removed from unincorporated County counts and added to the City counts. However, as the development is an existing condition and not new development, this change would be jurisdictional only and does not have a significant environmental impact in terms of parks and recreation use. Thus, for the developed portions of the islands, impacts with regard to a parks and recreational use would be less than significant impact.

The Islands also include approximately five vacant/undeveloped lots that could potentially be developed with five single-family dwelling units. Assuming an average of 2.98 persons per single-family household and rounding up, these five lots would potentially add 16 persons to the City's population, which would not result in a significant increase of the projected City and County household and population projections. Added to the existing plus North Canyon Ranch population numbers from Table 4.13-3, the small population increase would result in only a small fraction of a change in the ratio (i.e., less than a 100th of an acre per person), which would remain at 9.57 acres per 1,000 people, which again is better than the City's goal of five acres per 1,000. As such, the Island Annexations would not result in an increase of population that would result in a deficiency of parkland resources, and the project would have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts would be less than significant, and therefore no mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.13.3.2 Construction of Recreation Facilities

The proposed project would potentially have a significant impact to recreation resources if the project would include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

North Canyon Ranch

The current ratio of parkland to residents within the City far exceeds the above-stated standard, and the proposed project would not result in the need to construct additional offsite recreational facilities. In addition, the project would provide recreational amenities within the project site consisting of 70.82 acres of open space, two pocket parks totaling 0.43 acres, and additional landscaping amenities, which would reduce the need for future residents to utilize offsite recreational facilities. Provision of these open space areas within the proposed project would not result in adverse physical effects on the environment. Therefore, potential impacts related to construction of recreation facilities would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The Islands are existing developed areas, where development is not proposed to be changed. For the majority of these areas, the existing housing and number of residents are assumed to remain the same as under current conditions, except it's assumed that approximately five single-family lots could be developed in the future, though there are no known plans for their development. The existing development within the Islands would not constitute new development and would therefore not require the construction or expansion of additional recreational facilities. These five lots would potentially add five dwelling units to the housing count and 16 persons to the City's population, which would not result in a significant increase of the projected City and County household and population projections, and therefore not require the construction or expansion of additional recreational facilities. The Islands would have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts would be less than significant, and therefore no mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.13.4 Cumulative Impacts

Continued development and growth throughout the City would contribute to greater demand for parks and recreational facilities. Based on Section 3.0, Cumulative Development, which includes projects that are approved and awaiting approval, there are numerous residential projects approved for construction also located near the project site. However, the current supply of parkland resources provided by Park District exceeds the standard of five acres per 1,000 persons by a substantial margin (see Existing Conditions). With the current level of parkland inventory, the Park District would continue to meet its parkland resources standard even if cumulative development (beyond the proposed project) were to result in an additional 100,000 residents, which is more than the County projected increase Countywide by 2028 (see Section 4.11, Population and Housing) (at that point the ratio would be 5.35 acres per person). At the 2.98 average household size, that many added residents would assume an additional 32,786 dwelling units, which is above the projected Countywide growth by 2028. If the project's cumulative impact on a City level is less than significant, the impact Park District-wide would be even less.

As shown in Section 3.0, the related projects would add only a fraction of that number of units, and thus the City would continue to meet the parkland provision standards. The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to substantial recreation facility impacts. In addition, the City requires future developers proposing subdivisions requiring a tentative map approval within the City to either dedicate land for park facilities or pay a fee in lieu of providing parkland in the form of Quimby fees, which would offset recreation impacts of individual projects. Therefore, potential cumulative impacts regarding the City's provision of parkland would be less than significant.

4.14 TRANSPORTATION

SECTION 4.0

4.14 TRANSPORTATION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for purposes of this EIR) to result in transportation impacts and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to transportation facilities where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this EIR. **Appendix I, Transportation**, provides the North Canyon Ranch Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis.¹

4.14.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions. As the project has had several changes in scope, the following analysis and existing conditions were based on the North Canyon Ranch VMT Analysis Memorandum. The implementation of Senate Bill 743 has removed thresholds related to traffic performance and congestion, replacing them with VMT thresholds, and thus this analysis is based upon the project VMT Analysis.

Environmental Setting

North Canyon Ranch

The project site is an undeveloped vacant property located in the northwest portion of the City's Sphere of Influence, abutting the City limits on the southern and eastern boundaries. The project site is located immediately north of the Simi Town Center Mall development and associated residential complexes.

Regional access to the project site vicinity is provided via State Route 118 (SR-118, or Ronald Reagan Freeway). Ramps to SR-118 are provided at First Street and at Erringer Road in the vicinity of the project site.

Local access to the undeveloped site is primarily from the northern terminus of First Street or the western terminus of Falcon Street. The City's General Plan identifies a future arterial street segment as a "Minor Arterial (Not Built)" to extend Falcon Street through the proposed project site from its western terminus just west of Erringer Road, to connect with the northern terminus of First Street at the northwestern boundary of the Simi Town Center Mall.² The City has an existing background VMT per capita of 17.0 for home-based trips and a VMT per employee of 10.9 for work-based trips.³

¹ City of Simi Valley, North Canyon Ranch VMT Analysis Memorandum, October 25, 2021.

² City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 5, Mobility and Infrastructure, June 2012.

³ City of Simi Valley, North Canyon Ranch VMT Analysis, October 25, 2021.

Area Roadways and Intersections

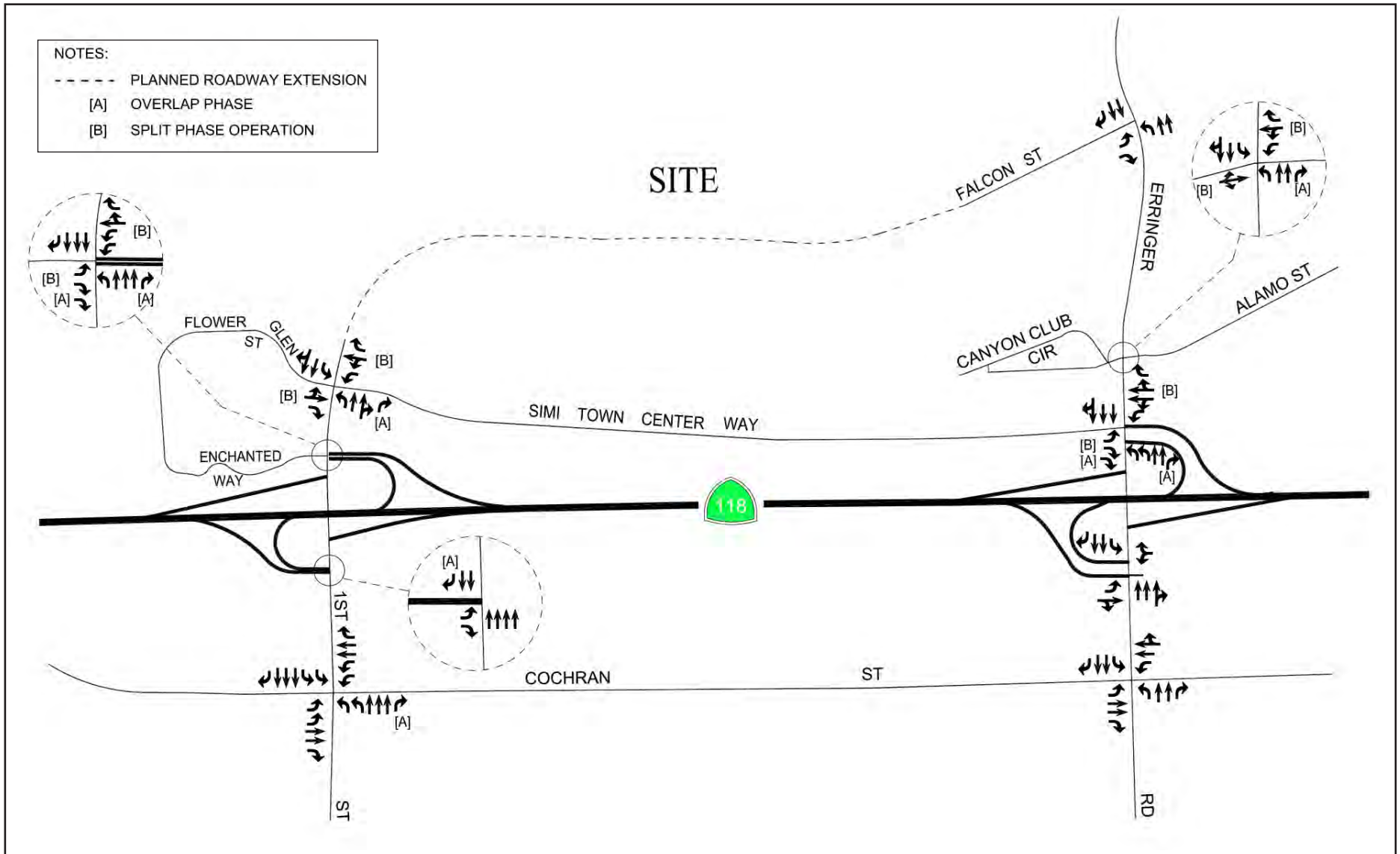
Access within the general area is also provided by the following nine area intersections:

1. First Street/Flower Glen Street-Simi Town Center Way
2. First Street/Enchanted Way-SR-118 Freeway Westbound (WB) Ramps
3. First Street/SR-118 Freeway Eastbound (EB) Ramps
4. First Street/Cochran Street
5. Erringer Road/Falcon Street
6. Erringer Road/Alamo Street
7. Erringer Road/Simi Town Center Way-SR-118 Freeway WB Ramps
8. Erringer Road/SR-118 Freeway EB Ramps
9. Erringer Road/Cochran Street

The existing lane configurations at these area intersections are displayed in **Figure 4.14-1, Existing Lane Configurations**.

The closest regional access to the project site is provided by SR-118, via freeway on- and off-ramps at First Street. Brief descriptions of the main roadways in the project site vicinity are described below:

- **First Street:** A north-south oriented roadway that is located southwest of the project site. First Street is designated as a Primary Arterial Street near the project site in the Circulation Element of the Valley General Plan. First Street currently terminates just north of the Simi Town Center Mall. Three through travel lanes are provided in each direction on First Street in the project vicinity. Parking is prohibited along both sides of First Street with posted no parking anytime signs. First Street is posted for a 40 miles per hour speed limit within the project study area.
- **Erringer Road:** A north-south oriented roadway that is located southeast of the project site. Erringer Road is designated as a Secondary Arterial Street near the project site in the Circulation Element of the Simi Valley General Plan e. Two through travel lanes are provided in each direction on Erringer Road north of Alamo Street. South of Alamo Street, three through travel lanes are provided in each direction on Erringer Road. Parking is prohibited along both sides of Erringer.
- **Road with posted no parking anytime signs.** Erringer Road is posted for a 40 miles per hour speed limit within the project study area.
- **Flow Glen Street:** An east-west roadway that is located south of the project site and extends between First Street to the west and Erringer Road to the east. Two through travel lanes are provided in each direction on Simi Town Center Way. Parking is prohibited along both sides of Simi Town Center Way with no posted parking anytime signs. Simi Town Center Way is posted for a 35 miles per hour speed limit within the project study area.
- **Enchanted Way:** An east-west roadway that is located southwest of the project site. One through travel lane is provided in each direction on Enchanted Way. Parking is prohibited along both sides of Enchanted Way with posted no parking anytime signs. Enchanted Way is posted for a 25 miles per hour speed limit within the project study area.
- **Cochran Street:** An east-west arterial highway that is located south of the project site. Cochran Street is designated as a Secondary Arterial Street within the project study area in the Circulation Element of the Simi Valley General Plan. Two through travel lanes are provided in each direction on Cochran Street in the project vicinity. Parking is prohibited along both sides of Cochran Street with posted no parking anytime signs. Cochran Street is posted for a 45 miles per hour speed limit within the project study area.



Source: Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers, 2016.

- Falcon Street: An east-west roadway that will border the project site to the south. Falcon Street currently terminates just east of Erringer Road. Parking is currently prohibited along both sides of Falcon Street with posted no parking anytime signs. There is no posted speed limit on the existing portion of Falcon Street within the project study area.
- Alamo Street: An east-west roadway that is located south of the project site. Two through travel lanes with separate bike lanes are currently provided in each direction on Alamo Street. Parking is prohibited along both sides of Alamo Street with posted no parking anytime signs. Alamo Street is posted for a 45 miles per hour speed limit within the project study area.

Bicycle and Bus Access

A total of six existing and proposed bicycle facilities (i.e., Class II Bikeway, Class III Bike Routes, or Enhanced Class III Bike Routes) in the City’s bicycle network are located within an approximately one-mile radius from the project site. The existing and proposed bicycle routes in the City’s bicycle network are presented in **Figure 4.14-2, Existing and Proposed Bicycle Facilities**. As shown in Figure 4.14-2, the following key bicycle routes are located near the North Canyon Ranch project site:

- North-South Routes
 - Madera Road: Class II Bikeways (Future)
 - First Street: Class II and Class III Bikeways (Future)
 - Erringer Road: Class II Bikeways (Existing and Future)
- East-West Routes
 - Falcon Street: Class II Bikeways (Future)
 - Alamo Street: Class II Bikeways (Existing)
 - Cochran Street: Class III Bikeways (Future)
 - Agnew Street: Class III Bikeways (Future)

Class II bikeways are lanes on the outside edge of roadways reserved for the exclusive use of bicycles and are designated with special signing and pavement markings. Class III bikeways are roadways recommended for bicycle use and are designated with signs posted along roadways. Enhanced Class III bikeways include 4” white edge lines and “Share the Road” signage.

A Class II bikeway is proposed on Falcon Street, as designated in the City’s Bicycle Master Plan.

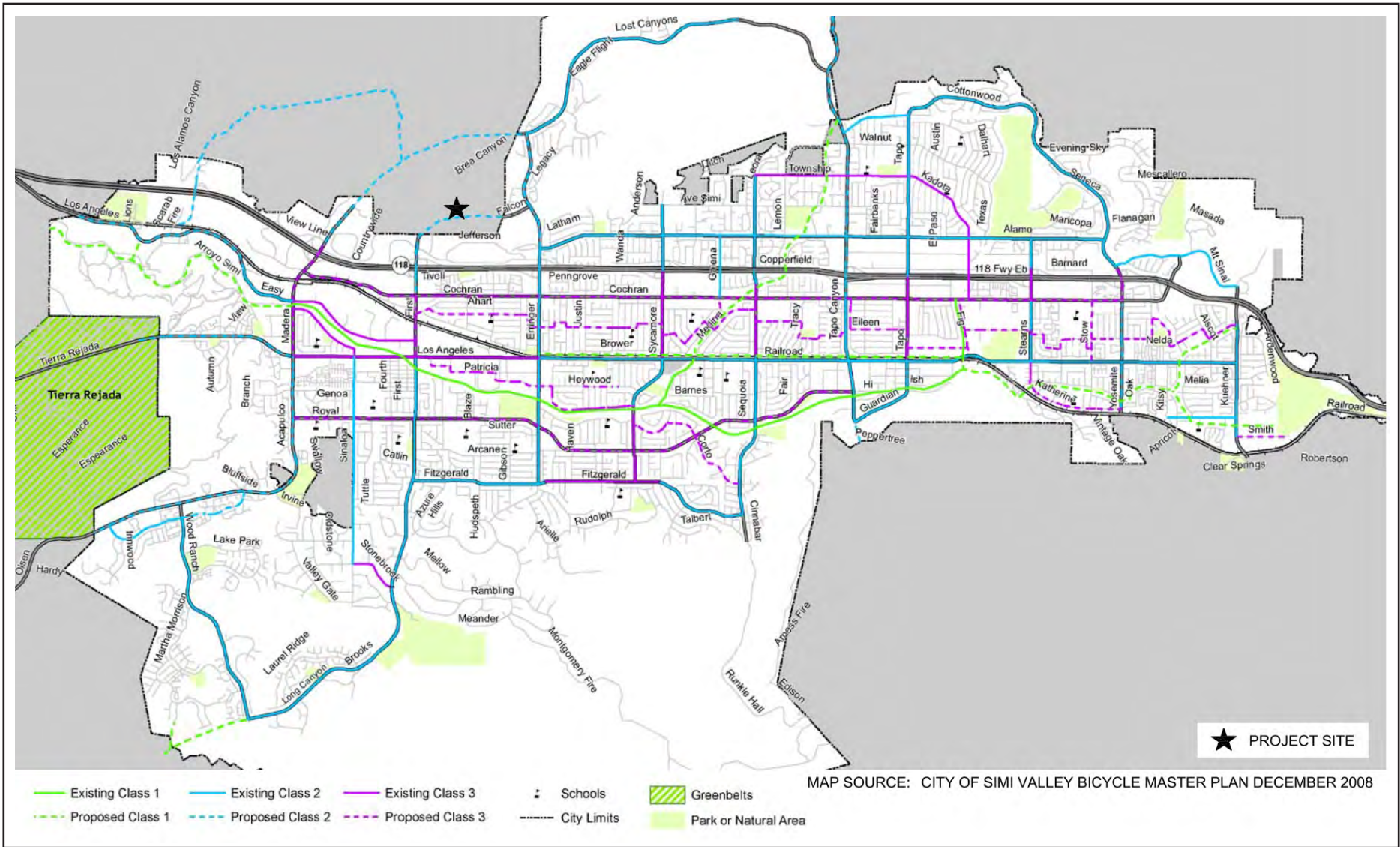
The City is served by Simi Valley Transit (SVT), which runs three routes through the City, and by the Ventura County Transportation Commission as shown in **Figure 4.14-3, Simi Valley Transit Bus Routes**. There are no existing buses to the project site given there are no roads into the project site, but one of the SVT bus routes (Route 10) and three of the County of Ventura’s routes stop at the Simi Valley Town Center, which is less than 1,500 feet south of the North Canyon Ranch project site.^{4,5} The Project would add four bus stops along the proposed extension of Falcon Street, two on each side, as shown on the proposed Tentative Map.

Island Annexations

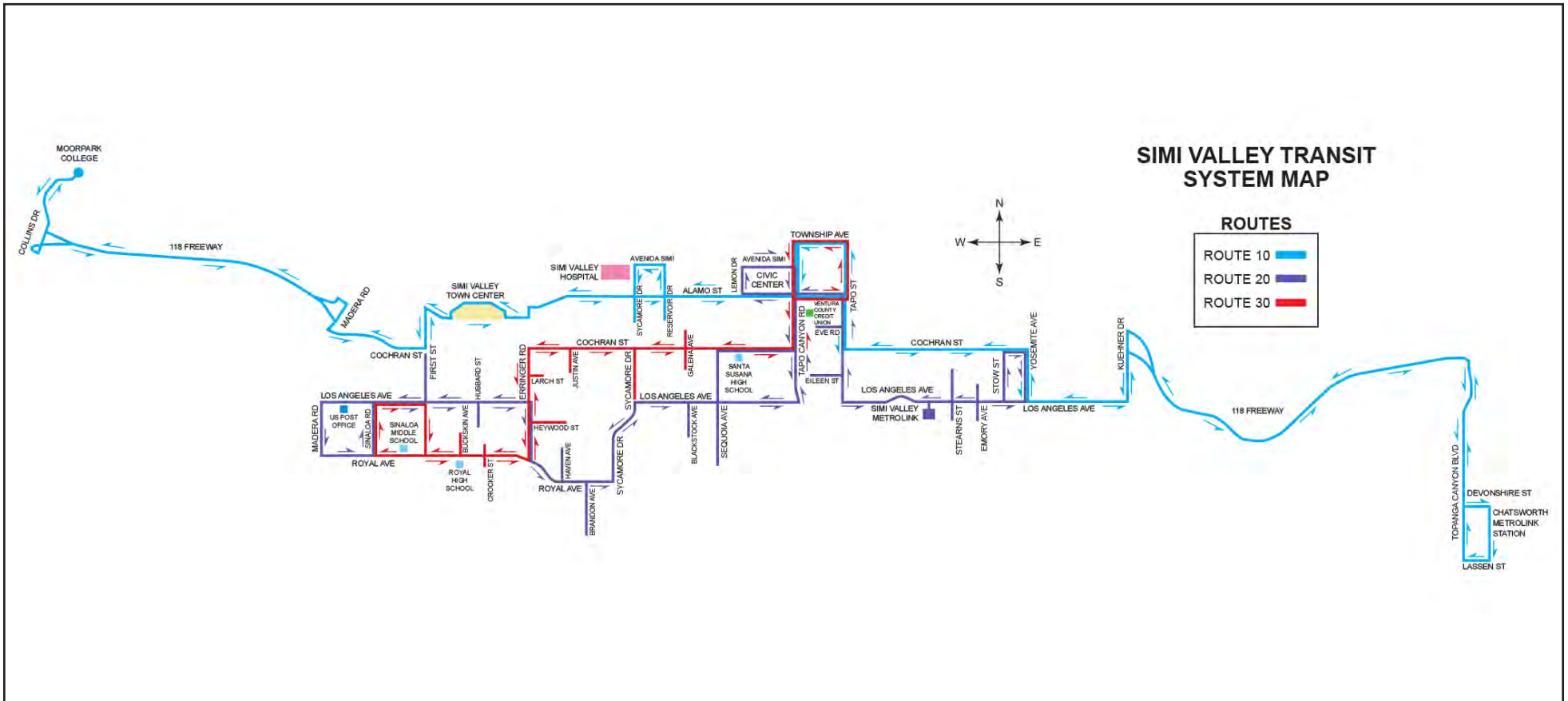
In addition to the North Canyon Ranch development, this EIR addresses the annexation of nine County Island areas to the City. These are existing developed areas, completely surrounded by City areas and served

⁴ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley Transit, Accessed on February 29, 2024, at: <https://www.simivalley.org/departments/public-works/simi-valley-transit> and <https://www.simivalley.org/home/showpublisheddocument/27596/6383851771225>.

⁵ County of Ventura, Ventura County Transportation Commission, East County Routes 70-73X (see Routes 70, 72, and 73), Accessed on March 1, 2024, at: <https://www.goventura.org/vctc-transit/routes-schedules/east-county/>



Source: Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers, 2016.



by existing roadways. These areas are not proposed for further development at this time; the City merely proposes to annex the properties.

Regulatory Setting

State

Senate Bill 743

Senate Bill 743 (SB 743) requires the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to streamline the review of several types of development projects that are subject to the requirements of CEQA, including the development of infill projects in transit priority areas, as well as to shift the focus of transportation analysis away from driver delay and toward the reduction of GHGs, creation of multimodal networks, and promotion of mixed-use developments. SB 743 will result in a change in how impacts relative to transportation are determined, through the use of new methodologies for traffic analyses. Whereas the CEQA review of transportation impacts currently focuses on the delay that vehicles experience at intersections and on roadway segments, which is often measured using Level of Service (LOS), SB 743 requires a VMT analysis.

Assembly Bill 1358

Assembly Bill 1358 (AB 1358) is known as the California Complete Streets Act. AB 1358 requires amendment of the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) General Plan Guidelines to help local governments to include multimodal transportation network policies into their general plans and circulation elements. The goal of AB 1358 is to provide information for local governments to develop a safe, convenient, and connected multimodal transportation network.⁶

Regional and Local

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

In September 2020, the Regional Council of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) adopted the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS): A Plan for Mobility, Accessibility, Sustainability, and a High Quality of Life. The RTP/SCS is updated every four years and sets policies, strategies, and projects for Southern California’s future mobility, housing, economic, environmental, and public health goals. It is a collaborative planning document for the counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura.

Simi Valley General Plan

The Simi Valley General Plan provides goals and policies for the City to establish a comprehensive and consistent framework for land use decision-making. Chapter 5, Mobility and Infrastructure, includes the goals and policies that pertain to the analysis in this section. Goal M-4, Level of Service, aims for efficient movement of vehicles, people, and other modes of travel along City streets by maintaining acceptable levels of service at intersections.⁷ The corresponding policy is as follows:

- Policy M-4.1 Level of Service (LOS).** Design the vehicular circulation system to operate with intersections at LOS C or better during peak traffic periods. Street intersections may operate on an interim basis at LOS D during peak hours around major industrial, commercial, and mixed-use centers where the short-term attainment of LOS C may be

⁶ Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, Update to the General Plan Guidelines: Complete Streets and the Circulation Element, December 15, 2010.

⁷ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 5, Mobility and Infrastructure, June 2012.

impractical or not attainable without mitigation that has a far greater negative impact than allowing for a greater level of service. Projected LOS E or F operation at any time of day will not be acceptable.

However, since preparation of the General Plan, the state has directed that CEQA transportation analysis utilize VMT.

Simi Valley Bicycle Master Plan

The Simi Valley Bicycle Master Plan identifies facilities and programs to improve bicycling within Simi Valley. Projects identified and recommended within the Simi Valley Bicycle Master Plan are given priority for state and federal funding. The document is also used as a planning tool to implement short term and long-term recommendations to develop new and redevelop bicycle facilities.⁸

Simi Valley VMT Thresholds

The City has an existing background VMT per capita of 17.0 for home-based trips and a VMT per employee of 10.9 for work based trips.⁹ The City's VMT threshold is based on the generation of VMT exceeding the level of 5% less than background VMT for the City, (i.e., greater than 95% of background VMT for the City). Accordingly, the thresholds are greater than 16.15 VMT per capita for home-based trips and greater than 10.35 VMT per employee for work-based trips.

4.14.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to transportation has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, as established in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact to transportation when the proposed project has potential to (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. (***Circulation System Policy***)
- Conflict or be inconsistent with the CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b). (***Vehicle Miles Traveled***)
- Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). (***Design Hazards***)
- Result in inadequate emergency access. (***Emergency Access***)

In assessing impacts related to transportation, Appendix G will be used as the thresholds of significance. The City has an existing background VMT per capita of 17.0 for home-based trips and a VMT per employee of 10.9 for work based trips. The City's VMT threshold is based on the generation of VMT exceeding the level of 5% less than background VMT for the City, (i.e., greater than 95% of background VMT for the City). Accordingly, the thresholds are greater than 16.15 VMT per capita for home-based trips and greater than 10.35 VMT per employee for work-based trips. As the proposed project is residential, the applicable threshold is greater than 16.15 VMT per capita for home-based trips.

