
Draft Environmental Impact Report
SCH No. 2022110600

Majestic Thousand Palms
Riverside County, California



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ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
A-1	Light Agriculture
A-2	Heavy Agriculture
AB	Assembly Bill
ABAU	Adjusted Business As Usual
ACL	Applied Ceramic Label
ACS	American Community Survey
A-D	Agriculture-Dairy
ADT	average daily traffic
AERMOD	American Meteorological Society/EPA Regulatory Model
AFY	acre-feet/year
AIA	Airport Influence Area
AIRFA	American Indian Religious Freedom Act
ALUC	Airport Land Use Commissions
ALUCP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
amsl	above mean sea level
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
A-P	Light Agriculture with Poultry
A-P	Alquist-Priolo
APN	Assessor Parcel Number
APSA	Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act
ATP	Active Transportation Plan
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
AST	Aboveground Storage Tank
B	Basin
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BACT	Best Available Control Technology
bgs	below ground surface
BMP	Best Management Practice
C&D	Construction and Demolition
C/V	Citrus/Vineyard
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CadnaA	Computer Aided Noise Abatement
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Cal OES	Governor's Office of Emergency Services
CalARP	California Accidental Release Prevention



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CalGEM	California Geological Energy Management Division
CalGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
Calveno	California Vehicle Noise
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CAPCOA	California Air Pollution Control Officers Association
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBSC	California Building Standards Code
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CCRUS	Carbon Capture, Removal, Utilization, and Storage
CD	Consistency Determination
CDC	California Department of Conservation
CDE	California Department of Education
CDFA	California Department of Food and Agriculture
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDP	Census Designated Place
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFC	chlorofluorocarbon
CFGC	California Fish and Game Code
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGC	California Government Code
CH ₄	methane
CIWMP	Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan
CLCA	California Land Conservation Act
CLOMR	Conditional Letter of Map Revision
CMP	Congestion Management Program
CMUTD	California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CNRA	California Natural Resources Agency
CO	carbon monoxide



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
COG	Council of Governments
COPPS	Community Oriented and Policing Problem Solving
COP	Community Oriented Policing
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
CRA	Cultural Resources Analysis
CREC	Controlled Recognized Environmental Condition
CRMP	Cultural Resource Monitoring Program
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
CSA	Community Service Area
CTC	California Transportation Commission
CTR	California Toxics Rules
CTR	Commute Trip Reduction
CUPA	California Unified Program Agency
CVAG	Coachella Valley Association of Governments
CVCC	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
CVMSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
CVSIP	Coachella Valley PM ₁₀ State Implementation Plan
CVWD	Coachella Valley Water District
CWA	Clean Water Act
cy	cubic yards
CZ	Change of Zone
D	Urban and Built-Up Land
dB	Decibel
dBA	A-weighted Decibel
DEH	Department of Environmental Health
DIF	Development Impact Fee
DOE	Department of Energy
DOE	Determination of Eligibility
DOSH	Division of Occupational Safety and Health
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
du/ac	dwelling units per acre
DWA	Desert Water Agency
EA	Energy Analysis



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
EA	Environmental Assessment
EAC	Existing plus Ambient Growth plus Cumulative
EI	Expansion Index
EIA	Energy Information Administration
EIC	Eastern Information Center
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMFAC	EMission FACtor Model
EO	Executive Order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPCRA	Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act
ERIS	Environmental Risk Information Services
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
ESFR	Early Suppression Fast Response
ETC	Employee Transportation Coordinator
EV	Electric Vehicle
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FE	federally endangered
FEIR	Final Environmental Impact Report
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FICON	Federal Interagency Committee on Noise
FIMA	Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FT	federally fhreatened
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FYI	For Your Information
G	Grazing Land
g/VMT	grams per vehicle miles traveled
g/idle-hr	grams per idle-hour



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
GBN	Ground-Based Noise
GBV	Ground-Based Vibration
GCC	Global Climate Change
GHG	greenhouse gas
GHGA	Greenhouse Gas Analysis
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GLO	General Land Office
GPA	General Plan Amendment
GPD	gallons per day
GRH	Guaranteed Ride Home
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
GVWR	gross vehicle weight rating
GWh	gigawatt hour
GWP	Global Warming Potential
HBW	Home-Based Work
HCA	Housing Crisis Act
HCD	Housing and Community Development
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HDR	High Density Residential
HDT	Heavy Heavy-Duty Trucks
HFC	hydrofluorocarbon
HI	Hazard Index
HMBEP	Hazardous Materials Business Emergency Plan
HMIS	Hazardous Materials Inventory Statements
HMMP	Hazardous Materials Management Plan
HMTA	Hazardous Materials Transportation Act
HMTUSA	Hazardous Materials Transportation Uniform Safety Act
HREC	Historical Recognized Environmental Site Condition
HSC	Health and Safety Code
HSWA	Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments
HU	Hydrologic Unit
HWCL	Hazardous Waste Control Law
I	Interstate
IA	Implementing Agreement



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IEPR	Integrative Energy Policy Report
IID	Imperial Irrigation District
in/hr	inches per hour
in/sec	inches per second
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISO	Independent Service Operator
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
ITIP	Interregional Transportation Improvement Plan
ITP	incidental take permits
IWMA	Integrated Waste Management Act
JPA	Joint Powers Authority
kWh	kilowatt hours
L	Farmland of Local Importance
L	Low Potential
LACM	Natural History Museum of Los Angeles
LDA	Light-Duty-Auto vehicles
LDT	Light-Duty-Trucks
Leq	equivalent continuous sound pressure level
LI	Light Industrial
Lmax	maximum noise level
LOMR	Letter of Map Revision
LOS	Level of Service
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
LSA	Lake and Streambed Alteration
LST	Localized Significance Threshold
LTF	Local Transportation Fund
LTO	Licensed Timber Operators
Lw	reference sound power level
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MCL	Maximum Contaminant Level



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
MCY	motorcyle
MDR	Medium Density Residential
MDAB	Mojave Desert Air Basin
MDT	Medium Heavy-Duty Trucks
MEISC	Maximally Exposed Individual School Child
MEIR	Maximally Exposed Individual Receptor
MEIW	Maximally Exposed Individual Worker
mg/L	milligrams per liter
mgd	million gallons per day
MHDR	Medium-High Density Residential
MHDT	Medium Heavy-Duty Trucks
MICR	maximum individual cancer risk
MM	Mitigation Measures
MMRP	Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
M-SC	Manufacturing - Service Commercial
MVA	megavolt-ampere
MW	megawatt
MWD	Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
MWEL0	Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Planning
NDA	No Development Alternative
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NESHAP	National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutant
NETR	Nationwide Environmental Title Research
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHL	National Historic Landmark
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NIOSH	National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NO _x	nitrogen oxides



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
NPA	No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPPA	Native Plant Protection Act
NPS	Non-Point Source
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NTR	National Toxics Rule
NVA	Noise and Vibration Analysis
NVIA	Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
NWW	Non-Wetland Water
O ₂	oxygen
O ₃	Ozone
O.D.	Outside Diameter
OAL	Office of Administrative Law
ODC	Ozone Depleting Compound
OEHHA	Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
OHV	off-highway vehicle
OIH	Office of Industrial Hygiene
OPR	Office of Planning and Research
OSFM	Office of the State Fire Marshall
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Act
P	Prime Farmland
PA	Program Agency
PA	Production/Attraction
PA	Public Address
Pb	lead
PCB	polychlorinated biphenyls
PCE	Passenger Car Equivalent
PGAm	modified Peak Ground Acceleration
PM	Particulate Matter
pph	persons per household
Ppm	parts per million
PPT	Plot Plan
PPV	Peak Particle Velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
PRIMP	Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program
PRPA	Paleontological Resources Preservation Act
PSIA	Palm Springs International Airport
PSUSD	Palm Springs Unified School District
PV	photovoltaic
PVC	polyvinyl chloride
Qal	Quaternary-age alluvium
Qs	Quaternary-age dune sand
R-1	One-Family Dwellings
R-A	Residential - Agricultural
RBC	Rocks Biological Consulting
RCA	Regional Conservation Authority
RCDEH	Riverside County Department of Environmental Health
RCDWR	Riverside County Department of Waste Resources
RCFD	Riverside County Fire Department
RCNM	Roadway Construction Noise Model
RCPG	Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide
RCPLS	Riverside County Public Library System
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RCSD	Riverside County Sheriff's Department
REC	Recognized Environmental Condition
REMEL	Reference Energy Mean Emission Level
RPF	Registered Professional Forester
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Assessment
RMM	Riverside Municipal Museum
RMS	root mean square
ROG	Reactive Organic Gas
ROW	Right-of-Way
RPA	Reduced Project Alternative
RPS	Renewables Portfolio Standard
RR	Regulatory Requirements
RTIP	Regional Transportation Improvement Plan
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
RTPA	Regional Transportation Planning Agency



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITS OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
RUWMP	Regional Urban Water Management Planning
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
S	Farmland of Statewide Importance
s.f.	square feet
SAA	Streambed Alteration Agreement
SARA	Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
SB	Senate Bill
SBA	Small Business Administration
SBCM	San Bernardino County Museum
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCG	Southern California Gas Company
SCH	State Clearinghouse
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SDNHM	San Diego Natural History Museum
SE	State Endangered
SFP	School Facilities Program
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SHA	Safe Harbor Agreement
SHMA	Seismic Hazards Mapping Act
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SHRC	State Historic Resources Commission
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification Code
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SM	silty sand
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SNUR	Significant New Use Rule
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SO _x	sulfur oxides
SORE	small off-road engine
SP	gravelly sand
SP	Service Population
SR	State Route
SRA	Source Receptor Area
SRA	State Responsibility Area



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
SSAB	Salton Sea Air Basin
SSC	Species of Special Concern
STA	Sunline Transit Agency
STA	State Transit Assistance
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
SWP	State Water Project
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	Storm Water Resources Control Board
TA	Traffic Analysis
TAC	toxic air contaminant
TCR	Tribal Cultural Resource
TDA	Transportation Development Act
TDS	total dissolved solid
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century
THP	Timber Harvesting Plan
TIA	Traffic Impact Analysis
tpd	tons per day
TRU	Transportation Refrigeration Unit
TSCA	Toxic Substances Control Act
TUMF	Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee
U	Unique Farmland
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
U.S.	United States
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USCB	United States Census Bureau
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
UST	Underground Storage Tank
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VCP	vitriified clay pipe
VdB	Decibel notation
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound
vph	vehicles per hour



ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND UNITES OF MEASURE

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
W-2	Controlled Development Areas
WAIRE	Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions
WCVAP	Western Coachella Valley Area Plan
WDR	Waste Discharge Requirement
WL	Watch List
WMI	Watershed Management Initiative
WPCO	Warehouse Points Compliance Obligation
WQMP	Water Quality Management Plan
WRP	Water Reclamation Plant
WRP	Water Recycling Plan
WSA	Water Supply Assessment
WSC	Western Science Center
X	Other Land
ZEV	zero-emission vehicle
ZORI	Zones of Required Investigation



S.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

S.1 INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000, *et seq.* requires that before a public agency makes a decision to approve a project that could have one or more adverse effects on the physical environment, the agency must inform itself about the project’s potential environmental impacts, give the public an opportunity to comment on the environmental issues, and take feasible measures to avoid or reduce potential harm to the physical environment.

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), having California State Clearinghouse (SCH) No. 2022110600, was prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Article 9, Sections 15120-15132 to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with planning, constructing, and operating the proposed Project, which consists of applications for General Plan Amendment No. 220004 (GPA 220004), Change of Zone No. 2200013 (CZ 200013), and Plot Plan No. 220022 (PPT 220022) with associated off-site infrastructure improvements, which are collectively referred to herein as the “Project” or “proposed Project.” This EIR does not recommend approval or denial of the proposed Project; rather, this EIR is a source of factual information regarding potential impacts that the Project may cause to the physical environment. The Draft EIR will be available for public review for a minimum period of 45 days. After consideration of public comment, the County of Riverside will consider certifying the Final EIR and adopting required findings.

This Executive Summary complies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15123, “Summary.” This EIR includes a description of the proposed Project and evaluates the physical environmental effects that could result from Project implementation. Riverside County determined that the scope of this EIR should cover 21 subject areas. The scope includes all of the subject areas listed in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines and in consideration of public comment received by Riverside County in response to this EIR’s Notice of Preparation (NOP). The NOP, and written comments received by Riverside County in response to the NOP, are attached to this EIR as *Technical Appendix A*. In consideration of public comment on the NOP, the 21 environmental subject areas that could be reasonably and significantly affected by planning, constructing, and/or operating the proposed Project are analyzed herein, including:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Aesthetics | 12. Mineral Resources |
| 2. Agriculture and Forestry Resources | 13. Noise |
| 3. Air Quality | 14. Paleontological Resources |
| 4. Biological Resources | 15. Population and Housing |
| 5. Cultural Resources | 16. Public Services |
| 6. Energy | 17. Recreation |
| 7. Geology and Soils | 18. Transportation |
| 8. Greenhouse Gas Emissions | 19. Tribal Cultural Resources |
| 9. Hazards and Hazardous Materials | 20. Utilities and Service Systems |
| 10. Hydrology and Water Quality | 21. Wildfire |
| 11. Land Use and Planning | |



Refer to EIR Section 4.0, *Environmental Analysis*, for a full account and analysis of the subject matters listed above. For each of the aforementioned subject areas, this EIR describes: 1) the physical conditions that existed at the approximate time this EIR's NOP was filed with the California State Clearinghouse (December 1, 2022), 2) discloses the type and magnitude of potential environmental impacts resulting from Project planning, construction, and operation; and 3) if warranted, recommends feasible mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid significant adverse environmental impacts that the proposed Project may cause. A summary of the proposed Project's significant environmental impacts and the mitigation measures imposed by Riverside County on the Project to lessen or avoid those impacts is included in this Executive Summary as Table S-1, *Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions*. Riverside County applies mitigation measures that it determines: 1) are feasible and practical for project applicants to implement; 2) are feasible and practical for Riverside County to monitor and enforce; 3) are legal for Riverside County to impose; 4) have an essential nexus to the Project's impacts; and 5) would result in a benefit to the physical environment. CEQA does not require the Lead Agency to impose mitigation measures that are duplicative of mandatory regulatory requirements.

This EIR also discusses alternatives to the proposed Project. Alternatives are described that would attain most of the Project's objectives while avoiding or substantially lessening the proposed Project's significant adverse environmental effects. A full discussion of Project alternatives is found in Section 6.0, *Alternatives*.

S.2 PROJECT SYNOPSIS

S.2.1 LOCATION AND REGIONAL SETTING

The 83.0-acre Project site that is the subject of this EIR is located within the Thousand Palms community of unincorporated Riverside County, California, northeast of Interstate 10 (I-10). More specifically, as depicted on EIR Figure 2-2, the 83.0-acre Project site is located east of and abutting Rio del Sol, north of and abutting the future alignment of 30th Avenue, west of and abutting the future alignment of Robert Road, and south of 28th Avenue. The Project site encompasses Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 648-150-034 and 648-150-035. Under existing conditions, the Project site consists of vacant and undeveloped desert land. Land uses in the vicinity of the Project site include an existing recycling facility and vacant lands to the north of the Project site and the future alignment of Robert Road and undeveloped and agricultural lands to the east. Single family residences occur to the southeast of the Project site, with undeveloped and vacant lands and industrial uses to the south. To the west of the Project site are undeveloped and vacant lands as well as Varner Road. Refer to EIR Section 2.0 for a detailed description of local setting and surrounding land uses.

S.2.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The underlying purpose of the Project is to develop an economically viable, employment-generating warehouse distribution center that is compatible with the surrounding area and in close proximity with the State Highway system. The Project would achieve its underlying purposed and goal through the following objectives.



- A. Increase employment-generating land uses north of I-10 in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County.
- B. Strengthen the goods movement supply chain in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by locating a supply chain use close proximity to designated truck routes and the State highway system to avoid or shorten vehicular trip lengths on other roadways.
- C. Expand economic development, facilitate job creation, and increase the tax base in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by accommodating and diversifying facilities needed to support the goods movement supply chain.
- D. Increase the electric utility supply and delivery capacity for the Thousand Palms community.
- E. Provide a land use that is not sensitive to potential odor and windblown material as a transitional land use between an existing organic materials recycling facility and other businesses and residences in Thousand Palms to the south.

S.2.3 PROJECT SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The County of Riverside is the Lead Agency for the proposed Project, under whose authority this EIR has been prepared. The proposed Project consists of applications for a general Plan Amendment (GPA 220004), Change of Zone (CZ 2200013), and Plot Plan (PPT 220022). Collectively, approval of these applications would allow for the development of a 1,238,992 square foot (s.f.) warehouse building and an Imperial Irrigation District (IID) joint electric substation on the 83.0-acre property. This EIR analyzes the physical effects associated with all components of the proposed Project, including planning, construction, and ongoing operation. Specifically, the Project Applicant is requesting the following governmental approvals from Riverside County to implement the Project (refer to Chapter 3.0, *Project Description*, for a complete description of the Project's construction and operational characteristics):

- **General Plan Amendment No. 220004 (GPA 220004)** is a proposal to modify the General Plan and Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP) land uses designation on the eastern +/- half of the Project site from "Medium Density Residential (MDR)" to "Light Industrial (LI)." The western +/- half of the Project site would not be affected by GPA 220004 and would continue to be designated for LI land uses.
- **Change of Zone No. 2200013 (CZ 2200013)** is a proposal to change the zoning classification for the eastern +/- half of the Project site from "Residential – Agricultural (R-A)" to "Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC)." The western +/- half of the Project site would not be affected by CZ 2200013 and would continue to be zoned for M-SC land uses.
- **Plot Plan No. 220022 (PPT 220022)** is a proposal for the development of the 83.0-acre property with a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building that includes 20,000 s.f. of office uses and 1,218,992 s.f. of warehouse space, as well as a 50 megawatt (MW) IID joint electric substation. Other proposed features



include landscaping, parking areas, docking doors, and frontage improvements along Rio del Sol Road and 30th Avenue. Off-site improvements required to implement the Project entail limited off-site road improvements including the paving of Robert Road between 30th Avenue and Del Norte Way and the installation of power poles supporting overhead lines between the proposed onsite IID substation and existing IID facilities.

S.3 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

CEQA Guidelines § 15123(b)(2) requires that areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency (Riverside County) be identified in the Executive Summary. Substantive issues raised in response to the NOP are summarized in Table 1-1 in EIR Section 1.0. The purpose of this table is to present the primary environmental issues of concern raised by public agencies and the general public during the NOP review period. The table is not intended to list every comment received by the County during the NOP review period. Regardless of whether or not a comment is listed in the table, all applicable comments received in responses to the NOP are addressed in this EIR. Based on comments received during the NOP review period, Project impacts to the environment under the issues of air quality, cultural resources, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and tribal cultural resources were identified as potential areas of concern.

S.4 PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

S.4.1 NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE (NDA)

The No Development Alternative (NDA) considers no development/disturbance on the Project site beyond that which occurs under existing conditions. As such, the Project site would continue to consist of 83.0 acres of vacant and undeveloped land. Under the NDA, no improvements would be made to the Project site and none of the Project's roadway, utility, or other infrastructure improvements would occur. This Alternative was selected by the Lead Agency to compare the environmental effects of the proposed Project with an alternative that would leave the Project site in its existing condition.

S.4.2 NO PROJECT (EXISTING GENERAL PLAN) ALTERNATIVE

The No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative (NPA) assumes development of the 83.0-acre property in accordance with the site's existing General Plan land uses. The Project site is located within the WCVAP portion of the Riverside County General Plan. Figure 2-4 in EIR Subsection 2.0 depicts the site's existing General Plan land use designations. As shown, under existing conditions the eastern +/- 39.9 acres of the Project site are designated for "Medium Density Residential (MDR)" land uses, while the eastern +/- 43.1 acres of the Project site are designated for "Light Industrial (LI)" land uses. Based on the midpoint densities and probably intensities specified in Appendix E to the County's General Plan for residential and light industrial uses, the NPA would result in approximately 140 dwelling units within the eastern 39.9 acres of the Project site and approximately 570,741 s.f. of light industrial building area within the western portions of the Project site. Due to the reduction in the size of the proposed light industrial building, it is expected that no Imperial Irrigation District (IID) substation would need to be constructed on site. This Alternative was selected by the Lead Agency to compare the environmental effects of the proposed Project with an alternative that



would allow for buildout of the Project site in accordance with the site's existing General Plan land use designations.

S.4.3 REDUCED PROJECT ALTERNATIVE (RPA)

The Reduced Project Alternative (RPA) considers development of the 83.0-acre Project site with a smaller warehouse building than is proposed for the Project. Specifically, the RPA would allow for development of a 929,244 s.f. warehouse building in lieu of the 1,238,992 s.f. building proposed as part of the Project. The approximately 7.1 acres of the Project site that would not be developed with warehouse uses under the RPA instead would be developed with a truck trailer parking lot to serve the proposed on-site building as well as existing and future light industrial developments in the local area. As with the Project, under the RPA there would be approximately 2.5 acres on site that would be developed with a joint IID electric substation, and similar to the Project the RPA also would require the installation of power poles and power lines off site. This alternative was selected to allow the Lead Agency (Riverside County) to consider a design for the Project site that would reduce the Project's operational impacts to air quality, and impacts due to GHG emissions and VMT.

S.4.4 SMALL BUILDING ALTERNATIVE (SBA)

Pursuant to the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service and Vehicle Miles Traveled (December 2020), general light industrial developments with less than 179,000 s.f. of building area are presumed to result in a less-than-significant transportation impact due to VMT. Thus, this alternative was selected to allow the Lead Agency (Riverside County) to consider a design for the Project site that would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impact due to VMT. The Small Building Alternative (SBA) assumes the Project site would be developed with one warehouse building, but the proposed warehouse building would be reduced in size from approximately 1,238,992 s.f. under the proposed Project to approximately 175,000 s.f. under the SBA (representing a reduction in building area by approximately 85.9%). The portions of the warehouse lot not used for the building would be used for parking and trailer storage. Due to the significant reduction in the size of the building as compared to the proposed Project, it is anticipated that the IID joint electric substation would not need to be constructed on site under the SBA. All other components of the SBA would be the same as the proposed Project, including the proposed infrastructure and roadway improvements. This alternative was selected by the Lead Agency in order to evaluate an alternative that would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts to transportation, which in turn also would reduce the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts due to air quality and due to GHG emissions. The SBA is identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

S.5 EIR PROCESS

As a first step in the CEQA compliance process, Riverside County determined that the proposed Project likely would result in significant environmental effects, and distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for public review on December 1, 2022. An Initial Study was not prepared for the Project, and as such this EIR evaluates all of the environmental subject areas listed in Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, as implemented by Riverside County. This EIR has been prepared as a Project EIR pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15161. As described by State CEQA Guidelines § 15161, a Project EIR is the most common type of EIR that: 1)



examines the environmental impacts of a specific development project; 2) should focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development of the project; and 3) shall examine all phases of the project, including planning, construction, and operation.

This EIR represents the independent judgment of Riverside County (as the Lead Agency) and evaluates the physical environmental effects that could result from constructing and operating the proposed Project. Acting as Lead Agency, the County of Riverside will consider the following issues regarding the proposed Project: a) evaluation of this EIR to determine if the physical environmental impacts are adequately disclosed; b) assessment of the adequacy and feasibility of identified mitigation measures and the potential addition, modification to, or deletion of mitigation measures, standard conditions of approval, or Project design features; c) consideration of alternatives to the Project that would reduce or eliminate significant environmental effects of the Project; and, if necessary, d) consideration of Project benefits that override the Project's unavoidable and unmitigable significant effects on the environment.

Before taking action to approve the Project, the County of Riverside (serving as the Lead Agency) has the obligation to: (1) ensure this EIR has been completed in accordance with CEQA; (2) review and consider the information contained in this EIR as part of its decision making process; (3) make a statement that this EIR reflects Riverside County's independent judgment; (4) ensure that all significant effects on the environment are avoided or substantially lessened where feasible; and, if necessary (5) make written findings for each unavoidable significant environmental effect stating the reasons why mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in this EIR are infeasible and citing the specific benefits of the proposed Project that outweigh its unavoidable adverse effects (State CEQA Guidelines §§ 15090-15093).

S.6 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS, MITIGATION MEASURES AND CONCLUSIONS

S.6.1 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

An Initial Study was not prepared for the proposed Project because the County determined that an EIR clearly was required. As such, this EIR evaluates all of the environmental topics identified in Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines and in the County's standard Environmental Assessment Checklist form. There were no issues found to be not significant as a result of the Project's NOP process.

S.6.2 IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Table S-1, *Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions*, provides a summary of the proposed Project's environmental impacts, as required by State CEQA Guidelines § 15123(a). Also presented are the mitigation measures recommended by Riverside County to further avoid adverse environmental impacts or to reduce their level of significance. After the application of all feasible mitigation measures, the Project would result in significant and unavoidable environmental effects, as summarized below.

- Air Quality (AQMP Consistency): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the long-term air quality emissions of the Project, but would not reduce the Project's operational-source NO_x and VOC emissions to a level below SCAQMD regional thresholds of



significance. Additionally, the Project's proposed land uses for the eastern +/- half of the Project site are not consistent with the growth forecasts included in the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP. Thus, Project's direct and cumulatively-considerable impacts due to a conflict with or obstruction of the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP would represent a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation measures are not available.

- Air Quality (Air Pollutant Emissions): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the Project's long-term air quality emissions, although the exact reduction amount cannot be quantified. For some measures it would be overly speculative to quantify resulting emissions reductions. For instance, while the Project would install passenger car EV charging stations it cannot be determined how many zero emission vehicles would replace gasoline-fueled vehicles as a result. Additionally, in order to promote alternative fuels, and help support "clean" truck fleets, the developer/successor-in-interest at the Project must provide building occupants with information related to SCAQMD's Carl Moyer Program, or other such programs that promote truck retrofits or "clean" vehicles. Yet it cannot be reasonably predicted how many clean trucks would replace diesel-fueled trucks as a result. With other measures the reduction values cannot be quantified due to limitation in the modeling software, such as the requirement that all future cold storage warehousing be equipped with electrical hookups to eliminate idling of main and auxiliary engines during the loading and unloading process. Thus, even with implementation of these mitigation measures and with compliance with the anticipated regulations implemented by the EPA and CARB to improve truck efficiency, the estimated long-term emissions generated under full buildout of the proposed Project still would exceed the SCAQMD's regional operational significance threshold for VOCs and NO_x and would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations in the SSAB for O₃. Additionally, the predominance of the Project's operational-source emissions would be generated by passenger cars and trucks accessing the Project site. Neither the Project Applicant nor the County have regulatory authority to control tailpipe or consumer product emissions, and no feasible mitigation measures beyond the measures identified herein exist that would reduce Project operational-source VOC or NO_x emissions to levels that are less than significant. Therefore, the proposed Project's operational emissions of VOCs and NO_x would represent a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not available.
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Significant and Unavoidable Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would ensure that the proposed Project is fully consistent with the Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019) by requiring the Project Applicant to demonstrate that implementing building permit applications have incorporated measures to achieve a minimum of 100 points pursuant to the CAP Update Screening Tables, and by requiring future that future building permit applications demonstrate that on site renewable energy production equal to at least 20% of the building's energy demand has been accommodated on site pursuant to CAP measure R2-CE1. Thus, and pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d), because the Project would comply with Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019), and because the CAP Update qualifies as a "Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas



Emissions,” it could be concluded that the Project’s GHG emissions would be reduced to less-than-significant levels pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b). However, the Project prior to mitigation would emit 33,130.16 MTCO₂e/yr of GHGs, which is more than 10 times the screening threshold identified by the CAP Update of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. Thus, although implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would serve to reduce the Project’s GHG emissions and would assist the County in meeting its GHG reduction targets through 2050, the Project’s level of GHG emissions following mitigation still would be substantial and still would have the potential to have a significant impact on the environment. Accordingly, and despite the Project’s compliance with the CAP Update, the Project’s GHG emissions conservatively are evaluated as a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not currently available.

- Transportation (Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The effectiveness of commute trip reduction measures to reduce VMT are human behavior based. In addition to specific tenancy considerations, locational context is also a major factor relevant to the potential effectiveness of VMT reduction measures. A project can only realize a quantifiable reduction in commute VMT under the most favorable circumstances and ideal local conditions, which are not present in the Project site’s context. Although Mitigation Measures MM 4.18-2 and MM 4.18-2 are aimed at reducing the Project’s VMT to the maximum practical extent, it is unlikely that the mitigation would reduce the Project’s Work VMT or Total VMT per employee to below the County’s threshold of significance. Accordingly, Project impacts due to VMT would represent a significant and unavoidable impact on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
<p>located within any County Agricultural Preserves, and there are no components of the proposed Project that have the potential to adversely affect agricultural operations at the nearest agricultural preserve/Williamson Act-contracted lands. As such, the Project would not result in any impacts to agricultural preserves or Williamson Act-contracted lands, and would not result in any impacts due to a conflict with agricultural zoning. No impact would occur.</p> <p><u>Threshold c.</u>: There are no properties within 300 feet of the Project site that are zoned primarily for agricultural use, as defined by Ordinance No. 625. Furthermore, should any agricultural uses become established within 300 feet of the Project site and that have been under operation for at least three (3) years prior to Project implementation, then Riverside County Ordinance No. 625 would apply. The Project would be conditioned to require compliance with Ordinance No. 625, if applicable, which would ensure that Project-related construction and operational activities would not indirectly cause or contribute to the conversion of off-site farmland to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.</p> <p><u>Threshold d.</u>: Assuming mandatory compliance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 625, there are no components of the Project that would involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.</p> <p><u>Thresholds e., f., and g.</u>: There are no forest lands in the Project site's vicinity, and no lands in the Project vicinity are zoned for timberland,</p>	<p>No Impact</p> <p>No Impact</p> <p>No Impact</p>				



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
timberland production, or forest uses. The Project would not result in the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact would occur.					
4.3 Air Quality					
<p>Threshold a: The proposed Project's near-term construction activities would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Threshold for NO_x, while the Project's long-term operational emissions would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds for VOC and NO_x. Additionally, although approval of the Project's proposed General Plan Amendment would ensure that the Project's land uses are fully consistent with the Riverside County General Plan, the Project's proposed land uses are not consistent with the land use inputs utilized in the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP for the Project site and the Project would generate operational-source emissions of NO_x and VOCs that would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds for these pollutants. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.3-8 would ensure that all Project-related construction equipment meets CARB Tier 4 interim emission standards or better, which would reduce the Project's near-term construction-related impacts due to NO_x emissions to below a level of significance. However, while implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the long-term air quality emissions of the Project, the identified mitigation would not reduce the Project's operational-source NO_x and VOC emissions to a level below SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance. Additionally, although approval of the Project's proposed GPA 220004 would ensure the Project's land uses are fully consistent with the General Plan land use designations for the property, because the Project would result in operational VOC and NO_x</p>	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	<p>MM 4.3-1 The minimum number of automobile electric vehicle (EV) charging stations required by the California Code of Regulations Title 24 shall be provided. In addition, and to facilitate the possible future installation of infrastructure that would charge the batteries that power the motors of electric-powered trucks, the following shall be installed:</p> <p>a) At Shell building permit, an electrical room(s) and/or exterior area(s) of the site shall be designated where future electrical panels would be located for the purpose of supplying power to on-site charging facilities for electric powered trucks. Conduit shall be installed from this designated area where the panel would be located to the on-site location where the charging facilities would be located where electric-powered trucks would park and connect to charging facilities to charge the batteries that power the motors of the electric-powered trucks.</p>	Project Applicant	Riverside County Building & Safety Department	Prior to issuance of building permits for Building Shell
		<p>MM 4.3-2 Prior to issuance of building permits for future uses on site, Riverside County shall verify that passenger car Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations and designated carpool parking stalls have been accommodated per the provisions of the California Green Building Standards Code and shall verify that the plans require that each building be constructed with an adequately sized electrical panel(s) and conduit to accommodate future EV charging stations at a minimum of 5 percent of the passenger car parking spaces.</p>	Project Applicant	Riverside County Building & Safety Department	Prior to issuance of building permits
		<p>MM 4.3-3 As a component of all future lease or sales agreements, the lease or sales document shall include a provision requiring all on-site mobile equipment used as part of building operations (including yard trucks, hostlers, yard goats, pallet jacks, forklifts) shall be required to be powered by electricity, and an appropriate numbers of charging stations for the on-site equipment shall be accommodated on the site.</p>	Project Applicant, Future Building Occupants	Riverside County Planning Department	As a component of all future lease or sales agreement and during the life of the Project



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
		<p>b) Sites shall clearly mark entry and exit points for trucks and service vehicles.</p> <p>c) Sites shall be densely screened with landscaping along all bordering streets and adjacent sensitive receptors, with trees spaced no further apart than 25 feet on center. Fifty percent of the landscape screening shall include a minimum of 36- inch box trees. Facility owners and operators will be responsible for identifying a long-term maintenance mechanism to assure that the landscaping remains in place and healthy in accordance with the approved landscaping plan.</p> <p>d) Legible, durable, weather-proof signs shall be placed at truck access gates, loading docks, and truck parking areas that identify applicable California Air Resources Board (CARB) anti-idling regulations. At a minimum each sign shall include: 1) instructions for truck drivers to shut off engines when not in use; 2) instructions for drivers of diesel trucks to restrict idling to no more than five minutes; and 3) telephone numbers of the building facilities manager and CARB to report violations.</p> <p>e) Facility operators shall train their managers and employees on efficient scheduling and load management to eliminate unnecessary queuing and idling of trucks.</p> <p>f) To encourage truck drivers to take the shortest route to convenience services, signs shall be posted in appropriate locations and/or handouts should be provided that show the locations of nearest food options, fueling, truck maintenance services, and other similar convenience services.</p> <p>g) Each tenant shall designate an air quality Compliance Officer responsible for implementing the measures described herein and/or in the project conditions of approval and mitigation measures that are applicable to tenants. Contact information shall be provided to the County and updated annually, and signs shall be posted in visible locations providing the contact information for the Compliance Officer to the surrounding community. The Compliance Officer also shall coordinate with CARB and SCAQMD to obtain the latest information about regional air quality concentrations, health risks, and trucking regulations.</p> <p>h) Signs shall be posted in the appropriate locations heavy truck drivers to park and perform any maintenance of trucks in designated on-site areas and not within the surrounding community or on public</p>			

Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
		<p>streets.</p> <p>i) Facility operators for sites that exceed 250 employees shall establish a rideshare program, in accordance with AQMD rule 2202, with the intent of discouraging single-occupancy vehicle trips and promote alternate modes of transportation, such as carpooling and transit where feasible.</p> <p>Regardless as to whether they are listed above in Mitigation Measure MM 4.3-6, the Project shall comply with all other applicable provisions of Board of Supervisors' Policy F-3.</p> <p>MM 4.3-7 As a component of all future lease or sales agreements, the lease or sales document shall include a provision requiring all building tenants to utilize electric equipment for landscape maintenance to the extent feasible.</p> <p>MM 4.3-8 Prior to issuance of grading or building permits, Riverside County shall ensure that the grading and building plans include a note requiring that all offroad equipment required for Project-related construction activities shall meet CARB Tier 4 interim emission standards or better. Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with this requirement and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by County of Riverside staff or its designee to confirm compliance. This requirement also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.</p> <p>RR 4.3-1 The Project is required to comply with the provisions of SCAQMD Rule 403, "Fugitive Dust" by implementing the following dust control measures during construction activities, such as earth moving activities, grading, and equipment travel on unpaved roads. Prior to grading permit issuance, the County shall verify that the following notes are included on the grading plan. Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with the notes and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by County of Riverside staff or its designee to confirm compliance. These notes also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.</p>	<p>Project Applicant, Future Building Occupants</p> <p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p> <p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p>	<p>Riverside County Planning Department</p> <p>Riverside County Building & Safety Department</p> <p>SCAQMD, Riverside County Building & Safety Department</p>	<p>Prior to final building inspection for Tenant Improvements and during the life of the Project</p> <p>Prior to issuance of grading or building permits and during construction activities</p> <p>During construction activities</p>



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
<p>nesting yellow warbler and LeConte’s thrasher and to other nesting bird species if the species are not surveyed for and avoided pre-construction. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-1 would ensure that appropriate pre-construction surveys are conducted for the burrowing owl, and would further ensure that impacts to any individual burrowing owl(s) that may be identified are avoided, and would require preparation and implementation of a Burrowing Owl Plan in the event any burrowing owl individuals are identified during the pre-construction surveys. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-2 would ensure pre-construction nesting surveys are conducted prior to commencement of construction activities, and further requires appropriate avoidance of any active nests that may be identified. In addition, and although indirect impacts to the CVMSHCP Conservation Areas are not anticipated, implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-3 would ensure that appropriate measures are undertaken in order to preclude impacts to the Conservation Areas. Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce the Project’s potential impacts due to a conflict with the CVMSHCP to less-than-significant levels.</p> <p><u>Threshold b. and c.:</u> No sensitive vegetation communities would be impacted by the Project; thus, impacts to sensitive vegetation communities would not occur. Pertaining to plants, no federally- or State-listed threatened, endangered, or special-status plant species would be impacted other than potential impacts to the Coachella Valley milkvetch (a covered plant species), the impact to which would be less than significant with mandatory payment of CVMSHCP fees as</p>	<p>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>presence/absence of burrowing owls within 30 days prior to commencement of ground-disturbing activities at any portion of the Project site. If burrowing owls are detected on-site during the pre-construction survey, the owls shall be relocated/excluded from the site outside of the breeding season following accepted protocols, and subject to the approval of the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) and Wildlife Agencies (i.e., CDFW and/or USFWS).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Burrowing Owl Management Plan: In the event that burrowing owl is determined to be present, or in the event that an assumption is made that the burrowing owl occurs on-site, a burrowing owl management plan shall be prepared and implemented in coordination with the CVCC and CDFW that shall detail the relocation of owls from the Project site, passively and/or actively. If additional site visits determine the species is absent, then the pre-construction survey (as discussed above) shall instead be implemented. <p>The conditions of approval shall require that a copy of the results of the pre-construction survey (and all additional surveys), as well as copies of the Burrowing Owl Management Plan, if required, must be provided to the County of Riverside Planning Department for review and approval (in the case of the Burrowing Owl Management Plan) prior to any vegetation clearing and ground disturbance activities.</p> <p>MM 4.4-2 Prior to the issuance of grading permits for Plot Plan No. 220022, Riverside County shall condition the grading permit(s) to require the following. This note also shall be depicted on the Project’s grading plans, and Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with this note and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by Riverside County staff or its designee to confirm compliance. This note also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.</p> <p><i>“Vegetation clearing shall be conducted outside of the bird nesting season (generally February 1 through July 31) to the extent feasible. If avoidance of the nesting season is not feasible, a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist</i></p>	<p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p>	<p>Riverside County Building & Safety Department, Riverside County Environmental Programs Department</p>	<p>Prior to issuance of grading permits and during vegetation clearing activities</p>



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
<p>required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 875. Pertaining to wildlife species, although there is a remote potential the Project could result in impacts to Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, this species is covered under the CVMSHP and Project impacts would be less than significant with mandatory payment of CVMSHP fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 875. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-1 would ensure that appropriate pre-construction surveys are conducted for the burrowing owl, and would further ensure that impacts to any individual burrowing owl(s) that may be identified are avoided, and would require preparation and implementation of a Burrowing Owl Plan in the event any burrowing owl individuals are identified during the pre-construction surveys. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-2 would ensure pre-construction nesting surveys are conducted prior to commencement of construction activities, and further requires appropriate avoidance of any active nests that may be identified. Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce Project impacts to the burrowing owl and nesting birds to below a level of significance.</p> <p><u>Threshold d.</u>: The Project site does not contain any wildlife nursery sites. The Project site is approximately 1,200 feet southwest of the CVMSHCP-designated Thousand Palms Linkage and is not within a wildlife corridor. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to wildlife movement corridors and linkages.</p> <p><u>Threshold e.</u>: The Project would physically impact up to 40.2 acres of developed areas, less than 0.1-</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p> <p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>	<p><i>within no more than 72 hours of such scheduled disturbance, to determine the presence of nests or nesting birds. If active nests are identified, the biologist shall establish appropriate buffers around the vegetation (typically 500 feet for raptors and sensitive species, 300 feet for non-raptors/non-sensitive species). All work within these buffers shall be halted until the nesting effort is finished (i.e., the juveniles are surviving independent from the nest). The biologist shall review and verify compliance with these nesting boundaries and shall verify the nesting effort has finished. Work may resume within the buffer area when no other active nests are found. Alternatively, a qualified biologist may determine that construction can be permitted within the buffer areas and would develop a monitoring plan to prevent any impacts while the nest continues to be active (eggs, chicks, etc.). Upon completion of the survey and any follow-up construction avoidance management, a report shall be prepared and submitted to Riverside County for mitigation monitoring compliance record keeping. If vegetation removal is not completed within 72 hours of a negative survey during nesting season, the nesting survey must be repeated to confirm the absence of nesting birds."</i></p> <p>MM 4.4-3 Best management practices in compliance within the CVMSHCP Guidelines shall apply to avoid and minimize impacts on adjacent native habitat. Prior to issuance of grading and/or building permits, Riverside County shall review the grading and/or building plans to ensure the following requirements are either depicted on the plans, or included as notes on the building or grading plans. Construction contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with these requirements and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by Riverside County staff or its designee to confirm compliance. These requirements also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prior to the allowance of nighttime construction work, Riverside County shall review the plans to ensure that a note is included requiring that all lighting be oriented inward toward the Project site and away from the northeastern boundaries of the Project site. 	<p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p>	<p>Riverside County Building & Safety Department</p>	<p>Prior to issuance of grading or building permits and during construction activities</p>

Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
		<p>submitted to the County Project planner and/or inspector, the appropriate Project supervisor/engineer/etc., and monitoring Native American tribe(s), if any.</p> <p>MM 4.5-4 Preconstruction Meeting: The Archaeological Monitor shall be invited to a preconstruction meeting with construction personnel and County and tribal representatives. The attending archaeologist shall review the provisions of the CRMP and answer any applicable questions.</p> <p>MM 4.5-5 Construction Monitoring: Full-time monitoring shall occur throughout the entire Project area, including all off-site improvement areas, during ground-disturbing activities. Full-time monitoring shall continue until the Archaeological Monitor required pursuant to Mitigation Measure MM 4.5-1 determines that the overall sensitivity of the Project area has been reduced from high to low as a result of mitigation monitoring. Should the monitor(s) determine that there are no cultural resources within the Project site or off-site improvement areas, or should the sensitivity be reduced to low during monitoring, all monitoring shall cease.</p> <p>MM 4.5-6 Unanticipated Discoveries: If subsurface cultural resources are encountered during construction, if evidence of an archaeological/historical site is observed, or if other suspected historic resources are encountered, all ground-disturbing activity shall cease within 100 feet of the resource. In such a case, the County Archaeologist shall be immediately notified. A meeting shall be convened between the developer, the Archaeological Monitor (as required by Mitigation Measure MM 4.5-1), the Native American tribal representative (or other appropriate ethnic/cultural group representative) required pursuant to Mitigation Measure MM 4.5-2, and the County Archaeologist to discuss the significance of the find. Potentially significant cultural resources could consist of, but are not limited to: stone, bone, fossils, wood, or shell artifacts or features, including structural remains, historic dumpsites, hearths, and middens. Midden features are characterized by darkened soil and could conceal material remains, including worked stone, fired clay vessels, faunal bone, hearths, storage pits, or burials and special attention should</p>	<p>Project Applicant, Project Archaeologist</p> <p>Project Applicant, Project Archaeologist</p> <p>Project Applicant, Project Archaeologist</p>	<p>Tribal Monitor, County Archaeologist, Planning Department</p> <p>Tribal Monitor, County Archaeologist, Planning Department</p> <p>Tribal Monitor, County Archaeologist, Planning Department</p>	<p>Prior to commencement of construction activities</p> <p>During all construction-related ground-disturbing activities</p> <p>In the event of unanticipated discovery of subsurface cultural resources</p>

Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
		<p>always be paid to uncharacteristic soil color changes. Any previously undiscovered resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance under all applicable regulatory criteria. At the meeting with the aforementioned parties, a decision is to be made, with the concurrence of the County Archaeologist, as to whether the identified resource comprises a unique historic resource as defined under § 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and as to the appropriate treatment (documentation, recovery, avoidance, etc.) for the identified cultural resource. Resource evaluations shall be limited to nondestructive analysis. Further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until the appropriate treatment has been accomplished.</p> <p>MM 4.5-7 Curation: Any archaeological artifacts recovered as a result of mitigation, excluding items covered by the provisions of applicable Treatment Plans or Agreements, shall be donated to the Western Science Center in Hemet or as directed by the County Archaeologist, where they would be afforded long-term preservation. The Developer/Applicant is responsible for all costs and fees associated with curation of the artifacts.</p> <p>MM 4.5-8 Final Phase IV Report: The results of the mitigation monitoring program shall be incorporated into a final report and submitted to the Riverside County Planning Department for review and approval. Upon approval by the Lead Agency, the final report, including any associated DPR 523 Forms, shall be submitted to the Developer/land Owner, the Eastern Information Center (EIC), and the monitoring tribe(s), if any.</p> <p>RR 4.5-1 Unless otherwise required by law, the site of any reburial of Native American human remains or associated grave goods shall not be disclosed and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act. The Coroner, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code Section 6254 (r), parties, and Lead Agencies, will be asked to withhold public disclosure information related to such reburial, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California</p>	<p>Project Applicant, Project Archaeologist</p> <p>Project Applicant, Project Archaeologist</p> <p>As required by Government Code Section 6254 (r)</p>	<p>County Archaeologist, Planning Department</p> <p>County Archaeologist, Planning Department</p> <p>As required by Government Code Section 6254 (r)</p>	<p>Following discovery of previously- undiscovered archaeological artifacts</p> <p>Following completion of the mitigation monitoring program</p> <p>As required by Government Code Section 6254 (r)</p>

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		<p>Government Code 6254 (r).</p> <p>RR 4.5-2 In the event that human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing construction activities on site or within the Project's off-site improvement areas, compliance with California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 and Public Resources Code § 5097 et. seq. shall be required. State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to Public Resource Code Section 5097.98(b) remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made. The County Coroner shall determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required, and determine if the remains are of Native American origin. In the event that the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be contacted within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the "Most Likely Descendant." The Most Likely Descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the NAHC is unable to identify a Most Likely Descendant, or if the Most Likely Descendant failed to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being notified by the NAHC, or the Project Applicant rejects the recommendation of the Most Likely Descendant, the Project Applicant shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods on the property in a location not subject to further ground disturbance. Evidence of compliance with this mitigation measure, if human remains are found, shall be provided to Riverside County upon the completion of a treatment plan and final report detailing the significance and treatment finding.</p>	Project Applicant, Project Archaeologist	County Archaeologist, Planning Department, NAHC, County Coroner	Upon the discovery of any human remains
4.6 Energy					
<u>Threshold a.</u> : Project construction and operations would not result in the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy. Further, the energy demands of the Project can be	Less-than-Significant Impact	RR 4.6-1 The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude energy consumption impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition	N/A	N/A	N/A



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<p>accommodated within the context of available resources and energy delivery systems. The Project would not engage in wasteful or inefficient uses of energy and aims to achieve energy conservation goals within the State of California. As such, Project impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources would be less than significant requiring no mitigation.</p> <p><u>Threshold b:</u> Energy consumed by the Project’s operation is calculated to be comparable to, or less than, energy consumed by other single-family residential projects of similar scale and intensity that are operating in California, as the Project would be subject to current regulatory requirements, such as the 2022 version of Title 24, which was not in effect when most existing residential developments were constructed. Based on the analysis presented herein, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>	<p>for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pavley Fuel Efficiency Standards (AB1493). Establishes fuel efficiency ratings for new vehicles. ▪ Renewable Portfolio Standards (SB 100): Increases California’s RPS requirement to 50% renewable resources target by December 31, 2026, and to achieve a 60% target by December 31, 2030. SB 100 also requires that retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities procure a minimum quantity of electricity products from eligible renewable energy resources so that the total kilowatt hours (kWh) of those products sold to their retail end-use customers achieve 44% of retail sales by December 31, 2024, 52% by December 31, 2027, and 60% by December 31, 2030. In addition to targets under AB 32 and SB 32, Executive Order B-55-18 establishes a carbon neutrality goal for the state of California by 2045; and sets a goal to maintain net negative emissions thereafter. The Executive Order directs the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), the Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and CARB to include sequestration targets in the Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan consistent with the carbon neutrality goal. ▪ CCR Title 13, Motor Vehicles, Section 2449(d)(3): Idling. Grading plans shall reference the requirement that a sign shall be posted on-site stating that construction workers need to shut off engines at or before five minutes of idling. 			
<p>4.7 Geology and Soils</p>					
<p><u>Thresholds a. and c:</u> No active or potentially active fault is known to exist at the Project site nor is the site situated within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Thus, impacts due to rupture of a known earthquake would be less than significant. The Project site and vicinity is subject to seismic ground shaking associated with earthquakes. A significant impact could occur if the Project was not constructed in accordance with</p>	<p>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>MM 4.7-1 Prior to issuance of grading or building permits, the Riverside County Building and Safety Department shall verify that all of the recommendations given in the Project’s geotechnical study, entitled “Geotechnical Investigation, Majestic Thousand Palms, NEC Rio Del Sol Road & 30th Avenue,” dated September 17, 2021, prepared by Sladden Engineering, and included as Technical Appendix E to the Project’s EIR, are incorporated into the construction and grading plans. The recommendations primarily address the need for remedial grading including over-excavation and re-compaction</p>	<p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p>	<p>Riverside County Building and Safety Department</p>	<p>Prior to issuance of grading or building permits</p>



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<p>the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (<i>Technical Appendix E</i>). Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.7-1 would ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated into grading and/or building permit applications to address seismic-related hazards in conformance with the CBSC, the Riverside County Building Code, and the Project's site-specific Geotechnical Investigation (EIR Technical Appendix E). With implementation of the required mitigation, impacts due to strong seismic ground shaking would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.</p> <p><u>Threshold b.</u>: Groundwater levels in the Project area are in excess of 50 feet below the existing ground surface. The potential for liquefaction impacting the Project is therefore considered negligible. Thus, the Project would not be subject to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, and no impact would occur.</p> <p><u>Threshold d.</u>: The areas to be physically impacted by the Project are situated on relatively level ground and are not immediately adjacent to any slopes or hillsides that could be potentially susceptible to slope instability. There are no signs of slope instability in the form of landslides, rock falls, earthflows, or slumps. Accordingly, the Project would not be located on an unstable geologic unit and would not result in on- or off-site landslide hazards, and no impact would occur. Additionally, due to the lack of shallow groundwater, the potential for lateral spreading is low and potential impacts associated with lateral spreading would be less than significant. Static settlement of the Project site would be induced by subjecting the existing grades to design grades</p>	<p>No Impact</p> <p>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>within the building areas to support foundation bearing soil. Recommendations also address building footings, slab on grade construction, and pavement design. Specific recommendations for site preparation are presented in the Earthwork and Grading section of the report. Alternatively, the Project shall comply with the findings and recommendations of any geotechnical studies that may be required in association with future grading and/or building permits.</p> <p>RR 4.7-1 The Project is required to comply with the provisions of County Ordinance Nos. 457 and 460. Ordinance No. 457 requires that all projects comply with California Building Codes and the International Building Codes. These codes establish site-specific investigation requirements, construction standards, and inspection procedures to ensure that development does not pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the public, and includes requirements related to erosion. Ordinance No. 460 sets forth soil erosion control requirements and requires preparation and implementation of a wind erosion control plan.</p> <p>RR 4.7-2 The Project is required to comply with the provisions of SCAQMD Rule 403, by addressing blowing dust from the Project's construction activities.</p> <p>RR 4.7-3 The Project is required to comply with the provisions of the County's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, and the future-required Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Compliance with the NPDES permit and the future-required SWPPPs would ensure an effective combination of erosion control and sediment control measures (i.e., Best Management Practices) are implemented to reduce or eliminate sediment discharge to surface water from stormwater and non-stormwater discharges.</p>	<p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p> <p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p> <p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p>	<p>Building and Safety Department</p> <p>Building and Safety Department, SCAQMD</p> <p>Building and Safety Department, Santa Ana RWQCB</p>	<p>As specified by Ordinance Nos. 457, 460, and 547</p> <p>As specified by Rule 403</p> <p>During construction activities and long-term operations</p>



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<p>(adding fill) and by the proposed structural building loads. The geotechnical report prepared for the Project site includes site-specific recommendations to attenuate potential hazards, including hazards due to collapse. Impacts due to collapse hazards could occur if proposed grading activities are not conducted in accordance with the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Update (<i>Technical Appendix E</i>), which is a potentially significant direct impact of the proposed Project. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.7-1 would ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated into future grading and/or building permit applications to address the potential for collapse hazards. With implementation of the required mitigation, impacts due to collapse hazards would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.</p> <p><u>Threshold e.</u>: The Project site is susceptible to ground subsidence and a significant impact due to ground subsidence could occur if future development on site were to fail to comply with the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (<i>Technical Appendix E</i>). Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.7-1 would ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated into future grading and/or building permit applications to address the potential for ground subsidence hazards. With implementation of the required mitigation, impacts due to ground subsidence hazards would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.</p> <p><u>Threshold f.</u>: There are no volcanoes in the Project region; thus, no impacts due to volcanic hazards would occur. Areas to be physically impacted by the Project are situated at an elevated</p>	<p>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p> <p>No Impact</p>				



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<p>inland location and are not immediately adjacent to any impounded bodies of water. Thus, the risk of seiches affecting the Project are considered negligible and no impacts due to seiches would occur with implementation of the Project. Areas to be physically impacted by the Project are situated on relatively level ground and are not immediately adjacent to any slopes or hillsides that could be potentially susceptible to slope instability. There are no signs of slope instability in the form of landslides, rock falls, earthflows, or slumps on or near the site. Accordingly, areas to be physically impacted by the Project are not subject to mudflow hazards, and no impact would occur.</p> <p><u>Threshold g.</u>: Areas to be physically impacted by the project have flat and gently sloping topography. The Project would not result in a substantial change in topography or ground surface relief features, and impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold h.</u>: Manufactured slopes are proposed along the northern Project site boundary, which would be constructed at a maximum gradient of approximately 2:1 (horizontal:vertical) and would measure up to 16 feet in height. A retaining wall also is proposed at the base of the northern slope that would measure up to four feet in height. Slopes also are proposed around the proposed retention basins in the southern portion of the Project site, which would measure approximately 30 feet in height and would be constructed at a maximum gradient of 3:1. Although the slopes would exceed a height of 10 feet, site-specific recommendations are provided in the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (Technical Appendix E), which would ensure that proposed slopes are</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p> <p>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>				



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<p>grossly stable. A potentially significant impact could occur if site grading activities do not comply with the site-specific recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.7-1 would ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated into future grading and/or building permit applications to ensure that any slopes higher than 10 feet would be grossly stable. With implementation of the required mitigation, impacts associated with unstable slopes would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.</p> <p><u>Threshold i:</u> There are no subsurface sewage disposal systems on the Project site under existing conditions. Thus, the Project would not result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems, and no impact would occur.</p> <p><u>Threshold L:</u> Sewer service to the proposed Project would be provided by the CVWD, and no septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed as part of the Project. As such, no impact associated with septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would occur.</p> <p><u>Thresholds j. and m.:</u> The Project would not result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. The Project Applicant would be required to obtain an NPDES permit for construction activities and adhere to a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) as well as SCAQMD Rule 403 and Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 457 and 460. With mandatory compliance to these regulatory requirements, the potential for water and wind erosion impacts during construction would be less than significant. Following development, wind and</p>	<p>No Impact</p> <p>No Impact</p> <p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>				



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<p>production equal to at least 20% of the building’s energy demand has been accommodated on site pursuant to CAP measure R2-CE1. Thus, and pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d), because the Project would comply with Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019), and because the CAP Update qualifies as a “Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions,” it could be concluded that the Project’s GHG emissions would be reduced to less-than-significant levels pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b). However, the Project prior to mitigation would emit 33,130.16 MTCO₂e/yr of GHGs, which is more than 10 times the screening threshold identified by the CAP Update of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. Thus, although implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would serve to reduce the Project’s GHG emissions and would assist the County in meeting its GHG reduction targets through 2050, the Project’s level of GHG emissions following mitigation still would be substantial and still would have the potential to have a significant impact on the environment. Accordingly, and despite the Project’s compliance with the CAP Update, the Project’s GHG emissions conservatively are evaluated as a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not currently available.</p> <p><u>Threshold b.:</u> The Project would be consistent with or otherwise would not conflict with the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan and the SCAG 2024-2050 RTP/SCS. However, the Project has the potential to conflict with the Riverside County CAP Update if the Project were unable to achieve 100 points pursuant to the CAP Screening Tables</p>	<p>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>square feet of commercial, office, industrial, or manufacturing development shall be required to offset the energy demand through renewable energy production. Renewable energy production shall be onsite generation of at least 20% of energy demand for commercial, office, industrial or manufacturing development. Prior to issuance of each building permit, the Project Applicant shall provide documentation to the County of Riverside Building & Safety Department demonstrating compliance with CAP measure R2-CE1, which shall include calculations of the building’s estimated energy demands as well as calculations showing that the on-site renewable energy production would achieve at least 20% of the building’s energy demands.</p>		<p>Building & Safety Department</p>	



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<p>requiring best management practices during construction activities. With implementation of the proposed Project under long-term conditions, all runoff generated on site would be appropriately treated by the Project's BMPs. Thus, the Project would not adversely affect surface or groundwater quality. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality; would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge; and would not conflict with the Colorado River Region Basin Plan or result in adverse groundwater quality impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Thresholds c. and f.:</u> With implementation of the Project's proposed drainage plan, all runoff tributary to the Project site and generated on the Project site would be directed to proposed retention basins within the southern portions of the Project site. The vast majority of runoff would be allowed to infiltrate into the groundwater table. As such, implementation of the proposed Project would not result in an increase in peak runoff from the Project site and therefore would not result in the alteration of the existing alignment of any downstream receiving waters. Additionally, the Project would not contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold d.:</u> With mandatory adherence to the SWPPP requirements, Project-related effects associated with construction-related erosion, siltation, water quality, and flooding on</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p> <p>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>Applicant shall obtain a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) from FEMA to verify that the Project site has been graded in such a manner as to remove areas planned for development with warehouse and IID substation uses from areas subject to flooding hazards.</p> <p>RR 4.10-3 The Project Applicant is required to comply with the provisions of the required NPDES permit, and the required SWPPP. Compliance with the NPDES permit and the SWPPP would identify and implement an effective combination of erosion control and sediment control measures (i.e., Best Management Practices) to reduce or eliminate discharge to surface water from storm water and non-stormwater discharges.</p>	<p>Project Applicant, Construction Contractors</p>	<p>Safety Department</p> <p>Building & Safety Department, Santa Ana RWQCB</p>	<p>shell building permits</p> <p>During long-term operations</p>



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<p>downstream water sources and flood control systems would be maintained at a level below significance. However, if installation of off-site IID power poles are not covered by the Project's SWPPP, short-term construction-related erosion impacts have the potential to be significant during off-site power pole installation. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.10-1 would reduce to less-than-significant levels the potential for construction-related soil erosion and erosion-related water quality impacts during installation of IID power poles and lines by requiring best management practices during construction activities. During long-term operation of the Project, large portions of the Project site would consist of impervious surfaces, r substantially decreasing erosion potential as compared to existing conditions. Additionally, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would infiltrate into the groundwater table via the proposed retention basins, the Project has no potential to exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Additionally, the retention basins have been designed to treat the Project's pollutants of concern, including heavy metals, nutrients, sediment/turbidity, trash/debris, and oil/grease, the Project would not provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Operational impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Thresholds e. and g.:</u> Although the Project site occurs within a mapped floodplain, as a standard regulatory requirement (see Code of Federal Regulations Title 44 Parts 60, 65, and 72), the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA prior to the issuance of grading and building permits.</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>				

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<p>respectively, which would ensure the developed portions of the Project site are removed from the mapped floodplain. Accordingly, with completion of the CLOMR and LOMR processes, the Project would not impede or redirect flood flows. Additionally, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be fully retained on site and would infiltrate into the groundwater table, the Project has no potential to increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site. Impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold h.</u>: The Project would be required to obtain a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA, which would ensure that the warehouse and electrical substation portions of the Project are removed from the mapped floodplain. With completion of the CLOMR and LOMR processes, the Project would not risk the release of pollutants due to site inundation from floods, and impacts would be less than significant. The Project site is located approximately 72 miles from the Pacific Ocean, and as such there is no potential for the Project site to be inundated with tsunamis. The Project site is situated at an elevated inland location and is not immediately adjacent to any impounded bodies of water, and the risk of seiches affecting the Project site are considered “negligible.” As such, the Project would not be subject to inundation due to seiches, and no impact would occur.</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>				
<p>4.11 Land Use and Planning</p>					
<p><u>Threshold a.</u>: The Project would not conflict with the General Plan, WCVAP, Connect SoCal, or any other land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Impacts would be less than</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>	<p>Impacts to land use and planning would be less than significant; therefore, mitigation measures are not required.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>



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<p>significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold b.</u>: The Project would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community (including a low-income or minority community), and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	Less-than-Significant Impact				
4.12 Mineral Resources					
<p><u>Threshold a.</u>: According to the CDC, land that would be physically impacted by the Project is classified as MRZ 3, which includes “areas containing mineral deposits the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.” Therefore, the Project is not proposed on land that contains known mineral resources that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State. Accordingly, Project would have no adverse impact to known mineral resources.</p> <p><u>Threshold b.</u>: Land that would be physically impacted by the Project is not designated as a mineral resource recovery site by the County’s General Plan or the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP). Additionally, the Project site does not occur within any specific plans or other land use plans that identify the Project site as a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Accordingly, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan, and no impact would occur.</p> <p><u>Threshold c.</u>: Although lands within 0.75-mile of the Project site are subject to on-going mining operations, the Project’s proposed warehouse and electric substation uses and associated off-site</p>	<p>No Impact</p> <p>No Impact</p> <p>No Impact</p>	<p>The Project would result in less-than-significant mineral resources impacts; therefore, mitigation measures are not required.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A



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<p>would not expose people residing or working in the area to excessive private airport-related noise, and impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold c.:</u> The construction noise analysis shows that the nearby receiver locations would not be exposed to Project-related construction noise levels exceeding the 80 dBA Leq significance threshold resulting in less-than-significant impacts at all receiver locations. Additionally, Table 4.13-10 shows that Project-related noise impacts during nighttime concrete pouring activities also would not expose any nearby sensitive receptors to noise levels exceeding the FTA 70 dBA Leq nighttime residential noise level threshold at all the nearest noise sensitive receiver locations.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, Urban Crossroads recommends noise abatement measures during typical construction activities and during nighttime concrete pouring activities. In addition, and although impacts are anticipated to be less than significant, the Project has the potential to result in significant noise impacts during construction of the off-site IID utility poles and power lines; this is evaluated as a significant impact on a direct basis. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.13-1 would ensure that appropriate noise attenuation measures are implemented during the construction activities, including during nighttime concrete pouring activities and during construction and installation of the off-site IID power poles and power lines. Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce the Project’s potential impacts due to construction-related noise to less-than-significant levels. Project operational-related noise levels would not exceed the daytime noise level standard of 55 dBA Leq and would not exceed the nighttime noise level standard of 45</p>	<p>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>receivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The construction contractor shall limit equipment and material deliveries to the same hours specified for construction equipment (between the hours of 6:00am to 6:00pm during the months of June through September and 7:00am to 6:00pm during the months of October through May). ▪ Electrically powered air compressors and similar power tools shall be used, when feasible, in place of diesel equipment. ▪ No music or electronically reinforced speech from construction workers shall be allowed. <p>RR 4.13-1 The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude noise. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA’s definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All construction activities and haul truck deliveries shall adhere to Section 2.i of Riverside County Ordinance No. 847, which prohibits construction activities that make loud noise from occurring between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. during the months of June through September, and between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. during the months of October through May, and on Sundays and federal holidays. Exceptions to these time restrictions may be granted pursuant to Section 7 of Ordinance No. 847 (e.g., if needed to accommodate nighttime concrete pouring activities). ▪ All future implementing developments shall comply with Riverside County Board of Supervisors Policy F-3, “Good Neighbor” Policy for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses. Applicable measures related to noise, include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provision 2.5: Construction contractors shall locate or park all stationary construction equipment so that the emitted noise is directed away from sensitive receptors nearest the project site, to the extent practicable. ○ Provision 3.1: Warehouse/distribution facilities should be generally designed so that truck bays and loading docks are a 	<p>As specified by Ordinance No. 847</p> <p>As specified by Board of Supervisors Policy F-3</p>	<p>As specified by Ordinance No. 847</p> <p>As specified by Board of Supervisors Policy F-3</p>	<p>As specified by Ordinance No. 847</p> <p>As specified by Board of Supervisors Policy F-3</p>



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
<p>dba Leq. Additionally, daytime and nighttime operational noise increases would not exceed 1.5 dBA, and therefore would not exceed the applicable noise increase criteria (5.0 dBA). Accordingly, Project-related operational noise impacts would be less than significant. Table 4.13-16 through Table 4.13-18 demonstrate that Project traffic-related noise increases would not exceed the noise level increase thresholds under EAC 2025 or HY 2045 conditions. As such, Project-related traffic noise increases would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold d.</u>: At distances ranging from 1,329 to 1,709 feet from Project construction activities, construction vibration velocity levels are 0.000 to 0.001 in/sec PPV and would remain below the continuous vibration threshold of 0.3 PPV at all receiver locations. Therefore, the Project-related vibration impacts would be less than significant during the construction activities at the Project site. Under long-term operating conditions, all trucks generated by the Project would travel along County roadways that are regularly maintained to prevent discontinuous pavement (e.g., potholes); thus, and based on guidance from Caltrans, the Project's operational traffic-related vibration impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>	<p>minimum of 300 feet, measured from the property line of the sensitive receptor to the nearest dock door using a direct straight-line method. This distance may be reduced if the site design include berms or other similar features to appropriately shield and buffer the sensitive receptors from the active truck operations areas. Other setbacks appropriate to the site's zoning classification shall be incorporated in the design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Provision 3.6: On-site speed bumps shall not be allowed except at security/entry gates. Truck loading bays and drive aisles shall be designed to minimize truck noise. o Provision 3.7: Dock doors shall be located where they are not readily visible from sensitive receptors or major roads. If it is necessary to site dock doors where they may be visible, a method to screen the dock doors shall be implemented. A combination of landscaping, berms, walls, and similar features shall be considered. o Provision 3.8: An additional "wing-wall" shall be installed perpendicular to the loading dock areas to further attenuate noise related to truck activities and also address aesthetics by screening the loading area when adjacent to sensitive receptors. o Provision 3.12: Facility construction shall comply with the hours of operation and exterior noise decibel levels as required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 847 ("Noise Ordinance"). o Provision 4.10: If a public address (PA) system is being used in conjunction with a warehouse/distribution facility operations, the PA system shall be oriented away from sensitive receptors and the volume set at a level not readily audible past the property line. o Provision 4.11: Facility Operation shall comply with the exterior noise decibel levels as required by Ord. 847 (Noise Ordinance), which includes a maximum exterior decibel level of 55 dba (between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.) and 45 dba (between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.) as measured on adjacent occupied residences, or as modified by the most current version of Ordinance No. 847. 			
<p>4.14 Paleontological Resources</p>					



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
<p>Threshold a.: The Project would not impact any known paleontological resources or unique geological features. However, there is a remote potential that fossils may be discovered during grading and earthmoving activities. In the remote event that paleontological resources are uncovered during grading and earthmoving activities, Mitigation Measure MM 4.14-1 would ensure that the area where the resource(s) was identified is subject to monitoring, and would further ensure that any uncovered fossils are appropriately treated. With implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.14-1, the Project's potential impacts to previously-undiscovered paleontological resources would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>MM 4.14-1 Prior to grading permit issuance, the Riverside County shall verify that the following notes are included on the grading plans. Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with these notes and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by Riverside County staff or its designee to confirm compliance. These notes also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors. These requirements only shall apply in the event that a paleontological resource(s) is uncovered during Project grading and earthmoving activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If paleontological resources are discovered during earth disturbance activities, the discovery shall be cordoned off with a 100-foot radius buffer so as to protect the discovery from further potential damage, and a county-qualified paleontologist shall be consulted to assess the discovery. If the discovery is determined to be significant by the paleontologist, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) shall be initiated, which shall include notification of appropriate personnel involved and monitoring of earth disturbance activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a paleontological resource(s) are uncovered, monitoring of mass grading and excavation activities in areas identified as likely to contain paleontological resources shall be performed by a qualified paleontologist or paleontological monitor. Monitoring shall be conducted full-time in areas of grading or excavation in undisturbed sedimentary deposits. ○ Paleontological monitors shall be equipped to salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays. The monitor must be empowered to temporarily halt or divert equipment to allow removal of abundant or large specimens in a timely manner. Monitoring may be reduced if the potentially fossiliferous units are not present in the subsurface, or, if present, are determined on exposure and examination by qualified paleontological personnel to have low potential to contain fossil resources. The monitor shall notify the project paleontologist, who will then notify the concerned parties of the discovery. ○ Paleontological salvage during trenching and boring activities is typically from the generated spoils and does not delay the 	<p>Project Applicant, Project Paleontologist</p>	<p>County Geologist, Riverside County Planning Department</p>	<p>Prior to the issuance of grading permits and during grading and ground-disturbing activities</p>

Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
		<p>trenching or drilling activities. Fossils shall be collected and placed in cardboard flats or plastic buckets and identified by field number, collector, and date collected. Notes shall be taken on the map location and stratigraphy of the site, which is photographed before it is vacated, and the fossils are removed to a safe place. On mass grading projects, discovered fossil sites shall be protected by flagging to prevent them from being overrun by earthmovers (scrapers) before salvage begins. Fossils shall be collected in a similar manner, with notes and photographs being taken before removing the fossils. Precise location of the site shall be determined with the use of handheld GPS units. If the site involves remains from a large terrestrial vertebrate, such as large bone(s) or a mammoth tusk, that is/are too large to be easily removed by a single monitor, a fossil recovery crew shall excavate around the find, encase the find within a plaster and burlap jacket, and remove it after the plaster is set. For large fossils, use of the contractor's construction equipment may be solicited to help remove the jacket to a safe location.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Isolated fossils shall be collected by hand, wrapped in paper, and placed in temporary collecting flats or five-gallon buckets. Notes shall be taken on the map location and stratigraphy of the site, which is photographed before it is vacated, and the fossils are removed to a safe place. ○ Particularly small invertebrate fossils typically represent multiple specimens of a limited number of organisms, and a scientifically suitable sample can be obtained from one to several five-gallon buckets of fossiliferous sediment. If it is possible to dry screen the sediment in the field, a concentrated sample may consist of one or two buckets of material. For vertebrate fossils, the test is usually the observed presence of small pieces of bones within the sediments. If present, as many as 20 to 40 five-gallon buckets of sediment can be collected and returned to a separate facility to wet-screen the sediment. ○ In accordance with the "Microfossil Salvage" section of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology guidelines (2010:7), bulk sampling and screening of fine-grained sedimentary deposits (including carbonate-rich paleosols) must be performed if the 			

Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
		<p>deposits are identified to possess indications of producing fossil “microvertebrates” to test the feasibility of the deposit to yield fossil bones and teeth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In the laboratory, individual fossils shall be cleaned of extraneous matrix, any breaks shall be repaired, and the specimen, if needed, shall be stabilized by soaking in an archivally approved acrylic hardener (e.g., a solution of acetone and Paraloid B-72). ○ Recovered specimens shall be prepared to a point of identification and permanent preservation (not display), including screen-washing sediments to recover small invertebrates and vertebrates. Preparation of individual vertebrate fossils is often more time-consuming than for accumulations of invertebrate fossils. ○ Identification and curation of specimens into a professional, accredited public museum repository with a commitment to archival conservation and permanent retrievable storage (e.g., Western Science Center [WSC], Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County [LACM], San Diego Natural History Museum [SDNHM], San Bernardino County Museum [SBCM], or Riverside Municipal Museum [RMM]) shall be conducted. The paleontological program shall include a written repository agreement prior to the initiation of mitigation activities. Prior to curation, the lead agency (i.e., Riverside County) shall be consulted on the repository/museum to receive the fossil material. ○ A final report of findings and significance shall be prepared, including lists of all fossils recovered and necessary maps and graphics to accurately record their original location(s). The report, when submitted to, and accepted by, the appropriate lead agency, shall signify satisfactory completion of the Project program to mitigate impacts to any potential nonrenewable paleontological resources (i.e., fossils) that might have been lost or otherwise adversely affected without such a program in place. 			
4.15 Population and Housing					
Threshold a: Areas to be physically disturbed by	No Impact	No significant environmental impacts related to population and	N/A	N/A	N/A



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
4.18 Transportation					
<p><u>Threshold a.</u>: The only applicable programs, plans, ordinances, or policies addressing the circulation system in the Project area are the Riverside County General Plan and Riverside County ordinances. EIR Technical Appendix M includes an analysis of the Project consistency with the policies of the Riverside County General Plan, and demonstrates that the proposed Project would not conflict with applicable General Plan policies, including policies contained within the General Plan Circulation Element. Additionally, the Project would not conflict with Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 413, 452, 460, 461, 499, 659, 671, 748, or 824, which are the applicable ordinances within the County related to the circulation system. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	Less-than-Significant Impact	<p>MM 4.18-1 Prior to the issuance of grading permits or improvement plans affecting Rio Del Sol and/or prior to grading or improvement plans allowing for the construction of the off-site Imperial Irrigation District (IID) power poles, the Project Applicant shall prepare and Riverside County shall approve a temporary traffic control plan to ensure maintained vehicle flow in both directions on Rio Del Sol and along the route of the off-site IID power poles. The temporary traffic control plan(s) shall comply with the applicable requirements of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CMUTD). A requirement to comply with the temporary traffic control plan shall be noted on all grading and building plans and also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.</p> <p><i>The following measures relate to VMT reduction. The reduction of VMT involves travel behavior change related to individuals' attitudes, goals, and travel choices. The following mitigation measures are included to encourage these changes but it is acknowledged that Riverside County has no involvement in private lease negotiations among and between private property owners, building owners, and building tenants and has no enforcement authority over leases.</i></p>	Project Applicant, Construction Contractors	Riverside County Building & Safety Department	Prior to issuance of grading permits or improvement plans allowing for the construction of off-site IID power poles
<p><u>Threshold b.</u>: Project-generated Work VMT per employee would be approximately 26.6 miles, which would exceed the County's adopted threshold of 14.2 miles by 87.3%. Additionally, the Project's Total VMT per Service Population would be approximately 70.4 miles, which would exceed the existing County-wide average by 142.8%. Accordingly, the Project would result in a significant impact due to the Project's VMT on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis. Although Mitigation Measures MM 4.18-2 and MM 4.18-3 are aimed at reducing the Project's VMT to the maximum practical extent, it is unlikely that the mitigation would reduce the Project's Work VMT or Total VMT per employee</p>	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	<p>MM 4.18-2 Local Hire Program: Future building lease or sales agreements shall include a requirement to implement a local hire program, with the goal of attracting employees that live within a 12-mile radius of the Project site.</p> <p>MM 4.18-3 Voluntary Commute Trip Reduction Program: Future building lease or sales agreements shall include a requirement to implement a voluntary program to discourage single-occupancy vehicle trips for employees and encourage alternative modes of transportation such as carpooling, taking transit, walking, and biking. Examples of potential Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program features include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designated Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC): An 	Project Applicant, Future Tenants	Riverside County Planning Department	As a condition of future building lease or sales agreements
			Project Applicant, Future Tenants	Riverside County Planning Department	As a condition of future building lease or sales agreements



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
bike lanes or bike facilities are proposed as part of the Project. Impacts associated with physical improvements to these roadways are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject heading (e.g., biological resources, etc.). There would be no impacts to the environment specifically related to the construction of this community trail that have not already been evaluated and mitigated for throughout this EIR. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.					
4.19 Tribal Cultural Resources					
<u>Threshold a.</u> : The Project has the potential to result in significant impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources during ground-disturbing construction activities in the absence of protective measures. Implementation of EIR Mitigation Measures MM 4.5-1 through MM 4.5-8 would ensure monitoring of ground-disturbing activities by an Archaeological Monitor and Tribal Monitor, and further would ensure the appropriate treatment of any Tribal Cultural Resources that may be identified during Project-related ground-disturbing activities. Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce potential Project impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources to below a level of significance.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Mitigation Measures MM 4.5-1 through MM 4.5-8 and RR 4.5-1 and RR 4.5-2 shall apply.	As specified for Mitigation Measures MM 4.5-1 through MM 4.5-8 and RR 4.5-1 and RR 4.5-2	As specified for Mitigation Measures MM 4.5-1 through MM 4.5-8 and RR 4.5-1 and RR 4.5-2	As specified for Mitigation Measures MM 4.5-1 through MM 4.5-8 and RR 4.5-1 and RR 4.5-2
4.20 Utilities and Service Systems					
<u>Threshold a.</u> : Although the Project would require construction of new or expanded water, wastewater conveyance, and stormwater drainage systems, impacts associated with the construction of such facilities are evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are	Less-than-Significant Impact	RR 4.20-1 The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude impacts associated with utilities and service systems. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project is required to comply with the provisions of the 	As set forth by AB	As set forth by AB	As set forth by AB



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
<p>identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project’s impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project’s proposed water, sewer, and drainage improvements that have not already been addressed. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to water, sewer, and drainage improvements would be less than significant. Additionally, the Project’s wastewater generation would represent approximately 2.2% of the 5.0 mgd secondary treatment capacity at WRP 7 and approximately 4.5% of the 2.5 mgd tertiary treatment capacity at WRP 10. Additionally, the Project’s wastewater generation would represent 0.6% of the 18 mgd treatment capacity at WRP 10. Accordingly, the Project would not result in or require the expansion of the existing facilities at the WRP 7 or WRP 10, and impacts would therefore be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold b.:</u> The RUWMP demonstrates that the CVWD would have sufficient water supplies even during single and multiple dry years to meet the projected demand within its district through year 2045. Because the Project’s anticipated water demand would be within the demand projections identified by the RUWMP, it can be concluded that the TVWD would have sufficient water supplies to serve the Project based on existing entitlements and resources. Additionally, the Project would not 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. Furthermore, although the CVWD anticipates it will require an increase in imported</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>	<p>California Solid Waste Integrated Waste Management Act, (AB 939, 1989) which mandates a reduction of disposed waste throughout California.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Project is required to comply with the provisions of the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Act (AB 1327) which developed a model ordinance for adoption of recyclable materials in development projects. AB 1327 requires all development projects that are commercial, industrial, institutional, or marina in nature and where solid waste is collected and loaded, to provide an adequate area for collecting and loading recyclable materials over the lifetime of the project. The area is required to be provided before building permits are issued. ▪ The Project is required to comply with the provisions of the Mandatory Commercial Recycling Program (AB 341): AB 341 made a legislative declaration that it is the policy goal of the state that not less than 75% of solid waste generated be source reduced, recycled, or composted by the year 2020, and required the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, by January 1, 2014, to provide a report to the Legislature that provides strategies to achieve that policy goal and also includes other specified information and recommendations. ▪ The Project would be subject to the following applicable standard conditions of approval imposed on the Project by the RCDWR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prior to issuance of a building permit, a Waste Recycling Plan (WRP) shall be submitted to the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources for approval. At a minimum, the WRP must identify the materials (i.e., cardboard, concrete, asphalt, wood, etc.) that will be generated by construction and development, the projected amounts; the measures/methods that will be taken to recycle, reuse, and/or reduce the amount of material; the facilities and/or haulers that will be utilized; and the targeted recycling or reduction rate. During Project construction, the Project site shall have, at a minimum, two bins: one for waste disposal and the other for the recycling of Construction and Demolition (C&D) materials. Additional 	<p>939</p> <p>As set forth by AB 1327</p> <p>As set forth by AB 341</p> <p>Project Applicant, Future Building Occupants/ Tenants</p>	<p>939</p> <p>As set forth by AB 1327</p> <p>As set forth by AB 341</p> <p>RCDWR</p>	<p>939</p> <p>As set forth by AB 1327</p> <p>As set forth by AB 341</p> <p>Prior to issuance of a building permit, prior to final building inspection, and during the life of the proposed Project</p>



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<p>water, the CVWD anticipates such demands would be met through the DCFP, Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project, and Sites Reservoir Project. Impacts to the environment associated with these programs currently are being evaluated as part of project-level EIRs for the DCFP, Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project, and Sites Reservoir Project (SCH Nos. 2020010227, 2019011027, and 2001112009, respectively), and there are no components of the Project’s anticipated water demand that would result in increased impacts to the environment beyond what is already evaluated as part of these EIRs. Accordingly, physical impacts to the environment resulting from the Project’s incremental increase in demand for potable water would be less than significant on a Project-level basis.</p> <p><u>Threshold c.</u>: Impacts associated with the Project’s proposed sewer improvements are inherent to the Project’s construction phase, and impacts have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project’s impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project’s proposed sewer improvements that have not already been addressed in pertinent sections of this EIR. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to proposed sewer improvements would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold d.</u>: The Project’s wastewater generation would represent approximately 2.4% of the 5.0 mgd secondary treatment capacity at WRP 7 and</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p> <p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>	<p>bins are encouraged to be used for further source separation of C&D recyclable materials. Accurate record keeping (receipts) for recycling of C&D recyclable materials and solid waste disposal must be kept. Arrangements can be made through the franchise hauler.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Prior to final building inspection, evidence (i.e., receipts or other type of verification) to demonstrate Project compliance with the approved WRP shall be presented by the Project proponent to the Planning Division of the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources in order to clear the project for occupancy permits. Receipts must clearly identify the amount of waste disposed and Construction and Demolition (C&D) materials recycled. o Hazardous materials are not accepted at Riverside County landfills. In compliance with federal, State, and local regulations and ordinances, any hazardous waste generated in association with the Project shall be disposed of at a permitted Hazardous Waste disposal facility. Hazardous waste materials include, but are not limited to, paint, batteries, oil, asbestos, and solvents. 			



Table S-1 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Conclusions

Summary of Impacts	Significance Determination	Mitigation Measures (MM) and Regulatory Requirements (RR)	Responsible Parties	Monitoring Parties	Implementation Stage
<p>approximately 4.8% of the 2.5 mgd tertiary treatment capacity at WRP 7. Additionally, the Project's wastewater generation would represent 0.7% of the 18 mgd treatment capacity at WRP 10. Accordingly, the Project would not result in or require the expansion of the existing facilities at WRP 7 or WRP 10, and impacts would therefore be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold e.</u>: The Lamb Canyon Landfill would have adequate capacity to handle solid waste generated by the Project's construction and operational phases. The Project would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><u>Threshold f.</u>: With mandatory compliance to AB 939, AB 341, SB 1383, and RCDWR's programs and policies, the Project would not result in a significant impact due to noncompliance with regulations related to solid waste. A less-than-significant impact would occur.</p> <p><u>Threshold g.</u>: Impacts associated with the construction or expansion of utility facilities would be less than significant or otherwise mitigated to the maximum feasible extent by this EIR. No additional mitigation would be required.</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p> <p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p> <p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>				
4.21 Wildfire					
<p><u>Threshold a.</u>: The Project site and surrounding areas are not identified as evacuation routes, and there are no adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans applicable to the Project area. During construction and at Project</p>	<p>Less-than-Significant Impact</p>	<p>RR 4.21-1 The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude wildfire-related impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the</p>			



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susceptibility to wildfire hazards, indicating that the chance of wildfires affecting these areas is negligible. Therefore, the Project would not 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, and no impact would occur.					



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all public agencies within the State of California having land use approval over project activities that have the potential to adversely affect the quality of the environment, regulate such activities so that impacts to the environment can be prevented to the extent feasible. Such activities are reviewed and monitored through the CEQA compliance process, as provided in the CEQA Statute (Public Resources Code Sections 21000- 21177, as amended) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387, as amended).

Under CEQA, if there is substantial evidence that a project may have a significant effect on the physical environment, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(a)(1)). This document serves as an EIR for the proposed Majestic Thousand Palms Project. For purposes of this EIR, the term “Project” refers to all actions associated with implementation of the Majestic Project including its planning, construction, and ongoing operations. The term “Project Applicant” used herein refers to Majestic Realty Co., which is the entity that submitted applications to the County of Riverside (herein, “County”) to entitle the Project. The term “Project site” refers to the property upon which the Project is proposed. The public agency with the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project or the first public agency to make a discretionary decision to proceed with a proposed project should ordinarily act as the Lead Agency pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15050-15051. The term “Lead Agency” used herein refers to the County of Riverside. Throughout this document, the terms “Draft EIR” and “Final EIR” may be used interchangeably since both are part of the ultimate EIR record; however, “Draft EIR” may be used specifically when referring to information provided in the volume made available for the CEQA-required 45-day public review period.

1.1 PURPOSES OF CEQA AND THIS EIR

This EIR has been prepared in compliance with CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 2100 et. seq.), as amended, and the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15000 et. seq.), as amended. As stated by State CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(a), the basic purposes of CEQA are to:

- Inform governmental decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities.
- Identify the ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced;
- Prevent significant avoidable damage to the environment by requiring changes in projects through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when the governmental agency finds the changes to be feasible; and
- Disclose to the public the reasons why a governmental agency approved the project in the manner the agency chose if significant environmental effects are involved.



The purposes of this EIR are to inform public agency decision-makers and the general public about the potentially significant environmental effects of the Majestic Thousand Palms Project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the Project that would feasibly attain most of the basic Project objectives but would avoid or substantially lessen its significant environmental effects (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15121(a)). This EIR is an informational document that represents the independent judgment of Riverside County. Staff in the County’s Planning Department reviewed and, as necessary, directed revisions to all submitted drafts, technical studies, and reports supporting this EIR for consistency with County policies and requirements, reviewed the Project materials to ensure that this EIR reflects Riverside County’s independent judgment. Governmental approvals requested from Riverside County by the Project Applicant include:

1. Adoption by resolution of General Plan Amendment No. 220004 (GPA 220004);
2. Adoption by ordinance of Change of Zone No. 2200013 (CZ 2200013);
3. Approval by resolution of Plot Plan No. 220003 (PPT 220022); and
4. Certification of this EIR.

Other related discretionary and administrative actions that are required to construct and operate the Project described in this EIR are listed in Section 3.0, *Project Description*. This document complies with all criteria, standards, and procedures of CEQA §§ 21000 *et seq.* and State CEQA Guidelines §§ 15000 *et seq.*

As a first step in the CEQA-compliance process, Riverside County determined that implementation of the Project has the potential to result in significant environmental effects, and a Project EIR, as defined by State CEQA Guidelines § 15161, is required. As stated in State CEQA Guidelines § 15161, a Project EIR should “...focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development project” and “...examine all phases of the project including planning, construction, and operation.” This EIR represents the independent judgment of Riverside County (as the Lead Agency) and evaluates the physical environmental effects that could result from constructing and operating the proposed Project. Acting as Lead Agency, Riverside County will consider the following issues regarding the proposed Project: a) evaluation of this EIR to determine if the physical environmental impacts are adequately disclosed; b) assessment of the adequacy and feasibility of identified mitigation measures and the potential addition, modification to, or deletion of mitigation measures, standard conditions of approval, or Project design features; c) consideration of alternatives to the Project that would reduce or eliminate significant environmental effects of the Project; and, if necessary, d) consideration of Project benefits that override the Project’s unavoidable and unmitigable significant effects on the environment.

Accordingly, and in conformance with CEQA Guidelines § 15121(a), the purposes of this EIR are to: (1) disclose information by informing public agency decision makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects associated with all phases of the Project, (2) identify possible ways to minimize or avoid those significant effects, and (3) to describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project that would feasibly attain most of the basic Project objectives but would avoid or substantially lessen its significant environmental effects.



Before taking action to approve the Project, the County of Riverside (serving as the Lead Agency) has the obligation to: (1) ensure this EIR has been completed in accordance with CEQA; (2) review and consider the information contained in this EIR as part of its decision-making process; (3) make a statement that this EIR reflects Riverside County’s independent judgment; (4) ensure that all significant effects on the environment are avoided or substantially lessened where feasible; and, if necessary (5) make written findings for each unavoidable significant environmental effect stating the reasons why mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in this EIR are infeasible and citing the specific benefits of the proposed Project that outweigh its unavoidable adverse effects (State CEQA Guidelines §§ 15090-15093).

The roles and responsibilities of the County of Riverside Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for Project-related approvals are as follows.

- **The Planning Commission:** The Planning Commission will recommend to the Board of Supervisors whether the Project’s applications, which include GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022, should be approved, modified, or denied, and will recommend to the Board of Supervisors whether to certify the Final EIR (FEIR) with or without modifications.
- **Board of Supervisors:** The Board of Supervisors will decide whether to approve, modify, or deny GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022. Project-related approvals will be subject to a noticed public hearing held before the Board of Supervisors. Upon approval or conditional approval of the Project and certification of this EIR by the Board of Supervisors, the County would conduct additional discretionary and administrative level reviews as needed to implement the Project.

This EIR and all supporting technical appendices are available for review at the Riverside County Planning Department, 4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor, Riverside, CA 92501, during the County’s regular business hours, can be requested in electronic form by contacting the County Planning Department, or can be accessed from the Planning Department’s main web page (<https://planning.rctlma.org/>) under the “CEQA Environmental Noticing” heading.

1.2 SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATED BY THIS EIR

The County of Riverside is the Lead Agency for the proposed Project, under whose authority this EIR has been prepared. For purposes of this EIR, the term “Project” refers to the Project’s discretionary applications (GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022) and the discretionary and ministerial actions required to implement the Project, as proposed, and all of the activities associated with Project implementation including planning, construction, and long-term operations.

In summary, the Project Applicant is proposing development of a 1,238,992 square foot (s.f.) warehouse building and an Imperial Irrigation District (IID) 50 megawatt (MW) joint electric substation on an 83.0-acre property located at the northeast corner of Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue in the Thousand Palms community of unincorporated Riverside County. The Project also would require off-site road improvements and the construction of power poles supporting overhead lines between the proposed IID substation and existing IID



facilities. Governmental approvals requested from Riverside County by the Project Applicant include the following:

- **General Plan Amendment No. 220004 (GPA 220004)** is a proposal to modify the General Plan land uses designation on the eastern +/- half of the Project site from “Medium Density Residential (MDR)” to “Light Industrial (LI).” The western +/- half of the Project site would not be affected by GPA 220004 and would continue to be designated for LI land uses.
- **Change of Zone No. 2200013 (CZ 2200013)** is a proposal to change the zoning classification for the eastern +/- half of the Project site from “Residential – Agricultural (R-A)” to “Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC).” The western portion of the Project site would not be affected by CZ 2200013 and would continue to be zoned for M-SC land uses.
- **Plot Plan No. 220022 (PPT 220022)** is a proposal for the development of the 83.0-acre property with a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building that includes 20,000 s.f. of office uses and 1,218,992 s.f. of warehouse space, as well as a 50 MW IID joint electric substation. Other proposed features include landscaping, parking areas, docking doors, and frontage improvements along Rio Del Sol Road and 30th Avenue. Off-site improvements required to implement the Project entail limited off-site road improvements including the paving of Robert Road between 30th Avenue and Del Norte Way and the installation of power poles supporting overhead lines between the proposed onsite IID substation and existing IID facilities.

Refer to Section 3.0, *Project Description*, for a detailed description of these requested discretionary actions and the proposed physical and operational characteristics of the Project. Other related discretionary and administrative actions that are required to construct and operate the Project are also described in Section 3.0.

1.3 CEQA COMPLIANCE PROCESS

CEQA (Public Resources Code, §§ 21000- 21177) requires that all public agencies within the State of California, having land use approval over project activities that have the potential to affect the quality of the environment, shall regulate such activities so that impacts to the environment can be prevented to the extent feasible. Such activity is reviewed and monitored through the CEQA process, as provided in the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, §§ 15000-15387). CEQA distinguishes varied levels of documentation and public review based on a project’s anticipated level of effect on the environment.

When it is determined through preliminary review that a project may likely have one or more significant effects upon the environment, then an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared. The “scope” of the EIR may be determined through preparation of an Initial Study and a public scoping process. The EIR should consider both the potential project-specific (direct and indirect) and cumulative environmental impacts that could result from the implementation of the proposed project.



Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15121, the EIR is primarily an informational document intended to inform the public agency decision-makers and the general public of the potentially significant effects of a proposed project. The EIR should disclose all known potentially significant impacts; identify feasible means to minimize or mitigate those effects; and consider a number of feasible alternatives to the project that might further reduce significant impacts while still attaining the project objectives. The decision-makers must consider the information in an EIR before taking action on the proposed project. The EIR may constitute substantial evidence in the record to support the agency’s action on the project.

The EIR is prepared by or under the direction of the Lead Agency, which for the proposed Project is the County of Riverside. The County of Riverside is the public agency that has the primary responsibility for approving or carrying out the Project. Further, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, which are public agencies that have a level of discretionary approval over some component of the proposed Project, may rely upon the EIR prepared by the County of Riverside.

An EIR is prepared in two key stages. First, a Draft EIR is prepared and distributed for public and agency review. Once comments on the Draft EIR are received, responses to those comments and any additional relevant project information are prepared and compiled in a Final EIR. Both of these documents (i.e., the Draft EIR and the Final EIR), along with any related technical appendices and reference sources, represent the complete record of the EIR. Throughout this document, the terms Final EIR or Draft EIR may be used interchangeably since both are part of the ultimate EIR record; however, “Draft EIR” may be used specifically when referring to information provided in the volume made available for the CEQA-required 45-day public review period.

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines § 15087, this Draft EIR will be made available for review by the public and public agencies for a minimum period of 45 days to provide comments “on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated” (State CEQA Guidelines § 152049(a)). Responses to written comments received during the public review period will be included in the Final EIR. During the decision-making process, the Project and its design features, objectives, merits, environmental consequences, and socioeconomic factors, among other information contained in the Project’s administrative record, will be considered by Riverside County decision-makers. If the Final EIR is certified and the Project approved, Riverside County and other public agencies with permitting authority over all, or portions, of the Project would be able to rely on the Final EIR as part of their permitting processes to evaluate the environmental effects of the Project as they pertain to the approval or denial of applicable permits.

1.4 EIR SCOPE, FORMAT, AND CONTENT

1.4.1 EIR SCOPE

Pursuant to the procedural requirements of CEQA, on December 1, 2022, the County filed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) with the California Office of Planning and Research’s (OPR) State Clearinghouse (SCH) and the Riverside County Clerk to indicate that an EIR would be prepared to evaluate the Project’s potential to impact the environment. An Initial Study was not prepared for the Project, and as such this EIR evaluates



all of the environmental subject areas listed in Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, as implemented by Riverside County. The NOP was distributed to surrounding property owners, responsible and trustee agencies, and other interested parties for a 30-day public review period that commenced on December 1, 2022, and concluded on January 6, 2023. The NOP was distributed for public review to solicit responses to help the County identify the full scope and range of potential environmental concerns associated with the Project so that these issues could be fully examined in this EIR.

In addition, Riverside County held a publicly-noticed EIR Scoping Meeting on December 12, 2022, using a combination in-person meeting and an internet-based virtual platform (Zoom). At the Scoping Meeting, the County provided information about the proposed Project, the intended scope of the EIR, and provided opportunity for public agencies and members of the general public to comment on the scope of environmental issues to be addressed in this EIR.

The NOP, public review distribution list, and written comments received by Riverside County during the NOP public review period are provided in *Technical Appendix A* to this EIR. Please refer to Table 1-1, *Summary of NOP Comments*, for summarized comments received during the NOP public review period. The purpose of this table is to present a summary of the environmental topics that were expressed by public agencies, interested parties, and members of the general public to be of primary interest. Table 1-1 is not intended to list every comment received by the County during the NOP review period. Regardless of whether or not an environmental or CEQA-related comment is listed in the table, all relevant comments received in response to the NOP and during the EIR Scoping Meeting are addressed in this EIR.

Table 1-1 Summary of NOP Comments

Commenter	Comment	EIR Section(s) Where Comment is Addressed
State		
Center for Biological Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests that the EIR adequately assess and mitigate the Project’s cumulative impacts on air quality in the region. 	EIR Subsection 4.0 (Environmental Analysis) and Subsection 4.3 (Air Quality)
CARE CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests mailed notice of all records related to the Project. 	
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends an assessment and inventory of habitats and species located within the Project footprint. Requests that the EIR include a thorough discussion of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to biological resources, as well as an analysis of reasonable alternatives to the Project. 	EIR Subsection 4.0 (Environmental Analysis), Subsection 4.4 (Biological Resources), and Section 6.0 (Alternatives)
Native American Heritage Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States the requirements of AB 52 and SB 18. 	EIR Subsection 4.5 (Cultural Resources) and EIR Section 4.19 (Tribal Cultural Resources)



Table 1-1 Summary of NOP Comments

Commenter	Comment	EIR Section(s) Where Comment is Addressed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides recommendations for Project-specific Cultural Resource Assessments 	
Regional		
Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests that the DEIR identify mitigation measures in order to reduce the impact that truck traffic serving the Project has on surrounding communities. 	EIR Subsection 4.3 (Air Quality), Subsection 4.8 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), and Subsection 4.18 (Transportation)
Coachella Valley Water District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests the submission of a Project-specific Water Supply Assessment (WSA). 	EIR Subsection 4.20 (Utilities and Service Systems)
Imperial Irrigation District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States the plan of service for the IID Substation located on the Project site. States design guidelines and CEQA analysis requirements for the IID Substation. 	EIR Subsection 3.0 (Project Description)
South Coast Air Quality Management District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends a Project-specific mobile health risk assessment due to Project-related diesel-fueled vehicular trips. Notes potential public health impacts due to the proposed Project and existing land uses. Lists potential mitigation measures to reduce operational air quality impacts. 	EIR Subsection 4.3 (Air Quality)
Local		
Teamsters Local 1932	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests that cumulative impacts, particularly energy demands, greenhouse gas emissions, and air quality, include consideration for all warehouse projects in the region. 	EIR Subsection 4.0 (Environmental Analysis), Subsection 4.3 (Air Quality), Subsection 4.6 (Energy), and Subsection 4.8 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions)

As previously indicated, an Initial Study was not prepared for the proposed Project because the County determined that an EIR was clearly required. As such, this EIR evaluates all of the environmental topics identified in Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines and in the County’s standard Environmental Assessment Checklist form. Based on Appendix G and the County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist form, and in consideration of all comments received by Riverside County on the NOP and during the EIR Scoping Meeting, Section 4.0 of this EIR evaluates the Project’s potential to cause adverse effects to the following environmental issue areas:



- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Paleontological Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

1.4.2 USE OF THIS EIR

Riverside County will release the Draft EIR for a minimum 45-day public review period and make the Draft EIR and its supporting technical appendices available for review in electronic form on the County’s website, located at <https://planning.rctlma.org/>. During the 45-day review period, comments on the content of the Draft EIR can be submitted to:

Riverside County – Planning Department
Attn: Russell Brady, Project Planner
P.O. Box 1409
Riverside, CA 92502-1409
Email: rbrady@rivco.org

Public comments should be focused “on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 152049(a)).

Following the Draft EIR’s 45-day public review period, the County will then respond in writing to all submitted comments pertaining to an environmental effect and publish a Final EIR. Before taking action to approve the Project, Riverside County (serving as the Lead Agency) has the obligation to: (1) ensure this EIR has been completed in accordance with CEQA; (2) review and consider the information contained in this EIR as part of its decision making process; (3) make a statement that this EIR reflects the County’s independent judgment; (4) ensure that all significant effects on the environment are avoided or substantially lessened where feasible; and, if necessary (5) make written findings for each unavoidable significant environmental effect stating the reasons why mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in this EIR are infeasible and citing the specific benefits of the proposed Project that outweigh its unavoidable adverse effects (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15090-15093).



Project-related decision-making hearings will be subject to noticed public hearings held before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, which will include consideration of the information contained in the Final EIR and the associated administrative record. The roles and responsibilities of the Riverside County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for Project-related approvals are as follows.

- **Planning Commission:** The Planning Commission will make advisory recommendations to the Board of Supervisors whether proposed GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022 should be approved, approved with changes, or not approved, and will recommend to the Board of Supervisors whether to certify the Final EIR with or without modifications.
- **Board of Supervisors:** The Board of Supervisors will decide whether to certify the Final EIR and whether to approve, approve with changes, or deny GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022.

During the decision-making processes, the Project and its design features, objectives, merits, environmental consequences, and socioeconomic factors, among other information contained in the Project's administrative record, will be considered by Riverside County. If the Final EIR is certified and GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022 are approved, Riverside County and other public agencies with permitting authority over all or portions of the Project would be able to rely on the Final EIR as part of their permitting and approval processes to evaluate the environmental effects of the Project as they pertain to the approval or denial of applicable permits. County staff also would rely on the certified Final EIR to subsequently conduct administrative level reviews for implementing permits and approvals.

1.4.3 CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THIS EIR

This EIR contains all of the information required to be included in an EIR as specified by the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines (California Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et. seq. and California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 5). This EIR is organized in the following manner:

- **Section S.0, Executive Summary**, provides an overview of the EIR document and CEQA-compliance process. The Project and its objectives are described, and the location and regional setting of the Project site is documented. In addition, the Executive Summary discloses potential areas of controversy related to the Project, including those issues identified by other agencies and the public, and identifies potential alternatives to the proposed Project that would reduce or avoid significant impacts, as required by CEQA. Finally, the Executive Summary provides a summary of the Project's impacts, mitigation measures, and conclusions, in a table that forms the basis of the EIR's Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program (MMRP).
- **Section 1.0, Introduction**, provides introductory information about the CEQA process and the responsibilities of Riverside County, serving as the Lead Agency for this EIR; a brief description of the Project; the purpose of this EIR; applications submitted by the Project Applicant that would require discretionary approvals from Riverside County; and an overview of the EIR format.



- **Section 2.0, Environmental Setting**, describes the environmental setting, including an overview of the regional and local setting, as well as descriptions of the Project site’s physical conditions and surrounding context. The existing setting is defined as the condition of the Project site and surrounding area at the approximate date this EIR’s NOP was released for public review on December 1, 2022. The setting discussion also addresses the relevant regional planning documents that apply to the Project site and vicinity.
- **Section 3.0, Project Description**, serves as the EIR’s Project Description for purposes of CEQA and contains a level of specificity commensurate with the level of detail proposed as part of the Project, including the summary requirements pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. This section provides a detailed description of the Project, including its purpose and main objectives; design features; landscaping; site drainage; utilities; grading and construction characteristics; and operational characteristics expected over the Project’s lifetime. In addition, the discretionary actions required of Riverside County and other government agencies to implement the Project are discussed.
- **Section 4.0, Environmental Analysis**, provides an analysis of the potential direct, indirect, and cumulatively considerable impacts that may occur from implementing the proposed Project. Topics that were found to have no potential of being significantly impacted are discussed in Section 5.0, *Other CEQA Considerations*. A conclusion concerning significance is reached for each discussion, and mitigation measures are presented as warranted. The environmental changes identified in Section 4.0 and throughout this EIR are referred to as “effects” or “impacts” interchangeably. The State CEQA Guidelines also describe the terms “effects” and “impacts” as being synonymous (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15358).

In the environmental analysis subsections of Section 4.0, the existing conditions are disclosed that are pertinent to the subject area being analyzed, accompanied by a specific analysis of physical impacts that may be caused by implementing the proposed Project. Impacts are evaluated on a direct, indirect, and cumulative basis. Direct impacts are those that would occur directly as a result of the proposed Project. Indirect impacts represent secondary effects that would result from Project implementation. Cumulative effects are defined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 as “...two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.”

The analysis in Section 4.0 is based in part upon technical studies that are appended to this EIR. Information also is drawn from other sources of analytical materials that directly or indirectly relate to the proposed Project and are cited in EIR Section 7.0, *References*. Where the analysis demonstrates that a physical adverse environmental effect may or would occur without undue speculation, feasible mitigation measures are recommended to reduce or avoid the significant effect. Mitigation measures must be fully enforceable, have an essential nexus to a legitimate governmental interest, and be “roughly proportional” to the impacts of the Project. The discussion then indicates whether the identified mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance. In most cases, implementation of the mitigation measures would reduce the adverse environmental impacts to below



a level of significance. If mitigation measures are not available or feasible to reduce an identified impact to below a level of significance, the environmental effect is identified as a significant and unavoidable adverse impact, for which a Statement of Overriding Considerations would need to be adopted by Riverside County pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093.

- **Section 5.0, Other CEQA Considerations**, includes specific topics that are required by CEQA. These include a summary of the Project’s significant and unavoidable environmental effects, a discussion of the significant and irreversible environmental changes that would occur should the Project be implemented, as well as potential growth-inducing impacts of the proposed Project. Section 5.0 also includes a discussion of the potential environmental effects that were found not to be significant during the preparation of this EIR.
- **Section 6.0, Project Alternatives**, describes and evaluates alternatives to the proposed Project that could reduce or avoid the Project’s adverse environmental effects. CEQA does not require an EIR to consider every conceivable alternative to the Project but rather to consider a reasonable range of alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. A range of four (4) alternatives is presented in Section 6.0, including a No Development Alternative, No Project Alternative, Reduced Project Alternative, and Small Building Alternative.
- **Section 7.0, References**, cites all reference sources used in preparing this EIR and lists the agencies and persons that were consulted during preparation of this EIR. Section 7.0 also lists the persons who authored or participated in preparing this EIR.

CEQA requires that an EIR contain, at a minimum, certain specified content. Table 1-2, *Location of CEQA Required Topics*, provides a quick reference in locating the CEQA-required sections within this document.

1.4.4 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15147 states that the “information contained in an EIR shall include summarized... information sufficient to permit full assessment of significant environmental impacts by reviewing agencies and members of the public,” and that the “placement of highly technical and specialized analysis and data in the body of an EIR shall be avoided.” State CEQA Guidelines Section 15150 allows for the incorporation “by reference all or portions of another document... [and is] most appropriate for including long, descriptive, or technical materials that provide general background but do not contribute directly to the analysis of a problem at hand.” The purpose of incorporation by reference is to assist the Lead Agency in limiting the length of this EIR. Where this EIR incorporates a document by reference, the document is identified in the body of the EIR, citing the appropriate section(s) of the incorporated document and describing the relationship between the incorporated part of the referenced document and this EIR.

Therefore, the detailed technical studies, reports, and supporting documentation that were used in preparing this EIR are bound separately as Technical Appendices. The Technical Appendices are available for review at



Table 1-2 Location of CEQA Required Topics

CEQA Required Topic	State CEQA Guidelines Reference	Location in this EIR
Table of Contents	§ 15122	Table of Contents
Summary	§ 15123	Section S.0
Project Description	§ 15124	Section 3.0
Environmental Setting	§ 15125	Section 2.0
Consideration and Discussion of Environmental Impacts	§ 15126 and § 15126.2(a)	Section 4.0
Energy Conservation	§ 15126.2(b) and Appendix F	Subsection 4.5
Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot be Avoided if the Proposed Project is Implemented	§ 15126.2(c)	Section 4.0 & Subsection 5.1
Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would be Involved in the Proposed Project Should it be Implemented	§ 15126.2(d)	Subsection 5.2
Growth-Inducing Impacts of the Proposed Project	§ 15126.2(e)	Subsection 5.3
Consideration and Discussion of Mitigation Measures Proposed to Minimize Significant Effects	§ 15126.4	Section 4.0 & Table S-1
Consideration and Discussion of Alternatives to the Proposed Project	§ 15126.6	Section 6.0
Effects Not Found to be Significant During the EIR Scoping Process	§ 15128	Subsection 5.4
Organizations and Persons Consulted	§ 15129	Section 7.0 & Technical Appendices
Discussion of Cumulative Impacts	§ 15130	Section 4.0

the Riverside County Planning Department, located at 4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor, Riverside, CA 92501, or on the Planning Department’s web site, located at <https://planning.rctlma.org/>. The individual technical studies, reports, and supporting documentation that comprise the Technical Appendices are as follows:

- A. Initial Study, Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Written Comments on the NOP
- B1. Air Quality Impact Analysis
- B2. Mobile Source Health Risk Assessment
- C1. Biological Resources and MSHCP Consistency Report
- C2. Aquatic Resources Delineation Report
- C3. Corps Determination Letter
- D. Cultural Resources Assessment
- E. Energy Analysis
- F. Geotechnical Evaluation
- G. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report
- H. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- I1. Water Quality Management Plan
- I2. Hydrology Report



- K1. Traffic Analysis
- K2. Vehicle Miles Travelled Analysis
- K3. Supplemental Truck Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis
- L. Water Supply Assessment
- M. Project Correspondence
- N. General Plan Consistency Analysis
- O. “Good Neighbor Policy” Consistency Analysis

Other reference sources that are incorporated into this EIR by reference are listed in Section 7.0, *References*, of this EIR. In most cases, documents or websites not included in the EIR’s Technical Appendices are cited for convenience by a link to the online location where the document/website can be viewed by the public. All references relied upon by this EIR are included as part of Riverside County’s Administrative Record pertaining to the proposed Project.

1.5 RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

The California Public Resource Code Section 21104 requires that all EIRs be reviewed by Responsible and Trustee Agencies (see also State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082 and Section 15086(a)). As defined by State CEQA Guidelines Section 15381, “the term ‘Responsible Agency’ includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project.” A “Trustee Agency” is defined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15386 as “a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project which are held in trust for the people of the State of California.” The known Responsible and Trustee Agencies for the Majestic Thousand Palms Project are listed below. Regardless, this EIR can be used by any Trustee Agency or Responsible Agency, whether identified in this EIR or not, as part of their decision-making processes in relation to the proposed Project.

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** is identified as a Responsible Agency pertaining to the issuance of a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) and Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) to remove the Project’s development area footprint from mapped flood hazard areas.
- **Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)** is identified as a Trustee Agency that is responsible for the protection of California’s water resources and water quality. The Colorado River Basin RWQCB is responsible for issuance of a Construction Activity General Construction Permit and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit to ensure that on-site water flows do not result in siltation, other erosional effects, or degradation of surface or subsurface water quality. The Colorado River Basin RWQCB also would be responsible for issuing a Waste Discharge Permit for Project impacts to Colorado River Basin RWQCB jurisdictional areas pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act.
- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)** is identified as a Trustee Agency that is responsible for the protection of fish and wildlife resources, and has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically



sustainable populations of those species. The CDFW would be responsible for issuing a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) pursuant to Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code.

- **South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)** is identified as a Responsible Agency, in the event that any future tenant/user of the Project site requires a permit to construct or permit to operate. These permits are required to install or operate equipment pursuant to SCAQMD Rules related to specific types and quantities of air pollutant emissions.
- **Imperial Irrigation District (IID)** is identified as a Responsible Agency and would be responsible for approving the design and development of the proposed on-site IID substation, installation of power poles and overhead lines off site, and for approving the Project's proposed improvements to connect to IID's electrical grid.
- **Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)** is identified as a Responsible Agency pertaining to the approval of the Project's proposed water and wastewater system connections and improvements and for issuing the Project's Water Supply Assessment ("WSA"; EIR *Technical Appendix L*). CVWD also is responsible for approval of the Project's flood control and drainage system.
- **Southern California Gas Company (SCG)** is identified as a Responsible Agency pertaining to the approval of the Project's connections to SCG's natural gas distribution systems.

1.6 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

Substantive issues raised in response to this EIR's NOP were previously summarized in Table 1-1. Based on comments received in response to the NOP, concerns were raised regarding potential impacts to the environment pertaining to the topics of air quality (including localized emissions and cancer and non-cancer related health risks, as well as mitigation measures addressing these concerns), biological resources (habitat, sensitive species, and direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts), sensitive cultural resources (including tribal cultural resources), water supply, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and cumulatively-considerable impacts of the Project. No other areas of concern or controversy were identified pertaining to the proposed Project, beyond comments regarding the Project's potential environmental effects summarized in Table 1-1.

1.7 ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED BY THE DECISION-MAKING BODY

The primary issue to be resolved by the decision-making body for the proposed Project involves the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts in the environmental topic areas of Air Quality (due to a conflict with the SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) and due to regional emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x)) and Transportation (due to the Project's Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)), which are addressed in EIR Subsections 4.3 and 4.18, respectively. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors will evaluate whether the mitigation measures presented in this document to reduce the Project's unavoidable environmental impacts to air quality and due to VMT adequately reduces the Project's impacts to the maximum feasible extent. The Board of Supervisors also will determine whether the Project's benefits outweigh the adverse environmental



effects in support of adopting a Statement of Overriding Considerations pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093. Finally, the Board of Supervisors will decide whether to approve one of the Project alternatives in lieu of the proposed Project, if it is determined that one of the alternatives is feasible, meets the Project's objectives, and its approval would serve to substantially reduce or avoid the significant environmental effects.



2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This Section 2.0 is provided pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15125(a), and includes a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the Project site and its off-site improvement areas from both a local and regional perspective as it existed at the approximate time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) was published for this EIR, which occurred on December 1, 2022. This Section provides a brief overview of resources on and surrounding the Project site; additional detail regarding existing conditions for individual issue areas (e.g., biology, geology, etc.) is provided within the appropriate subsection headings within Section 4.0, *Environmental Analysis*, of this EIR.

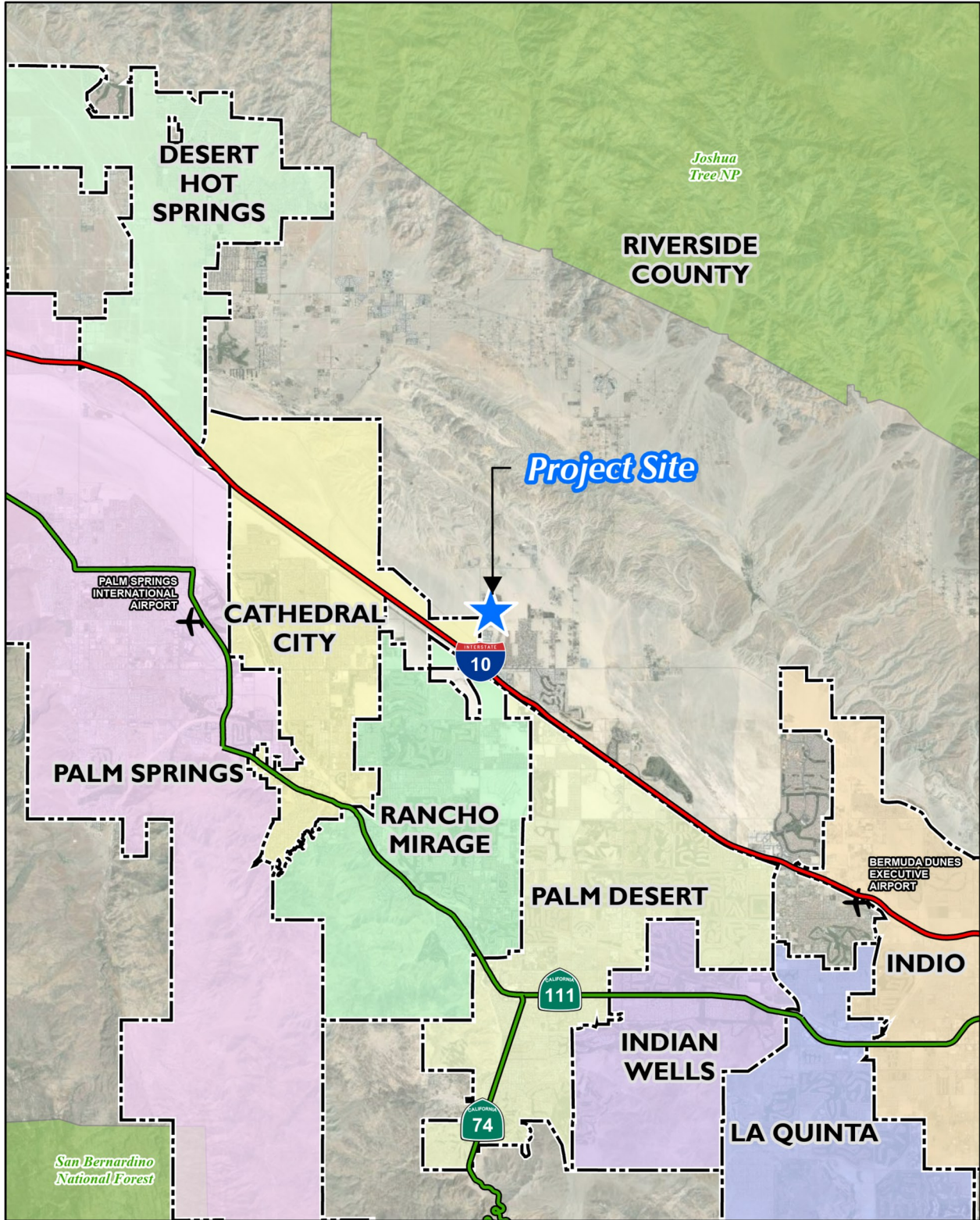
2.1 REGIONAL SETTING AND LOCATION

The 83.0-acre Project site is located within the Thousand Palms community of unincorporated Riverside County, California, within the City of Cathedral City's sphere of influence. Figure 2-1, *Regional Map*, depicts the Project site's location within the regional vicinity. As shown, Riverside County abuts San Bernardino County to the north; Orange County to the west; and San Diego and Imperial Counties to the south. Riverside County is located in an urbanizing area of southern California commonly referred to as the Inland Empire. The Inland Empire is an approximate 28,000 square-mile region comprising western San Bernardino County, western Riverside County, and the eastern reaches of Los Angeles County. As of 2018, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) estimated that Riverside County as a whole had a population 2,415,954 (SCAG, 2019, p. 3). SCAG estimated that the population within the SCAG region will increase from a population of 18.8 million in 2016 to a population of 22.5 million by 2045 (SCAG, 2020, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Appendix, Table 14).

2.2 LOCAL SETTING AND LOCATION

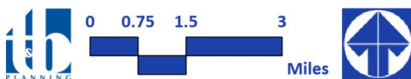
The Project site is located within the central portion of unincorporated Riverside County, California. As depicted on Figure 2-2, *Vicinity Map*, the 83.0-acre Project site and off-site improvement areas are located within the Thousand Palms community of the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP) portion of unincorporated Riverside County. The 83.0-acre Project site is located east of and abutting Rio del Sol, north of and abutting the future alignment of 30th Avenue, west of and abutting the future alignment of Robert Road, and approximately 0.75-mile south of 28th Avenue. The Project site is located approximately 0.7-mile northeast of the Interstate 10 (I-10) on and off ramps at Bob Hope Drive. The Project site encompasses Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 648-150-034 and 648-150-035, and is located within the southwest portion of Section 7, Township 4 south, Range 6 east, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian.

As described in further detail in EIR Section 3.0, *Project Description*, the Project also would entail the construction of off-site power poles to connect the proposed on-site Imperial Irrigation District (IID) joint substation to existing IID facilities. Although the precise location of individual power poles is unknown at this time, it is anticipated that the power poles would be constructed along one or more of the following roadway segments: 30th Avenue between the Project site and Sierra del Sol; Roberts Road between the Project site and Ramon Road; Sierra del Sol between 30th Avenue and Ramon Road; El Centro Way between Roberts Road

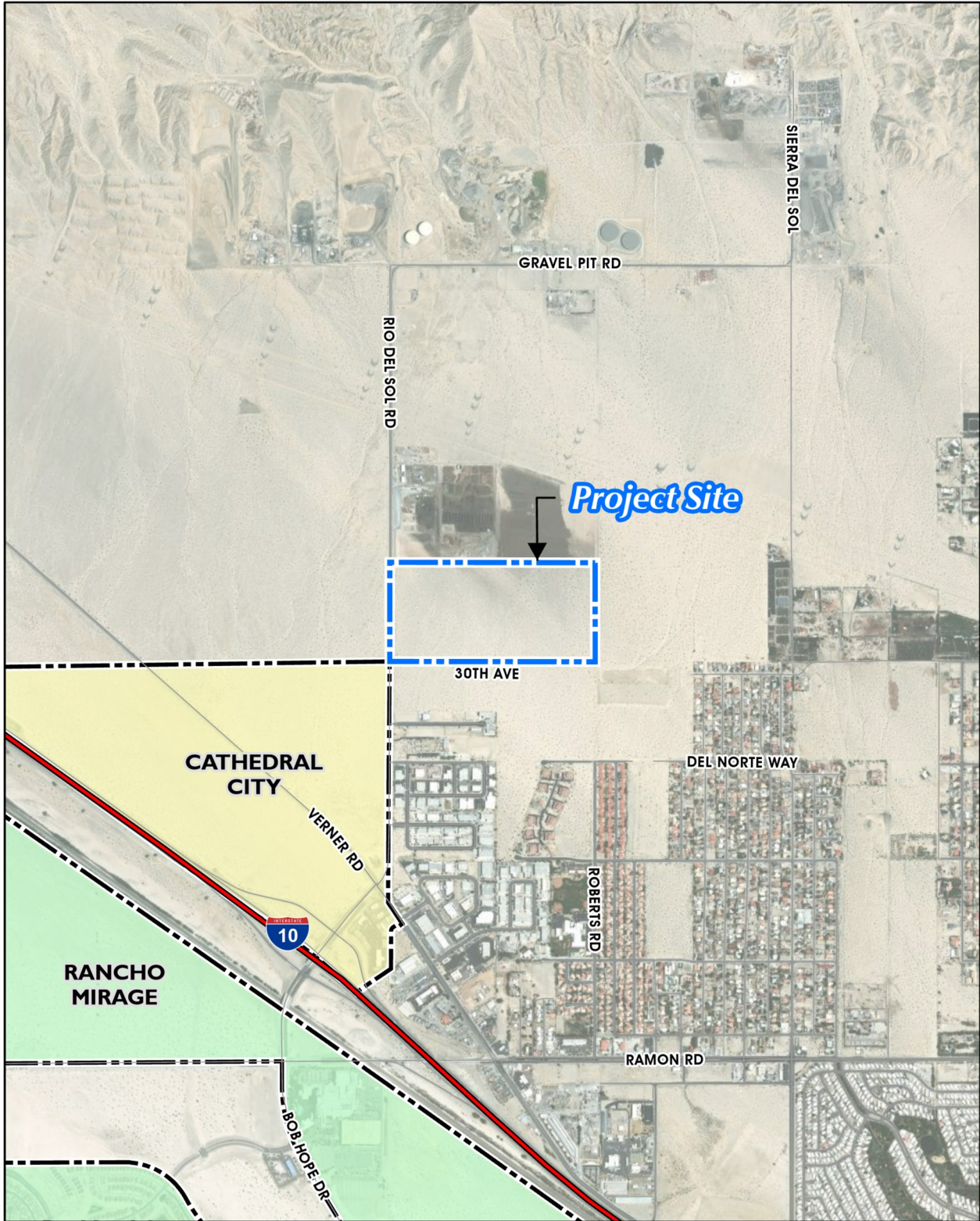


Source(s): ESRI, RCIT (2023)

Figure 2-1

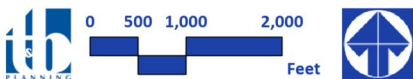


Regional Map



Source(s): ESRI, RCTLMA (2022)

Figure 2-2



Vicinity Map



and San Miguelito Drive; San Miguelito Drive between El Centro Way and Ramon Road; and Ramon Road between Roberts Road and Sierra del Sol. The segments of Robert Road between the Project site and Del Norte Way and the of 30th Avenue between the Project site and just west of Monte Vista Way are planned roadways that are currently undeveloped and consist of vacant desert land with scattered vegetation. The remaining potential off-site alignments for the power poles would traverse existing single-family residential neighborhoods located to the east and southeast of the Project site.

The census tract containing the Project site (Census Tract 6065044505) is ranked by the State as being in the 27th percentile for pollution burden, which, based on the Census Tract’s demographic characteristics results in the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) ranking the area in the 41st percentile of communities that are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution (OEHHA, 2022a).

OEHHA’s California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool: CalEnviroScreen 4.0, is a screening methodology that the State uses to identify California communities that are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution. The CalEnviroScreen 4.0 indicators for the Project site’s Census Tract based on data collected between approximately 2016 and 2019 are shown in Table 2-1, *CalEnviroScreen Indicators for Census Tract 6065044505*.

Table 2-1 CalEnviroScreen Indicators for Census Tract 6065044505

Indicator	% Burden	Indicator	% Burden
Exposures		Environmental Effects	
Ozone:	89	Cleanup Sites	0
PM 2.5:	7	Groundwater Threats	22
Diesel PM:	54	Hazardous Waste	5
Pesticides:	0	Impaired Waters	0
Toxic Releases:	4	Solid Waste	85
Traffic:	87	Sensitive Populations	
Drinking Water Contaminants:	45	Asthma	44
Lead in Housing:	34	Low Birth Weight	9
Cleanups:	0	Cardiovascular Disease	73
Groundwater Threats:	22	Socioeconomic Factors	
Hazardous Waste:	5	Education	59
Impaired Water:	0	Linguistic Isolation	56
Solid Waste:	85	Poverty	62
		Unemployment	65
		Housing Burden	48

(OEHHA, n.d.)

Exposure indicators are based on measurements of different types of pollution that people may come into contact with. Environmental effects indicators are based on the locations of toxic chemicals in or near communities. Sensitive population indicators measure the number of people in a community who may be more severely affected by pollution because of their age or health. Socioeconomic factor indicators are conditions



that may increase people’s stress or make healthy living difficult and cause them to be more sensitive to pollution’s effects. As indicated in Table 2-1, for the Project site’s Census Tract, the highest environmental exposures (over 80%) are from ozone (O₃), traffic, and solid waste. The highest population and socioeconomic factors (over 80%) are limited to environmental effects associated with solid waste. (OEHHA, n.d.) There is an organic wastes recycling facility located immediately north of the Project site’s boundary.

The Project site is not located in a SB 535 Disadvantaged Community identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) (CalEPA, 2022).

2.3 SURROUNDING LAND USES AND DEVELOPMENT

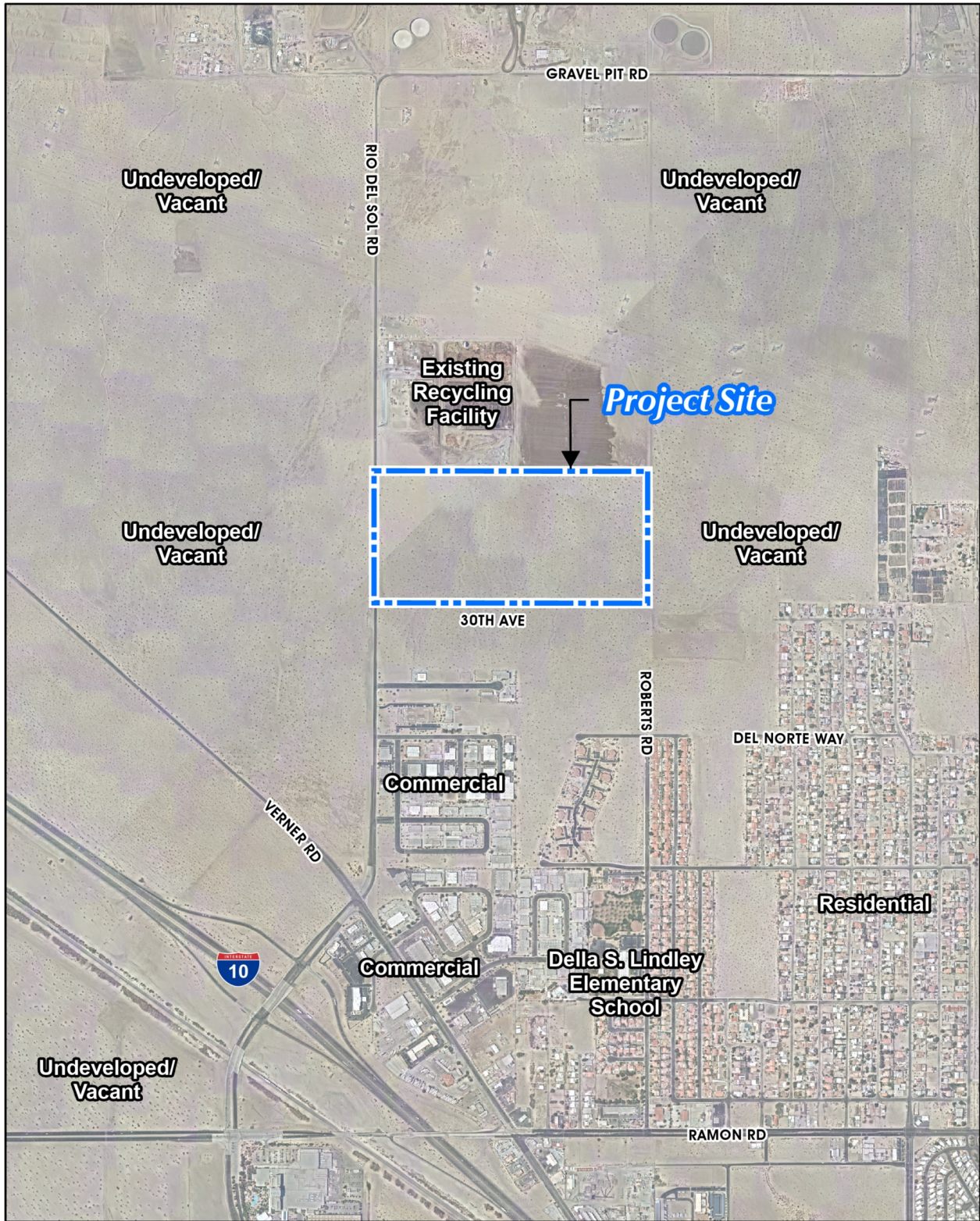
Land uses in the vicinity of the Project site are depicted on Figure 2-3, *Surrounding Land Uses*. As shown, there is an existing organic wastes recycling facility (SA Recycling) located north of and abutting the western +/- half of the northern Project boundary, with remaining lands to the north comprising undeveloped vacant land. To the east of the Project site is the planned alignment of Robert Road, beyond which are undeveloped lands and agricultural uses, while single-family residences occur to the southeast of the Project site. To the south of the Project site are undeveloped and vacant lands, with land located south of the westerly +/- half of the Project site planned as a recreational vehicle storage lot. Further south are several light industrial/business park uses and single family residences. To the west of the Project site are undeveloped and vacant lands, with Varner Road occurring approximately 0.4-mile southwest of the Project site. The I-10 freeway is located approximately 0.7-mile southwest of the Project site. The Project site is located approximately 5.2 miles east of the Palm Springs International Airport. There are two existing schools within two miles of the Project site, including the Della S. Lindley Elementary School, located at 31495 Robert Road, Thousand Palms, California (approximately 0.6-mile south of the Project site), and Rancho Mirage High School, located at 31001 Rattler Road in the City of Rancho Mirage, California (approximately 1.6 miles southwest of the Project site).