⁸ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley Bicycle Master Plan, December 2008.

⁹ City of Simi Valley, North Canyon Ranch VMT Analysis, October 25, 2021.

4.14.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Methodology

A VMT analysis was prepared using the Simi Valley Transportation Analysis Model (SVTAM). The model estimates traffic volumes and trip length by using trip generation based on land use, trip distribution, mode choice (e.g., heavy vehicle vs. light vehicle), and trip assignment based on the preceding steps.¹⁰

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch project consists of construction of 157 single-family units and 50 multi-family residential units for a total of 207 dwelling units. The VMT Study evaluated 160 single-family units and 50 multi-family units for a total of 210 dwelling units, which would yield slightly higher impacts and thus is a conservative evaluation. The project site is located along the planned First Street/Falcon Street extension, north of State Route 118. Vehicular access to the project residential lots will be provided via the extension of Falcon Street and a system of interconnecting internal project roadways.

Vehicular access to the project site will be provided via the project's construction of the extension of Falcon Street, along with internal project roadways taking access along the extension of Falcon Street. The site roadways and internal project driveways will be constructed to City standards (e.g., roadway cross-section width, road curb return radii). The locations of the project site vehicular access driveways and streets are shown on the project Site Plan (see Chapter 2.0, Project Description, Figure 2- 2, North Canyon Ranch Site Plan). Project construction will also provide sidewalks, bus turnouts, and Class II bicycle lanes on both sides of Falcon Street.

Island Annexations

The Island Annexation Areas are not proposed for further development at this time. As no change in development would occur, no roadway changes and no trip generation changes would occur. Based upon this information, the level of service would remain unchanged as a result of the annexations, and an assessment of Level of Service for these areas is not warranted.

4.14.3.1 Circulation System Policy

The proposed project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact to transportation if the project would conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including transit and non-motorized travel.

North Canyon Ranch

The project would include a main access road through the project site that would connect Falcon Street to First Street, as anticipated in the Simi Valley General Plan. This road would be designed in conformance with City standards and to address the Complete Streets concept. The project would encourage walking, public transit, and bicycling with the necessary facilities as part of the project design. These facilities include sidewalks, bus turnouts, and Class II bicycle lanes on both sides of Falcon Street. The bikeway design would be consistent with the Simi Valley Bicycle Master Plan, which has a planned Class II bikeway on the Falcon Street extension. The project would also accommodate local transit service with bus turnouts along both sides of the roadway. Sidewalks will also be provided along both sides of the roadway. Completion of the project site segment of Falcon Street and implementation of the Complete Streets concepts along that extension will encourage more walking, public transit, and bicycling in the project

¹⁰ Ibid.

vicinity. All of these improvements would be designed in conformance with City standards (e.g., roadway cross-section width, road, and driveway curb return radii).

Accordingly, the project would be consistent with the General Plan for CEQA transportation circulation issues, as it would accommodate cars, bicycles, pedestrian, and local transit. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact with regard to conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including public transit.

Island Annexations

The Island Annexation areas were developed as County unincorporated areas and thus were not required to be developed to City standards, which may differ. There are currently no City plans or funding to change or improve the roadway infrastructure for these areas, so no reasonably foreseeable physical change would occur. Further, no private development is proposed in the County Islands as a part of this project. Therefore, no environmental impacts would occur. Any future changes would be subject to City review for potential CEQA analysis.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.14.3.2 Vehicle Miles Traveled

The proposed project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact related to VMT if the project would exceed City VMT thresholds.

North Canyon Ranch

As discussed in the City VMT memo, the peak modeled VMT from the SVTAM model for the project was 9.9 VMT per capita for home-based trips. This would not exceed the City's threshold of 16.15 VMT/capita for home-based trips, which is five percent less than the background VMT per capita of 17.0 for home-based trips. The model did not include work-based trips for the project, as it does not have commercial, retail, or office, components. Therefore, the project would have no VMT-related impact.

Island Annexations

The Island Annexation areas are not proposed for further development at this time. As no change in development would occur, no trip generation changes would occur. Based upon this information, VMT would remain unchanged as a result of the annexations, and an assessment of VMT for these areas is not warranted. While five residential lots within these areas may be potentially developed in the future, development would not be likely to exceed five dwelling units total, which would have a minimal impact. Would be below VMT screening thresholds for analysis.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.14.3.3 Design Hazards

The proposed project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact to transportation if the project would substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).

North Canyon Ranch

Vehicular access to the project residential lots will be provided via the extension of Falcon Street and from there via new internal project roadways on the extension of Falcon Street. All of the roads would be constructed in conformance with City standards and the site plans would be reviewed and approved by the Ventura County Fire Protection District (Fire Department, or VCFD). The main road would include one through travel lane in each direction. A raised median island with openings and left-turn pockets at select locations would also reduce hazardous risks. The main project roadway would also include bus turnouts along both sides of the roadway to accommodate local transit service. Both sides of the roadway would also have sidewalks and Class II bicycle lanes. Each of these features would serve to reduce potential for incompatible uses thus reducing potential for hazardous risks. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact to increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses.

Island Annexations

The Island Annexation areas are not proposed for further development at this time. As no change in development would occur, no additional roads or driveways would occur. Based upon this information, the roadway design would remain unchanged because of the annexations, and no design hazards would occur as a result of the annexations. Further, potential future development would be required to adhere to City design standards. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.14.3.4 Emergency Access

The proposed project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact to transportation if the project would result in inadequate emergency access.

North Canyon Ranch

Access to the project site would be from First Street to the west and Falcon Street to the east. The project would construct the street that connects Falcon Street to First Street and serves as the main access road. Internal roadways would branch off of the main road. All roads through the project site would be constructed in conformance with City standards and the site plans would be reviewed and approved by the Fire Department, which will assure ample ingress and egress and access to all structures by Fire Department equipment. Accordingly, the plan review and compliance with City standards would ensure adequate emergency access. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact related to resulting in inadequate emergency access.

Island Annexations

The Island Annexation areas are accessed by existing roadways are not proposed for further development at this time. As no change in development would occur, emergency access would remain unchanged because of the annexations, and an assessment of emergency access for these areas is not warranted. Minor additional development, comprised of five dwelling units, may occur but within an existing developed street system and all undeveloped parcels would be reviewed for adequate emergency access by the VCFD. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.14.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

The analysis of transportation impacts 4.14.1 and 4.14.2 includes cumulative considerations. The City considers future transportation conditions with buildout of the General Plan as the cumulative project set. As evaluated above, no significant impacts to the various components of circulation system would occur under cumulative conditions. Impacts would be less than significant. The evaluation of project VMT was based on a per capita threshold, which considers City VMT as a whole. Therefore, because the project would have a less than significant per capita VMT rate compared to the City as a whole, cumulative VMT impacts would also be less than significant.

With regard to roadway design, emergency access, transit, and potential conflicts with other modes of transportation (impacts 4.14.3.3 and 4.14.3.4), all projects within the City will be required to comply with City design standards. Development plans for roadways will be subject to review by the City Department of Public Works, Traffic Engineering Division to ensure the design conforms to safety standards and emergency access and that pedestrian and bicycle plan and complete street concepts, where applicable. As future projects would be subject to City standards and review for these issues and thus avoiding impacts, no significant cumulative impacts would occur.

Island Annexations

The Island Annexation areas are accessed by existing roadways are not proposed for further development at this time. As no development would occur, project-level or cumulative impacts related to the transportation system, VMT, design hazards, and emergency access would not occur. In addition, potential future development on the developable portions of these areas would be of a small scale that would not be cumulatively considerable.

4.15 UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

4.15.1 Water Supply

SECTION 4.0

4.15 UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations to result in impacts to water supply and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to utilities, where warranted.

This analysis section is subdivided into three subsections for separate evaluations of potential impacts to Water Supply (4.15.1), Wastewater (4.15.2) and Solid Waste (4.15.3) that would serve the project. The analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a description of existing fire services facilities, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined based on Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and additional regulatory agency standards or guidance, where applicable. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft .

4.15.1 WATER SUPPLY

Relevant to this analysis, a Water Availability letter¹ and the project Water System Hydraulic Analysis² are provided in **Appendix K, Utilities**.

4.15.1.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

Local Water Purveyor

The City is served by two water purveyors, the Ventura County Waterworks District No. 8 (District 8) and the Golden State Water Company. The project site is located within the service area of District 8, which serves approximately 68 percent of the developed portion of Simi Valley in addition to unincorporated areas located southeast and north of the incorporated City boundary. The estimated District 8 service area population in 2020 was 94,739 people with an anticipated growth rate of 0.5 percent per year.³ District 8 provides water supply infrastructure in the project vicinity that serves adjacent residential and commercial uses along the southern and eastern project boundaries, as well as existing commercial development to the south of the project.

District 8's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) describes current and planned water supplies, current and planned water demands, and water conservation efforts. The UWMP provides a guide for determining water availability to meet demands and is required to be updated every five years. The most current UWMP

¹ Michelle Elorde, P.E., Senior Engineer, Waterworks District No. 8, Water Availability Letter, April 1, 2024.

² Tetra Tech, Technical Memorandum, Water System Hydraulic Analysis for Tentative Tract 5658-A, June 21, 2021.

³ Waterworks District No. 8 and City of Simi Valley, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 1, 2021.

for District 8 is the Amended 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. The following discussion is primarily based on information provided in the District 8 2020 UWMP.⁴

Table 4.15.1-1, Current and Projected Water Supplies for Ventura County Waterworks District No. 8, shows the existing and projected water supplies available for District 8, as reported in the 2020 UWMP.

Table 4.15.1-1
Current and Projected Water Supplies
for Ventura County Waterworks District No. 8

Source	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
<i>Existing Supplies (AFY)</i>						
Imported Water (Calleguas)	19,726	21,370	23,152	25,081	27,172	27,172
Groundwater	100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
Recycled Water (Simi Valley Water Quality Control Plant)	57	76	76	80	80	80
Total Existing Supplies	19,833	22,546	24,328	26,261	28,352	28,352
<i>Planned New Supplies (AFY)</i>						
N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Existing and Planned Supplies	19,833	22,546	24,328	26,261	28,352	28,352
Source: Waterworks District No. 8 and City of Simi Valley, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 1, 2021. (Table 3-1 and Table 3-2)						

Table 4.15.1-1 shows District 8's projected water supplies from existing sources for 2025 is 22,546 acre feet per year (AFY), with supplies projected to increase to 28,352 AFY by 2040 and 2045. As shown in Table 4.15.1-1, District 8 currently has three primary sources of water supply: imported water from Calleguas Municipal Water District, groundwater from Gillibrand Groundwater Basin and recycled water. These three sources, which comprise District 8's water supply, are discussed further below.

Imported Water

The State Water Project (SWP) California Aqueduct System delivers water to the Metropolitan Water District (MWD), the primary water wholesaler for the region. Approximately 99 percent of water to District 8 is imported water obtained from the MWD, which supplies water to District 8 via the Calleguas distribution system (an enterprise special district). If needed, Calleguas Municipal Water District can also receive water from the Colorado River through wheeling agreements and temporary interconnections.⁵ MWD's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan was prepared in compliance with the Water Code Sections of the Urban Water Management Planning Act, and provides planning projections of supply capability and demand developed through a collaborative process with the member agencies through the Integrated Water Resources Plan Update.⁶

Water from the SWP is from the rain and snow in the Sierra Nevada, Cascade, and Coastal mountain ranges. The water travels through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and is pumped to the MWD. The MWD treats water at the Jensen Filtration Plant, in which it is then conveyed into Ventura County through a pipeline tunneled through the Santa Susana Mountains. Calleguas stores this water in the Lake Bard Reservoir, treats it at the Lake Bard Water Filtration Facility, and then delivers it to District 8.⁷

⁴ Waterworks District No. 8 and City of Simi Valley, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 1, 2021.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

⁷ Waterworks District No. 8 and City of Simi Valley, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 1, 2021.

Groundwater Sources

District 8’s local sources include groundwater and recycled water. District 8 operates pumps that extract groundwater from the Gillibrand Sub-basin of the Simi Valley Basin via two wells which meet all applicable Maximum Containment Levels (MCLs) post treatment. Inflow from overlying streams, percolation of precipitation, and irrigation return are considered the main recharge sources to the basin. Groundwater only accounts for 0.2 percent of total water delivered within the service area. The available groundwater from the Gillibrand Basin 1,100 AFY annually from 2025-2045. Groundwater from the Gillibrand sub-basin is treated at the Tapo Canyon Water Treatment Plant, which creates potable water by reducing the hardness, total dissolved solids and other salt constituents. Utilizing local groundwater resources reduces the dependence on imported water within the City.⁸

Recycled Water

District 8 recycled about 57 AFY of recycled water in 2020, sourced from the Simi Valley Water Quality Control Plant for irrigation and non-potable uses. Recycled water is primarily served to the Simi Valley Landfill for dust control and Simi Valley Public Services Center for irrigation.⁹

Project Site

North Canyon Ranch

The project site is currently vacant and surrounded to the east by residential land uses and to the south by commercial land uses that generate demand for water, which is supplied by District 8. Supplies and infrastructure in the neighboring developed areas is maintained by District 8.

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine unincorporated areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The annexation areas include approximately 8.0 acres of vacant/undeveloped land, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units. The areas are currently also served by District 8, based on their mapped service area.¹⁰

REGULATORY SETTING

Federal

Clean Water Act (1972)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established primary drinking water standards in the Clean Water Act. States are required to ensure that potable water retailed to the public meets these standards. Standards for a total of eighty-one individual constituents have been established under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The EPA may add additional constituents in the future. State primary and secondary drinking water standards are promulgated in the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 22, Sections 64431– 64501. Secondary drinking water standards incorporate non-health risk factors including taste, odor, and appearance.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

State

Urban Water Management Planning Act (1983)

The Urban Water Management Planning Act (Water Code Section 10610, et seq.) was enacted in 1983 and has been amended many times since. The Act applies to municipal water suppliers that serve more than 3,000 customers or provides more than 3,000 AFY of water. The Act requires identified water suppliers to update their UWMP every five years to identify short-term and long-term water demand management measures to meet growing water demands during normal, dry, and multiple-dry years.

Senate Bill 610 and Senate Bill 221

Senate Bill (SB) 610 and SB 221 became effective January 1, 2002 and are intended to improve the linkage between certain land use decisions made by cities and counties and water supply availability.

Under SB 610, a water supply assessment (WSA) must be furnished to local government for inclusion in any environmental documentation for certain types of projects, as defined in Water Code Section 10912(a) and subject to CEQA. For residential projects, a WSA is required for projects that propose more than 500 dwelling units.

SB 221 applies to the Subdivision Map Act, conditioning a tentative map to document that the public water supplier has sufficient water supply available to serve the proposed development.

2016 California Green Building Standards

The California Green Building Standards Code, also known as CALGreen, provides regulations to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings to reduce negative impacts. These regulations include requirements for mandatory water conservation measures applicable to residential development.

CALGreen Section 4.303, Indoor Water Use, specifies mandatory water use efficiency requirements for plumbing fixtures and fittings to be used in residential projects.

CALGreen Section 4.304, Outdoor Water Use, requires that automatic irrigation system controllers for landscaping provided by the builder and installed at the time of final inspection comply with the following:

- Controllers must be weather- or soil moisture-based controllers that automatically adjust irrigation in response to changes in plants' needs as weather conditions change.
- Weather-based controllers without integral rain sensors or communication systems that account for local rainfall must have a separate wired or wireless rain sensor which connects or communicates with the controller(s). Soil moisture-based controllers are not required to have rain sensor input.

Water Code Section 535

Water purveyors that serve 15 or more service connections are required, as a condition of new retail water service (where water service has not been previously provided) to install separate water meters to measure the volume of water used exclusively for landscape purposes. This requirement applies to service connections that serve property with more than 5,000 sq. ft. of irrigated landscape.

Senate Bill X7-7

The Water Conservation Act of 2009 (Senate Bill X7-7) was enacted in November 2009 and requires that all water suppliers increase their water use efficiency. This requires the state to achieve a 20 percent

reduction in urban per capita water use in California by December 31, 2020. This bill would require each urban retail water supplier to develop urban water use targets and interim urban water use targets to reduce urban water consumption.¹¹ District 8 is currently meeting both the Interim and Compliance Water Use Target of SBX7-7, and plans to continue to implement demand management reduction measures and expand its recycled water program.¹²

Recycled Water Regulations

Within the State of California, recycled water is regulated by the EPA, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB), Department of Health Services (DHS). The SWRCB has adopted Resolution No. 77-1, Policy with Respect to Water Reclamation in California. This policy states that the SWRCB and RWQCB would encourage and consider or recommend for funding water reclamation projects that do not impair water rights or beneficial instream uses, such as maintaining certain riparian habitats or supporting recreational activities.

The RWQCB implements the SWRCB’s Guidelines for Regulation of Water Reclamation and issues waste discharge permits that serve to regulate the quality of recycled water based on stringent water quality requirements. The DHS develops policies protecting human health, and comments and advises on Regional Water Quality Control Board permits (RCIP Existing Setting Report and Resolution No. 77-1, Policy with Respect to Water Reclamation in California). District 8 currently delivers recycled water from Simi Valley Water Quality Control Plant to the Simi Valley Landfill and the City’s Public Services Center, and in 2008 created a Recycled Water Master Plan. Regulations governing recycled water use were reviewed and linked to specific projects.¹³

California Code of Regulations Title 22

Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations provides regulations related to recycled water. These specify requirements for the treatment of, and allowed uses for, reclaimed water in California.

Regional and Local

2020 District 8 and City of Simi Valley Urban Water Management Plan

The 2020 District 8 and City UWMP is mandated by the California Water Code sections 10610-10657. The UWMP is a tool that guides water management agencies through multiple water supply issues. The plan must develop and report water use targets and achievements in the due to SBX7-7. The District 8 and Simi Valley UWMP includes historical and current water use of the region and the methodology to predict future water use within the District 8 service area. District 8 also has programs for water management such as public education, water waste prohibitions, monitoring and repairing system leaks, and improving irrigation efficiency.¹⁴

2020 MWD Urban Water Management Plan

The 2020 MWD UWMP was prepared in compliance with the California Water Code. The MWD UWMP is an assessment of the Metropolitan’s water service reliability, describes and evaluates sources of water supply efficient uses of water, demand management measures implementation strategy and schedule, and

¹¹ California Legislative Information, Senate Bill No. 7, Chapter 4, Accessed on February 1, 2019.

¹² Waterworks District No. 8 and City of Simi Valley, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 1, 2021.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

other relevant information and programs. The plan evaluates risk of drought and prepared and adopted a Water Shortage Contingency Plan.¹⁵

2020 Water Shortage Contingency Plan Waterworks District No. 8

The 2020 Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) addresses Water Code Section 10632, which requires that every urban water supplier prepare and adopt a WSCP as part of its UWMP. This contingency plan serves as a guide for the intended actions by District 8 during water shortage conditions to improve preparedness for droughts and other impacts on water supplies by describing the process used to address varying degrees of water shortages.

Water Shortage Contingency Plan MWD

The Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) adopted by MWD complies with Water Code section 10632, which requires a WSCP as part of the UWMP. The plan acts as a guide for MWD to navigate water shortages and preparedness for droughts and other impacts on water supplies. The WSCP also includes the MWD's procedures for conducting an annual water supply and demand assessment.

City Water Shortage Emergency Regulations

The City in cooperation with District 8 adopted regulations responding to the California drought and Water Shortage Emergency. These regulations require residents to follow a one day per week watering schedule with a 10 minute limit and no watering between 9 am to 5 pm. Violations may result in a notice of violation then subsequent fines. All watering regulations and requirements may change based on water use and water level supplies. Additional requirements are:¹⁶

- Cease washing exterior hard surfaces such as sidewalks and driveways.
- Wash vehicles using a hose quipped with a shutoff nozzle.
- No initial filling of decorative water features.
- Swimming pools and outdoors spas must be covered when not in use.
- No filling or refilling ornamental lakes or ponds except to sustain aquatic life.
- Fix all leaks, breaks, or malfunctions within 48 hours.

Simi Valley Municipal Code

SVMC section 6-11.201, et seq. governs the City's water conservation program, which includes restrictions on watering hours and duration, prohibitions on the generation of excessive runoff and overwatering, and other regulations intended to reduce water consumption. The City and District 8 are required to follow permanent water use mandates such as, but not limited to, no instillation of single-pass cooling systems in new buildings and only using re-circulated water in decorative fountains or water features.¹⁷

4.15.1.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to water supply has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, which are based upon the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The

¹⁵ The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Water Shortage Contingency, June 2021.

¹⁶ City of Simi Valley, Department of Public Works, Water Conservation, accessed on January 3, 2023 at: <https://www.simivalley.org/departments/public-works/water-conservation>

¹⁷ City of Simi Valley, Water Conservation Fact Sheet, June 6, 2017, Accessed on May 9, 2018 at: <http://www.simivalley.org/home/showdocument?id=13529>.

proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact regarding water supply if the proposed project would (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- Require or result in the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. (*New or Expanded Water Facilities*)
- Not have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources. (*Water Supplies*)

4.15.1.3 PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

For purposes of this evaluation, projected water use, and supply were derived from the District 8 2020 UWMP. The UWMP’s projected water demands considered recent historical water use and future land development using water demand factors based on land use categories. The UWMP indicates that current and projected water supplies primarily consist of imported water supplies purchased from Calleguas. The imported water supplies are delivered to Calleguas by the MWD via the SWP California Aqueduct system. District 8 also uses local groundwater and recycled water supplies. The UWMP projects sufficient water resources would be available to meet demands through 2045.

Table 4.15.1-2, Project Water Demand, provides a breakdown of the project’s water demand by proposed land use categories based on the water demand factors provided by the Water System Hydraulic Analysis for Tentative Tract 5659-A Technical Memorandum by Tetra Tech.

**Table 4.15.1-2
Project Water Demand**

Residential Land Use	Size	Demand Factor (average daily)	Water Demand	AFY
Single Family Residential	157 du ¹	420 GDP/du	66,780 GDP/du	74.85 AFY
Multi-Family Residential	50 du	259 GPD/du	12,950 GDP/du	14.52 AFY
Total			79,730 GDP/du	89.37 AFY
Source: Tetra Tech, Technical Memorandum, Water System Hydraulic Analysis for Tentative Tract 5658-A, June 21, 2021, Appendix 2. Note: includes 100 gpm irrigation demand for multi-family common areas.				
¹ du = dwelling unit(s).				

Implementation of the proposed project would construct 157 single-family residential lots and a 50-unit townhome complex. This would create additional demand as there is no current water uses on the project site. The project would be required to implement applicable water conservation and efficiency measures pursuant to current regulations, which would reduce the project’s demand for water.

The projected water demand generated by the proposed project is shown in Table 4.15.1-2 and estimates approximately 79,730 gallons per day (GPD) or 89.37 acre feet per year (AFY). As shown in Table 4.15.1-1, District 8’s projected existing water supplies would be 22,546 AFY in 2025 and 28,352 AFY of for 2045. The project’s total water demand would represent less than one percent (i.e., approximately 0.40 percent) of District 8’s projected 2025 water supplies and less than one percent (i.e., approximately 0.32 percent) of District 8’s projected 2045 water supplies.

4.15.1.3.1 New or Expanded Water Facilities

North Canyon Ranch

The project site would be served by District 8, and as stated previously, a majority of District 8’s water supply comes from the Calleguas Municipal Water District, which receives its water from the MWD. Both the Calleguas Municipal Water District and MWD have published their own UWMPs that account for water supply reliability in the future and are accompanied with actions to ensure water supplies meet long term demand. District 8 does not anticipate water quality to affect water supply reliability. As noted in Regulatory setting, District 8 also has a contingency plan should water supplies be interrupted, and in cooperation with the City, there are currently Water Shortage Emergency water restrictions in place for residents.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in a net increase in water demand of approximately 89.37 AFY. Based on the projected demand and supply within District 8 for year 2025 (which is 20,950 AFY)¹⁸, there is expected to be 1,596 AFY excess supply. The project’s projected demand would constitute 5.6 percent of District 8’s projected excess supply.

District 8 is also currently constructing the Salinity Management Pipeline. Portions to the south of the City are complete, but the Simi Valley segment and another northerly branch are not yet completed.¹⁹ . Construction of the Salinity Management Pipeline would develop the Simi Valley Basin into a source of potable water by treating groundwater to remove total dissolved solids and other salt constituents which estimates to have a perennial yield of 9,000 AFY.²⁰ Therefore, with the construction of this project, additional water would be available, and the project’s demand would constitute even less of the water available in Simi Valley.

While the project site itself is not within the City limits, it is included within its Sphere of Influence and is accounted for within its General Plan. The General Plan anticipates development at the project site. Within the General Plan EIR, water supply outside of the City limits and within the Sphere of Influence, in which the project falls, is accounted for.²¹ Water supply is projected to be sufficient for buildout of the General Plan, including the project site.

Given the project site’s size, location, and anticipated water supplies, the project would not require new or expanded water treatment facilities, the construction of which could result in significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact.

Required Island Annexations

The Islands are substantially developed but include approximately 8.0 acres of vacant/undeveloped land dispersed throughout the Islands, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units. However, no development is proposed or known at this time. Project approval would result only in Annexation to the City. Given no proposed physical change in the island annexation areas, and thus no change in anticipated water demand, this component of the project would not require new or expanded water treatment facilities, the construction of which could result in significant environmental impacts.

The project would have less than significant impacts regarding water treatment facilities and would be served by adequate water supplies from existing entitlements and resources.

¹⁸ Waterworks District No. 8 and City of Simi Valley, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, Table 2-14, June 1, 2021.

¹⁹ Calleguas Municipal Water District, Calleguas Salinity Management Pipeline Enhancing the Use of Local Water Supplies (Brochure), Accessed January 5, 2023, at: <https://www.calleguas.com/images/docs-documents-reports/crsmpbroc.pdf>

²⁰ Waterworks District No. 8 and City of Simi Valley, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 1, 2021.