2.4 PLANNING CONTEXT

CEQA Guidelines § 15125(d) requires that EIRs identify the general plans and regional plans that are applicable to the project under evaluation, and recognize potential inconsistencies. Plans that are applicable to the Project evaluated herein are summarized below, with additional information provided in the applicable resource discussions in Section 4.0, *Environmental Analysis*.

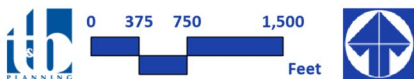
2.4.1 SCAG REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY (RTP/SCS)

SCAG is a regional agency established pursuant to California Government Code § 6500, also referred to as the Joint Powers Authority law. SCAG is designated as a Council of Governments (COG), a Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), and a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The Project site is within SCAG’s regional authority. In April 2024, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted the *2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (“Connect SoCal”). Connect SoCal is the applicable Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) for the Project. Connect SoCal embodies a collective vision for the region’s future, prepared with input by local governments,



Source(s): ESRI, NearMap Imagery (June 2023), RCIT (2023)

Figure 2-3



Surrounding Land Uses



county transportation commissions (CTCs), tribal governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, and stakeholders within the counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. Connect SoCal plans for a large number of transportation projects, ranging from highway improvements, railroad grade separations, bicycle lanes, new transit hubs, and replacement bridges. These future investments were included in county plans developed by the six CTCs and seek to reduce traffic bottlenecks, improve the efficiency of the region's network, and expand mobility choices. The goals of Connect SoCal are to: 1) build and maintain an integrated multimodal transportation network; 2) develop, connect and sustain communities that are livable and thriving; 3) create a healthy region for the people of today and tomorrow; and 4) support a sustainable, efficient and productive regional economic environment that provides opportunities for all residents. (SCAG, 2024)

2.4.2 SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN (AQMP)

The Project site is located within the Riverside County portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Currently, the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) are exceeded in most parts of the SSAB. In response, and in conformance with California Health and Safety Code Section 40702 et seq. and the California Clean Air Act, the SCAQMD adopted a series of Air Quality Management Plans (AQMPs) to meet the State and federal ambient air quality standards. AQMPs are updated regularly to more effectively reduce air pollutant emissions, to accommodate growth, and to minimize negative fiscal impacts of air pollution control on the economy. The *Coachella Valley PM₁₀ State Implementation Plan* (CVSIP) establishes additional controls needed for expeditious attainment of the PM₁₀ standards in the Coachella Valley, including within the SSAB. In addition, the most recent AQMP adopted by the AQMD Governing Board on December 2, 2022 ("2022 AQMP"), addresses air quality within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), the Riverside County portion of the SSAB (which includes the Project site), and the Riverside County portion of the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB). The 2022 AQMP incorporates the latest scientific and technological information and planning assumptions, including the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. The 2022 AQMP is based on assumptions provided by the Emission FACtor model (EMFAC) developed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for motor vehicle information and assumptions provided by SCAG for demographics. The air quality levels projected in the 2022 AQMP are based on the assumption that development associated with general plans, specific plans, residential projects, and wastewater facilities will be constructed in accordance with population growth projections identified by SCAG in its 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. The 2022 AQMP also assumes that such development projects will implement strategies to reduce emissions generated during the construction and operational phases of development. (SCAQMD, 2022)

2.4.3 RIVERSIDE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN AND WESTERN COACHELLA VALLEY AREA PLAN (WCVAP)

The prevailing planning document for the Project site and its surrounding area is the Riverside County General Plan. The Project site is located within the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP) portion of the Riverside County General Plan. As depicted on Figure 2-4, *Existing General Plan Land Use Designations*, the County's General Plan and WCVAP designate the western +/- half of the 83.0-acre Project site for "Light Industrial (LI)" land uses, and designates the eastern +/- half of the Project site for "Medium Density Residential (MDR)" land uses (RCIT, n.d.). The LI land use designation is intended to accommodate industrial



and related uses including warehousing/distribution, assembly and light manufacturing, repair facilities, and supporting retail uses. The MDR land use designation is intended to accommodate single-family attached and detached residences with a density range of 5 to 8 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and on lot sizes ranging from 4,000 to 6,500 s.f. (Riverside County, 2021a, Table LU-4).

2.4.4 ZONING

The Riverside County Zoning Ordinance is intended to implement the Riverside County General Plan's land use plan. As shown on Figure 2-5, *Existing Zoning Classifications*, under existing conditions, the western +/- half of the Project site is zoned for "Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC)" land uses, while the eastern +/- half of the Project site is zoned for "Residential Agricultural (R-A)." The M-SC zoning classification allows for most light manufacturing and industrial uses defined under the Standard Industrial Classification Code (SIC) with Plot Plan approval. The R-A zoning classification allows for one-family dwellings and a variety of agricultural uses. (Riverside County, 2021c; RCIT, n.d.)

2.4.5 COACHELLA VALLEY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (CVMSHCP)

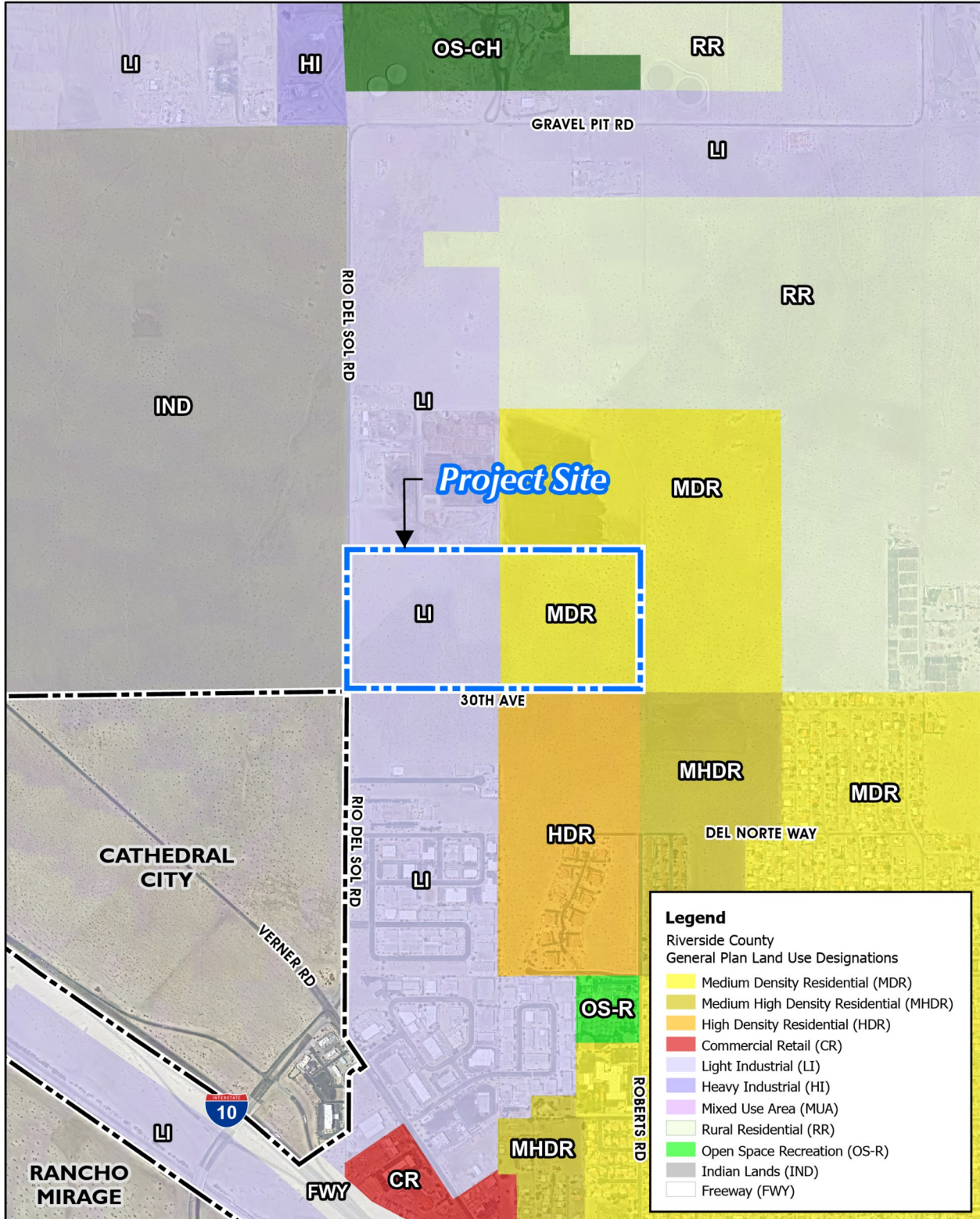
The Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), a regional Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), received final approval on October 1, 2008, and an Implementing Agreement (IA) was executed between the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and participating entities. The CVMSHCP allows signatories to the IA to issue take authorizations for all species covered by the CVMSHCP, including State and federally-listed species and other identified covered species and their habitats. The Project site is not located within a Conservation Area or Core Habitat for any of the CVMSHCP Covered Species. The Thousand Palms Conservation Area is the nearest preserved open space, located approximately 1,200 feet northeast of the Project site's north-central extent. Refer to EIR Subsection 4.4, *Biological Resources*, for additional information about the CVMSHCP and the Project site's relationship thereto. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.8-51; Rocks, 2022a, p. 35)

2.5 EXISTING PHYSICAL SITE CONDITIONS

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15125, the physical environmental condition for purposes of establishing the setting of an EIR is the environment as it existed at the time the EIR's NOP was released for public review. The NOP for this EIR was released for public review on December 1, 2022. The following subsections provide a description of the Project site's physical environmental condition ("existing conditions") as of that approximate date. The site's current physical conditions and surrounding areas are shown on Figure 2-6, *Aerial Photograph*.

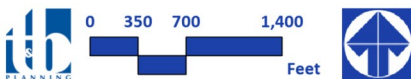
2.5.1 LAND USE

As shown on Figure 2-6, under existing conditions, the 83.0-acre Project site consists of vacant and undeveloped desert land. Research conducted for the Project site by Nova Group determined that the Project site has never been subject to improvements or development, aside from improvements to Rio Del Sol along the Project site's frontage with this roadway consisting of two paved travel lanes (Nova, 2021, p. 17). Existing

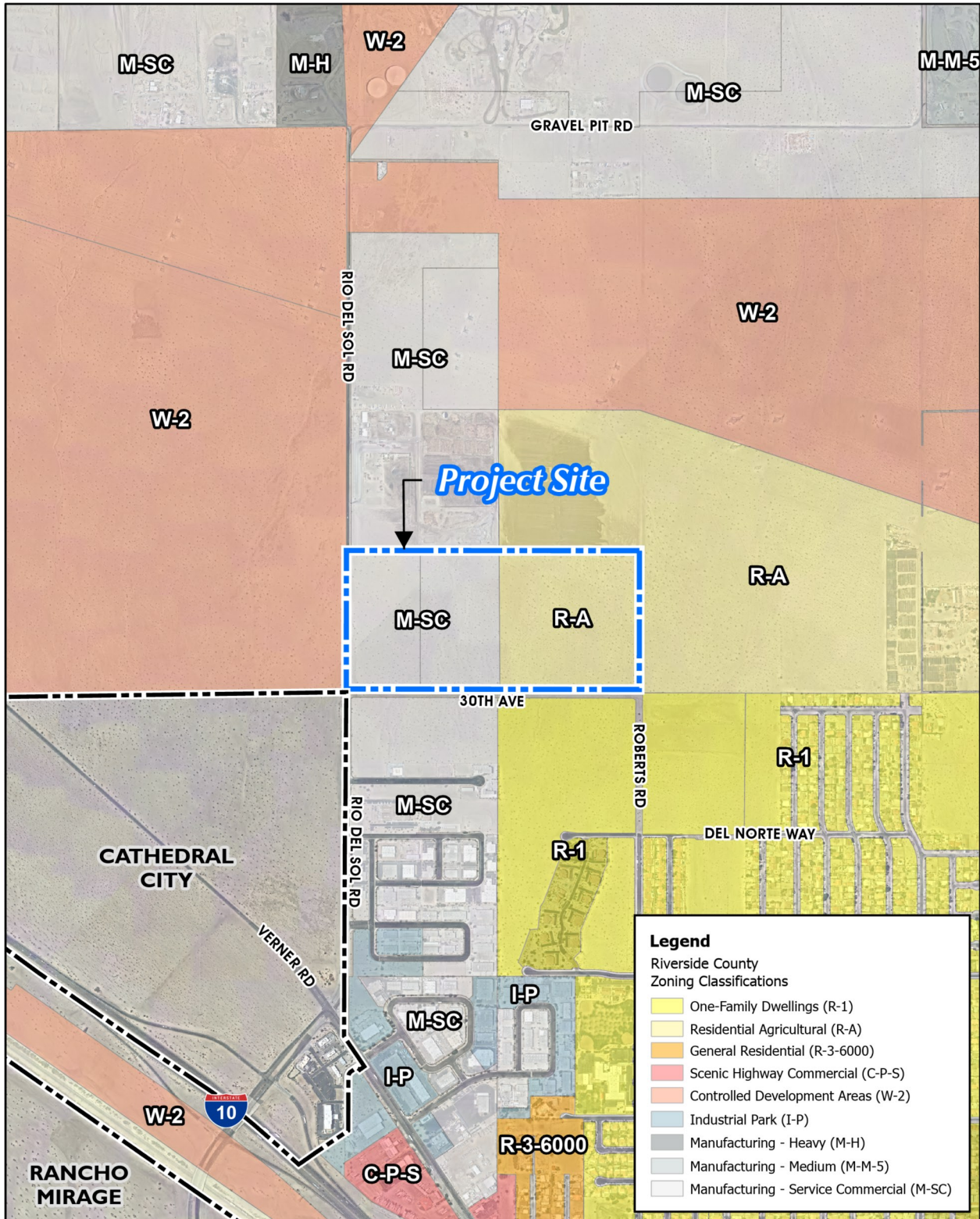


Source(s): ESRI, NearMap Imagery (June 2023), RCIT (2023)

Figure 2-4

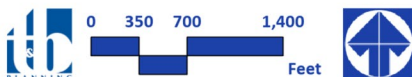


Existing General Plan Land Use Designations



Source(s): ESRI, NearMap Imagery (June 2023), RCIT (2023)

Figure 2-5

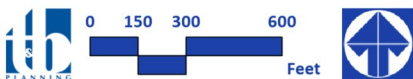


Existing Zoning Classifications



Source(s): ESRI, NearMap Imagery (June 2023), RCIT (2023)

Figure 2-6



Aerial Photograph



land uses in the Project's off-site improvement areas include unimproved roads, improved (paved) roads, and developed and undeveloped roadway shoulders inside and outside of the public right-of-way.

2.5.2 SITE TOPOGRAPHY

Figure 2-7, *USGS Topographic Map*, depicts the topographic conditions of the Project site. As shown, the Project site gently slopes downward from the northeast corner to the southwest corner of the Project site. Elevations on site range from approximately 280 feet above mean sea level (amsl) near the southwest corner of the Project site to 326 feet amsl near the northeastern corner of the Project site. Overall topographic relief is approximately 46 feet. Topography of the Project's off-site improvement areas are flat and gently sloping.

2.5.3 AIR QUALITY AND CLIMATE

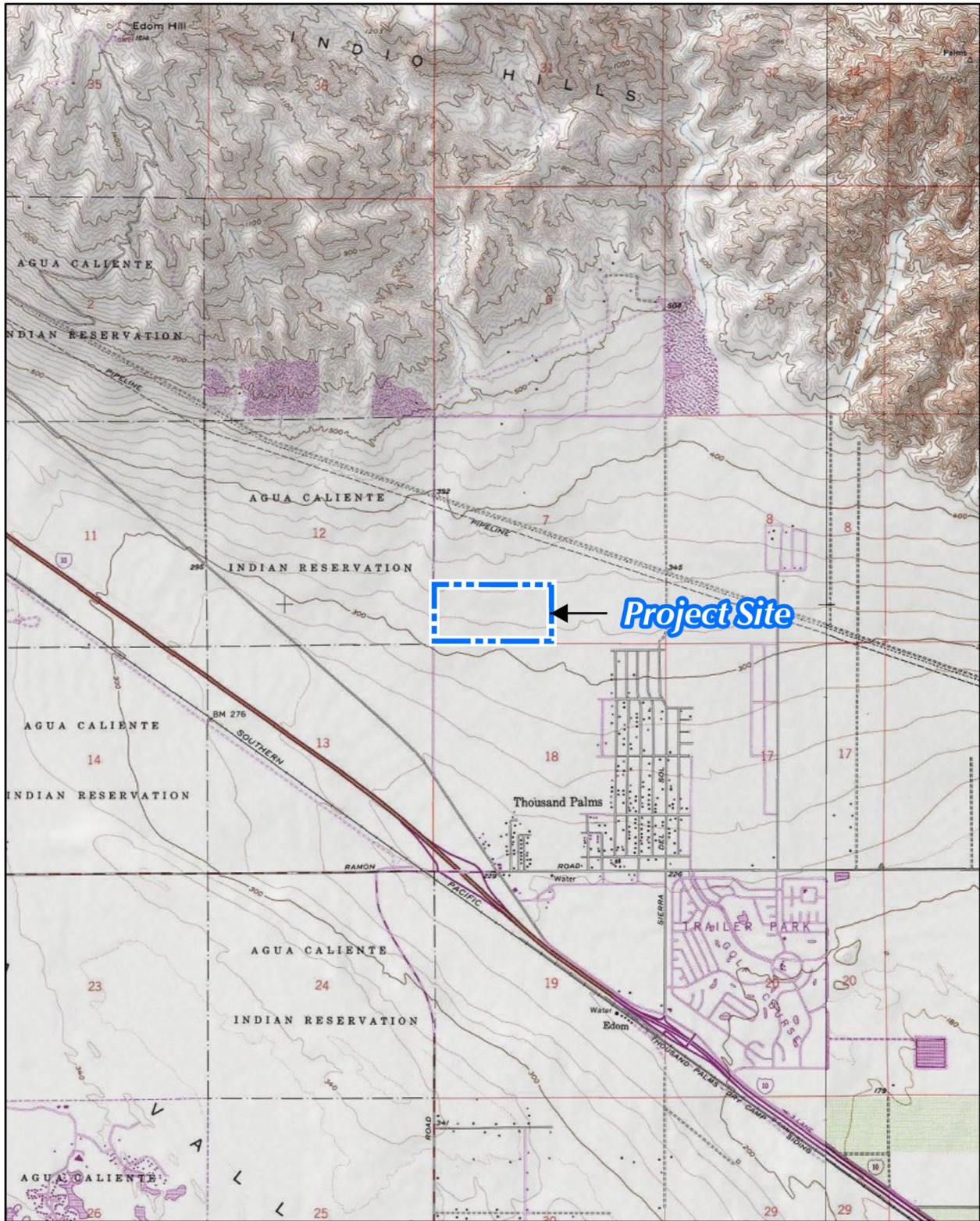
The Project site is located in the SSAB within the jurisdiction of SCAQMD. The SCAQMD was created by the 1977 Lewis-Presley Air Quality Management Act, which merged four county air pollution control bodies into one regional district. Under the Act, the SCAQMD is responsible for bringing air quality in areas under its jurisdiction into conformity with federal and State air quality standards. The SSAB (also referred to as "the Basin") is aligned in a north-west-southwest orientation stretching from Banning Pass to the Mexican border. The regional climate, as well as the temperature, wind, humidity, precipitation, and amount of sunshine significantly influence the air quality in the Basin.

As documented in the Project's Air Quality Impact Analysis (*Technical Appendix B* to this EIR), the climate of the Coachella Valley is a continental, desert-type climate, with hot summers, mild winters, and very little annual rainfall. Precipitation is less than six inches annually and occurs mostly in the winter months from active frontal systems and in the late summer months from thunderstorms. Almost all of the annual rainfall comes from the fringes of mid-latitude storms from late November to early April with summers often being completely dry. Temperatures exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), on the average, for four months each year, with daily highs near 110 °F during July and August. Summer nights are cooler with minimum temperatures in the mid-70s. During the winter season, daytime highs are quite mild, but the dry air is conducive to nocturnal radiational cooling, with early morning lows around 40 °F. The Coachella Valley and adjacent areas also are exposed to frequent gusty winds. In addition, portions of the SSAB experience surface inversions almost every day of the year. Inversions in the SSAB are attributed to strong surface heating, but are usually broken, allowing pollutants to disperse more easily. Weak surface inversions are caused by cooling of air in contact with the cold surface of the earth at night. In the valleys and low-lying areas, this condition is intensified by the addition of cold air flowing downslope from the hills and pooling on the valley floor.

Refer to EIR Subsection 4.3, *Air Quality*, for additional discussion of the air quality and climate setting.

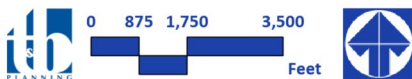
2.5.4 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

As more fully discussed in EIR Subsection 4.2, *Agriculture and Forestry Resources*, the California Department of Conservation (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) identifies "Important Farmland" to include lands mapped as "Prime Farmland," "Farmland of Statewide Importance," "Unique Farmland," and



Source(s): ESRI, USGS (2013)

Figure 2-7



USGS Topographic Map



“Farmland of Local Importance.” The Project site (83.0 acres) and its off-site improvement areas are classified by the FMMP as “Other Land,” indicating that there is no Important Farmland under existing conditions (RCIT, n.d.). Additionally, the Project site and surrounding areas consist of desert lands that do not contain any forestry resources.

2.5.5 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 2-2, *Summary of On- and Off-Site Vegetation Communities*, provides a summary of the vegetation communities that occur on the Project site and within the Project’s off-site improvement areas. As shown, the Project site and off-site improvement areas include 40.2 acres of Developed lands, <0.1-acre of Disturbed lands, 0.6-acre of Disturbed Desert Saltbush Scrub, and 104.5 acres of Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub. Vegetation within the 83.0-acre Project site primarily includes Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub, with a strip along the western boundary of the Project site comprising Developed lands and a small portion (<0.1-acre) of the northern boundary in the eastern portion of the Project site comprising Disturbed lands. Refer to EIR Subsection 4.4, *Biological Resources*, for a more detailed discussion of biological resources on site and within the Project’s off-site improvement areas. (Rocks, 2022a, Table 1 and Figure 2)

Table 2-2 Summary of On- and Off-Site Vegetation Communities

Vegetation Community/Land Use	Acres (On and Off Site)¹
Developed	40.2
Disturbed	<0.1
Disturbed Desert Saltbush Scrub	0.6
Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub	104.5
Total:	145.4

(Rocks, 2022a, Table 1); 1. Acreages are rounded.

2.5.6 GEOLOGY

The Project site is located within the Colorado Desert Physiographic Province (also referred to as the Salton Trough) that is characterized as a northwest-southeast trending structural depression extending from the Gulf of California to the Banning Pass. The Salton Trough is dominated by several northwest trending faults, most notably the San Andreas Fault system. The Salton Trough is bounded by the Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains on the southwest, the San Bernardino Mountains on the north, the Little San Bernardino/Chocolate/Orocopia Mountains on the east, and extends through the Imperial Valley into the Gulf of California on the south. A relatively thick sequence (20,000 feet) of sediment has been deposited in the Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Trough from Miocene to present times. These sediments are predominately terrestrial in nature with some lacustrine (lake) and minor marine deposits. The major contributor of these sediments has been the Colorado River. The mountains surrounding the Coachella Valley are composed primarily of Precambrian metamorphic and Mesozoic II granitic rock. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

The Project site is mapped to be underlain by undifferentiated Quaternary-age dune sand (Qs) and alluvium (Qal). During field investigations, which included site borings, disturbed soil was encountered to a depth of approximately one (1) foot below ground surface (bgs). Underlying the disturbed soil and extending to the



maximum depths explored, native earth materials were encountered. Generally, the native earth materials consisted of silty sand and gravelly sand. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

Refer to EIR Subsection 4.7, *Geology and Soils*, for additional discussion about the site’s existing geologic conditions.

2.5.7 SOIL TYPES AND EROSION POTENTIAL

Table 2-3, *Summary of On-Site Soil Characteristics*, provides a summary of the soils present on the Project site, and identifies the attendant rate of runoff and susceptibility to erosion by water and wind. As shown, approximately 39.5% of the Project site has a slow rate of runoff, a moderate susceptibility to water erosion, and a slight susceptibility to wind erosion. Approximately 48.5% of the Project site has a slow rate of runoff, a slight susceptibility to water erosion, and a high susceptibility to wind erosion. Approximately 11.9% of the Project site has a very slow rate of runoff, a slight susceptibility to water erosion, and a high susceptibility to wind erosion. (USDA, 1980, p. 12 and 23; USDA, n.d.)

Table 2-3 Summary of On-Site Soil Characteristics

Map Symbol	Map Unit Name	Rate of Runoff	Susceptibility to Water Erosion/ Wind Erosion	Acreage	Percent of Site
CdC	Carsitas gravelly sand, 0 to 9 percent slopes	Slow	Moderate/Slight	32.8	39.5%
CkB	Carsitas fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes	Slow	Slight/High	40.3	48.5%
MaB	Myoma fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes	Very Slow	Slight/High	9.9	11.9%
Totals for Area of Interest:		--	--	83.0	100.0%

(USDA, 1980, p. 12 and 23)

2.5.8 HYDROLOGY

The Project site is located on an alluvial fan and alluvial fans present variable drainage patterns given the loose nature of the soil. Under existing conditions, the Project site is unimproved with exception of improved portions of Rio Del Sol Road that traverse the western boundary of the site. The natural drainage pattern flows north to south between 2.5% and 3.5%. The Project site receives run-on sheet flow drainage on the eastern half of the site; however, the western half does not due to the adjacent organic materials recycling development to the north. Flows existing the site do so at concentrated points but the majority of runoff generated on the Project site infiltrates into the groundwater table. (PBLA, 2022a, p. 1) Please refer to EIR Subsection 4.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, for additional discussion of the existing hydrologic conditions of the Project site.

2.5.9 NOISE

The most common and substantial source of noise in Riverside County is mobile noise generated by transportation-related sources. Other sources of noise are the various land uses (i.e., residential, commercial, and institutional) that generate stationary-source noise. Within the Project area, and based on noise measurements collected by Urban Crossroads, Inc., ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project site range from approximately 51.4 CNEL to approximately 56.1 CNEL. (Urban Crossroads, 2023, p. 26). Refer to EIR



Subsection 4.13, *Noise*, for additional information regarding the existing noise conditions within the Project area.

2.5.10 TRANSPORTATION

The primary transportation facility in the Project area is I-10, located approximately 0.7-mile southwest of the Project site. Other regional transportation facilities in the area include State Route (SR) 111, located approximately 4.5 miles southwest of the Project site, and SR 62, located approximately 12.8 miles northwest of the Project site. Primary access to the Project site is provided via Rio del Sol, which directly connects with I-10 to the south. Varner Road, located approximately 0.4-mile southwest of the Project site, and Ramon Road, located approximately 1.0-mile south of the Project site, are designated by the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element as “Major Highways (118-foot Right-of-Way (ROW)).” Rio Del Sol Road and 30th Avenue are classified by the Circulation Element as “Secondary Highways (100-foot ROW).” No other roadways in the immediate vicinity of the Project site are classified as General Plan Circulation Element roadways. (Urban Crossroads, 2023f, p. 19)

The Project area currently is served by Sunline Transit Agency (STA), a public transit agency serving various jurisdictions within Riverside County. Based on a review of the existing transit routes within the vicinity of the Project site, Sunline Route 4 runs along Ramon Road. There are no bus stops along the Project site’s frontages under existing conditions. (Urban Crossroads, 2023f, p. 23)

The County General Plan Circulation Element and adjacent City of Cathedral City’s Active Transportation Plan (ATP) identify planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The County identifies a planned Class II bike path along portions of Varner Road in the vicinity of the Project site, whereas the City of Cathedral City’s ATP identifies this same alignment for a planned Class I shared bike/pedestrian trail. Neither the County General Plan nor the City’s ATP identify any bicycle or trail facilities along or within the Project site. The City of Cathedral City’s North City Extended Specific Plan area is located west of Rio del Sol, west of the Project site, and calls for the establishment of a multi-purpose/equestrian trail generally aligned with 30th Avenue, extending into off-site open space areas. Under existing conditions, there are limited pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of the Project site. Field observations and traffic counts conducted in April 2022 indicate light pedestrian and bicycle activity within the study area. (Urban Crossroads, 2023f, p. 23)

2.5.11 PUBLIC FACILITIES

Fire protection services for the Project site are provided by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). The RCFD provides a full range of fire services within the County and contracting cities. The level of service provided is dependent on response times, travel distance, and staffing workload levels established in the Riverside County Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Aid Plan. The Fire Protection Master Plan contains four fire response categories that are used to determine the response times/travel distances for primary and secondary fire stations. The response categories are based on the amount of community build-out presumed in the Master Fire Plan. The Fire Department assumes in any given region that three or more fire engines respond to any reported fire.



The fire station that would serve the Project is Station 35 (Roy Wilson), located at 31920 Robert Road in Thousand Palms, or approximately 1.0-mile south of the Project site. The Project also could be served by RCFD Station 69 (North Rancho Mirage), located at 71751 Gerald Ford Drive in Rancho Mirage, or approximately 3.1 miles southwest of the Project site. The fire stations that could serve the Project site are staffed full-time, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with a minimum three-person crew, including paramedics, operating a “Type 1” structural firefighting apparatus.

The Riverside County Sheriff’s Department (RCSD) provides community policing for the Project area. The Sheriff Station serving the Project area is the Palm Desert Station, located at 73705 Gerald Ford Drive in Palm Desert, CA, 92211, approximately 4.9 miles southwest of the Project site. In addition to community policing, other services provided by the Sheriff’s Department include, but are not limited to, operating of the emergency 911 system, operating correctional facilities, performing traffic control, and providing crime prevention education. Also, the Sheriff’s Department coordinates with volunteer groups such as Neighborhood Watch Programs and the Community Oriented and Policing Problem Solving (COPPS) Program and the Community Oriented Policing (COP) Program. COPPS shifts the focus of police work from a solely reactive mode by supplementing traditional law enforcement methods with proactive problem-solving approaches that involve the community as well as the police.

The Project site is located within the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD). The nearest schools to the Project site include Della S Lindley Elementary School, located approximately 0.6-mile south of the Project site; James Workman Middle School, located approximately 2.6 miles west of the Project site; and Rancho Mirage High School, located approximately 1.6 miles southwest of the Project site. In the 2022-2023 school year, the PSUSD had a total enrollment of 21,032 students (DOE, n.d.). As reported by the March 2022 PSUSD School Fee Justification Study, the PSUSD has a total capacity of 25,699 students (PSUSD, 2022, p. ES=1).

Under existing conditions, there is only one park facility (Century Park) within a 2.0-mile radius of the Project site. Century Park includes a tot lot, shade areas, restrooms, half-court basketball court, tennis court, and an open field play area.

The Project site is located within the Riverside County Public Library System (RCPLS) service area. The nearest library servicing the proposed Project site is the Desert Center Library, located at 70251 Ramon Road, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270, or approximately 2.0 miles southwest of the Project site.

2.5.12 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

A. Water Service

The Project site is located in the service area of the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD). The CVWD service area consists of approximately 640,000 acres and served approximately 112,609 domestic water connections in 2021. Under normal, single-dry year, and multiple dry year conditions, CVWD projects 100% water supply reliability. Under existing conditions, there is a 36-inch water main within Rio Del Sol Road along the Project site’s frontage. (Charles Marr, 2023, p. 30)



B. Sewer Service

CVWD's Sanitation Division provides sewer collection and treatment services within the Project area. CVWD owns and operates a large collection system and five water reclamation plants (WRPs): 1, 2, 4, 7, and 10. The CVWD sanitary collection sewer system includes more than 1,130 miles of sanitary sewer pipeline, which are composed of approximately 1,060 miles of gravity pipelines and 70 miles of force mains.

Sewer flows collected in the Project area are conveyed to WRP 7 for treatment. WRP 7 has a secondary treatment permit capacity of 5.0 million gallons per day (mgd) and a tertiary treatment capacity of 2.5 mgd. WRP 7 consists of a headworks facility followed by an activated sludge system, tertiary filters, and chlorine disinfection. Secondary effluent may be pumped to the tertiary treatment system, stored in the secondary equalization basin, or diverted to on-site and/or off-site percolation ponds for land disposal. The tertiary treatment system includes dual media filtration and chlorine disinfection to meet Title 22 requirements for recycled water. The recycled water is used for off-site irrigation delivery and is either stored in a covered storage reservoir or pumped offsite to an open reservoir near the Del Webb Sun City Golf Course (Palm Desert).

Under existing conditions there is a 15-inch CVWD sewer line located within Rio Del Sol Road. There are no sewer facilities on the Project site under existing conditions.

C. Solid Waste Services

The Riverside County Department of Waste Resources (RCDWR) is responsible for the efficient and effective landfill disposal of non-hazardous county waste within the County, and operates five active landfills in addition to holding a contract agreement to dispose of waste at the private El Sobrante Landfill (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.17-36).

Solid waste generated in the Project area is conveyed to either the Edom Hill Transfer Station, located approximately 4.0 miles northwest of the Project site, or the Coachella Valley Transfer Station, located approximately 16.0 miles southeast of the Project site. Solid waste collected at these transfer stations is conveyed to the Lamb Canyon Landfill for disposal, located 34.2 miles west of the Project site. The Lamb Canyon Landfill is permitted to receive 5,000 tons per day (tpd) of solid waste, while data from July 2023 shows that the Lamb Canyon Landfill received a daily average of approximately 1,411.6 tpd. (RCDWR, 2023)

D. Other Services

The Project site also is located in the service territories of the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) for electricity, Southern California Gas Company (SCG) for natural gas, while telecommunication services are provided by AT&T, MCI, and Frontier Communications.



2.5.13 RARE AND UNIQUE RESOURCES

As required by State CEQA Guidelines § 15125(c), the environmental setting should identify any inconsistencies between a proposed project and applicable general, specific, or regional plans, and place special emphasis on resources that are rare or unique to that region and would be affected by the project. Based on the existing conditions of the Project site and surrounding area described above and discussed in more detail in Section 4.0, *Environmental Analysis*, the Project site does not contain any rare or unique resources.

The principal discretionary actions required of Riverside County to implement the Project are described in detail in Section 3.0, *Project Description*, and are listed in Table 3-1, *Matrix of Project Approvals/Permits*. The Project entails a proposed amendment to the County's General Plan (proposed GPA 220004) that would modify the General Plan land uses designation on the eastern +/- half of the Project site from "Medium Density Residential (MDR)" to "Light Industrial (LI)." The western +/- half of the Project site would not be affected by GPA 220004 and would continue to be designated for Light Industrial (LI) land uses.



3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Section 3.0 provides all of the information required of an EIR Project Description by California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15124, including a description of the Project's precise location and boundaries; a statement of the Project's objectives; a description of the Project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics; and a description of the intended uses of this EIR, including a list of the governmental agencies that are expected to use this EIR in their decision-making processes, a list of permits and approvals that are required to implement the Project, and a list of related environmental review and consultation requirements.

3.1 SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Project as evaluated herein involves the proposed development of a 1,238,992 square foot (s.f.) warehouse building and a potential Imperial Irrigation District (IID) joint electric substation on an 83.0-acre property located on the northeast corner of Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue in the Thousand Palms community of unincorporated Riverside County in the City of Cathedral City's sphere of influence. The governmental approvals requested from Riverside County to implement the Project consist of the following:

- **General Plan Amendment No. 220004 (GPA 220004)** is a proposal to modify the General Plan and Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP) land uses designation on the eastern +/- half of the Project site from "Community Development – Medium Density Residential (CD-MDR)" to "Community Development – Light Industrial (LI)." The western +/- half of the Project site would not be affected by GPA 220004 and would continue to be designated for LI land uses. The General Plan Amendment would make the entire Project site consistent with one land use designation of "Community Development – Light Industrial (LI)," and the proposed GPA would not affect the Project site's General Plan Foundation Component designation, which would remain as "Community Development."
- **Change of Zone No. 2200013 (CZ 2200013)** is a proposal to change the zoning classification for the eastern +/- half of the Project site from "Residential – Agricultural (R-A)" to "Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC)." The western +/- half of the Project site would not be affected by CZ 2200013 and would continue to be zoned for M-SC land uses. The Change of Zone would amend roughly half the site in order to zone the entire site as Manufacturing-Service Commercial in order to eliminate any split zoning.
- **Plot Plan No. 220022 (PPT 220022)** is a proposal for the development of the 83.0-acre property with a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building that includes 20,000 s.f. of office uses and 1,218,992 s.f. of warehouse space, as well as a potential 50 megawatt (MW) IID joint electric substation¹. Other proposed features include landscaping, parking areas, docking doors, and frontage improvements along

¹ As discussed in further detail in Subsection 3.5, although this EIR evaluates potential physical impacts to the environment associated with the construction and long-term operation of the IID substation and off-site power poles and power lines, it is anticipated that the IID substation ultimately would be constructed at an off-site location.



Rio Del Sol Road and 30th Avenue. Off-site improvements required to implement the Project entail limited off-site road improvements including the paving of Robert Road between 30th Avenue and Del Norte Way and the installation of power poles supporting overhead lines between the potential onsite IID substation and existing IID facilities.

The Project's applications, as submitted to the County of Riverside by the Project Applicant, are herein incorporated by reference pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15150 and are available for review at the Riverside County Planning Department, 4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor, Riverside, CA 92501. All other discretionary and administrative approvals that would be required of the County of Riverside or other government agencies also are within the scope of the Project analyzed in this EIR.

3.2 SUMMARY OF REQUESTED APPROVAL ACTIONS

The County of Riverside has primary approval responsibility for the proposed Project. As such, the County of Riverside serves as the Lead Agency for this EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15050. The role of the Lead Agency was previously described in Section 1.0 of this EIR. As part of the approval process of the proposed Project, the County's Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider the Final EIR, GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022. The Planning Commission will make advisory recommendations to the Riverside County Board of Supervisors on whether to approve, approve with changes, or not approve GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022. A public hearing will then be held before the Board of Supervisors, which will consider the information contained in the Project's EIR and the EIR's Administrative Record in its decision-making processes, will certify or decline to certify this EIR, and will approve, approve with changes, or deny approval of proposed GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022.

Should these actions be approved, additional discretionary and ministerial actions by the County and other agencies would be required to implement the Project. Table 3-1, *Matrix of Project Approvals/Permits*, lists the authorities and agencies that are expected to use this EIR and provides a summary of subsequent actions associated with the Project. This EIR covers all federal, State, and local government and quasi-governmental approvals which may be needed to construct and implement the Project, whether or not they are explicitly listed in Table 3-1 or elsewhere in this EIR (CEQA Guidelines § 15124(d)).

3.3 PROJECT LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

A more detailed description of the Project site's regional location and setting is included in EIR Section 2.0, *Environmental Setting*. The Project site is located in the northern portion of unincorporated Riverside County, California and positioned in the southwest quarter of Section 7, Township 4 South, Range 6 East, San Bernadino Base and Meridian. The Project site includes Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 648-150-034 and 678-150-035. Refer to Figure 3-1, *Regional Map* for the Project site's location within the regional vicinity. More specifically and as depicted Figure 3-2, *Vicinity Map*, the 83.0-acre Project site is located north of Interstate 10 (I-10) and the future extension of 30th Avenue, east of Rio Del Sol Road, and west of the planned alignment of Robert Road within the Thousand Palms community of unincorporated Riverside County.



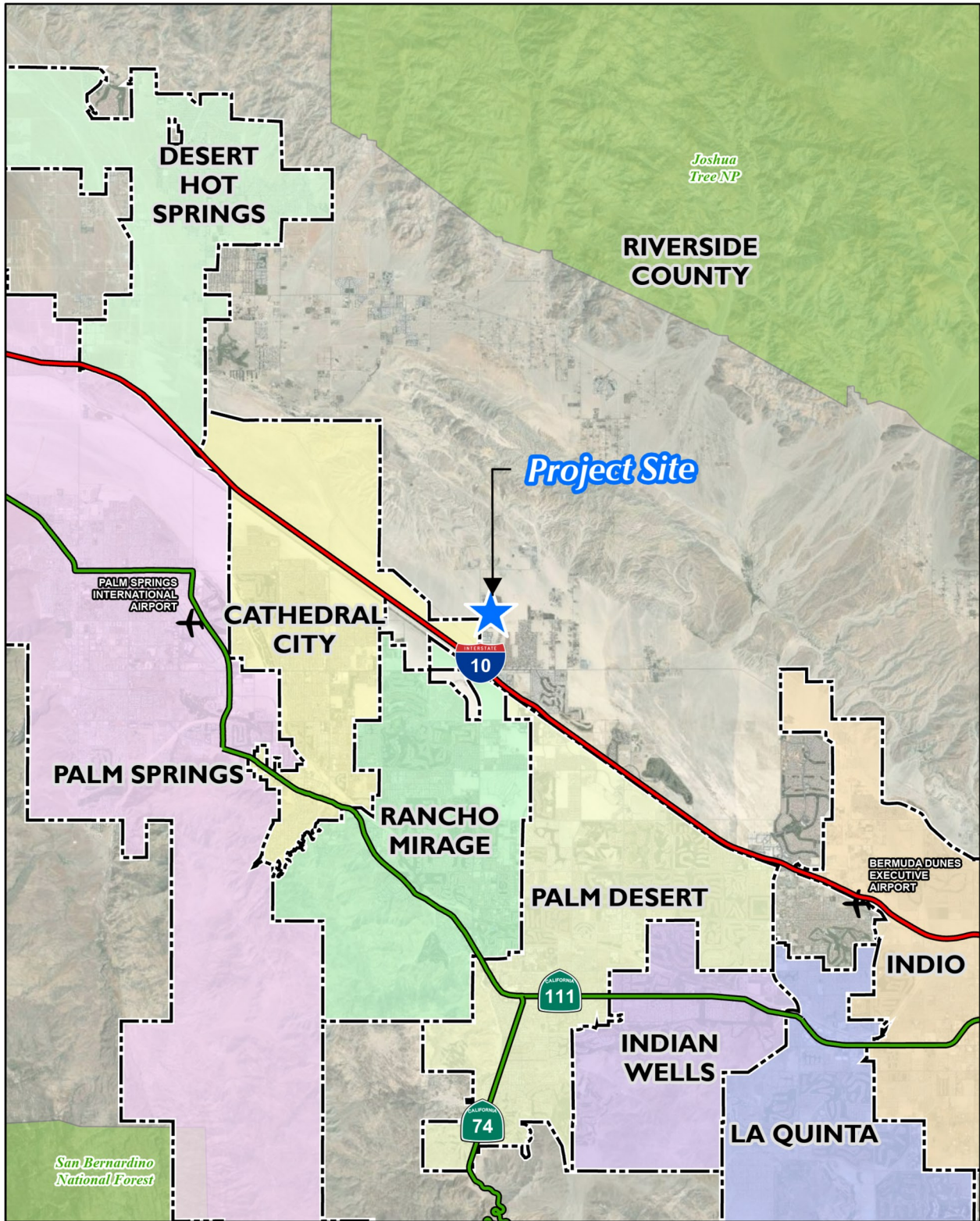
3.4 STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The fundamental purpose and goal of the Majestic Thousand Palms Project is to develop an economically viable, employment-generating warehouse distribution center that is compatible with the surrounding area and in close proximity with the State highway system. The Project would achieve its underlying purpose and goal through the following objectives.

- A. Increase employment-generating land uses north of I-10 in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County.

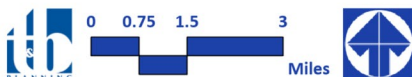
Table 3-1 Matrix of Project Approvals/Permits

Agency	Approvals and Decisions
County of Riverside Discretionary Approvals	
Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors whether to approve, conditionally approve, or not approve GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 220022.
Board of Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve, conditionally approve, or not approve GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, and PPT 2020022. • Certify or not certify the Final EIR along and adopt associated CEQA Findings.
Subsequent County of Riverside Approvals	
Riverside County Subsequent Implementing Approvals: Planning Department and/or Building and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue grading permits. • Issue building permits • Accept public right-of-way dedications • Approve road improvement plans. • Issue encroachment permits • Authorize nighttime construction activities, if proposed.
Other Agencies – Subsequent Approvals and Permits	
Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue a Construction Activity General Construction Permit. • Confirm Compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements. • Issuance of a Waste Discharge Permit per the Porte Colone Water Quality Control Act.
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuance of a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA).
South Coast Air Quality Management District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve permits to construct and permit to operate (if such permits are required by Project site occupants).
Southern California Gas Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve connections to natural gas distribution systems.
Imperial Irrigation District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve design and development of on-site IID substation and off-site transmission lines. • Approve electrical connections and transformer installation.
Coachella Valley Water District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve proposed drainage infrastructure and improvements. • Approve proposed water and wastewater system connections and improvements.
Federal Emergency Management Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuance of a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) and Letter of Map Revision (LOMR).

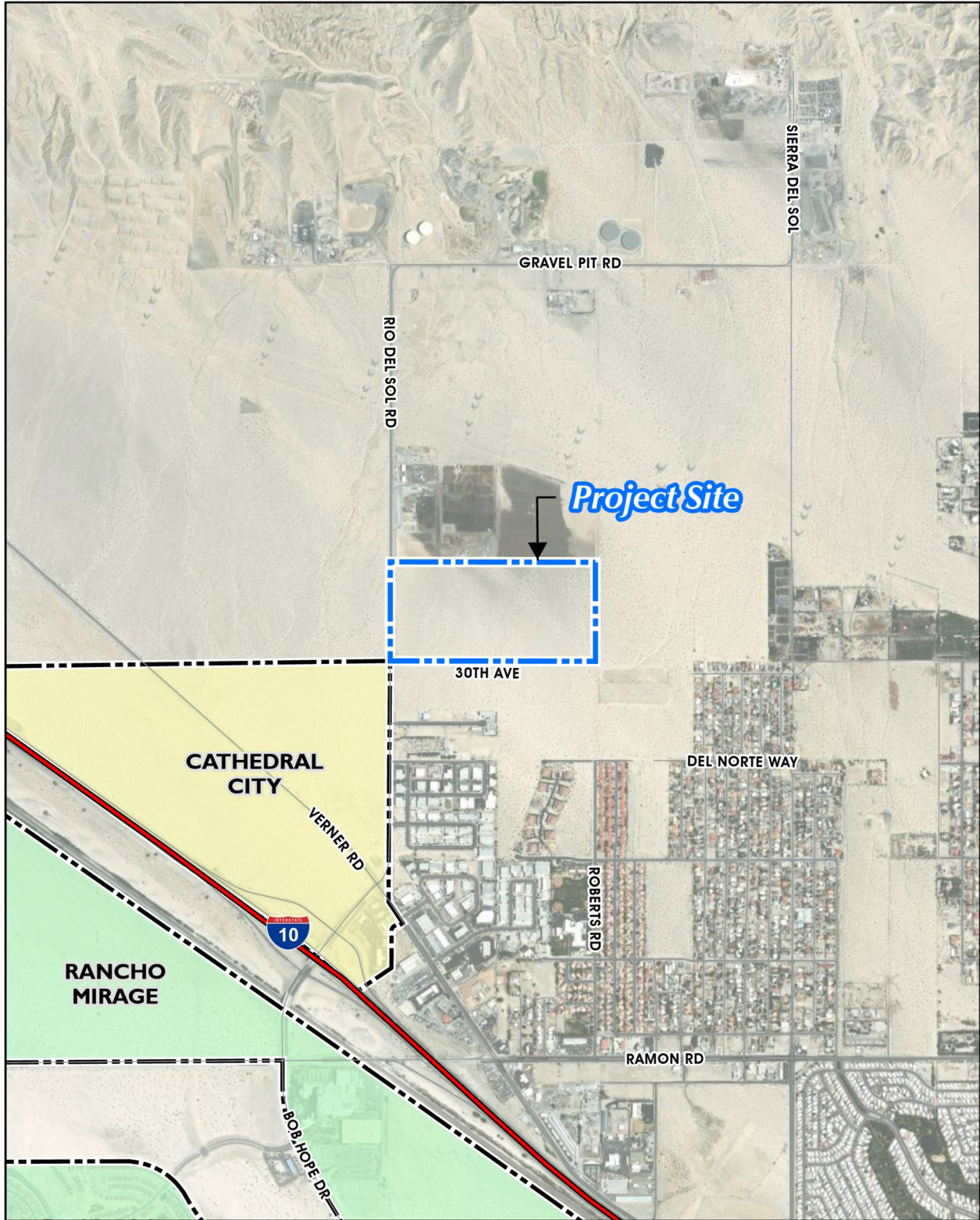


Source(s): ESRI, RCIT (2023)

Figure 3-1

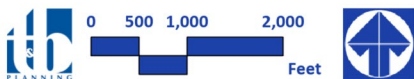


Regional Map



Source(s): ESRI, RCTLMA (2022)

Figure 3-2



Vicinity Map



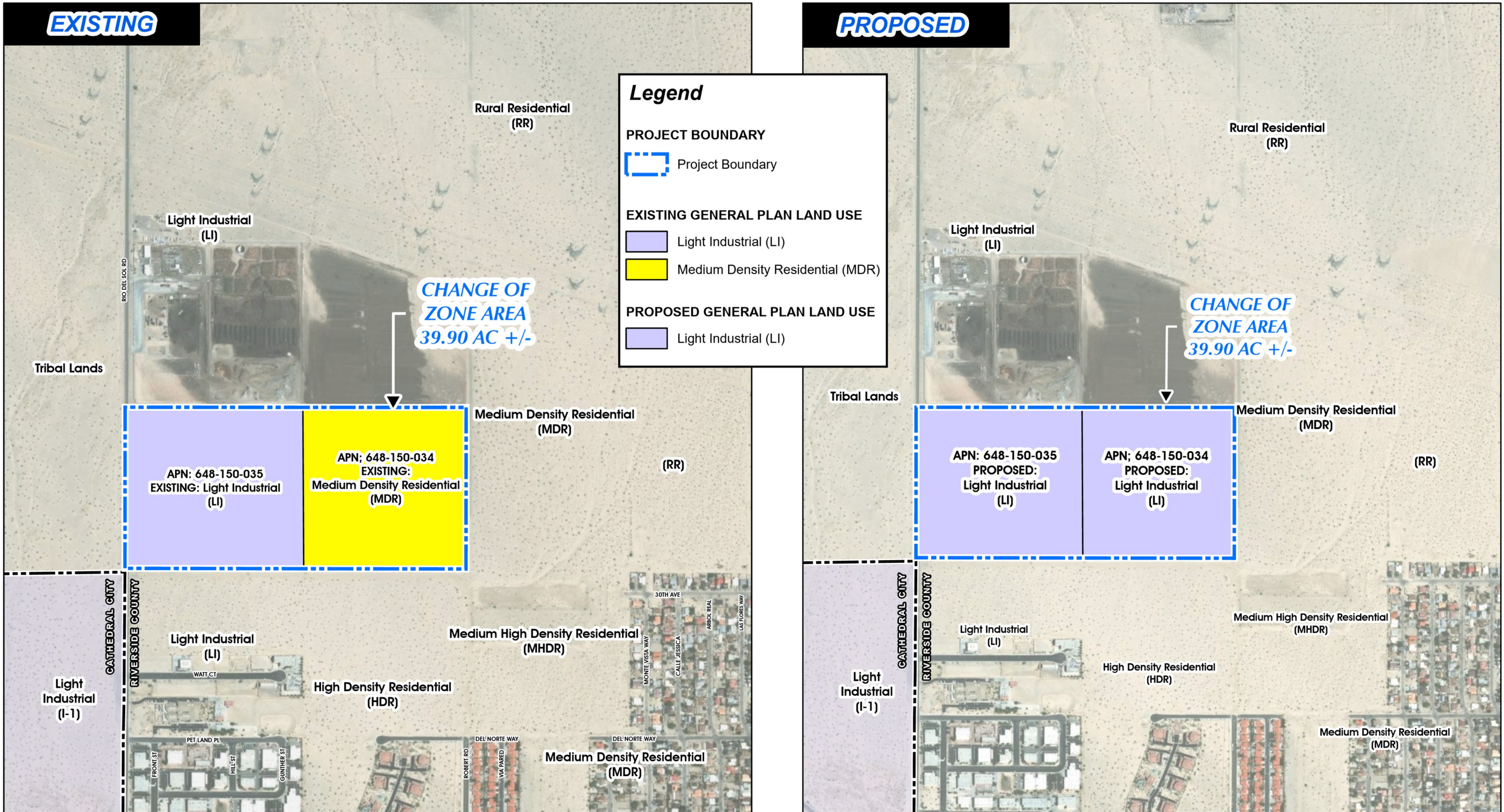
- B. Strengthen the goods movement supply chain in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by locating a supply chain use close proximity to designated truck routes and the State highway system to avoid or shorten vehicular trip lengths on other roadways.
- C. Expand economic development, facilitate job creation, and increase the tax base in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by accommodating and diversifying facilities needed to support the goods movement supply chain.
- D. Increase the electric utility supply and delivery capacity for the Thousand Palms community.
- E. Provide a land use that is not sensitive to potential odor and windblown material as a transitional land use between an existing organic materials recycling facility and other businesses and residences in Thousand Palms to the south.

3.5 PROJECT'S COMPONENT PARTS AND DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS

The Project Applicant proposes the development of 83.0 acres located north of I-10 and the future extension of 30th Avenue, east of Rio Del Sol Road, and west of the planned alignment of Robert Road, with a proposed 1,238,992 s.f. light industrial warehouse building, a potential IID electrical substation, the construction of off-site roadway improvements, and the potential installation of IID power poles off site. Applications submitted to the County of Riverside to entitle the Project for development as proposed are described below. The principal approval actions requested of the County of Riverside to implement the Project include General Plan Amendment No. 220004 (GPA 220004), Change of Zone No. 2200013 (CZ 2200013), and Plot Plan No. 220022 (PPT 220022), as described herein. Additional discretionary and administrative actions that would be necessary to implement the Project previously were listed in Table 3-1. A full set of Project application materials are on file with the County of Riverside Planning Department, 4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor, Riverside, CA 92502.

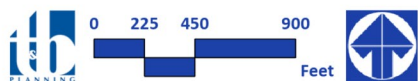
3.5.1 GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 220004

The Riverside County General Plan, which was comprehensively updated in 2015 and most recently amended in September 2021, assigns a land use designation to all properties within the County's jurisdiction. Development is required by law to comply with the provisions of the County's General Plan. The Project Applicant is seeking a General Plan Amendment (GPA No. 220004) to modify the General Plan and WCVAP land use designations for the 83.0-acre Project site. Specifically, and as depicted on Figure 3-3, *General Plan Amendment No. 220004*, under existing conditions the eastern +/- half of the Project site is designated for "Medium Density Residential (MDR)" land uses and the western +/- half of the Project site is designated for "Light Industrial (LI)" land uses. As also shown on Figure 3-3, as part of GPA No. 220004, the eastern +/- half of the Project site would be redesignated for LI land uses. The western +/- half of the Project site would not be affected by GPA 220004 and would continue to be designated for LI land uses; thus, with approval of GPA No. 220004, the entire 83.0-acre Project site would be designated for LI land uses. The General Plan describes the "Light Industrial (LI)" land use designation as providing for "industrial and related uses including



Source(s): ESRI, Nearmap Imagery (2022), RCTLMA (2022), Cathedral City General Plan Draft (2019), North City Extended Specific Plan (01-15-2014)

Figure 3-3



General Plan Amendment No. 220004



warehousing distribution, assembly and light manufacturing, repair facilities, and supporting retail uses.” The LI land uses designation allows for a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of between 0.25 to 0.60. (Riverside County, 2021a, Table LU-4)

3.5.2 CHANGE OF ZONE NO. 2200013

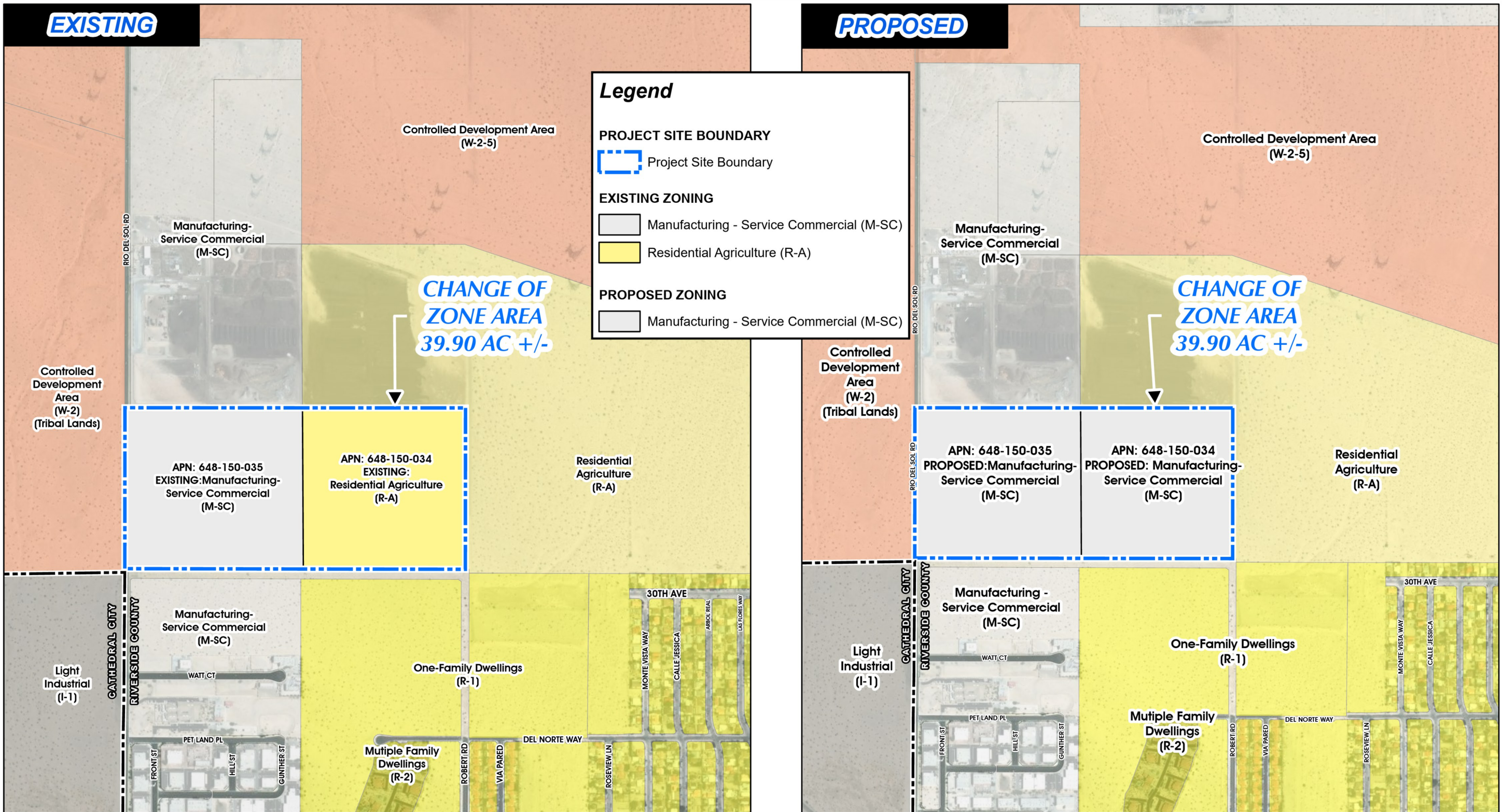
The Riverside County Zoning Ordinance (Riverside County Ordinance No. 348), which is part of the County’s Code of Ordinances, assigns a zoning classification to all properties within unincorporated Riverside County. All development within the County is required, by law, to comply with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. As shown on Figure 3-4, *Change of Zone No. 2200013*, under existing conditions, the eastern +/- half of the Project site is zoned for “Residential – Agriculture (R-A)” land uses and the western +/- half of the Project site is zoned for “Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC)” land uses. As part of Change of Zone No. 2200013 (CZ 2200013), and as also shown on Figure 3-4, the Project Applicant proposes to change the zoning classification on the eastern +/- half of the property from R-A to M-SC. No changes are proposed to the existing M-SC zoning classification that currently applies to the western +/- half of the Project site; thus, with approval of CZ 2200013, the entire 83.0-acre Project site would be zoned for M-SC land uses. The M-SC zoning classification permits industrial and manufacturing uses, such as warehousing and distribution, as well as related service and commercial uses, which are the use types of uses intended for the proposed building. The M-SC zoning classification allows for a building height of between 50 feet and 75 feet. (Riverside County, 2023)

3.5.3 PLOT PLAN NO. 220022

The Project Applicant proposes to develop the 83.0-acre Project site with a 1,238,992 s.f. light industrial warehouse building and a potential IID joint substation. Section 11.2 of Ordinance No. 348, which establishes permitted uses within the M-SC zone, allows for warehousing and distribution uses with approval of a Plot Plan. Accordingly, Plot Plan No. 220022 (PPT 220022) is proposed to allow for the development of the proposed light industrial warehouse building. Figure 3-5, *Plot Plan No. 220022 Site Plan*, depicts the conceptual site plan included as part of PPT 220022. Major components of PPT 220022 are discussed below.