²¹ City of Simi Valley, General Plan EIR, June 2012.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.15.1.3.2 Water Supplies

North Canyon Ranch

As mentioned above, the project would connect to District 8’s water supplies. District 8, which receives its water from the Calleguas Municipal Water District which receives its water from MWD. As all three of the water districts have UWMPs that project sufficient water supplies in the future, the project would have the necessary water supplies to serve the project. As the project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, it would have a less than significant impact in this regard.

Required Island Annexations

Potential development within vacant portions of the annexation areas would connect to District 8’s water supplies. As the project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, it would have a less than significant impact in this regard.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.15.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

Under CEQA, a project’s impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, for the issue of Water Supply, the General Plan buildout would be the overall cumulative project set. Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, provides a list of recent, currently proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects in the City, as a subset of General Plan buildout.

North Canyon Ranch

Cumulative impacts would be evaluated in terms of General Plan buildout within the service area of District 8. As water in the area is supplied via water purveyors or District, the impacts of a project to water supply would be limited to District 8 water supplies and projections. The UWMP includes assumed planned General Plan buildout within District 8, and determined through required future wet and dry year calculations that sufficient water would be provided. No significant cumulative impact would occur.

Required Island Annexations

The annexation areas include approximately 8.0 acres of vacant/undeveloped land, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units. While no specific plans have been proposed for the

five lots, the Island Annexation areas are within the service area of District 8, and the addition of five dwelling units would be minimal and not have a cumulatively considerable impact.

Full Project

The combined impacts of all project components would be less than significant with regard to water supply, and the impact would not be cumulatively considerable. Combined with future projects, based on the UWMP, no significant impacts of the project plus future projects would occur. Therefore, no significant cumulative impact would occur as a result of the project.

4.15 UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

4.15.2 Wastewater

SECTION 4.0

4.15.2 WASTEWATER

Project-related reports and materials to support this wastewater analysis are provided in Appendix K, Utilities, including a North Canyon Ranch Preliminary Sewer Study²² and a Sewer Availability Letter.²³

4.15.2.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

Existing Wastewater System

The Sanitation Services Division (SSD) of the City Department of Public Works (DPW) operates the City’s sanitary sewer system, including the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) also known as the Water Quality Control Plant, located at 600 West Los Angeles Avenue, Simi Valley. This WWTP, treats all the wastewater in the City.

The City maintains approximately 380 miles of sewer line, 7,500 manholes, and 3 lift stations that transport wastewater from residential and commercial properties to the wastewater treatment plant. As of the 2019, the City’s Sewer Management Plan indicated that the system served a population of approximately 127,000. The system’s average daily flow was approximately 7.9 million gallons a day (mgd).²⁴

The SSD is also responsible for overseeing compliance with the SWRCB’s General Wastewater Discharge Requirement (GWDR) order No. 2006-0003, issued May 2, 2006.

The City’s WWTP is rated to accept 12.5 mgd of wastewater and treats an average daily flow of up to 9.6 mgd during wet winter months, leaving an excess capacity of approximately 2.9 mgd.²⁵ During dry weather, the average daily flow is approximately 7.7 mgd, leaving an excess capacity of 4.8 mgd.²⁶

Project Site

North Canyon Ranch

The project site is currently vacant and surrounded to the east by residential land uses and to the south by commercial land uses that is served by the City’s existing wastewater facilities. The proposed North Canyon Ranch project site is currently outside the boundaries of the currently served properties in the service district;²⁷ however, it would be included upon project approval, based upon the service availability letter to the project applicant. Review by Sanitation Services will assure that that the City has adequate WWTP and trunk line sewerage capacity to serve the proposed development. The project applicant will be required to pay sewerage system connection fees before construction. Based on the project’s Preliminary Sewer Study,

²² Christiansen & Company, North Canyon Ranch (TTM 5658-A) Preliminary Sewer Study, February 19, 2019, as updated with “Tentative Tract Map No. 5658-A Master Sewage Disposal Plan” (map), January 5, 2023.

²³ Michelle Elorde, P.E., Senior Engineer, Sewer Availability Letter, April 1, 2024.

²⁴ City of Simi Valley, 2019 Sewer System Management Plan, p. 1-2.

²⁵ City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Volume I, Chapter 4.17, Utilities/Service Systems, June 2012.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ City of Simi Valley, 2019 Sewer System Management Plan, Figure 1-1, p. 1-3.

the project’s wastewater lines from the eastern portion of the site would connect to the existing sewer lines in the neighboring portion of Erringer Road to the east and the western portion of the site would connect to existing sewer lines in First Street to the south.²⁸

Island Annexations

The annexation areas are currently within the SSD Sanitation Service area, based upon the Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP).²⁹ However, some lots within the Island Annexations are currently on septic systems and not yet connected to the SSD sanitary sewer system.

REGULATORY SETTING

Federal

National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit system was established as part of the CWA to regulate both point source discharges (a municipal or industrial discharge at a specific location or pipe) and non-point source discharges (diffuse runoff of water from adjacent land uses) to surface waters of the United States. For point source discharges, such as sewer outfalls, each NPDES permit contains limits on allowable concentrations and mass emissions of pollutants contained in the discharge.

Disposal of Biosolids

The federal Clean Water Act and regulations set forth by the California Department of Health Services and State Water Resources Control Board are aimed primarily at discharges of effluent to surface waters. The disposal of biosolids is regulated by requirements set forth by the California Integrated Waste Management Control Board, the SWRCB’s General Order, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 257 and 530, county ordinances, and other such regulations.

State

2016 California Green Building Standards

The Green Building Standards Code, also known as CALGreen, provides regulations to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings to reduce negative impacts. These regulations include requirements for mandatory water conservation measures applicable to residential development. CalGreen Section 4.303, Indoor Water Use, specifies mandatory water use efficiency requirements for plumbing fixtures and fittings to be used in residential projects.

Regional and Local

Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program (Section 402 of the Clean Water Act) controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or man-made ditches. Examples of pollutants include, but are not limited to, rock, sand, dirt, and agricultural, industrial, and municipal waste

²⁸ Christiansen & Company, North Canyon Ranch (TTM 5658-A) Preliminary Sewer Study, February 19, 2019, as updated with “Tentative Tract Map No. 5658-A Master Sewage Disposal Plan” (map), January 5, 2023.

²⁹ City of Simi Valley, Department of Public Works, Sanitation Services Division City of Simi Valley, California: SSMP Sewer System Management Plan, Updated April 2019, Figure 1-1, p. 1-3.

discharged into waters of the United States.³⁰ Individual homes that are connected to a municipal system, use a septic system, or do not have a surface discharge do not need an NPDES permit; however, industrial, municipal, and other facilities must obtain permits if their discharges go directly to surface waters.

Simi Valley Municipal Code

SVMC sections 6-13.501, et seq., sets forth uniform requirements for direct and indirect use of the wastewater collection and treatment system of the City with all applicable Federal and State standards required by the Clean Water Act of 1977. It provides authority to regulate and control sewage, establish building sewers and connection requirements, and prevent illicit discharges into the City’s sanitary sewer system.

4.15.2.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to wastewater has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, which are based on the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact regarding wastewater if it would (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it would not have adequate capacity to serve the project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments. (*Wastewater Treatment Capacity*)
- Require or result in the construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. (*New or Expanded Wastewater Treatment Facilities*)

4.15.2.3 PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The North Canyon Ranch portion of the project would develop an approximately 160-acre vacant property with 157 single family lots and 50 townhomes. As the lot is currently vacant there is not existing sewer services. The project would connect to the existing sewer system in the City. As part of the project, there would be buildout of the sewer system on the project site that would connect to the existing sewer system on Erringer Road to the east and First Street to the south.³¹ The Islands use of sanitary sewer system would not change with the project.

The following analysis is primarily based on the existing capacity of the City’s sanitary sewer system and WWTP, and the ability of the treatment facility to adequately serve the project site. For a conservative evaluation, the total wastewater generated by the proposed project components will be compared to the existing treatment facility capacity. The analysis below includes information from the North Canyon Ranch Preliminary Sewer Study (Appendix K).

4.15.2.3.1 Wastewater Treatment Capacity

North Canyon Ranch

The North Canyon Ranch (TTM 5658-A) Preliminary Sewer Study evaluates the proposed sewer system and its impact to the existing sewer system. In its evaluation, the Preliminary Sewer Study determined the

³⁰ State Water Resources Control Board, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) – Wastewater, Accessed May 15, 2018 at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/npdes/.

³¹ Christiansen & Company, North Canyon Ranch (TTM 5658-A) Preliminary Sewer Study, February 19, 2019, as updated with “Tentative Tract Map No. 5658-A Master Sewage Disposal Plan” (map), January 5, 2023.

existing capacity and flow rates for the project’s connecting sewer lines, considering two connection points: sewer lines in Erringer Road to the east, and sewer lines in to the south in First Street.

To the east, the project would connect to the system at Erringer Road. The report determined that pipes to and in Erringer Road have ample capacity to convey the existing and proposed peak sewer flows without improvements to the existing infrastructure.

The project’s westerly 28 lots and the townhomes would convey sewer flow to the First Street sewer system, which would be conveyed to the sewer trunk in Easy Street. Along First Street through to Easy Street the project may require improvements to the pipes as a result of the project. The Preliminary Sewer Study recommends locations for sewer flow measurements to determine if new pipes would be required. The report found that the peak dry weather sewer flow rate would be well below the pipe capacity of the proposed development’s sewer system. The existing sewer system in Erringer Road is adequate. Pipe capacity in the existing sewer in First Street and Easy Street would be sufficient after implementation of mitigation measure **SEW-1**, which would require the project to implement sewer improvement recommendations within an approved sewer study when the westerly lots and townhome sites are ready to be constructed to ensure the project’s wastewater would be able to safely connect to the existing sewer system. The easterly single family lots from TTM 5658-A can be developed with no restrictions or conditions requiring downstream improvements.

With regard to the actual wastewater treatment system, as discussed above, there is a remaining capacity of 2.9 mgd at the WWTP (i.e., it is designed to handle 12.5 mgd of wastewater, and treats nearly 9.6 mgd, leaving a remaining or excess capacity of 2.9 mgd) The project’s Preliminary Sewer Study found that the sewer flow to Erringer Road and First Street would have a peak dry weather flow rate of 0.159 cfs (34,000 gpd) and 0.224 cfs (28,700 gpd), respectively. This totals an estimated 62,700 gpd (0.062 mgd) from the project site, which is only approximately 2.2 percent of the remaining capacity at the WWTP. The demand could be accommodated within the capacity of the WWTP, with 2.8 mgd capacity remaining. This would not create a need for the construction of a new or expanded wastewater treatment facility. Sewer infrastructure is checked as projects develop, to assure no sewer pipeline capacity issues.

Therefore, with implementation of mitigation measure SEW-1, which assures pipeline capacity will be able to convey the project’s wastewater to the WWTP, the project’s impacts to sewer infrastructure and WWTP capacity would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The Islands are currently within the SSD Sanitation Service area, based upon the SSMP.³² However, some lots within the Islands are currently on septic systems and not yet connected to the SSD sanitary sewer system;³³ approximately five dwelling units could be constructed on vacant annexation area lots, which would likely need connections to the existing sewer system. Five additional single-family units would have a minimal impact on the WWTP capacity, and further, no plans are available, so the timing or whether the additions would occur, are unknown. As no additional connections to the system are known or proposed at this time, no Island Annexations impact to WWTP capacity would occur with the project. Future connections to the SSD would require individual applications, and payment of fees, which would be reviewed and approved by the City SSD, as they are proposed. Where potential environmental impacts could occur pursuant to CEQA, the City would be able to require subsequent CEQA environmental documentation for these projects, where warranted.

³² City of Simi Valley, Department of Public Works, Sanitation Services Division City of Simi Valley, California: SSMP Sewer System Management Plan, Updated April 2019, Figure 1-1, p. 1-3.

³³ Ibid.

Mitigation Measures

MM SEW-1: To avoid potential capacity problems at downstream wastewater lines, the permittee must implement localized wastewater line improvement recommendations provided within the latest City approved sewer report for the North Canyon Ranch Project.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch impacts would be less than significant after mitigation, which will ensure that adequate localized sewer line capacity is provided, consistent with sewer improvement recommendations within a final sewer study, as reviewed and approved by the City. Annexation of the Islands would have no impact at this time.

4.15.2.3.2 New or Expanded Wastewater Treatment Facilities

North Canyon Ranch

The project would be served by the City SSD and would connect to the existing City sewer system. All of the wastewater from the City flows to WWTP, where it would be treated before being discharged to the Arroyo Simi. The North Canyon Ranch project would utilize approximately 2 percent of the remaining capacity at the WWTP. With regard to local sewer line capacity, the project would be required to comply with mitigation to require the project to implement sewer improvement recommendations within an approved sewer study when the westerly lots and multi-family sites are ready to be constructed to ensure the project's wastewater would be able to safely connect to the existing sewer system. The easterly single family lots shown in the proposed Tentative Map can be developed with no restrictions or conditions requiring downstream improvements. Therefore, with implementation of SEW-1, the wastewater treatment provider would be able to determine that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, and impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

Some lots within the Islands are currently on septic systems and not yet connected to the SSD sanitary sewer system,³⁴ and approximately five dwelling units could be constructed on vacant annexation area lots, which would likely need connections to the existing sewer system should they be constructed. As no additional connections to the system are known or proposed at this time, no impact to sewer infrastructure or WWTP capacity would occur with the project. Future connections to the SSD would require individual applications, and payment of fees, which would be reviewed and approved by the City SSD, as they are proposed. Where potential environmental impacts could occur pursuant to CEQA, the City would be able to require subsequent CEQA environmental documentation for these projects, where warranted. Currently, the Required Island Annexations would not result in a significant impact on the capacity of the WWTP that would result in the need for new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities, and no impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of mitigation measure SEW-1, above, is required.

Residual Impacts

North Canyon Ranch impacts would be less than significant after mitigation, which will ensure that adequate localized sewer line capacity is provided, consistent with sewer improvement recommendations

³⁴ Ibid.

within a final sewer study, as reviewed and approved by the City. Annexation of the Required Annexation Islands would have no impact at this time.

4.15.2.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Under CEQA, a project’s impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, for the issue of sewer services, the General Plan buildout would be the overall cumulative project set. Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, provides a list of recent, currently proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects in the City, as a subset of General Plan buildout.

North Canyon Ranch

Cumulative impacts would be evaluated in terms of General Plan buildout within the service area of the Simi Valley WWTP. This WWTP, treats all the wastewater in the City and is designed to accommodate General Plan Buildout. Further, the project will be subject to water conservation measures incorporated into the California Building Standards Code, such as low flush toilets and shower heads. No significant cumulative impact would occur.

Required Island Annexations

The annexation areas include approximately 8.0 acres of vacant/undeveloped land, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units. No specific plans have been proposed for the five lots, the Island Annexation areas are within the service area of District 8, and the addition of five dwelling units would be minimal and not have a cumulatively considerable impact.

Full Project

The North Canyon Ranch project component would be less than cumulatively considerable with regard to WWTP capacity, and as the Island Annexations would add little to no impact, and the combined project impact would not be cumulatively considerable. Based on the UWMP consideration of General Plan buildout, the water conservation measures in place (as discussed in the Regulatory Setting section), and the minimal impact of the combined project, the cumulative impact of the project plus cumulative projects would result in no significant impacts. Therefore, no significant cumulative impact would occur.

4.15 UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

4.15.3 Solid Waste

SECTION 4.0

4.15.3 SOLID WASTE

4.15.3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

The City currently has an exclusive franchise with Waste Management, to provide all of the solid waste, recycling, and yard waste collection services.³⁵ For the residences of Simi Valley, the solid waste, recycling, and yard waste is collected weekly.³⁶ All of the solid waste collected within the City is disposed of at the Simi Valley Landfill and Recycling Center (SVLRC), which is also operated by Waste Management.³⁷ The landfill is located northwest of Simi Valley in unincorporated Simi Valley. The SVLRC has a daily capacity of up to 9,250 tons per day.³⁸ The maximum permitted capacity of the SVLRC is 119,600,000 cubic yards and is estimated to have 82,954,873 cubic yards of remaining capacity as of January 1, 2019 with an estimated closure date of March 31, 2063.³⁹

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) is the nation's primary law governing the disposal of solid and hazardous waste. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery, implements RCRA, which sets national goals for reducing the amount of waste generated and ensuring that wastes are managed in an environmentally sound manner. The solid waste programs encourage states to develop comprehensive plans to manage nonhazardous industrial solid waste and municipal solid waste, sets criteria for municipal solid waste landfills, and prohibits the open dumping of solid waste. RCRA regulations encourage source reduction and recycling and promote the safe disposal of municipal waste.⁴⁰

³⁵ City of Simi Valley, Solid Waste Services, Accessed on January 5, 2023 at: <https://www.simivalley.org/departments/public-works/environmental-compliance/solid-waste-services>

³⁶ Waste Management, Welcome Residents of Simi Valley, Accessed on February 11, 2019 at: <https://www.wm.com/us/local/ca/simi-valley/residential/>.

³⁷ City of Simi Valley, General Plan EIR, Section 4.17, Utilities/Service Systems, June 2012.

³⁸ Waste Management, Simi Valley Landfill, Accessed on January 5, 2023 at: <http://www.wm.com/location/california/ventura-county/landfill/index.jsp>.

³⁹ CalRecycle, SWIS Facility Detail, Simi Valley Landfill & Recycling Center (56-AA-0007), Accessed on February 5, 2023 at: <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/608?siteID=3954>

⁴⁰ Environmental Protection Agency, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Overview, Accessed on February 11, 2019 at: <https://www.epa.gov/rcra/resource-conservation-and-recovery-act-rcra-overview>.

State**California Integrated Waste Management Act (Assembly Bill 939)**

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) was enacted to reduce, recycle, and reuse solid waste generated in the State to the maximum extent feasible. AB 939 required that jurisdictions implement programs to achieve 25 percent diversion of solid waste from landfill disposal by 1995, and 50 percent diversion by January 2000. The act also requires cities and counties to adopt a Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE) of their Waste Management Plans to describe actions to achieve waste reduction goals. The purpose of the SRRE is to describe how each jurisdiction will meet the State-mandated diversion requirements. The SRRE for each locality is the basis for each county's Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP).⁴¹

California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act (Assembly Bill 1327)

The California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991, mandates that local jurisdictions adopt a model ordinance requiring that development projects provide an adequate storage area for the collection and removal of recyclable materials. The sizes of these storage areas are to be determined by the appropriate jurisdictions' regulations. If no regulations exist within the jurisdiction, the CalRecycle model ordinance takes effect.⁴²

Construction and Demolition Waste Materials Diversion Requirements (Senate Bill 1374)

Construction and demolition (C&D) Waste Materials Diversion Requirements were enacted in 2002. Senate Bill (SB) 1374 seeks to assist jurisdictions with diverting their C&D waste material, and it also required that CalRecycle adopt a model ordinance for diverting 50 to 75 percent of C&D waste from landfills by 2004, for voluntary use by California jurisdictions. CalRecycle adopted its model ordinance in March 2004. SB 1374 dictates that jurisdictions include a summary of the progress made in diverting C&D waste in their annual AB 939 report.⁴³

Regional and Local**Simi Valley Municipal Code**

The Simi Valley Municipal Code contains regulations for solid waste and recycling to ensure the City of Simi Valley meets AB 939 requirements. The SVMC also includes regulations for how to dispose of solid waste and types of recycling and disposal containers that are required for particular land uses. It implements rules such as the minimum 75 percent diversion requirement during project construction in compliance with the California Green Building Standards Code.

4.15.3.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to solid waste has been analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, which are based upon the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact regarding wastewater if the proposed project would (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

⁴¹ CalRecycle, History of California Solid Waste Law, 1985-1989, States of 1989, Accessed on February 11, 2019 at: <https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/laws/legislation/calhist/1985to1989>.

⁴² California Legislative Information, Public Resources Code, Division 30, Part 3, Chapter 18: California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act.

⁴³ CalRecycle, Senate Bill 1374 (2002), Accessed on February 11, 2019 at: <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/Library/CandDModel/>

- Generate solid waste in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. (*Landfill Capacity*)
- Fail to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. (*Solid Waste Regulatory Compliance*)

4.15.3.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

North Canyon Ranch

The project site is currently undeveloped land. There is no current uses or existing waste services to the project site. As the whole City is exclusively served by Waste Management, the project site would also be served by Waste Management and have its solid waste disposed of at the SVLRC.

For purposes of this analysis, solid waste generation was calculated using the generation factors within the Simi Valley General Plan EIR for the project’s single-family dwelling units and multi-family dwelling. The generation of project solid waste is shown in **Table 4.15.3-1, Solid Waste Generation**.

Table 4.15.3-1
Solid Waste Generation

Land Use	Generation Factors ^a	Units	Solid Waste Generated
Single-Family Dwelling Unit	2.04 tons/du/yr	157	320.3 tons/yr
Multi-Family Dwelling Unit	1.17 tons/du/yr	50	58.5 tons/yr
Total			378.8 tons/yr

^a City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan EIR, Section 4.17, Utilities/Service Systems, June 2012.

Required Island Annexations

The annexation areas include approximately 8.0 acres of vacant/undeveloped land, which could potentially be developed with approximately five dwelling units which generate solid waste. This would generate 10.2 tons/yr based on the disposal factors provided above. However, no specific plans are proposed for any of the vacant lots. The City will review such plans when they are submitted, and determine if potential significant impacts could potentially occur, necessitating further CEQA review. At this time no development is proposed, and no impacts are anticipated.

4.15.3.3.1 Landfill Capacity

North Canyon Ranch

The project site’s solid waste would be collected by Waste Management, which would then transfer it to the SVLRC. During construction, the project site currently does not have any uses, thus would not generate a significant amount of solid waste from demolition. In construction of the project, it would be subject to the SVMC, which requires a 75 percent diversion rate. Given the project’s size, and the short term nature of construction relative to the longevity of the landfill capacity, the project’s impacts during construction would be less than significant.

During operations, the project would result in an increase of 378.89 tons per year, or approximately 1.05 tons per day. The SVLRC has a daily permitted capacity of 9,250 tons per day, leaving substantial remaining capacity. Thus, during operations, the North Canyon Ranch project would amount to less than 0.1 percent of the daily permitted capacity at the SVLRC. Therefore, impacts during operation to the landfill serving the project would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The 10.2 tons/yr of waste generated by the potential development within the vacant portions of the Island areas should they be developed, would amount to less than 0.0003 percent of the daily permitted capacity at the SVLRC, leaving substantial remaining capacity. Therefore, impacts during operation to the landfill serving the project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.15.3.3.2 Solid Waste Regulatory Compliance North Canyon Ranch

The project is within the City and would be subject to federal, state and City regulations. As the SVMC and General Plan address solid waste, the project would be indirectly subject to the regulations within the City, which incorporate federal and state policy, and those that apply to the City's waste services and those that the SVLRC is subject to. The SVMC includes regulations such as the diversion of at least 75 percent of construction solid waste, which would comply with several of the state and federal regulations. There are no unusual aspects of the project that would prohibit compliance or result in insufficient compliance. As these regulations and plans were developed in accordance with the state and federal statutes and regulations, impacts would be less than significant with regard to failing to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Required Island Annexations

The annexation areas would be subject to the City's regulations. As these regulations and plans were developed in accordance with the state and federal statutes and regulations, impacts would be less than significant with regard to failing to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.15.3.4 Cumulative Impacts

Under CEQA, a project's impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, for the issue of Solid Waste, the General Plan buildout would be the overall cumulative project set. Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, provides a list of recent, currently proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects in the City, as a subset of General Plan buildout.

This cumulative analysis would be considered within the City, as the whole City is served by Waste Management and disposes of waste to the SVLRC. The relevant cumulative project set would be General Plan Buildout, which includes specific related projects currently known to the City (Section 3.0, Cumulative Projects, and Table 3-1). The project's landfill capacity impacts would be less than significant, and thus not cumulatively considerable. The SVLRC was approved for horizontal expansion by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors in 2011. Based on current available space and daily capacity, SVLRC landfill has an estimated cease operation date of March 31, 2063.⁴⁴ As with the rest of the City, the project would be required to comply with all City's regulations which were developed in accordance with the state and federal statutes and regulations, impacts with regard to landfill capacity and solid waste policy and regulations would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The Island areas would continue to be subject to existing solid waste policy and regulations that were developed in accordance with the state and federal statutes and regulations. The generation of waste by five additional single-family homes would be minimal compared to the capacity of the landfill (i.e., the SVLRC). Impacts with regard to landfill capacity and solid waste policy and regulations would be less than significant.

Full Project

The combined impacts of each project component would be less than significant with regard to landfill capacity, as well as solid waste policy and regulations. Combined with related projects, no significant impact is anticipated given the lifespan of the landfill (estimated cease operation date of March 31, 2063), and the requirement to comply with solid waste policy and regulations on the local level, which are consistent with federal and state requirements. There are no unusual characteristics of the project components or the related projects that would prohibit compliance or result in insufficient compliance. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

⁴⁴ CalRecycle, SWIS Facility Detail, Simi Valley Landfill & Recycling Center (56-AA-0007), Accessed on February 5, 2023 at: <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/608?siteID=3954>.

4.16 WILDFIRE

SECTION 4.0

4.16 WILDFIRE

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) analysis section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for the purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts related to wildfires and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts related to wildfire, where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR. Project-related reports and materials to support this wildfire analysis are provided in Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this Draft EIR. Project-related reports and materials to support this analysis are provided in **Appendix J, Fire Protection**, including the mapped Fuel Modification Plan and Preliminary Fire Protection Plan (FPP) for North Canyon Ranch.¹

4.16.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based upon these baseline conditions.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting is a description of the physical environmental conditions on and in the vicinity of the project site.

Project Components

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development project site is located within an approximately 160-acre undeveloped property in unincorporated Ventura County, adjacent to the City's northwest boundary. There are currently no housing units or permanent population on the project site. The project site property is located within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) and City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB) area in the current Simi Valley General Plan, thus anticipating future development on the site. The project applicant is requesting that the project site be annexed into the City boundary. Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences as well as commercial uses and stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, single-family residences to the east, and open space to the north and west. The southwestern corner of the development area is located at the northern terminus of First Street, and the eastern side of the development area is located at the western terminus of Falcon Street, which the project would extend westerly through the project site to connect with First Street.

¹ FIREWISE 2000, LLC, North Canyon Ranch Preliminary Fire Protection Plan, Tentative Tract No. 5658. Simi Valley, California, Revised November 22, 2023. VCFD preliminary approval, December 18, 2023.

The North Canyon Ranch site, located at the wildland urban interface (WUI), is designated within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Regulation (CAL FIRE)² and as a VHFHSZ by the Ventura County Fire Protection District (Fire Department, or VCFD), and reflected in the existing Simi Valley General Plan and the associated General Plan EIR.³ The VCFD provides fire protection services within the City, including the project site. With approval of the project, the SRA designation will change to a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) designation.

The vegetation at the site consists of coastal sage scrub, small patches of cactus scrub, highly disturbed non-native grass/forb habitats, and riparian scrub at some locations along drainage courses and within debris basins. As stated, the majority of the natural habitats at the site are disturbed to varying degree by grazing. Previously modified areas include some large, graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, fill dirt, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, and two debris basins, which protect urban areas to the south from stormwater and debris flows. Artificial ditches have been constructed to direct stormwater flows around the perimeter of previously graded areas. Some “two-track” roads traverse the north-south trending ridgelines, which continue off-site. Envicom Corporation biological resources field notes identify that there is also a fuel reduction zone maintained along the eastern boundary, which protects the neighboring residential development. Three fires have burned the site since 1958. The Brea Canyon Fire of 1958 burned the western edge and the southwestern corner of the site, while the Clampitt Fire burned the entire site in 1970. The most recent fire to burn the site was the Simi Fire of 2003, which burned nearly the entire site leaving only the southeastern corner unaffected.

Required Island Annexations

The project would include the annexation of nine Island areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The Islands are surrounded on at least three sides by City jurisdiction and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (i.e., single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. The VCFD provides fire protection services to the sites, and would continue to do so following annexation, as the City is serviced by VCFD.

All of the Islands are located within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA). The entirety of Island areas 1, 3, 6, 7 and 9 and portions of area 2 are shown within a VHFHSZ by CAL FIRE⁴ and on the Simi Valley General Plan Fire Hazard Figure and General Plan EIR Wildfire Hazard Area Figure.⁵ Islands 8 and 4, which are located further from the wildland-urban interface, are the only Required Island Annexation areas outside the VHFHSZ.

² FRAP, Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at: <https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/>.

³ City of Simi Valley, General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.8-Hazards and Hazardous Materials), Figure 4.8-1, Wildfire Hazard Area, June 2012; and City of Simi Valley, General Plan, Safety and Noise Element, Figure S-2, Fire Hazard, June 2012.

⁴ FRAP, Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at: <https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/>.

⁵ City of Simi Valley, General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.8-Hazards and Hazardous Materials), Figure 4.8-1, Wildfire Hazard Area, June 2012.

Area Fire Setting

Wildland Fire Factors

Wildland fire generally refers to a fire that occurs within a suburban or rural area that contains uncultivated lands, timber, watershed, brush or grasslands, including areas in which there is a mingling of developing and undeveloped lands. Fires have played a natural part of the Southern California ecosystem for thousands of years, however, with the spread of urban development and increasing climate change, wildland fires have come to represent a significant hazard to life and property.

The undeveloped North Canyon Ranch project site is located adjacent to the City, which is susceptible to wildland fires. Generally, the wildland fire season extends from early spring to late fall; however unseasonable hot, dry or windy weather conditions can present wildland fire hazards at any time. Hazards arise from a combination of hot weather, an accumulation of vegetation, and low moisture content of the air. These conditions, if coupled with high winds and years of drought, can compound the potential impact of a fire.

Cities such as Simi Valley that are built within or adjacent to hillsides or mountainous areas, have increased the number of people living near heavily vegetated areas where wildlands meet urban development. As noted earlier, this interface is also referred to as the WUI. A fire along the WUI can result in major losses of property and structures unless adequate protection measures have been provided. As discussed further below in Regulatory Setting, CAL FIRE has adopted WUI regulations as part of the California Building Standards Code (CBSC) and California Fire Code (CFC), as adopted by the Simi Valley Municipal Code (SVMC). The WUI includes building materials list, construction methods, as well as project siting requirements to lessen the potential impacts of wildland fires on urban uses. Although there is existing urban development to the east and south, the proposed North Canyon Ranch project would be on the WUI, and thus of concern for wildfires.

Generally, there are three major factors that sustain wildfires and allow for predictions of a given area's potential to burn. These factors include fuel (materials that feed a fire), topography, and weather. In addition, other factors complicate the issues, including the WUI, diversified responsibility for wildland vegetation management, destructive insects, and diseases. Other causes of wildfires include power line failure, sparks from off-road vehicles, construction equipment, and other power-driven equipment used in industry, agriculture, and recreation. In developed areas, wildfires can start from humans, bonfires, rubbish burning, sparks from chimneys, and fireworks. Natural causes, primarily lightning, are now relatively minor causes of local fires. Rugged terrain will also hinder fire suppression attempts by hampering the mobility and effectiveness of firefighters and equipment.

The Simi Valley General Plan EIR identified the integration of five fire determinants (human proximity, vegetation, access, slope, wind direction) to delineate four natural fire hazard potential zones in the City. As stated in the Plan, high risk equates to areas lying to the immediate west of developed areas; chaparral or dense sage scrub cover; very steep (40 percent) slope; and somewhat limited access. Medium risk equates to areas fronting developments and backcountry, sage scrub and less developed chaparral cover, moderate (20 to 40 percent) slope, and somewhat limited access. Low risk equates to areas in the vicinity of developed property; grassland and less developed sage scrub cover; level to gentle (0-20 percent) slope; and available access. No risk equates to developed areas; cultivated urban cover; flat slope; and available urban access. The project site area falls within a LRA VHFHSZ and is within a high risk area.⁶

⁶ City of Simi Valley, General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.8-Hazards and Hazardous Materials), June 2012.

Wildfire Pollutants and Air Quality

Wildfire smoke – a complex mixture of air pollutants – is unhealthy to breathe and can be especially dangerous for children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with heart or respiratory conditions. These sensitive groups are advised to limit outdoor activities, especially when the Air Quality Index reaches levels considered “Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups” or above. Even healthy people may experience symptoms in smoky conditions or after exposure.⁷

Wildfires produce a range of harmful air pollutants, from known cancer-causing substances to tiny particles that can aggravate existing health problems and, particularly with long term exposure, can increase the risk of heart attack or stroke. Particulate Matter (PM) is the principal pollutant of concern from wildfire smoke for the relatively short-term exposures (hours to weeks) typically experienced by the public. Particles from smoke tend to be very small (with diameters of 2.5 micrometers and smaller, i.e., PM_{2.5}). They are small enough to get deep into the lungs and the smallest, ultrafine particles can pass directly into the bloodstream. The association between PM_{2.5} and heart and lung health effects are well documented in scientific literature.

Larger and more frequent and intense wildfires are a growing public health problem, contributing to reduced air quality for people living near or downwind of fire. Health problems related to wildfire smoke exposure can be as mild as eye and respiratory tract irritation and as serious as worsening of heart and lung disease, including asthma, and even premature death.⁸

Ventura County Fire Protection District/Wildland Fire Division

As discussed in Draft EIR Section 4.13.1, Fire and Ambulance Services, the VCFD provides fire prevention, fire suppression, and emergency services in Simi Valley. Fire protection for the County is provided by five battalions, which are comprised of 33 fire stations, staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Battalion 4 serves the cities of Simi Valley and Moorpark, and the surrounding unincorporated areas with seven fire stations providing fire and rescue response in the Battalion service area.

The VCFD maintains six fire stations within the boundaries of the City, as listed in Table 4.16-1 Fire Stations in Simi Valley. The nearest fire station to the project site is Station 47, which is located approximately 0.3 miles from the project site boundary. **Table 4.16-1, Fire Stations in Simi Valley** provides a list of VCFD stations in the project vicinity, and available apparatus at each location.

In addition, the VCFD has a wildland fire protection strategy that includes the following components: prevention, passive protection, fire suppression, and fuel bed management. The VCFD’s Wildland Fire Division, within the Bureau of Support Services, also provides safety and tactical education and training in wildland incident responses for employees. The Division sustains a long-term plan of maintaining a patchwork of modified fuel beds to control historical wildland fires that provide control zones for assets of value and range improvement.

⁷ California Air Resources Board, Protecting Yourself from Wildfire Smoke, Accessed on September 28, 2022 at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/protecting-yourself-wildfire-smoke/>.

⁸ Ibid.

**Table 4.16-1
Fire Stations in Simi Valley**

Station #	Address	Personnel	Apparatus	Distance from Project ^a
47	2901 Erringer Rd. Simi Valley, CA	3 firefighters	medic-engine; a reserve ladder truck; utility unit	0.3 mile
45	790 Pacific Ave. Simi Valley, CA	3 firefighters	engine; reserve engine; foam unit; dozer	2 miles
41	1910 Church St. Simi Valley, CA	1 chief 9 firefighters	engine; ladder truck; reserve engine; command vehicle, Rescue Ambulance	3 miles
46	3265 Tapo St. Simi Valley, CA	3 firefighters	engine; reserve engine	4 miles
44	1050 Country Club Dr. Simi Valley, CA	4 firefighters	rescue engine (<i>Quint</i>); reserve engine; reserve ladder truck	5 miles
43	5874 E. Los Angeles Ave. Simi Valley, CA	3 firefighters	medic-engine, brush engine, utility pickup	7 miles

Source: Ventura County Fire Protection District website, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at: <http://fire.countyofventura.org>.
^a Approximated driving distance (road miles).

As stated in the General Plan EIR, due to Ventura County’s diverse geography and six different microclimates, the County is broken down into ten different “fuel beds” that serve as the geographical basis from which the plan was developed. The City planning area is within two fuel beds: the Simi Fuel Bed and the Oakridge Fuel Bed. The project site is located within the Oak Ridge Fuel Bed, which is bordered on the north by the Santa Clara River, on the south by the Simi fuel bed, on the east by the Los Angeles/Ventura County line and on the west by Highway 23. The ground cover of the bed consists of medium brush on the north slope and light, flashy fuels on the south slope. The predominant risk exposure in this area is the interface area along the northern boundary of the City. As this residential area grows, so does the risk from wildfire.⁹

Emergency Preparedness

The County of Ventura and the City both implement programs to facilitate emergency preparedness. Specifically, the County of Ventura’s Office of Emergency Services (OES) administers the County’s disaster preparedness and response program and development of the County’s Emergency Response Plan. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a centralized location for coordinating countywide emergency response activities. The EOC is the coordination point between the cities, special districts and the State OES. The EOC serves to support field operations and liaison with all public and private disaster response agencies at all levels of government. The EOC is activated in response to major events and disasters that are beyond the scope of normal day-to-day emergencies. The EOC also serves as one of the central points for activating the U.S. Emergency Alert System for broadcasting emergency information to residents and the VC Notification Alert system in Ventura County.

The Simi Valley Emergency Services Program plans for, responds to, and coordinates the recovery from disasters. The program fulfills the following five major objectives: Emergency Planning, Emergency Management Training, Coordination for Emergency Response and Planning, Disaster Recovery, and Public Education. The City also partners with a number of organizations in the response to disasters, including the Simi Valley Unified School District, the VCFD, Southern California Edison, Simi Valley Hospital, Ventura County and California Offices of Emergency Services, Southern California Gas

⁹ City of Simi Valley, General Plan EIR, Chapter 4 (Section 4.8-Hazards and Hazardous Materials), June 2012.

Company, American Red Cross, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Additionally, the City implements the Community Emergency Response Training (known as CERT) program, which is designed to provide residents and businesses with skills to become self-reliant and to assist others during disasters. Volunteers are trained in a variety of emergency response skills conducted by the VCFD in conjunction with the Simi Valley OES.¹⁰

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy

The 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Report was created by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to establish uniform federal policies regarding the management of wildland fire, triggered by the events of the 1994 wildfire season. Goals of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Report included protection of human life, proper reintroduction of wildland fire as a critical natural process, and cooperative wildland fire management. The 1995 Federal Wildlife Fire Management Report recognized the importance of fire processes in maintaining natural systems and created a strategy for planning, implementing and monitoring of wildland fire management activities at the federal level.¹¹

The Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy was completed in January 2001 and recommended selected changes to clarify purpose and intent of issues not fully covered in 1995, such as the fire hazard situation in the WUI is more complex than understood in 1995 and emphasis on program management at senior levels of federal agencies is critical for successful implementation of the plan. The 2001 Review and Update found federal fire management activities and programs to provide for firefighter and public safety, protect and enhance land management objectives and human welfare, integrate programs and disciplines, require interagency collaboration, emphasize the natural ecological role of fire and contribute to ecosystem sustainability.¹² In 2003, the Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy was developed to set forth direction for consistent implementation of the federal fire policy. In 2009, the Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy replaced the 2003 document as the primary guidance for federal agency implementation strategies.¹³

National Fire Plan

The National Fire Plan is a 2000 Presidential Directive that was passed as a response to severe wildland fires that burned throughout the United States. The National Fire Plan focuses on reducing fire impacts on rural communities and assuring sufficient firefighting capacity in the future. The plan is a long-term commitment based on cooperation and communication among federal agencies, state and local governments, tribes, and interested public entities. There are five key areas addressed under the National Fire Plan, including firefighting and preparedness, rehabilitation and restoration, hazardous fuels reduction, community assistance, and accountability.¹⁴

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of the Interior, Federal Wildland Fire Management Final Report, December 18, 1995.

¹² U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of the Interior, Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Final Report, January 2001.

¹³ U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of the Interior, Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, February 13, 2009.

¹⁴ Forests and Rangelands, Previous Wildfire Fire Management Initiatives, National Fire Plan, Accessed on September 28, 2022 at: <https://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/resources/overview/>.

Healthy Forest Restoration Act

The Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) established a protocol for the creation of a document – a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) that articulates a wildfire safety plan for communities at risk from wildland fires.

State

California Strategic Fire Plan

The California Strategic Fire Plan (2018) was developed in conjunction between the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (the Board) and CAL FIRE. In 2018, the Board adopted a new strategic fire plan to address fire prevention and natural resource management to maintain the state’s forest as a resilient carbon sink to meet California’s climate change goals and serve as important habitat for adaption and mitigation. The Board has adopted these Plans since the 1930s and periodically updates them to reflect current and anticipated needs as the environmental, social and economic landscape of California’s wildlands changes over time. The 2018 Strategic Fire Plan emphasized the continued collaboration between local, state, federal, tribe and private partners to effectively manage a fire resilient WUI and natural environment.

The goals that are critical to achieving the 2018 Strategic Fire Plan’s vision around fire prevention, natural resource management and fire suppression efforts include:¹⁵

- “Improve the availability and use of consistent, shared information on hazard and risk assessment;
- Promote the role of local planning processes, including general plans, new development, and existing developments, and recognize individual landowner/homeowner responsibilities;
- Foster a shared vision among communities and the multiple fire protection jurisdictions, including county-based plans and community-based plans such as Community Wildfire Protection Plans;
- Increase awareness and actions to improve fire resistance of man-made assets at risk and fire resilience of wildland environments through natural resource management;
- Integrate implementation of fire and vegetative fuels management practices consistent with the priorities of landowners or managers;
- Determine and seek the needed level of resources for fire prevention, natural resource management, fire suppression, and related services; and
- Implement needed assessments and actions for post-fire protection and recovery.”

Government Code Section 51182

Once the project is annexed to the City, Government Code 51182 applies. This regulation sets fire-safety requirements for any person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains an occupied dwelling or occupied structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered land, shrub-covered land, grass-covered land, or land that is covered with flammable material, which area or land is within a VHFHSZ designated by the local agency pursuant to Government Code Section 51179. The fire-safety requirements include defensible space and fuel modification requirements.

¹⁵ State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California, August 22, 2018.

Public Resources Code 4290 & 14 California Code of Regulations Section 1270, et seq. (State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations)

This portion of the Public Resources Code provides that the State Board of Fire Services must adopt regulations implementing minimum fire safety standards related to defensible space that are applicable to SRA lands under the authority of the department, and to lands classified and designated as VHFHSZ. The State Board of Fire Services is an 18-member advisory board to the California State Fire Marshal, and is comprised of representatives of fire service labor, fire chiefs, fire districts, volunteer firefighters, city and county government, Office of Emergency Services, and the insurance industry. The “State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations” (14 Cal. Code Regs. section 1270, et seq.) was promulgated for the purpose of establishing state minimum wildfire protection standards in conjunction with building, construction, and development in SRAs and VHFHSZs. These regulations provide for basic emergency access and perimeter wildfire protection measures, as well as standards for emergency access; signing and building numbering; private water supply reserves for emergency fire use; vegetation modification, fuel breaks, greenbelts, and measures to preserve undeveloped ridgelines.

Health and Safety Code

State fire regulations set forth in Health and Safety Code Sections 13000, et seq. include regulations for building standards (as also set forth in the CBSC), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire suppression training.

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code contains regulations relating to construction and maintenance of buildings and the use of premises based on portions of the International Fire Code. Topics addressed in the code include, fire hydrants, automatic sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire and explosion hazards safety, hazardous materials storage and use, provisions intended to protect and assist first responders, industrial processes, and many other general and specialized fire-safety requirements for new and existing buildings and premises. The code contains specialized technical regulations related to fire and life safety. State Fire Code Chapter 49 addresses wildfire safety measures. The chapter includes mitigation strategies to reduce the hazards of fire originating within a structure spreading to wildland, as well as fire originating in wildland spreading to structures. These strategies are included in the following requirements: development of FPPs, development of landscape plans and long-term vegetation management, and creation and maintenance of defensible space to protect structures and subdivisions.

California Building Standards Code

The CBSC contains multiples chapters which address fire safety:

Chapter 7, Fire and Smoke Protection Features

Chapter 7 regulates materials, systems and assemblies used for structural fire resistance and fire-resistance-rated construction separation of adjacent spaces to safeguard against the spread of fire and smoke within a building and the spread of fire to or from buildings. Chapter 7 applies to all permitted structures.

Chapter 7A, Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure

Chapter 7A establishes minimum standards for the protection of life and property by increasing the ability of a building located in any FHSZ within SRAs or any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area to resist the intrusion of flames or burning embers projected by a vegetation fire and contributes to a systematic

reduction in conflagration losses. Chapter 7A applies to new buildings located within a Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area, which includes those within an LRA VHFHSZ. The proposed project is located within a VHFHSZ and therefore will be required to meet the ignition-resistant construction standards of Chapter 7A.

California Energy Code

The California Energy Code contains the regulations for conservation requirements for the construction of new buildings. The CEC is responsible for setting performance standards that allow for an energy budget. This allows builders to comply with these standards using different methods to meet performance standards.¹⁶ Water conservation is important in that it allows for water to be available when needed for firefighting.

Regional and Local

Ventura County Fire Protection District Unit Strategic Fire Plan

The Ventura County Fire Protection District Unit Strategic Fire Plan (2023) is a component of the California Strategic Fire Plan used within the VCFD and established under the HFRA protocol. The VCFD seeks to achieve the same goals as the State Plan for a natural environment that is more fire resilient, buildings and infrastructure that are more fire-resistant, and a society that is more aware of and responsive to the benefits and threats of wildland fire, on a local level that works with stakeholders and cooperators to create programs, policies, and procedures that would make the residents of Ventura County safer. Another significant element of the plan is to identify and evaluate wildland fire hazards to minimize negative effects of a wildland fire on the natural and human environments.¹⁷

Ventura County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2023)

The Ventura County CWPP was established under the HFRA protocol in collaboration with local, county, state and federal agencies as well as various community organizations within the County. The CWPP identified wildfire risks and clarifies priorities for funding and programs to reduce impacts of wildfire on the communities at risk within Ventura County.¹⁸

Ventura County Fire Protection District Ordinance No. 29

Ordinance No. 29 of the VCFD to be known as the Ventura County Fire Apparatus Access Code, establishes the minimum cumulative design and maintenance standards for emergency fire access roads within the jurisdictional boundaries of the VCFD. These provisions permit emergency resources to respond to an incident in a safe and effective manner.¹⁹

Wildland Fire Action Plan

The Fire Hazard Reduction Program (FHRP) is the cornerstone of the VCFD Wildland Fire Action Plan. The Wildland Fire Action Plan provides guidance to homeowners against wildfires by maintaining property free of fire hazards or nuisance vegetation year-round and compliance with clearance requirements. Property owners included in the program receive an annual Notice to Abate Fire Hazard and required to undergo inspection to ensure compliance.²⁰

¹⁶ California Energy Commission, 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings, For the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.

¹⁷ Ventura County Fire Protection District, Unit Strategic Fire Plan, May 2023.

¹⁸ Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Ventura County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, March 9, 2010.

¹⁹ Ventura County Fire Protection District Ordinance No. 29, Accessed on September 21, 2022 at: <https://vcfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Ordinance-29-Adopted-Version-1.pdf>

²⁰ Ventura County Fire District, Ready Set Go! Your Personal Wildfire Action Plan, 2013.

Simi Valley Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City is required to adopt and state and federally approved Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan under the regulations of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The overall intent of the Plan is to be a strategic planning tool for the reduction or prevention of injury and damage from hazards in Simi Valley. The City joined with Ventura County for the 2022 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update. The plan documents the community's known natural hazards, capabilities, and vulnerabilities and identifies strategies to overcome those vulnerabilities.

Simi Valley Municipal Code

Chapter 4-5 (Emergency Preparedness)

SVMC Chapter 4-5 regulates the preparation and carrying out of plans for the protection of persons and property within the jurisdiction of the City, Districts, Agency, and Authority in the event of an emergency: the direction of the Emergency Organization; and the coordination of the emergency functions of the City with all other public agencies, corporations, organizations, and affected private persons.

SVMC Chapter 8-18 (Simi Valley Building Code)

SVMC Title 8, Chapter 18 adopts the 2022 California Building Standards Code as the Primary Existing Building Code of the City.

4.16.2 Thresholds of Significance

The potential wildfire impacts of the project have been analyzed in relation to the following threshold criteria, which are based upon the state CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact with regard to wildfire if located in or near SRAs or lands classified as VHFHSZ and the project would:

- Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. ***(Substantially Impair Emergency Response or Evacuation Plan)***
- 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. ***(Pollutant Concentrations from Wildfires)***
- Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. ***(Installation or Maintenance of Wildfire Associated Infrastructure)***
- 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. ***(Post Wildfire Indirect Impacts)***

4.16.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The North Canyon Ranch project applicant proposes to construct a residential development within a project site to be annexed to the City. Although there is existing urban development to the east and south, the site is within a VHFHSZ and the project would be on the WUI, and thus of concern for wildfires.

In addition to continuing an urban pattern of development adjacent on two sides, several aspects of the proposed project that serve to reduce fire impacts, include its location, which would be within 0.3 miles of the closest fire station (Station #47). The project will also complete the extension of Falcon Street from

Erringer Road to Falcon Street to improve area circulation and provide the site with two points of access. Also, the design would retain an access route for VCFD vehicles to enter through the proposed Falcon street extension to provide fire break maintenance or wildland fire fighting services if needed. In the case of a wildland fire, CAL FIRE would also send resources to suppress the fires in the area.²¹ Additionally, development of the project would require VCFD review and approval of site plans for fire protection features including adequate fire apparatus access, roadway width, turnaround areas, adequate placement of hydrants with appropriate pressures to provide fire-flow for firefighting purposes, installation of sprinklers, and establishment of fuel modification zones for brush clearance adjacent to development. These features would be specified on project plans and specifically in the FPP and Fuel Modification Plan for the project site.

The proposed North Canyon Ranch Fuel Modification Plan map was reviewed and deemed acceptable to the VCFD. The map was developed based on analysis in the project-specific preliminary FPP for the North Canyon Ranch development, which was developed pursuant to Fire Code Chapter 49 (see Regulatory Setting) and was also reviewed and deemed acceptable to the VCFD. Together they are designed to minimize fire hazards and risks that may threaten life and property associated with the proposed residential development. In addition, the preliminary FPP establishes both short and long-term fuel modification actions to minimize any projected fire hazard and risk and assigns annual maintenance responsibilities for each of the recommended fuel modification actions. The FPP provides fuel treatment and construction feature direction for developers, architects, builders, the VCFD, and the individual lot owners to use in making the structures in the proposed project relatively safe from future wildfires.

The FPP study looked at historical fire data, weather station data, vegetation composition (i.e., as fuel for wildfires) considering aerial photography and Envicom’s biological resources mapping (see Section 4.4, Biological Resources), in order to recommend fuel modification obligations for North Canyon Ranch. The preparers of the FPP used the “BehavePlus 6.0.0 Fire Behavior Prediction Model” developed by USDA–Forest Service to make the fire behavior assessments. Flame length was modeled for various wind direction scenarios using worst case assumptions for: high winds, fuels, fuel moisture, and topography. This analysis allows for fuel modification zones to be established to avoid direct contact of wildfire flames with structures. In addition to fuel-burning flame length, the FPP study evaluated potential structure ignitions that occur from three wildfire sources: convective firebrands (flying embers), direct flame impingement, and radiant heat. In order to minimize wildfire issues occurrence or exacerbation which may cause a significant impact to fire services that may result in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the FPP provides detailed specifications for the Fuel Modification Zones shown on the map, and additional construction and landscaping requirements such as appropriate vegetation usage and list of VCFD prohibited plant list. Recommended Construction Standards include preconstruction inspection of water and power infrastructure, operable windows, interior sprinklers, and building materials specifications. Fire Infrastructure requirements include water availability with sufficient fire flow (i.e., sufficient volume and pressure for firefighting), hydrants, as well as specifications for privacy gates, should they be installed, and labeled fire access roads and gates. Homeowner Education recommendations include the developer providing a copy of the final North Canyon Ranch Final Fire Protection Plan, including the Fuel Modification Plan map to residents and the Homeowner’s Association (HOA). The HOA is to ensure continued compliance with all Fuel Modification maintenance and construction requirements, as monitored by the VCFD, and comply with the Mandated Inclusions in the HOA and Lot Owner Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs).