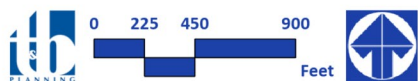
A. Site Plan and Building Configuration

As shown on Figure 3-5, the warehouse building is proposed on the western approximately 80.5 acres of the Project site, and would include 1,218,992 s.f. of warehouse space along with 20,000 s.f. of office uses that may be located in any of the four corners of the proposed building. The building’s user(s) is not known at this time. The proposed building is rectangular in shape and would be positioned with the short sides of the building facing west and east and the longer sides of the building facing north and south. A total of 212 truck docking doors are proposed, with 106 dock doors along the northern façade of the building and 106 dock doors along the southern façade of the building. Because dock doors are proposed on two opposite sides of the building, the building is referred to as a “cross dock warehouse,” which is typical in warehouse design. A total of ±732 parking spaces for passenger vehicles are proposed to the east and west of the proposed building, inclusive of 137 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations, 147 EV capable spaces, and 16 accessible parking spaces. A total of ±484 parking spaces for truck trailers is proposed to the north, east, and south of the proposed building,

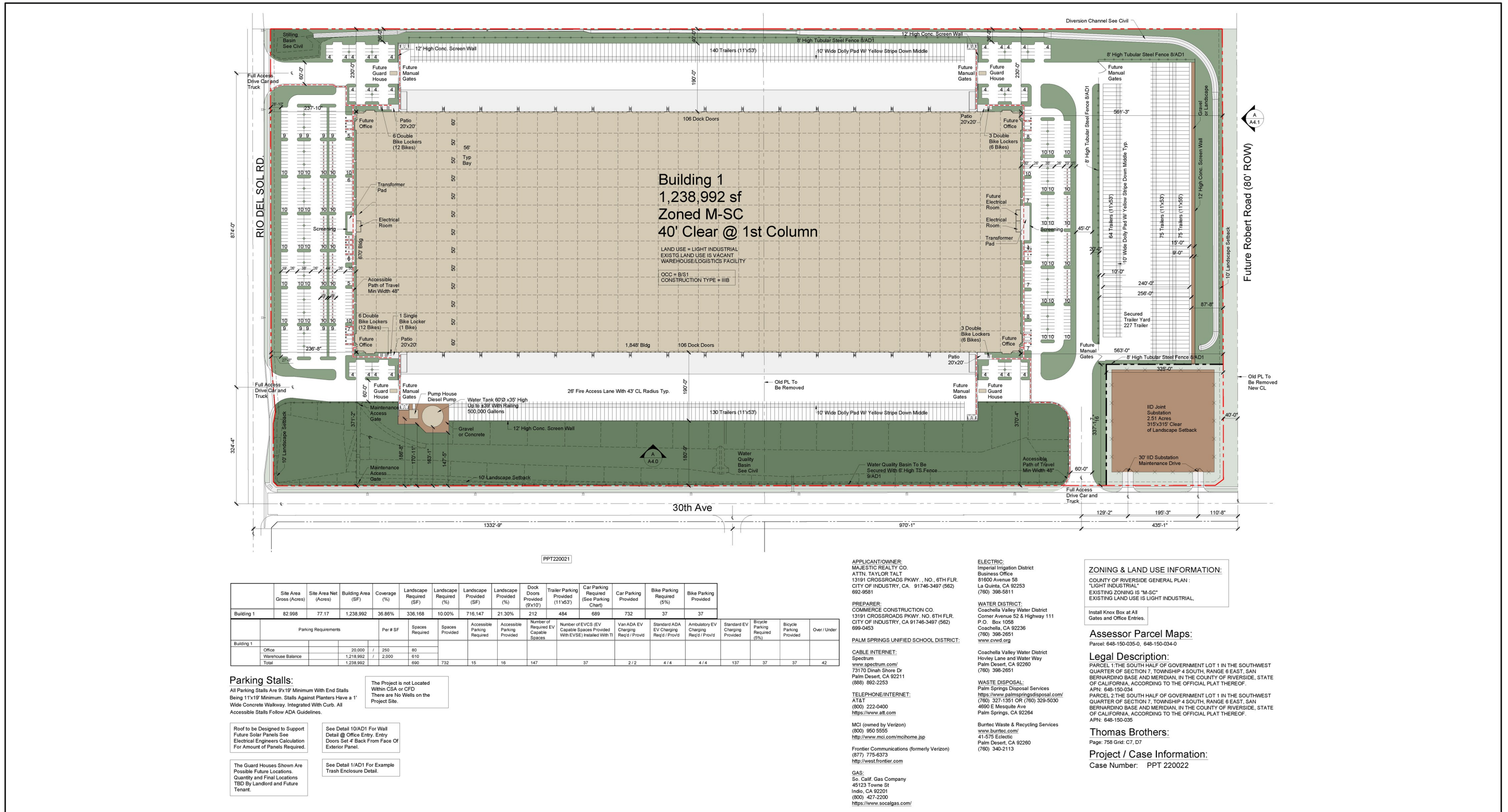


Source(s): ESRI, RCTLMA (2022), Cathedral City General Plan Draft (2019), North City Extended Specific Plan (01-15-2014)

Figure 3-4



Change of Zone No. 2200013



Source(s): Commerce Construction Co. (01-10-2024)

Figure 3-5



Plot Plan No. 220022 Site Plan



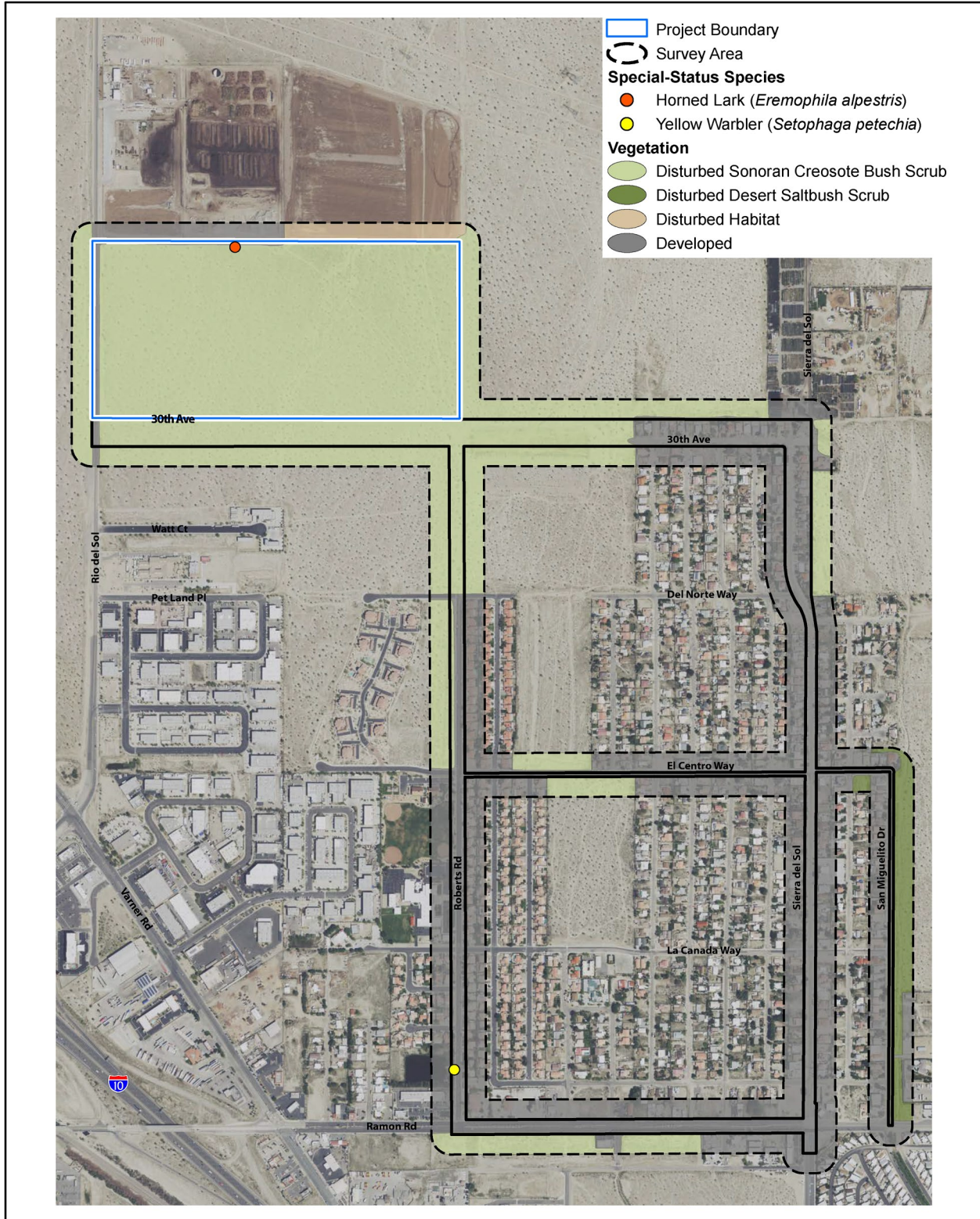
inclusive of a truck trailer parking area proposed in the eastern and northeastern portions of the Project site. Access to the proposed warehouse building would be accommodated via two driveways along Rio Del Sol Road (from north to south, Driveways 1 and 2) and one driveway along 30th Avenue (Driveway 3). All three of these driveways would serve both passenger vehicles and trucks. In addition, water quality/retention basins are proposed along the southern portion of the warehouse building site, and a stilling basin is proposed in the northwest corner of the warehouse building site.

This EIR also includes an evaluation of potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of a potential IID joint substation in the southeastern corner of the Project site on approximately 2.5 acres. A new substation is necessary because the IID does not have capacity in the local area to serve the Project's proposed warehouse building and other parts of the Thousand Palms community with electricity. However, based on discussions with IID staff, it was determined that the necessary IID substation likely would be constructed at an off-site location. If constructed at an off-site location, the IID substation would not be a Project-related component, and the IID already is undertaking a separate review of the off-site substation location pursuant to the requirements of CEQA. However, in order to account for the potential that the IID substation ultimately may be constructed on site, this EIR includes an evaluation of potential physical impacts to the environment that would result should the substation be constructed on site. If constructed on site, the IID substation would be square in shape, measuring approximately 315 feet by 315 feet in size, and would accommodate a typical 2 bank station. Two driveways would occur along 30th Avenue to provide maintenance access to the IID substation. Additionally, and in the event the IID substation ultimately is constructed on site, power poles would be installed in the Project vicinity between the on-site substation and existing IID facilities. Although not depicted on the PPT 220022 site plan, the potential off-site routes for transmission lines are evaluated as part of this EIR, although the precise location of, and ultimate need for, individual power poles is unknown at this time. The potentially impacted areas resulting from power pole installation off site are depicted on Figure 3-6, *Survey Area for Off-Site Power Pole Locations*. It should be noted that the off-site areas shown on Figure 3-6 depict the potential routes for the power lines; however, in the event the IID substation is constructed on site, not all of the depicted alignments would be implemented, and physical impacts only would occur in specific locations where power poles would be installed. Thus, the study area depicted on Figure 3-6 overstates the Project's potential off-site impacts due to the potential power pole installation.

In addition, the Project would construct a water tank and pump house on site to provide adequate water pressure for on-site fire hydrants. The water tank is proposed at the southwestern corner of the truck court to the south of the proposed warehouse building, and would have a diameter of 60 feet, and would measure up to 35 feet in height. The water tank would have a maximum storage capacity of 500,000 gallons. A building for diesel pumps also is proposed to the west of the water tank. Access to the water tank and pump house would be accommodated via manual gates providing access via Driveway 2.

B. Grading and Site Work

Figure 3-7 through Figure 3-10, *Plot Plan No. 220022 Grading Plan*, depicts the grading plan included as part of PPT 220022. As shown, the site would be graded in a manner that largely approximates the site's existing topographic conditions, except as necessary to accommodate proper site drainage and sewer flows. The Project



Source(s): Rocks Biological Consulting (12-09-2022)

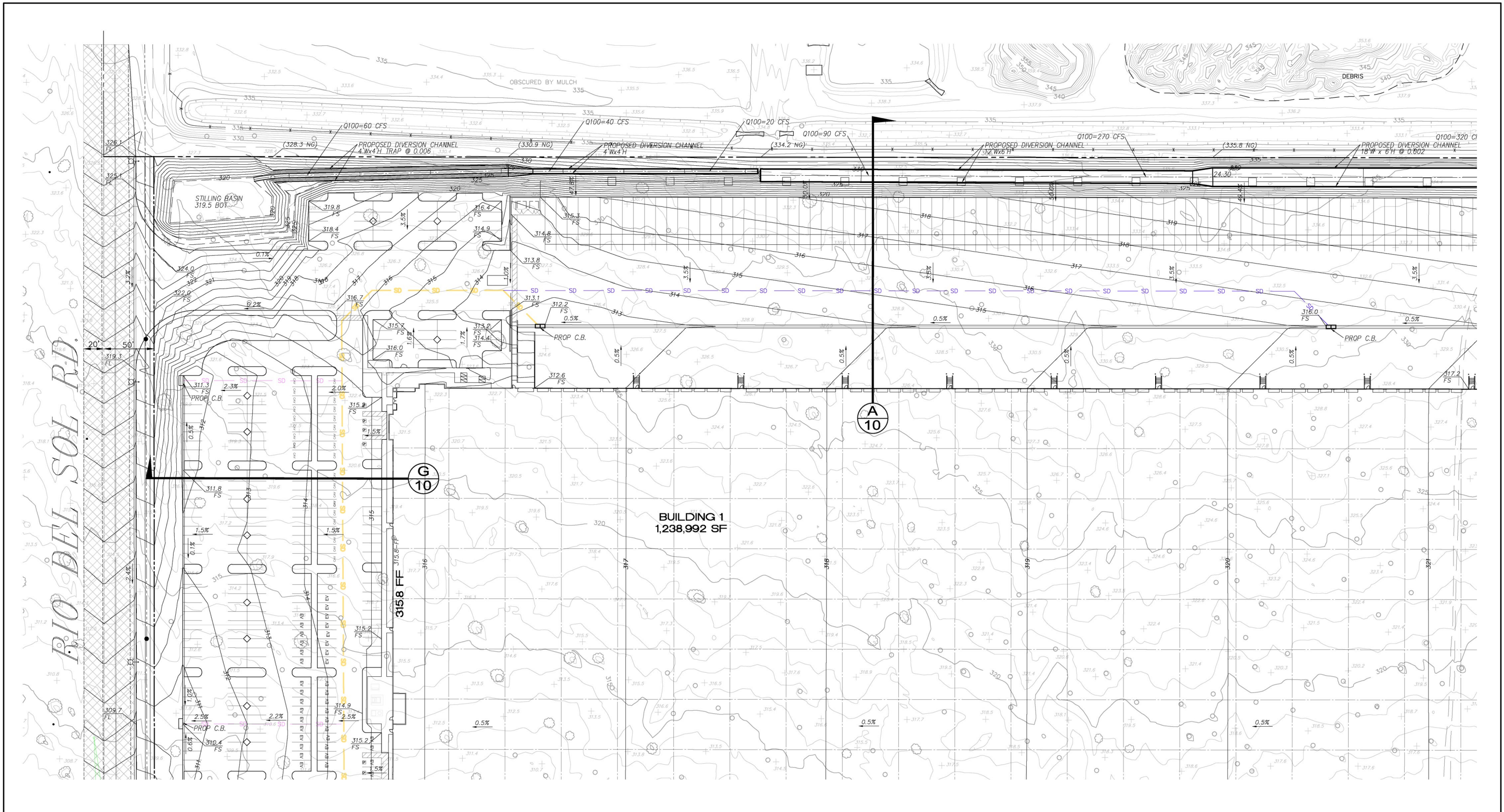
Figure 3-6



Not to Scale

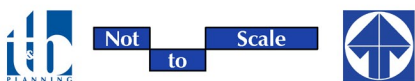


Survey Area for Off-Site Power Pole Locations

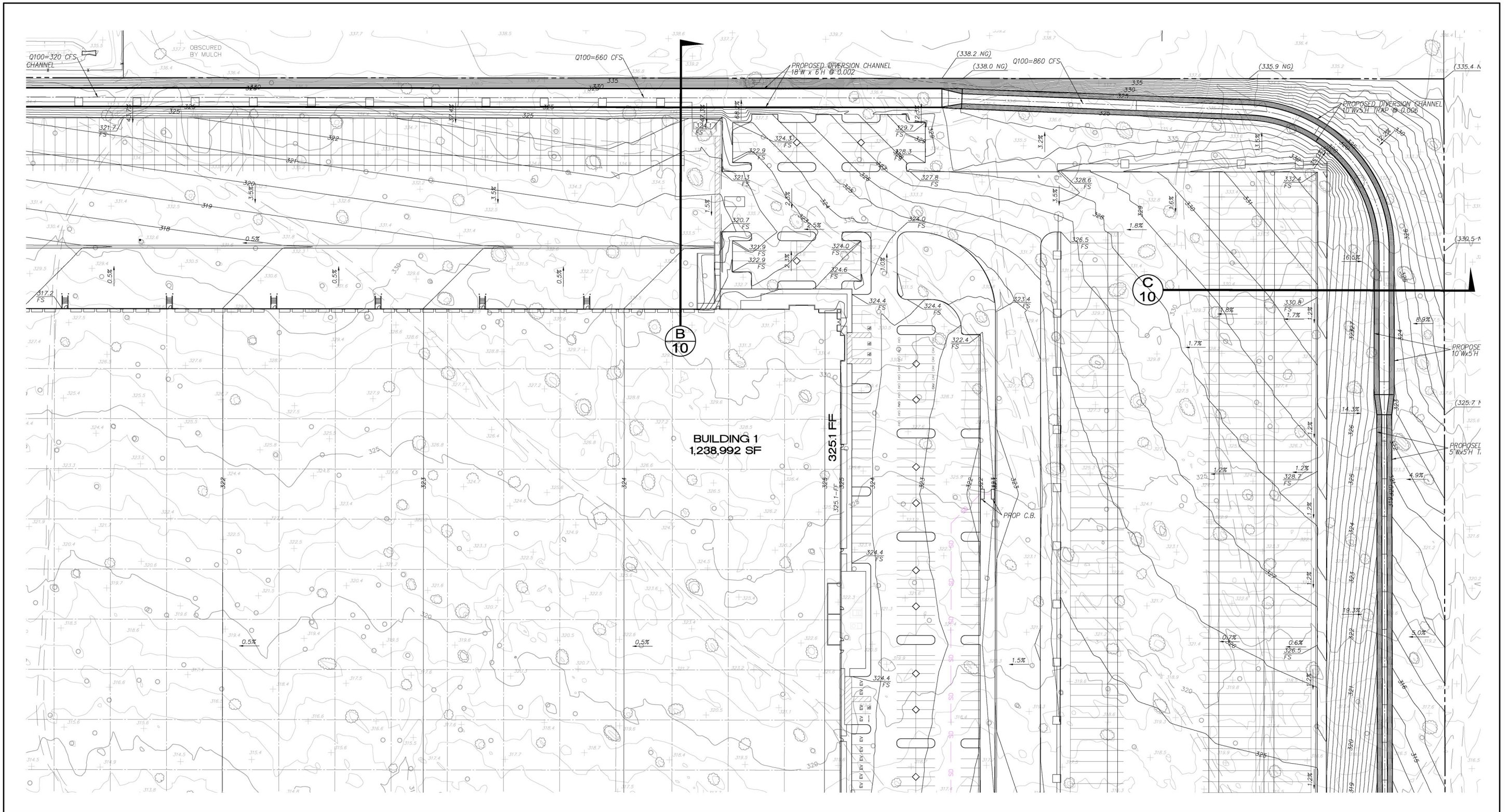


Source(s): PBLA Engineering, Inc. (01-11-2024)

Figure 3-7

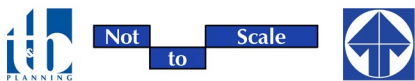


Plot Plan No. 220022 Grading Plan (1 of 4)

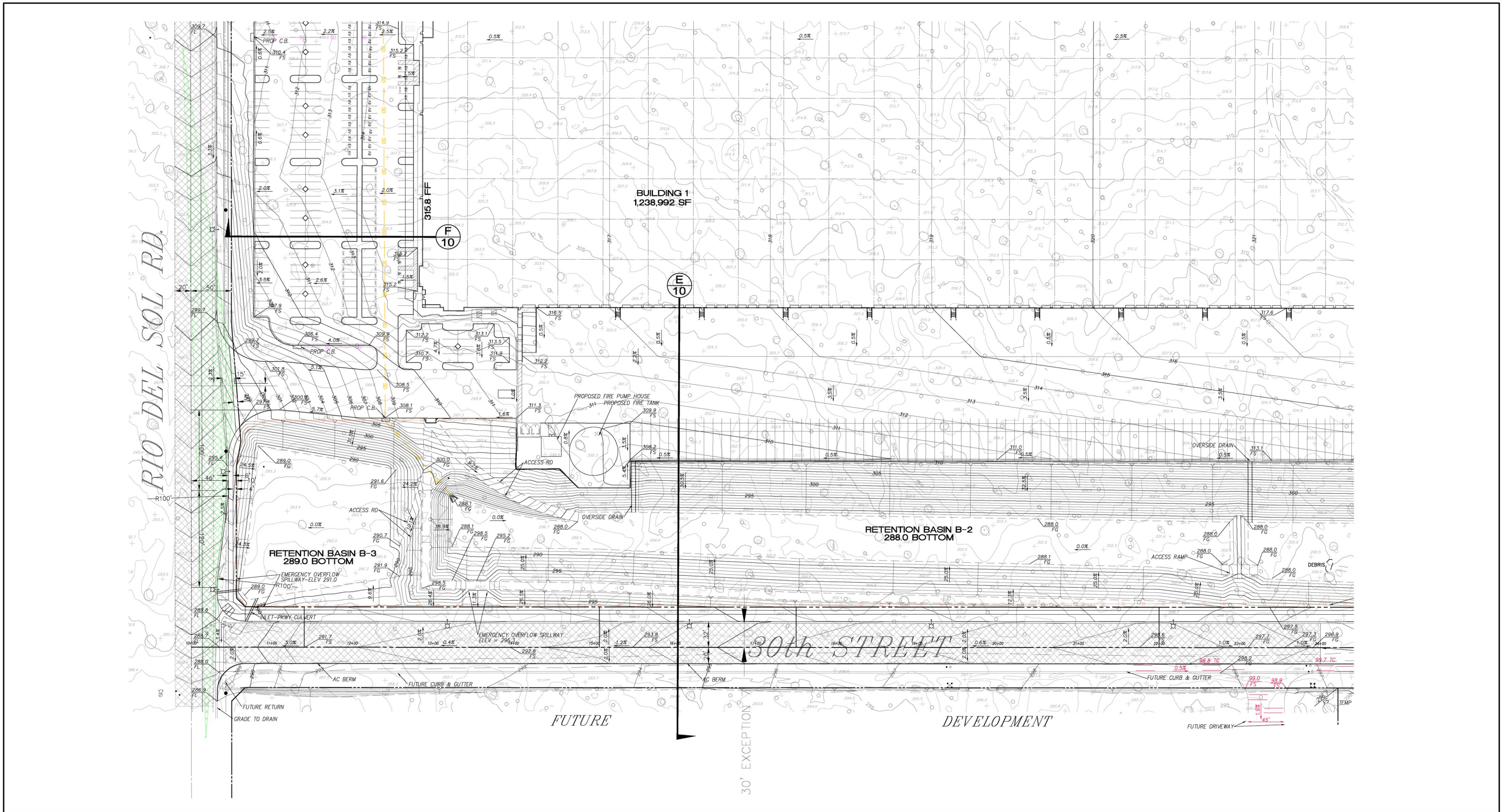


Source(s): PBLA Engineering, Inc. (01-11-2024)

Figure 3-8

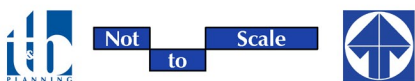


Plot Plan No. 220022 Grading Plan (2 of 4)

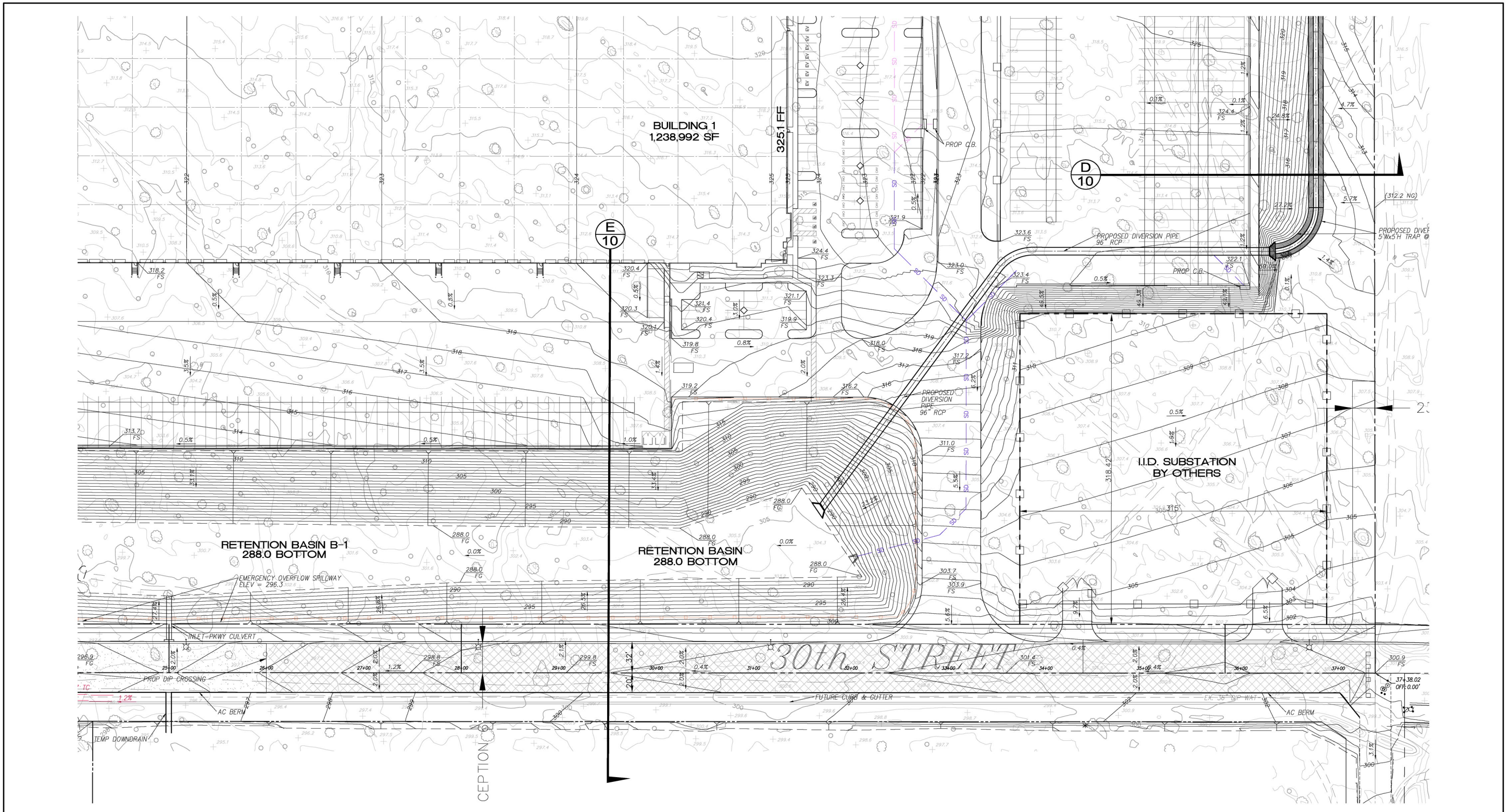


Source(s): PBLA Engineering, Inc. (01-11-2024)

Figure 3-9

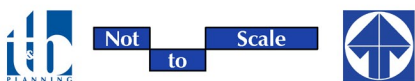


Plot Plan No. 220022 Grading Plan (3 of 4)



Source(s): PBLA Engineering, Inc. (01-11-2024)

Figure 3-10



Plot Plan No. 220022 Grading Plan (4 of 4)



would require a total of 681,925 cubic yards (cy) of cut and 712,323 cy of fill, requiring the net import of approximately 30,398 cy of soils². No blasting is required for the Project. Manufactured slopes are proposed along the northern site boundary, which would be constructed at a maximum gradient of approximately 2:1 (horizontal:vertical) and would measure up to 16 feet in height. The slope along the northern Project boundary also would accommodate a proposed 6-foot by 12-foot stormwater drainage diversion channel/berm (as described more fully below under the discussion of Drainage in subsection 3.5.3.G). Slopes also are proposed around the proposed retention basins in the southern portion of the Project site, which would measure up to ±28 feet in height and would be constructed at a maximum gradient of 3:1. Minor slopes also are proposed along the western site boundary measuring up to ±9 feet in height.

In addition, and as shown on Figure 3-11, *Proposed Grading – Off-Site Roadway Improvements*, the County will require the Project Applicant to pave Robert Road between 30th Avenue and the existing improved portion of this roadway at the intersection with Del Norte Way. The proposed minor grading and a 32-foot-wide paved road segment is necessary to provide access primarily for fire trucks and other emergency vehicles between the Project site and Del Norte Way. It is not anticipated that daily Project-related traffic would use this segment of Robert Road.

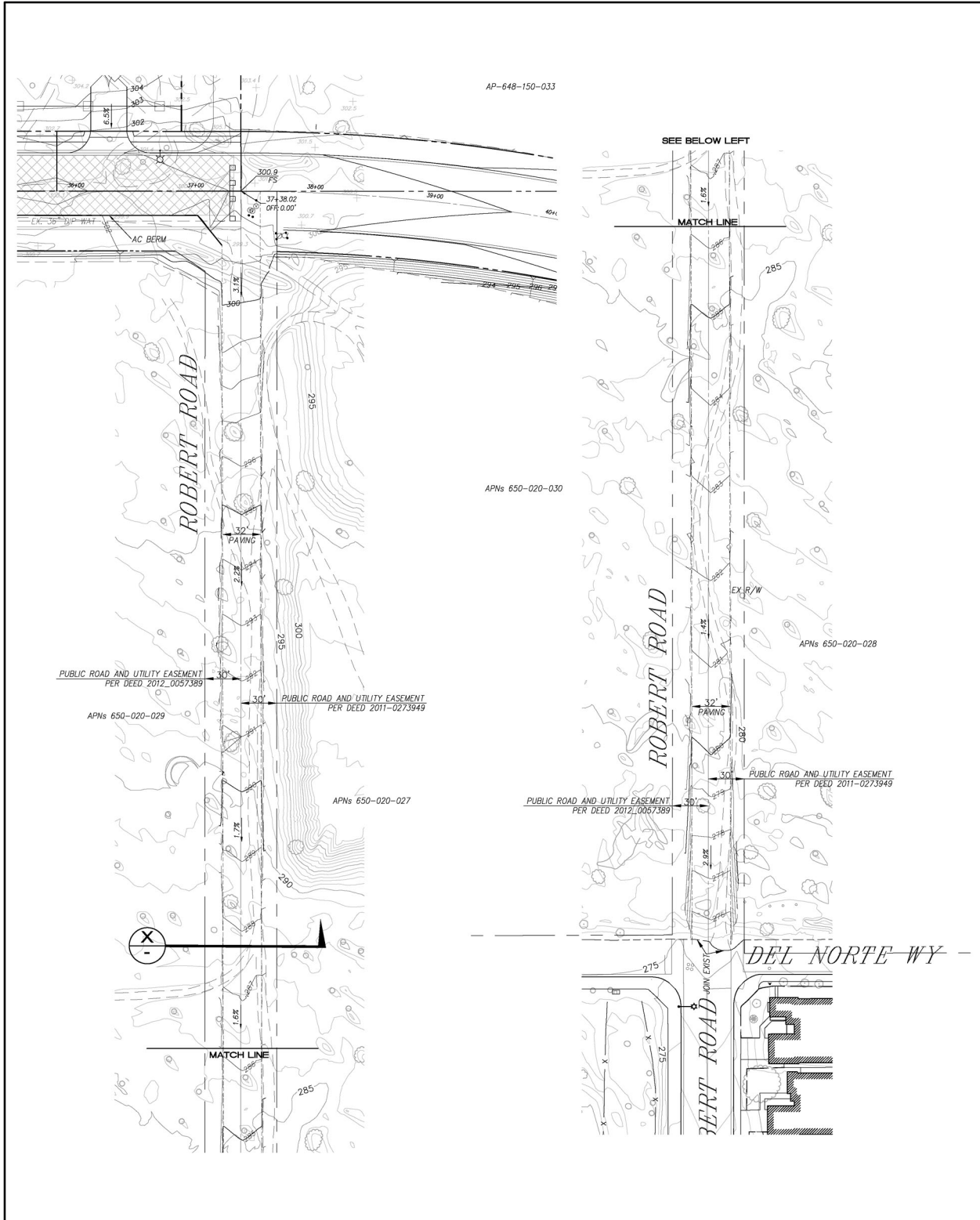
C. Architectural Design

Architectural characteristics proposed as part of the warehouse building are depicted on Figure 3-12 through Figure 3-14, *Building Elevations*. As shown, the building is designed in a contemporary style with concrete tilt up panels that would be painted in shades of tan, brown, and maroon. The proposed office spaces would be treated with solar cool gray glazing (glass) and spandrel glass that would be accented with a mixture of compatible colors. The proposed building would range from 44 to 49 feet in height, with the taller portions of the building occurring at the corners of the building and at several locations along the longer sides of the building, and the shorter portions of the building occurring along the northern and southern sides of the building. As previously noted, a total of 212 dock doors are proposed, with 106 dock doors along the northern facing side of the building and 106 dock doors along the southern facing side of the building. Additionally, and in accordance with Measure R2-CE1 (Clean Energy) of the Riverside County Climate Action Plan Update (CAP Update), the proposed warehouse building is designed to accommodate rooftop solar panels that would serve a minimum of 20 percent of the building's energy demand. The precise number of solar panels required would be determined as part of future building permits for tenant improvements once the precise user(s) of the proposed building are identified.

D. Circulation

As previously shown on Figure 3-5, access to the Project site would be accommodated via Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue. As part of the Project, the Project Applicant would be required to construct improvements along the Project site's frontages with Rio Del Sol Road and 30th Street, as depicted on Figure 3-15, *Plot Plan No. 220022 Roadway Cross-Sections*. In addition, the Project Applicant would be required to improve Robert

² Although the Project only would require the net import of approximately 30,398 cy of soil, the Project's technical studies provided a "worst case" analysis by assuming that the Project would require up to 101,140 cy of soil import.



Source(s): PBLA Engineering, Inc. (01-11-2024)

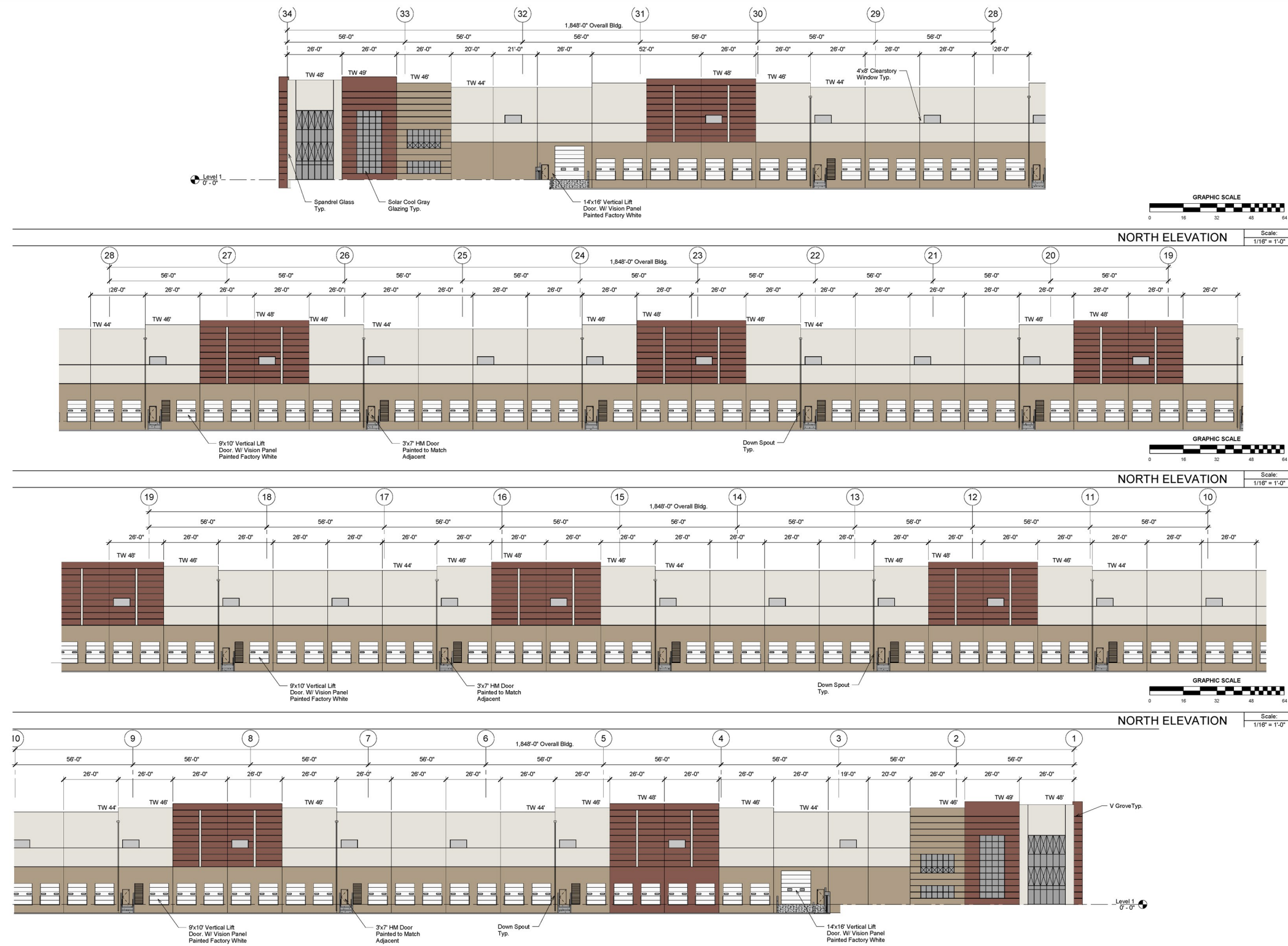
Figure 3-11



Not to Scale



Proposed Grading -
Off-Site Roadway Improvements



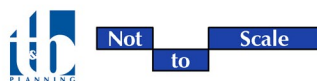
COLOR LEGEND

- SHERWIN WILLIAMS
SW7636
ORIGAMI WHITE
- SHERWIN WILLIAMS
SW7549
STUDIO TAUPE
- SHERWIN WILLIAMS
SW6054
CANYON CLAY
- GLAZING
SOLOR COOL GRAY

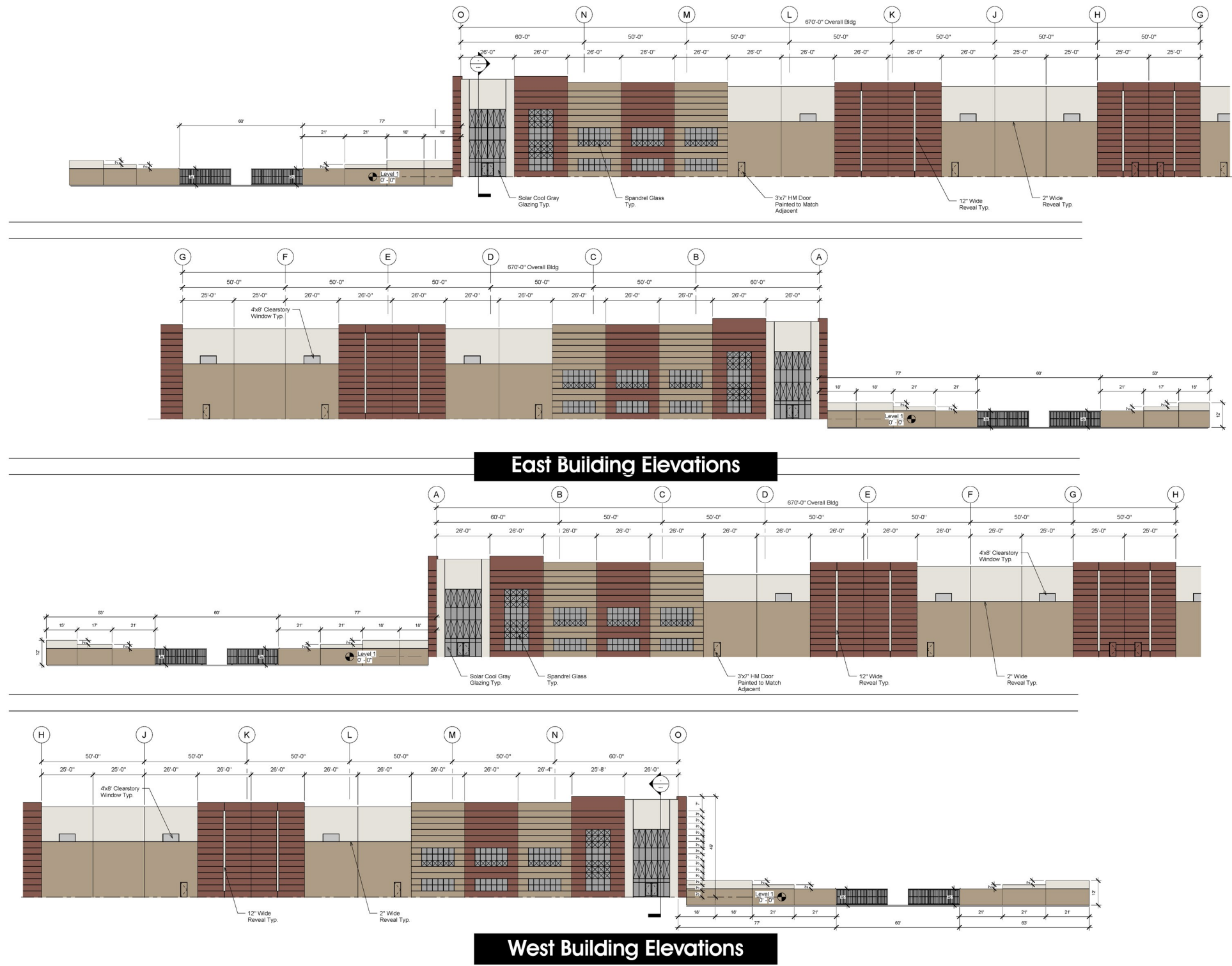
Building is Concrete Tilt Up Panels
Mullions to be Clear Anodized Aluminum

Source(s): Commerce Construction Co. (01-10-2024)

Figure 3-12



Building Elevations (North)



COLOR LEGEND

	SHERWIN WILLIAMS SW7636 ORIGAMI WHITE
	SHERWIN WILLIAMS SW7549 STUDIO TAUPE
	SHERWIN WILLIAMS SW6054 CANYON CLAY
	GLAZING SOLAR COOL GRAY

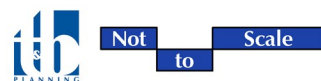
Building is Concrete Tilt Up Panels
Mullions to be Clear Anodized Aluminum

Provide Roof Top Screening of All
A.C. Units Per County of
Riverside Standards.

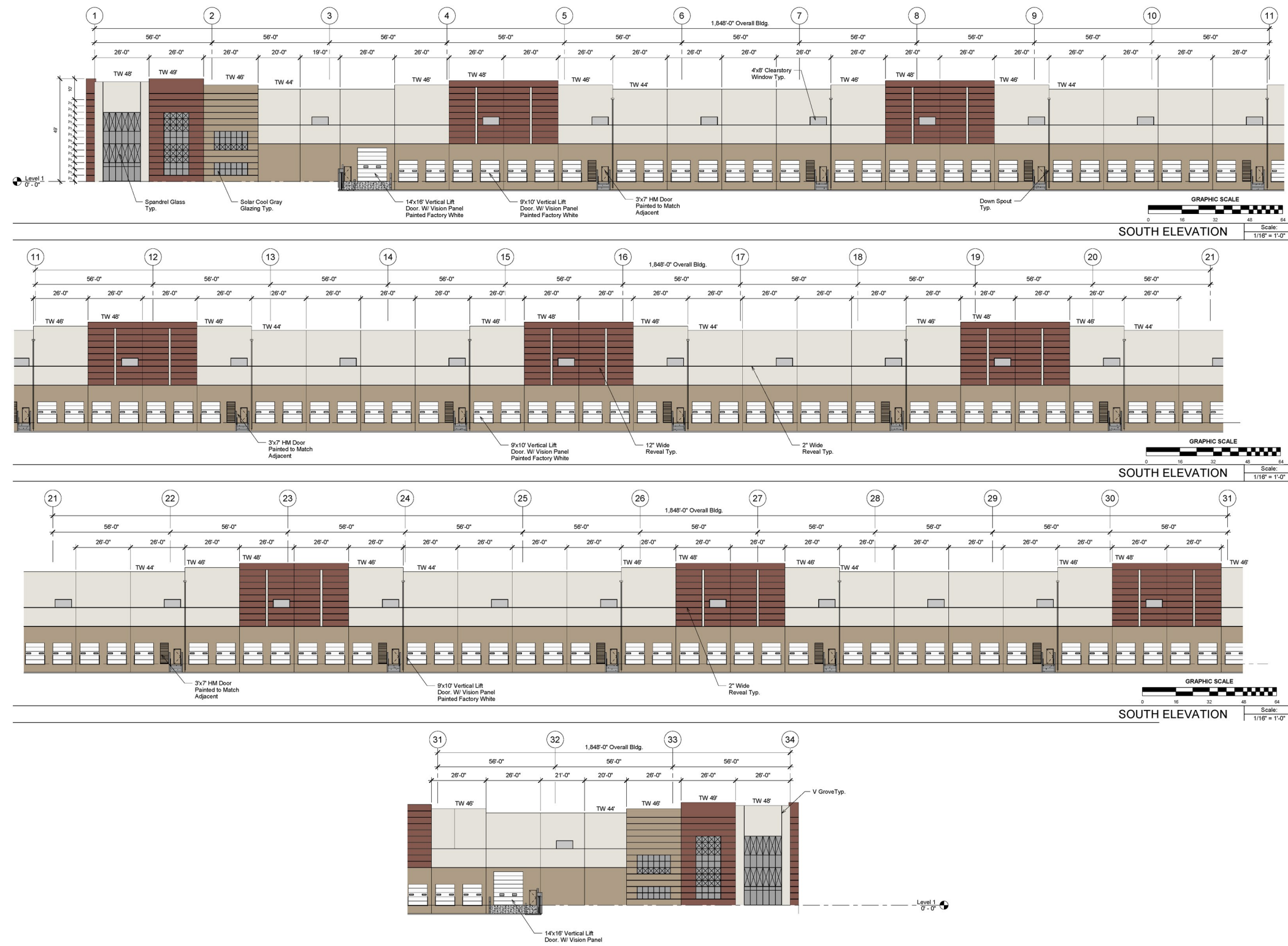
Total Maximum Height is 49'
Above Finish Floor.

Source(s): Commerce Construction Co. (01-10-2024)

Figure 3-13



Building Elevations (East and West)

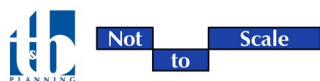


COLOR LEGEND

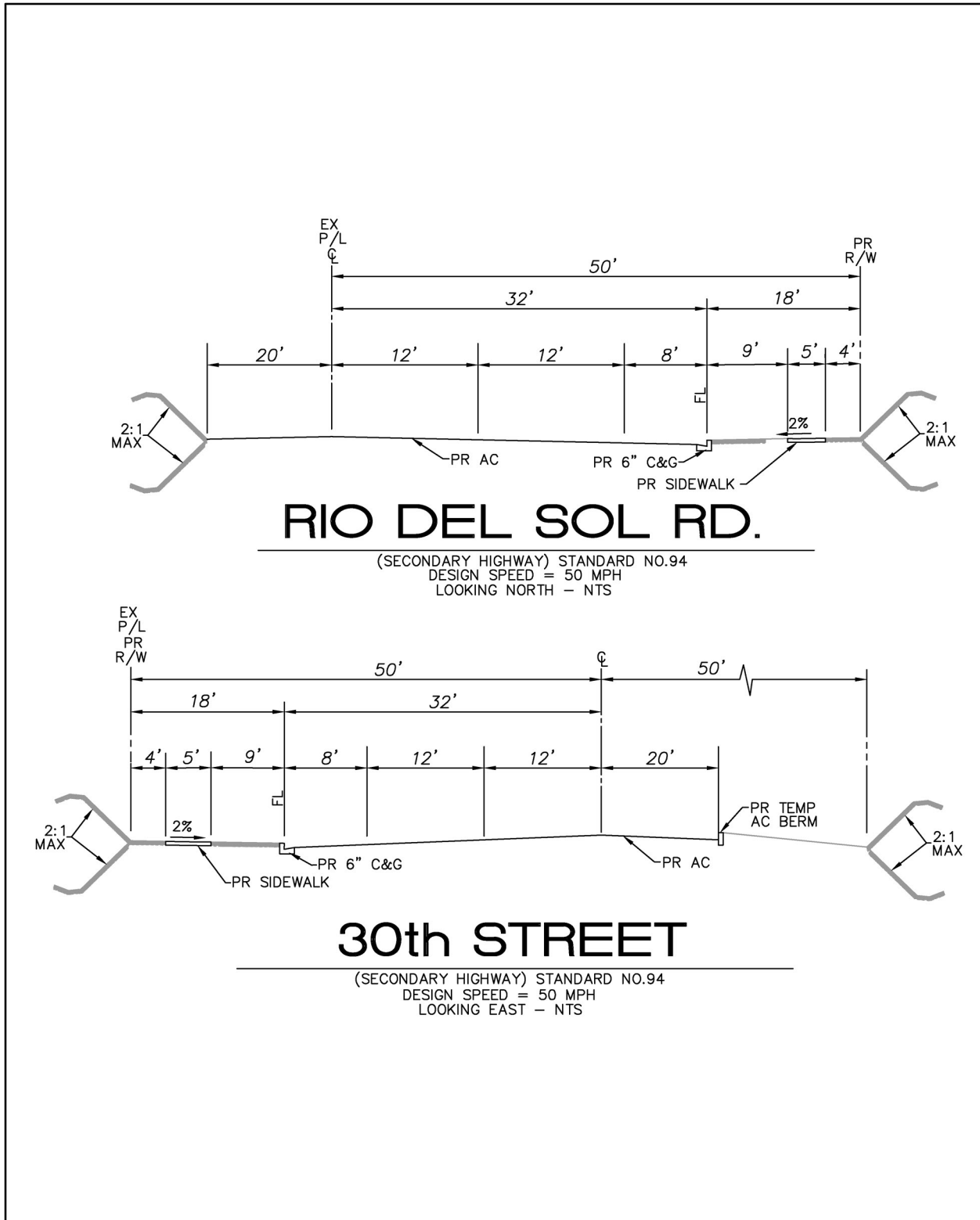
- SHERWIN WILLIAMS
SW7636
ORIGAMI WHITE
 - SHERWIN WILLIAMS
SW7549
STUDIO TAUPE
 - SHERWIN WILLIAMS
SW6054
CANYON CLAY
 - GLAZING
SOLOR COOL GRAY
- Building is Concrete Tilt Up Panels
Mullions to be Clear Anodized Aluminum

Source(s): Commerce Construction Co. (01-10-2024)

Figure 3-14



Building Elevations (South)



Source(s): PBLA Engineering, Inc. (01-30-2024)

Figure 3-15



Not to Scale

Plot Plan No. 220022 Roadway Cross-Sections



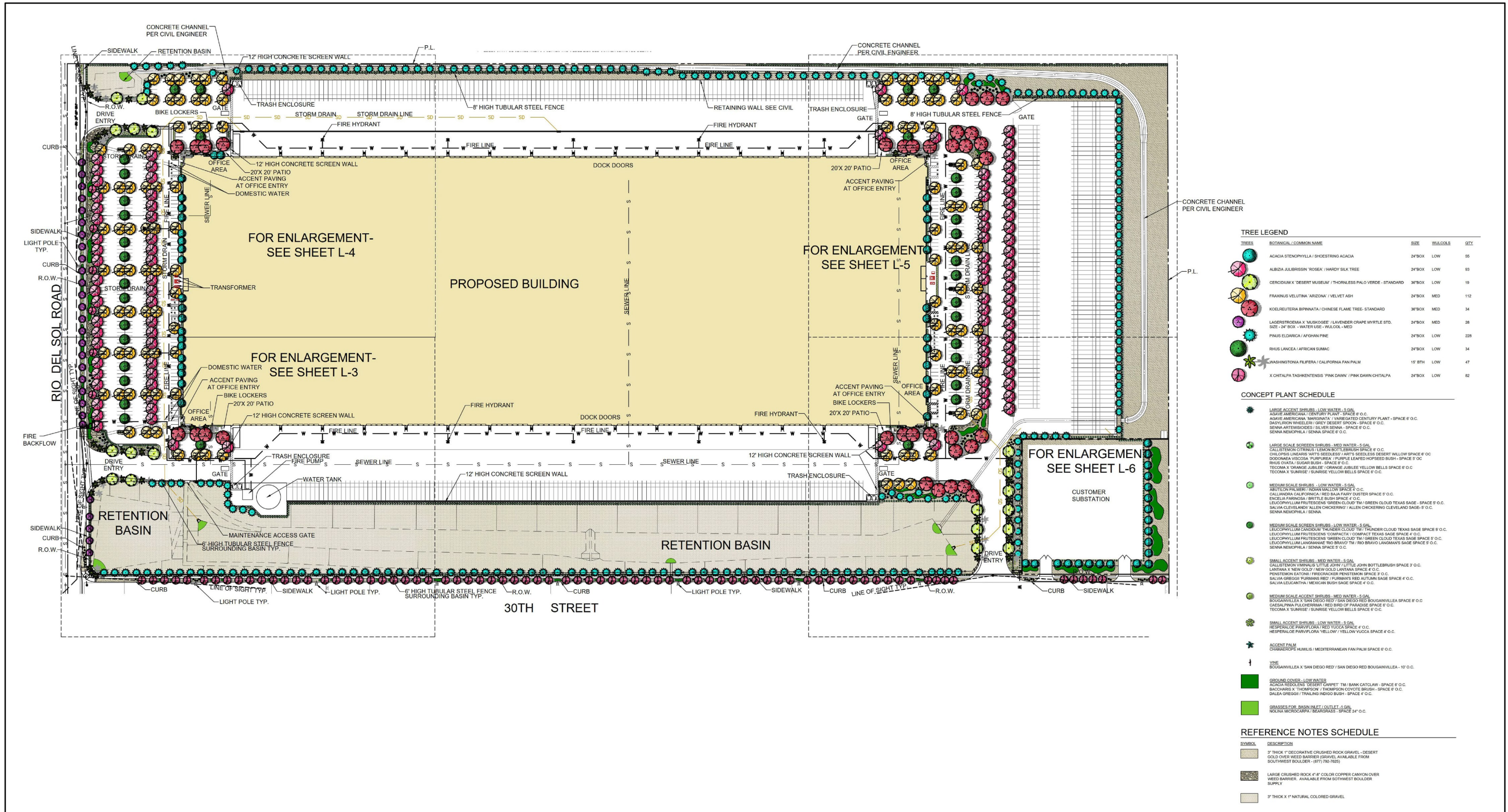
Road off site between the southeast corner of the Project site and Del Norte Way. Proposed roadway improvements are described below.

Rio Del Sol Road: Under existing conditions, Rio Del Sol Road along the Project site's frontage exists as a two-lane undivided roadway with one lane in each direction and approximately 24 feet of paved roadway surface. As shown on Figure 3-15, the Project Applicant would be required to improve this segment of Rio Del Sol Road to its ultimate half-width standard as a "Secondary Highway (100-foot right-of-way (ROW))." The Project Applicant would dedicate 50 feet of ROW for this roadway along the Project site frontage and would improve the roadway to include two northbound travel lanes, inclusive of an 8-foot-wide turning lane, curb, gutter, and a variable width landscaped parkway that includes a five-foot-wide curb-separated sidewalk. No traffic signals are proposed.

- 30th Avenue. Under existing conditions, 30th Avenue along the Project site's frontage does not exist. As part of the Project, the Project Applicant would be required to construct the segment of 30th Avenue along the site's frontage between Rio del Sol and Robert Road to its ultimate General Plan Circulation Element standard as a Secondary Highway (100-foot ROW). The Project Applicant would dedicate 50 feet of ROW for this roadway along the Project site's frontage and would improve the roadway to include two travel lanes, an 8-foot-wide turning lane, curb, gutter, and an 18-foot-wide landscaped parkway along the northern side of the roadway that would include a five-foot-wide curb-separated sidewalk. Ultimate improvements to the southern half of this segment of 30th Avenue would be completed by property owners along the southern side of the road as part of future development of these parcels.
- Robert Road. Under existing conditions, the segment of Robert Road between 30th Avenue and Del Norte Way is an unimproved dirt road. As part of the Project, and in order to accommodate emergency access to the Project site, the Project Applicant would be required to pave Robert Road to a 32-foot width between 30th Avenue and Del Norte Way.

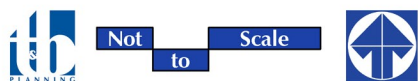
E. Landscaping

Figure 3-16, *Plot Plan No. 220022 Conceptual Landscape Plan*, depicts the Project's conceptual landscape plan. As shown, landscaping would be ornamental in nature and would feature trees, hedges, shrubs, groundcovers, and accent plants, with landscaping concentrated along the site boundaries, along the eastern and western sides of the building, around the potential IID substation site, in the passenger vehicle parking areas to the east and west of the proposed building, and within the proposed retention basins in the southern portions of the Project site. Trees proposed as part of site landscaping would include 24-inch box shoestring acacia (*Acacia stenophylla*), 24-inch box hardy silk tree (*Albizia julibrissin* 'Rosea'), 36-inch box thornless Palo Verde (*Cercidium x* 'Desert Museum'), 24-inch box velvet ash (*Fraxinus velutina* 'Arizona'), 36-inch box Chinese flame tree (*Koelreuteria bipinnata*), 24-inch box lavender crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia x* 'Muskogee'), 24-inch box Afghan pine (*Pinus eldarica*), 24-inch box African sumac (*Rhus lancea*), 15-foot brown trunk height California fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*), and 24-inch box pink dawn chitalpa (*X Chitalpa tashkentensis* 'Pink Dawn').



Source(s): Commerce Construction Co. (01-08-2024)

Figure 3-16



Plot Plan No. 220022 Conceptual Landscape Plan

Lead Agency: County of Riverside

SCH No. 2022110600



F. Walls and Fencing

As shown on the proposed PPT 220022 Site Plan (refer to Figure 3-5, previously presented), 12-foot-tall concrete screen walls are proposed along the southern edge of the southern truck court, and along the northern and eastern sides of the northern truck court. An 8-foot-tall tubular steel fence also is proposed along the northern edge of the northern truck court. Manual gates are proposed at the east and west ends of the truck courts to restrict access to these areas. The proposed retention basins in the southern portions of the Project site would be secured with 6-foot-tall tubular steel fencing, with maintenance access gates proposed along the northern and southern sides of the retention basins within the western portion of the Project site. The potential IID substation would be surrounded by 8-foot-tall tubular steel fencing.

G. Water, Sewer, and Drainage

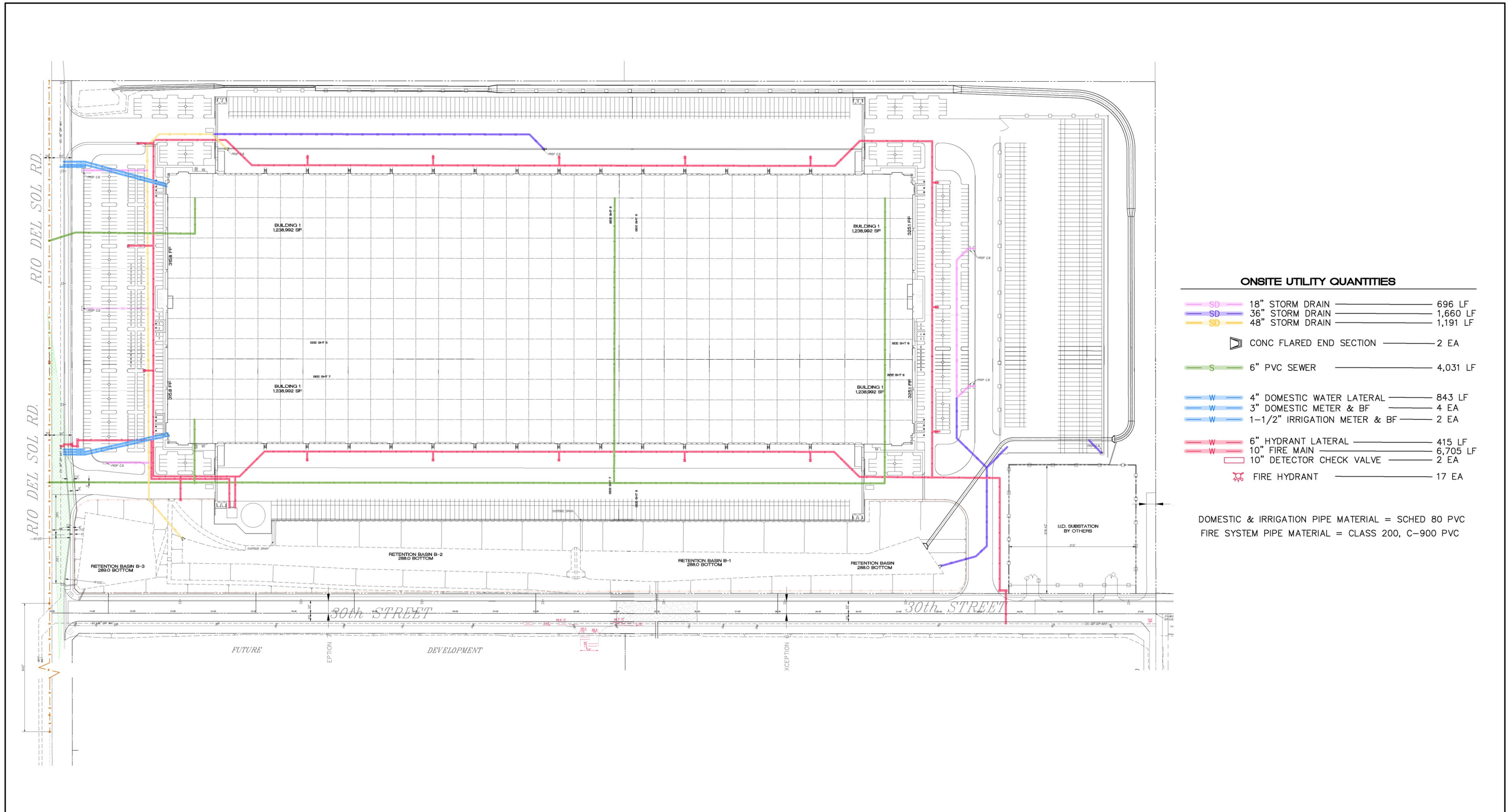
PPT 220022 also includes a proposed utility plan, as depicted on Figure 3-17, *Plot Plan No. 220022 Utility Plan*. Major components of the Project's proposed utility improvements are described below.

1. Water Service

Water service and supply to the Project site is provided by Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD). Under existing conditions, there is a 36-inch water main within Rio Del Sol Road and a 36-inch water main within the 30th Avenue alignment along the Project site's frontages with these roadways. As part of the Project, domestic water lines are proposed to extend from the existing 36-inch water main within Rio Del Sol to the northwest and southwest corners of the proposed warehouse building, which would provide domestic water service to the entire building. Fire water service would be accommodated by the existing 36-inch water mains within 30th Avenue and Rio Del Sol. The Project's design would extend a fire water main from the existing 36-inch water mains and the proposed water tank in the southwestern portion of the Project site. The water tank is intended to ensure there would be adequate water pressure on site for fire suppression purposes. A series of ±10-inch fire water mains would extend from the water tank and would surround the proposed warehouse building. Fire hydrant lateral lines are proposed extend from the fire water mains to provide water to individual fire hydrants proposed around the proposed building to ensure adequate fire protection.

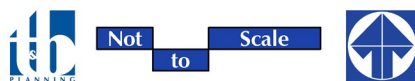
2. Sewer Service

Sewer service to the proposed Project also would be provided by CVWD. As depicted on Figure 3-17, under existing conditions there is a 15-inch vitrified clay pipe (VCP) sewer line located within Rio Del Sol Road. As part of the Project, a polyvinyl chloride (PVC) sewer line is proposed on site within the southern drive aisle that would extend to the north beneath the building at two locations, with one sewer line extending to the north beneath the building in the central portion of the southern truck court and the other sewer line extending to the north near the southeast corner of the proposed warehouse building. An additional PVC sewer line is proposed just to the south of the northern driveway entrance along Rio Del Sol, which would extend from the northwest corner of the building to the existing 15-inch PVC sewer line. Wastewater generated by the proposed Project would be conveyed to CVWD Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) No. 7, which is located at the southeast corner



Source(s): PBLA Engineering, Inc. (01-11-2024)

Figure 3-17



Plot Plan No. 220022 Utility Plan

Lead Agency: County of Riverside

SCH No. 2022110600



of Avenue 38 and Burr Street in the City of Indio, approximately 8.8 miles southeast of the Project site. WRP 7 has a secondary treatment permit capacity of 5.0 million gallons per day (mgd) and a tertiary treatment capacity of 2.5 mgd (CVWD, 2020, p. 3-11)

3. *Drainage*

Figure 3-17 also depicts the Project's proposed drainage improvements. As shown, a series of catch basins and storm drain lines of various diameters would be constructed on the site to convey runoff towards one of three retention basins proposed in the southern portions of the site. The three retention basins, labeled from east to west as Retention Basins B-1, B-2, and B-3, would collect and retain runoff generated on the Project site, runoff that would be tributary to the Project site from 30th Avenue and Rio Del Sol, and runoff that is tributary to the Project site from off-site areas the north. Specifically, runoff generated in the northern truck court and the western portions of the Project site would be conveyed to the west and south via proposed 36- and 48-inch storm drain lines, ultimately discharging directly into the western portion of Retention Basin B-2. Runoff generated in the eastern portion of the Project site would be conveyed to the south by proposed 18- and 36-inch storm drain lines and would discharge directly into the eastern portion of Retention Basin B-1. Retention Basins B-1 and B-2 also would receive a majority of run-on flows from 30th Avenue. Retention Basin B-3 is designed to collect flows generated along Rio Del Sol and the remaining run-on flows from 30th Avenue.

In addition and to convey off site flows, a diversion berm is proposed along the northern edge of the Project site, which would direct run-on flows from the western portion of the site westerly along the northern property line to a proposed stilling basin proposed in the northwest corner of the Project site. Low flows would not overflow the stilling basin, while peak flows from the stilling basin as well as the remaining run-on flows along the central and eastern portions of the northern Project boundary would be conveyed to the east and south along the northern and eastern Project boundaries via a proposed diversion channel to a proposed 96-inch RCP diversion pipe in the southeastern portion of the Project site that would discharge directly into Retention Basin B-1. In addition, run-on flows from the improved portion of Rio Del Sol, as well as a portion of the run-on flows from the improved portion of 30th Avenue, would be conveyed into Retention Basin B-3. The three retention basins have been sized to retain and infiltrate all runoff that is tributary to the site, such that there would be no runoff discharged from the Project site except during unusually high rainfall events. During unusually high rain events, the three retention basins are designed with emergency overflow spillways that would discharge a majority of the excess runoff directly onto 30th Avenue, with a portion of these flows being discharged onto Rio Del Sol. Specifically, Retention Basins B-1 and B-2 would discharge onto 30th Avenue once flows within the basin exceed the design elevation of 296.3 feet above mean sea level (amsl), while flows within Retention Basin B-3 would discharge onto 30th Avenue and Rio Del Sol once flows within the basin exceed the design elevation of 291.0 feet amsl.