²¹ As confirmed by VCFD review (Corina Cagley and Larry Williams), October 2023.

4.16.3.1 Substantially Impair Emergency Response or Evacuation Plan

A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

North Canyon Ranch

As stated in the Regulatory Setting, the County of Ventura and the City both implement programs to facilitate emergency preparedness. Specifically, the County of Ventura's OES administers the County's disaster preparedness and response program and development of the County's Emergency Response Plan. The EOC is the coordination point between the cities, special districts and the State OES, and serves to support field operations and liaison with all public and private disaster response agencies at all levels of government. In addition, the City plans for, responds to, and coordinates the recovery from disasters in coordination with multiple organizations. The City implements the CERT program, which is designed to provide residents and businesses with skills to become self-reliant and to assist others during disasters. Volunteers are trained in a variety of emergency response skills conducted by the VCFD in conjunction with the Simi Valley OES. The project would be required to comply with all applicable regulations outlined in the disaster preparedness and emergency plans to ensure emergency preparedness and response. City residents are kept aware through the U.S. Emergency Alert System for broadcasting emergency information to residents and the VC Notification Alert system in Ventura County.

As discussed in Section 4.12, Public Services – Fire and Ambulance Services, the project site is served by the VCFD with the closest station, Fire Station #47, just 0.3 miles away on Erringer Road. The project site would comply with all regulations and design review requirements of the City and VCFD and is located within close proximity to an existing fire station, which would allow for adequate emergency preparedness and disaster response. Construction of the proposed residences would increase demand for fire protection and emergency services. However, the project is located in close proximity to an existing VCFD fire station and VCFD resources; would be required to provide final development plans for review and approval by VCFD to ensure regulatory compliance; and would incorporate project features per the VCFD, which would require a project-specific final FPP, pursuant to Chapter 49 of the CFC. As noted earlier, a proposed Fuel Modification Plan map and preliminary FPP have been reviewed and deemed acceptable to the VCFD. The Final FPP will be developed once the Tract Map is approved and structure foundation footprints, driveway locations and landscape plan are further finalized.

During construction, the proposed project would not result in total closure of any roadways, and thus any temporary construction impact to emergency evacuation would be reduced. Partial closures, if needed for short periods of time, such as for trucks exporting soil and delivering materials, would be temporary. Partial closure would require a construction traffic management plan to be approved by the City, which may include flag persons and signage to assure traffic flow and safety. Other alternate routes to exit the surrounding area are available through other local streets. As such the project would not substantially impair or physically interfere with the ability of emergency vehicles to respond to emergencies within the vicinity of the site.

In addition, the most accessible regional emergency access route would be the SR-118, located just south of the project site. During operations, the project would not interfere with movement of emergency vehicles on the existing local street network or the SR-118. The project will provide a critical City road network connection by building Falcon Street to connect Erringer Road and First Street, which will facilitate emergency access and evacuation of the site and surrounding areas beyond the site. As such, the project would not directly impair an adopted emergency response plan. However, as development in a VHFHSZ and WUI is of particular concern for wildfires, a Final FPP will be required, as stated in mitigation measure FIRE-1, in Section 4.12.1, Fire and Ambulance Services. With regulatory compliance

and project features noted above, and with mitigation measure FIRE-1, the project's potential wildfire impacts and indirect potential impacts on emergency response to wildfires would be reduced to less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The Islands are located within existing developments and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. As such, the project would not cause substantial development or population growth due to the Required Island Annexations. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction. The annexation of the Islands would therefore not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Therefore, the potential impacts of the Islands Annexations regarding emergency response would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

In addition to regulatory compliance and project features, mitigation measure FIRE-1 is required.

Residual Impacts

With implementation of mitigation measure FIRE-1, which is designed to assure adherence with all aspects of the North Canyon Ranch Final FPP, the project's potential wildfire impacts and indirect potential impacts on emergency response to wildfires would be reduced to less than significant. No development or physical changes would occur in the Islands, and thus no impact would occur there.

4.16.3.2 Pollutant Concentrations from Wildfires

The proposed project may have a significant impact if 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. As detailed in the Environmental Setting Section above, generally, there are three major factors that sustain wildfires and allow for predictions of a given area's potential to burn, fuel, topography, and weather. All three factors are present in Simi Valley. In addition to a generally dry climate and periodic droughts, wind is a factor in the spread of wildfires. For the City, for most of the year the wind is predominantly from the north (for 7.0 months, from September 25 to April 25), with a peak percentage of 56 percent on January 1. The wind direction for the rest of the year (5.0 months, from April 25 to September 25) is most often from the west for with a peak percentage of 48 percent on June 2.²² Fires at the base of a slope spread more readily and quickly upslope; downslope spreading is still possible, but fires generally move more quickly uphill than downhill or on flat terrain.²³ Most wildfires are caused by human activity, either directly or by indirect means such as a downed electrical line. Considering human causation and the slopes and prevailing winds, based on the location of North Canyon Ranch and the Required Annexation Islands that are adjacent to – or at – the WUI (i.e.,

²² Weatherspark Website, Accessed October 20, 2022 at: <https://weatherspark.com/y/1731/Average-Weather-in-Simi-Valley-California-United-States-Year-Round#Sections-Wind>

²³ National Park Service, Wildland Fire Behavior, Accessed October 20, 2022 at: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/wildland-fire-behavior.htm#:~:text=It%20will%20typically%20move%20more,or%20than%20on%20flat%20terrain.&text=Topography%20describes%20land%20shape>.

Islands 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6), there is a potential for human activity in the project site locations to cause a wildfire.

North Canyon Ranch

The proposed project is located within a VHFHSZ as mapped by CAL FIRE pursuant to state law and based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other factors. The FHSZs influence how people are permitted to construct buildings and protect property to reduce risk associated with wildland fires. As stated above, the VCFD's Wildland Fire Division, within the Bureau of Support Services sustains a long-term plan of maintaining a patchwork of modified fuel beds to control historical wildland fires that provide control zones for assets of value and range improvement.

The project site would be graded according to the approved grading plan providing large, level building lots and manufactured slopes that would be designed, drained and landscaped meet County standards and resist failure, siltation and excessive runoff. The project proposes 207 residential units, placed throughout the site in a logical pattern, such that the design would not introduce elements that would capture and funnel prevailing winds in a manner that would substantially exacerbate wildfire risks and/or expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. The roads, building lots and graded and maintained areas of the site will act as local fire breaks and the ultimate fire water (flow and pressure) and hydrants will provide and facilitate access to water for use in fire suppression. There is also an existing fuel modification/reduction zone along the eastern boundary, which protects the neighboring residential development, and the project will be required to provide a fuel modification zone to serve as a fuel break.

In addition, the North Canyon Ranch Tentative Tract Map (TTM) has undergone VCFD design review and preliminary review by the City as part of the project application, in anticipation of the annexation. Several revisions of the TTM have during this review have occurred before this Draft EIR, which have reduced the extent of the project development footprint within the WUI, reduced units, and incorporated fire-safety requirements. Formal City review will occur once the LAFCo annexation is complete. The map design and conditions to be applied will assure the plans incorporate fire safety features as required by the VCFD and SVMC, including the requirement for sprinklers in new buildings, design accommodations for fire apparatus access, fire-safe landscaping specifications, project-specific defensible space, and fuel approved modification zones. Given the location of the project site in a VHFHSZ and WUI, the TTM design features, final FPP and Fuel Modification Plan essential for avoiding an exacerbation of wildfire potential at or spreading from the project site. These fire-reduction features and conditions will reduce the potential for project-related wildfire-generated hazardous pollutant concentrations that result in unhealthy air quality within the region, as described in Regulatory Setting, above.

In addition to local regulations, the project must comply with State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations (14 Cal. Code of Regs. section 1270), governing access a multitude of fire safe issues, including fire hydrants, road design, building siting, setbacks and fuel modification (i.e., thinning or clearance near structures), including building setbacks from property lines. In general, 30 feet building setbacks will be required from all property lines and/or the center of a road, with specific exceptions allowable with review and approval of the VCFD. Exceptions may include topographic limitations, sensitive habitat, or development density or patterns that promote low-carbon emission outcomes, and where exceptions are made, alternate features to reduce structure to structure ignition potential will be required by the VCFD through the plan review process. Pursuant to CFC Chapter 49, a project-specific final Fire Protection Plan for the North Canyon Ranch project must be reviewed and approved by the VCFD, which will specify a program of fire safe measures required for the project.

The buildings would also conform to Chapters 7, 7A, and 9 of the CBSC, which regulate building materials, structural design as it relates to fire containment, safety features, and fire sprinkler systems. CFC Chapter 7A requirements harden the structure against wildfires, but also serve to further reduce the likelihood of the development burning out of control. CFC Chapter 7A compliant features include a class A roof assembly with no eaves or soffit venting, which would allow combustible embers to enter. The flat non-combustible roof and vertical non-combustible cladding on the exterior walls, constructed of a combination of cement plaster and fiber cement panels present a fireproof shell to the exterior with no system venting to allow burning embers inside. Additionally, the project would comply with the standard Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which requires Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) 13 requirements or equivalent air filters for new development. MERV 13 filters are the highest rated filters that the HVAC system can accommodate and can improve the systems efficient in removing particulates and are required for all residential and industrial structures. As such, the project would implement regulatory requirements specifically provided for high fire hazard areas to ensure the project would not exacerbate wildfire risk, and therefore exposing project occupants to pollutant concentrations from wildfire. To assure implementation of all TTM design features and conditions of approval all features the project will be reviewed and approved by the VCFD during plan check, prior to issuance of building permits, and during construction, to assure all TTM design features and conditions are appropriately implemented.

As discussed above and in Section 4.12, Public Services – Fire and Ambulance Services, the project site is served by the VCFD with the closest station, Fire Station #47, just 0.3 miles away on Erringer Road. As the project site would comply with all regulations required by the VCFD (including design and defensible space requirements with appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification zones), would incorporate all required TTM design features and conditions, and is located within close proximity to an existing fire station.

The project's potential to impact or exacerbate impacts of pollutant emissions from fires considering slopes, prevailing winds, and other factors, would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These Islands are located within existing developed areas and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. The project would not cause substantial development or population growth due to the Islands. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction. The future annexations would not necessarily exacerbate wildfire risks through potential additional development, as infill is determined by the state to be preferable to development into the wildland-urban interface. Infill in generally developed areas with fire-fighting infrastructure has less impact on wildfires than other development. Further, the potential minor increase in future development would not contribute to substantial growth and would result in a less than significant impact related to exposing project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Therefore, the potential impacts of the Islands Annexations regarding wildfire would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.16.3.3 Installation or Maintenance of Wildfire Associated Infrastructure

The proposed project may have a significant impact if it would require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

North Canyon Ranch

The project would require the installation of roads, power lines, water storage tanks and other utilities typical of any residential and light industrial development. As discussed in **Section 4.15, Utilities and Service Systems**, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment storm water draining, electric power, natural gas or telecommunications facilities. The infrastructure added for project use would be to the latest design requirements of the utility provider and the City, unlike older development in other parts of California that may be more susceptible to failure or breakage, such as older power lines that have sometimes been the cause of wildfires. Beyond the provision of service to the site, the project would not require additional emergency facilities related to the provision of water, power lines or other utilities.

The project would provide local public streets to serve the project site, and private drives and fire lanes for adequate vehicular and fire access. All proposed roads will also be constructed to applicable local, county, state and federal fire codes regulations, and the new roads would act as additional fire breaks and facilitate access for emergency responders. As such, the construction of the project would not exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment due to the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure, and with regulatory compliance impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These Islands are located within existing developed areas within the unincorporated portion of Ventura County and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. The project would not cause substantial development or population growth due to the Island Annexations. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction. The future development of these lots may require localized installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure through potential additional development; however, such infrastructure has yet to be designed and like development of the five lots, the timing is unknown. The potential minor increase in future development would not contribute to substantial growth or infrastructure development. If any larger infrastructure changes are proposed in the future within the Islands, they would be reviewed by the City to determine if CEQA evaluation is required. Therefore, based on the lack of plans for any substantive increase in infrastructure at this time, the Islands Annexations with regarding exacerbation of fire risk or temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment due to the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure wildfire would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.16.3.4 Post Wildfire Indirect Impacts

The proposed project may have a significant if it would expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream impact flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

North Canyon Ranch

Previously modified areas within the project site include artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, and two debris basins, which avoid substantial onsite erosion and protect urban areas to the south from stormwater and debris flows. The project site contains a series of ditches and swales, which help to convey stormwater flows from undisturbed northern portions of the watershed to the two existing temporary detention ponds in the southern portion of the site. The two temporary detention ponds currently intercept and capture stormwater flows from the site's sub-basins. The western pond collects runoff from the western sub-drain, while the eastern pond collects runoff from the central and eastern sub-drains. These detention ponds would be retained and improved as part of the project, and would remain in place and operable throughout construction, retaining runoff within the site, which would trap sediment and potentially other pollutants before being released offsite to the existing storm drain system.

As described in Section 4.8, Hydrology and Water Quality, the project would be required to submit a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for approval by the City and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB). The SWPPP will reference Best Management Practices (BMP's) to be implemented during the construction process to minimize erosion and sedimentation, as well as impacts of other construction-related pollutants. The submittal of the SWPPP to the LARWQCB shall be memorialized by a Notice of Intent, to be included in the SWPPP, and the issuance of a Waste Discharge Identification Number from the state. The SWPPP must be accompanied by an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan that will indicate the general locations where the required BMP's will be employed, as well as staging areas where materials with the potential to pollute stormwater would be stored and provided secondary containment such as a berm. Throughout construction, the developer would be required to have the site inspected to insure that BMPs are adequate and maintained in compliance with SWPPP conditions to further ensure flooding and erosion does not occur on-site.

During operations, the project would be required to comply with the MS4 Permit for Ventura County, which requires the project to capture, treat, retain and infiltrate runoff from storm events in which stormwater runoff will be limited to five percent (5%) of the site's effective impervious area. The project design has incorporated improvements to the western detention pond to accommodate and infiltrate runoff by placement of gravel and sand under 14,300 square feet of the basin bottom to allow for bio-infiltration of runoff, which would exceed the calculated infiltration area necessary to ensure compliance with the MS4 Permit conditions.

In addition, there are no special flood hazard areas mapped within the project site based on a review of the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel Number 06111C0842E (January 20, 2010). The project design will include flood control infrastructure adhering to the latest County design standards and codes, and the Department of Public Works' grading plan review will examine whether the project plans include

appropriate grades, benching, subdrains, planting for slope stability and other design standards for onsite manufactured slopes in order to assure slope stability and reduce erosion, which has the potential to affect wildfire susceptibility. These regulatory compliant features would reduce potential stormwater and erosion impacts under both normal and post-fire conditions. As the project would comply with the SWPPP and MS4 requirements, including BMPs to treat, retain and infiltrate stormwater to minimize flooding and erosion as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability or drainage changes. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

The Islands are located within existing developed areas and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the City to annex these properties, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed. As such, the project would not cause substantial development or population growth due to the Island Annexations. Additionally, the five vacant lots within these areas could potentially be developed with five homes in the future with or without implementation of the rest of this project if they remained within County jurisdiction. No plans for these lots are known at this time; however, development of the lots would be subject to regulations and City plan review individual project designs including grading and drainage plans that would ensure adequate slope stability and reduce erosion under both normal and post-fire conditions. Further, the potential minor increase in future development would not contribute to substantial growth. As such, the minor potential development of five lots would result in a less than significant impact related to post wildfire indirect impacts. Therefore, the potential impacts of the Islands Annexations would be less than significant wildfire impacts with regard to exposure of people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream impact flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant before mitigation.

4.16.4 Cumulative Impacts

North Canyon Ranch

Under CEQA, a project's impact is cumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, provides a list of recent, currently proposed and reasonably foreseeable projects in the City, as a subset of General Plan buildout. With regard to an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, the project and related project direct impacts would be reduced by provision of a critical City road network connection by building Falcon Street to connect Erringer Road and First Street, which will facilitate emergency access and evacuation of the site and surrounding areas beyond the site, and regulatory compliance to ensure the project would not interfere with emergency vehicles or access routes. For indirect impacts, the provision of mitigation requiring the final FPP and Fuel Modification (mitigation measure FIRE-1) will assure that project indirect impacts to emergency response of evacuation would not contribute to a significant impact and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

With regard to pollutant concentrations from wildfires, project and related project sites would be reduced through individual project design and regulatory compliance (e.g., adequate access, fire flow and volume, fire hydrants, building sprinklers, defensible space), as well as compliance with County plans and procedures. Regarding installation of wildfire associated infrastructure, the project and related project site impacts would be reduced by incorporating the latest design requirements of the utility provider and the City, and provision of local public streets to serve the project site, and private drives and fire lanes for adequate vehicular and fire access. Regarding post wildfire indirect impacts, the project and related project sites would be reduced by regulatory compliance with the SWPPP during construction and MS4 Permit during operations. Overall, as the proposed project design would comply with regulatory requirements and undergo VCFD review and approval including adoption of a project-specific final Fire Protection Plan, project impacts would be reduced to less than significant, and would not be cumulatively considerable. Other projects in the area would be similarly subject to regulatory compliance and review, and therefore cumulative impacts related to wildfire would be less than significant.

Required Island Annexations

These unincorporated areas are located adjacent to existing development and include parcels that are mostly developed for residential use with single-family homes or duplexes. A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas could potentially be developed with five dwelling units. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for LAFCo to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project. As evaluated above, the annexation of the Island Areas would not result in significant impacts related to wildfire. Therefore, the City's annexation of the Islands would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to wildfire, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Full Project

The combined impacts of all project components, with design features, TTM conditions and regulatory compliance that includes a project-specified final Fire Protection Plan to be reviewed and approved by the City and VCFD, would be less than significant for all aspects of CEQA wildfire impacts. No specific impacts of future projects related to wildfire are known at this time. Future projects in the City would also be assessed for potential impacts as part of the City's CEQA review process for projects. No significant cumulative impact would occur as a result of the project.

5.0 ALTERNATIVES

SECTION 5.0

5.0 ALTERNATIVES

Introduction & Methodology

The CEQA Guidelines require that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) identify and evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives that are designed to avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant environmental impacts of the proposed project while meeting most of the basic project objectives. The CEQA Guidelines also set forth the intent and extent of alternatives analysis to be provided in an EIR. Those considerations are discussed below.

Alternatives to the Project

Section 15126.6(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines states:

“An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. An EIR is not required to consider alternatives which are infeasible. The lead agency is responsible for selecting a range of project alternatives for examination and must publicly disclose its reasoning for selecting those alternatives. There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason.”

Project Objectives & Significant Effects

Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines specifies that the purpose of alternatives discussion is to evaluate alternatives to the project that would feasibly attain *most of the basic project objectives* but would *avoid or substantially lessen any of the project’s significant effects*. Thus, the selection of alternatives should center around the objectives and the significant effects, which are specified in Chapter 2.0, Project Description, and Chapter 4.0, Impact Analysis, of this EIR, and repeated and summarized here as follows:

Objectives

North Canyon Ranch

The project objectives for the North Canyon Ranch component of the project are as follows:

- Construct a variety of housing types to expand the City of Simi Valley’s housing stock (i.e., both single family and multi-family housing) and help to meet the City Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) projections.
- Provide new housing designed and built to modern energy-efficient standards.
- Establish open space areas within the subdivision to provide for aesthetic and health benefits of the future project and surrounding area residents.
- Construct the extension of Falcon Street, from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west, fulfilling a City General Plan component that promotes mobility within the City for use by automobiles, busses, and bicycles.

Required Island Annexations

The objectives for the Required Island Annexations component of the project are as follows:

- Incorporate County Island areas, which are within and adjacent to the City boundaries in order to provide for orderly growth and development and land use oversight, in compliance with the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.

- Establish more efficient and logical geographic boundaries for planning and zoning purposes.
- Provide for a more logical jurisdictional arrangement for the efficient provision of public services.

Significant Effects

North Canyon Ranch

None of the project's effects were found to be significant and unavoidable (i.e., none would remain significant after the incorporation of mitigation measures). The following project effects were found to be potentially significant, but less than significant with incorporation of mitigation measures:

- Biological Resources
 - 4.4.3.1 Candidate, Sensitive, and Special Status Species (Mitigation requires biological monitoring and protective measures during construction; pre-construction surveys for special-status wildlife; gnatcatcher surveys; no use of anticoagulant rodenticides; Western Spadefoot Habitat Management Plan for creation or restoration of habitat; and pre-construction nesting bird surveys);
 - 4.4.3.2 Sensitive Natural Communities (Mitigation and Monitoring Plan required for sensitive plant communities; no use of invasive plants in landscaping; Invasive Plant Species Management Plan);
 - 4.4.3.3 Protected Wetlands, Waters, and Riparian Habitat (Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Program);
 - 4.4.3.5 Local Policies and Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources (Mitigation for tree protection during construction)
- Cultural, Tribal Cultural, and Paleontological Resources
 - 4.5.3.2, 4.5.3.3: Archaeological and Paleontological Resources (Mitigation requires an Archaeological and Paleontological Construction Monitoring Plan, appropriate discovery protocol, and final reports)
 - 4.5.3.4, 4.5.3.5: Human Remains and Tribal Cultural Resources Listed in or Eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) (Only construction requires mitigation: Requires the same mitigation for archaeological resources and includes mitigation protocol for the unexpected discovery of human remains)
- Geology and Soils
 - 4.6.3.3, 4.6.3.4, 4.6.3.6, and 4.6.3.7: Seismic Ground Failure Risk, Landslide Risk, Geologic Stability, and Expansive Soil (Mitigation requires removal and recompaction of soil to remove landslide potential, and assure stable slopes and foundations, using design criteria to be established in City reviewed and approved geotechnical reports)
- Noise
 - 4.10.3.2: Groundborne Vibration or Groundborne Noise Potential (Construction-phase noise and vibration – (NOI-1 is required, restricting the use of heavier equipment near any off-site residence)
- Public Services
 - Physical Impacts to Fire Protection Service Facilities [Mitigation requires a Fire Protection Plan (FPP) including the Fuel Modification Plan]
- Utility and Service Systems
 - 4.15.2.3.1, 4.15.2.3.2 Wastewater Facilities and Capacity and New or Expanded Facilities (Mitigation requires the applicant to abide by a City-approved sewer report)

- Wildfire
 - 4.16.3.1 Substantially Impair Emergency Response or Evacuation Plan (Mitigation requires an FPP, including the Fuel Modification Plan)

Required Island Annexations

The Required Island Annexations were found to have no significant impact or require any mitigation, since the only action required would be the jurisdictional change from unincorporated County territory to City jurisdiction. A few vacant parcels may be developed with up to an estimated five single-family residences. However, there are no plans for such development. Where future development is proposed, it would be subject to site plan review to determine whether CEQA documentation would be needed.

Alternatives Selected for Evaluation

North Canyon Ranch

As noted above, alternatives are limited to those that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the proposed project, and of those alternatives, the EIR need only examine those that could feasibly attain most of the basic project objectives. In considering whether to evaluate the listed alternatives, the ability to satisfy the project objectives was considered. To explore ways to reduce project impacts, particularly significant impacts (even though they are mitigatable), the following alternatives were selected and evaluated below:

- Alternative 1: No Project (no development)
- Alternative 3: General Plan Alternative [full buildout of existing General Plan designations established for the North Canyon Ranch site, as an area within Simi Valley’s City Urban Boundary (CURB) and Sphere of Influence (SOI)]
- Alternative 2: Reduced Units and Reduced Footprint Project (same land use types but in differing amounts)

The analysis later in this Section evaluates each alternative and its potential impacts and ability to meet project objectives, as compared to the proposed project.

Required Island Annexations

The purpose of evaluating alternatives is to examine ways to reduce the project’s significant impacts, yet the Required Island Annexations have no significant impacts. The proposed action is to change the jurisdiction of the Island areas from unincorporated County territory to property within and fully a part of the City of Simi Valley, as required by the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCo). No development is proposed at this time. The purpose of the annexation is to create a more organized jurisdictional pattern, and orderly development, which allows for more efficient governance of the properties now known as County Islands. For these reasons, an analysis of specific alternatives is not meaningful. The following discussion provides additional exploration of alternatives for the Annexation Areas.

A no project alternative would retain the County Islands in County jurisdiction. The “no project” alternative would result in the LAFCo requirement being unfulfilled, resulting in a policy conflict with LAFCo land use policy. The no project alternative would propose no development, but neither does the proposed project. Thus, other issues and impacts of the proposed project would be identical for the Required Island Annexations.

A reduced project alternative for the County Islands is not plausible since the proposed project would result in no physical change in the environment and thus no significant impacts. Even a reduction of land use would require demolition of existing development, which would result in demolition impacts which are greater than with the proposed project. Again, no physical change in the environment is proposed in the Required Island Annexations.

Alternatives Considered but Rejected

North Canyon Ranch

Alternatives to the location and type of land use were also considered. With regard to location, there are no properties of sufficient size for the project that are designated in the General Plan for Residential Medium Density (3.6 – 5.0 du/ac), and Residential Moderate Density (5.1 – 10.0 du/ac) development. Alternative land uses could be considered; however, the City is in need of housing units to meet the City’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and Housing Element goals, and there is not a general need for more commercial space given current land use trends. Mixed use is generally desirable as it reduces vehicle trips by placing commercial uses and services close to housing. While the project is 100 percent residential, it would be located proximate to the Simi Valley Town Center Mall and adjacent commercial uses, which along with the existing multi-family residential development to the south of the project site and the proposed project uses creates a mixed-use node within the City. Since alternatives to location and type of land use were found not reasonably viable, they were rejected from further analysis.

Required Island Annexations

The goal with the County Islands is to annex them to the City, to achieve the LAFCo goal of orderly development, consistent with the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act. These Island areas are fully developed, except for five parcels that could potentially be developed for single-family use and thus a change in location is not logical or possible. As the Islands are largely subdivided and developed, consideration of an alternative to alter the land use does not make sense and would also not achieve the LAFCo goal. Based on this, alternatives to the location and type of land use for the Required Island Annexations were eliminated from further analysis.

5.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Environmental Impacts of Alternative 1

The North Canyon Ranch project site is comprised of Assessor Parcel Number (APN), 615-0-500-0075, and totals approximately 160.32 acres of unincorporated Ventura County territory, within the City’s SOI and CURB. Under this No Project Alternative, no development would occur. The site would remain vacant and undeveloped. The existing, previously modified areas onsite would remain as they are. These include some graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, and two debris basin that protect urban areas to the south from stormwater and debris flows. The remainder of the site would stay in its current undeveloped condition, without any of the proposed project features. Thus, no housing would be constructed and the extension of Falcon Street through the property would not occur. Because no development would be proposed, none of the project entitlements would be proposed.

Aesthetics

The No Project Alternative would not change the aesthetic condition of the site and would not alter the existing condition. The proposed project would result in less than significant impact as the site is not visible from many locations; however, the No Project Alternative would have a slightly reduced, less than significant impact.

Agricultural Resources and Open Space

The project site is Farmland Monitoring and Mapping Program designated Grazing Land but is not used for current or recent grazing or other agricultural uses and the site is not enrolled in a Williamson Act contract. The project site is also designated as County-zoned open space. The No Project Alternative would not alter or change the existing conditions, so there would be no impact. Like the proposed project, impacts would be less than significant; but the impacts of this alternative would be even less.

Air Quality

The No Project Alternative would not generate any new air pollutants since there since there would be no construction or operation of any development at the project site. This alternative would not add new population density and would not conflict with the 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) as no residential population would be introduced to the project site. The proposed project would generate less than significant emissions from construction and operations. This alternative would have no impact, as such, this alternative would have less impact than the proposed project.

Biological Resources

The No Project alternative would make no modifications to the site, and thus all existing biological resources would remain. None of the biological resource mitigation measures would occur either. There would be no impacts with this alternative, and the less than significant with mitigation impacts of the project would be avoided.

Cultural, Tribal Cultural and Paleontological Resources

The No Project Alternative would involve no ground disturbance or grading, so it would not affect cultural resources, tribal cultural resources, and/or paleontological resources. Although the proposed project would not disturb any known cultural resources, grading could disturb unidentified archaeological and/or paleontological resources. Mitigation measures are implemented for the proposed project to less than significant. As such, this alternative would have less impact than the proposed project.

Geology and Soils

The project site currently consists previously modified areas including some graded areas, unimproved dirt roads, artificial slopes with concrete terrace drains, and two debris basin that would remain the same with this alternative and the rest of the site is vacant and undeveloped. The No Project Alternative would not alter or develop the project site; thus, no structures would be exposed to geological hazards that could be present at the project site. The project site is located on soils that range non-expansive to highly expansive. The Geotechnic Study Report recommends several mitigation measures the proposed project would implement to increase building and people safety for a less than significant impact. Since the No Project alternative does not propose to develop the project site, this alternative would have less impact than the proposed project.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Under the No Project Alternative, the site would remain as-is and no ground disturbance or development would occur. The project site does not emit any greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions since there are no emission sources located on the project site. The No Project Alternative would keep the site undeveloped, emitting no GHG. While the proposed project would have a less than significant impact, this alternative would have less impact.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The project site is primarily drained by three watershed sub-drains that are separated by ridgelines generally aligned north and south within the subject property. The western sub-drain extends upslope to the west and north of the site onto adjacent property. The central and eastern sub-drains also extend off-site to the north onto adjacent undeveloped property, but to a lesser extent than the western sub-drain. Although the subject property is currently undeveloped, under existing conditions the southern portion of the site has been previously altered somewhat in connection with development of the adjacent Simi Town Center Mall by placement of fill soil and construction of two temporary detention ponds located along the southern site boundary. Currently, a series of ditches, swales, and possibly pipes help to convey stormwater flows from undisturbed northern portions of the watershed to the two existing temporary detention ponds in the southern portion of the site. The two temporary detention ponds currently intercept and capture stormwater flows from the site's watershed sub-basins. The western pond collects runoff from the western sub-drain, while the eastern pond collects runoff from the central and eastern sub-drains. The proposed project would modify drainage onsite to avoid flooding and to assure no significant impacts to drainage. Under the No Project Alternative, the project site would not change so it would maintain existing drainage patterns, thus having no impact. The proposed project impact would be less than significant and, as such, this alternative would have less impact.

Land Use and Planning

Although designated for residential development under the City of Simi Valley General Plan as a CURB and SOI area, under the No Project Alternative, no zone change would occur, and the project site would remain as Open Space under Ventura County zoning. Since the No Project Alternative would not undergo any development, there would be need for a City general amendment to reconfigure the general plan designation boundaries, or for a City zone change. Additionally, the project site would not be annexed to the City. This alternative would not propose development to that would change the General Plan and would have no impact on land use and planning or related policies. For most issues, this alternative would have less impact than the proposed project's less than significant impact. However, the alternative would also not have the beneficial impact of the project with regard to provision of needed housing, a key policy consideration for the City, and therefore would have a more adverse impact than the proposed project on this topic.

Noise

The project site is currently undeveloped and does not generate noise. Under the No Project Alternative, the project would remain the same and not create short- or long-term noise sources. The proposed project's noise impacts would be significant, but mitigatable. Thus, this alternative would have less noise impact than the proposed project.

Population and Housing

The No Project Alternative would not create any housing and would not generate any population or employment growth. Since there would be no residential dwelling units developed for this alternative, the project would not assist the city with reaching the RHNA and Housing Element goals. So, the project may have less impact than the proposed project, but it does not help the City achieve housing goals, which is a less beneficial impact.

Public Services - Fire Services, Police Services, Schools

Implementation of the No Project Alternative would result in any development, and thus would not create the demand for fire services, police services, and schools. This alternative would have no impact; therefore,

it would reduce the proposed project's less than significant impact for police and schools and avoid the mitigation measure requiring an approved FPP.

Parks and Recreation

There are several Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (Park District) parks and recreational facilities near the project site. Since the No Project Alternative would involve any development and thus would not generate any population or employment growth, the facilities would not be impacted. As such, this alternative would reduce the proposed project's less than significant impact. However, the No Project Alternative would also not provide 70.82 acres of designated open space or the two proposed pocket parks totaling 0.43 acres.

Transportation

The City's General Plan identifies a future arterial street segment of Falcon Street as a "Minor Arterial (Not Built)" to extend through the proposed project site from its western terminus just west of Erringer Road, to connect with the northern terminus of First Street at the northwestern boundary of the Simi Town Center Mall. The planned roadway would complete a segment of the City's desired street pattern for the northwest portion of the City, providing for improved circulation and emergency ingress and egress there. Under the No Project Alternative, extension of Falcon Street through the project site would not be developed, and thus the intended benefit to area circulation would not occur. The alternative would not generate any vehicle miles traveled (VMT) since there would be no development, and thus would have less of a VMT impact than the proposed project's less than significant impact. However, without providing the extension of Falcon Street, it would not provide a benefit to area circulation that was intended in the City General Plan.

Utilities and Service Systems – Water Supply, Wastewater, Solid Waste

The No Project Alternative would not create additional demand for public utilities such as water, wastewater, and solid waste collection and disposal and thus no impact the physical facilities associated with them. The proposed project would require mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than the significant. As such, this alternative would no impact on utilities infrastructure, which is less than the proposed project's less than significant impact.

Wildfire

The North Canyon Ranch site, located at the urban-wildland interface, is designated within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Regulation (CAL FIRE) and as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) by the City of Simi Valley in the existing Simi Valley General Plan and the associated General Plan EIR. The VCFD provides fire protection services within the City of Simi Valley, including the project site. Under the No Alternative Project, the alternative would not increase the risk of fire hazards or safety since the project site would remain unchanged. The project would create 207 total dwelling units on the urban wildland interface, which would require adoption of the project Fire Plan, regulatory compliance and design features and an approved FPP, including a fuel modification plan and adequate access, to assure a less than significant impact from wildfire. This alternative would have no impact, and therefore less of an impact than the proposed project. However, development of the proposed project will allow for a new fuel modification zone within the project ownership, with an ongoing project responsibility to maintain it.

Alternative 1's Ability to Meet Project Objectives

The No Project alternative would not meet the project objectives, which are restated as follows:

- Construct a variety of housing types to expand the City of Simi Valley's housing stock (i.e., both single family and multi-family housing) and help to meet the City RHNA projections.
- Provide new housing designed and built to modern energy-efficient standards.
- Establish open space areas within the subdivision to provide for aesthetic and health benefits of the future project and surrounding area residents.
- Construct the extension of Falcon Street, from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west, fulfilling a City General Plan component that promotes mobility within the City for use by automobiles, busses, and bicycles.

The alternative would not provide housing in a variety of housing types to expand the City of Simi Valley's housing supply and help to meet the City's RHNA projections and would not implement the General Plan-proposed extension of Falcon Street. Without the development, energy-efficient standards would not be applicable. No public open space would be provided, although the site would remain as privately owned, natural open space. Thus, in terms of the objectives, the project would be preferred over the No Project alternative.

5.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE

Environmental Impacts of Alternative 2

Another type of no project alternative for a project that requires a General Plan Amendment is to consider the development that could occur if the amendment were not granted. The General Plan alternative is a scenario where up to the maximum units allowed by the General Plan within the North Canyon Ranch project site would be developed. The current General Plan designations for the site are Open Space (1 du/40 ac), Residential Medium Density (3.6-5.0 du/ac), and Residential Moderate Density (5.1 – 10.0 du/ac). The General Plan alternative would fully develop these planned areas for a total of 406 units, consisting of 355 townhomes within the Moderate Density area on the east, and 51 single family homes within the Medium Density area on the west, as shown in **Figure 5-1, General Plan Alternative**.



The alternative would have proportionately adjusted parking, amenities and landscaping. As the plan calls for the Falcon Street to First Street connection within the property, this alternative assumes it is constructed. A general street pattern has not been established; however, construction of the development would disturb approximately 45.7 of the 160-acre project site, not including fuel modification or stabilized slopes, within the Moderate and Medium Density designations on Figure 5-1. By comparison, the proposed project would modify 90.6 acres of the site, also without fuel modification, but including slope stabilization. The amount of slope stabilization for the alternative is not known; thus, it is difficult to compare the two development options without further design of the General Plan alternative. For the purposes of this analysis, the disturbance is assumed to be slightly less than with the project, and the density of development would be greater.

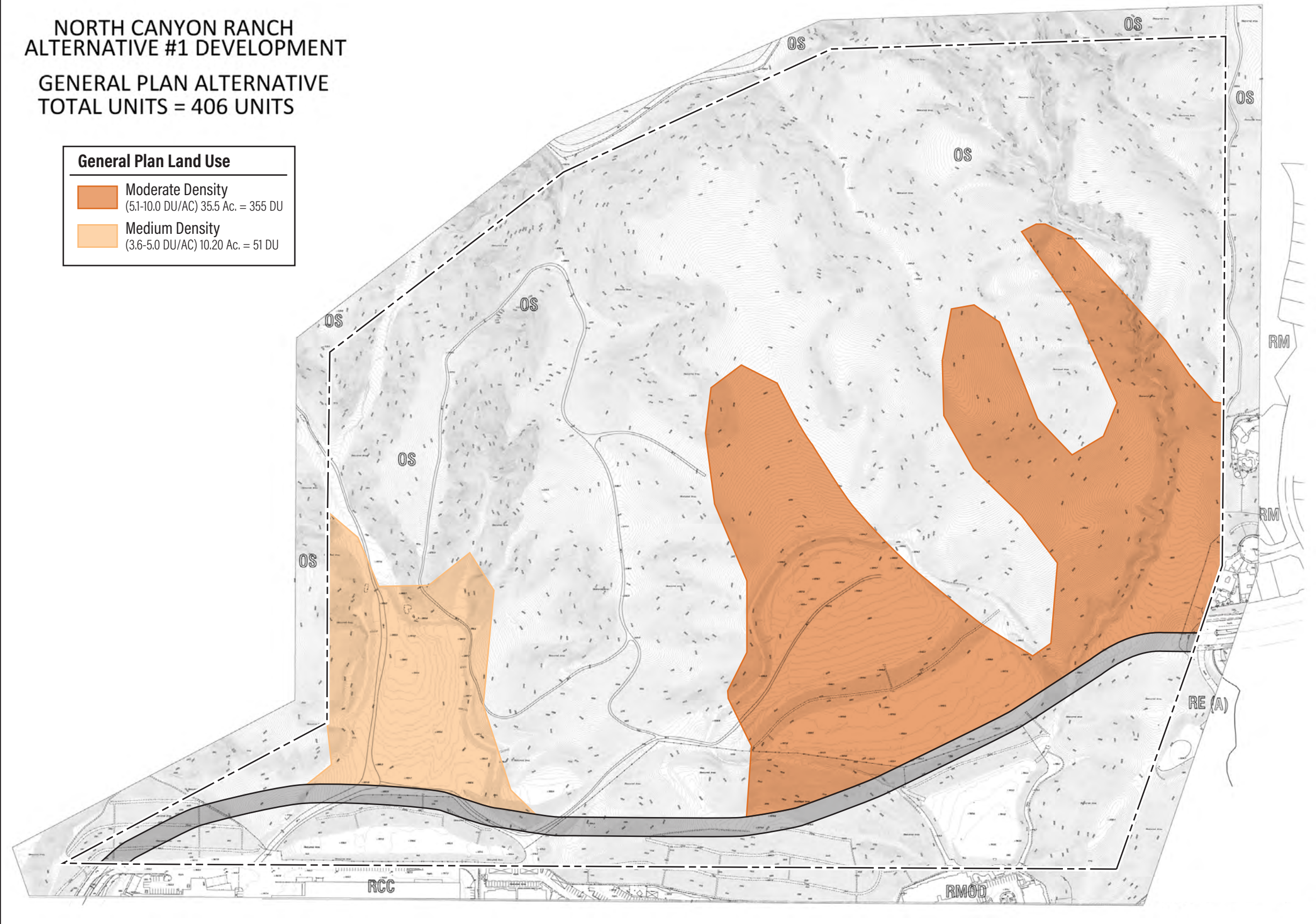
Aesthetics

Distant scenic view opportunities in the project vicinity are generally limited to views of hills and mountain ridgelines that surround the City. Public vantage points are generally limited to open space areas and along roadway corridors. There are no officially designated State or County Scenic Highways in the City of Simi Valley, although the California Scenic Highway Mapping System identifies the Ronald Reagan Freeway (SR-118, or the 118 Freeway) within the City as an Eligible State Scenic Highway. Existing land uses

**NORTH CANYON RANCH
ALTERNATIVE #1 DEVELOPMENT**

**GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE
TOTAL UNITS = 406 UNITS**

General Plan Land Use	
	Moderate Density (5.1-10.0 DU/AC) 35.5 Ac. = 355 DU
	Medium Density (3.6-5.0 DU/AC) 10.20 Ac. = 51 DU



Source: Christiansen & Company, August 2023.



adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and “big box” stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, which substantially block public views of the project site from roadways in the project vicinity.

Due to the location and elevation of the project site, as shown in the Aesthetics Section, the project would not block or substantially obscure views of the hills or ridgelines that surround the City. Although the General Plan alternative would likely require more grading than the project, like the project it would develop the land closest to the southern portion of the site, thus retaining hills on site and being less visible from behind the surrounding land uses. Like the project, the alternative would be most visible from the public view at the current terminus of Falcon Street. There are no clear or close views of the project site from the 118 Freeway. The design of the alternative would be similar to the proposed project with earth tone exterior finishes to blend with the aesthetic of the neighboring residential developments. Landscaping would be provided throughout the developed portions of the project site with shrubs and trees. The alternative would have a similar source of light along roadways and multi-family parking areas which would be required to comply with City standards. Since the alternative would have a larger development footprint, its impact would be somewhat greater than the proposed project, but both would have less than significant impacts.

Agricultural Resources and Open Space

The project site does not contain FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance and is not zoned for agricultural use. The project site is FMMP-designated as Grazing Land, although the property has not been utilized for grazing or irrigated agricultural production within the past seven years. The North Canyon Ranch property has been pre-planned for orderly development by the General Plan, so it would not directly or indirectly impact disorderly development of open space or undeveloped land. The proposed project and General Plan alternative would have similar effects to agricultural resources and open space, resulting in a similar less than significant impact.

Air Quality

The AQMP incorporates Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) estimates for population growth, that are also used by cities and counties within the SCAG region. Assuming the General Plan alternative, the project site would be fully developed to the maximum currently allowable density, which would be 406 units. Using the average household size of 2.98 from the Population and Housing Section, the alternative would represent less than one percent of the projected growth estimates used in the AQMP. Although the alternative would generate more growth (i.e., more units and more population) than the alternative, the alternative’s growth would also fall well within the projected population growth forecast of the City and would not conflict with the AQMP. The alternative would use the same construction equipment, but the construction timeframe would be longer due to an increase in dwelling units constructed. The alternative would implement the same design features and follow regulation to ensure minimization of construction impacts and it is assumed the construction program could be designed to remain below the maximum daily emissions thresholds of the VCAPCD, although the overall amount of pollutant emissions would be higher than with the project. Additionally, the alternative would have a small increase in operational impacts due to an increased number of units and population (e.g., 207 project units compared to 406 alternative units), but impacts would be less than significant since they would not jeopardize attainment of air quality standards individually or cumulatively. The alternative would also implement MM AQ-1 Valley Fever during construction which is based upon the VCAPCD Assessment Guidelines. Therefore, air quality impacts would be less than significant after mitigation for the alternative; however, they would be increased from the proposed project due to the increased size of the General Plan alternative.

Biological Resources

Comparing the General Plan alternative footprint in Figure 5-1 to the biological resources and impacts identified in the Biological Resources Section, it is possible to generalize the potential physical impacts of the alternative, keeping in mind that the slope stabilization areas, which would require additional ground disturbance, have not yet been identified for the alternative. Falcon Street would still be built, but the alternative footprint would not develop any uses south of Falcon Street, leaving that portion of the identified gnatcatcher habitat open, which would result in roughly 20 - 25 percent less impact area to those two habitat areas, combined. Also, more of the small flowering morning glory habitat would remain in the eastern portion of the site, assuming slope stabilization can void this area. The location of the spadefoot toad would be avoided more with the alternative as well, whereas the multi-family portion of the project would develop this area. Because slope stabilization limits are not yet known, once they are added, the areas that would be less affected by this alternative (compared to the project) would be better known, but the footprint would definitely be less overall. These impacts also do not consider fuel modification, which would need to occur with any alternative; however, it is assumed that the VCFD allow special consideration for sensitive species in these areas, with an adjusted approach to fuel modification (e.g., hand thinning where appropriate). This alternative has the benefit of leaving a large area in the center of the site open, allowing the gnatcatcher and toad clearer passage to the north and into the open areas beyond the site. Impacts with this alternative would be less than with the project, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation scalable to the alternative footprint and impacts.

Cultural, Tribal Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Under both the project and the General Plan alternative, grading and other ground-disturbing activities would occur for development of the project site. Given that grading could uncover previously unknown archeological resources, implementation of mitigation measures is required for the project and the alternative. Although no known paleontological resources were identified on the site during site surveys (as described in the Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources Section), ground disturbance activities could result in uncovering of unknown paleontological resources, and this requires mitigation for potential discovery. Additionally, in the unlikely event human remains are discovered, both the project and the alternative would implement a mitigation measure to avoid potential inadvertent impacts. The General Plan alternative and proposed project would have similar impacts, though the alternative would have a somewhat decreased development footprint, and therefore a somewhat reduced potential impact. With the use of the mitigation measures identified in this EIR, the impacts the project and the alternative would both be reduced to less than significant.

Geology and Soils

The General Plan alternative would develop the project site to the maximum amount of dwelling units allowed, providing more units and higher densities, though the alternative would have a somewhat smaller developmental footprint. As the alternative would be located on the same site, similar geologic characteristics would apply. The project site is located near the Simi-Santa Rosa fault system with eight subsidiary faults south and adjacent to the project site that were proven to be inactive at the time of development of the mall site and were determined by the North Canyon Ranch geology report to not be a constraint to development. The previously mentioned Simi-Santa Rosa fault could create substantial shaking if a seismic event occurred along fault; however, all new structures would be required to comply with all applicable provisions in the current California Building Standards Code (CBSC). The North Canyon Ranch geotechnic study concluded that there is no groundwater within the upper fifty feet of the soil profile, so liquefaction would not have adverse effects at the project site. Mitigation measures for seismic compression and landslides were introduced in the Geology and Soils Section, that would also apply to the alternative. As with the proposed project, the alternative would be required to comply with the

California State Construction General Permit and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which requires best management practices. The North Canyon Ranch geology study determined portions of onsite alluvial soils are subject to hydroconsolidation, which requires mitigation measures to reduce potential adverse effects. The project geology study also identified the presence of onsite soils ranging from non-expansive to highly expansive, providing recommendations that have been used as mitigation measures to reduce potential adverse effects. Similarly, the General Plan alternative would be required to comply with the CBSC. Impacts of the project and the alternative would be similar and would be reduced to less than significant with regulatory compliance and the mitigation measures presented in this EIR.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The General Plan alternative would develop the project site to the maximum allowable density, which would increase the amount of development in comparison to the proposed project. GHG emissions during construction would result mainly from trip generation and use of heavy equipment and trucks. Due to the size of the alternative, it would result in more GHG emissions during construction, due to the longer timeframe. As construction emissions occur for a limited period of a project's lifetime, as a standard practice, GHG emissions from construction are amortized over a presumed project lifetime. A proposed project lifetime of 30 years is recommended by South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) for amortizing construction related GHG emissions. With amortization, the difference would not be great, but the alternative would have higher emissions. During operation, the alternative would have the same GHG sources as the proposed project but with higher emissions due to the increased size of the alternative (i.e., more units and more trips). Since there are no adopted numerical standards for GHG emissions, impacts are determined based on consistency of state, regional, and local plans. As with the proposed project, the alternative would be consistent with SCAG RTP/SCS, Climate Change Scoping Plan, and the Simi Valley Climate Action Plan (CAP). Therefore, the alternative project would have a greater emissions impact than the proposed project, but both would be consistent with plan policy and have less than significant impacts.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The alternative project would propose single-family and multi-family residences across the 160-acre site for a total of 406 dwelling units, which is the maximum density allowed by the General Plan. The alternative would develop drainage facilities including drainage basins, surface and subsurface drainage conveyance infrastructure, and improvements to the existing temporary detention basins throughout the project site. The design and capacity of the drainage basins would be based on the current Ventura County Technical Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Control Measures. Like the project, the alternative would be subject to compliance with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit for Ventura County. Like the project it would also require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit which in turn requires the developer to submit a SWPPP for approval by the City of Simi Valley and the LARWQCB for Best Management Practices (BMPs) implemented during construction. It is assumed that construction of the alternative development would disturb somewhat less of the project site. The construction program would follow regulatory controls and BMPs. The alternative would be required to capture, treat, and retain and infiltrate runoff from storm events, to demonstrated in a LID plan that would be reviewed and approved by the City. Through design and implementation of regulatory controls, runoff during operation would properly to avoid substantial erosion or siltation, flooding or impediment of flood flows, or runoff in exceedance of the capacity of the existing or planned drainage system. As such, the alternative and proposed project would have similar, less than significant impacts.

Land Use and Planning

The General Plan alternative would develop portions of the project site with single-family and multi-family residents, with almost double the number of units. The development would not divide an existing community since the project site is located at the edge of development. Once developed, the project and the alternative would provide for a more unified development pattern and improve the roadway network, mobility, access and evacuation. This alternative would follow the existing pre-planned land use designations and would not require a General Plan Amendment. Like the project, the alternative would be consistent with the Housing Element and RHNA goal to provide more housing, but the alternative goes further in meeting this goal. Both the alternative and the project would provide the extension Falcon Street, as shown in the City General Plan. The alternative would also be comparable to the proposed project's consistency with applicable policies and goals from the City's General Plan, Citywide Land Use and Urban Design, Housing Element, and LAFCo goals. This alternative would improve on meeting RHNA and Housing Element goals while not requiring a General Plan Amendment. Both the proposed project and the alternative would have a less than significant impact, though the alternative's impacts would be preferred in terms of land use and planning goals.

Noise

Noise from construction of the General Plan alternative would be generated by on-site heavy equipment used from demolition, grading, and other construction related activity. This alternative would develop almost double the residential units, so construction would have a longer timeline. Since the alternative would use similar construction equipment and be located near the same sensitive receptors, noise impacts would be relatively similar except over a longer construction period (which is a short-term, temporary impact). The alternative would follow the same regulations as the proposed project and would not result in any significant construction noise impact. The proposed project would not increase traffic noise levels on nearby existing roadways enough to be readily perceptible to the human ear in an outdoor environment. Given the number of background trips on nearby roadways, although the alternative would generate roughly double the number of trips compared to the project, those trips would be a small percentage of all trips and based on rough calculations, would also not generate enough traffic noise to exceed the threshold of significance during either the existing plus alternative or future plus alternative scenarios.¹ No significant construction vibration impacts are expected to occur for the project, and with similar construction characteristics, the same would be true of the alternative. Both the project and the alternative would implement mitigation measure NOI-1 that prohibits operation of large bulldozers or similar equipment within 24 feet of any off-site residence. As such, the alternative would have greater noise impacts due to the longer construction period and additional operational traffic, but it is estimated that both the proposed project and alternative would have less than significant impacts with mitigation.