3.6 PROJECT'S TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS

3.6.1 CONSTRUCTION CHARACTERISTICS

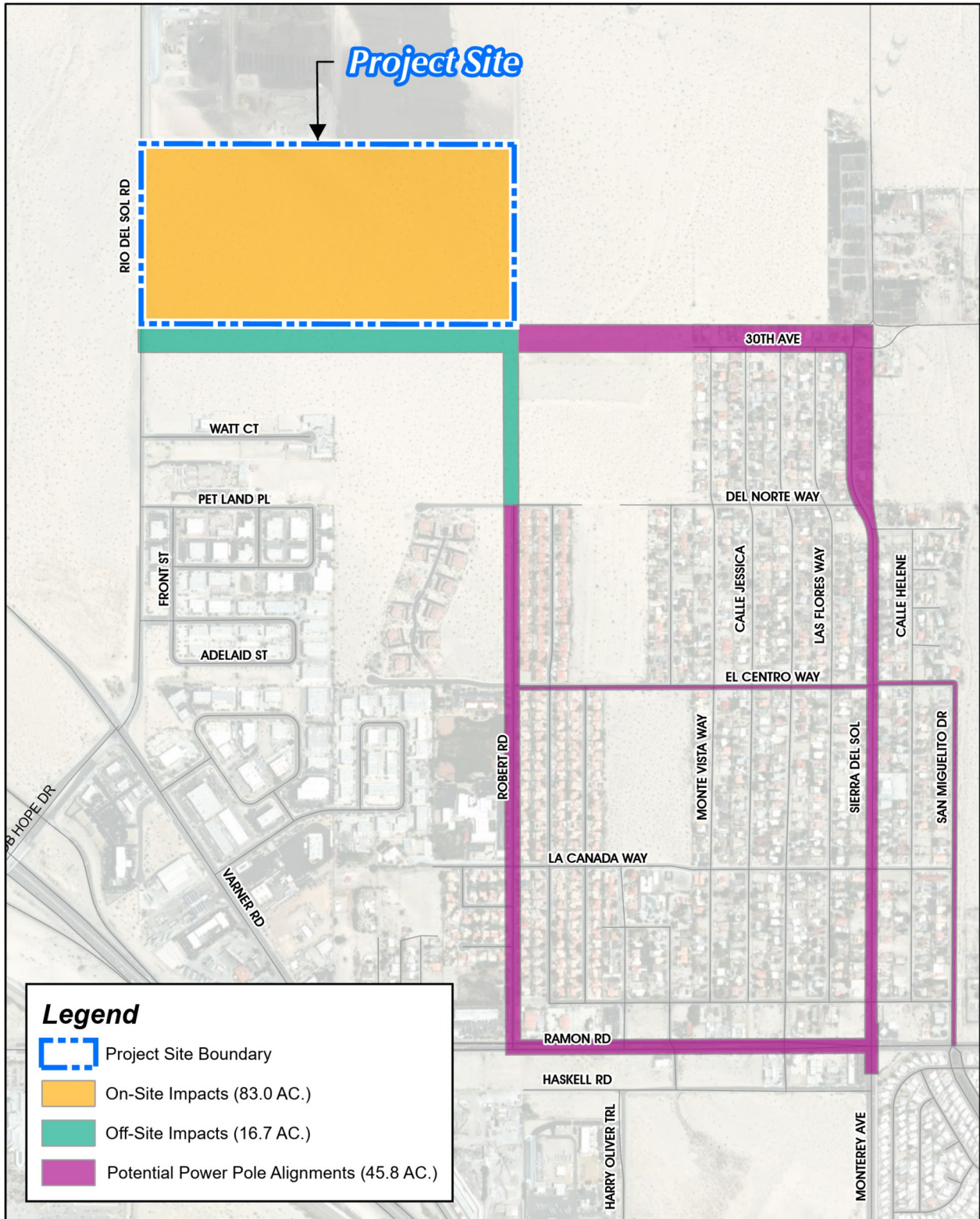
A. *IID Substation and Overhead Line Details*

As previously noted, a new substation is necessary because the IID does not have capacity in the local area to serve the Project's proposed warehouse building and other parts of the Thousand Palms community with electricity. However, based on discussions with IID staff, it was determined that the necessary IID substation likely would be constructed at an off-site location. If constructed at an off-site location, the IID substation would not be a Project-related component, and the IID already is undertaking a separate review of the off-site substation location pursuant to the requirements of CEQA. However, in order to account for the potential that the IID substation ultimately may be constructed on site, this EIR includes an evaluation of potential physical impacts to the environment that would result should the substation be constructed on site. In the event the substation is constructed on site, the substation would consist of a new 50 MW joint substation in the southeastern corner of the Project Site that would be constructed and operated by the IID. The substation, should it ultimately be constructed on site, is designed in two 25 MW banks, for a total of 50 MW. At full build-out, the substation's primary equipment would include one 92kV circuit breakers, two 25 megavolt-ampere (MVA) transformers, and up to eight distribution circuits at full build-out. Equipment would reach a maximum height of 15 feet and would be surrounded by a security fence with secured access gates. The proposed substation area would comprise approximately 2.5 acres in the shape of a square. Reinforced concrete subsurface footings and concrete slabs would be installed along with a grounding grid. Equipment would be bolted or welded to slabs and footings to meet or exceed seismic requirements. All equipment would be grounded to a substation perimeter looped grounding grid.

In the event that the substation ultimately is constructed on site, a 92 kV above-ground power line would be needed off-site to connect the proposed substation to the local electric grid. The poles would be ± 70 feet in height and constructed of in-line wood pole and steel poles at changes of direction. Although the exact pole locations are not yet determined, the wood poles would be 2-feet in diameter at in-line locations. The steel poles would be 7-feet in diameter at changes of direction. During installation, a maximum 10 foot wide by 10 foot long by 15 foot deep maximum ground disturbance area would occur around each pole for installation, and it would take approximately four days to install each pole. Pole installation consists of auguring and removing soil, setting/installing the pole and backfilling. After the poles are installed, electric transmission lines would be anchored to and strung between the poles. The electric line installation process would take approximately 64 working days. Electric line installation consists of pole trucks and spools of new lines at each pole anchoring and spanning from new pole to new pole. After installation, periodic maintenance and repairs typically consist of visual inspections, cleaning of mechanisms and statistical readings.

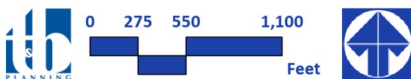
B. *Project-Related Physical Disturbances*

Figure 3-18, *Limits of Disturbance*, depicts the anticipated on- and off-site areas that could be physically disturbed as part of the Project's warehouse improvements and/or due to improvements associated with the potential on-site IID substation. For purposes of analysis throughout this EIR, it is assumed that



Source(s): ESRI, PBLA (2022), RCTLMA (2021)

Figure 3-18



Limits of Disturbance



implementation of the proposed Project would result in disturbance to the 83.0-acre Project site. In addition, proposed frontage improvements along Rio Del Sol Road and 30th Avenue would extend beyond the existing Project site boundaries by approximately 14 feet, resulting in off-site impacts to an additional approximately +/- 1.3 acres abutting the Project site's frontages with these roadways. The Project also would be required to construct improvements to Robert Road between 30th Avenue and Del Norte Way. Off-site impacts associated with the Project-related roadway and utility improvements would comprise up to approximately 16.7 acres.

Additionally, in the event that the IID substation is constructed on site, power poles would be installed between the proposed on-site IID substation and existing IID power facilities located near the intersection of Ramon Road and Monterey Avenue. The alignment of the proposed off-site power lines ultimately would be determined by IID in the event that the IID opts to construct the substation on site; however, for purposes of this EIR, it is assumed that the power poles could be constructed within one of several alignments. Conservatively, all of the potential alignments are analyzed for environmental effects in this EIR. Potential alignments would involve the existing/planned alignments for 30th Avenue (between Rio Del Sol Road and Sierra Del Sol), Robert Road (between Ramon Road and 30th Avenue), Sierra Del Sol (between 30th Avenue and just south of Ramon Road), El Centro Way (between Robert Road and San Miguel Drive), Ramon Road (between Robert Road and Sierra Del Sol), and/or along San Miguelito Drive (between El Centro Way and Ramon Road). Although the limits of disturbance depicted on Figure 3-18 shows full disturbance to approximately 45.8 acres along these road segments, the only areas that actually would be physically disturbed as part of the Project evaluated herein include areas where individual power poles and appurtenant facilities would be installed, resulting in impacts to a roughly maximum 10-foot by 10-foot area that would extend to a maximum depth of 15 feet at each pole location. Additionally, in the event the IID substation is constructed on site, only one route would be selected for the proposed power poles and power lines between the proposed on-site IID substation and existing IID facilities, meaning that the majority of the off-site power pole alignments shown on Figure 3-18 would not be disturbed as part of the Project.

C. Construction Activities Schedule and Equipment Fleet

For purposes of analysis, construction of Project is expected to commence in June 2024 and would last through May 2025. The construction schedule utilized in the analysis, shown in Table 3-2, *Anticipated Construction Duration*, represents a "worst-case" analysis scenario because should construction occur later than analyzed, emission factors for construction activity decrease as time passes and the analysis year increases due to emission regulations becoming more stringent³. The duration of construction activity and associated equipment represents a reasonable approximation of the expected construction fleet. Table 3-3, *Anticipated Construction Equipment*, provides a summary of the construction equipment anticipated to be used during construction of the proposed Project inclusive of the warehouse, potential IID substation, and potential off-site power poles. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, p. 33)

³ As shown in the CalEEMod User's Guide Version 2022.1, Section 4.3 "Off-Road Equipment" as the analysis year increases, emission factors for the same equipment pieces decrease due to the natural turnover of older equipment being replaced by newer less polluting equipment and new regulatory requirements.



Table 3-2 Anticipated Construction Duration

Construction Activity	Start Date	End Date	Working Days
Site Preparation	6/1/2024	8/23/2024	60
Grading	7/1/2024	11/1/2024	90
Substation Construction	8/1/2024	2/28/2025	152
Building Construction	10/1/2024	5/1/2025	153
Off-Site Utility and Infrastructure Improvements	1/1/2025	3/31/2025	64
Paving	4/1/2025	5/1/2025	23
Architectural Coating	11/1/2024	5/1/2025	130

(Urban Crossroads, 2023a, Table 3-3)

D. Construction-Related Vehicular Traffic

Construction generates on-road vehicle emissions from vehicle usage for workers, vendors, and haul trucks commuting to and from the site. The number of trips are presented below in Table 3-4, *Construction Vehicle Trip Assumptions*. Worker trips are based on CalEEMod defaults. It should be noted that for vendor trips, specifically, CalEEMod only assigns vendor trips to the building construction phase. Vendor trips would likely occur during all phases of construction. As such, the CalEEMod defaults for vendor trips have been adjusted based on a ratio of the total vendor trips to the number of days of each subphase of activity.

3.6.2 WAREHOUSE OPERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

At the time this EIR was prepared, the future tenant(s) of the proposed warehouse buildings was unknown. For the purposes of this EIR, the Project is assumed to be operational 24 hours per day, seven days per week, with exterior loading and parking areas illuminated at night. The proposed warehouse building is designed such that business operations would be conducted within the enclosed building, with the exception of traffic movement, parking, and the loading and unloading of tractor trailers at designated loading bays. As a practical matter, dock doors on warehouse buildings are not occupied by a truck or trailer at all times of the day. There are typically many more dock door positions on warehouse buildings than are needed for receiving and shipping volumes. The dock doors that are in use at any given time are usually selected based on interior building operation efficiencies. In other words, trucks ideally dock in the position closest to where the goods carried by its trailer are stored inside the building. As a result, a number of dock door positions are frequently inactive throughout the day. Because the warehouse user(s) is not known and some users require chilled, cooled, or freezer space to accommodate the storage of items requiring temperature control (examples include food products, medicines and other pharmaceuticals, wax products, beauty supplies etc.), 20% of the proposed warehouse space (247,798 s.f.) is assumed to comprise temperature-controlled spaces (commonly called “cold storage”), while the remaining 80% of the warehouse space (991,194 s.f.) is anticipated to be occupied by non-refrigerated high-cube fulfillment center uses.

A. Lighting

The uses on the Project site would be illuminated at night for safety and security. Exterior lighting is required to comply with the Riverside County Ordinance No. 915, which requires that outdoor lighting should be fully



Table 3-3 Anticipated Construction Equipment

Construction Activity	Equipment ¹	Amount	Hours Per Day
Site Preparation	Rubber Tired Dozers	3	8
	Crawler Tractors	4	8
Grading	Excavators	2	8
	Graders	1	8
	Rubber Tired Dozers	1	8
	Scrapers	2	8
	Crawler Tractors	2	8
Substation Construction	Cranes	2	8
	Forklifts	3	8
	Generator Sets	1	8
	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	3	8
	Welders	1	8
Building Construction	Off-Highway Trucks	2	8
	Cranes	1	8
	Forklifts	3	8
	Generator Sets	1	8
	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	3	8
Off-Site Utility and Infrastructure Improvements	Welders	1	8
	Excavators	1	8
	Off-Highway Trucks	1	8
Paving	Other Construction Equipment	1	8
	Pavers	2	8
	Paving Equipment	2	8
Architectural Coating	Rollers	2	8
	Air Compressors Air Compressors	1	8

¹ In order to account for fugitive dust emissions, Crawler Tractors were used in lieu of Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes during the site preparation and grading phases of Project construction.
(Urban Crossroads, 2023a, Table 3-4)

Table 3-4 Construction Vehicle Trip Assumptions

Construction Activity	Worker Trips Per Day	Vendor Trips Per Day	Hauling Trips Per Day
Site Preparation	18	40	0
Grading	20	60	140
Substation Construction	520	103	0
Building Construction	520	103	0
Off-Site Utility and Infrastructure Improvements	8	0	0
Paving	15	0	0
Architectural Coating	104	0	0

(Urban Crossroads, 2023a, Table 3-2)



shielded and directed so that no direct light falls outside of the parcel of origin. Any outdoor lighting that shines onto adjacent property or streets that produce a nuisance or disabling glare, or that is above the horizontal plane, would not be permitted. A photometric plan was prepared as part of the Project's application materials to demonstrate compliance with Ordinance No. 915 (refer to Sheet E1.20 of the Project's application materials).

B. Future Employment

Based on employment generation rates specified in Appendix E to the Riverside County General Plan, Light Industrial land uses generate approximately one employee per 1,030 s.f. of building area (Riverside County, 2021a, Appendix A, Table E-5). Accordingly, the Project's 1,238,992 s.f. of light industrial building area is reasonably expected to generate approximately 1,203 new, recurring jobs ($1,238,992 \text{ s.f.} \div 1,030 \text{ s.f./employee} = 1,202.9$ employees). A nominal number of employees also would occur in association with the potential on-site IID substation for periodic on-site maintenance and operation.

C. Vehicle Trips

1. Project Trip Generation

As more fully discussed in Section 4 of the Project's Traffic Analysis ("TA"; EIR *Technical Appendix K1*) based on independent judgement of the Riverside County Transportation Department and the operational characteristics described above, the proposed Project is calculated to generate approximately 2,640 actual vehicle trip ends per day, with 149 vehicle trips during the a.m. peak hour and 193 vehicle trips during the p.m. peak hour, as summarized in Table 3-5, *Project Trip Generation Summary*. In addition, Passenger Car Equivalent (PCE) factors were applied to the trip generation rates for heavy trucks (large 4+ axles). PCEs allow the typical "real-world" mix of vehicle types to be represented as a single, standardized unit, such as the passenger car, to be used for the purposes of capacity and level of service analyses. Using PCEs, and as also summarized in Table 3-5, the proposed Project is anticipated to generate 3,488 PCE trip ends per day, with 188 PCE trips during the a.m. peak hour and 236 PCE trips during the p.m. peak hour. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, Table 4-2)

2. Project Trip Distribution and Assignment

The Project trip distribution and assignment process represents the directional orientation of traffic to and from the Project site. The trip distribution pattern is heavily influenced by the geographical location of the site, the location of surrounding uses, and the proximity to the regional freeway system. The assignment of traffic from the Project area to the adjoining roadway system is based upon the Project trip generation, trip distribution, and the arterial highway and local street system improvements that would be in place by the time of initial occupancy of the Project. Based on the identified Project traffic generation and trip distribution patterns, the Project's traffic distribution and peak hour intersection turning movement volumes are shown on the following exhibits of the Project's TA (*Technical Appendix K1*). (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, pp. 34, 38)

- Exhibit 4-1 Project (Truck) Trip Distribution



Table 3-5 Project Trip Generation Summary

Land Use	Quantity Units ¹	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Daily
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Actual Vehicles:								
High-Cube Cold Storage	247.798 TSF							
Passenger Cars:		19	1	20	5	18	23	340
2-axle Trucks:		1	2	3	1	1	2	64
3-axle Trucks:		0	1	1	0	0	0	20
4+-axle Trucks:		1	3	4	2	2	4	102
Total Truck Trips (Actual Vehicles):		2	6	8	3	3	6	186
High-Cube Cold Storage Trips (Actual Vehicles) ²		21	7	28	8	21	29	526
High-Cube Fulfillment	991.194 TSF							
Passenger Cars:		79	23	102	40	103	143	1,736
2-4axle Trucks:		4	4	8	5	6	11	162
5+-axle Trucks:		5	6	11	5	5	10	216
Total Truck Trips (Actual Vehicles):		9	10	19	10	11	21	378
High-Cube Fulfillment Trips (Actual Vehicles) ²		88	33	121	50	114	164	2,114
Total Passenger Cars		98	24	122	45	121	166	2,076
Total Trucks (Actual Vehicles)		11	16	27	13	14	27	564
Total Project Trips (Actual Vehicles)²		109	40	149	58	135	193	2,640
Passenger Car Equivalent (PCE):								
High-Cube Cold Storage	247.798 TSF							
Passenger Cars:		19	1	20	5	18	23	340
2-axle Trucks:		1	3	4	2	2	4	98
3-axle Trucks:		0	1	1	1	1	2	42
4+-axle Trucks:		4	8	12	6	6	12	304
Total Truck Trips (PCE):		5	12	17	9	9	18	444
Total Trips (PCE) ²		24	13	37	14	27	41	784
High-Cube Fulfillment	991.194 TSF							
Passenger Cars:		79	23	102	40	103	143	1,736
2-4axle Trucks:		8	8	16	10	12	22	322
5+-axle Trucks:		16	17	33	14	16	30	646
Total Truck Trips (PCE):		24	25	49	24	28	52	968
Total Trips (PCE) ²		103	48	151	64	131	195	2,704
Total Passenger Cars		98	24	122	45	121	166	2,076
Total Trucks (PCE)		29	37	66	33	37	70	1,412
Total Project Trips (PCE)²		127	61	188	78	158	236	3,488

¹ TSF = thousand square feet

² Total Trips = Passenger Cars + Truck Trips.
(Urban Crossroads, 2023a, Table 4-2)



- Exhibit 4-2 Project (Passenger Car) Trip Distribution
- Exhibit 4-3 Project Only Traffic Volumes (Actual Vehicles)

D. Water Demand

The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) prepared a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) for the proposed Project, which is provided in EIR *Technical Appendix L*. As shown in Table 3-6, *Project Total Water Demand*, the Project’s warehouse building and exterior landscaped areas would generate a demand for approximately 111.2 acre-feet/year (AFY) of water (or approximately 99,273 gallons per day (GPD)). (CVWD, 2023, Table 6-1)

Table 3-6 Project Total Water Demand

Land Use	Land Area (Acres)	Indoor Commercial and Industrial Demand (AFY)	Outdoor Irrigation Demand (AFY)	Total Water Demand (AFY)
Warehouse	27.98	56.1	0	56.1
Office	0.46	0.9	0	0.9
Irrigated Landscape ¹	17.43	0	54.2	54.2
Totals		57.0	54.2	111.2

1. Includes irrigated medians.
(CVWD, 2023, Table 6-3)

E. Wastewater Generation

According to wastewater generation estimates used in Riverside County EIR No. 521, light industrial uses within the County are anticipated to generate approximately 1,500 gpd of wastewater per acre. The wastewater demand rates identified by EIR No. 521 reflect the County’s standard estimate for wastewater generation by use type within the County. Thus, and excluding the 2.51-acre potential IID substation that ultimately may be constructed in the southeast corner of the Project site (which would not involve the generation of wastewater) and excluding areas that would consist of proposed ROW dedications (approximately 5.8 acres), the Project is expected to result in the generation of approximately 112,050 gpd of wastewater requiring treatment (74.7 net-acres x 1,500 gpd/net-acre = 112,050 gpd). (Riverside County, 2015, Table 4.19-BJ)

3.6.3 IID SUBSTATION OPERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

In the event the IID substation is constructed on site, maintenance and inspection of the proposed substation are anticipated to be minimal as the substation and power lines would be controlled remotely. Routine maintenance and inspection activities would take place fewer than once per month by IID.



4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

4.0.1 SUMMARY OF EIR SCOPE

In accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15126-15126.4, this EIR Section 4.0, *Environmental Analysis*, provides analyses of potential direct, indirect, and cumulatively-considerable impacts that could occur from planning, constructing, and operating the proposed Project.

In compliance with the procedural requirements of CEQA, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was prepared and distributed for public review on December 1, 2022, in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082. An Initial Study was not prepared and the NOP indicated that the required EIR will evaluate all of the topics listed in Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, as implemented by Riverside County and the County's standard Environmental Assessment (EA) Form. Public comment on the scope consisted of written comments received by the Riverside County in response to the NOP issued for this EIR. A publicly-noticed Scoping Session also was held as part of a Riverside County Planning Director's Hearing on December 12, 2022 at the Riverside County Administrative Building (4080 Lemon Street, Riverside, CA 92501); no comments were made on EIR's scope of potential environmental effects were provided as part of the Scoping Session. Pursuant to Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's standard EA form, this EIR evaluates 21 primary environmental subject areas, as listed below. Each Subsection evaluates several specific subject matters related to the general topic of the Subsection. The title of each Subsection is not limiting; therefore, refer to each Subsection for a full account of the subject matters addressed therein.

- | | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------|
| 4.1 | Aesthetics | 4.12 | Mineral Resources |
| 4.2 | Agriculture and Forest Resources | 4.13 | Noise |
| 4.3 | Air Quality | 4.14 | Paleontological Resources |
| 4.4 | Biological Resources | 4.15 | Population and Housing |
| 4.5 | Cultural Resources | 4.16 | Public Services |
| 4.6 | Energy | 4.17 | Recreation |
| 4.7 | Geology and Soils | 4.18 | Transportation |
| 4.8 | Greenhouse Gas Emissions | 4.19 | Tribal Cultural Resources |
| 4.9 | Hazards and Hazardous Materials | 4.20 | Utilities and Service Systems |
| 4.10 | Hydrology and Water Quality | 4.21 | Wildfire |
| 4.11 | Land Use and Planning | | |

4.0.2 SCOPE OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

CEQA requires that an EIR contain an assessment of the cumulative impacts that may be associated with a proposed project. As noted in State CEQA Guidelines § 15130(a), "an EIR shall discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable." "[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 creating related impacts" (State CEQA Guidelines §15130(a)(1)). As defined in State CEQA Guidelines § 15355:



‘Cumulative Impacts’ refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.

- (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.*

State CEQA Guidelines § 15130(b) describes two acceptable methods for identifying a study area for purposes of conducting a cumulative impact analysis. These two approaches include: 1) 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 (‘the list of projects approach’), or 2) 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 area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact (‘the summary of projections approach’).

The summary of projections approach is used in this EIR, except for the evaluation of near-term vehicular traffic-related noise impacts, which relies instead on the list of projects approach. This methodology was determined to be appropriate by Riverside County because long-range planning documents contain a sufficient amount of information to enable an analysis of cumulative effects for all subject areas, with exception of vehicular-related noise effects, which require a greater level of detailed study.

Under this approach, the cumulative analysis under most sections considers impacts to each issue area based on the presumed buildout of the Riverside County General Plan as well as the general plans of nearby jurisdictions that occur within the cumulative study area for each subject area. For most issue areas, this would encompass nearby areas within unincorporated Riverside County, nearby portions of Cathedral City, and nearby portions of the City of Rancho Mirage, although the cumulative study area may be smaller or larger depending on the issue area under evaluation. For example, for the issue area of aesthetics, the cumulative study area is defined by the Project’s viewshed (i.e., off-site areas with views of the Project site), which encompasses lands within the immediate Project vicinity (i.e., within approximately two miles of the Project site). For the issue of hydrology and water quality, by contrast, the cumulative study area is defined as the Colorado River Basin Region, which encompasses all of Imperial County and portions of San Bernadino, Riverside, and San Diego Counties. For the issue of biology, the cumulative study area corresponds to the boundaries of the Coachella Valley Multiple Habitat Species Conservation Plan (CVMHSCP), as the CVMHSCP provides for the conservation of a wide variety of special status plant and animal species and encompasses a broad region that generally represents biological conditions associated with the Project area; thus, the cumulative study area for biological resources includes all future land uses within the Coachella Valley region as called for by the general plans of the County and the various cities that are included in the CVMHSCP region. Refer to the individual Subsections within EIR Section 4.0 for a description of the specific cumulative study area used for each subject evaluated in this EIR.

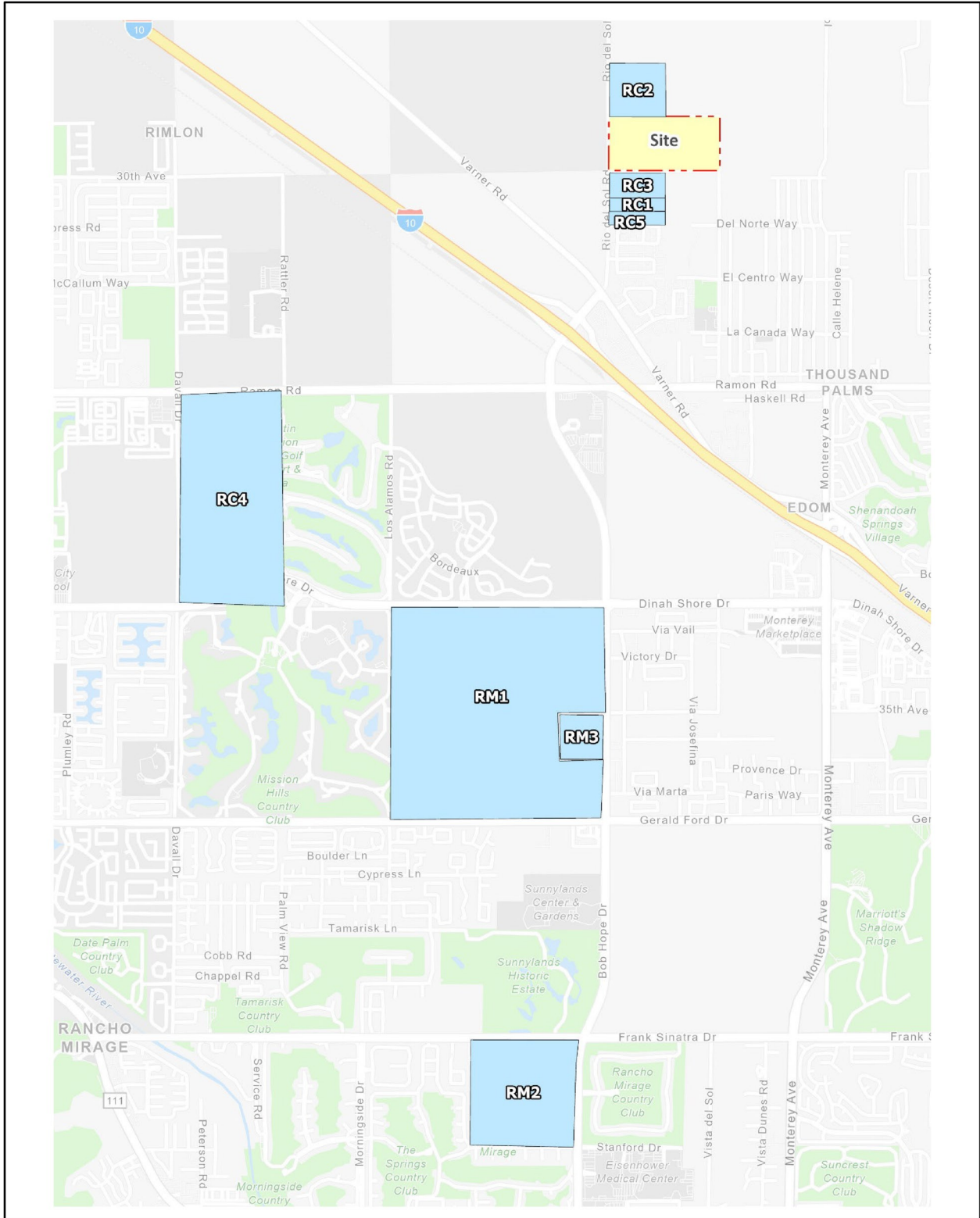


As noted, for most issue areas, nearby portions of unincorporated Riverside County and nearby portions of Cathedral City and the City of Rancho Mirage are used as the Project’s cumulative study area. This area largely contains open space and undeveloped lands, with single family homes south and southeast of the Project site and to the west of I-10, and industrial and commercial developments to the south of the Project site and to the west of I-10. This study area exhibits similar characteristics in terms of climate, geology, and hydrology. This study area also encompasses the service areas of the Project site’s primary public service and utility providers. Areas outside of this study area either exhibit topographic, climatological, or other environmental circumstances that differ from those of the Project area, or are simply too far away from the proposed Project site to produce environmental effects that could be cumulatively considerable.

The analysis of cumulatively-considerable traffic-related impacts to noise uses a combined approach, utilizing the list of projects approach for the near-term analysis of cumulatively-considerable impacts, and the summary of projections approach for the evaluation of long-term cumulatively-considerable impacts. With the combined approach, the cumulative impact analysis for the analysis of traffic-related impacts to noise overstates the Project’s (and Project-related components’) potential cumulatively-considerable impacts as compared to an analysis that would rely solely on the list of projects approach or solely on the summary of projections approach; therefore, the combined approach provides a conservative, “worst-case” analysis for cumulative traffic-related noise impacts.

For near-term conditions, the analysis of cumulatively-considerable vehicular-related noise impacts is based on existing traffic conditions plus ambient growth and the manual addition of traffic from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, and includes approved and pending development projects in proximity to the Project site that would contribute traffic to the same transportation facilities as the Project and/or that have the potential to affect regional transportation facilities. This methodology recognizes development projects that have the potential to contribute measurable traffic to the same intersections, roadway segments, and/or State highway system facilities as the proposed Project and have the potential to be made fully operational in the foreseeable future. As depicted on Figure 4.0-1, *Cumulative Development Projects Location Map*, and as shown on Table 4.0-1, *Cumulative Projects List*, the near-term cumulative impact analysis of traffic-related noise impacts includes eight other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects within this study area in addition to the summary of projections (Urban Crossroads, 2023f, Table 4-2). The analysis of long-term cumulatively-considerable traffic noise impacts considers full buildout of nearby portions of unincorporated Riverside County, the City of Cathedral City, and the City of Rancho Mirage, based on the general plan land use plans for these jurisdictions.

For the issue of air quality, the cumulative study area comprises the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), while the cumulative impact analysis relies on guidance from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The SCAQMD published a report giving direction on how to address cumulative impacts from air pollution: *White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution* (SCAQMD, 2003). In this report the AQMD states on page D-3:



Source(s): Urban Crossroads (07-20-2023)

Figure 4.0-1

**Cumulative Development
Projects Location Map**



Not to Scale





Table 4.0-1 Cumulative Projects List

No.	Project Name	Address/Location	Land Use	Quantity/Units
City of Rancho Mirage				
RM1	Section 31 Specific Plan	Bordered by Gerald Ford Drive, Monterey Avenue, Frank Sinatra Drive, and Bob Hope Drive RM3 Rancho	Multifamily Housing Single Family Residential Hotel Commercial	832 DU 1,100DU 400 Rooms 175,000 SF
RM2	Desert Island Hotel and SPA	Southwest corner of Frank Sinatra Drive and Bob Hope Drive	Hotel	53 Rooms
RM3	Rancho Monterey SP	Northwest corner of Monterey Avenue and Dick Kelly Drive (35 th Ave.)	Multifamily Housing Commercial Retail Hotel	400 DU 150,000 SF 150 Rooms
Riverside County Unincorporated				
RC1	CUP 190058	East of Rio Del Sol between 30 th Avenue and Del Norte	Cannabis Facility	13,060 SF
RC2	CUP220004	Southeast corner of Rio Del Sol and Vista Chino	Industrial	54,413 SF
RC3	PPT220021	Southeast corner of Rio Del Sol & 30 th Avenue.	RV Storage	632 RVs
RC4	SP00391	East of Los Alamos, South of Del Webb Way, North of Bordeaux	Residential	1,2000 DU
RC5	PPT200001	East of Rio Del Sol, Between 30 th & Del Norte	Industrial	22,000 SF

(Urban Crossroads, 2023f, Table 4-3)

“...the AQMD uses the same significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts for all environmental topics analyzed in an Environmental Assessment or EIR. The only case where the significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts differ is the Hazard Index (HI) significance threshold for toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions. The project specific (project increment) significance threshold is HI > 1.0 while the cumulative (facility-wide) is HI > 3.0. It should be noted that the HI is only one of three TAC emission significance thresholds considered (when applicable) in a CEQA analysis. The other two are the maximum individual cancer risk (MICR) and the cancer burden, both of which use the same significance thresholds (MICR of 10 in 1 million and cancer burden of 0.5) for project specific and cumulative impacts.

Projects that exceed the project-specific significance thresholds are considered by the SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. This is the reason project-specific and cumulative significance thresholds are the same. Conversely, projects that do not exceed the project-specific thresholds are generally not considered to be cumulatively significant.”

The cumulative analysis provided in EIR Subsection 4.3 assumes that individual projects that do not generate emissions that exceed the SCAQMD’s recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would also not cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Salton Sea Air



Basin (SSAB) is in nonattainment, and, therefore, would not be considered to have a significant, adverse air quality impact. Reversely, individual project-related emissions that exceed SCAQMD thresholds for project-specific impacts would be considered cumulatively considerable.

Environmental impacts associated with buildout of the cumulative study area were evaluated in CEQA compliance documents prepared for the respective general plans of each of the above-named jurisdictions. The location where each of these CEQA compliance documents is available for review is provided below. All of the CEQA compliance documents listed below are herein incorporated by reference pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15150.

- Riverside County General Plan Program EIR No. 521 (SCH No. 2009041065), available for review at the Riverside County Planning Department, located at 4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor, Riverside, California 92501.
- City of Rancho Mirage General Plan Update EIR (SCH No. 2004081038), available for public review at the City of Rancho Mirage Planning Division, located at 69825 Highway 111 Rancho Mirage, CA 92270.
- Cathedral City Imagine 2040 General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2018081012), available for public review at the City of Cathedral City Planning Department, 68700 Avenida Lalo Gurerrero, Cathedral City, CA 92234.

4.0.3 IDENTIFICATION OF IMPACTS

Subsections 4.1 through 4.21 of this EIR evaluate the 21 environmental subjects warranting analysis pursuant to CEQA. The format of discussion is standardized as much as possible in each Subsection for ease of review. The environmental setting is discussed first, followed by a discussion of the Project's potential environmental impacts based on specified thresholds of significance used as criteria to determine whether potential environmental effects are significant.

The thresholds of significance used in this EIR are based on the thresholds presented in State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G and as applied by Riverside County to create the County's standard Environmental Assessment (EA) Form. The thresholds are intended to assist the reader of this EIR in understanding how and why this EIR reaches a conclusion that an impact would or would not occur, is significant, or is less than significant.

Serving as the CEQA Lead Agency for this EIR, Riverside County is responsible for determining whether an adverse environmental effect identified in this EIR should be classified as significant or less than significant. While Riverside County has generally elected to use the thresholds presented in State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, it should be noted that CEQA affords the County discretion to formulate standards of significance, and recognizes that the significance of a particular impact may vary with the setting (14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15064(b).) The standards of significance used in this EIR are based on the independent judgment of Riverside County, taking into consideration the current State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Riverside County's Municipal Code, and adopted County policies and ordinances; the judgment of the technical experts that



prepared this EIR's Technical Appendices; performance standards adopted, implemented, and monitored by regulatory agencies; significance standards recommended by regulatory agencies; and the standards in CEQA that trigger the preparation of an EIR. As required by State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(a), impacts are identified in this EIR as direct, indirect, cumulative, short-term, long-term, on-site, and/or off-site impacts of the proposed Project. A summarized "impact statement" is provided in each Subsection following the analysis.

The following terms are used to describe the level of significance related to the physical conditions within the area affected by the proposed Project:

- **No Impact:** An adverse change in the physical environment would not occur.
- **Less-than-Significant Impact:** An adverse change in the physical environment would occur but the change would not be substantial or potentially substantial and would not exceed the threshold(s) of significance presented in this EIR.
- **Significant Impact:** A substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in the physical environment would occur and would exceed the threshold(s) of significance presented in this EIR, requiring the consideration of mitigation measures.

Each Subsection also includes a discussion or listing of the applicable regulatory criteria (laws, policies, regulations, etc.) that the Project is required to comply with (if any). If impacts are identified as significant after mandatory compliance with regulatory criteria, feasible mitigation measures are presented that would either avoid the impact or reduce the magnitude of the impact. The following terms are used to describe the level of significance following the application of recommended mitigation measures:

- **Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation:** A substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in the physical environment would occur that would exceed the threshold(s) of significance presented in this EIR; however, the impact can be avoided or reduced to a less-than-significant level through the application of feasible mitigation measure(s).
- **Significant and Unavoidable Impact:** A substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in the physical environment would occur that would exceed the threshold(s) of significance presented in this EIR. Feasible and enforceable mitigation measure(s) that have a proportional nexus to the Project's impact are either not available or would not be fully effective in avoiding or reducing the impact to below a level of significance.

For any impact identified as significant and unavoidable, Riverside County would be required to adopt a statement of overriding considerations pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15093 in order to approve the Project despite its significant impact(s) to the environment. The statement of overriding considerations would list the specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the Project, supported by substantial evidence in the Project's administrative record, that outweigh the unavoidable impacts.



4.1 AESTHETICS

This Subsection 4.1 describes the aesthetic qualities and visual resources present on the Project site and in the site's vicinity and evaluates the potential effects that the Project may have on these resources. Descriptions of existing visual characteristics, both on site and in the vicinity of the Project site, and the analysis of potential impacts to aesthetic resources are based, in part, on site photographs included as part of the Project's application materials, analysis of aerial photography (Google Earth, 2023), and Project application materials related to the proposed development that were submitted to Riverside County and described in Section 3.0, *Project Description*, of this EIR. This Subsection also is based in part on information and policies contained in the Riverside County General Plan (Riverside County, 2021a), Riverside County GIS database (RCIT, n.d.), Riverside County Ordinance No. 348 (Riverside County, 2021c), and Riverside County Ordinance No. 655 (Riverside County, 1988).

4.1.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Existing Aesthetic Conditions

The Project site encompasses approximately 83.0 acres of disturbed and undeveloped land located on the northeast corner of Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue in the Thousand Palms community of unincorporated Riverside County. Under existing conditions, the Project site is unimproved and has never been subject to improvements or developments. The topography of the site is characterized by relatively flat land, with elevations on the site ranging from approximately 280 feet above mean sea level (amsl) near the southwest corner of the Project site to 326 feet amsl near the northeastern corner of the Project site. Overall topographic relief is approximately 46 feet. The Project site consists of disturbed soils, scattered small patches of vegetation, and scattered patches of debris. In the Project's potential off-site disturbance areas described in EIR Section 3.0, *Project Description*, off site infrastructure improvement areas are topographically flat or gently sloping and fall along existing public road alignments surrounded by single family homes, parks, and disturbed and undisturbed vacant land. While all potential transmission routes are studied as part of this EIR, only one route would be selected for the proposed power poles and power lines between the Project site and existing IID facilities and the majority of the off-site power pole alignments studied would not be disturbed as part of the Project.

To illustrate the existing visual conditions of the Project site, a photographic inventory was prepared. Figure 4.1-1, *Site Photograph Key Map*, depicts the locations of the six vantage photographs of the Project site along with nine vantage photos taken along the potential alignments for the IID power poles and overhead lines. These photographs, shown on Figure 4.1-2 through Figure 4.1-9, were taken on December 26, 2022, and provide a representative visual inventory of the visual characteristics of the Project site and potential off site infrastructure alignments as seen from surrounding public viewing areas.

- Site Photograph 1 (Figure 4.1-2): Site Photograph 1 was collected at the southwest corner of the Project site at the future intersection of Rio Del Sol Road and 30th Avenue looking northeast. As viewed from this location, the Project site appears as a relatively flat parcel of land that is covered with scattered vegetation. A real estate sign is visible in the left portion of the photo. The neighboring development

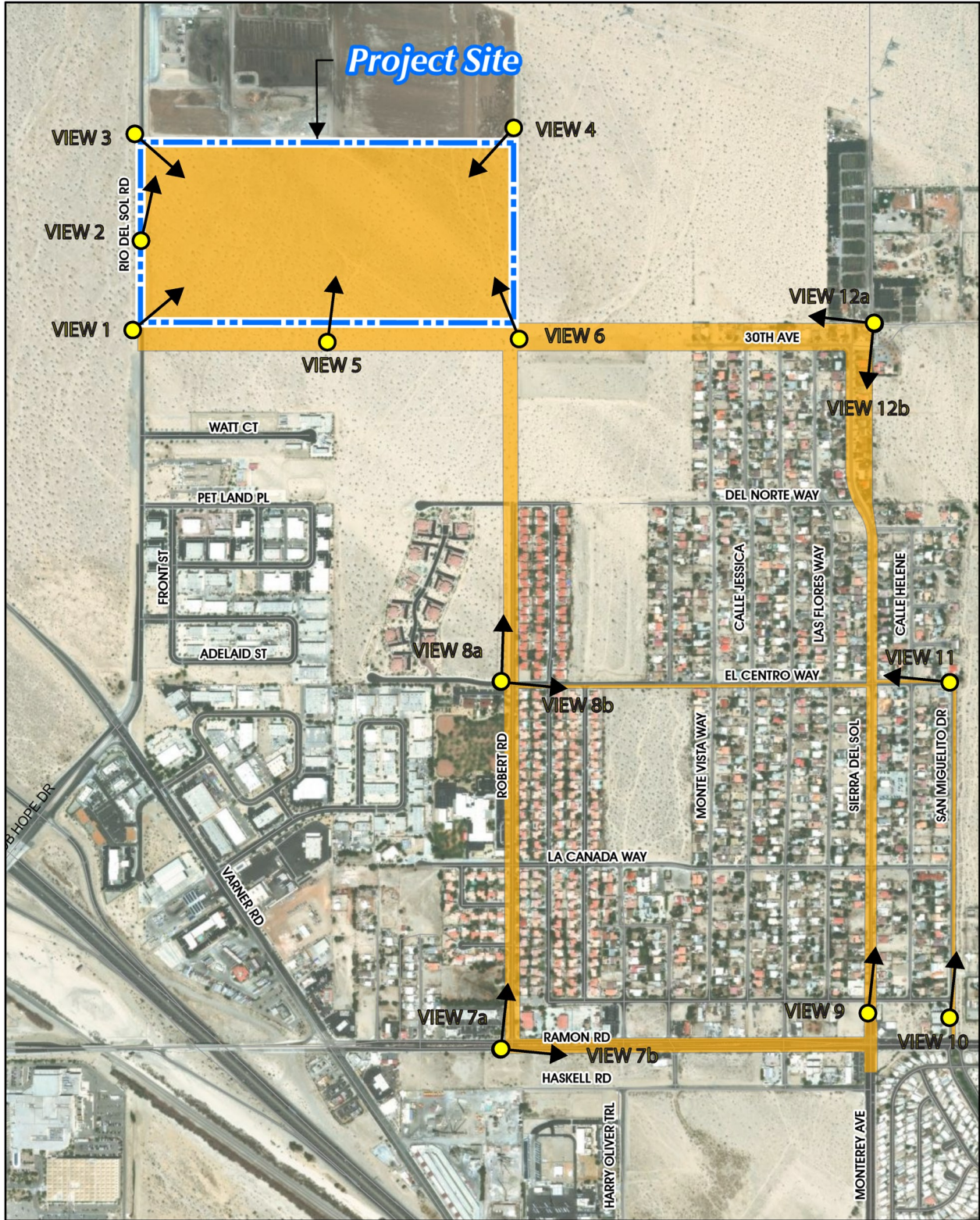


Figure 4.1-1



Not to Scale



Site Photograph Key Map



View 1: View from the southwestern corner of the Project Site along Rio Del Sol Rd looking northwest.



View 2: View from west of the Project Site along Rio Del Sol Rd looking north.

Key Map

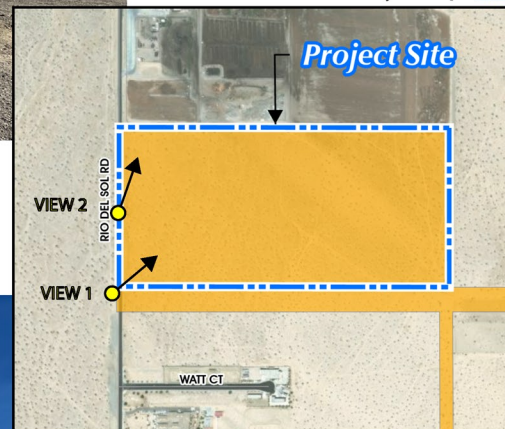


Figure 4.1-2

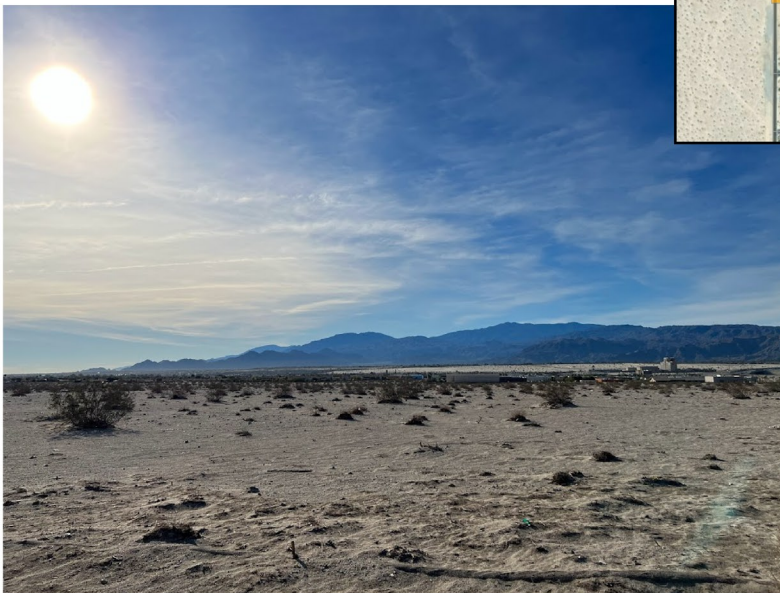


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Site Photos 1 and 2



View 3: View from the northwestern corner of the Project Site along Rio Del Sol Rd looking southeast.



View 4: View from the northeastern corner of the Project Site looking southwest.

Key Map

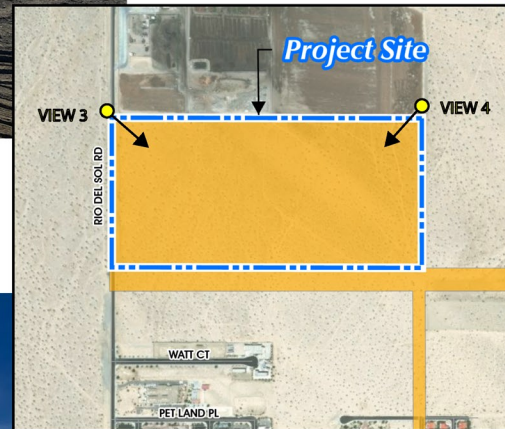


Figure 4.1-3



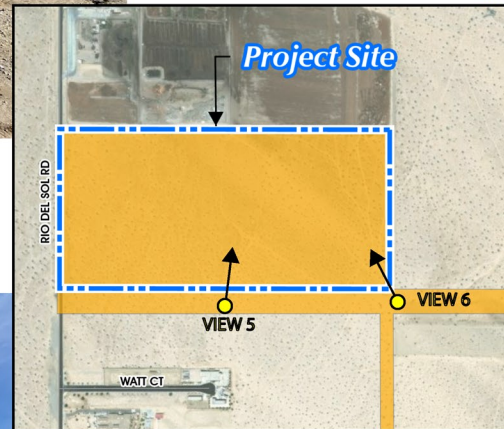
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Site Photos 3 and 4



View 5: View from south of the Project Site looking north.

Key Map



View 6: View from the southeastern corner of the Project Site looking northwest.

Figure 4.1-4



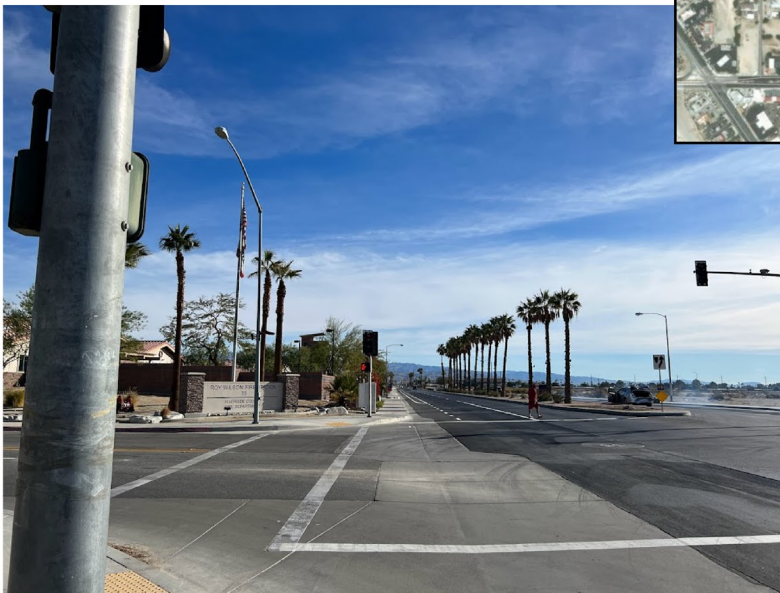
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Site Photos 5 and 6



View 7a: View from the intersection of Ramon Rd and Robert Rd looking north.

Key Map



View 7b: View from the intersection of Ramon Rd and Robert Rd looking east.

Figure 4.1-5



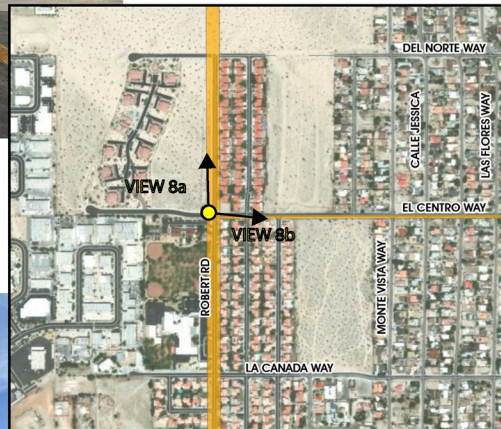
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Transmission Line Route Site Photo 7



View 8a: View from the intersection of Robert Rd and El Centro Way looking north.

Key Map



View 8b: View from the intersection of Robert Rd and El Centro Way looking east.

Figure 4.1-6



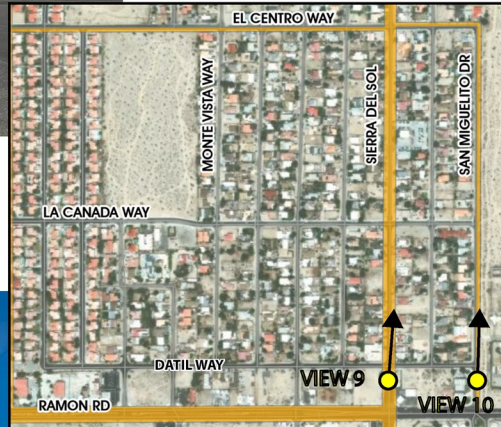
Not to Scale

Transmission Line Route Site Photo 8



View 9: View from the intersection of Datil Way and Sierra Del Sol looking north.

Key Map



View 10: View from San Miguelito Dr looking north.

Figure 4.1-7



Not to Scale

Transmission Line Route Site Photos 9 and 10



Key Map 



View 11: View from the intersection of San Miguelito Dr and El Centro Way looking west.

Figure 4.1-8



Not to Scale

Transmission Line Route Site Photo 11



View 12a: View from the intersection of 30th Ave and Sierra Del Sol looking west.

Key Map



View 12b: View from the intersection of 30th Ave and Sierra Del Sol looking south.

Figure 4.1-9



Not to Scale

Transmission Line Route Site Photo 12



to the north, an organic materials recycling facility, is visible in the distance in the left portion of the photo, while the Little San Bernadino Mountains are visible in the background of the photograph along the horizon.

- Site Photograph 2 (Figure 4.1-2): Site Photograph 2 was collected at the western boundary of the Project site along Rio Del Sol Road looking northeast. From this vantage, Rio Del Sol is visible on the left side of the photograph and telephone poles are visible running along the east side of Rio Del Sol. The Project site is shown in the right portion of the photo and appears to consist of relatively flat that is covered with scattered vegetation and debris. The neighboring development to the north, an organic materials recycling facility, is visible in the distance in the central portion of the photo. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are visible in the background of the photograph along the horizon.
- Site Photograph 3 (Figure 4.1-3): Site Photograph 3 was collected along Rio Del Sol Road at the northwestern corner of the Project site looking to the southeast. As shown, the Project site appears to consist of vacant and disturbed land with scattered vegetation and debris. Tire tracks are visible in the foreground of the photo at the boundary between the Project site and the existing development to the north. The Santa Rosa Mountain Range is visible in the right portion of the photo along the horizon, and the Little San Bernadino Mountains are visible on the left portion of the photo along the horizon.
- Site Photograph 4 (Figure 4.1-3): Site Photograph 4 was taken at the northeastern corner of the Project site along the planned alignment of Robert Road, looking south. From this vantage, the Project site appears to comprise relatively flat land that contains scattered vegetation. Existing developments within Cathedral City are visible in the distance, while the San Jacinto Mountains are visible along the horizon.
- Site Photograph 5 (Figure 4.1-4): Site Photograph 5 was taken at the southern Project boundary along the planned alignment of 30th Avenue, looking north. As shown, there is a minor slope in the foreground of the photo, and the majority of the Project site is scarcely visible from this location. The foreground shows that this portion of the Project site consists of desert land with scattered shrubs. The existing development to the north of the Project site, an organic materials recycling facility, and associated transmission poles are visible in the background of the photograph. Additionally, the Little San Bernadino mountains are visible along the horizon in the right portion of the photo.
- Site Photograph 6 (Figure 4.1-4): Site Photograph 6 was taken along at the southeastern corner of the Project site at the future intersection of 30th Avenue and Robert Road, looking northwest. As shown, the Project site appears to comprise disturbed desert land with scattered shrubs. Tire tracks dominate foreground of the photo, with scattered debris visible in the middle ground. Mountains associated with the Little San Bernadino Mountains are visible along the horizon.
- Site Photograph 7a and 7b (Figure 4.1-5): Site Photographs 7a and 7b were taken at the intersection of Ramon Road and Robert Road, with Site Photograph 7a showing views to the north along Robert Road and Site Photograph 7b looking east along Ramon Road.



As shown in Photograph 7a, this portion of the potential off-site IID power pole alignment consists of a fully developed area, with the driveway for a commercial strip mall visible in the foreground and a fire station visible in the right portion of the photo. As shown, this portion of Robert Road is fully improved, with extensive areas of ornamental landscaping. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are visible along the horizon.

As shown in Photograph 7b, the fully-improved intersection of Ramon Road and Robert Road dominates the foreground, with existing traffic signals, roadway signage, and crosswalks visible. In the left portion of the photo is a monument sign for the existing fire station. In the distance, Ramon Road from this location is visible as a two-lane roadway with a landscaped median. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are scarcely visible along the horizon.

- Site Photograph 8a and 8b (Figure 4.1-6): Site Photographs 8a and 8b were taken at the intersection of Robert Road and El Centro Way, with Photograph 8a looking north along Robert Road and Photograph 8b looking east along El Centro Way.

As shown in Photograph 8a, the intersection of Robert Road and El Centro Way is visible in the foreground as a stop-controlled intersection with crosswalks. In the middle ground is an undeveloped property that is covered with scattered shrubs. In the right portion of the photo, single-family residential dwelling units are visible along the east side of Robert Road, with additional single-family residential homes visible in the distance in the left portion of the photo. Several street lights are visible in the photo. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are visible along the horizon.

As shown in Photograph 8b, the intersection of Robert Road and El Centro Road is visible in the foreground as a stop-controlled intersection with crosswalks, beyond which are several single-family homes. Several street lights are visible in the photo. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are scarcely visible along the horizon.

- Site Photograph 9 (Figure 4.1-7): Site Photograph 9 was taken at the intersection of Datil Way and Sierra Del Sol looking north. As shown, the intersection of Datil Way and Sierra Del Sol is visible in the foreground, with a painted stop line visible along Datil Way. In the left portion a solid brick wall associated with an existing commercial structure (Bugout Pet Products) is visible, while residential uses are visible along the eastern side of Sierra Del Sol. An existing power line is visible along the left portion of the photo, while street lights are visible along Sierra Del Sol. Several large mature palm trees are visible, along with other ornamental vegetation. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are scarcely visible along the horizon.
- Site Photograph 10 (Figure 4.1-7): Site Photograph 10 was taken on San Miguelito Drive just south of Datil Way, looking north. As shown from this vantage point, San Miguelito Drive appears as a partially improved roadway with no sidewalks or curb/gutter. Several single-family homes are visible in the left portion of the photo, with the nearest homes appearing to be surrounded by block walls or chain-link fencing. In the right portion of the photo are undeveloped lands with scattered vegetation and a



drainage ditch, with an existing commercial business (Western Trails RV, Boat, & Trailer Storage) scarcely visible in the distance in the right portion of the photo, along with several single-family homes. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are scarcely visible along the horizon.

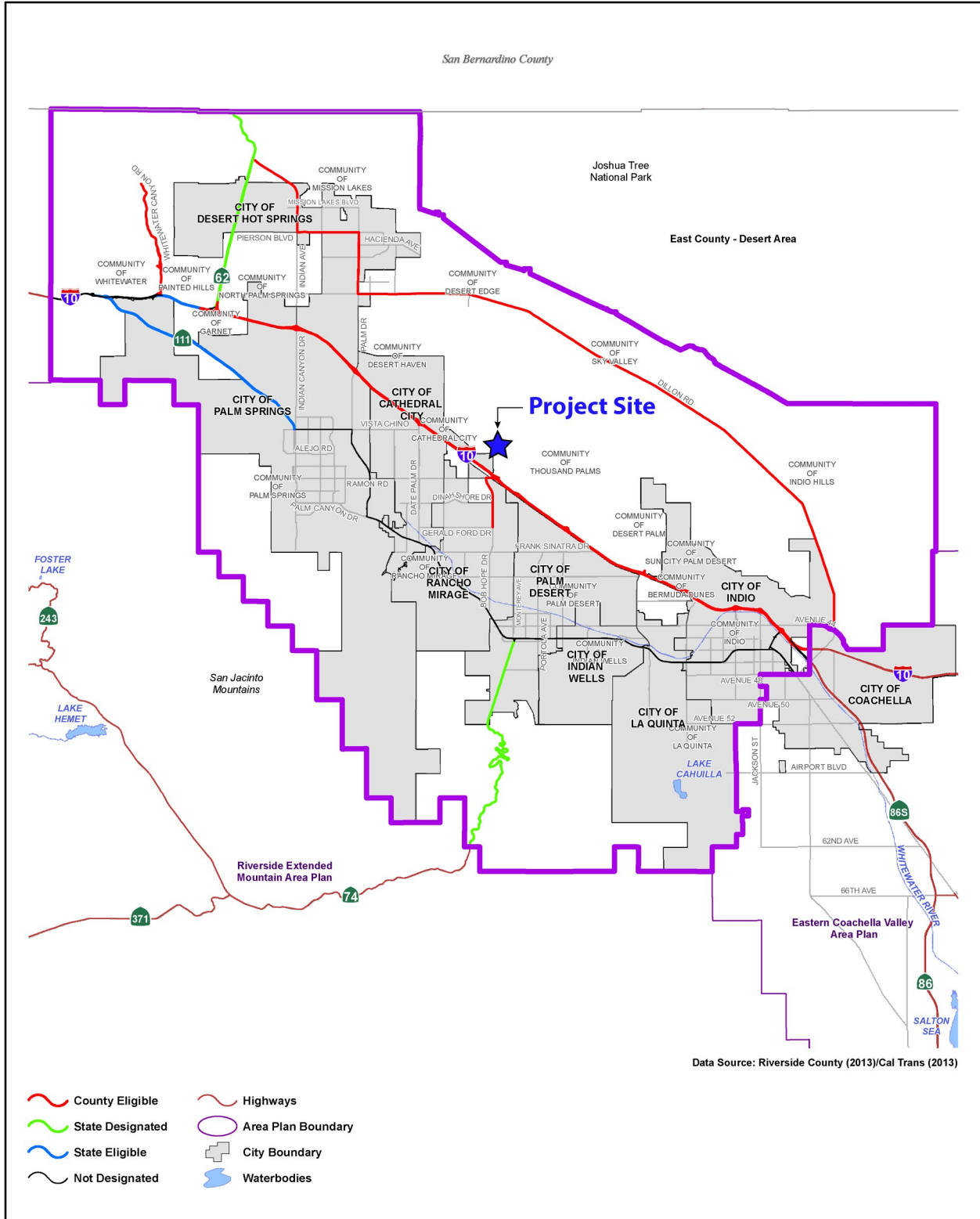
- Site Photograph 11 (Figure 4.1-8): Site Photograph 11 was taken at the intersection of San Miguelito Drive and El Centro Way looking west. As shown, the intersection is visible in the foreground. An existing single-family home and associated chain-link fencing are visible in the left portion of the photo, with several additional single-family homes visible further in the distance along the left and right portion of the roadway. Ornamental landscaping associated with the existing residential uses are visible throughout the photo. Existing telephone poles also are visible along the west side of San Miguelito Drive and in the right portion of the photo. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are scarcely visible along the horizon.
- Site Photograph 12a and 12b (Figure 4.1-9): Site Photographs 12a and 12 b were taken at the intersection of Sierra Del Sol and 30th Avenue, with Photograph 12a depicting views to the west along 30th Avenue and Photograph 12 depicting views to the south along Sierra Del Sol.

As shown in Photograph 12a, the foreground is visually dominated by the existing intersection, with 30th Avenue visible in the middle ground and in the distance. Two existing telephone poles are visible in the left portion of the photo. In the middle ground and in the distance are existing single-family homes located along the northern and southern sides of the roadway. The Little San Bernadino Mountains are visible along the horizon.

As shown in Photograph 12 b, Sierra Del Sol is clearly visible as a partially improved roadway that does not include sidewalks, curbs, or gutters. Ornamental landscaping associated with the existing single-family homes along this roadway segment dominate the majority of the views, with numerous mailboxes and vehicles visible in the distance. The majority of the single-family homes are not prominently visible from this location. The Santa Rosa Mountains are visible in the distance along the horizon.

B. Scenic Highways

According to Figure 9 of the Riverside County General Plan's Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP), and as shown on Figure 4.1-10, *WCVAP Scenic Highways*, there are no State or County designated scenic highway in the Project site's vicinity. The closest State designated highway to the Project site is State Route 74 (SR-74), located approximately 7.7 miles southwest of the Project site. The closest County eligible scenic highway to the Project site is I-10, located approximately 0.7-mile southwest of the Project site. The closest State eligible scenic highway is a segment of State Route 111 (SR-111), located approximately 8.1 miles west of the Project site. (Riverside County, 2021b, Figure 9; Google Earth, 2023)



Source(s): County of Riverside (12-08-2015)

Figure 4.1-10



Not to Scale



WCVAP Scenic Highways



4.1.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the state and local environmental laws and related regulations governing aesthetics.

A. State Regulations

1. California Scenic Highways

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the State Scenic Highway Program, established in 1963 through Senate Bill 1467, Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260 through 263 to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors, through special conservation treatment. A highway may be designated as scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view. Scenic corridors consist of land that is visible from, adjacent to, and outside the highway right-of-way, and is comprised primarily of scenic and natural features. Topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines determine the corridor boundaries. Existing law provides Caltrans with full possession and control of all State highways, while this legislation places the Scenic Highway Program under the stewardship of Caltrans. The legislation further declares the intent of the State to assign responsibility for the regulation of land use and development along scenic highways to the appropriate State and local governmental agencies. Scenic highways are classified as either Officially Designated or Eligible for designation and Caltrans maintains the lists of these highways (Caltrans, 2021).

2. California Historic Parkways

Within the State Scenic Highway System, there is also a system of California Historic Parkways, as defined in the Streets and Highways Code, Sections 280-284. California Historic Parkways are freeways that meet the following criteria:

- The original construction was completed prior to 1945;
- The department or Office of Historic Preservation in the Department of Parks and Recreation announces or recognizes features of historical significance, including notable landmarks, historical sites, or natural or human achievements that exist or that occurred during the original construction of the parkway or in the immediately adjacent land area through which the parkway currently passes;
- Any portion of the highway or corridor is bounded on one or both sides by federal, state, or local parkland, Native American lands or monuments, or other open space, greenbelt areas, natural habitat or wildlife preserves, or similar acreage used for or dedicated to historical or recreational uses; and
- Any portion of the highway is traversed, at the time of designation and by the department's best count or estimate using existing information, by not less than 40,000 vehicles per day on an annual daily average basis.

California Historic Parkways are signed with specific markers designating them as a California Historic Parkway (CA Legislative Info, n.d.).