Population and Housing

The General Plan alternative would develop a mix of single- and multi-family residences at the allowable maximum, providing 406 dwelling units and an estimated population of 1,210. This alternative would contribute to the local (City) and regional (County) population and housing growth within the projected City projections. Since there are no existing housing or people on the project site, like the project, the

¹ The greatest impact from project-related traffic noise would be at the Falcon Street west of Erringer Road segment in the existing year analysis. Assuming double the project-generated traffic for this alternative, the alternative's noise increase would be 3.8 dBA at that location, which is less than the 5 dBA significance threshold. In the cumulative future year, the greatest impact of project-related traffic noise would be on the Falcon Street east of First Street segment. Assuming double the project-generated traffic, the alternative-related noise increase at this location would be only 0.7 dBA CNEL, which would also be a less than significant. The greatest cumulative traffic noise increase (future cumulative noise minus existing noise) is on Falcon Street east of First Street and would be greater than 13.8 dBA CNEL, but the project contribution would be less than significant at 0.7 dBA CNEL.

alternative would not displace existing housing or people. This alternative would go farther than the project in help the City achieve RHNA and Housing Element goals, but both the General Plan alternative and the proposed project would have less than significant impacts.

Public Services - Fire Services, Police Services, Schools

Fire Services

The General Plan alternative would develop single-family homes and multi-family homes for a total of 406 residential units. The VCFD currently serves the project site and the City of Simi Valley. Due to the site's close proximity to the fire station (Station 47), emergency vehicles would be able to reach the project within the VCFD response time objective of five to seven minutes for emergency calls and nine to 12 minutes for non-emergency calls. This alternative would submit a Tentative Map (TM), which as required by the Subdivision Map Act (and SVMC), would be subject to VCFD review and approval for fire safety issues and approval of an FPP, including access and fuel modification. It is estimated that, similar to the project, this alternative would not require the development of new or expanded fire protection facilities in order to adequately serve the increased population, given regulatory compliance and review. This alternative would have a somewhat greater impact due to increased service demands from a higher estimated population, but like the proposed project, impacts would be less than significant after mitigation requiring an approved FPP.

Police Services

The General Plan alternative would develop single-family homes and multi-family homes for a total of 406 residential units. The Simi Valley Police Department (SVPD) provides police services to the City's 125,975 population and all areas of the City. While it is estimated that the proposed project would add 617 people and the alternative would add 1,210 people, neither would substantially alter the officer to population ratio, given the total size of the City population. However, the SVPD does not rely on an officer to population goal, and instead consider include response times (emergency and non-emergency), traffic accident rates and ratios, crime rates, citizen complaint to call ratios, and case clearance ratios. The project site is located near the Simi Valley Police Department headquarters (approximately 2.5 miles); therefore, like the project, the alternative would have a reasonable police response time. This alternative would include similar designs to the proposed project that would incorporate design features consistent with crime prevention through environmental design measures presented in the General Plan that would reduce potential for crime. While the alternative would have a greater population and therefore a somewhat greater demand on services, like the project, impacts would be less than significant.

Schools

The Simi Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) provides public education facilities in the City of Simi Valley. Additionally, 16 private school are located in Simi Valley that provide varying grades from kindergarten to 12th grade. As the project is within the City's SOI and CURB, but not within the City boundaries, this alternative would be proposed to be annexed into the City and the SVUSD. The proposed project is projected to fit within the existing overall SVUSD school capacity, even if all elementary school students went to either one of the two elementary schools, one of the two middle schools, and one of the two high schools. Based on the capacity numbers evaluated in this EIR, the larger number of General Plan alternative elementary students could not be accommodated if they all went to Atherwood Elementary School, but like the project, all middle school and high school students could be accommodated even if they all went to just one of those middle or high schools. Considering and the ability of SVUSD to accommodate students at different schools when needed and considering the combined capacity of all SVUSD elementary schools, all projected school children in the General Plan alternative would be accommodated within existing capacities. Both the project and this alternative would pay the development impact fees set forth in the school district's School Facilities Needs Analysis to address the impact of

students generated by new development on school facilities. The alternative would generate more demand for school facilities, but with payment of school fees both the proposed project and the alternative would have a less than significant impact on schools.

Parks and Recreation

The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (Park District) owns, operates, and maintains parks and open space areas in the Cities of Simi Valley and Oak Park and unincorporated areas in the vicinity. According to the City's General Plan EIR, the Park District considers five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents as the City's minimum parkland standard. The existing parkland ratio is far above the goal, with 9.62 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. As evaluated in the EIR, development of the project would not significantly lower the parkland per resident ratio, which already well exceeds the goal. The project would provide recreational amenities and open space within the project site consisting of 70.82 acres of open space, two (2) pocket parks totaling 0.43 acres, and additional landscaping amenities, which would reduce the need for future residents to utilize offsite recreational facilities. The General Plan alternative would have a greater increase in residents, but would also provide opens space, pocket parks and amenity areas, which are assumed to be in proportion to the increased impacts. Additionally, pursuant to applicable codes, development projects requesting tentative map approval are required to dedicate land or provide development fees to the Park District to offset potential increases in use of recreation resources. The alternative would have a greater impact to park demand than the proposed project, but both would have less than significant impacts.

Transportation

The General Plan alternative would include the connection of Falcon to First Street, as anticipated in the City of Simi Valley General Plan. This extended road would be designed with conformance of Simi Valley Standards and include sidewalks, bus turnouts, and Class II bicycle lanes on both sides of Falcon Street. The project and the alternative would both comply with the City's traffic study guidelines and construct the extension of Falcon Street through the property. The VMT threshold for the City is 16.15 VMT/Capita for home-based trips, which would not be exceeded by the project. The alternative would generate more vehicle trip miles overall, but have the same VMT/Capita, and therefore the alternative would also not exceed the City threshold. Since Falcon Street would be completed, all roads would be designed in conformance with Simi Valley standards, and the site plan would be reviewed and approved by the VCFD, this would ensure adequate emergency access. The proposed project and alternative would have similar impacts to VMT/Capita, which would be less than significant.

Utilities and Service Systems – Water Supply, Wastewater, Solid Waste

Water Supply

The City is served by two water purveyors, the Ventura County Waterworks District No. 8 (District 8) and the Golden State Water Company. The project site is located within the service area of District 8, which serves approximately 68 percent of the developed portion of Simi Valley in addition to unincorporated areas located southeast and north of the incorporated City boundary. Given the large service area of District 8, since the proposed project's total water demand would be less than one percent of District 8's water demand in 2025 and 2045, it follows that the General Plan alternative water demands (even at double the units and demand of the project) would not significantly impact water supply. Similar to the project, his alternative would not require new or expanded water treatment facilities. Both the project and the alternative would have a less than significant impact, but the alternative's impact would have greater impact due to a higher water demand.

Wastewater

The project site is currently vacant and surrounded to the east by residential land uses and to the south by commercial land uses that is served by the Sanitation Services Division (SSD) of the City of Simi Valley Department of Public Works (DPW). The proposed North Canyon Ranch project site is currently outside the boundaries of the service district; however, it would be included upon approval, based upon the service availability letter to the project applicant. The applicant would be required to pay sewerage system connection fees for any development on site – the project or an alternative project - prior to construction. The proposed project was found to have a less than significant impact on the sewer system. The alternative's physical improvements for wastewater would be similar to the proposed project for sewer connection and flow conveyance. The proposed project would use approximately use 2.2 percent of remaining capacity of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and based on the size of the General Plan alternative, it would utilize 4.4 percent, which is also a minimal amount. During construction of the alternative, the applicant must comply with a mitigation measure implementing the localized sewer line improvement recommendations from the latest City approved sewer report for the project, and the alternative would require comparable mitigation. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact after mitigation but generate more wastewater and therefore have a greater impact on the Wastewater Treatment Plant than the proposed project.

Solid Waste

The project site is currently undeveloped land. The City of Simi Valley is currently served by Waste Management for trash collection, and the project site would also be served by Waste Management, with solid waste disposal at the Simi Valley Landfill and Recycling Center (SVLRC). Given the project's size, and the short-term nature of construction relative to the longevity of the landfill capacity, the project's impacts during construction would be less than significant. The proposed project operational impact would amount to less than 0.1 percent of the daily permitted capacity at the SVLRC, which would be a less than significant impact. At roughly double the number of units, the General Plan alternative would utilize less than 0.2 percent of the capacity and would also be found less than significant. Both the project and the alternative would comply with the City Municipal Code and General Plan to address solid waste such as regulations to divert at least 75 percent of construction solid to recycling. Both the project and the alternative would have a less than significant impact, but this alternative would have an increased impact compared to the project.

Wildfire

The project site is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) and located at the wildland urban interface (WUI) and thus fire impacts, including emergency response and evacuation, pollutants from wildfires, firefighting-associated infrastructure, and potential indirect effects of wildfire are potential concerns for any development at the site. With the project and the alternative, the provision of the missing segment of Falcon Street, as planned by the City, through the project will aid emergency access and evacuation for the development on the site and in the surrounding area. Also, any development of the site will require firefighting-associated infrastructure, a project-specific FPP, and a project access and circulation system meeting VCFD requirements. With project design features and TM conditions, both the proposed project and the alternative would have less than significant impacts with mitigation requiring an approved FPP, including a fuel modification plan and adequate access; however, impacts would be greater with the alternative, considering more residents would be added.

Alternative 2's Ability to Meet Project Objectives

The General Plan alternative would meet all of the project objectives, which are restated as follows:

- Construct a variety of housing types to expand the City of Simi Valley's housing stock (i.e., both single family and multi-family housing) and help to meet the RHNA projections.
- Provide new housing designed and built to modern energy-efficient standards.
- Establish open space areas within the subdivision to provide for aesthetic and health benefits of the future project and surrounding area residents.
- Construct the extension of Falcon Street, from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west, fulfilling a City General Plan component that promotes mobility within the City for use by automobiles, busses, and bicycles.

The alternative would provide more units in a variety of housing types to expand the City of Simi Valley's housing supply and help to meet the City's RHNA projections. The alternative would also provide energy-efficient development and open space areas, and would extend Falcon Street through the property, consistent with the General Plan. In this sense, the General Plan alternative would be preferred over the project, although it would have increased impacts, as described above.

5.3 ALTERNATIVE 3: REDUCED UNITS AND REDUCED FOOTPRINT ALTERNATIVE

Environmental Impacts of Alternative 3

The Reduced Units and Reduced Footprint alternative (Reduced alternative) consist of similar development from the project but with fewer residential dwelling units and a smaller development footprint. In this alternative scenario, construction would consist of 130 dwelling units, comprised of 50 townhome dwelling units and 80 single-family residences, with proportionally adjusted parking and amenity space. The architectural style, design, and landscaping would be similar to the proposed project. The development footprint of the project would change since the project would not develop the moderate density designated zone in the middle of the project site that the project proposes, and Falcon Street would not be connected from Erringer Road to First Street in this alternative scenario. The Reduced alternative would be designed in a way to avoid wildlife areas and add an extra 100 feet fuel modification buffer, where possible).

Development would occur only within the roughly drawn street pattern areas depicted in **Figure 5-2, Reduced Alternative**. In the image, the existing General Plan classifications for the site remain for comparison purposes, but the development would occur in the areas shown in blue and red cross-hatching.




Aesthetics

Distant scenic view opportunities in the project vicinity are generally limited to views of hills and mountain ridgelines that surround the City. Public vantage points are generally limited to open space areas and along roadway corridors. There are no officially designated State or County Scenic Highways in the City of Simi Valley, although the California Scenic Highway Mapping System identifies the Ronald Reagan Freeway (SR-118, or the 118 Freeway) within the City as an Eligible State Scenic Highway. Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and "big box" stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, which substantially block public views of the project site from roadways in the project vicinity.



Due to the location and elevation of the project site, as shown in the Aesthetics Section, the project would not block or substantially obscure views of the hills or ridgelines that surround the City. Like the project it

NORTH CANYON RANCH



Reduced Alternative

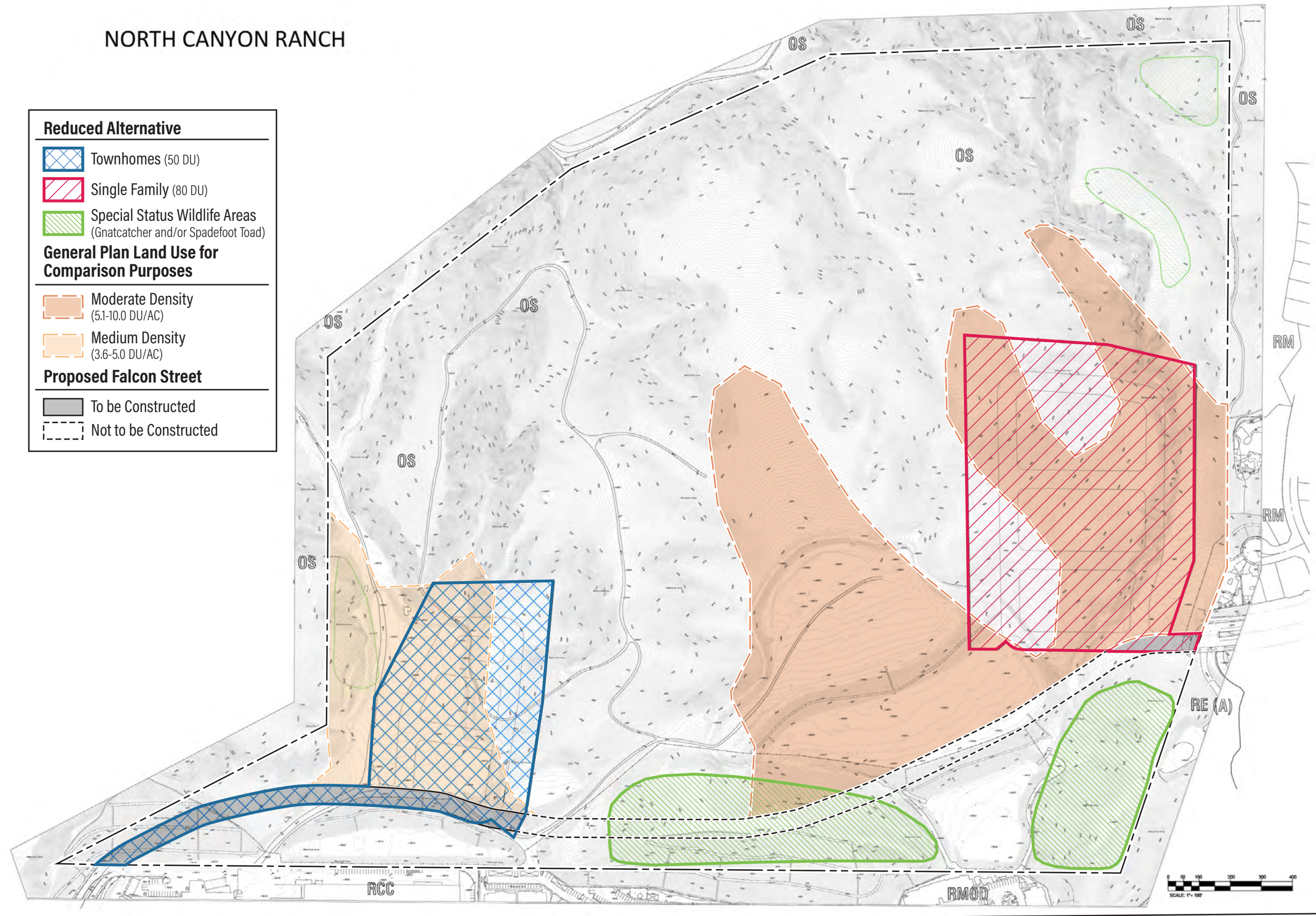
-  Townhomes (50 DU)
-  Single Family (80 DU)
-  Special Status Wildlife Areas
(Gnatcatcher and/or Spadefoot Toad)

General Plan Land Use for Comparison Purposes

-  Moderate Density
(5.1-10.0 DU/AC)
-  Medium Density
(3.6-5.0 DU/AC)

Proposed Falcon Street

-  To be Constructed
-  Not to be Constructed



Source: Christiansen & Company, August 2023.

would develop the land closest to the southern portion of the site, thus retaining hills on site and being less visible from behind the surrounding land uses. Any development in this location would be most visible from the public view at the current terminus of Falcon Street. The Reduced alternative, however, would require grading than the project and develop a smaller area, resulting in an even less visible development than the project. There are no clear or close views of the project site from 118 Freeway. The design of the alternative would be similar to the proposed project with earth tone exterior finishes to blend with the aesthetic of the neighboring residential developments. Landscaping would be provided throughout the developed portions of the project site with shrubs and trees. The alternative would have a similar source of light along roadways and multi-family parking areas which would be required to comply with City standards. Since the alternative would have a smaller development footprint, it would be even less visible than the project, and have reduced impacts compared to the proposed project, though both would have less than significant impacts.

Agricultural Resources and Open Space

The project site does not contain FMMP-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance and is not zoned for agricultural use. However, the project site is designated as Grazing Land, although the property has not been utilized as grazing land or irrigated agricultural production within the past seven years. The North Canyon Ranch property has been pre-planned for orderly development with General Plan land use designations so it would not directly or indirectly impact disorderly development. The proposed project and Reduced alternative would have similar effects, resulting in a less than significant impact.

Air Quality

The AQMP incorporates SCAG estimates for population growth, that are also used by cities and counties within the SCAG region. Assuming the Reduced alternative, a smaller portion of the project site would be developed with fewer units (130, as opposed to 207 with the project). Using the average household size of 2.98 from the Population and Housing Section, like the project, the alternative at fewer units would also represent less than one percent of the projected growth estimates used in the AQMP. This alternative's growth would also fall well within the projected population growth forecast of the City and would not conflict with the AQMP. The alternative would use the same construction equipment, but the construction timeframe would be shorter due to its smaller size. The alternative would implement the same design features and follow regulation to ensure minimization of construction impacts and it is assumed the construction program would be designed to remain below the maximum daily emissions thresholds of the VCAPCD, and the overall amount of pollutant emissions would be lower than with the project. The alternative would have a reduction in operational impacts compared to the project due to the smaller number of units and population, and like the project, impacts would not jeopardize attainment of air quality standards individually or cumulatively. The alternative would also implement MM AQ-1 Valley Fever during construction, which is based upon the VCAPCD Assessment Guidelines. Therefore, air quality impacts would be less than significant after mitigation for this alternative, and impacts would be reduced compared to the proposed due to the decreased size of the Reduced alternative.

Biological Resources

Comparing the Reduced alternative footprint in Figure 5-1 to the biological resources and impacts identified in the Biological Resources Section, it is possible to generalize the potential physical impacts of the alternative, keeping in mind the slope stabilization areas, which would require additional ground, have not yet been identified for the alternative. The Reduced alternative footprint would not develop Falcon Street or any uses south of its proposed alignment, leaving a large portion of the identified gnatcatcher habitat there undeveloped, which would entirely avoid direct impact to the two habitat areas located there (shown

in green cross-hatching in Figure 5-1). The undeveloped area of this alternative would also include the location of the spadefoot toad, south of where the roadway would be if extended. Also, more of the small flowering morning glory habitat would remain in the eastern portion of the site, assuming slope stabilization can void this area. Because slope stabilization limits are not yet known, once they are added, the areas that would be still less affected by this alternative (compared to the project) would be reduced, but still more area. These impacts also do not take into account fuel modification, which would need to occur with any alternative; however, it is assumed that the VCFD allow special consideration for sensitive species in these areas, with an adjusted approach to fuel modification (e.g., hand thinning where appropriate). This alternative would clearly leave more habitat areas of concern open, resulting in a biological improvement over the project. Impacts with this alternative would be somewhat less than with the project, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation scalable to the alternative footprint and impacts.

Cultural, Tribal Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Under both the project and the Reduced alternative, grading and other ground-disturbing activity would occur for development of the project site. Given that grading could uncover previously unknown archeological resources, implementation of mitigation measures is required for the project and the alternative. Although no known paleontological resources were identified on the site during site surveys (as described in the Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources Section), ground disturbance activities could result in uncovering of unknown paleontological resources, and this requires mitigation for potential discovery. Additionally, in the unlikely event human remains are discovered, both the project and the alternative would implement a mitigation measure to avoid potential inadvertent impacts. The Reduced alternative and proposed project would have similar impacts, though the alternative would have a decreased development footprint, and therefore a reduced potential impact. With the use of the mitigation measures identified in this EIR, the impacts the project and the alternative would both be reduced to less than significant.

Geology and Soils

Development of the Reduced alternative would occur within in the same parcel as the proposed project but would have a reduced development area. The project site is located near the Simi-Santa Rosa fault system with eight subsidiary faults south and adjacent to the project site that were proven to be inactive at the time of development of the mall site and were determined by the North Canyon Ranch geology report to not be a constraint to the proposed development. The actual Simi-Santa Rosa fault could create substantial shaking if a seismic event occurred along fault; however, all new structures would be required to comply with all applicable provisions in the current CBSC. The North Canyon Ranch geotechnic study concluded that there is no groundwater within the upper fifty feet of the soil profile, so liquefaction would not have adverse effects at the project site. Mitigation measures for seismic compression and landslides were introduced in in the Geology and Soils Section, that would also apply to the Reduced alternative. As with the proposed project, the alternative would be required to comply with the California State Construction General Permit and implement a SWPPP, which requires best management practices. The North Canyon Ranch geology study determined portions of onsite alluvial soils are subject to hydroconsolidation, which requires mitigation measures to reduce adverse effects. The project geology study also identified the presence of onsite soils ranging from non-expansive to highly expansive, providing recommendations that have been used as mitigation measures to reduce potential adverse effects. Similarly, the Reduced alternative would be required to comply with the CBSC and the mitigation measures presented in in this EIR . Impacts of the project and the alternative would be similar and would be reduced to less than significant with regulatory compliance and the mitigation measures.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Reduced alternative would develop less of the project site and develop fewer units (130 as opposed to 207), which would decrease the amount of development in comparison to the proposed project. GHG emissions during construction would result mainly from trip generation and use of heavy equipment and trucks. Due to the size of the alternative, it would result in reduced GHG emissions during construction due to the shorter timeframe. As construction emissions occur for a limited period of a project's lifetime, as a standard practice, GHG emissions from construction are amortized over a presumed project lifetime. A proposed project lifetime of 30 years is recommended by SCAQMD for amortizing construction related GHG emissions. With amortization, the alternative would have lower emissions. During operation, the alternative would have the same GHG sources as the proposed project but with lower emissions due to the decreased size of the project (i.e., more units and more trips). Since there are no adopted numerical standards for GHG emissions, impacts are determined based on a project's consistency of state, regional, and local plans. As with the proposed project, the alternative would be consistent with SCAG RTP/SCS, Climate Change Scoping Plan, and the Simi Valley CAP. Therefore, the alternative project would have a reduced emissions impact than the proposed project, but both would be consistent with plan policy and have less than significant impacts.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The Reduced alternative project would propose single-family and multi-family residences across a reduced footprint on the 160-acre site for a total of 130 dwelling units, which is reduced from the project's proposed 207 units. The alternative would develop drainage facilities including drainage basins, surface and subsurface drainage conveyance infrastructure, and improvements to the existing temporary detention basins throughout the project site. The design and capacity of the drainage basins would be based on the current Ventura County Technical Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Control Measures. Like the project, the alternative would be subject to compliance with the Los Angeles LARWQCB MS4 permit for Ventura County. Like the project it would also require a NPDES Construction General Permit which in turn requires the developer to submit a SWPPP for approval by the City of Simi Valley and the LARWQCB for BMPs implemented during construction. The Reduced alternative would disturb less of the project site, and the construction program would follow regulatory controls and BMPs. The alternative would be required to capture, treat, and retain and infiltrate runoff from storm events, to demonstrated in a LID plan that would be reviewed and approved by the City. Through design and implementation of regulatory controls, runoff during operation would properly to avoid substantial erosion or siltation, flooding or impediment of flood flows, or runoff in exceedance of the capacity of the existing or planned drainage system. As such, the alternative and proposed project would have similar, less than significant impacts.

Land Use and Planning

The Reduced alternative would develop smaller portions of the project site with single-family and multi-family residents, for a total of 77 fewer units. The development would not divide an existing community since the project site is located at the edge of development. Once developed, the project and the alternative would provide for a unified development pattern in that the two Reduced alternative development areas would be adjacent to existing development. Unlike the proposed project, the alternative would not provide the connection of Falcon Street from Erringer Road to First Street. While it would provide adequate access for the alternative development, unlike the project it wouldn't improve the roadway network, mobility, access and evacuation for the surrounding area. Like the project, the alternative would be consistent with the Housing Element and RHNA goal to provide more housing, but the alternative would produce 77 fewer units and thus would not go as far in meeting the goal. The alternative would also be comparable to the proposed project's consistency with applicable policies and goals from the City's General Plan, Citywide Land Use and Urban Design, Housing Element, and LAFCo. This alternative would help meet RHNA and

Housing Element goals, but to a lesser degree. Both the proposed project and the alternative would have a less than significant impact, though the project's impacts would be preferred in terms of land use and planning goals as the project would provide more units.

Noise

Noise from construction of the Reduced alternative would be generated by on-site heavy equipment used from demolition, grading, and other construction related activity. As previously discussed, the alternative would develop 77 fewer residential units and have a reduced footprint, so construction would have a shorter timeline. Since the alternative would use similar construction equipment and be located nearby the same sensitive receptors, noise impacts would be relatively similar, except over a shorter construction period (which is a short-term, temporary impact). The alternative would follow the same regulations as the proposed project and would not result in any significant construction noise impact. The proposed project would not increase traffic noise levels on nearby existing roadways enough to be readily perceptible to the human ear in an outdoor environment. Given the reduced number of trips from the Reduced project, compared to the project, the alternative trips would be an even smaller percentage of all trips and therefore the alternative would also not generate enough traffic noise to have a significant impact. No significant construction vibration impacts are expected to occur for the project, and with similar construction characteristics, the same would be true of the alternative. Both the project and the alternative would implement mitigation measure NOI-1 that prohibits operation of large bulldozers or similar equipment within 24 feet of any off-site residence. As such, the alternative would have reduced noise impacts due to the shorter construction period and reduced operational traffic, but it is estimated that both the proposed project and alternative would have less than significant impacts with mitigation.