B. Riverside County General Plan

The Riverside County General Plan does not have any specific sections related to aesthetics and visual resources. However, the Land Use Element of the Riverside County General Plan includes policies related to Land Use Compatibility, Community Design, and Scenic Corridors, which have applicability to the topic of aesthetics. The Land Use Element provides direction related to how future development is intended to build out, such as the intensity/density and character of new development. The Land Use Element also addresses the relationship between development, community enhancement, and natural resource management.

The Multipurpose Open Space Element of the Riverside County General Plan also addresses open space and scenic resources in Riverside County. According to the Multipurpose Open Space Element, scenic resources include: "...areas that are visible to the general public and considered visually attractive" and "...natural landmarks and prominent or unusual features of the landscape." Hillsides and ridges that rise above urban or rural areas or highways can also be considered scenic backdrops. Additionally, the Multipurpose Open Space Element defines scenic vistas as "...points, accessible to the general public, that provide a view of the countryside." Riverside County General Plan Policy OS 21.1 intends to "[i]dentify and conserve the skylines, view corridors, and outstanding scenic vistas within Riverside County." (Riverside County, 2021a, pp. OS-52 to OS-53)

The Circulation Element, Land Use Element, and Multipurpose Open Space Element of the Riverside County General Plan also identify scenic corridors, which are roadways (including State and County eligible and designated scenic highways) that traverse scenic resources and identify policies that are intended to protect and maintain the scenic resources within these corridors. Scenic highways in the Project vicinity are depicted on Figure 4.1-10. As noted in the WCVAP, Policy WCVAP 19.1 seeks to "Protect the scenic highways in the Western Coachella Valley from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with policies in the Scenic Corridors sections of the Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements." (Riverside County, 2021b, p. 67; Riverside County, 2021a, p. OS-52)

C. Riverside County Ordinance No. 348, Land Use Ordinance

Riverside County's Land Use Ordinance No. 348 establishes allowable uses of land and sets standards for what and how land may be developed. The ordinance protects the people and property of Riverside County from development of unsuitable land uses and aims to ensure that built areas are developed safely and with minimal conflict with surrounding lands. Ordinance No. 348 also identifies requirements for landscaping associated with development proposals. The landscaping of development projects should enhance the visual character and aesthetic quality of a site and its surroundings. (Riverside County, 2021c)

D. Riverside County Ordinance No. 655, Regulating Light Pollution

Riverside County has an adopted ordinance regulating light pollution (Ordinance No. 655). Ordinance No. 655 is intended to restrict the permitted use of certain light fixtures emitting light into the night sky which could have a detrimental effect on astronomical observation and research. Ordinance No. 655 sets forth requirements for lamp source and shielding of light emissions for outdoor fixtures to reduce "skyglow" or light pollution



that affects day or nighttime views from the Mt. Palomar Observatory, which is located approximately 42.3 miles southwest of the Project site. As shown on WCVAP Figure 6, the Project site is located within Zone B of the Mt. Palomar Nighttime Lighting Policy Area. As such, the Project is subject to the outdoor lighting policies and requirements specified by Riverside County Ordinance No 655, which includes specific standards for lighting fixtures installed along public roadways and in other common areas and applies to all new development. Ordinance No. 655 encourages the use of low-pressure sodium lamps where possible, requires the shielding of all nonexempt outdoor lighting fixtures, specifies the hours of operation for non-exempt outdoor lighting fixtures, and regulates lighting fixtures used to illuminate an outdoor advertising display. (Riverside County, 1988)

E. Riverside County Ordinance No. 915, Regulating Outdoor Lighting

Riverside County adopted an ordinance regulating outdoor lighting (Ordinance No. 915) that provides minimum requirements for outdoor lighting in order to reduce light trespass. Ordinance No. 915 provides regulations on adequate lighting shielding, glare, and light trespass to ensure that all development in Riverside County installs lighting in a way that does not jeopardize the health, safety, or general welfare of Riverside County residents and does not degrade their quality of life. (Riverside County, 2012)

4.1.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section I of Appendix G to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to aesthetics and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate a project's impacts to aesthetic resources (OPR, 2018a):

- Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?
- Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?
- Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Additionally, the following thresholds are derived from Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, as revised to reflect the December 2018 updates to the State CEQA Guidelines. As such, the following thresholds are used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on aesthetics. The proposed Project would result in a significant impact to aesthetics if the Project or any Project-related component would:

- a. *Have a substantial effect upon a scenic highway corridor within which it is located;*



- b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and unique or landmark features; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; or result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view;*
- c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality;*
- d. Interfere with the nighttime use of the Mt. Palomar Observatory, as protected through Riverside County Ordinance No. 655;*
- e. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area; or*
- f. Expose residential property to unacceptable light levels.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist, which are based on Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project’s impacts on aesthetics.

4.1.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: Would the Project have a substantial effect upon a scenic highway corridor within which it is located?

As previously indicated and depicted in Figure 4.1-10, there are no officially designated State or County scenic corridors within the Project’s vicinity or viewshed. The closest State designated highway to the Project site is a segment of State Route 74 (SR-74), located approximately 7.7 miles southwest of the Project site. The closest County eligible scenic highway to the Project site is I-10, located approximately 0.7-mile southwest of the Project site. The closest State eligible scenic highway is State Route 111 (SR-111), located approximately 8.1 miles west of the Project site. The Project site is not visible from any portion of SR-74 or SR-111 due to distance and intervening development. Thus, the Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on portions of SR-74 or SR-111.

The proposed Project would be visible from nearby segments of I-10. Specifically, the Project would convert the Project site from vacant and undisturbed land to a light industrial warehouse development with an IID substation, with parking areas and landscaping. The Project’s proposed warehouse building and IID substation, as well as portions of the associated IID off-site power poles, would be visible from nearby portions of I-10. Although introduction of the Project represents a change to distance views of the property from a segment of I-10, the Project site under existing conditions appears as an undisturbed and sparsely vegetated parcel in the foreground of an organic materials recycling facility and does not comprise a visual resource under existing conditions. Moreover, the Project’s design would be required to comply with its Plot Plan application materials, which establish characteristics of the site design, building elevations, and landscaping, among other components in accordance with the County’s Code of Ordinance to ensure that the proposed development is



not aesthetically offensive. Additionally, the Project's proposed warehouse building, walls, and landscaping would block views of the existing recycling facility to the north, which could be perceived as a net benefit to northerly facing views from off-site areas. Therefore, development of the Project site as proposed would not have a substantial adverse effect on any officially-designated scenic highways and would result in less-than-significant impacts to nearby eligible scenic highways, including I-10. (Riverside County, 2021b, Figure 9; Google Earth, 2023)

Threshold b: *Would the Project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and unique or landmark features; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; or result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?*

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

According to mapping information available from the United States Census Bureau (USCB), the Project site is not located within an urbanized area (USCB, 2010). Under existing conditions, the 83.0-acre site is vacant and undeveloped, while the Project's associated off-site infrastructure alignments (road and utility line/power pole location improvements) generally comprise public roadway rights-of-way and their immediately adjacent private property frontages that contain vacant land, residential lots, scattered public facilities uses (fire station and schools), as well as commercial uses along the northern edge of Ramon Road. There are no visually-prominent scenic resources within the Project's boundaries under existing conditions, such as trees, rock outcroppings, or unique or landmark features. Within the off-site infrastructure alignments are ornamental landscaping and vacant land absent of significant trees, rock outcroppings, or unique or landmark features. As such, no scenic resources would be directly affected by the Project.

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in the development of a light industrial warehouse building, an IID substation, and associated parking, water quality basins, walls, and landscaping on approximately 83.0 acres. The proposed warehouse building would have a maximum height of 49 feet above the proposed grade; however, the proposed building would not obstruct public views of regional scenic resources, including the Little San Bernadino Mountains, San Jacinto Mountains, and Santa Rosa Mountains, as views of these mountain ranges are common in the local area. Additionally, as depicted on site photos Figure 4.1-2 through Figure 4.1-4, the Project site does not contribute to any prominent scenic vistas visible to the public under existing conditions because the site is relatively flat, has scatterings of vegetation and debris and is framed to the north by an existing recycling operation. Topographic features in the distance are at high elevations and are easily seen beyond the reaches of the Project site. Additionally, the Project's proposed Plot Plan No. 220022 (PPT 220022) includes visually attractive architectural, hardscape, and landscaping characteristics. The design of the Project as shown in the Project's application materials include screen walls, landscaping, and a desert color palette for the building that would ensure that the proposed development is not visually offensive and would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the Project site or its surroundings and would not create an aesthetically offensive site open to public view. Accordingly,



development on the Project site as proposed would result in less-than-significant impacts to scenic resources, scenic vistas, and visual character.

As part of the Project, an Imperial Irrigation District (IID) substation would be constructed in the southeastern portion of the Project site. The proposed substation would be surrounded by fencing and perimeter landscaping, with the landscaping consisting evergreen Afghan Pine trees and Shoestring Acacia trees for continual visual screening. Also, Pink Dawn Chitalpa trees are proposed to be planted along the Project site's frontage with 30th Street which would further screen the substation. Off site, road improvements and the paving of a section of Robert Road have no reasonable potential to impact a scenic resource.

Power poles would need to be constructed between the proposed on-site substation and existing IID power facilities. The alignment of the proposed off-site power lines has not yet been determined by IID; however, for the purposes of this EIR, it is assumed that the power poles could be constructed within the existing/planned alignments for 30th Avenue (between Rio Del Sol Road and Sierra Del Sol), Robert Road (between Ramon Road and 30th Avenue), Sierra Del Sol (between 30th Avenue and just south of Ramon Road), El Centro Way (between Robert Road and San Miguel Drive), Ramon Road (between Robert Road and Sierra Del Sol), and/or along San Miguelito Drive (between El Centro Way and Ramon Road), as depicted on EIR Figure 3-6. While the proposed off-site poles supporting the transmission lines are proposed to be approximately 70 feet tall and would represent a change to the visual character along the ultimate alignment, the poles are proposed to be approximately two to seven feet in diameter and would not obstruct any public scenic views due to their narrow physical characteristics. In addition, while ornamental landscaping and trees occur along portions of the proposed IID utility alignments, none of the existing ornamental vegetation in off-site areas would be substantially affected by the Project. Furthermore, and as previously depicted on the site photos shown on Figure 4.1-5 through Figure 4.1-9, the transmission line routes analyzed herein are proposed to be within heavily disturbed areas that do not contain or contribute to prominent scenic vistas. Views of topographic features in the distance have no reasonable potential to be obstructed by the installation of power poles and overhead utility lines. In conclusion, construction of the off-site Project-related power poles and transmission lines would result in less-than-significant impacts to scenic resources, scenic vistas, and visual character.

Threshold d: Would the Project interfere with the nighttime use of the Mt. Palomar Observatory, as protected through Riverside County Ordinance No. 655?

As shown on Figure 6 of the WCVAP, the Project site is located within "Zone B" of the Mt. Palomar Observatory Lighting Policy Area. All development projects within Zone B of the Mt. Palomar Nighttime Lighting Policy Area are required to adhere to the requirements of Riverside County Ordinance No. 655, which controls artificial lighting sources to protect the Observatory. Ordinance No. 655 states that low-pressure sodium lamps are the preferred illuminating source, and that outdoor lighting fixtures are required to be shielded. Pursuant to Section 7 of Ordinance No. 655, future building permits would be required to include specific information with regards to lighting, as follows: 1) the location of the site where outdoor light fixtures would be installed; 2) plans indicating the location and type of fixtures of the premises; and 3) a description of the outdoor light fixtures, including, but not limited to, manufacturer's catalog cuts and drawings. The required plans and descriptions would enable the County to determine whether compliance with the requirements of the ordinance is met. No building permits would be issued by the County unless the building permit applications



demonstrate consistency with the various provisions of Ordinance No. 655. As such, the Project has no potential to interfere with the nighttime use of the Mt. Palomar Observatory, as protected through Riverside County Ordinance No. 655, and impacts would be less than significant. (Riverside County, 1988; Riverside County, 2021b)

Threshold e: Would the Project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Threshold f: Would the Project expose residential property to unacceptable light levels?

In addition to Riverside County Ordinance No. 655, which is addressed above under the analysis of Threshold d., future development on the Project site would be subject to Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 915 and 348. Ordinance No. 915 requires that all outdoor luminaires in shall be located, adequately shielded, and directed such that no direct light falls outside the parcel of origin, or onto the public right-of-way. Compliance with Ordinance No. 915 would be assured through future review of building permit applications by Riverside County and would ensure that the Project does not expose residential property to unacceptable light levels. Ordinance No. 348, the Riverside County Land Use Ordinance, provides land use planning and zoning regulations that implement the County's policy. Mandatory compliance with Ordinance Nos. 348 and 915 would ensure that all lighting and building design elements proposed by the Project are designed to prevent the creation of substantial light or glare that could affect day or nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be less than significant.

Furthermore, none of the Project's proposed building materials would consist of reflective materials, except for the proposed windows, which would not be mirrored and would have similar low-potential glare characteristics as do other glass windows on buildings in the surrounding area. The proposed Project does not include any components that would generate substantial amounts of glare from reflective surfaces; therefore, impacts associated with glare would be less than significant.

Based on the foregoing analysis, and because the Project would be required to comply with the lighting provisions of Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 348, 655, and 915, impacts due to Project lighting and glare and due to the exposure of residential property to unacceptable light levels would be less than significant.

4.1.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

For purposes of analysis, the Project's cumulative study area includes all areas within the Project's viewshed, as the Project does not have the potential to result in cumulatively-considerable impacts to visual quality outside of areas in which the Project site is visible.

As discussed in the analysis of Threshold a., there are no officially-designated or eligible State or County scenic highway corridors within the Project's viewshed. As such, the Project would not have a substantial effect on a scenic highway corridor, and no cumulatively-considerable impacts would occur.

As discussed under the analysis of Thresholds b. and c., the Project would not damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and unique or landmark features, and impacts would



therefore be less-than-cumulatively considerable. Cumulative development including the proposed RV parking facility and small industrial building projects to the south of the Project site would not obstruct views of any scenic vistas or views open to public review, such as the Little San Bernardino Mountains. Mountain views would still be visible in the distance given their high elevation and prominent visual location in the distance. Thus, impacts would be less-than-cumulatively considerable. In addition, the design of the Project as shown in proposed PPT 220022 would ensure that the proposed development does not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold d., the Project and other cumulative developments within the Project's viewshed would be required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 655 requirements pertaining to Zone B. Compliance with Ordinance No. 655 would be assured through future County review of building permit applications. As such, cumulatively-considerable impacts due to a conflict with Ordinance No. 655 would be less than significant.

The proposed Project as well as other cumulative developments within the Project's viewshed would be subject to compliance with Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 655, 915, and 348, which would preclude potential impacts due to Project lighting. Although the Project and cumulative developments may incorporate building materials with the potential to create glare, only limited building materials such as glass are proposed for the Project's warehouse building, which would not have the potential to create significant glare impacts. Accordingly, impacts due to light and glare would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

4.1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project site is not located within the viewshed of any officially designated scenic highways. The Project would be developed in substantial conformance with its Plot Plan application materials, which would ensure that the Project is not visually offensive. Additionally, the Project would obstruct views of the existing recycling facility to the north, which could be perceived as a net benefit to existing views in surrounding areas. Therefore, development of the Project site as proposed would not have a substantial adverse effect on any officially-designated scenic highways and would result in less-than-significant impacts to nearby eligible scenic highways, including I-10.

Thresholds b. and c.: Less-than-Significant Impact. There are no visually-prominent scenic resources within the Project site boundaries or its off-site improvement areas. The proposed warehouse building would not obstruct public views of regional scenic resources, including the Little San Bernadino Mountains, San Jacinto Mountains, and Santa Rosa Mountains, as views of these mountain ranges are common in the local area and the mountains rise to high elevations whereas the height of the proposed building is only 49 feet. Proposed off-site road and electric utility line infrastructure would have no reasonable potential to obstruct views of scenic resources. Accordingly, the proposed Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to scenic resources, scenic vistas, and visual character.



Threshold d.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Compliance with the provisions of County Ordinance No. 655 would be assured through future County review of building permits. Impacts due to a conflict with Ordinance No. 655 would be less than significant.

Thresholds e. and f.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Mandatory compliance with Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 348, 655, and 915 would ensure that Project-related lighting and glare would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area, and also would ensure the Project does not expose residential property to unacceptable light levels. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.1.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude aesthetic impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- The Project is required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 655, which restricts the use of certain light fixtures emitting light into the night sky which could have a detrimental effect on astronomical observation and research. Ordinance No. 655 sets forth requirements for lamp source and shielding of light emissions for outdoor fixtures to reduce "skyglow" or light pollution that affects day or nighttime views from the Mount Palomar Observatory (located approximately 22.9 miles southeast of the Project site in northern San Diego County). Pursuant to the requirements of Ordinance No. 655, all lighting shall consist of low-pressure sodium lighting, or other lamp types that emit 4050 lumens or less. If light fixtures are proposed above 4050 lumens, then the lighting shall be fully shielded in conformance with the requirements of Ordinance No. 655.
- The Project is required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 915, which provides minimum requirements for outdoor lighting to reduce light trespass. Ordinance No. 915 provides regulations on adequate lighting shielding, glare, and light trespass to ensure all development in Riverside County installs lighting in a way that does not jeopardize the health, safety, or general welfare of Riverside County residents or degrade their quality of life.
- The Project is required to comply with Article XI of Riverside County Ordinance No. 348 for the Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC) Zone, which specifies that "[a]ll lighting fixtures, including spot lights, electrical reflectors and other means of illumination for signs, structures, landscaping, parking, loading, unloading and similar areas, shall be focused, directed, and arranged to prevent glare or direct illumination on streets or adjoining property."

Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant; therefore, mitigation is not required.



4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

The information and analysis in this Subsection 4.2 are based in part on information obtained from the California Department of Conservation (CDC) Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program (FMMP) (CDC, 2021), Riverside County GIS (RCIT, n.d.), and the Riverside County General Plan Amendment 960 Final EIR (Riverside County, 2015b). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of these and other reference sources.

4.2.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Forestry Resources

The Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are located in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County, which is a predominantly desert and mountainous region containing a number of natural open space features. As shown in Figure 4.5.3 of the Riverside County General Plan Update Draft EIR No. 521, aside from scattered desert woodlands, there are no forestry resources in the Project site's immediate vicinity under existing conditions. The nearest forest land to the Project site occurs within the San Bernardino National Forest, located approximately 12.1 miles west of the Project site. (Riverside County, 2015a, Figure 4.5.2; Google Earth, 2022)

B. Agricultural Resources

1. Regional Agricultural Setting

According to information available from the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, the top three categories of agricultural resources cultivated in Riverside County (by value) are nursery stock, milk, and alfalfa. In 2021 (the most recent year for which data is available), the total gross value of agricultural production in Riverside County was approximately \$1.41 billion, which represents a 0.9% decrease from 2020 when total values were \$1.42 billion. (Agricultural Commissioner, 2021)

The CDC reports that agricultural lands face continuing pressure from urbanization and rising production costs. The CDC's "2016-2018 California Farmland Conversion Report" summarizes land use conversion between 2016 and 2018 (the most recent years for which information has been reported by the CDC), and states that Riverside County as a whole experienced a net loss of 560 acres of Prime Farmland, 147 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 445 acres of Unique Farmland (total loss of 1,152 acres of Important Farmland types) between 2016 and 2018, representing an overall decline of 0.06% (CDC, n.d., Table A-25). Important Farmlands, as defined by the CDC and Riverside County, include Prime Farmland, Statewide Important Farmland, and Unique Farmland.

2. Historic and Existing Site Conditions

As previously shown on Figure 2-6, the 83.0-acre Project site under existing conditions consists of vacant and undeveloped desert land. Research conducted for the Project site by Nova Group determined that the Project site has never been subject to improvements or development, and there is no evidence that the Project site was ever used for agricultural production (Nova, 2021, p. 17). Similarly, the Project's off-site infrastructure



improvement areas are located in or adjacent to public roadway rights-of-way that are not used for agricultural production.

3. Zoning

Riverside County Ordinance No. 625 identifies the following zoning classifications as “land zoned for primarily agricultural purposes”: “Light Agriculture (A-1),” “Light Agriculture with Poultry (A-P),” “Heavy Agriculture (A-2),” “Agriculture-Dairy (A-D),” and “Citrus/Vineyard (C/V).” As described in EIR subsection 2.4.4, under existing conditions the western +/- half of the Project site is zoned for “Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC)” land uses, while the eastern +/- half of the Project site is zoned for “Residential Agricultural (R-A).” Thus, under existing conditions, the Project site is not zoned for primarily agricultural purposes, as defined by Ordinance No. 625. (Riverside County, 1994; RCIT, n.d.) The Project’s off-site infrastructure improvement areas are located in or adjacent to public roadway rights-of-way.

4. Agricultural Land Classifications

The goal of the CDC’s FMMP is to provide consistent, timely, and accurate data to decision makers for use in planning for the present and future of California's agricultural land resources. To meet this goal, the FMMP's objective is to provide maps and statistical data to the public, academia, and local, State, and federal governments to assist them in making informed decisions for the best utilization of California's farmland. The FMMP was established in 1982 in response to what was by then a critical need for data on the nature, location, and extent of farmland, grazing land, and urban built-up areas in the State. California Government Code § 65570 mandates the FMMP to biennially report to the Legislature on the conversion of farmland and grazing land, and to provide maps and data to local governments and the public. The FMMP also was directed to prepare and maintain an automated map and database system to record and report changes in the use of agricultural lands. It was the intent of the Legislature and a broad coalition of building, business, government, and conservation interests that the FMMP be non-regulatory, and provide a consistent and impartial analysis of agricultural land use and change in California. With this in mind, the FMMP provides basic data from which observations and analyses can be made in the land use planning process. (CDC, 2004, p. 3)

Pursuant to the FMMP, all lands within California are classified into one of seven map categories. The minimum mapping unit is generally 10 acres, except as otherwise noted (CDC, 2004, p. 6). Provided below is a description of the various map categories established by the FMMP:

- **Prime Farmland (P):** Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date. (CDC, 2004, p. 6)
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance (S):** Farmland 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 prior to the mapping date. (CDC, 2004, p. 6)



- **Unique Farmland (U):** Farmland of 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. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date. (CDC, 2004, p. 6)
- **Farmland of Local Importance (L):** Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. (CDC, 2004, p. 6)
- **Grazing Land (G):** Land on 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. The minimum mapping unit for Grazing Land is 40 acres. (CDC, 2004, p. 6)
- **Urban and Built-Up Land (D):** Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, public administrative purposes, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes. (CDC, 2004, p. 6)
- **Other Land (X):** Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land. (CDC, 2004, p. 6)

The Project site and the Project's off-site infrastructure improvement areas are classified by the FMMP as "Other Land." "Farmland" is defined in Section II (a) of Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and by Riverside County to mean "Prime Farmland," "Farmland of Statewide Importance," or "Unique Farmland." Thus, the Project site does not contain any "Farmland" as mapped by the FMMP. The nearest "Farmland" to the Project site occurs on a property located approximately 0.46-mile to the east of the Project site, which is classified as "Unique Farmland." (CDC, 2021; Google Earth, 2022)

5. *Williamson Act Land Preserves and Agricultural Preserves*

Agricultural preserves are the result of Riverside County's participation in the California Land Conservation Act (CLCA) of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, CA Gov. Code § 51200, et seq. This program allows owners of agricultural land to have their properties assessed for tax purposes on the basis of agricultural production rather than current market value. The main purpose of the Act is to encourage property owners to continue to farm their land, and to prevent the premature conversion of farmland to urban uses. According to Riverside County GIS, the Project site is not included in any agricultural preserves, and is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract. The nearest agricultural preserve and Williamson Act contracted land occurs



approximately 8.8 miles to the southeast of the Project site (Coachella Valley 53 Agricultural Preserve). (RCIT, n.d.)

4.2.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the state and local environmental laws and related regulations governing the protection of agricultural and forest resources.

A. State Regulations

1. *California Land Conservation Act (CLCA)*

The California Land Conservation Act (CLCA) of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act (CA Gov. Code § 51200, et seq.), enables local governments to 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 that are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. Pursuant to California Government Code § 51230, counties and cities may establish Agricultural Preserves, which define boundaries of those areas within which the city or county will be willing to enter into contracts pursuant to the CLCA. Contracts pursuant to the CLCA are only allowed for areas within established Agricultural Preserves. Agricultural Preserves generally must be at least 100 acres in size; however, a city or county may allow for lesser acreage if a finding is made that the characteristics of the agricultural enterprises in the area are unique and that the establishment of preserves of less than 100 acres is consistent with the general plan of the county or city. Once established, land uses within an Agricultural Preserve must be agricultural in nature, or other such uses that are not incompatible with agricultural uses. For lands within Agricultural Preserves, individual land owners may enter into a Contract with a county or city, which would provide for the exclusion of uses other than agricultural, and other than those compatible with agricultural uses, for the duration of the Contract, even if the land is sold to a new owner. In return for entering into a Contract, the landowner is granted preferential taxes that are based upon agricultural and related land uses rather than fair market value. Contracts may be exited at the option of the landowner or local government by initiating the process of term nonrenewal. Under this process, the remaining contract term (nine years in the case of an original term of ten years) is allowed to lapse, with the contract null and void at the end of the term. During the nonrenewal process, the annual tax assessment continually increases each year until it is equivalent to current tax rates at the end of the nonrenewal period. Under a set of specifically defined circumstances, a Contract may be cancelled without completing the process of term nonrenewal. Contract cancellation, however, involves a comprehensive review and approval process, and the payment of a fee by the landowner equal to 12.5 percent of the full market value of the property in question. (CDC, 2019; CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

2. *Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP)*

The goal of the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) is to provide consistent, timely, and accurate data to decision makers for use in planning for the present and future of California's agricultural land resources. To meet this goal, FMMP's objective is to provide maps and statistical data to the public, academia, and local, state, and federal governments to assist them in



making informed decisions for the best utilization of California's farmland. The FMMP was established in 1982 in response to what was by then a critical need for data on the nature, location, and extent of farmland, grazing land, and urban built-up areas in the State. Government Code § 65570 mandates FMMP to biennially report to the Legislature on the conversion of farmland and grazing land, and to provide maps and data to local government and the public. The FMMP was also directed to prepare and maintain an automated map and database system to record and report changes in the use of agricultural lands. It was the intent of the Legislature and a broad coalition of building, business, government, and conservation interests that FMMP be non-regulatory, and provide a consistent and impartial analysis of agricultural land use and change in California. With this in mind, FMMP provides basic data from which observations and analyses can be made in the land use planning process. (CDC, 2004, p. 3)

As previously discussed, pursuant to the FMMP, all lands within California are classified into one of seven map categories. Refer to the discussion presented above in subsection 4.2.1.B.4 for a description of the FMMP mapping categories.

3. *California Forest Practice Act*

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) enforces the laws that regulate logging on privately-owned lands in California. The Forest Practice Act was enacted in 1973 to ensure that logging is done in a manner that will preserve and protect fish, wildlife, forests and streams. The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection enacts and enforces additional rules to protect these resources. (CAL FIRE, n.d.)

CAL FIRE ensures that private landowners abide by these laws when harvesting trees. Although there are specific exemptions in some cases, compliance with the Forest Practice Act and Board rules apply to all commercial harvesting operations for landowners of small parcels, to ranchers owning hundreds of acres, and large timber companies with thousands of acres. (CAL FIRE, n.d.)

The Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) is the environmental review documents submitted by landowners to CAL FIRE outlining what timber he or she wants to harvest, how it will be harvested, and the steps that will be taken to prevent damage to the environment. THPs are prepared by Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) who are licensed to prepare these comprehensive, detailed plans. THPs can range from about 100 pages to more than 500 pages. (CAL FIRE, n.d.)

CAL FIRE does not have the authority to deny a THP that is in compliance with state and federal rules and laws, simply because the logging plan is unpopular with the public. The Department reviews and approves between 500 to 1,400 THPs each year. A THP that does not comply with all forestry and environmental regulations is returned to the RPF. It is only approved after the RPF and landowner agree to make the changes necessary to ensure compliance with all laws. CAL FIRE follows-up on approved THPs with site inspections and can shut down operations, cite or fine RPFs, Licensed Timber Operators (LTOs), and landowners if illegal operations are found. (CAL FIRE, n.d.)



B. Local Regulations

The following ordinances address farmland and agricultural preserves within unincorporated Riverside County.

- Riverside County Ordinance No. 509: This ordinance establishes uniform rules which apply to Agricultural Preserves. This ordinance determines which uses are agricultural or compatible uses within an Agricultural Preserve and prohibits all other uses within an Agricultural Preserve.
- Riverside County Ordinance No. 625: This “Right-to-Farm” Ordinance requires that development of residential uses adjacent to properties zoned primarily for agricultural purposes be regulated. Specifically, Ordinance No. 625 states that if any agricultural operation that has been in place for at least three years and is not considered a nuisance operation at the time the operation began, no change in surrounding land uses shall cause said operation to become a nuisance. A note is to be added to the Environmental Constraints Sheet for any tentative land division that states:

“...that no agricultural activity, operation, or facility, or appurtenances thereof, conducted or maintained for commercial purposes, and in a manner consistent with proper and accepted customs and standards, as established and followed by similar agricultural operations in the same locality, shall be or become a nuisance, private or public, due to any changed condition in or about the locality, after the same has been in operation for more than three (3) years if it was not a nuisance at the time it began.”

If any parcel within 300 feet of the site is zoned primarily for agricultural uses at the time of occupancy permit issuance, the Project shall comply with the “Right-to-Farm” Ordinance. County Ordinance No. 625 defines land zoned for “primarily agricultural purposes” as any land lying within any one of the following zone classifications established by the Riverside County Land Use Ordinance No. 348: A-1 (Light Agriculture); A-P (Light Agriculture with Poultry); A-2 (Heavy Agriculture); A-D (Agriculture-Dairy); or C/V (Citrus/Vineyard).

4.2.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section II of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to forestry and agricultural resources, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate a project’s impacts on forest and agricultural resources:

- Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local 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?
- Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?



- Would the project 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))?
- Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- Would the project 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?

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, are derived from Section II of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact on forestry or agricultural resources if construction and/or operation if the Project would:

- a. *Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;*
- b. *Conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve;*
- c. *Cause development of non-agricultural uses within 300 feet of agriculturally zoned property (Ordinance No. 625 "Right-to-Farm");*
- d. *Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use;*
- e. *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 Govt. Code section 51104(g));*
- f. *Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or*
- g. *Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in con-version of forest land to non-forest use.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on forestry and agricultural resources.



4.2.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: Would the Project 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?

As mapped by the CDC's FMMP, the entire Project site and the Project's associated off-site infrastructure alignments are mapped as containing "Other Land." "Other Land" is not considered to comprise "Farmland," and no agricultural uses have ever occurred on the Project site. The nearest "Farmland" to the Project site occurs on a property located approximately 0.46-mile to the east of the Project site, which is classified as "Unique Farmland." Accordingly, the Project has no potential to convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use, and no impact would occur. (CDC, 2021; Google Earth, 2022)

Threshold b.: Would the Project conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve?

As defined by Riverside County Ordinance No. 625, "lands primarily zoned for agricultural use" include properties that are zoned for "Light Agriculture (A-1)," "Light Agriculture with Poultry (A-P)," "Heavy Agriculture (A-2)," "Agriculture-Dairy (A-D)," or "Citrus/Vineyard (C/V)." (Riverside County, 1994). Under existing conditions, the Project site is zoned M-SC and R-A, which are not agricultural zoning classifications as defined by Ordinance No. 625. The Project's off-site infrastructure improvement areas are located in or adjacent to public roadway rights-of-way. There are no properties within two miles of the site that are zoned primarily for agricultural use, as defined by Ordinance No. 625. As such, the Project would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning, and no impact would occur.

Under existing conditions, the Project site and the Project's associated off-site infrastructure alignments are not used for agricultural production. The nearest lands that are used for agricultural production occurs approximately 0.4-mile to the east of the Project site, and there are no components of the proposed Project that could adversely affect on-going agricultural operations on this or any other properties in the Project vicinity. As such, no impact would occur.

According to Riverside County GIS, there are no agricultural preserves or Williamson Act contracted land within the Project vicinity. The nearest lands that are included within an agricultural preserve and/or are subject to a Williamson Act Contract occur approximately 8.8 miles to the southeast of the Project site (Coachella Valley 53 Agricultural Preserve) (RCIT, n.d.). Due to the distance between the Project site and the Coachella Valley 53 Agricultural Preserve, the Project has no potential to result in conflicts with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve. No impact would occur.



Threshold c.: Would the Project cause development of non-agricultural uses within 300 feet of agriculturally zoned property (Ordinance No. 625 Right-to-Farm)?

As defined by Riverside County Ordinance No. 625, “lands primarily zoned for agricultural use” include properties that are zoned for “Light Agriculture (A-1),” “Light Agriculture with Poultry (A-P),” “Heavy Agriculture (A-2),” “Agriculture-Dairy (A-D),” or “Citrus/Vineyard (C/V).” (Riverside County, 1994). There are no properties within 300 feet of the Project site or the Project’s off-site infrastructure alignments that are zoned primarily for agricultural use, as defined by Ordinance No. 625. Furthermore, should any agricultural uses become established within 300 feet of the Project site and that have been under operation for at least three (3) years prior to Project implementation, then Riverside County Ordinance No. 625 would apply. Ordinance No. 625 protects agricultural operations from nuisance complaints and encourages the development, improvement, and long-term viability of agricultural land. The Project would be conditioned to require compliance with Ordinance No. 625, if applicable, which would ensure that Project-related construction and operational activities would not indirectly cause or contribute to the conversion of off-site farmland to non-agricultural use. Based on the mandatory compliance with Ordinance No. 625, no impact would occur.

Threshold d.: Would the Project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

There are no components of the Project that would involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. Although agricultural uses occur in the Project vicinity (refer to the discussion of Threshold c.), there are no components of the proposed Project that could indirectly affect these existing agricultural uses. Additionally, as indicated under the analysis of Threshold c., in the event that any agricultural uses become established for a minimum of three years and within 300 feet of the Project site, the Project would be subject to the provisions of Riverside County Ordinance No. 625, which protects agricultural operations from nuisance complaints and encourages the development, improvement, and long-term viability of agricultural land. Compliance with Ordinance No. 625 would ensure that future development on site does not result in indirect impacts to existing agricultural uses in the surrounding area. Thus, the Project would not result in any other changes to the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use, and no impacts would occur.

Threshold e.: Would the Project 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 Govt. Code section 51104(g))?

Threshold f.: Would the Project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?



Threshold g.: Would the Project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The Project site, the Project's off-site infrastructure alignments, and surrounding areas are not zoned for forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) § 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by PRC § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code § 51104(g)) (RCIT, n.d.). As such, the Project has no potential to conflict with such zoning, and no impact would occur.

As shown in Figure 4.5.2 of the Riverside County General Plan Update Draft EIR No. 521, which was prepared in conjunction with the County's 2015 General Plan Update, aside from scattered desert woodlands there are no forestry resources in the Project's vicinity under existing conditions. The nearest forest land to the Project site occurs within the San Bernardino National Forest, located approximately 12.1 miles west of the Project site. (Riverside County, 2015a, Figure 4.5.2; Google Earth, 2022). Based on a review of aerial imagery, there are no forest-related uses within the vicinity of the Project site, aside from the production of date trees (which are not forestry resources) (Google Earth, 2021). As such, the Project has no potential to result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and no impact would occur.

Furthermore, the Project would not involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact would occur.

4.2.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The cumulative study area for the evaluation of potential impacts to agriculture and forestry resources includes the Coachella Valley portion Riverside County. Lands within the Coachella Valley generally exhibit similar climate, geologic, and soil characteristics. Additionally, agricultural lands throughout the Coachella Valley are subject to future development that would preclude agricultural uses, based on the various land use designations applied to lands throughout Coachella Valley by the County's General Plan and the general plans of other local jurisdictions.

As discussed under Threshold a., the Project site and the Project's associated infrastructure alignments do not contain any Farmland as defined by State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Section II(a). Accordingly, because the Project has no potential to result in impacts to Farmland, the Project would not result in any cumulatively-considerable impacts to Farmland.

Under existing conditions, the Project site is zoned for M-SC and R-A land uses, neither of which comprise agricultural zoning classifications. In addition, the Project site does not contain any agricultural uses under existing conditions, the Project site is not located within or near a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve, and the Project site and surrounding areas are not subject to a Williamson Act contract. There are no components of the proposed Project that could indirectly affect any Agricultural Preserves or Williamson Act-contracted lands within the Project vicinity. Therefore, the Project would not result in any cumulatively-considerable impacts due to a conflict with existing agricultural zoning, existing agricultural use, due to a conflict with land subject to a Williamson Act contract, or due to a conflict with a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve.



There are no properties within the Project vicinity that are zoned primarily for agricultural use, as defined by Ordinance No. 625. Furthermore, should any agricultural uses become established within 300 feet of the Project site and that have been under operation for at least three (3) years prior to Project implementation, then Riverside County Ordinance No. 625 would apply. The Project would be conditioned to require compliance with Ordinance No. 625, if applicable, which would ensure that Project-related construction and operational activities would not indirectly cause or contribute to the conversion of off-site farmland to non-agricultural use. As other cumulative developments within the immediate vicinity of the Project site also would be subject to compliance with Ordinance No. 625, if required, the Project would not result in any cumulatively-considerable impacts due to the conversion of off-site farmland to non-agricultural use.

There are no components of the Project that would involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

The Project site, and the Project's associated infrastructure alignments, and surrounding areas are not zoned for forest land (as defined in PRC § 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by PRC § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code § 51104(g)). As such, the Project has no potential to conflict with such zoning, and no cumulatively-considerable impacts would occur. In addition, the Project has no potential to result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and no cumulatively-considerable impacts due to the loss or conversion of forest land would occur. Furthermore, there are no components of the proposed Project that could result in the conversion of forest land to non-forest use, as there are no lands used for forest land uses; thus, no cumulatively-considerable impacts would occur.

4.2.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: No Impact. As mapped by the CDC's FMMP, areas that would be physically disturbed by the Project are mapped as containing "Other Land." "Other Land" is not considered to comprise "Farmland," and no agricultural uses have ever occurred on the Project site. Accordingly, the Project has no potential to convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use, and no impact would occur.

Threshold b.: No Impact. Areas that would be physically disturbed by the Project are not zoned for agricultural uses under existing conditions. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning and no impact would occur. There are no components of the proposed Project that could result in indirect impacts to off-site agricultural uses such that agricultural use of off-site properties would be adversely affected. Accordingly, Project would not result in any impacts to existing agricultural uses. Additionally, the Project's physical disturbance areas are not subject to a Williamson Act contract and is not located within any County Agricultural Preserves, and there are no components of the proposed Project that have the potential to adversely affect agricultural operations at the nearest agricultural preserve/Williamson Act-contracted lands. As such, the Project would not result in any impacts to agricultural preserves or Williamson Act-contracted lands, and would not result in any impacts due to a conflict with agricultural zoning. No impact would occur.



Threshold c.: No Impact. There are no properties within 300 feet of the Project site that are zoned primarily for agricultural use, as defined by Ordinance No. 625. Furthermore, should any agricultural uses become established within 300 feet of the Project site and that have been under operation for at least three (3) years prior to Project implementation, then Riverside County Ordinance No. 625 would apply. The Project would be conditioned to require compliance with Ordinance No. 625, if applicable, which would ensure that Project-related construction and operational activities would not indirectly cause or contribute to the conversion of off-site farmland to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.

Threshold d.: No Impact. Assuming mandatory compliance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 625, there are no components of the Project that would involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.

Thresholds e., f., and g.: No Impact. There are no forest lands in the Project site's vicinity, and no lands in the Project vicinity are zoned for timberland, timberland production, or forest uses. The Project would not result in the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact would occur.

4.2.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude agriculture impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- In the event that new agricultural uses become established on agriculturally-zoned lands (as defined by Riverside County Ordinance No. 625) prior to Project occupancy, the provisions of Ordinance No. 625 shall apply. Ordinance No. 625 requires that when lands are developed adjacent to properties zoned primarily for agricultural purposes (that support agricultural operations that have been in place for at least three years and not considered a nuisance operation at the time the operation began), future land buyers must be notified of any agricultural operations that are on-going in the area, and mandate that such agricultural uses shall not be the subject of nuisance complaints.

Mitigation

No adverse impacts would occur; therefore, mitigation is not required.



4.3 AIR QUALITY

This Subsection 4.3 is based on two technical reports prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc. (herein, “Urban Crossroads”). The first report addresses the Project’s potential to result in regional and localized air quality impacts, and is entitled “Majestic Thousand Palms (GPA220004, CZ2200013, PPT220022, CEQ220033) Air Quality Impact Analysis” (herein, “AQIA”), dated January 30, 2024, and included as *Technical Appendix B1* to this EIR (Urban Crossroads, 2024a). The second report addresses the Project’s potential to result in health risk impacts to sensitive receptors and workers due to diesel particulate matter (DPM) from Project-related heavy-duty diesel trucks, and is entitled “Majestic Thousand Palms (GPA220004, CZ2200013, PPT220022, CEQ220033) Mobile Source Health Risk Assessment” (herein, “HRA”), dated January 30, 2024, and included as *Technical Appendix B2* to this EIR (Urban Crossroads, 2024b). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of these and other reference sources.

4.3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Salton Sea Air Basin

The Project site is located within Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The SCAQMD was created by the 1977 Lewis-Presley Air Quality Management Act, which merged four county air pollution control bodies into one regional district. Under the Act, the SCAQMD is responsible for bringing air quality in areas under its jurisdiction into conformity with federal and state air quality standards. The SSAB is aligned in a northwest-southwest orientation stretching from Banning Pass to the Mexican border. The regional climate, as well as the temperature, wind, humidity, precipitation, and amount of sunshine significantly influence the air quality in the Basin. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 13)

B. Climate and Meteorology

The climate of the Coachella Valley is a continental, desert-type climate, with hot summers, mild winters, and very little annual rainfall. Precipitation is less than six inches annually and occurs mostly in the winter months from active frontal systems and in the late summer months from thunderstorms. Almost all of the annual rainfall comes from the fringes of mid-latitude storms from late November to early April with summers often being completely dry. Temperatures exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), on average, for four months each year, with daily highs near 110°F during July and August. Summer nights are cooler with minimum temperatures in the mid-70s. During the winter season, daytime highs are quite mild, but the dry air is conducive to nocturnal radiational cooling, with early morning lows around 40°F. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 13)

Portions of the SSAB experience surface inversions almost every day of the year. Inversions in the SSAB are attributed to strong surface heating, but are usually broken, allowing pollutants to disperse more easily. Weak surface inversions are caused by cooling of air in contact with the cold surface of the earth at night. In the valleys and low-lying areas, this condition is intensified by the addition of cold air flowing downslope from the hills and pooling on the valley floor. In addition, inversions in the SSAB caused by the presence of the Pacific high-pressure cell can cause the air mass aloft to sink. As the air descends, compressional heating warms the air to a temperature higher than the air below. This subsidence inversion can act as a nearly



impenetrable lid to the vertical mixing of pollutants. These inversions can persist for one or more days, causing air stagnation and the buildup of pollutants. Subsidence inversions are common from November through June and are relatively absent from July through October. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 13)

C. Wind Patterns and Blowsand

The Coachella Valley and adjacent areas are exposed to frequent gusty winds. The flat terrain of the valley and strong temperature differentials, created by intense solar heating, produce moderate winds and deep thermal convection. Wind speeds exceeding 31 miles per hour (mph) occur most frequently in April and May. On an annual basis, strong winds (greater than 31 mph) are observed 0.6 percent of the time and speeds of less than 6.8 mph account for more than one-half of the observed winds. Prevailing winds are from the northwest through southwest, with secondary flows from the southeast. The strongest and most persistent winds typically occur immediately to the east of Banning Pass, which is noted as a wind power generation resource area. Aside from this locale, the wind conditions in the remainder of the Coachella Valley are geographically distinct. Stronger winds tend to occur closer to the foothills. Less frequently, widespread gusty winds occur over all areas of the Valley. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 13)

Within the Project area, there is a natural sand migration process, called “blowsand,” that has direct and indirect effects on air quality. Blowsand produces particulate matter (PM₁₀) in two ways: (1) by direct particle erosion and fragmentation as natural PM₁₀, and (2) by secondary effects, as sand deposits on road surfaces. Also, where water has already receded around the Salton Sea, the surface areas contain a salty mix of sediments that can change from a hardened salt crust to a fluffy soft layer of dust depending upon the season. Exposed sediments could elevate PM₁₀ levels throughout the region. Almost 120,000 acres of Salton Sea lakebed could be exposed as inflows to the Sea decrease in future years. Local communities may be affected by 60,000 potentially dust-blowing acres, which will cause PM₁₀ levels to rise. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 14)

D. Criteria Pollutants

Criteria pollutants are pollutants that are regulated through the development of human health based and/or environmentally-based criteria for setting permissible levels. Criteria pollutants, their typical sources, and health effects are identified below.

1. Carbon Monoxide (CO)

CO is a colorless, odorless gas produced by the incomplete combustion of carbon-containing fuels, such as gasoline or wood. CO emissions come from any source that burns fuel such as automobiles, trucks, heavy construction equipment, farming equipment, and residential heating. CO concentrations tend to be the highest during the winter morning, when little to no wind and surface-based inversions trap the pollutant at ground levels. Because CO is emitted directly from internal combustion engines, unlike ozone (O₃), motor vehicles operating at slow speeds are the primary source of CO in the SSAB. The highest ambient CO concentrations are generally found near congested transportation corridors and intersections. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)



CO Health Effects: Individuals with a deficient blood supply to the heart are the most susceptible to the adverse effects of CO exposure. The effects observed include earlier onset of chest pain with exercise, and electrocardiograph changes indicative of decreased oxygen (O₂) supply to the heart. Inhaled CO has no direct toxic effect on the lungs but exerts its effect on tissues by interfering with O₂ transport and competing with O₂ to combine with hemoglobin present in the blood to form carboxyhemoglobin (COHb). Hence, conditions with an increased demand for O₂ supply can be adversely affected by exposure to CO. Individuals most at risk include fetuses, patients with diseases involving heart and blood vessels, and patients with chronic hypoxemia (O₂ deficiency) as seen at high altitudes. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

2. *Sulfur Oxides (SO_x)*

Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) is a colorless, extremely irritating gas or liquid. It enters the atmosphere as a pollutant mainly as a result of burning high sulfur-content fuel oils and coal and from chemical processes occurring at chemical plants and refineries. When SO₂ oxidizes in the atmosphere, it forms SO₄. Collectively, these pollutants are referred to as sulfur oxides (SO_x). Sources of SO_x include coal or oil burning power plants and industries, refineries, and diesel engines. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

SO_x Health Effects: A few minutes of exposure to low levels of SO₂ can result in airway constriction in some asthmatics, all of whom are sensitive to its effects. In asthmatics, increase in resistance to air flow, as well as reduction in breathing capacity leading to severe breathing difficulties, are observed after acute exposure to SO₂. In contrast, healthy individuals do not exhibit similar acute responses even after exposure to higher concentrations of SO₂. Animal studies suggest that despite SO₂ being a respiratory irritant, it does not cause substantial lung injury at ambient concentrations. However, very high levels of exposure can cause lung edema (fluid accumulation), lung tissue damage, and sloughing off of cells lining the respiratory tract. Some population-based studies indicate that the mortality and morbidity effects associated with fine particles show a similar association with ambient SO₂ levels. In these studies, efforts to separate the effects of SO₂ from those of fine particles have not been successful. It is not clear whether the two pollutants act synergistically, or one pollutant alone is the predominant factor. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

3. *Nitrogen Oxide (NO_x)*

Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x) consist of nitric oxide (NO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and nitrous oxide (N₂O) and are formed when nitrogen (N₂) combines with O₂. Their lifespan in the atmosphere ranges from one to seven days for NO and NO₂, to 170 years for N₂O. NO_x is typically created during combustion processes and are major contributors to smog formation and acid deposition. NO_x results from any source that burns fuel such as automobiles, trucks, heavy construction equipment, farming equipment and residential heating. NO₂ is a criteria air pollutant and may result in numerous adverse health effects. It absorbs blue light, resulting in a brownish-red cast to the atmosphere and reduced visibility. Of the seven types of NO_x compounds, NO₂ is the most abundant in the atmosphere. As ambient concentrations of NO₂ are related to traffic density, commuters in heavy traffic may be exposed to higher concentrations of NO₂ than those indicated by a regional monitoring station. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

NO_x Health Effects: Population-based studies suggest that an increase in acute respiratory illness, including infections and respiratory symptoms in children (not infants), is associated with long-term exposure to NO₂ at



levels found in homes with gas stoves, which are higher than ambient levels found in Southern California. Increase in resistance to air flow and airway contraction is observed after short-term exposure to NO₂ in healthy subjects. Larger decreases in lung functions are observed in individuals with asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (e.g., chronic bronchitis, emphysema) than in healthy individuals, indicating a greater susceptibility of these sub-groups. In animals, exposure to levels of NO₂ considerably higher than ambient concentrations result in increased susceptibility to infections, possibly due to the observed changes in cells involved in maintaining immune functions. The severity of lung tissue damage associated with high levels of Ozone (O₃) exposure increases when animals are exposed to a combination of O₃ and NO₂. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

4. *Ozone (O₃)*

Ozone (O₃) is a highly reactive and unstable gas that is formed when reactive organic gases (ROG) and NO_x, both byproducts of internal combustion engine exhaust, undergo slow photochemical reactions in the presence of sunlight. ROG sources include any source that burns fuels (e.g., gasoline, natural gas, wood, oil), solvents, petroleum processing, and storage and pesticides. O₃ 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. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

O₃ Health Effects: Individuals exercising outdoors, children, and people with preexisting lung disease, such as asthma and chronic pulmonary lung disease, are considered to be the most susceptible subgroups for O₃ effects. Short-term exposure (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. Elevated O₃ levels are associated with increased school absences. In recent years, a correlation between elevated ambient O₃ levels and increases in daily hospital admission rates, as well as mortality, has also been reported. An increased risk for asthma has been found in children who participate in multiple outdoor sports and live in communities with high O₃ levels. O₃ exposure under exercising conditions is known to increase the severity of the responses described above. Animal studies suggest that exposure to a combination of pollutants that includes O₃ may be more toxic than exposure to O₃ alone. Although lung volume and resistance changes observed after a single exposure diminish with repeated exposures, biochemical and cellular changes appear to persist, which can lead to subsequent lung structural changes. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

5. *Particulate Matter*

Particulate matter (PM) includes inhalable particles with diameters that are generally 10 micrometers and smaller, which are referred to as PM₁₀, and fine inhalable particles with diameters that are generally 2.5 micrometers and smaller, which are referred to as PM_{2.5}. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

PM₁₀ is a major air pollutant consisting of tiny solid or liquid particles of soot, dust, smoke, fumes, and aerosols. Sources of PM₁₀ include road dust, windblown dust, and construction. PM₁₀ also is formed from other pollutants (acid rain, NO_x, SO_x, and organics), and from the incomplete combustion of any fuel. Particulate matter pollution is a major cause of reduced visibility (haze) which is caused by the scattering of light and consequently the significant reduction of air clarity. The size of the particles (10 microns or smaller, about



0.0004 inches or less) allows them to easily enter the lungs where they may be deposited, resulting in adverse health effects. Additionally, PM₁₀ is a criteria air pollutant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

PM_{2.5} is a similar air pollutant to PM₁₀ consisting of tiny solid or liquid particles that are 2.5 microns or smaller (often referred to as fine particles). PM_{2.5} comes from fuel combustion in motor vehicles, equipment, and industrial sources, and residential and agricultural burning. PM_{2.5} also is formed from reaction of other pollutants (acid rain, NO_x, SO_x, and organics). These particles are formed in the atmosphere from primary gaseous emissions that include SO₄ formed from SO₂ release from power plants and industrial facilities and nitrates that are formed from NO_x release from power plants, automobiles, and other types of combustion sources. The chemical composition of fine particles highly depends on location, time of year, and weather conditions. PM_{2.5} is a criteria air pollutant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

PM Health Effects: A consistent correlation between elevated ambient fine particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) levels and an increase in mortality rates, respiratory infections, number and severity of asthma attacks and the number of hospital admissions has been observed in different parts of the United States and various areas around the world. In recent years, some studies have reported an association between long-term exposure to air pollution dominated by fine particles and increased mortality, reduction in lifespan, and an increased mortality from lung cancer. Daily fluctuations in PM_{2.5} concentration levels have also been related to hospital admissions for acute respiratory conditions in children, to school and kindergarten absences, to a decrease in respiratory lung volumes in normal children, and to increased medication use in children and adults with asthma. Recent studies show lung function growth in children is reduced with long-term exposure to particulate matter. The elderly, people with preexisting respiratory or cardiovascular disease, and children appear to be more susceptible to the effects of high levels of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

6. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are hydrocarbon compounds (any compound containing various combinations of hydrogen and carbon atoms) that exist in the ambient air. VOCs contribute to the formation of smog through atmospheric photochemical reactions and/or may be toxic. Compounds of carbon (also known as organic compounds) have different levels of reactivity; that is, they do not react at the same speed or do not form O₃ to the same extent when exposed to photochemical processes. VOCs often have an odor, and some examples include gasoline, alcohol, and the solvents used in paints. Exceptions to the VOC designation include CO, carbon dioxide (CO₂), carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate. VOCs are a criteria pollutant since they are a precursor to O₃, which is a criteria pollutant. The terms VOC and ROG (as discussed below) are used interchangeably. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

Organic chemicals are widely used as ingredients in household products. Paints, varnishes, and wax all contain organic solvents, as do many cleaning, disinfecting, cosmetic, degreasing, and hobby products. Fuels are made up of organic chemicals. All of these products can release organic compounds while in use, and, to some degree, when they are stored. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)



VOCs Health Effects: Breathing VOCs can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat, can cause difficulty breathing and nausea, and can damage the central nervous system as well as other organs. Some VOCs can cause cancer. Not all VOCs have all these health effects, though many have several. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

7. Reactive Organic Gases (ROGs)

Similar to VOCs, Reactive Organic Gases (ROGs) are also precursors in forming O₃ and consist of compounds containing methane (CH₄), ethane (C₂H₆), propane, butane, and longer chain hydrocarbons, which are typically the result of some type of combustion/decomposition process. Smog is formed when ROG and NO_x react in the presence of sunlight. ROGs are a criteria pollutant since they are a precursor to O₃, which is a criteria pollutant. The terms ROG and VOC (see above discussion) are used interchangeably. Sources of ROGs are similar to VOCs, and are described above. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

ROGs Health Effects: Health effects from ROGs are similar to VOCs, and are described above. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, Table 2-1)

8. Lead (Pb)

Lead (Pb) is a heavy metal that is highly persistent in the environment and is considered a criteria pollutant. In the past, the primary source of Pb in the air was emissions from vehicles burning leaded gasoline. The major sources of Pb emissions include ore and metals processing, particularly Pb smelters; resource recovery; the deterioration of Pb-based paints; and leaded gasoline use and piston-engine aircraft operating on leaded aviation gasoline. Other stationary sources include waste incinerators, utilities, and lead-acid battery manufacturers. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

Pb Health Effects: Fetuses, infants, and children are more sensitive than others to the adverse effects of Pb exposure. Exposure to low levels of Pb can adversely affect the development and function of the central nervous system, leading to learning disorders, distractibility, inability to follow simple commands, and lower intelligence quotients. In adults, increased Pb levels are associated with increased blood pressure. Pb poisoning can cause anemia, lethargy, seizures, and death; although it appears that there are no direct effects of Pb on the respiratory system. Pb can be stored in the bone from early age environmental exposure, and elevated blood Pb levels can occur due to breakdown of bone tissue during pregnancy, hyperthyroidism (increased secretion of hormones from the thyroid gland) and osteoporosis (breakdown of bony tissue). Fetuses and breast-fed babies can be exposed to higher levels of Pb because of previous environmental Pb exposure of their mothers. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

9. Odor

Odor means the perception experienced by a person when one or more chemical substances in the air come into contact with the human olfactory nerves. Odors can come from many sources including animals, human activities, industry, nature, and vehicles. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

Odor Health Effects: Offensive odors can potentially affect human health in several ways. First, odorant compounds can irritate the eye, nose, and throat, which can reduce respiratory volume. Second, studies have



shown that the VOCs that cause odors can stimulate sensory nerves to cause neurochemical changes that might influence health, for instance, by compromising the immune system. Finally, unpleasant odors can trigger memories or attitudes linked to unpleasant odors, causing cognitive and emotional effects such as stress. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-1)

E. Existing Air Quality

Existing air quality is measured at established SCAQMD air quality monitoring stations. Monitored air quality is evaluated in the context of ambient air quality standards. These standards are the levels of air quality that are considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health and welfare. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) currently in effect are shown in Table 4.3-1, *Ambient Air Quality Standards*. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 21)

The determination of whether a region's air quality is healthful or unhealthful is determined by comparing contaminant levels in ambient air samples to the State and federal standards. The most recent State and federal standards were updated by CARB on May 4, 2016, and are presented in Table 4.3-1. The air quality in a region is considered to be in attainment by the State if the measured ambient air pollutant levels for O₃, CO (except 8-hour Lake Tahoe), SO₂ (1 and 24 hour), NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. It should be noted that the three-year period is presented for informational purposes and is not the basis for how the State assigns attainment status. Attainment status for a pollutant means that the SCAQMD meets the standards set by the EPA or the California EPA (CalEPA). Conversely, nonattainment means that an area has monitored air quality that does not meet the NAAQS or CAAQS standards. In order to improve air quality in nonattainment areas, a State Implementation Plan (SIP) is drafted by CARB. The SIP outlines the measures that the state will take to improve air quality. Once nonattainment areas meet the standards and additional redesignation requirements, the EPA will designate the area as a maintenance area. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 21)

F. Regional Air Quality

Air pollution contributes to a wide variety of adverse health effects. The EPA has established NAAQS for six of the most common air pollutants: CO, Pb, O₃, particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), NO₂, and SO₂ which are known as criteria pollutants. The SCAQMD monitors levels of various criteria pollutants at 37 permanent monitoring stations and 5 single-pollutant source Pb air monitoring sites throughout the air district. On December 28, 2021, CARB posted the proposed 2021 amendments to the state and national area designations. Table 4.3-2, *Attainment Status of Criteria Pollutants in the SSAB*, shows the attainment designations for the SSAB. Appendix 2.1 of the Project's AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*) EIR provides geographic representation of the State and federal attainment status for applicable criteria pollutants within the SSAB. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 24)

G. Local Air Quality

The SCAQMD has designated general forecast areas and air monitoring areas (referred to as Source Receptor Areas (SRA)) throughout the district in order to provide Southern California residents about the air quality



Table 4.3-1 Ambient Air Quality Standards

Ambient Air Quality Standards						
Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards ¹		National Standards ²		
		Concentration ³	Method ⁴	Primary ^{3,5}	Secondary ^{3,6}	Method ⁷
Ozone (O ₃) ⁸	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m ³)	Ultraviolet Photometry	—	Same as Primary Standard	Ultraviolet Photometry
	8 Hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m ³)		0.070 ppm (137 µg/m ³)		
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀) ⁹	24 Hour	50 µg/m ³	Gravimetric or Beta Attenuation	150 µg/m ³	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetric Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m ³		—		
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5}) ⁹	24 Hour	—	—	35 µg/m ³	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetric Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m ³	Gravimetric or Beta Attenuation	12.0 µg/m ³	15 µg/m ³	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m ³)	Non-Dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)	35 ppm (40 mg/m ³)	—	Non-Dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)
	8 Hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m ³)		9 ppm (10 mg/m ³)	—	
	8 Hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m ³)		—	—	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂) ¹⁰	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m ³)	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence	100 ppb (188 µg/m ³)	—	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m ³)		0.053 ppm (100 µg/m ³)	Same as Primary Standard	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂) ¹¹	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m ³)	Ultraviolet Fluorescence	75 ppb (196 µg/m ³)	—	Ultraviolet Fluorescence; Spectrophotometry (Pararosaniline Method)
	3 Hour	—		—	0.5 ppm (1300 µg/m ³)	
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m ³)		0.14 ppm (for certain areas) ¹¹	—	
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	—		0.030 ppm (for certain areas) ¹¹	—	
Lead ^{12,13}	30 Day Average	1.5 µg/m ³	Atomic Absorption	—	—	High Volume Sampler and Atomic Absorption
	Calendar Quarter	—		1.5 µg/m ³ (for certain areas) ¹²	Same as Primary Standard	
	Rolling 3-Month Average	—		0.15 µg/m ³		
Visibility Reducing Particles ¹⁴	8 Hour	See footnote 14	Beta Attenuation and Transmittance through Filter Tape	No National Standards		
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m ³	Ion Chromatography			
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m ³)	Ultraviolet Fluorescence			
Vinyl Chloride ¹²	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m ³)	Gas Chromatography			



Table 4.3-1 Ambient Air Quality Standards (Cont'd)

1. California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except 8-hour Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide (1 and 24 hour), nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and visibility reducing particles), are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.
2. National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest 8-hour concentration measured at each site in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM₁₀, the 24 hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ is equal to or less than one. For PM_{2.5}, the 24 hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard. Contact the U.S. EPA for further clarification and current national policies.
3. Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.
4. Any equivalent measurement method which can be shown to the satisfaction of the ARB to give equivalent results at or near the level of the air quality standard may be used.
5. National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect the public health.
6. National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.
7. Reference method as described by the U.S. EPA. An "equivalent method" of measurement may be used but must have a "consistent relationship to the reference method" and must be approved by the U.S. EPA.
8. On October 1, 2015, the national 8-hour ozone primary and secondary standards were lowered from 0.075 to 0.070 ppm.
9. On December 14, 2012, the national annual PM_{2.5} primary standard was lowered from 15 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ to 12.0 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The existing national 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards (primary and secondary) were retained at 35 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, as was the annual secondary standard of 15 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The existing 24-hour PM₁₀ standards (primary and secondary) of 150 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over 3 years.
10. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 98th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 100 ppb. Note that the national 1-hour standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the national 1-hour standard to the California standards the units can be converted from ppb to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 100 ppb is identical to 0.100 ppm.
11. On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO₂ standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb. The 1971 SO₂ national standards (24-hour and annual) remain in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2010 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1971 standards, the 1971 standards remain in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2010 standards are approved.

Note that the 1-hour national standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.
12. The ARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as 'toxic air contaminants' with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.
13. The national standard for lead was revised on October 15, 2008 to a rolling 3-month average. The 1978 lead standard (1.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ as a quarterly average) remains in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2008 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1978 standard, the 1978 standard remains in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2008 standard are approved.
14. In 1989, the ARB converted both the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard and the Lake Tahoe 30-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which are "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" and "extinction of 0.07 per kilometer" for the statewide and Lake Tahoe Air Basin standards, respectively.

For more information please call ARB-PIO at (916) 322-2990
(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-2)

California Air Resources Board (5/4/16)



Table 4.3-2 Attainment Status of Criteria Pollutants in the SSAB

Criteria Pollutant	State Designation	Federal Designation
O ₃ – 1-hour standard	Nonattainment	-
O ₃ – 8-hour standard	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
PM ₁₀	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
PM _{2.5}	Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
CO	Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
NO ₂	Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
SO ₂	Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Pb	Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment

Note: See Appendix 2.1 of Technical Appendix B1 to this EIR for a detailed map of State/National Area Designations within the SSAB.

“-“ = The national 1-hour O₃ standard was revoked effective June 15, 2005.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-3)

conditions. The Project site is located within the Coachella Valley monitoring area (SRA 30). The Coachella Valley 1 monitoring station is located approximately 8.0 miles west of the Project site and reports air quality statistics for O₃, CO, NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 24)

The most recent three years of published data available from SCAQMD is shown on Table 4.3-3, *Project Area Air Quality Monitoring Summary 2019-2021*, and identifies the number of days ambient air quality standards were exceeded for the study area, which is considered to be representative of the local air quality at the Project site. Data for O₃, CO, NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} for 2019 through 2021 was obtained from the SCAQMD Air Quality Data Tables. Data for SO₂ is omitted because attainment is regularly met in the SSAB and few monitoring stations measure SO₂ concentrations. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 24)

H. Sensitive Receptors

Some people are especially sensitive to air pollution and are given special consideration when evaluating localized air quality impacts from projects. These groups of people include children, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular illness. Structures that house these persons or places where these persons gather are defined as “sensitive receptors.” These structures typically include uses such as residences, hotels, and hospitals where an individual can remain for 24 hours. Receptors in the Project study area are described below and shown on Figure 4.3-1, *Receptor Locations*. All distances are measured from the Project site boundary to the outdoor living areas (e.g., backyards) or at the building façade, whichever is closer to the Project site. It should be noted that for clarity purposes, the receptors presented in Figure 4.3-1 do not represent all modeled receptors. A total of 97 receptors were modeled, extending up to three miles from the Project site. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 46-47)

R1: Location R1 represents the existing residence at 72758 30th Avenue, approximately 1,329 feet southeast of the Project site. R1 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the Project site.



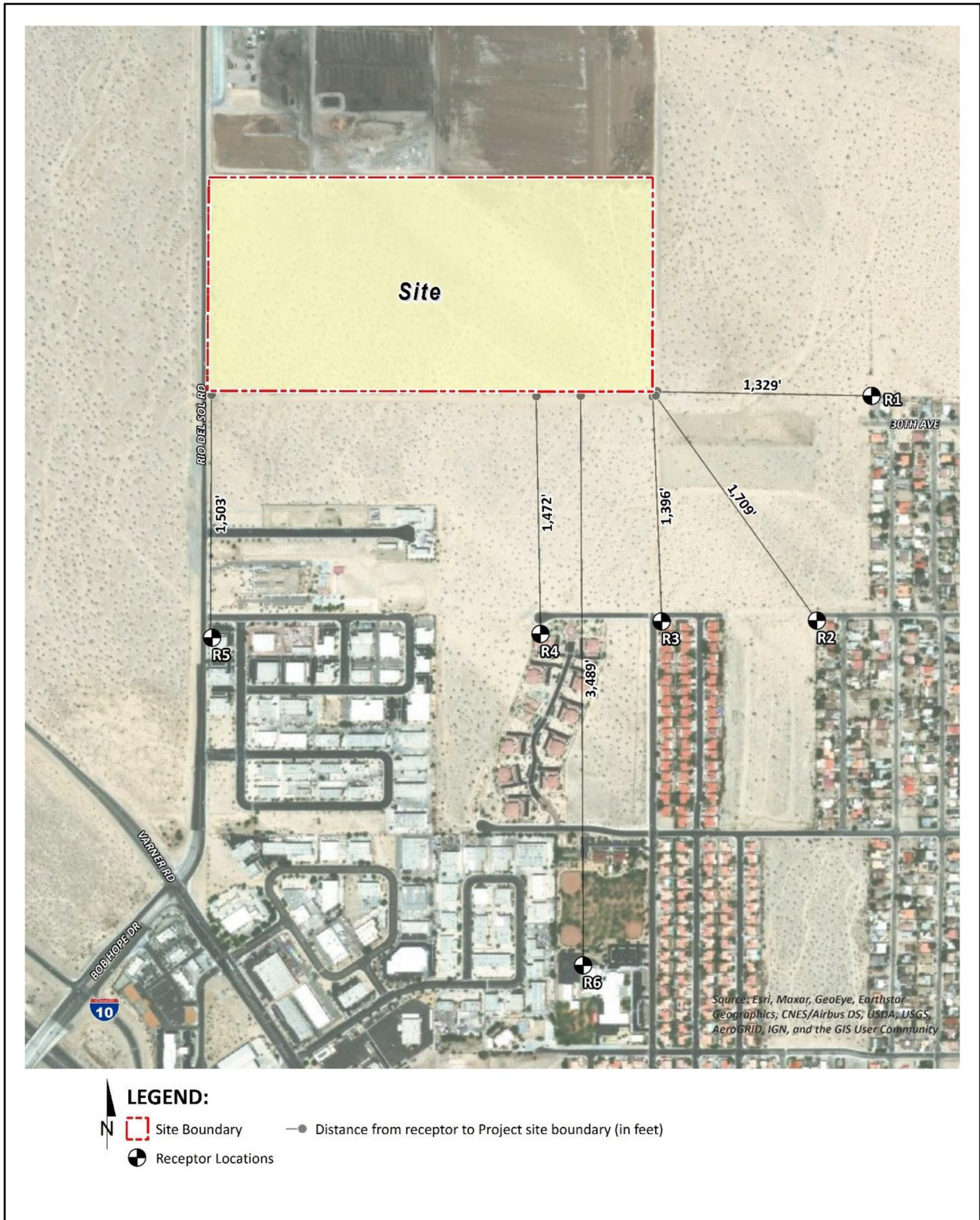
Table 4.3-3 Project Area Air Quality Monitoring Summary 2019-2021

Pollutant	Standard	Year		
		2019	2020	2021
O ₃				
Maximum Federal 1-Hour Concentration (ppm)		0.100	0.119	0.110
Maximum Federal 8-Hour Concentration (ppm)		0.084	0.094	0.092
Number of Days Exceeding State 1-Hour Standard	> 0.09 ppm	5	9	10
Number of Days Exceeding State/Federal 8-Hour Standard	> 0.070 ppm	34	49	38
CO				
Maximum Federal 1-Hour Concentration	> 35 ppm	1.3	0.8	0.8
Maximum Federal 8-Hour Concentration	> 20 ppm	0.7	0.5	0.4
NO ₂				
Maximum Federal 1-Hour Concentration	> 0.100 ppm	0.041	0.047	0.036
Annual Average		0.007	0.007	0.007
PM ₁₀				
Maximum Federal 24-Hour Concentration (µg/m ³)	> 150 µg/m ³	75	48	100
Annual Federal Arithmetic Mean (µg/m ³)		29.5	20.4	21.4
Number of Days Exceeding Federal 24-Hour Standard	> 150 µg/m ³	0	0	0
Number of Days Exceeding State 24-Hour Standard	> 50 µg/m ³	5	0	9
PM _{2.5}				
Maximum Federal 24-Hour Concentration (µg/m ³)	> 35 µg/m ³	15.50	23.90	13.50
Annual Federal Arithmetic Mean (µg/m ³)	> 12 µg/m ³	6.05	6.42	6.2
Number of Days Exceeding Federal 24-Hour Standard	> 35 µg/m ³	0	0	0

µg/m³ = Microgram per Cubic Meter

Source: Data for O₃, CO, NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} was obtained from SCAQMD Air Quality Data Tables.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 2-4)



Source(s): Urban Crossroads (09-01-2023)

Figure 4.3-1



Not to Scale



Receptor Locations



- R2: Location R2 represents the existing residence at 30525 Roseview Lane, approximately 1,709 feet southeast of the Project site. R2 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the Project site.
- R3: Location R3 represents the existing residence at 30524 Robert Road, approximately 1,396 feet south of the Project site. Since there are no private outdoor living areas (backyards) facing the Project site, R3 is placed at the building façade.
- R4: Location R4 represents the Legacy Apartments at 72940 El Centro Way, approximately 1,472 feet south of the Project site. Since there are no private outdoor living areas (backyards) facing the Project site, R4 is placed at the building façade.
- R5: Location R5 represents the potential worker receptor at the RSD – Refrigeration Supplies Distributor facility located at 30571 Front Street, approximately 1,503 feet south of the Project site.
- R6: Location R6 represents Della S. Lindley Elementary School, located at 31495 Robert Road, approximately 3,489 feet south of the Project site.

4.3.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations governing air quality emissions.

A. Federal Regulations

1. Federal Clean Air Act

The Clean Air Act (CAA; 42 U.S.C. § 7401 et seq.) is the comprehensive federal law that regulates air emissions from stationary and mobile sources. Among other things, this law authorizes Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) to protect public health and public welfare and to regulate emissions of hazardous air pollutants, which include ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_x), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), and lead (Pb). (EPA, 2023a)

One of the goals of the CAA was to set and achieve NAAQS in every state by 1975 in order to address the public health and welfare risks posed by certain widespread air pollutants. The setting of these pollutant standards was coupled with directing the states to develop state implementation plans (SIPs), applicable to appropriate industrial sources in the state, in order to achieve these standards. The CAA was amended in 1977 and 1990 primarily to set new goals (dates) for achieving attainment of NAAQS since many areas of the country had failed to meet the deadlines. (EPA, 2023a)

The sections of the federal CAA most directly applicable to the development of the Project site include Title I (Non-Attainment Provisions) and Title II (Mobile Source Provisions). Title I provisions address the urban air pollution problems of O₃ (smog), CO, and PM₁₀. Specifically, it clarifies how areas are designated and re-designated "attainment." It also allows EPA to define the boundaries of "nonattainment" areas: geographical areas whose air quality does not meet Federal air quality standards designed to protect public health. (EPA, 2022a) Mobile source emissions are regulated in accordance with the CAA Title II provisions. These



standards are intended to reduce tailpipe emissions of hydrocarbons, CO, and NO_x on a phased-in basis that began in model year 1994. Automobile manufacturers also are required to reduce vehicle emissions resulting from the evaporation of gasoline during refueling. These provisions further require the use of cleaner burning gasoline and other cleaner burning fuels such as methanol and natural gas. (EPA, 2022b)

Section 112 of the Clean Air Act addresses emissions of hazardous air pollutants. Prior to 1990, CAA established a risk-based program under which only a few standards were developed. The 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments revised Section 112 to first require issuance of technology-based standards for major sources and certain area sources. "Major sources" are defined as a stationary source or group of stationary sources that emit or have the potential to emit 10 tons per year or more of a hazardous air pollutant or 25 tons per year or more of a combination of hazardous air pollutants. An "area source" is any stationary source that is not a major source. (EPA, 2023a)

For major sources, Section 112 requires that EPA establish emission standards that require the maximum degree of reduction in emissions of hazardous air pollutants. These emission standards are commonly referred to as "maximum achievable control technology" or "MACT" standards. Eight years after the technology-based MACT standards are issued for a source category, EPA is required to review those standards to determine whether any residual risk exists for that source category and, if necessary, revise the standards to address such risk. (EPA, 2023a)

2. *National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAPS) Program*

National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) are stationary source standards for hazardous air pollutants. Hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) are those pollutants that are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects, such as reproductive effects or birth defects, or adverse environmental effects. The EPA develops national enforcement initiatives that focus on significant environmental risks and noncompliance patterns. For Fiscal Years 2014 to 2016, the Cutting Hazardous Air Pollutants National Initiatives Strategy focuses on categories of sources that emit HAPs. (EPA, 2023b)

Sources subject to NESHAPs are required to perform an initial performance test to demonstrate compliance. To demonstrate continuous compliance, sources are generally required to monitor control device operating parameters which are established during the initial performance test. Sources may also be required to install and operate continuous emission monitors to demonstrate compliance. Consistent with EPA's Clean Air Act Stationary Source Compliance Monitoring Strategy, NESHAP sources that meet the Clean Air Act definition of "major source" generally receive a full compliance evaluation by the state or regional office at least once every two years. (EPA, 2023b)

B. State Regulations

1. California Clean Air Act (CCAA)

The California Clean Air Act (CCAA) establishes numerous requirements for district plans to attain state ambient air quality standards for criteria air contaminants. The CCAA mandates achievement of the maximum degree of emissions reductions possible from vehicular and other mobile sources in order to attain the State's



ambient air quality standards, the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), by the earliest practical date. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) established the CAAQS for all pollutants for which the federal government has NAAQS and, in addition, established standards for sulfates, visibility, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride. Generally, the CAAQS are more stringent than the NAAQS. For districts with serious air pollution, its attainment plan should include the following: no net increase in emissions from new and modified stationary sources; and best available retrofit technology for existing sources. (SCAQMD, n.d.)

2. *Air Toxic Hot Spots Act*

The Air Toxic “Hot Spots” Information and Assessment Act of 1987, commonly known as AB 2588, (Health & Safety Code §§ 44300, et seq.) requires facilities emitting specified quantities of pollutants to conduct risk assessments describing the health impacts to neighboring communities created by their emissions of numerous specified hazardous compounds. If the district determines the health impact to be significant, neighbors must be notified. In addition, state law requires the facility to develop and implement a plan to reduce the health impacts to below significance, generally within five years. Additional control requirements for hazardous emissions from specific industries are established by the state and enforced by districts. (SCAQMD, n.d.)

3. *Air Quality Management Planning*

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) and local air districts throughout the State are responsible for developing clean air plans to demonstrate how and when California will attain air quality standards established under both the CAA and CCAA. For the areas within California that have not attained air quality standards, CARB works with local air districts to develop and implement State and local attainment plans. In general, attainment plans contain a discussion of ambient air quality data and trends; a baseline emissions inventory; future year projections of emissions, which account for growth projections and already adopted control measures; a comprehensive control strategy of additional measures needed to reach attainment; an attainment demonstration, which generally involves complex modeling; and contingency measures. Plans may also include interim milestones for progress toward attainment. Air quality planning activities undertaken by CARB also include the development of policies, guidance, and regulations related to State and federal ambient air quality standards; coordination with local agencies on transportation plans and strategies; and providing assistance to local districts and transportation agencies. (CARB, 2012)

4. *Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards and California Green Building Standards*

The California Energy Commission (CEC) first adopted Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce energy consumption in the state. Although not originally intended to reduce GHG emissions, increased energy efficiency, and reduced consumption of electricity, natural gas, and other fuels would result in fewer GHG emissions from residential and nonresidential buildings subject to the standard. The standards are updated periodically to allow for the consideration and inclusion of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2022 version of Title 24 was adopted by the CEC and became effective on January 1, 2023. The 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards focuses on four key areas in newly constructed homes and businesses: (1) encouraging electric heat pump technology for space and water heating, which consumes less energy and produces fewer emissions than gas-powered units; (2) establishing electric-



ready requirements for single-family homes to position owners to use cleaner electric heating, cooking and electric vehicle (EV) charging options whenever they choose to adopt those technologies; (3) expanding solar photovoltaic (PV) system and battery storage standards to make clean energy available onsite and complement the State's progress toward a 100 percent clean electricity grid; and strengthening ventilation standards to improve indoor air quality. The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards already were seven (7) percent more efficient than the previous (2016) Building Energy Efficiency Standards for residential construction and 30 percent more efficient than the previous Standards for non-residential construction. The 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards also already were 28 percent more efficient for residential construction and five (5) percent more efficient for nonresidential construction than the 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards they replaced. (CEC, n.d.)

Part 11 of Title 24 is referred to as the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code). The purpose of the CALGreen Code is to "improve public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: (1) Planning and design; (2) Energy efficiency; (3) Water efficiency and conservation; (4) Material conservation and resource efficiency; and (5) Environmental air quality." The CALGreen Code is not intended to substitute or be identified as meeting the certification requirements of any green building program that is not established and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC). Unless otherwise noted in the regulation, all newly constructed buildings in California are subject of the requirements of the CALGreen Code.

As previously stated, the Title 24 Building Energy Efficient Standards and CALGreen Code are updated on a regular basis, with the most recent approved updates consisting of the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and 2022 CALGreen Code, which became effective on January 1, 2023. Non-residential mandatory measures included in the 2022 CALGreen Code include:

- Short-term bicycle parking. If the new project or an additional alteration is anticipated to generate visitor traffic, provide permanently anchored bicycle racks within 200 feet of the visitors' entrance, readily visible to passers-by, for 5% of new visitor motorized vehicle parking spaces being added, with a minimum of one two-bike capacity rack (5.106.4.1.1).
- Long-term bicycle parking. For new buildings with tenant spaces that have 10 or more tenant-occupants, provide secure bicycle parking for 5% of the tenant-occupant vehicular parking spaces with a minimum of one bicycle parking facility (5.106.4.1.2).
- Designated parking for clean air vehicles. In new projects or additions to alterations that add 10 or more vehicular parking spaces, provide designated parking for any combination of low-emitting, fuel-efficient and carpool/van pool vehicles as shown in Table 5.106.5.2 (5.106.5.2).
- EV charging stations. New construction shall facilitate the future installation of EV supply equipment. The compliance requires empty raceways for future conduit and documentation that the electrical system has adequate capacity for the future load. The number of spaces to be provided for is contained in Table 5.106. 5.3.3 (5.106.5.3). Additionally, Table 5.106.5.4.1 specifies requirements for the



installation of raceway conduit and panel power requirements for medium- and heavy-duty electric vehicle supply equipment for warehouses, grocery stores, and retail stores.

- Outdoor light pollution reduction. Outdoor lighting systems shall be designed to meet the backlight, uplight and glare ratings per Table 5.106.8 (5.106.8).
- Construction waste management. Recycle and/or salvage for reuse a minimum of 65% of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste in accordance with Section 5.408.1.1, 5.405.1.2, or 5.408.1.3; or meet a local construction and demolition waste management ordinance, whichever is more stringent (5.408.1).
- Excavated soil and land clearing debris. 100% of trees, stumps, rocks and associated vegetation and soils resulting primarily from land clearing shall be reuse or recycled. For a phased project, such material may be stockpiled on site until the storage site is developed (5.408.3).
- Recycling by Occupants. Provide readily accessible areas that serve the entire building and are identified for the depositing, storage, and collection of non-hazardous materials for recycling, including (at a minimum) paper, corrugated cardboard, glass, plastics, organic waste, and metals or meet a lawfully enacted local recycling ordinance, if more restrictive (5.410.1).
- Water conserving plumbing fixtures and fittings. Plumbing fixtures (water closets and urinals) and fittings (faucets and showerheads) shall comply with the following:
 - Water Closets. The effective flush volume of all water closets shall not exceed 1.28 gallons per flush (5.303.3.1)
 - Urinals. The effective flush volume of wall-mounted urinals shall not exceed 0.125 gallons per flush (5.303.3.2.1).
 - 0.125 gallons per flush (5.303.3.2.1). The effective flush volume of floor-mounted or other urinals shall not exceed 0.5 gallons per flush (5.303.3.2.2).
 - Showerheads. Single showerheads shall have a minimum flow rate of not more than 1.8 gallons per minute and 80 psi (5.303.3.3.1). When a shower is served by more than one showerhead, the combine flow rate of all showerheads and/or other shower outlets controlled by a single valve shall not exceed 1.8 gallons per minute at 80 psi (5.303.3.3.2).
 - Faucets and fountains. Nonresidential lavatory faucets shall have a maximum flow rate of not more than 0.5 gallons per minute at 60 psi (5.303.3.4.1). Kitchen faucets shall have a maximum flow rate of not more than 1.8 gallons per minute of 60 psi (5.303.3.4.2). Wash fountains shall have a maximum flow rate of not more than 1.8 gallons per minute (5.303.3.4.3). Metering faucets shall not deliver more than 0.20 gallons per cycle (5.303.3.4.4). Metering faucets for wash fountains shall have a maximum flow rate not more than 0.20 gallons per cycle (5.303.3.4.5).
- Outdoor potable water uses in landscaped areas. Nonresidential developments shall comply with a local water efficient landscape ordinance or the current California Department of Water Resources' Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo), whichever is more stringent (5.304.1).



- Water meters. Separate submeters or metering devices shall be installed for new buildings or additions in excess of 50,000 sf or for excess consumption where any tenant within a new building or within an addition that is project to consume more than 1,000 gallons per day (GPD) (5.303.1.1 and 5.303.1.2).
- Outdoor water uses in rehabilitated landscape projects equal or greater than 2,500 sf. Rehabilitated landscape projects with an aggregate landscape area equal to or greater than 2,500 sf requiring a building or landscape permit (5.304.3).
- Commissioning. For new buildings 10,000 sf and over, building commissioning shall be included in the design and construction processes of the building project to verify that the building systems and components meet the owner's or owner representative's project requirements (5.410.2).

5. *California Air Resources Board Rules*

The CARB enforces rules related to air pollutant emissions in the State of California. Rules with applicability to the Project include, but are not limited to, those listed below.

- CARB Rule 2480 (13 CCR 2480): Airborne Toxics Control Measure to Limit School Bus Idling and Idling at Schools, which limits nonessential idling for commercial trucks and school buses within 100 feet of a school.
- CARB Rule 2485 (13 CCR 2485): Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fuel Commercial Vehicle Idling, which limits nonessential idling to five minutes or less for commercial trucks.
- CARB Rule 2449 (13 CCR 2449): In-Use Off-Road Diesel Idling Restricts, which limits nonessential idling to five minutes or less for diesel-powered off-road equipment.

6. *South Coast Air Quality Management District Rules*

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) enforces rules related to air pollutant emissions in the SSAB. Rules with applicability to the Project include, but are not limited to, those listed below.

- SCAQMD Rule 201: Permit to Construct
- SCAQMD Rule 402: Nuisance Odors
- SCAQMD Rule 403: Fugitive Dust
- SCAQMD Rule 431.2: Low Sulfur Fuel
- SCAQMD Rule 1113: Table of Standards
- SCAQMD Rule 1186: PM₁₀ Emissions from Paved and Unpaved Roads, and Livestock Operations

7. *Truck & Bus Regulation*

Under the Truck and Bus Regulation, adopted by CARB in 2008, all diesel truck fleets operating in California are required to adhere to an aggressive schedule for upgrading and replacing heavy-duty truck engines. Older, more polluting trucks are required to be replaced first, while trucks that already have relatively clean engines are not required to be replaced until later. Pursuant to the Truck and Bus Regulation, all pre-1994 heavy trucks (trucks with a gross vehicle weight rating greater than 26,000 pounds) were removed from service on California roads by 2015. Between 2015 and 2020, pre-2000 heavy trucks were equipped with PM filters and upgraded



or replaced with an engine that meets 2010 emissions standards. The upgrades/replacements occurred on a rolling basis based on model year. By 2023, all heavy trucks operating on California roads must have engines that meet 2010 emissions standards. Lighter trucks (those with a gross vehicle weight rating of 14,001 to 26,000 pounds) adhered to a similar schedule and were all replaced by 2020. (CARB, n.d.)

8. *Advanced Clean Truck Regulation*

In June 2020, CARB adopted a new Rule requiring truck manufacturers to transition from diesel trucks and vans to electric zero-emission trucks beginning in 2024. By 2045, every new truck sold in California will be required to be zero-emission. Manufacturers who certify Class 2b-8 chassis or complete vehicles with combustion engines would be required to sell zero-emission trucks as an increasing percentage of their annual California sales from 2024 to 2035. By 2035, zero-emission truck/chassis sales would need to be 55% of Class 2b – 3 truck sales, 75% of Class 4 – 8 straight truck sales, and 40% of truck tractor sales. CARB reports that as of 2020, most commercially-available models of zero-emission vans, trucks and buses operate less than 100 miles per day. Commercial availability of electric-powered long-haul trucks is very limited. However, as technology advances over the next 20 years, zero-emission trucks will become suitable for more applications, and several truck manufacturers have announced plans to introduce market ready zero-emission trucks in the future. (CARB, 2021)

9. *Senate Bill 535 – Disadvantaged Communities*

Senate Bill 535 (“SB 535”; De León, Chapter 830, 2012) recognizes the potential vulnerability of low-income and disadvantaged communities to poor air quality. Disadvantaged communities in California are specifically targeted for investment of proceeds from the State’s cap-and-trade program. These investments are aimed at improving public health, quality of life, and economic opportunity in California’s most burdened communities while at the same time reducing pollution that causes climate change. Authorized by the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), the State’s cap-and-trade program is one of several strategies that California uses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change. The funds must be used for programs that further reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. SB 535 requires that 25 percent of the proceeds from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund go to projects that provide a benefit to disadvantaged communities. The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) is charged with the duty to identify disadvantaged communities. CalEPA bases its identification of these communities on geographic, socioeconomic, public health, and environmental hazard criteria (Health and Safety Code, section 39711, subsection (a)). In this capacity, CalEPA currently defines a disadvantaged community, from an environmental hazard and socioeconomic standpoint, as a community that scores within the top 25 percent of the census tracts, as analyzed by the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool Version 3.0 (CalEnviroScreen). (OEHHA, 2022b)

10. *Senate Bill 1000 – Environmental Justice in Local Land Use Planning*

In an effort to address the inequitable distribution of pollution and associated health effects in low-income communities and communities of color, the Legislature passed and Governor Brown signed Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000) in 2016, requiring local governments to identify environmental justice communities (called “disadvantaged communities”) in their jurisdictions and address environmental justice in their general plans.



This new law has several purposes, including to facilitate transparency and public engagement in local governments' planning and decision-making processes, reduce harmful pollutants and the associated health risks in environmental justice communities, and promote equitable access to health-inducing benefits, such as healthy food options, housing, public facilities, and recreation. SB 1000 requires environmental justice elements to identify objectives and policies to reduce unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities. Generally, environmental justice elements will include policies to reduce the community's exposure to pollution through air quality improvement. SB 1000 affirms the need to integrate environmental justice principles into the planning process to prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities. (OAG, n.d.)

11. Assembly Bill 617

Assembly Bill 617 (AB 617) was enacted into law in 2017 and relates to criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants from sources other than vehicles. In response to AB 617, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) established the Community Air Protection Program (CAPP or Program). The Program's focus is to reduce exposure in communities most impacted by air pollution. Communities around the State are working together to develop and implement new strategies to measure air pollution and reduce health impacts. This first-of-its-kind statewide effort includes community air monitoring and community emissions reduction programs. In addition, the Legislature appropriated funding to support early actions to address localized air pollution through targeted incentive funding to deploy cleaner technologies in these communities, as well as grants to support community participation in the AB 617 process. AB 617 also includes new requirements for accelerated retrofit of pollution controls on industrial sources, increased penalty fees, and greater transparency and availability of air quality and emissions data, which will help advance air pollution control efforts throughout the State. This new effort provides an opportunity to continue to enhance air quality planning efforts and better integrate community, regional, and State level programs to provide clean air. (CARB, n.d.)

12. Senate Bill 1137 (SB 1137)

SB 1137 is intended to protect the public health of California's communities by creating a minimum health and safety distance of 3,200-feet between sensitive receptors, such as a residence, school, childcare facility, playground, hospital, or nursing home and an oil and gas production well. Specifically, the bill prohibits the California Geological Energy Management Division (CalGEM) from approving the drilling, re-drilling, or significant alteration of any oil and gas well within this "health protection zone." SB 1137 also requires oil and gas facility operators in these protection zones to implement strict pollution controls, and to develop response plans to protect the health of Californians currently living within 3,200 feet of an existing oil well. SB 1137 also requires operators of wells/facilities to provide an individual indemnity bond sufficient to pay the full cost of properly plugging and abandoning the well and decommissioning the facility in order to prevent operators from failing to properly decommission. **Invalid source specified.**

C. Local Regulations

1. Riverside County General Plan Air Quality Element

The County General Plan Air Quality Element identifies goals, policies and programs that are meant to balance the County's actions regarding land use, circulation, and other issues with their potential effects on air quality.



The Air Quality Element addresses ambient air quality standards set forth by the USEPA and CARB. The Air Quality Element contains policies designed to establish a regional basis for improving air quality. The following relevant and applicable policies from the County's Air Quality Element have been identified for the Project:

AQ 1.1: Promote and participate with regional and local agencies, both public and private, to protect and improve air quality.

AQ 1.4: Coordinate with the SCAQMD and MDAQMD to ensure that all elements of air quality plans regarding reduction of air pollutant emissions are being enforced.

AQ 2.1: The County land use planning efforts shall assure that sensitive receptors are separated and protected from polluting point sources to the greatest extent possible.

AQ 2.2: Require site plan designs to protect people and land uses sensitive to air pollution through the use of barriers and/or distance from emissions sources when possible.

AQ 2.3: Encourage the use of pollution control measures such as landscaping, vegetation and other materials, which trap particulate matter or control pollution.

AQ 3.1: Allow the market place, as much as possible, to determine the most economical approach to relieve congestion and cut emissions.

AQ 3.3: Encourage large employers and commercial/industrial complexes to create Transportation Management Associations.

AQ 4.1: Require the use of all feasible building materials/methods which reduce emissions.

AQ 4.2: Require the use of all feasible efficient heating equipment and other appliances, such as water heaters, swimming pool heaters, cooking equipment, refrigerators, furnaces and boiler units.

AQ 4.6: Require stationary air pollution sources to comply with applicable air district rules and control measures.

AQ 4.7: To the greatest extent possible, require every project to mitigate any of its anticipated emissions which exceed allowable emissions as established by the SCAQMD, MDAQMD, SCAB, the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board.

AQ 4.9: Require compliance with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1, and support appropriate future measures to reduce fugitive dust emanating from construction sites.

2. *Riverside County Board of Supervisors Good Neighbor Policy for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses*

The County of Riverside Board of Supervisors *Good Neighbor Policy for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses* ("Good Neighbor Policy") provides a framework through which large-scale logistics and warehouse projects, such as that proposed by the Project, can be designed and operated in a way that lessens their impact on surrounding communities and the environment. It is meant to apply Best Management Practices to help minimize potential impacts to sensitive receptors and is intended to be used in conjunction with the County's Land Use Ordinance, which provides development requirements for said projects. This policy



provides a series of development and operational criteria applicable to logistics and warehouse projects that include any building larger than 250,000 square feet in size with 20 or more loading docks that are implemented to supplement project-level mitigation measures in order to further reduce impacts related to logistics and warehousing development and operations. The Good Neighbor Policy requirements relate to site-specific development and construction activities, such as those proposed for the Project. (Riverside County, 2019b)

4.3.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

A. Thresholds of Significance

Section III of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to air quality, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate the Project's impacts due to air quality emissions (OPR, 2018a):

- Would the Project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?
- Would the Project 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?
- Would the Project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
- Would the Project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, are derived from Section II of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact due to air quality emissions if construction and/or operation of the Project would:

- a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan;*
- b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard;*
- c. Expose sensitive receptors, which are located within one (1) mile of the project site, to substantial pollutant concentrations; or*
- d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts due to air quality emissions. Riverside County also has chosen to apply SCAQMD significance thresholds, as presented in SCAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Significance Thresholds (April 2019), to evaluate the Project's air quality impacts against the above thresholds.



Accordingly, Threshold a., which addresses Section III.a of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, evaluates whether the proposed Project would conflict with SCAQMD’s 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which addresses State and federal requirements under the CAA. A conflict with the AQMP standards and requirements would inhibit the SCAQMD’s ability to achieve State and federal standards for air quality.

Threshold b. addresses Section III.b of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, and emissions generated by a development project would be significant under Threshold b. if emissions are projected to exceed the Regional Thresholds established by the SCAQMD for criteria pollutants.

Threshold c. addresses Section III.c of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines. Under this threshold, impacts would be potentially significant if emissions are projected to exceed the Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) established by the State of California and the SCAQMD for criteria pollutants, if the Project would cause or contribute to CO “Hot Spots,” or if the Project were to result in cancer or health hazard impacts that exceed the SCAQMD thresholds of significance.

Threshold d. evaluates Section III.d of Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. SCAQMD Rule 402 (“Nuisance”) and California Health & Safety Code, Division 26, Part 4, Chapter 3, Section 41700 prohibit the emission of any material which causes nuisance to a considerable number of persons or endangers the comfort, health, or safety of the public, including odors. The potential to violate Rule 402 or § 41700 is used herein as a basis to consider a project’s odors or other emissions to be significant and require feasible mitigation measures.

B. SCAQMD Regional Thresholds

The SCAQMD has developed regional significance thresholds for other regulated pollutants, as summarized in Table 4.3-4, *Maximum Daily Regional Emission Thresholds*. The SCAQMD’s *CEQA Air Quality Significance Thresholds* (March 2023) indicate that any projects in the SSAB with daily emissions that exceed any of the indicated thresholds should be considered as having an individually and cumulatively significant air quality impact. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 31)

Table 4.3-4 Maximum Daily Regional Emission Thresholds

Pollutant	Regional Construction Threshold	Regional Operational Thresholds
NO _x	100 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
VOC	75 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
PM ₁₀	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day
PM _{2.5}	55 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
SO _x	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day
CO	550 lbs/day	550 lbs/day
Pb	3 lbs/day	3 lbs/day

lbs/day = pounds per day
(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-1)

C. SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds

In order to calculate estimated localized pollutant concentrations resulting from Project construction and long-term operational activities, the SCAQMD-approved American Meteorological Society/EPA Regulatory Model (AERMOD) dispersion model was utilized, as discussed in further detail in Subsection 3.6 of the Project’s AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*). The purpose of performing a localized significance is to assess the potential for the Project to create site-adjacent health impacts. The results of the dispersion modeling were then compared to the SCAQMD’s LSTs, which are presented below in Table 4.3-5, *SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds*. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 45)

Table 4.3-5 SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds

Pollutant	Localized Significance Thresholds	
	Site Preparation/Grading	Long-Term Operation
CO (1 Hour)	20 ppm	20 ppm
CO (8 Hour)	9 ppm	9 ppm
NO ₂ (1 Hour)	0.18 ppm	0.18 ppm
PM ₁₀ (24 Hours)	10.4 µg/m ³	2.5 µg/m ³
PM _{2.5} (24 Hours)	10.4 µg/m ³	2.5 µg/m ³

(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Tables 3-10 through 3-12)

2. Localized Thresholds for CO Emissions

Based on the SCAQMD’s CEQA Air Quality Handbook (1993), a project’s localized CO emissions impacts would be significant if they exceed the following California standards for localized CO concentrations (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 50):

- 1-hour CO standard of 20.0 parts per million (ppm)
- 8-hour CO standard of 9.0 ppm

D. Toxic Air Contaminant Thresholds

The SCAQMD regulates levels of air toxics through a permitting process that covers both construction and operation. The SCAQMD has adopted Rule 1401 for both new and modified sources that use materials classified as air toxics. The SCAQMD CEQA Guidelines for permit processing consider the following types of projects significant:

- Any project involving the emission of a carcinogenic or toxic air contaminant identified in SCAQMD Rule 1401 that exceeds the maximum individual cancer risk of 10 in one million if the project is constructed with best available control strategy for toxics (T-BACT) using the procedures in SCAQMD Rule 1401.
- Any project that could accidentally release an acutely hazardous material or routinely release a toxic air contaminant posing an acute health hazard above an acute or chronic hazard index of 1.0.



E. Methodology

1. California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod)

Land uses such as the warehouse use of the proposed Project affect air quality through construction-source and operational-source emissions. In May 2023, the SCAQMD, in conjunction with the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and other California air districts, released the latest version of the CalEEMod Version 2022.1.1.18. The purpose of this model is to calculate construction-source and operational-source criteria pollutant (VOCs, NO_x, SO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from direct and indirect sources, and to quantify applicable air quality and GHG reductions achieved from mitigation measures. Accordingly, the latest version of CalEEMod has been used for this Project to determine construction and operational air quality emissions. Output from the model runs for both construction and operational activity are provided in Appendices 3.1 through 3.2 of the Project's AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 32)

2. Emissions Factors Model (EMFAC)

Vehicle DPM emissions were calculated using emission factors for particulate matter less than 10µm in diameter (PM₁₀) generated with the 2021 version of the Emission FACtor model (EMFAC) developed by the CARB. EMFAC 2021 is a mathematical model that CARB developed to calculate emission rates from motor vehicles that operate on highways, freeways, and local roads in California and is commonly used by the CARB to project changes in future emissions from on-road mobile sources. The most recent version of this model, EMFAC 2021, incorporates regional motor vehicle data, information and estimates regarding the distribution of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by speed, and number of starts per day. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 14)

3. Construction Emissions

Construction activities associated with the Project would result in emissions of VOCs, NO_x, SO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. Construction related emissions are expected from the following construction activities: site preparation; grading/blasting; substation construction; building construction; off-site utility and infrastructure improvements; paving; and architectural coating. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 32)

Construction Activities

Site Preparation and Grading Activities

Dust is typically a major concern during grading activities. Because such emissions are not amenable to collection and discharge through a controlled source, they are called "fugitive emissions." Fugitive dust emissions rates vary as a function of many parameters (soil silt, soil moisture, wind speed, area disturbed, number of vehicles, depth of disturbance or excavation, etc.). CalEEMod was utilized to calculate fugitive dust emissions resulting from this phase of activity. It is anticipated that the Project would require approximately 120,687 cubic yards of soil import. Site preparation and grading activities are modeled as sequential phases. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 32)



Building Construction, Paving, and Architectural Coating Activities

Building construction and paving emissions are primarily associated with exhaust emissions from on-site equipment and vehicular trips to the site by construction workers and vendor trips. Architectural coating emissions include worker trips as well, but the primary pollutant emission of concern during this phase is ROG/VOC. To present a reasonable worst-case scenario, the building construction, paving, and architectural coating activities are modeled as overlapping phases. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 32-33)

Substation Construction Activities

Construction of the electrical substation located in the southeast corner of the Project site is expected to begin prior to the building construction phase in August 2024, and would utilize the same construction equipment as would be used for the building construction phase of Project construction plus an additional crane and two off-highway trucks. With the commencement of building construction activities in October 2024, one crane and two off-highway trucks would continue to be used for substation construction, while the remaining equipment would be used for building construction of the proposed Project. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 33)

Off-Site Utility and Infrastructure Improvements

To support the Project, there would be grading, trenching, and paving for off-site improvements associated with roadway construction and utility installation. To connect the proposed IID Substation to the local electric grid, 92 kV above-ground power line would be needed off site, supported by new poles installed along an IID-selected alignment. During installation, it is assumed that an approximately 10 feet wide by 10 feet long by 15 feet deep maximum ground disturbance area would occur around each pole for installation, and it would take approximately four days to install each pole. Pole installation consists of auguring and removing soil, setting/installing the pole and backfilling. After the poles are installed, electric transmission lines would be anchored to and strung between the poles. The electric line installation process would take approximately 90 working days. Electric line installation consists of pole trucks and spools of new lines at each pole anchoring and spanning from new pole to new pole. The off-site utility improvements would be placed within a few feet of existing homes depending on the selected alignment. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 33)

It is expected that the off-site construction activities would take place at any one location for up to four days at most. Construction emissions from this off-site work would, therefore, be relatively short term, not concentrated in one area, and would be reduced at any given location as construction work moves linearly along the along the alignments and farther from sensitive uses. Emissions from off-site infrastructure improvements were modeled in CalEEMod assuming a total of 1.64 miles of linear construction activity. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 32)

Construction Duration, Equipment, and Vehicle Trips

Refer to EIR Subsection 3.6.1, *Construction Characteristics*. EIR Table 3-2 describes the anticipated duration of Project-related construction activities. EIR Table 3-3 describes the anticipated construction equipment. EIR Table 3-4 describes the expected number of on-road worker, vendor, and hauling trips anticipated to construct the Project.



4. *Operational Emissions*

Operational activities associated with the Project would result in emissions of VOCs, NO_x, SO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. Operational emissions are expected from the following primary sources: Area Source Emissions, Energy Source Emissions, Mobile Source Emissions, On-Site Cargo Handling Equipment Emissions, and Transportation Refrigeration Units (TRU) Emissions. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 37)

Area Source Emissions

Architectural Coating

Over time, the Proposed project's warehouse building would require maintenance and would therefore produce emissions resulting from the evaporation of solvents contained in paints, varnishes, primers, and other surface coatings. The emissions associated with architectural coatings were calculated using CalEEMod. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 37)

Consumer Products

Consumer products include, but are not limited to detergents, cleaning compounds, polishes, personal care products, and lawn and garden products. Many of these products contain organic compounds which when released in the atmosphere can react to form ozone and other photochemically reactive pollutants. The emissions associated with use of consumer products were calculated based on defaults provided within CalEEMod. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 37-38)

Landscape Maintenance Equipment

Landscape maintenance equipment would generate emissions from fuel combustion and evaporation of unburned fuel. Equipment in this category would include lawnmowers, shredders/grinders, blowers, trimmers, chain saws, and hedge trimmers used to maintain the landscaping of the Project. It should be noted that as October 9, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed AB 1346. The bill aims to ban the sale of new gasoline-powered equipment under 25 gross horsepower (known as small off-road engines (SOREs)) by 2024. For purposes of analysis, the emissions associated with landscape maintenance equipment were calculated based on assumptions provided in CalEEMod. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 38)

Energy Source Emissions

Combustion Emissions Associated with Electricity

Criteria pollutant emissions are emitted through the generation of electricity. However, because electrical generating facilities for the Project area are located either outside the region (state) or offset through the use of pollution credits (RECLAIM) for generation within the SSAB, criteria pollutant emissions from offsite generation of electricity are excluded from the evaluation of significance. Based on information provided by the Project Applicant, the site also is not expected to utilize natural gas for the building envelope, and therefore would not generate any emissions from direct energy consumption. Electricity usage associated with the Project was calculated based on data provided by the Project Applicant and includes 20% of the building user's electric power from renewable sources. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 38)

□ Mobile Source Emissions

The Project-related operational air quality emissions derive primarily from vehicle trips generated by the Project, including employee trips to and from the site and truck trips associated with the proposed uses. Trip characteristics available from the Project’s Traffic Analysis (“TA”; *Technical Appendix K1*) were utilized in the analysis. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 38)

Approach for Analysis of the Project

In order to determine emissions from passenger car vehicles, CalEEMod defaults for trip length and trip purpose were utilized. Based on the Project’s VMT Analysis (*Technical Appendix K2*), a passenger vehicle trip length of 15.6 was utilized. This analysis assumes that passenger cars include Light-Duty-Auto vehicles (LDA), Light-Duty-Trucks (LDT1¹ & LDT2²), Medium-Duty-Vehicles (MDV), and Motorcycles (MCY) vehicle types. In order to account for emissions generated by passenger cars, the fleet mix shown in Table 4.3-6, *Passenger Car Fleet Mix*, was utilized. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 38-39)

Table 4.3-6 Passenger Car Fleet Mix

Land Use	% Vehicle Type				
	LDA	LDT1	LDT2	MDV	MCY
High-Cube Fulfillment Center	50.75%	4.55%	25.13%	17.58%	1.99%
High-Cube Cold Storage					

Note: The Project-specific passenger car fleet mix used in this analysis is based on a proportional split utilizing the default CalEEMod percentages assigned to LDA, LDT1, LDT2, and MDV vehicle types. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-7)

To determine emissions from trucks for the proposed warehouse, the analysis utilized a truck trip length of 92.8 miles based on the Project’s VMT Analysis (*Technical Appendix K2*) and an assumption of 100% primary trips. This trip length assumption is higher than the CalEEMod defaults for trucks. In order to be consistent with the Project’s TA (*Technical Appendix K1*), trucks are broken down by truck type. The truck fleet mix is estimated by rationing the trip rates for each truck type based on information provided by the SCAQMD recommended truck mix, by axle type. Heavy trucks are broken down by truck type (or axle type) and are categorized as either Light-Heavy-Duty Trucks (LHDT1³ & LHDT2⁴)/2-axle, Medium-Heavy-Duty Trucks (MHDT)/3-axle, and Heavy-Heavy-Duty Trucks (HHDT)/4+-axle. To account for emissions generated by trucks, the fleet mix in Table 4.3-7, *Truck Fleet Mix*, was utilized. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 39)

¹ Vehicles under the LDT1 category have a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of less than 6,000 lbs. and equivalent test weight (ETW) of less than or equal to 3,750 lbs.

² Vehicles under the LDT2 category have a GVWR of less than 6,000 lbs. and ETW between 3,751 lbs. and 5,750 lbs.

³ Vehicles under the LHDT1 category have a GVWR of 8,501 to 10,000 lbs.

⁴ Vehicles under the LHDT2 category have a GVWR of 10,001 to 14,000 lbs.



Table 4.3-7 Truck Fleet Mix

Land Use	% Vehicle Type			
	LHDT1	LHDT2	MHDT	HHDT
High-Cube Fulfillment Center	14.20%	4.32%	10.73%	70.74%
High-Cube Cold Storage				

Note: Project-specific truck fleet mix is based on the number of trips generated by each truck type (LHDT1, LHDT2, MHDT, and HHDT) relative to the total number of truck trips. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-8)

Fugitive Dust Related to Vehicular Travel

Vehicles traveling on paved roads would be a source of fugitive emissions due to the generation of road dust inclusive of brake and tire wear particulates. The emissions estimate for travel on paved roads were calculated using CalEEMod. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 39)

On-Site Cargo Handling Equipment Source Emissions

It is common for industrial buildings to require the operation of exterior cargo handling equipment in the building’s truck court areas. For this Project, on-site modeled operational equipment includes up to four (4) 175 horsepower (hp), natural gas-powered cargo handling equipment – port tractor operating 4 hours a day for 365 days a year. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 40)

TRU Emissions

In order to account for the possibility of refrigerated uses, trucks associated with the cold-storage land use are assumed to also have TRUs. For modeling purposes, 186 two-way truck trips during have been estimated to include TRUs (e.g., all truck trips that would be associated with the high-cube cold storage use, as summarized in the Project-specific TA (*Technical Appendix KI*). TRUs are accounted for during on-site and off-site travel. The TRU calculations are based on EMISSIONS FACTOR MODEL version 2021 (EMFAC2021), developed by the CARB. EMFAC2021 does not provide emission rates per hour or mile as with the on-road emission model and only provides emission inventories. Emission results are produced in tons per day while all activity, fuel consumption and horsepower hours were reported at annual levels. The emission inventory is based on specific assumptions including the average horsepower rating of specific types of equipment and the hours of operation annually. These assumptions are not always consistent with assumptions used in the modeling of project level emissions. Therefore, the emissions inventory was converted into emission rates to accurately calculate emissions from TRU operation associated with project level details. This was accomplished by converting the annual horsepower hours to daily operational characteristics and converting the daily emission levels into hourly emission rates based on the total emission of each criteria pollutant by equipment type and the average daily hours of operations. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 40)

5. Modeling Inputs for Mobile Source Health Risk Assessment

The Project’s HRA (*Technical Appendix B2*) was prepared based on SCAQMD guidelines to produce conservative estimates of risk posed by Project-related DPM emissions.



Operational Emissions

Vehicle DPM emissions were calculated using emission factors for particulate matter less than 10 μ m in diameter (PM₁₀) generated with the 2021 version of the Emission FACtor model (EMFAC) developed by the CARB. The most recent version of this model, EMFAC 2021, incorporates regional motor vehicle data, information and estimates regarding the distribution of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by speed, and number of starts per day. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 14)

Several distinct emission processes are included in EMFAC 2021. Emission factors calculated using EMFAC 2021 are expressed in units of grams per vehicle miles traveled (g/VMT) or grams per idle-hour (g/idle-hr), depending on the emission process. The emission processes and corresponding emission factor units associated with diesel particulate exhaust for this Project are presented below. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 14)

For this Project, annual average PM₁₀ emission factors were generated by running EMFAC 2021 in EMFAC Mode for vehicles in the Riverside County jurisdiction. The EMFAC Mode generates emission factors in terms of grams of pollutant emitted per vehicle activity and can calculate a matrix of emission factors at specific values of temperature, relative humidity, and vehicle speed. The model was run for speeds traveled in the vicinity of the Project. The vehicle travel speeds for each segment modeled are summarized below. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 14)

- Idling – on-site loading/unloading and truck gate
- 5 miles per hour – on-site vehicle movement including driving and maneuvering
- 25 miles per hour – off-site vehicle movement including driving and maneuvering.

It is expected that minimal idling would occur at nearby intersections during truck travel on study area roadways (e.g., at an intersection during a red light, or yielding to make a turn). Notwithstanding, the analysis conservatively utilizes a reduced off-site average speed of 25 miles per hour (below the posted speed limit) for travel on study area roadways, use of a lower average speed for off-site travel results in a higher emission factor and therefore any negligible idling that would occur during truck travel along the study area is accounted for. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 14)

Calculated emission factors are shown in Table 4.3-8, *2025 Weighted Average DPM Emissions Factors*. As a conservative measure, a 2025 EMFAC 2021 run was conducted and a static 2025 emissions factor data set was used for the entire duration of analysis herein (e.g., 30 years). Use of 2025 emission factors would overstate potential impacts since this approach assumes that emission factors remain “static” and do not change over time due to fleet turnover or cleaner technology with lower emissions that would be incorporated into vehicles after 2025. Additionally, based on EMFAC 2021, Light-Heavy-Duty Trucks are comprised of 47.8% diesel, Medium-Heavy-Duty Trucks are comprised of 80.4% diesel, and Heavy-Heavy-Duty Trucks are comprised of 98.1% diesel. Trucks fueled by diesel are accounted for by these percentages accordingly in the emissions factor generation. Appendix 2.2 includes additional details on the emissions estimates from EMFAC. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, pp. 14-15)



Table 4.3-8 2025 Weighted Average DPM Emissions Factors

Speed	Weighted Average
0 (idling)	0.07731 (g/idle-hr)
5	0.01800 (g/s)
25	0.00804 (g/s)

(Urban Crossroads, 2024b, Table 2-3)

The vehicle DPM exhaust emissions were calculated for running exhaust emissions. The running exhaust emissions were calculated by applying the running exhaust PM10 emission factor (g/VMT) from EMFAC over the total distance traveled. The following equation was used to estimate off-site emissions for each of the different vehicle classes comprising the mobile sources: (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 15)

$$\text{Emissions}_{\text{speedA}} \text{ (g/s)} = \text{EF}_{\text{RunExhaust}} \text{ (g/VMT)} * \text{Distance (VMT/trip)} * \text{Number of Trips (trips/day)} \div \text{seconds per day}$$

Where:

- Emissions_{speedA} (g/s): Vehicle emissions at a given speed A;
- EF_{RunExhaust} (g/VMT): EMFAC running exhaust PM₁₀ emission factor at speed A;
- Distance (VMT/trip): Total distance traveled per trip.

Similar to off-site traffic, on-site vehicle running emissions were calculated by applying the running exhaust PM₁₀ emission factor (g/VMT) from EMFAC and the total vehicle trip number over the length of the driving path using the same formula presented above for on-site emissions. In addition, on-site vehicle idling exhaust emissions were calculated by applying the idle exhaust PM₁₀ emission factor (g/idle-hr) from EMFAC and the total truck trip over the total assumed idle time (15 minutes). The following equation was used to estimate the on-site vehicle idling emissions for each of the different vehicle classes: (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 15)

$$\text{Emissions}_{\text{idle}} \text{ (g/s)} = \text{EF}_{\text{idle}} \text{ (g/hr)} * \text{Number of Trips (trips/day)} * \text{Idling Time (min/trip)} * 60 \text{ minutes per hour} / \text{seconds per day}$$

Where:

- Emissions_{idle} (g/s): Vehicle emissions during idling;
- EF_{idle} (g/s): EMFAC idle exhaust PM₁₀ emission factor.

Each roadway was modeled as a line source made up of multiple adjacent volume sources. Each volume source is included in Appendix 2.3 to the Project’s HRA (*Technical Appendix B2*). The DPM emission rate for each volume source was calculated by multiplying the emission factor (based on the average travel speed along the roadway) by the number of trips and the distance traveled along each roadway segment and dividing the result by the number of volume sources along that roadway, as illustrated in Table 4.3-9, *DPM Emissions From Project Trucks (2025 Analysis Year)*. The modeled emission sources are illustrated on Figure 4.3-2, *Modeled On-Site Emission Sources*, for on-site sources and Figure 4.3-3, *Modeled Off-Site Emission Sources*, for off-

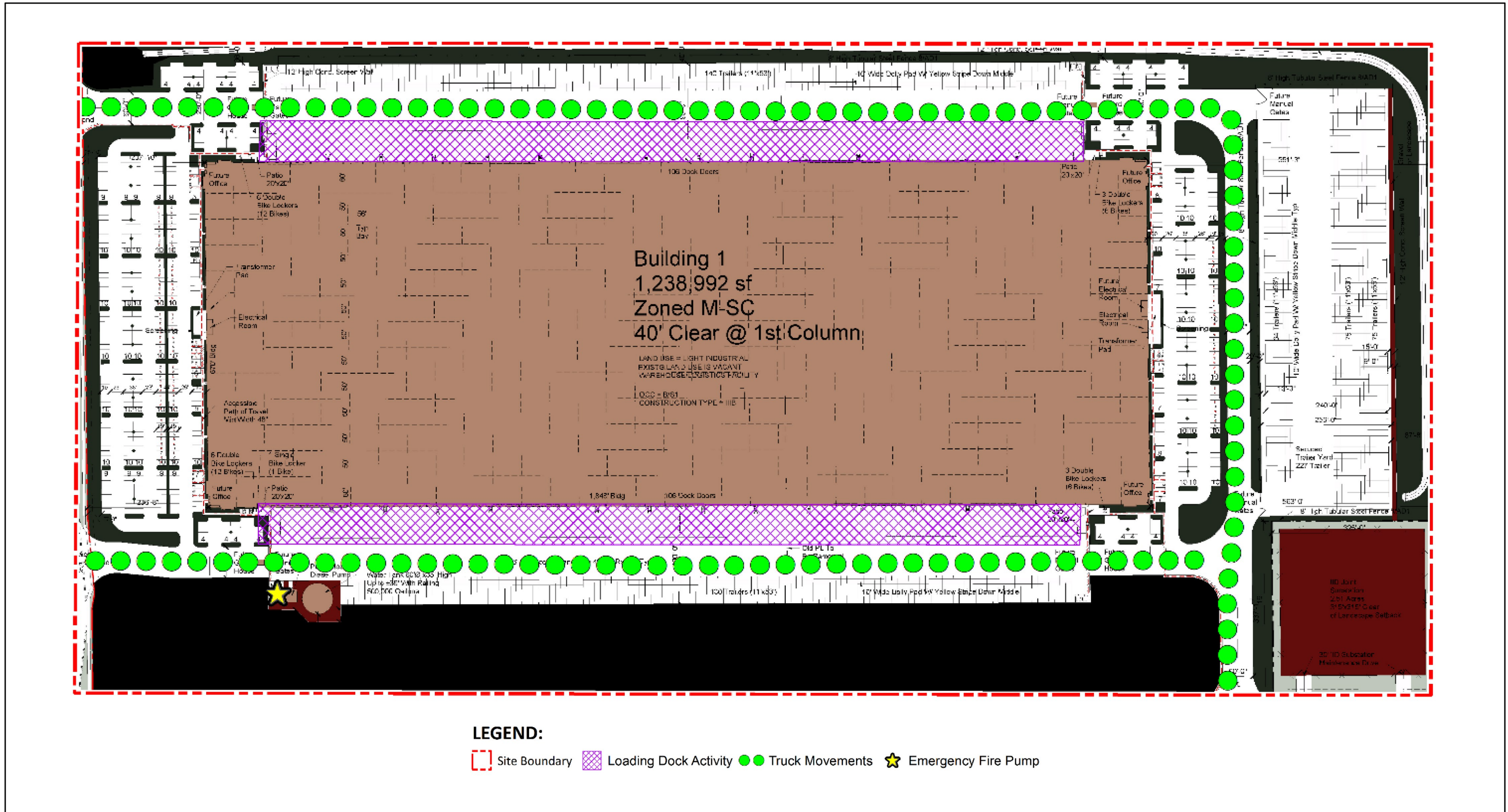


Table 4.3-9 DPM Emissions From Project Trucks (2025 Analysis Year)

Truck Emission Rates							
Source	Trucks Per Day	VMT ^a (miles/day)	Truck Emission Rate ^b (grams/mile)	Truck Emission Rate ^b (grams/idle-hour)	Daily Truck Emissions ^c (grams/day)	Daily TRU Emissions ^d (grams/day)	Modeled Emission Rate (g/second)
On-Site Idling - North	141			0.0773	2.73	9.75	1.444E-04
On-Site Idling - South	141			0.0773	2.73	9.75	1.444E-04
On-Site Travel	564	586.31	0.0180		10.55	16.22	3.099E-04
On-Site Travel - DW4	141	6.54	0.0180		0.12	0.18	3.455E-06
Off-Site Travel - Rio del Sol 25% Inbound/Outbound	141	23.18	0.0080		0.19	0.13	3.641E-06
Off-Site Travel - Rio del Sol 75% Inbound/Outbound	423	26.65	0.0080		0.21	0.15	4.186E-06
Off-Site Travel - 30th 25% Inbound/Outbound	141	61.05	0.0080		0.49	0.34	9.589E-06
Off-Site Travel - Rio del Sol N 100% Inbound/Outbound	564	234.00	0.0080		1.88	1.30	3.675E-05
Off-Site Travel - Rio del Sol S 100% Inbound/Outbound	564	88.28	0.0080		0.71	0.49	1.387E-05
Off-Site Travel - Varner N 5% Inbound/Outbound	28	6.40	0.0080		0.05	0.04	1.005E-06
Off-Site Travel - Varner 8% Inbound/Outbound	45	24.08	0.0080		0.19	0.13	3.782E-06
Off-Site Travel - Varner S 5% Inbound/Outbound	28	9.50	0.0080		0.08	0.05	1.492E-06
Off-Site Travel - Ramon 2% Inbound/Outbound	11	4.51	0.0080		0.04	0.02	7.079E-07
Off-Site Travel - Ramon E 1% Inbound/Outbound	6	1.39	0.0080		0.01	0.01	2.190E-07
Off-Site Travel - Ramon W 1% Inbound/Outbound	6	1.66	0.0080		0.01	0.01	2.601E-07
Off-Site Travel - Ramon 8% Inbound/Outbound	45	33.28	0.0080		0.27	0.18	5.228E-06
Off-Site Travel - Bob Hope 87% Inbound/Outbound	491	74.97	0.0080		0.60	0.41	1.178E-05
Off-Site Travel - Bob Hope 53% Inbound/Outbound	299	40.90	0.0080		0.33	0.23	6.424E-06
Off-Site Travel - Bob Hope 21% Inbound/Outbound	118	27.02	0.0080		0.22	0.15	4.245E-06
Off-Site Travel - Bob Hope 12% Inbound/Outbound	68	24.21	0.0080		0.19	0.13	3.802E-06

^a Vehicle miles traveled are for modeled truck route only.
^b Emission rates determined using EMFAC 2021. Idle emission rates are expressed in grams per idle hour rather than grams per mile.
^c This column includes the total truck travel and truck idle emissions. For idle emissions this column includes emissions based on the assumption that each truck idles for 15 minutes.
^d This column includes the total TRU emissions during truck travel and idling. During truck idling it is assumed that each TRU operates for 30 minutes.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024b, Table 2-4)



Source(s): Urban Crossroads (01-30-2024)

Figure 4.3-2



Modeled On-Site Emission Sources



Source(s): Urban Crossroads (09-01-2023)

Figure 4.3-3



Not to Scale



Modeled Off-Site Emission Sources



site sources. The modeling domain is limited to the Project's primary truck route and includes off-site sources in the study area for more than $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. This modeling domain is more inclusive and conservative than using only a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile modeling domain which is the distance supported by several reputable studies which conclude that the greatest potential risks occur within a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the primary source of emissions. In the case of the Project, the primary source of emissions is the on-site idling and on-site travel. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, pp. 15-16)

On-site truck idling was estimated to occur as trucks enter and travel through the Project site. Although the Project's diesel-fueled truck and equipment operators will be required by State law to comply with CARB's idling limit of 5 minutes, staff at SCAQMD recommends that the on-site idling emissions be calculated assuming 15 minutes of truck idling, which would account for on-site idling which occurs while the trucks are waiting to pull up to the truck bays, idling at the bays, idling at check-in and check-out, etc. As such, this analysis calculates truck idling at 15 minutes, consistent with SCAQMD's recommendation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 16)

As summarized in the Project's TA (*Technical Appendix K1*), the Project is expected to generate a total of approximately 2,640 actual vehicular trip-ends per day (1,320 vehicles inbound + 1,320 vehicles outbound) which includes 2,076 passenger vehicle trips (1,038 passenger vehicles inbound + 1,038 passenger vehicles outbound) and 564 two-way truck trips (282 trucks inbound per day + 282 trucks outbound) per day. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 16)

TRU Emissions

In order to account for the possibility of refrigerated uses, trucks associated with the cold-storage land use are assumed to also have TRUs. For modeling purposes, 186 two-way truck trips during have been estimated to include TRUs (e.g., all truck trips that would be associated with up to 247,798-sf of high-cube cold storage use, as summarized in the Project's TA (*Technical Appendix K1*)). TRUs are accounted for during on-site and off-site travel. The TRU calculations are based on EMISSIONS FACTOR MODEL version 2021 (EMFAC2021), developed by the CARB. EMFAC2021 does not provide emission rates per hour or mile as with the on-road emission model and only provides emission inventories. Emission results are produced in tons per day while all activity, fuel consumption and horsepower hours were reported at annual levels. The emission inventory is based on specific assumptions including the average horsepower rating of specific types of equipment and the hours of operation annually. These assumptions are not always consistent with assumptions used in the modeling of project level emissions. Therefore, the emissions inventory was converted into emission rates to accurately calculate emissions from TRU operation associated with project level details. This was accomplished by converting the annual horsepower hours to daily operational characteristics and converting the daily emission levels into hourly emission rates based on the total emission of each criteria pollutant by equipment type and the average daily hours of operations. Emissions from TRUs are assumed to occur during idling, on-site and off-site activities. It was assumed that TRUs would operate for 30 minutes while parked at the loading docks. In order to account for on- and off-site travel, the TRU gram per second emission rate was divided by 5 and 25, respectively, in order to account for travel speeds of 5 and 25 miles per hour. TRU emissions were modeled in AERMOD as line sources. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, pp. 16-17)



Emergency Fire Pump

The proposed Project includes the installation of an emergency fire pump, as shown on Figure 4.3-2. The fire pump would be diesel fueled and the analysis assumes that the fire pump would be rated at 300 brake horsepower (bhp). The analysis assumed that each generator could potentially operate for up to 1 hour per day, one day per week, for a total of 50 hours per year for maintenance and testing purposes. Consistent with SCAQMD guidance, the emergency fire pump was modeled as a point source. Because detailed engine specifications are not known at this time, release parameters (including exhaust height, diameter, temperature, and flow rate) were obtained from the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association Facility Prioritization Guidelines. In order to account for potential building downwash effects which have the potential to affect point sources in AERMOD, building downwash was modeled using the Building Profile Input Program (BPIP). (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 17)

IID Substation

Maintenance and inspection of the proposed substation are anticipated to be minimal as the substation and power lines would be controlled remotely. Maintenance and inspection activities would take place fewer than once a month. The low amount of operational emissions and intermittent nature of these activities would not result in emissions that would exceed the emissions reported for the proposed warehouse building.

4.3.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: Would the Project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

The Project site is located within the SSAB, which experiences relatively poor air quality. The SCAQMD has jurisdiction over an approximately 10,743 square-mile area consisting of the four-county Basin and the Los Angeles County and Riverside County portions of what use to be referred to as the Southeast Desert Air Basin. In these areas, the SCAQMD is principally responsible for air pollution control, and works directly with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), County transportation commissions, local governments, as well as State and federal agencies to reduce emissions from stationary, mobile, and indirect sources to meet State and federal ambient air quality standards. These State and federal air quality standards are currently exceeded in most parts of the SSAB. In response, the SCAQMD has adopted a series of AQMPs to meet the state and federal ambient air quality standards. AQMPs are updated regularly in order to more effectively reduce emissions, accommodate growth, and to minimize any negative fiscal impacts of air pollution control on the economy. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 53)

The 2022 AQMP was adopted by SCAQMD's Governing Board on December 2, 2022. The 2022 AQMP continues to evaluate current integrated strategies and control measures to meet the CAAQS, as well as explore new and innovative methods to reach its goals. Some of these approaches include utilizing incentive programs, recognizing existing co-benefit programs from other sectors, and developing a strategy with fair-share reductions at the federal, State, and local levels. Similar to the 2016 AQMP, the 2022 AQMP incorporates scientific and technological information and planning assumptions, including the 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy ("RTP/SCS"; also known as "Connect SoCal"), a planning document that supports the integration of land use and transportation to help the region meet the



federal CAA requirements. The Project's consistency with the AQMP will be determined using the 2022 AQMP as discussed below. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 53)

Criteria for determining consistency with the AQMP are defined in Chapter 12, Section 12.2 and Section 12.3 of the 1993 CEQA Handbook. These indicators are discussed below: (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 54)

- **Consistency Criterion No. 1:** *Potential to result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.*

The violations that Consistency Criterion No. 1 refer to are the CAAQS and NAAQS. CAAQS and NAAQS violations would occur if regional or localized significance thresholds were exceeded.

Construction Impacts – Consistency Criterion No. 1

Consistency Criterion No. 1 refers to violations of the CAAQS and NAAQS. CAAQS and NAAQS violations would occur if localized or regional significance thresholds were exceeded. As indicated under the analysis of Thresholds b. and c., the Project's localized construction-source emissions would not exceed applicable LST thresholds; however, prior to mitigation the Project's construction-related regional emissions would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Threshold for NO_x. Accordingly, prior to mitigation, Project construction-source NO_x emissions exceedances would incrementally contribute to an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations and potentially to new violations or delays in the timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 54)

Operational Impacts – Consistency Criterion No. 1

As indicated under the discussion and analysis of Thresholds b. and c., the Project's localized operational-source emissions would not exceed applicable LSTs. However, Project operational-source emissions would exceed applicable regional thresholds for emissions of VOC and NO_x. Accordingly, Project operational-source VOC and NO_x emissions exceedances would incrementally contribute to an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations and potentially to new violations or delays in the timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 54)

Conclusion – Consistency Criterion No. 1

On the basis of the preceding discussion, the Project is determined to be inconsistent with the first criterion.

- **Consistency Criterion No. 2:** *Potential to exceed the assumptions in the AQMP based on the years of Project build-out phase.*

The 2022 AQMP demonstrates that the applicable ambient air quality standards can be achieved within the timeframes required under federal law. Growth projections from local general plans adopted by cities in the district are provided to the SCAG, which develops regional growth forecasts, which are then used to develop



future air quality forecasts for the AQMP. Development consistent with the growth projections in County of Riverside General Plan is considered to be consistent with the AQMP. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 54-55)

Construction Impacts – Consistency Criterion No. 2

Peak day emissions generated by construction activities are largely independent of land use assignments, but rather are a function of development scope and maximum area of disturbance. Irrespective of the Project site’s land use designation, development of the site to its maximum potential would likely occur, with disturbance of the entire site occurring during construction activities. As such, when considering that no construction-related emissions thresholds would be exceeded (as discussed under the analysis of Thresholds b. and c.), the Project’s construction-related emissions would be consistent with the AQMP according to this criterion. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 54)

Operational Impacts – Consistency Criterion No. 2

The Project site is located within an unincorporated portion of the County of Riverside and the County’s General Plan designates the western +/- half of the Project site for “Manufacturing-Service Commercial (M-SC)” and designates the eastern +/- half of the Project site for “Residential Agriculture (R-A)” uses. Implementation of the Project would result in the redesignation of the eastern +/- half of the Project site to M-SC, with no changes proposed to the land use designation affecting the western +/- half of the Project site. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 55)

Although the Project is not consistent with the current General Plan land use designations at this time, approval of the Project’s proposed GPA 220004 would ensure the Project’s land uses are fully consistent with the General Plan land use designations for the property. However, because the Project would result in operational VOC and NO_x emissions that would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds, and because the Project’s proposed land uses are not consistent with the land use modeling inputs used in the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP, the Project would be inconsistent with this criterion. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 55)

Conclusion – Consistency Criterion No. 2

On the basis of the preceding discussion, the Project is determined to be inconsistent with the second criterion.