Population and Housing

The Reduced alternative would develop 130 units, comprised of 80 single-family and 80 multi-family residences, with an estimated population of 387. This alternative would contribute to the local (City) and regional (County) population and housing growth within the projected City projections. Since there are no existing housing or people on the project site, the project would not displace existing housing or people. This alternative would not go as far as the project in helping the City achieve RHNA and Housing Element goals, but both Reduced alternative and the proposed project would have less than significant impacts.

Public Services - Fire Services, Police Services, Schools

Fire Services

The Reduced alternative would develop single-family homes and multi-family homes for a total of 130 residential units. The VCFD currently serves the project site and the City of Simi Valley. Due to the site's close proximity to the fire station (Station 47), emergency vehicles would be able to reach the project within the VCFD response time objective of five to seven minutes for emergency calls and nine to 12 minutes for non-emergency calls. This alternative would submit a TM, which as required by standard procedure, would be subject to VCFD review and approval for fire safety issues, including access and fuel modification. The project would not require the development of new or expanded fire protection facilities in order to adequately serve the increased population, given regulatory compliance and review. As a smaller project, the Reduced alternative would also be expected to not require new or expanded fire protection facilities. As a smaller development, this alternative would have a reduced impact on service demands, but Falcon Street would not be connected from Erringer Road to First Street in this alternative scenario, which would be less desirable. Like the proposed project, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation requiring an approved FPP, but impacts would be increased due to the lack of a Falcon Street connection.

Police Services

The Reduced alternative would develop single-family homes and multi-family homes for a total of 130 residential units. The SVPD provides police services to the City's 125,975 population and all areas of the City. While it is estimated that the proposed project would add 617 people and the alternative would add 387 people, neither would substantially alter the officer to population ratio, given the total size of the City population. However, the SVPD does not rely on an officer to population goal, and instead considers response times (emergency and non-emergency), traffic accident rates and ratios, crime rates, citizen complaint to call ratios, and case clearance ratios. The project site is located near the Simi Valley Police Department headquarters (approximately 2.5 miles); therefore, like the project, the alternative would have a reasonable police response time. This alternative would include similar designs to the proposed project that would incorporate design features consistent with crime prevention through environmental design measures presented in the General Plan that would reduce potential for crime. While the alternative would have a reduced population and therefore a reduced demand on services, both the alternative and the project would have less than significant impacts.

Schools

The SVUSD provides public education facilities in the City of Simi Valley. Additionally, 16 private schools are located in Simi Valley that provide varying grades from kindergarten to 12th grade. As the project is within the City's SOI and CURB, but not within the City boundaries, this alternative would be proposed to be annexed into the City and the SVUSD. The proposed project is projected to fit within the existing overall SVUSD school capacity, even if all elementary school students went to either one of the two elementary schools, one of the two middle schools, and one of the two high schools. Based on the capacity numbers evaluated in this EIR, the smaller number of Reduced alternative students could also be accommodated if all went to a single elementary, middle school, or high school. The Reduced alternative would result in fewer students and thus the alternative's school demand could also be accommodated even if all elementary school students went to either one of the two elementary schools, one of the two middle schools, and one of the two high schools. Both the project and this alternative would pay the development impact fees set forth in the school district's School Facilities Needs Analysis to address the impact of students generated by new development on school facilities. The alternative would generate a reduced demand for school facilities, but with payment of school fees both the proposed project and the alternative would have a less than significant impact on schools.

Parks and Recreation

The Park District owns, operates, and maintains parks and open space areas in the Cities of Simi Valley and Oak Park and unincorporated areas in the vicinity. According to the City's General Plan EIR, the Park District considers five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents as the City's minimum parkland standard. The existing parkland ratio is far above the goal, with 9.62 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. As evaluated in the EIR, development of the project would not significantly lower the parkland per resident ratio, which already well exceeds the goal. The project would provide recreational amenities and open space within the project site consisting of 70.82 acres of open space, two (2) pocket parks totaling 0.43 acres, and additional landscaping amenities, which would reduce the need for future residents to utilize offsite recreational facilities. The Reduced alternative would have less of an increase in residents, and would also provide open space, pocket parks and amenity areas, which are assumed to be in proportion to the alternative. Pursuant to applicable law, development projects requesting tentative map approval are required to dedicate land or provide development fees to the Park District to offset potential increases in use of recreation resources. The alternative would have a reduced impact to park demand than the proposed project, but both would have less than significant impacts.

Transportation

Both the project and the Reduced alternative and the project would generate VMT. The VMT threshold for the City is 16.15 VMT/Capita for home-based trips, which would not be exceeded by the project. The alternative would generate fewer vehicle trip miles overall, but have the same VMT/Capita, and therefore the alternative would also not exceed the City threshold. The alternative would not construct the General Plan-identified connection of Falcon to First Street through the property. Other alternative-project roads would be designed in conformance with Simi Valley standards, and the site plan would be reviewed and approved by the VCFD to ensure adequate emergency access. The alternative would be less desirable because the extension of Falcon Street would not be provided, but the overall impact of both the alternative and the project would be less than significant.

Utilities and Service Systems – Water Supply, Wastewater, Solid Waste

Water Supply

The City is served by two water purveyors, the Ventura County Waterworks District No. 8 (District 8) and the Golden State Water Company. The project site is located within the service area of District 8, which serves approximately 68 percent of the developed portion of Simi Valley in addition to unincorporated areas located southeast and north of the incorporated City boundary. Given the large service area of District 8, since the proposed project's total water demand would be less than one percent of District 8's water demand in 2025 and 2045, it follows that the Reduced alternative water demands (reduced by 77 units) would also not significantly impact water supply. Similar to the project, his alternative would not require new or expanded water treatment facilities. Both the project and the alternative would have a less than significant impact, but the alternative's impact would have a reduced impact due to a reduced water demand.

Wastewater

The project site is currently vacant and surrounded to the east by residential land uses and to the south by commercial land uses that is served by the City DPW, SSD. The proposed North Canyon Ranch project site is currently outside the boundaries of the service district; however, it would be included upon approval, based upon the service availability letter to the applicant. The applicant would be required to pay sewerage system connection fees for any development on site – the project or an alternative project - prior to construction. The proposed project was found to have a less than significant impact on the sewer system. The alternative's physical improvements for wastewater would be similar to the proposed project for sewer connection and flow conveyance but scaled to the reduced development. The proposed project would use approximately use 2.2 percent of remaining capacity of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and based on the reduced size of the , it would utilize even less, which would be a more minimal amount. During construction of the alternative, the applicant must comply with a mitigation measure implementing the localized sewer line improvement recommendations from the latest City approved sewer report for the project, and the alternative would require comparable mitigation. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact after mitigation but would generate less wastewater and therefore have a reduced impact on the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Solid Waste

The project site is currently undeveloped land. The City of Simi Valley is exclusively served by Waste Management for trash collection, and the project site would also be served by Waste Management, with solid waste disposal at the SVLRC. Given the project's size, and the short-term nature of construction relative to the longevity of the landfill capacity, the project's impacts during construction would be less than significant. The proposed project operational impact would amount to less than 0.1 percent of the daily permitted capacity at the SVLRC, which would be a less than significant impact. At 77 fewer units, the Reduced alternative would utilize even less of the capacity and impacts would similarly be less than

significant. Both the project and the alternative would comply with the SVMC and General Plan to address solid waste such as regulations to divert at least 75 percent of construction solid to recycling. Both the project and the alternative would have a less than significant impact, but this alternative would have an increased impact compared to the project.

Wildfire

The project site is located within a VHFHSZ and located at the WUI, and thus fire impacts, including emergency response and evacuation, pollutants from wildfires, firefighting-associated infrastructure, and potential indirect effects of wildfire are potential concerns for any development at the site. With the project, the provision of the missing segment of Falcon Street, as planned by the City through the project, will aid emergency access and evacuation for the development on the site and in the surrounding area. The Reduced alternative would not provide this benefit. Any development of the site will require firefighting-associated infrastructure, a project-specific FPP, and a project access and circulation system meeting VCFD requirements, scaled to the size of the project. With project design features and TM conditions, both the proposed project and the alternative would have less than significant impacts with mitigation requiring an approved FPP, including a fuel modification plan and adequate access; however, impacts would be somewhat greater with the alternative, considering that Falcon Street would not be completed through the project site.

Alternative 3's Ability to Meet Project Objectives

The Reduced Alternative would meet most of the project objectives, which are restated as follows:

- Construct a variety of housing types to expand the City of Simi Valley's housing stock (i.e., both single family and multi-family housing) and help to meet the City RHNA projections.
- Provide new housing designed and built to modern energy-efficient standards.
- Establish open space areas within the subdivision to provide for aesthetic and health benefits of the future project and surrounding area residents.
- Construct the extension of Falcon Street, from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west, fulfilling a City General Plan component that promotes mobility within the City for use by automobiles, busses, and bicycles.

Like the project, the alternative would provide energy-efficient development and open space areas. However, the alternative would not provide as many units to expand the City of Simi Valley's housing supply and help to meet the City's RHNA projections and would not implement the General Plan-proposed extension of Falcon Street. Thus, the project would be preferred over the Reduced alternative, although the alternative would overall have reduced impacts, as evaluated above.

5.4 RIA ALTERNATIVES DISCUSSION

Since annexation of the Island areas is required by LAFCo, practically speaking, there are no alternatives to evaluated. From a Land Use and Planning perspective, without the annexation (i.e., the No Project scenario for this part of the project), the development pattern is disorganized, as identified in LAFCo documents, and governance of the Island areas would continue to function at reduced efficiency. By comparison, annexation will result in an orderly development pattern and more efficient governance. No physical changes to the Required Island Annexations would occur as a result of the project. Thus, for all issues, the proposed annexation is the preferred scenario.

5.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Based on the analysis above, the alternative and project impacts are compared in **Table 5-1, Comparison for the Project and the Alternatives**. A code for the abbreviations used is provided at the bottom of the table. Impacts that are marked less than significant, also require compliance with design features, TM conditions, and regulatory compliance measures.

**Table 5-1
Comparison of the Project and the Alternatives**

	Project	1 - No Project	2 – General Plan	3 – Reduced
Project / Alternative Characteristics				
Residential Units/Type	207 (157 single-family and 50 townhomes)	0	406 (51 single-family and 355 townhomes)	130 (80 single-family and 50 townhomes)
Disturbance Area	Approx. 89.02 ac.	No Disturbance	Somewhat Less	Less
Extension of Falcon Street from Erringer to First per GP	Yes	No	Yes	No
Meets the Project Objectives?	Yes	No (not at all)	Yes (and meets GP and RHNA projections to a greater degree)	Yes (but to a lesser degree)
Project / Alternative Impacts				
Aesthetics	LTS	NI	LTS +	LTS -
Agriculture and Open Space	LTS	NI	LTS	LTS
Air Quality	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM (-)
Biological Resources	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM (-)
Cultural, Tribal Cultural and Paleontological Resources	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (slightly -)	LTSAM (-)
Geology and Soils	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM	LTSAM
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Hydrology and Water Quality	LTS	NI	LTS	LTS
Land Use and Planning	LTS	NI ^(c)	LTS (-) ^(a)	LTS (+) ^(a)
Noise	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM (-)
Population and Housing	LTS	NI ^(c)	LTS (-) ^(a)	LTS (+) ^(a)
Parks and Recreation	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Public Services				
Fire	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM (+)
Police	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Schools	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Transportation	LTS	NI ^(c)	LTS (+)	LTS (+) ^(b)
Utilities				
Water Supply	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)

	Project	1 - No Project	2 – General Plan	3 – Reduced
Wastewater	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTS (-)
Solid Waste	LTS	NI	LTS (+)	LTS (-)
Wildfire	LTSAM	NI	LTSAM (+)	LTSAM (+)
SUMMARY	12 LTS 8 LTSAM	20 NI (however 3 are less beneficial)	12 LTS (incl. 8 more adverse and 2 less adverse than the project) 8 LTSAM (incl. 6 more adverse and 1 slightly less adverse than the project)	13 LTS (incl. 3 more adverse and 8 less adverse than the project) 7 LTSAM (incl. 4 less adverse and 2 more adverse than the project)
<p>Key to Impact Determination Notations: NI = No Impact; LTS = Less than Significant Impact; LTSAM = Less than Significant After Mitigation; SU = Significant Unavoidable. Plus and Minus Markings identify where the alternative has the same impact conclusion as the project, but the impact is greater or reduced compared to the project. ^(a) Impacts are considered less or more adverse than with the project in relation to RHNA numbers. ^(b) Impacts are considered less or more adverse than with the project in relation to implementing the Falcon Street connection as envisioned in the General Plan. ^(c) Although there would be No Impact, the alternative would also not help to meet RHNA numbers or extend Falcon Street.</p>				

As summarized in Table 5-1, based on an equal weighting of each of major environmental impact topics: The alternatives would have the following conclusions:

Project Impact Summary

- 12 Less than Significant
- 8 Less than Significant After Mitigation

The proposed project would have no significant impacts after mitigation. The impacts that would require mitigation are as follows: Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural, Tribal Cultural and Paleontological Resources; Noise; Fire Services, Wastewater, and Wildfire.

No Project Impact Summary

- 20 No Impact

None of the impacts of the project would occur. Also, the project would not help meet the City General Plan and RHNA goals or construct the extension of Falcon Street envisioned in the General Plan.

General Plan Alternative Impact Summary

- 12 Less than Significant (including 8 more adverse and 2 less adverse than the project)
- 8 Less than Significant After Mitigation (including 6 more adverse and 1 slightly less adverse than the project)

The primary considerations compared to the project would be that the General Plan alternative would have increased impacts with regard to Air Quality, GHG, Noise, VMT, Public Services, Parks and Recreation, Utilities, and Wildfire due to the increase in units and population. Increased impacts would also be projected for Biological Resources, because the alternative would avoid somewhat larger portions of sensitive habitats that support the gnatcatcher and/or spadefoot toad near the southern boundary from the center of

the boundary to the eastern edge of the property. Land Use and Planning impacts as well as Population and Housing impacts would be considered less adverse than the project, because more units would be provided to satisfy City General Plan and RHNA goals. The Falcon Street extension would be included, satisfying the General Plan vision for the roadway network, which would facilitate access and evacuation, similar to the project. This alternative would meet the project objectives and would actually go further in meeting the City General Plan and RHNA goals.

Reduced Units and Reduced Footprint Alternative Impact Summary

- 13 Less than Significant (including 3 more adverse and 8 less adverse than the project)
- 7 Less than Significant After Mitigation (including 4 less adverse and 2 more adverse than the project)

The primary considerations compared to the project would be that the Reduced Project alternative would have increased (more adverse) impacts with regard to Land Use and Planning impacts as well as Population and Housing, since it would provide fewer units to meet the City General Plan and RHNA goals. The alternative would have reduced impacts to Air Quality, GHG, most Public Services, Utilities, and Parks and Recreation, due to the smaller number of units. A greater number of vehicle miles would be added, but a similar VMT/Capita would occur. Wildfire and Fire Service impacts would be increased due to the lack of the Falcon Street extension through the project, which would make access and evacuation less efficient.

Superior Alternative Conclusion

Based on the analysis, the No Impact alternative would have no impacts, and thus, would be the environmentally superior alternative. After the No Project alternative, the Reduced Project alternative would have the least environmental impacts, and thus, would be the next environmentally superior alternative.

6.0 OTHER CEQA
CONSIDERATIONS

SECTION 6.0

6.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to identify significant environmental effects of a project. These impacts are evaluated in Chapter 4.0, Impact Analysis, of this Draft EIR. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) require that the Draft EIR:

“Describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.”¹ (Emphasis added.)

There are no impacts of the North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations project that remain significant even after the application of mitigation measures. Some impacts that would require the incorporation of mitigation measures in order to reduce significant impacts to below the level of significance, as discussed below in 6.1.1. (For a more detailed summary of all project impacts, see Section ES, Executive Summary or the corresponding impact analysis sections.) The implications and reasons for proposing the project, notwithstanding its environmental effects, are described below in 6.1.2, Implications and the Reasons Why the Project is Being Proposed.

6.1.1 Significant Impacts – Mitigable and Unavoidable

This Draft EIR evaluates a thorough list of environmental impact topics in Chapter 4.0, Impact Analysis. In determining potential impacts of the North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations project, the analysis sections consider project design features of the project and regulatory requirements. Where impacts are found to be significant even with the importation of stated project design features, mitigation measures have been recommended where potentially feasible, in order to reduce impacts to below the significance threshold. Issues within this category are listed below, along with a general summary of the type of mitigation provided (see individual analysis Sections for more detail and for the full text of the impacts and mitigation measures).

Significant but Mitigable Impacts (*Less Than Significant With Mitigation*)

North Canyon Ranch

The following North Canyon Ranch project impacts were found to be significant prior to mitigation, but less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation measures. No cumulative impacts were found to be significant or require mitigation measures.

- Air Quality (North Canyon Ranch):
 - 4.3.3.3 Sensitive Receptors (Mitigation reduces potential construction-phase risks of Valley Fever)
- Biological Resources (North Canyon Ranch):
 - 4.4.4.1 Candidate, Sensitive, and Special Status Species
 - 4.4.4.2 Sensitive Natural Communities
 - 4.4.4.3 Protected Wetlands, Waters, and Riparian Habitat

¹ CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b).

- 4.4.4.5 Local Policies and Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources (North Canyon Ranch):
 - 4.5.3.2 Archaeological Resources, 4.5.3.3 Paleontological Resources, 4.5.4 Human Remains, 4.5.3.6 Tribal Cultural Resources - Other Significant Tribal Cultural Resources (Mitigation requires an Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Plan, construction monitoring, specifies protocols for the inadvertent discovery of resources or human remains)
- Geology and Soils (North Canyon Ranch):
 - 4.6.3.3 Seismic Ground Failure Risk, 4.6.3.4 Landslide Risk, 4.6.3.6 Geologic Stability, 4.6.3.7 Expansive Soil (Mitigation requires implementation of geologist-recommended specifications from the geology studies and other measures to reduce potential poor soils/hazards such as landslides and establish appropriate geotechnical design criteria for the development)
- Noise (North Canyon Ranch):
 - 4.10.3.2 Excessive Groundborne Vibration or Groundborne Noise (Mitigation provided to reduce construction noise and vibration near off-site residences)

Required Island Annexations

No Required Island Annexations impacts were found to be significant or require mitigation. No cumulative impacts were found to be significant or require mitigation measures.

Significant and Unavoidable (*Impacts that Remain Significant After Mitigation*)

Based on the evaluations in this Draft EIR, no project or cumulative impacts were found to be significant or require mitigation. Thus, there are no significant and unavoidable impacts that would occur as a result of the project.

6.1.2 Implications and Reasons the Project is Proposed

The North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations Draft EIR provides a description of the proposed project features, government regulations, best management practices, and where warranted, mitigation measures, to reduce the significant impacts of the project (see Chapter 2.0, Project Description, and Chapter 4.0, Impact Analysis). Where possible, the North Canyon Ranch project component has been designed to avoid and reduce significant impacts to the environment. The Required Island Annexations component proposes no development or change at this time, and thus no impacts would occur. After mitigation for the North Canyon Ranch impacts noted in Section 6.1.1, no significant project or cumulative project impacts would occur as a result of the full project.

The North Canyon Ranch and Required Annexations project is proposed, notwithstanding the above-noted impacts that require mitigation, as the proposed project is anticipated to provide benefits, including the following, which coincide with the Project Objectives (see Chapter 2.0, Project Description).

The project would:

- Construct a variety of housing types to expand the City of Simi Valley's housing stock (i.e., both single family and multi-family housing) and help to meet the City Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) projections.

- Provide new housing designed and built to modern energy-efficient standards.
- Establish open space areas within the subdivision to provide for aesthetic and health benefits of the future project and surrounding area residents.
- Construct the extension of Falcon Street, from Erringer Road on the east to the northerly terminus of First Street on the west, fulfilling a City General Plan component that promotes mobility within the City for use by automobiles, busses and bicycles.
- Incorporate County Island areas, which are within and adjacent to the City boundaries in order to provide for orderly growth and development and land use oversight, in compliance with the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.
- Establish more efficient and logical geographic boundaries for planning and zoning purposes.
- Provide for a more logical jurisdictional arrangement for the efficient provision of public services.

6.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) also requires that the Draft EIR discuss:

“Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project [that] may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely.”

The CEQA Guidelines dictate that irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such commitments are considered in the decision as to whether to approve the project.

North Canyon Ranch

The North Canyon Ranch project site is located at the base of the hills that surround western Simi Valley. It is mostly in a natural state, but there has been some grading, grazing and deposition of soil on the site in the past and there are some debris basins on the site. During construction, the project would use building and construction supplies, which generally include materials as lumber and other wood products; aggregate materials, including sand and gravel, that are used to create concrete and asphalt; metals such as steel and copper; and petrochemical construction materials such as plastics. Construction typically uses nonrenewable / slowly renewable product like fossil fuels, including gasoline and oil, to operate construction vehicles and equipment and to transport materials and construction workers to and from the project site, and electricity may also be used for onsite generators. Throughout the operational phase of the project, the development would continue to consume water, electricity, and gasoline and oil involved in the operation and upkeep of the residential uses, including related transportation of goods and people.

Indirect effects of these irreversible changes would extend to air quality, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, population and housing, public services, utilities and other impact issues, as discussed in this Draft EIR. Development of the project would commit undeveloped land to urban use, and once developed, the site would typically remain in urban use for the foreseeable future.

As a new development, however, the indirect impacts of the project’s irreversible changes would be reduced given the project’s location proximate to a commercial center with shopping and employment opportunities and along a bus line with a bus stop within the boundaries of the project site. This type of land use arrangement reduces vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and reduces air quality and GHG emissions compared to residential development that is not proximate to commercial uses. The proposed site usage is for a project that meets many of the City’s goals and policies, as discussed in Section 4.9, Land Use and Planning, including residential development to help meet the City’s RHNA targets. Development within a mixed-use

area provides an optimal land use pattern that reduces VMT (and related fuel usage) and GHG emissions. Added to the VMT, GHG and fuel usage reductions of the infill mixed-use land development pattern, the new construction will meet the current, more energy-conserving requirements of the CALGreen Building Code.

Considering the size of the project and its mixed-use location compared to the range of development projects occurring annually throughout California, the commitment is not considered substantial. Further, given the state declared housing crisis and the stated regional and local need for housing, the use of resources for this project is considered appropriate by the City and was anticipated as an area of future residential development within the City's Sphere of Influence in the City General Plan.

Required Island Annexations

The Island areas are subdivided and urbanized, and in most cases surrounded on three or more sides by urban development. No new development is proposed with this project, though a few vacant parcels could be developed with single family homes. When viewed on a city-wide, regional or state level, this speculative potential for additional homes would generate a very small use of resources. The commitment would be considered appropriate by the City given the location and surrounding land uses, and the opportunity for orderly growth within the City boundary.

6.3 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACT

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(e) requires a discussion of the ways a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. CEQA does not consider growth inducement to be necessarily detrimental, beneficial, or of significance to the environment.

Growth inducement may occur where projects:

- Remove obstacles to population growth (e.g., a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant might allow for more construction in service areas).
- Indirectly result in the construction of new facilities due to project-related population increases that place higher demands on existing community service facilities that could cause significant environmental effects.
- Encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.

Both the North Canyon Ranch and Required Island Annexations components of the project were previously anticipated and planned by the City. Thus, the project components are not unplanned or undesired development. North Canyon Ranch as planned, and as proposed with some modification to the zoning and land use configuration to better match the Tentative Tract Map design, would retain the outer portions of the site (those portions contiguous with unincorporated Ventura County territory) as open space. The internal North Canyon Ranch streets are not configured for future extensions beyond the development or into the surrounding County area. Falcon Street would be extended through the property, and street extensions can be seen as growth inducing. However, the Falcon Street segment through the North Canyon Ranch project would provide connectivity to existing development and the existing street network (linking the existing westerly terminus of Falcon Street to the northerly terminus of First Street), providing two project access points for transportation and safe access and evacuation when needed. The proposed segment of Falcon Street has been included on County plans and assumed to be completed along with development of the site.

The annexation properties are already developed, and new development is not anticipated at this time. Future development if it were to occur would be limited to a few single-family properties dispersed throughout the City and would not represent significant growth. Further, this development could occur with or without the proposed Annexation action that is part of this project.

Potential indirect impacts and potential cumulative impacts are discussed throughout Chapter 4.0, Impact Analysis, and none were found to be significant, including impacts to Public Service facilities (see Section 4.12) and Utilities and Service Systems (see Section 4.15). No other aspects of the project were found to result in activities that would affect the environment beyond those discussed in Chapter 4.0.

Based on the above discussion, the project would not induce growth beyond City expectations and plans.

7.0 PREPARERS OF THE EIR,
ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS
CONSULTED AND REFERENCES

SECTION 7.0

7.0 PREPARERS OF THE EIR, ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED, AND REFERENCES

7.1 PREPARERS OF THE EIR AND TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS

The City of Simi Valley, as lead agency, is the preparer of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR), pursuant to CEQA. The Draft EIR was prepared with the use of a team of consultants and technical experts. The primary contacts are provided below. In addition, see Appendix A for agency and public comments, which provided input to this document.

LEAD AGENCY:

City of Simi Valley, Department of Environmental Services

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Attn: Elizabeth Richardson, Senior Planner (City Project Manager for the EIR)

APPLICANT:

North Canyon Ranch

SVJV Partners, LLC

3649 Ninth Street

Riverside, CA 92501

Required Island Annexations

City of Simi Valley, as required by the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (see Lead Agency, above)

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION:

Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission

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Ventura, CA 93003

Attn: Kau Luoma, Executive Officer

CITY CONSULTANT:

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7.2 PERSONS AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

Many public agency websites and documents were consulted in the preparation of this EIR, which are listed in notations and footnotes within the analysis sections as well as below in Section 7.2. Relevant letters received during the scoping process are provided in **Appendix A, Notice of Preparation, Early Consultation and Scoping Comments**. In some instances, staff assistance was sought and provided, from the following:

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Simi valley, CA 93063

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Larry Williams, Fire Prevention Officer, FHRP Unit Manager

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