AQMP Consistency Conclusion

Prior to mitigation, the Project would be inconsistent with AQMP Criterion No. 1 during construction activities and would be inconsistent with AQMP Criterion No’s. 1 and 2 under long-term operational conditions, resulting in a determination that impacts due to inconsistency with the AQMP would be potentially significant. Air quality mitigation measures are identified below in subsection 4.3.7, which would act to generally reduce the Project’s impacts. Additionally, incorporation of contemporary energy-efficient technologies and operational programs and compliance with SCAQMD emissions reductions and control requirements also would reduce Project air pollutant emissions. Notwithstanding, based on the analysis presented above, the Project is considered to be inconsistent with applicable AQMP Consistency Criteria, which is concluded to be a significant impact of the proposed Project. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 55)

Threshold b.: Would the Project 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?

Construction Emissions

Construction activities associated with the Project would result in emissions of VOCs, NO_x, SO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. Construction-related emissions associated with the Project are expected from the following construction activities: site preparation; grading; substation construction; building construction; off-site utility and infrastructure improvements; paving; and architectural coating. Refer to Subsection 3.4 of the Project’s AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*) for a description of the modeling inputs used to calculate the Project’s estimated construction-related air pollutant emissions. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 32)

CalEEMod calculates maximum daily emissions for summer and winter periods. The estimated maximum daily construction emissions for both summer and winter periods without mitigation are summarized in Table 4.3-10, *Overall Constructions Emissions Summary – Without Mitigation*. Detailed construction model outputs are presented in Appendix 3.1 of the Project’s AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*). Under the analyzed scenarios, emissions resulting from the Project construction would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Threshold established by the SCAQMD for NO_x. As previously indicated in Table 4.3-2, the SSAB is designated as nonattainment for O₃, and NO_x is a precursor to ozone formation. Thus, the Project’s emissions of NO_x during construction activities would cumulatively contribute to a net increase of a criteria pollutant (O₃) for which the SSAB is considered nonattainment. Accordingly, prior to mitigation, the Project’s construction-related emissions would represent a significant impact for which mitigation would be required. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 34)

Table 4.3-10 Overall Constructions Emissions Summary – Without Mitigation

Year	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer						
2024	14.60	124.00	153.00	0.29	25.10	11.30
2025	64.80	27.80	108.00	0.07	12.90	3.67
Winter						
2024	66.30	91.40	144.00	0.25	28.50	9.29
2025	62.40	42.00	108.00	0.13	20.70	5.73
Maximum Daily Emissions	66.30	124.00	153.00	0.29	28.50	11.30
SCAQMD Regional Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO

(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-4)

Operational Emissions

Operational activities associated with the Project would result in emissions of VOCs, NO_x, SO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. Operational emissions are expected from the following primary sources: area source emissions, energy source emissions, mobile source emissions, on-site cargo handling equipment emissions, and Transportation Refrigeration Unit (TRU) emissions. Refer to subsection 4.3.3 for a description of modeling inputs and assumptions used to calculate the Project’s operational emissions. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 37)



As previously stated, CalEEMod utilizes summer and winter EMFAC2021 emission factors in order to derive vehicle emissions associated with Project operational activities, which vary by season. The estimated operational-source emissions are summarized on Table 4.3-11, *Summary of Peak Operational Emissions*. As shown, the Project would exceed the numerical thresholds of significance established by the SCAQMD for emissions of VOCs and NO_x. As previously indicated in Table 4.3-2, the SSAB is designated as nonattainment for O₃, and VOCs and NO_x are precursors to ozone formation. Thus, prior to mitigation, the Project’s emissions of VOCs and NO_x would cumulatively contribute to a net increase of a criteria pollutant (O₃) for which the SSAB is considered nonattainment. Accordingly, the Project’s long term operational emissions would represent a significant impact for which mitigation would be required. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 40)

Table 4.3-11 Summary of Peak Operational Emissions

Source	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer						
Mobile Source	11.40	145.00	154.00	1.66	71.60	21.00
Area Source	38.80	0.45	53.90	< 0.005	0.10	0.07
TRU Source	7.76	8.87	0.87	0.00	0.34	0.32
Stationary Source	0.98	2.75	2.51	< 0.005	0.14	0.14
On-Site Equipment	0.59	1.88	82.22	0.00	0.15	0.14
Total Maximum Daily Emissions	59.53	158.95	293.50	1.66	72.33	21.67
SCAQMD Regional Threshold	55	55	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Winter						
Mobile Source	9.86	156.00	109.00	1.63	71.60	21.00
Area Source	29.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TRU Source	7.76	8.87	0.87	0.00	0.34	0.32
Stationary Source	0.98	2.75	2.51	< 0.005	0.14	0.14
On-Site Equipment	0.59	1.88	82.22	0.00	0.15	0.14
Total Maximum Daily Emissions	49.09	169.50	194.60	1.63	72.23	21.60
SCAQMD Regional Threshold	55	55	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO

(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-9)

Threshold c: Would the Project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

During construction and operational activities, the Project has the potential to expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The following provides an analysis based on the applicable LSTs established by the State of California and SCAQMD, an analysis of the Project’s potential to result in or contribute to CO “hot spots,” and an analysis of the Project’s potential to result in cancer risks and non-cancer health hazards.

A. Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) Analysis

In order to account for meteorological conditions at the Project site, meteorological data from the SCAQMD’s Redlands monitoring station was utilized, as this is the nearest station to the Project site for which

meteorological data is available. Additionally, a receptor height of 2 meters and regulatory default options were utilized consistent with SCAQMD’s LST guidance. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 45)

Sensitive receptors considered as part of the analysis previously were depicted on Figure 4.3-1 and were described previously in subsection 4.3.1.H. Consistent with the LST Methodology, the nearest land use where an individual could remain for 24 hours to the Project site has been used to determine construction and operational air quality impacts for emissions of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}, since PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} thresholds are based on a 24-hour averaging time. Per the LST Methodology, commercial and industrial facilities are not included in the definition of sensitive receptor because employees and patrons do not typically remain onsite for a full 24 hours but are typically onsite for 8 hours or less. However, LST Methodology explicitly states that “LSTs based on shorter averaging periods, such as the NO₂ and CO LSTs, could also be applied to receptors such as industrial or commercial facilities since it is reasonable to assume that a worker at these sites could be present for periods of one to eight hours.” Therefore, any adjacent land use where an individual could remain for 1 or 8-hours, that is located at a closer distance to the Project site than the receptor used for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} analysis, must be considered to determine construction and operational LST air impacts for emissions of NO₂ and CO since these pollutants have an averaging time of 1 and 8-hours. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 46)

Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) – Construction

Based on SCAQMD’s LST Methodology, emissions for concern during construction activities are on-site NO_x, CO, PM_{2.5}, and PM₁₀. The LST Methodology clearly states that “off-site mobile emissions from the Project should not be included in the emissions compared to LSTs.” As such, for purposes of the construction LST analysis, only emissions included in the CalEEMod “on-site” emissions outputs were considered. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 45)

As shown in Table 4.3-12, *Localized Significance Summary – Peak Construction*, emissions during the peak construction activity would not exceed the SCAQMD’s localized significance thresholds at the maximally exposed receptor location. All other modeled locations in the study area would experience a lesser concentration and consequently a lesser impact. As such, the Project’s localized impacts during construction activity would be less than significant. Outputs from the model runs for construction LSTs are provided in Appendix 3.4 of the Project’s GHGA (*Technical Appendix G*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 49)

Table 4.3-12 Localized Significance Summary – Peak Construction

Peak Construction	CO		NO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
	Averaging Time				
	1-Hour	8-Hour	1-Hour	24-Hours	24-Hours
Peak Day Localized Emissions	0.02	0.00	1.04E-02	0.27	0.13
Background Concentration ^A	1.3	0.7	0.047		
Total Concentration	1.32	0.70	0.06	0.27	0.13
SCAQMD Localized Significance Threshold	20	9	0.18	10.4	10.4
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

^A Highest concentration from the last three years of available data. Per SCAQMD LST guidance, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} background concentrations are not considered

Notes: PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations are expressed in µg/m³. All others are expressed in ppm.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-10)



Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) – Long-Term Operations

The LST analysis generally includes on-site sources (area, energy, mobile, and on-site cargo handling equipment). However, it should be noted that CalEEMod outputs do not separate on-site and off-site emissions from mobile sources. As such, to establish a maximum potential impact scenario for analytic purposes, the modeled emissions include all on-site Project related stationary (area) sources and on-site Project-related mobile emissions. In order to account for on-site mobile emissions, a trip length of one mile was utilized for both trucks and passenger cars. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 50)

In order to account for any potential impacts to on-site receptors as a result of operational activity, a scenario conservatively assuming 2025 emissions was analyzed. As shown in Table 4.3-13, *Localized Significance Summary – Peak Operations*, Project-related emissions would not exceed SCAQMD’s localized significance thresholds at the maximally exposed on-site receptors as a result of operational activities. Accordingly, long-term operation of the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, and impacts would be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 50)

Table 4.3-13 Localized Significance Summary – Peak Operations

Peak Construction	CO		NO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
	Averaging Time				
	1-Hour	8-Hour	1-Hour	24-Hours	24-Hours
Peak Day Localized Emissions	1.85E-02	1.23E-02	1.62E-03	0.09	0.04
Background Concentration ^A	1.3	0.7	0.047		
Total Concentration	1.32	0.71	0.05	0.09	0.04
SCAQMD Localized Significance Threshold	20	9	0.18	2.5	2.5
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

^A Highest concentration from the last three years of available data. Per SCAQMD LST guidance, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} background concentrations are not considered.

Notes: PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations are expressed in µg/m³. All others are expressed in ppm. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-12)

B. Carbon Monoxide “Hot Spots”

An adverse CO concentration, known as a “hot spot”, would occur if an exceedance of the state one-hour standard of 20 ppm or the eight-hour standard of 9 ppm were to occur. At the time the 1993 Handbook, the SSAB was designated nonattainment under the CAAQS and NAAQS for CO. It has long been recognized that CO hotspots are caused by vehicular emissions, primarily when idling at congested intersections. In response, vehicle emissions standards have become increasingly stringent in the last twenty years. Currently, the allowable CO emissions standard in California is a maximum of 3.4 grams/mile for passenger cars (there are requirements for certain vehicles that are more stringent). With the turnover of older vehicles, introduction of cleaner fuels, and implementation of increasingly sophisticated and efficient emissions control technologies, CO concentration in the SSAB is now designated as attainment, as previously noted in Table 4.3-2. Also, CO concentrations in the Project vicinity have steadily declined, as indicated by historical emissions data presented previously in Table 4.3-4. To establish a more accurate record of baseline CO concentrations affecting the SSAB, a CO “hot spot” analysis was conducted in 2003 for four busy intersections in Los Angeles at the peak



morning and afternoon time periods. This “hot spot” analysis did not predict any violation of CO standards, as shown on Table 4.3-14, *CO Model Results*. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 50-51)

Table 4.3-14 CO Model Results

Intersection Location	CO Concentrations (ppm)		
	Morning 1-hour	Afternoon 1-hour	8-hour
Wilshire Boulevard/Veteran Avenue	4.6	3.5	3.7
Sunset Boulevard/Highland Avenue	4	4.5	3.5
La Cienega Boulevard/Century Boulevard	3.7	3.1	5.2
Long Beach Boulevard/Imperial Highway	3	3.1	8.4

Note: Federal 1-hour standard is 35 ppm and the deferral 8-hour standard is 9.0 ppm.
(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-11)

It should be noted that SCAQMD has not conducted specific CO hotspots analysis for the SSAB as they have for the SCAB. However, since background concentrations are similarly low in both air basins, the SSAB is located within the jurisdiction of SCAQMD, and background traffic volumes in the SSAB are lower than those in the SCAB and therefore a lesser impact would be expected, it is appropriate to apply the SCAQMD criteria developed based on the SCAB when analyzing CO hotspots within the SSAB. As identified within SCAQMD's 2003 AQMP and the 1992 Federal Attainment Plan for Carbon Monoxide (1992 CO Plan), peak carbon monoxide concentrations in the basin were a result of unusual meteorological and topographical conditions and not a result of traffic volumes and congestion at a particular intersection. As evidence of this, for example, 8.4 ppm CO concentration measured at the Long Beach Blvd. and Imperial Hwy. intersection (highest CO generating intersection within the “hot spot” analysis), only 0.7 ppm was attributable to the traffic volumes and congestion at this intersection; the remaining 7.7 ppm were due to the ambient air measurements at the time the 2003 AQMP was prepared. In contrast, an adverse CO concentration, known as a “hot spot”, would occur if an exceedance of the state one-hour standard of 20 parts per million (ppm) or the eight-hour standard of 9 ppm were to occur. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 51)

The ambient 1-hr and 8-hr CO concentration within the Project study area is estimated to be 0.8 ppm and 0.4 ppm, respectively (data from Coachella Valley 1 station for 2021). Therefore, even if the traffic volumes for the proposed Project were ten times the traffic volumes generated at the Long Beach Blvd. and Imperial Hwy. intersection, due to the on-going improvements in ambient air quality and vehicular emissions controls, the Project would not be capable of resulting in a CO “hot spot” at any study area intersections. As noted above, only 0.7 ppm were attributable to the traffic volumes and congestion at one of the busiest intersections in the SCAB. Therefore if these traffic volumes were multiplied by ten times, it could be expected that the CO attributable to traffic would increase tenfold as well, resulting in 7 ppm – even if this were added to either the 1-hour or 8-hour CO concentrations within the Project study area, this would result in 7.8 ppm and 7.4 ppm for the 1-hr and 8-hr timeframes, respectively, neither of which would exceed the applicable 1-hr standard of 20 ppm or the 8-hr standard of 9 ppm. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 51-52)

Similar considerations are also employed by other Air Districts when evaluating potential CO concentration impacts. More specifically, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) concludes that under existing and future vehicle emission rates, a given project would have to increase traffic volumes at a single



intersection by more than 44,000 vehicles per hour—or 24,000 vehicles per hour (vph) where vertical and/or horizontal air does not mix—in order to generate a significant CO impact. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 52)

Traffic volumes generating the CO concentrations for the “hot spot” analysis are shown in Table 3-14 of the Project’s AQIA (*Technical Appendix B2*). The busiest intersection evaluated for AM traffic volumes was Wilshire Blvd. and Veteran Ave., with approximately 8,062 vehicles per hour (vph). The busiest intersection for PM traffic volumes was La Cienega Blvd and Century Blvd., with approximately 8,674 vph. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 52)

As summarized in Table 4.3-15, *Peak Hour Traffic Volumes*, the intersection of Bob Hope Drive and Ramon Road would have the highest AM and PM traffic volumes of 4,290 vph and 4,268 vph, respectively. Total traffic volumes at the intersections considered are less than the traffic volumes identified in the 2003 AQMP. As such, the Project would not produce the volume of traffic required to generate a CO “hot spot” either in the context of the 2003 Los Angeles hot spot study or based on representative BAAQMD CO threshold considerations. Therefore, CO “hot spots” are not an environmental impact of concern for the Project. Localized air quality impacts due to CO “hot spots” would therefore be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 52-53)

Table 4.3-15 Peak Hour Traffic Volumes

Intersection Location	Peak Traffic Volumes (vph)				
	Northbound (AM/PM)	Southbound (AM/PM)	Eastbound (AM/PM)	Westbound (AM/PM)	Total (AM/PM)
Bob Hope Dr. & Ramon Rd.	690/1,429	1,682/1,197	1,303/1,168	615/474	4,290/4,268
Bob Hope Dr. & I-10 EB Ramps	534/961	1,029/911	1,088/660	0/0	2,651/2,532
Bob Hope Dr. & I-10 WB Ramps	818/1,105	600/694	0/0	947/719	2,365/2,518
Varner Rd. & Ramon Rd.	632/436	315/665	799/445	607/558	2,353/2,104

(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-15)

C. Project-Related DPM Source Cancer and Non-Cancer Risks

A Project-specific Health Risk Assessment (HRA) was prepared for the Project and is included as EIR *Technical Appendix B2*. Refer to Section 2 of the Project’s HRA for a detailed discussion of the methodology, emissions estimation, exposure quantification, carcinogenic chemical risk, and non-carcinogenic exposure used as inputs to the analysis. Nearby sensitive receptors evaluated as part of the HRA are described above in subsection 4.3.1.H and previously were depicted in Figure 4.3-1. It should be noted that for clarity purposes, the receptors presented in Figure 4.3-1 do not represent all modeled receptors. A total of 97 receptors were modeled, extending up to three miles from the Project site.

1. Construction-Related Health Risk Impacts

The land use with the greatest potential exposure to Project construction-source DPM emissions is Location R4, which is located approximately 1,472 feet south of the Project site at the Legacy Apartments, located at 72940 El Centro Way. Since there are no private outdoor living areas (backyards) facing the Project site, R4 is placed at the building façade. At the Maximally Exposed Individual Receptor (MEIR), the maximum incremental cancer risk attributable to Project construction-source DPM emissions is estimated at 0.37 in one



million, which is less than the SCAQMD's significance threshold of 10 in one million. At this same location, non-cancer risks were estimated to be <0.01 , which would not exceed the applicable threshold of 1.0. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, pp. 24-25)

Off-site improvements, including the installation of 92 kV above-ground power lines, would be required and may result in construction activities near existing residences. However, because such activity is only expected to occur on an intermittent basis and off-site construction activities would not take place at any one location for more than four days, no additional measurable health risk impacts would occur. Location R4 would experience the highest concentrations of DPM during Project construction due to meteorological conditions at the site. Because all other modeled receptors would experience lower concentrations of DPM during Project construction, all other receptors in the vicinity of the Project would be exposed to less emissions and therefore less risk than the MEIR identified herein. As such, the Project would not cause a significant human health or cancer risk to adjacent land uses as a result of Project construction activity. All other receptors during construction activity would experience less risk than what is identified for this location. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 25)

2. Operational Health Risk Impacts

Residential Exposure Scenario

The residential land use with the greatest potential exposure to Project operational-source DPM emissions is Location R3, which is located approximately 1,396 feet to the south of the Project site at an existing residence, located at 30524 Robert Road. Since there are no private outdoor living areas facing the Project site, R3 is placed at the building façade nearest to the building site. At the MEIR, the maximum incremental cancer risk attributable to Project operational-source DPM emissions is calculated to be 0.94 in one million, which is less than the SCAQMD's significance threshold of 10 in one million. At this same location, non-cancer risks were calculated to be <0.01 , which would not exceed the applicable significance threshold of 1.0. Because all other modeled receptors would experience lower concentrations of DPM during Project operation, all other receptors in the vicinity of the Project would be exposed to less emissions and therefore less risk than the MEIR identified herein. As such, the Project would not cause a significant human health or cancer risk to adjacent land uses as a result of Project operational activity. All other receptors during operational activity would experience less risk than what is identified for this location. Thus, Project-related operational cancer and non-cancer health risk impacts at the MEIR would be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 25)

Worker Exposure Scenario

The worker receptor land use with the greatest potential exposure to Project operational-source DPM emissions is location R5, which represents the potential worker receptor located approximately 1,503 feet south of the Project site. At the Maximally Exposed Individual Worker (MEIW), the maximum incremental cancer risk impact is 0.31 in one million which is less than the SCAQMD's threshold of 10 in one million. Maximum non-cancer risks at this same location were calculated to be <0.01 , which would not exceed the applicable significance threshold of 1.0. Because all other modeled worker receptors are located at a greater distance than the MEIW analyzed herein, and DPM dissipates with distance from the source, all other worker receptors in the vicinity of the Project would be exposed to less emissions and therefore less risk than the MEIW identified



herein. As such, the Project would not cause a significant human health or cancer risk to adjacent workers, and impacts would be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, pp. 25-26)

School Child Exposure Scenario

The nearest school is Della S. Lindley Elementary School, which is represented by Location R6 and is located approximately 3,489 feet south of the Project site. At the Maximally Exposed Individual School Child (MEISC), the maximum incremental cancer risk impact attributable to the Project is calculated to be 0.07 in one million, which is less than the significance threshold of 10 in one million. At this same location, non-cancer risks attributable to the Project were calculated to be <0.01, which would not exceed the applicable significance threshold of 1.0. As such, the Project will not cause a significant human health or cancer risk to nearby school children, and impacts would be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 26)

3. Combined Construction and Operational Health Risk Impacts

The land use with the greatest potential exposure to Project construction-source and operational-source DPM emissions is Location R4. At the MEIR, the maximum incremental cancer risk attributable to Project construction-source and operational-source DPM emissions is calculated at 1.09 in one million, which is less than the threshold of 10 in one million. At this same location, non-cancer risks were calculated to be <0.01, which would not exceed the applicable threshold of 1.0. As such, the Project would not cause a significant human health or cancer risk to nearby residences, and impacts would be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024b, p. 26)

D. Community Health

Most local agencies, including the County of Riverside, lack the data to do their own assessment of potential health impacts from criteria air pollutant emissions, as would be required to establish customized, locally-specific thresholds of significance based on potential health impacts from an individual development project. The use of national or generic data to fill the gap of missing local data would not yield accurate results because such data does not capture local air patterns, local background conditions, or local population characteristics, all of which play a role in how a population experiences air pollution. Because it is impracticable to accurately isolate the exact cause of a human disease (for example, the role a particular air pollutant plays compared to the role of other allergens and genetics in causing asthma), existing scientific tools cannot accurately estimate health impacts of the Project's air emissions without undue speculation. Instead, readers are directed to the Project's AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*), as summarized herein, which provides extensive information concerning the quantifiable and non-quantifiable health risks related to the Project's construction and long-term operation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 56)

Notwithstanding, the preceding discussion does evaluate the proposed Project's localized impact to air quality for emissions of CO, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} by comparing the proposed Project's on-site emissions to the SCAQMD's applicable LST thresholds. The LST analysis above determined that the Project would not result in emissions exceeding SCAQMD's LSTs. Therefore, the proposed Project would not be expected to exceed the most stringent applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards for emissions of CO, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. As the Project's emissions would comply with federal, State, and local air quality standards, the



proposed Project's emissions are not sufficiently high enough to use a regional modeling program to correlate health effects on a basin-wide level, and such an analysis would not provide a reliable indicator of health effects even if modeled. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 56-57)

Threshold d: Would the Project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?)

Land uses generally associated with odor complaints include agricultural uses (livestock and farming), wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting operations, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding facilities. The Project does not contain land uses typically associated with emitting objectionable odors. Potential odor sources associated with the proposed Project may result from construction equipment exhaust and the application of asphalt and architectural coatings during construction activities and the temporary storage of typical solid waste (refuse) associated with the proposed Project's long-term operational uses. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 57)

Standard construction requirements would minimize odor impacts from construction. The construction odor emissions would be temporary, short-term, and intermittent in nature and would cease upon completion of the respective phase of construction; thus, odor emissions related to construction activity are considered less than significant. It is expected that Project-generated refuse would be stored in covered containers and removed at regular intervals in compliance with current solid waste regulations. The proposed Project also would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 402 to prevent occurrences of public nuisances. Therefore, odors and other emissions (such as those leading to odors) associated with construction and operations activities of the proposed Project would be less than significant and no mitigation is required. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 57)

Accordingly, Project odor-causing emissions impacts during construction and operational activities would be less than significant.

4.3.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

With exception of the issue of odors, the cumulative study area for air quality includes the Coachella Valley portion of the County of Riverside and the SSAB. The SSAB is designated as a nonattainment area for State standards of O₃ and PM₁₀. The region is also designated as a nonattainment area for federal standards of O₃ and PM₁₀. Cumulative growth in population, vehicle use, and industrial activity could inhibit efforts to improve regional air quality and attain the ambient air quality standards. Thus, with exception of odors, the setting for this cumulative analysis consists of the SSAB and associated growth and development anticipated in the air basin. For the issue of odors, the cumulative study area includes the Project site and lands in close proximity to the Project site, as odors diminish rapidly with distance from the source.

As previously shown in Table 4.3-2, the CAAQS and NAAQS designate the SSAB as nonattainment for O₃ and PM₁₀. The AQMD has published a report on how to address cumulative impacts from air pollution: *White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution*. In this report the AQMD clearly states (Page D-3): (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, pp. 57-58)



“...the AQMD uses the same significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts for all environmental topics analyzed in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The only case where the significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts differ is the Hazard Index (HI) significance threshold for TAC emissions. The project specific (project increment) significance threshold is $HI > 1.0$ while the cumulative (facility-wide) is $HI > 3.0$. It should be noted that the HI is only one of three TAC emission significance thresholds considered (when applicable) in a CEQA analysis. The other two are the maximum individual cancer risk (MICR) and the cancer burden, both of which use the same significance thresholds (MICR of 10 in 1 million and cancer burden of 0.5) for project specific and cumulative impacts.

Projects that exceed the project-specific significance thresholds are considered by the SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. This is the reason project-specific and cumulative significance thresholds are the same. Conversely, projects that do not exceed the project-specific thresholds are generally not considered to be cumulatively significant.”

Therefore, this analysis assumes that individual projects that do not generate operational or construction emissions that exceed the SCAQMD’s recommended daily thresholds for Project-specific impacts would also not cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which SSAB is in nonattainment, and, therefore, would not be considered to have a significant, adverse air quality impact. Alternatively, individual Project-related construction and operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD thresholds for project-specific impacts would be considered cumulatively considerable. (Urban Crossroads, 2024a, p. 58)

A. AQMP Consistency (Threshold a.)

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold a., the Project’s construction-source emissions would exceed applicable regional significance threshold for emissions of NO_x , , and long-term operation of the proposed Project would exceed applicable regional thresholds for emissions of VOC and NO_x . Although the Project’s proposed land uses would be consistent with the General Plan land use designations applied to the Project site with approval of GPA No. 220004, the Project’s proposed land uses are not consistent with the land use inputs used in the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP. In addition, long-term operations of the Project would result in operational VOC and NO_x emissions that would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds. Thus, the Project’s construction and long-term operational activities would result in conflict with the SCAQMD AQMP prior to mitigation. As other cumulative developments also have the potential to result in conflicts with the SCAQMD AQMP, Project impacts due to a conflict with the SCAQMD AQMP would be cumulatively considerable.

B. Regional Criteria Pollutant Emissions (Threshold b.)

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold b., prior to mitigation the Project’s construction-related regional emissions would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Threshold for NO_x , and the Project’s long-term operational emissions would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds for VOCs and NO_x . As previously indicated in Table 4.3-2, the SSAB is designated as nonattainment for O_3 , and VOCs and NO_x are precursors to ozone formation. Thus, the Project’s emissions of NO_x during construction activities and emissions of VOCs and NO_x during long-term operations would cumulatively contribute to a net increase of a criteria pollutant (O_3)



for which the SSAB is considered nonattainment. Therefore, and pursuant to SCAQMD's thresholds of significance that indicate that direct impacts also should be considered to be cumulatively considerable, the Project's impacts due to construction-related emissions of NO_x and operational emissions of VOCs and NO_x would be cumulatively considerable.

C. Localized Air Quality Impacts (Threshold c.)

1. LST Analysis

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold c., construction and long-term operation of the proposed Project would not exceed any of the SCAQMD LSTs. Accordingly, and based on SCAQMD guidance, the Project's construction and long-term operational localized air quality impacts would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

2. CO "Hot Spots"

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold c., the Project and other cumulative developments would not generate the traffic volumes necessary to produce a CO "hot spot." As shown in Table 4.3-15, the intersection of Bob Hope Drive and Ramon Road would have the highest AM and PM traffic volumes of 4,290 vph and 4,268 vph, respectively. Total traffic volumes at the intersections would be less than the traffic volumes identified in the 2003 AQMP. As such, the Project would not produce the volume of traffic required to generate a CO "hot spot" either in the context of the 2003 Los Angeles hot spot study or based on representative BAAQMD CO threshold considerations. Localized air quality impacts due to CO "hot spots" would therefore be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

3. Cumulatively-Considerable DPM-Source TAC Impacts

As discussed under Threshold c., at the MEIR, the maximum incremental cancer risk attributable to Project construction-source and operational-source DPM emissions is estimated at 0.37 and 0.77 in one million, respectively, which are less than the threshold of 10 in one million. At this same location, non-cancer risks were estimated to be <0.01 for both construction and long-term operation, which would not exceed the applicable threshold of 1.0. As such, cumulatively-considerable impacts due to cancer and non-cancer related health risks during both construction and operations would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

D. Odors (Threshold d.)

As discussed in the analysis of Threshold d., the Project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 402 to prevent occurrences of public nuisances and would be subject to solid waste regulations. Other developments within the cumulative study area similarly would be required to comply with SCAQMD rules and regulations and the solid waste regulations of the applicable local jurisdictions. Therefore, Project impacts due to other emissions (such as those leading to odors) would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.



4.3.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a: Significant Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. The proposed Project's near-term construction activities would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Threshold for NO_x, while the Project's long-term operational emissions would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds for VOC and NO_x. Additionally, although approval of the Project's proposed General Plan Amendment would ensure that the Project's land uses are fully consistent with the Riverside County General Plan, the Project's proposed land uses are not consistent with the land use inputs utilized in the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP for the Project site and the Project would generate operational-source emissions of NO_x and VOCs that would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds for these pollutants. Thus, prior to mitigation, the Project would be inconsistent with the SCAQMD AQMP, resulting a significant impact on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.

Threshold b: Significant Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. The Project's construction emissions would exceed the Regional Threshold established by the SCAQMD for emissions of NO_x, and long-term operation of the Project would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds for emissions of VOCs and NO_x. The SSAB is designated as nonattainment for O₃, and VOCs and NO_x are precursors to ozone formation. Thus, the Project's emissions of NO_x during construction activities and the Project's emissions of VOCs and NO_x under long-term operating conditions would cumulatively contribute to a net increase of a criteria pollutant (O₃) for which the SSAB is considered nonattainment. Thus, the Project's near-term construction emissions and long-term operational emissions would represent a significant impact prior to mitigation.

Threshold c: Less-Than-Significant Impact. The Project's construction and long-term operational emissions would not exceed any of the SCAQMD's LSTs, and impacts would be less than significant. In addition, the Project, even when considered in the context of cumulative developments, would not produce the level of traffic volumes necessary to create a CO "hot spot"; thus, impacts due to CO "hot spots" would be less than significant. Construction and operational activities associated with the Project would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to cancer or non-cancer health risks exceeding the SCAQMD thresholds of significance of 10 in one million or 1.0, respectively, even when combining the Project's construction- and operational-related DPM emissions, and impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, and impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold d: Less-Than-Significant Impact. The Project does not contain land uses associated with emitting objectionable odors. Additionally, the Project would be required to comply with the County's solid waste regulations, as well as SCAQMD rule 402 to prevent the occurrences of public nuisances. Therefore, odors associated with the proposed Project construction and operations would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

4.3.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude air quality impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.



- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of SCAQMD Rule 403, “Fugitive Dust” by implementing the following dust control measures during construction activities, such as earth moving activities, grading, and equipment travel on unpaved roads. Prior to grading permit issuance, the County shall verify that the following notes are included on the grading plan. Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with the notes and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by County of Riverside staff or its designee to confirm compliance. These notes also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.
 - All clearing, grading, earth-moving, or excavation activities shall cease when winds exceed 25 miles per hour (mph) per SCAQMD guidelines in order to limit fugitive dust emissions.
 - The contractor shall ensure that all disturbed unpaved roads and disturbed areas upon which construction equipment will operate are watered at least three (3) times daily during dry weather. Watering, with complete coverage of disturbed areas, shall occur at least three times a day, preferably in the midmorning, afternoon, and after work is done for the day.
 - The contractor shall ensure that traffic speeds on unpaved roads and Project site areas are reduced to 15 mph or less.
- The Project’s contractors are required to comply with the provisions of SCAQMD Rule 1113, *Architectural Coatings*, by requiring that all architectural coatings consist of low VOCs (i.e., VOCs of less than 50 grams per liter [g/L]) unless otherwise specified in the Rule 1113.
- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of SCAQMD Rule 1301 regarding stationary source equipment. The specific air quality goal is to achieve no net increases from new or modified permitted sources of nonattainment air contaminants or their precursors. Rule 1301 limits emission increases of ammonia, and Ozone Depleting Compounds (ODCs) from new, modified or relocated facilities by requiring the use of Best Available Control Technology (BACT).
- The Project is required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 2305, *Warehouse Indirect Source Rule*, that requires owners and operators associated with warehouses 100,000 square feet (sf) or larger are required to directly reduce nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and particulate matter emissions, or to otherwise facilitate emission and exposure reductions of these pollutants in nearby communities. The rule imposes a “Warehouse Points Compliance Obligation” (WPCO) on warehouse operators. Operators satisfy the WPCO by accumulating “Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions Points” (WAIRE Points) in a given 12-month period. WAIRE Points are awarded by implementing measures to reduce emissions listed on the WAIRE Menu, or by implementing a custom WAIRE Plan approved by the SCAQMD.
- The Project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 1401 by requiring that a person shall not discharge into the atmosphere from any single source of emission whatsoever any air contaminant for a period or periods aggregating more than three minutes in any 1 hour that is as dark or darker in shade as that designated No. 1 on the Ringelmann Chart, as published by the United States (U.S.) Bureau of Mines.



- The Project is required to comply with applicable SCAQMD rules for construction activities on the Project site. In addition to the SCAQMD requirements listed above, additional SCAQMD Rules that are currently applicable during construction activity for this Project include but are not limited to: Rule 1403 (Asbestos); Rule 431.2 (Low Sulfur Fuel); and Rule 1186 / 1186.1 (Street Sweepers).
- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of SCAQMD Rule 402, “Nuisance,” which requires that a person shall not discharge air contaminants or other materials that would cause health or safety hazards to any considerable number of persons or the public.

Mitigation

- MM 4.3-1 The minimum number of automobile electric vehicle (EV) charging stations required by the California Code of Regulations Title 24 shall be provided. In addition, and to facilitate the possible future installation of infrastructure that would charge the batteries that power the motors of electric-powered trucks, the following shall be installed:
- a. At Shell building permit, an electrical room(s) and/or exterior area(s) of the site shall be designated where future electrical panels would be located for the purpose of supplying power to on-site charging facilities for electric powered trucks. Conduit shall be installed from this designated area where the panel would be located to the on-site location where the charging facilities would be located where electric-powered trucks would park and connect to charging facilities to charge the batteries that power the motors of the electric-powered trucks.
- MM 4.3-2 Prior to issuance of building permits for future uses on site, Riverside County shall verify that passenger car Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations and designated carpool parking stalls have been accommodated per the provisions of the California Green Building Standards Code and shall verify that the plans require that each building be constructed with an adequately sized electrical panel(s) and conduit to accommodate future EV charging stations at a minimum of 5 percent of the passenger car parking spaces.
- MM 4.3-3 As a component of all future lease or sales agreements, the lease or sales document shall include a provision requiring all on-site mobile equipment used as part of building operations (including yard trucks, hostlers, yard goats, pallet jacks, forklifts) shall be required to be powered by electricity, and an appropriate numbers of charging stations for the on-site equipment shall be accommodated on the site.
- MM 4.3-4 In order to promote alternative fuels, and help support lower air pollutants associated with truck fleets, the developer/successor-in-interest shall provide building occupants with information related to SCAQMD’s Carl Moyer Program, or other such programs that promote truck retrofits or “clean” vehicles and information including, but not limited to, the health effect of diesel particulates, benefits of reduced idling time, CARB regulations, and importance of not parking in residential areas. Tenants shall be notified about 1) grant programs for diesel-fueled



vehicle engine retrofit and/or replacement; 2) designated truck parking locations in the project vicinity; 3) access to alternative fueling and charging stations proximate to the site that supply electric charging infrastructure or compressed natural gas; and 5) the United States Environmental Protection Agency's SmartWay program.

MM 4.3-5 All construction activities associated with the Project shall be subject to adherence with the Riverside County Board of Supervisors Policy F-3 ("Good Neighbor Policy" for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses). The following provisions shall apply to all construction activities on site:

- a. All diesel fueled off-road construction equipment greater than 50 horsepower, including but not limited to excavators, graders, rubber-tired dozers, and similar "off-road" construction equipment shall be equipped with CARB Tier 4 Compliant engines. If the operator lacks Tier 4 equipment, and it is not available for lease or short-term rental within 50 miles of the project site, Tier 3 or cleaner off-road construction equipment may be utilized subject to County approval.
- b. All excavators, graders, rubber-tired dozers, and similar "off-road" construction equipment shall be CARB Tier 3 Certified engines or better.
- c. The maximum daily disturbance area (actively graded area) shall not exceed 10 acres per day.
- d. Construction contractors shall utilize construction equipment, with properly operating and maintained mufflers, consistent with manufacturers' standards.
- e. The surrounding streets shall be swept on a regular basis to remove any construction related debris and dirt.
- f. Appropriate dust control measures that meet the SCAQMD standards shall be implemented for grading and construction activity.
- g. Construction Contractors shall prohibit truck drivers from idling more than five (5) minutes and require operators to turn off engines when not in use, in compliance with the California Air Resources Board regulations.
- h. Construction equipment maintenance records and data sheets, which includes equipment design specifications and equipment emission control tier classifications, as well as any other records necessary to verify compliance with the items listed above, shall be kept onsite and furnished to the County upon request.
- i. During construction, the Transportation & Land Management Agency representative shall conduct an on-site inspection with a facility representative to verify compliance with these policies, and to identify other opportunities to reduce construction impacts.

Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with these requirements and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by County of Riverside staff or its designee to



confirm compliance. These requirements also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.

- MM 4.3-6 All tenant operations on the site shall adhere to the germane policy provisions in the Riverside County Board of Supervisors Policy F-3 (“Good Neighbor Policy” for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses). Applicable requirements of Policy F-3 shall be specified in future lease agreements with all future tenants, and future tenants shall be required to permit periodic inspection by Riverside County to ensure compliance. Applicable feasible provisions of the Good Neighbor Policy that would serve to measurably reduce Project-related operational emissions include, but are not limited to, the following:
- a. The general queuing and spill-over of trucks onto surrounding public streets shall be prevented. Commercial trucks shall not be parked in the public road right-of-way or nearby residential areas.
 - b. Sites shall clearly mark entry and exit points for trucks and service vehicles.
 - c. Sites shall be densely screened with landscaping along all bordering streets and adjacent sensitive receptors, with trees spaced no further apart than 25 feet on center. Fifty percent of the landscape screening shall include a minimum of 36- inch box trees. Facility owners and operators will be responsible for identifying a long-term maintenance mechanism to assure that the landscaping remains in place and healthy in accordance with the approved landscaping plan.
 - d. Legible, durable, weather-proof signs shall be placed at truck access gates, loading docks, and truck parking areas that identify applicable California Air Resources Board (CARB) anti-idling regulations. At a minimum each sign shall include: 1) instructions for truck drivers to shut off engines when not in use; 2) instructions for drivers of diesel trucks to restrict idling to no more than five minutes; and 3) telephone numbers of the building facilities manager and CARB to report violations.
 - e. Facility operators shall train their managers and employees on efficient scheduling and load management to eliminate unnecessary queuing and idling of trucks.
 - f. To encourage truck drivers to take the shortest route to convenience services, signs shall be posted in appropriate locations and/or handouts should be provided that show the locations of nearest food options, fueling, truck maintenance services, and other similar convenience services.
 - g. Each tenant shall designate an air quality Compliance Officer responsible for implementing the measures described herein and/or in the project conditions of approval and mitigation measures that are applicable to tenants. Contact information shall be provided to the County and updated annually, and signs shall be posted in visible locations providing the contact information for the Compliance Officer to the surrounding community. The Compliance Officer also shall coordinate with CARB and SCAQMD to obtain the latest



information about regional air quality concentrations, health risks, and trucking regulations.

- h. Signs shall be posted in the appropriate locations heavy truck drivers to park and perform any maintenance of trucks in designated on-site areas and not within the surrounding community or on public streets.
- i. Facility operators for sites that exceed 250 employees shall establish a rideshare program, in accordance with AQMD rule 2202, with the intent of discouraging single-occupancy vehicle trips and promote alternate modes of transportation, such as carpooling and transit where feasible.

Regardless as to whether they are listed above in Mitigation Measure MM 4.3-6, the Project shall comply with all other applicable provisions of Board of Supervisors' Policy F-3.

MM 4.3-7 As a component of all future lease or sales agreements, the lease or sales document shall include a provision requiring all building tenants to utilize electric equipment for landscape maintenance to the extent feasible.

MM 4.3-8 Prior to issuance of grading or building permits, Riverside County shall ensure that the grading and building plans include a note requiring that all offroad equipment required for Project-related construction activities shall meet CARB Tier 4 interim emission standards or better. Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with this requirement and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by County of Riverside staff or its designee to confirm compliance. This requirement also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.

4.3.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. As discussed below under the discussion of Threshold b., implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.3-8 would ensure that all Project-related construction equipment meets CARB Tier 4 interim emission standards or better, which would reduce the Project's near-term construction-related impacts due to NO_x emissions to below a level of significance (as shown in Table 4.3-16). Thus, with the required mitigation, Project construction-related emissions would not conflict with the SCAQMD AQMP. However, while implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the long-term air quality emissions of the Project, the identified mitigation would not reduce the Project's operational-source NO_x and VOC emissions to a level below SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance. Additionally, although approval of the Project's proposed GPA 220004 would ensure the Project's land uses are fully consistent with the General Plan land use designations for the property, because the Project would result in operational VOC and NO_x emissions that would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds, the Project would be inconsistent with the AQMP land use assumptions for the Project site. Thus, Project's direct and cumulatively-considerable impacts due to a conflict with or obstruction of the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP would represent a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation measures are not available.



Threshold b.: Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. As shown in Table 4.3-16, *Overall Construction Emissions Summary (With Mitigation)*, implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.3-8 would ensure that all Project-related construction equipment meets CARB Tier 4 interim emission standards or better, and would reduce the Project’s construction-related emissions of NO_x to below the SCAQMD’s Regional Threshold for this pollutant; thus, with implementation of the required mitigation, the Project’s construction-related regional air quality emissions impact would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Table 4.3-16 Overall Construction Emissions Summary (With Mitigation)

Year	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer						
2024	5.80	75.30	163.00	0.29	20.70	7.23
2025	63.20	26.00	110.00	0.07	12.20	3.09
Winter						
2024	61.20	69.90	159.00	0.25	26.10	7.15
2025	60.10	40.60	122.00	0.13	19.90	5.00
Maximum Daily Emissions	63.20	75.30	163.00	0.29	26.10	7.23
SCAQMD Regional Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Note: CalEEMod construction-source (unmitigated) emissions are presented in Appendix 3.1 to the Project’s AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*).
(Urban Crossroads, 2024a, Table 3-6)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the Project’s long-term air quality emissions, although the exact reduction amount cannot be quantified. For some measures it would be overly speculative to quantify resulting emissions reductions. For instance, while the Project would install passenger car EV charging stations it cannot be determined how many zero emission vehicles would replace gasoline-fueled vehicles as a result. Additionally, in order to promote alternative fuels, and help support “clean” truck fleets, the developer/successor-in-interest at the Project must provide building occupants with information related to SCAQMD’s Carl Moyer Program, or other such programs that promote truck retrofits or “clean” vehicles. Yet it cannot be reasonably predicted how many clean trucks would replace diesel-fueled trucks as a result. With other measures the reduction values cannot be quantified due to limitation in the modeling software, such as the requirement that all future cold storage warehousing be equipped with electrical hookups to eliminate idling of main and auxiliary engines during the loading and unloading process. Thus, even with implementation of these mitigation measures and with compliance with the anticipated regulations implemented by the EPA and CARB to improve truck efficiency, the estimated long-term emissions generated under full buildout of the proposed Project still would exceed the SCAQMD’s regional operational significance threshold for VOCs and NO_x and would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations in the SSAB for O₃. Additionally, the predominance of the Project’s operational-source emissions would be generated by passenger cars and trucks accessing the Project site. Neither the Project Applicant nor the County have regulatory authority to control tailpipe or consumer product emissions, and no feasible mitigation measures beyond the measures identified herein exist that would reduce Project operational-source VOC or NO_x emissions to levels that are less than significant. Therefore, the proposed Project’s operational emissions



of VOCs and NO_x would represent a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not available.



4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The analysis in this Subsection is based, in part, on information from the report titled “Majestic Thousand Palms Project Biological Resources and MSHCP Consistency Report” (herein, “BR”), prepared by Rocks Biological Consulting (herein, “RBC”), dated December 9, 2022, and included as *Technical Appendix C1* to this EIR (RBC, 2022a). The Project’s Biological Resources Report addresses potential impacts associated with development of the Project as proposed, as well as potential impacts associated with off-site improvements. In addition, the analysis in this subsection is based, in part, on information from the report titled “Majestic Thousand Palms Aquatic Resources Delineation Report” (herein, “ARDR”), prepared by Rocks Consulting, dated October 11, 2022, and included as *Technical Appendix C2* to this EIR (RBC, 2022b). This Subsection also incorporates a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (“Corps”), dated March 3, 2023, which clarifies that the Project site does not contain any Waters of the United States (WoUS) subject to regulation pursuant to Part 325.9 of Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The letter from the Corps is entitled “Determination of Need for Department of the Army Permit,” is dated March 3, 2023, and is included as *Technical Appendix C3* to this EIR. Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of these and other reference sources.

For purposes of discussion within this Subsection, the following terminology is used (refer also to Figure 4.4-1, *Vegetation Communities Map*):

- The term “**Project site**” refers to the 83.0-acre property located at the northeast corner of Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue that is proposed for development with the proposed warehouse building and IID substation.
- The term “**off-site improvement areas**” refers to the 62.5 acres within potential off-site infrastructure improvement alignments for roadway improvements and IID overhead utility line improvements. Roadway improvements include frontage improvements to Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue and the paving of a 32-foot section of Robert Road between 30th Avenue and San Miguelito Drive. Because IID has not yet decided which off-site alignment will be selected for the placement of power poles to support off-site overhead electrical lines, all of the potential alignments are evaluated herein. The potential off-site power pole alignments include 30th Avenue (between Rio Del Sol Road and Sierra Del Sol), Robert Road (between Ramon Road and 30th Avenue), Sierra Del Sol (between 30th Avenue and just south of Ramon Road), El Centro Way (between Robert Road and San Miguel Drive), Ramon Road (between Robert Road and Sierra Del Sol), and/or along San Miguelito Drive (between El Centro Way and Ramon Road). As described in EIR Section 3.0, although the entirety of these potential alignments are evaluated herein for potential physical effects, the only areas that actually would be physically disturbed as part of the IID off-site improvements are areas where individual power poles and appurtenant facilities would be installed, resulting in maximum permanent impacts to roughly a 10-foot by 10-foot area that would extend to a maximum depth of 15 feet at each pole location, and potentially temporary impacts within the alignments where equipment would be staged for a few days around each pole location.



- The term “**potential impact area**” refers collectively to the 83.0-acre Project site as well as the 62.5 acres of potential off-site improvement areas for infrastructure (145.5 acres total) that may be physically impacted by Project development.
- The term “**Survey Area**” refers to the 145.5-acre potential impact area and a 150-foot buffer around that area (172.4 acres) for a total of approximately 319.9 acres.

It should be noted that the Project’s BR considers the term, “Project site,” to comprise the 83.0-acre property proposed for development in addition to the 62.5 acres of potential off-site improvements. This is because the Wildlife Agencies responsible for issuing permits for the Project consider the term “Project site” to comprise the whole of the Project’s actions, inclusive of on- and off-site impacts. In addition, large portions of the off-site impact limits include potential disturbances associated with IID power pole installation, while impacts associated with the installation of the power poles only would occur in the specific locations where the poles ultimately would be installed; thus, a large portion of the 83.0-acre “potential impact area” would not be impacted by Project implementation. Accordingly, the discussion provided herein separates the Project’s on- and off-site impacts to ensure consistency with the Project Description presented in EIR Section 3.0.

4.4.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

RBC conducted site visits, vegetation mapping, biological surveys, and habitat assessments for the Survey Area. Provided below is a summary of the biological resources that occur within the Survey Area under existing conditions. Refer to Section 3 of the Project’s BR (*Technical Appendix C1*) for a discussion of the methodology utilized by RBC to evaluate the existing biological conditions within the Survey Area. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 1-2)

A. Vegetation Communities

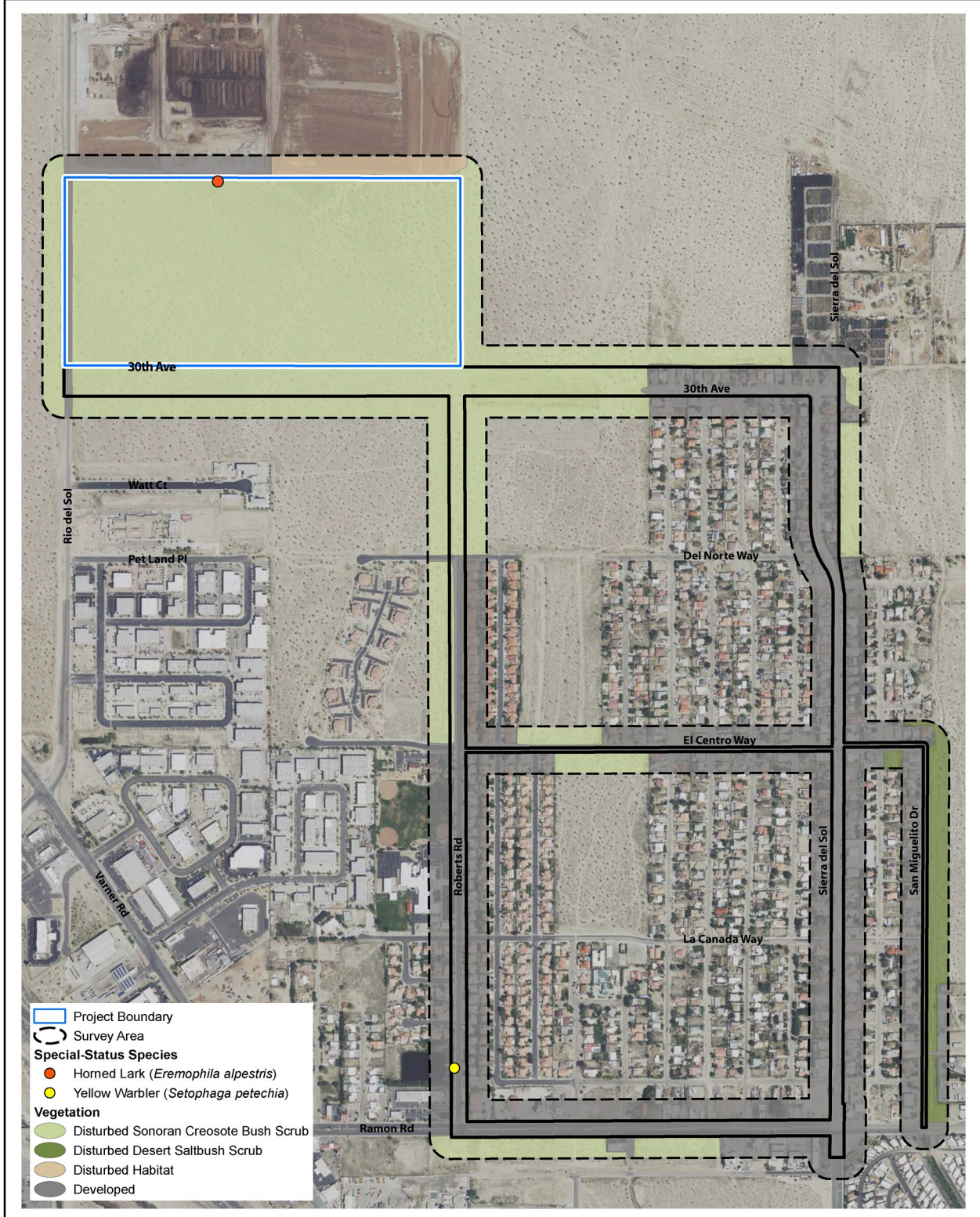
Table 4.4-1, *Vegetation Communities/Land Use Impacts*, summarizes the existing vegetation communities, which are described below and depicted on Figure 4.4-1, *Vegetation Communities Map*.

Table 4.4-1 Vegetation Communities/Land Use Impacts

Vegetation Community/Land Use	Survey Area (acres)	Project Site and Maximum Extent of Off-Site Physical Improvements
Developed	143.1	40.2
Disturbed	4.4	<0.01
Disturbed Desert Saltbrush Scrub	8.9	0.6
Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub	161.5	104.5
Totals	317.9	145.4

(RBC, 2022a, Table 1)

- **Developed:** Developed land supports little to no native vegetation and is composed of human-made structures and paved surfaces (buildings, pavement, etc.). Developed areas encompass approximately 40.2 acres within the potential impact area, while developed areas comprise approximately 143.1 acres



Source(s): Rocks Biological Consulting (12-09-2022)

Figure 4.4-1



Not to Scale



Vegetation Communities Map



within the Survey Area. Developed areas within Project site are limited to existing improvements along Rio Del Sol, while developed areas within the remaining portions of the Survey Area consist of roads and buildings. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 11-12)

- **Disturbed:** Disturbed land is typically classified as land on which the native vegetation has been significantly altered by agriculture, construction, or other land-clearing activities, and the species composition and site conditions are not characteristic of the disturbed phase of a plant association. Disturbed habitat typically is found in vacant lots, along roadsides, within construction staging areas, and in abandoned fields. The habitat is typically dominated by non-native annual species and perennial broadleaf species. Disturbed habitat occurs on less than 0.1-acre of the Project site in the north-central extent of the site and is characterized by a complete lack of native species. The disturbed habitat area has been denuded of most vegetation and covered in mulch, possibly from past agricultural activities on the property to the north. Approximately 4.4 acres of disturbed lands occur within the overall 319.9-acre Survey Area. (RBC, 2022a, p. 12)
- **Disturbed Desert Saltbush Scrub:** Disturbed desert saltbush scrub is similar to desert saltbush scrub; however, it has been substantially physically altered by human disturbance. Disturbed desert saltbush scrub occurs where fine-textured, poorly drained soils with high salinity and/or alkalinity occur. This community is dominated by one of more species of saltbush (*Atriplex* sp.), including allscale (*Atriplex polycarpa*) and four-winged saltbush (*Atriplex canescens* var. *linearis*), and commonly associated with screwbean mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa* var. *torreyana*). Disturbed desert saltbush scrub occurs on 0.6-acre along the southeastern portion of the Project's off-site improvement areas, and borders developed habitat. An additional 8.3 acres of disturbed desert saltbush scrub is located within the overall Survey Area, also in close proximity to developed habitat. This plant community is dominated by four-winged saltbush and allscale. Due to its proximity to developed habitat, human disturbances, including vehicle paths and tracks, trash dumping, and erosion, are present throughout the community. (RBC, 2022a, p. 12)
- **Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub:** Disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub is similar to Sonoran creosote bush scrub; however, it has been substantially physically altered by human disturbance. Disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub occurs on slopes, alluvial fans, and valleys and consists of widely spaced stands of creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), four-wing saltbush, indigo bush (*Psoralea schottii*), white dalea (*P. emoryi*), and other shrub or succulent species. Disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub occurs on a total of 104.5 acres of the potential impact area, encompassing the majority of the Project site as well as undeveloped portions of the Project's off-site improvement areas. A total of 161.5 acres of disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub was identified within the overall Survey Area. This plant community is dominated by creosote bush, white dalea, and burrobrush (*Ambrosia dumosa*). Little to no annuals were observed within this habitat during the general biological survey. Human disturbances, including off-road vehicle tracks and trash dumping, is present throughout this community and several linear segments appear to function as roads. (RBC, 2022a, p. 12)

B. Special-Status Plant Species

Special-status plant species include those that are: 1.) listed or proposed for listing by federal or State agencies as threatened or endangered; 2.) California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) List 1 or 2; or 3.) are considered rare, endangered, or threatened by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or other local conservation organizations or specialists. (RBC, 2022a, p. 13)

The California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) system was created by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), which is a Statewide resource conservation organization that has developed an inventory of California's sensitive plant species. The CRPR system is recognized by the CDFW and essentially serves as an early warning list of potential candidate species for threatened or endangered status. The CRPR system is categorized as outlined in Table 4.4-2, *California Rare Plant Rank Definitions*. (RBC, 2022a, p. 13)

Table 4.4-2 California Rare Plant Rank Definitions

Rank	1A	presumed extirpated in California and 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 needed
	4	plants of limited distribution
Threat	0.1	Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)
	0.2	Moderately 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)

(RBC, 2022a, Table 2)

1. Special-Status Plant Species Observed

No special-status plant species were observed during biological surveys conducted on the Project site or within the overall Survey Area. Special-status plants assessed for their potential to occur within the Survey Area are presented in Appendix E to the Project's BR (*Technical Appendix C1*). It should be noted that CRPR 3 and 4 species were omitted from the potential to occur analysis due to their relatively low threat status. Additionally, non-listed special-status plant species with low, very low, or no potential to occur are not addressed further in



this Subsection. These species have low or no potential for occurrence, no impacts are anticipated on these species. (RBC, 2022a, p. 14)

2. Threatened and Endangered Plant Species

No federally- or State-listed threatened or endangered plants were observed during general biological surveys and none have moderate or high potential to occur within or immediately adjacent to the Survey Area due to lack of suitable habitats. Coachella Valley milkvetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*; federally endangered (FE)) has low potential to occur within the Survey Area and is discussed below. There is no designated critical habitat for federally- or State-listed species within or adjacent to the Survey Area. (RBC, 2022a, p. 14)

- **Coachella Valley Milkvetch**: Coachella Valley milkvetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*; FE) is found in dune or Sonoran desert scrub habitats where new sand is available, often as a result of the wind-related sand transport system. Coachella Valley milkvetch is endemic and limited to California and exhibits pink-purple petals, leaves composed of leaflets, and a legume-shaped fruit typical of other Fabaceae species. Suitable elevations for Coachella Valley milkvetch range from 130-2,150 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Development on or adjacent to suitable habitat and habitat degradation via fragmentation, human activities (e.g., off-road vehicle use), and competition with invasives has led to the decline of Coachella Valley milkvetch. Coachella Valley milkvetch is a Covered Species under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). (RBC, 2022a, pp. 14-15)

Coachella Valley milkvetch was not observed in the Survey Area during biological surveys. This species is vulnerable to off-highway vehicle (OHV) activity, evidence of which is present throughout the Survey Area. In addition, Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*) and Saharan mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) are both present throughout the Survey Area which reduce site suitability for Coachella Valley milkvetch. (RBC, 2022a, p. 15)

3. Other Special Status Plant Species

No other special-status plant species were observed or were determined have the potential to occur in the Survey Area during general biological surveys. There are records of two other special-status plant species occurring in proximity to the Project site: chaparral sand-verbena (*Abronia villosa* var. *aurita*) and flat-seeded spurge (*Euphorbia platysperma*). These species have low potential to occur due significant disturbances that have limited the persistence of native annuals within the Survey Area. Horn's milkvetch (*Astragalus hornii* var. *hornii*) also has been recorded within three miles of the Project site; however, this species was not observed within the Survey Area and does not have potential to occur due to the lack of suitable habitats. No other special-status plant species have a moderate or high potential to occur within the Survey Area due to the lack of suitable habitat. (RBC, 2022a, p. 15)



C. Special-Status Animal Species

1. Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species

No federally- or State-listed wildlife species were documented within or adjacent to the Survey Area during biological surveys. One federally- and State-listed wildlife species, Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (*Uma inornata*; FT and State endangered (SE)), has been recorded within one mile of the Project site and the Survey Area overlaps with Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard critical habitat per the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consulting (IPaC) database query and Critical Habitat for Threatened and Endangered Species database. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and USFWS database did not identify any additional federally or State-listed wildlife within or immediately adjacent to the Survey Area. No other federally or State-listed wildlife species have moderate or high potential to occur within the Survey Area due to lack of suitable habitat nor does critical habitat for any of these species occur within the Survey Area. (RBC, 2022a, p. 15)

- **Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard**: Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP and is found in desert wash habitats, sparse desert, or alkali scrub where fine, windblown sand or dunes for burrowing are present. They are primarily insectivorous, and populations tend to fluctuate with precipitation rates which likely affect food availability. Habitat loss/fragmentation and degradation of the aeolian sand transport system through development has led to the decline of Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. Though highly degraded, the Survey Area overlaps with critical habitat for Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard; however, the Project has no federal funding or authorizations, and critical habitat designations do not restrict Project activities without federal nexus. Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard has low potential to occur within the Survey Area due to a general lack of windblown sands and dunes, surrounding development, and anthropogenic disturbances, such as off-road vehicle use and garbage. (RBC, 2022a, p. 16)

2. Other Special-Status Wildlife Species

California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*) and yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*) were the only other special-status wildlife species observed on the Project site during the biological survey. Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus tereticaudus chlorus*) also is presumed to be present, as discussed below. No additional non-federally/State-listed special-status wildlife species were observed during biological surveys. Several non-federally/State-listed special-status wildlife species have moderate to high potential to occur on site, including LeConte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), vermilion flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*), and Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*). (RBC, 2022a, p. 16)

- **Burrowing Owl**: Burrowing owl is designated a CDFW Species of Special Concern (SSC). Suitable burrowing owl habitat can be found in annual and perennial grasslands, deserts, and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. Suitable burrowing owl habitat also may include trees and shrubs if the canopy covers less than 30 percent of the ground surface. Burrows are the essential component of burrowing owl habitat; both natural and artificial burrows provide protection, shelter, and nests for burrowing owl. Burrowing owl typically use burrows made by rodents, such as ground



squirrels or badgers, but may also use human-made structures, such as concrete culverts; concrete, asphalt, or wood debris piles; or openings beneath concrete or asphalt pavement. (RBC, 2022a, p. 16)

Burrowing owls have declined throughout much of their range because of habitat loss due to urbanization, agricultural conversion, and destruction of ground squirrel colonies. The incidental poisoning of burrowing owls and the destruction of their burrows during eradication programs aimed at rodent colonies have also caused their decline. Although burrowing owl are relatively tolerant of lower levels of human activity, human-related impacts, such as shooting and introduction of non-native predators, have negative population impacts. Burrowing owl often nest and perch near roads where they are vulnerable to roadside shooting, fatal car strikes, and general harassment. Burrowing owl is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 16-17)

No burrowing owl, burrowing owl sign, or suitable burrows were observed within the Survey Area during the general biological survey. Burrowing owl has a low potential to occur within the Survey Area based on the lack of suitable burrows. Despite low potential for occupancy within the Survey Area, the Project site and off-site improvement areas could support burrowing owls in the future. Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel squirrels are presumed to occur within the Survey Area and could create burrows suitable to support burrowing owl in the future. (RBC, 2022a, p. 17)

- **California Horned Lark:** California horned lark is designated a CDFW Watch List (WL) species, which is found from coastal deserts and grasslands to alpine dwarf-shrub habitat above treeline, and in coniferous or chaparral habitats. It is a common to abundant resident in a variety of open habitats, usually found in habitats where trees and large shrubs are absent. Within Southern California, California horned lark nests on the ground in open fields, grasslands, and rangelands. Horned larks forage in areas with low-growing vegetation and feed primarily on grains and other seeds, shifting to mostly insects in the summer months. California horned lark breeds from March through July, with a peak in activity in May. Pairs do not maintain territories outside of the breeding season and instead form large gregarious, somewhat nomadic flocks. (RBC, 2022a, p. 17)

Threats to California horned lark include habitat destruction and fragmentation. Habitats preferred by California horned lark are easily converted to other landscapes and human uses such as farmland and development. Pesticides also have been shown to poison and kill horned larks. As a ground nester, California horned lark is vulnerable to mowing in a variety of habitats and pesticide use in agricultural fields. California horned lark is not a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP; however, the CVMSHCP conserves habitat suitable for this species through the protection of other species (e.g., Palm Springs pocket mouse). (RBC, 2022a, p. 17)

California horned lark individuals were observed within the northern portion of the Project site during the general biological survey. Disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub within the Survey Area provides suitable habitat for foraging and nesting. (RBC, 2022a, p. 17)

- **Coachella Valley Round-tailed Ground Squirrel:** Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, also known as Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel, is designated an SSC. Suitable Coachella



Valley round-tailed ground squirrel habitat can be found in the Coachella Valley in eolian dunes and desert scrub containing shrubs for cover and burrowing. Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel prefer to reside in mesquite thickets and coarse sand/gravel soils of the Lower Sonoran Life Zone (i.e., the arid, hot deserts of the southwestern United States and northwest Mexico). Omnivorous Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrels feed on mesquite and creosote seeds, bark, flowers, and leaves as well as annual seeds, cultivated plants, carrion, ants, termites, and grasshoppers. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 17-18)

Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel have declined due to habitat degradation, the conversion of dunes and desert scrub to development/agricultural land, and predation by domestic animals at habitat edges. Off-road vehicle use dismantles burrows and leads to unfavorable soil compaction over time. Habitat suitability for Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel also decreases with the introduction of invasives, such as Saharan mustard, which limit visibility for predator detection. Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP. (RBC, 2022a, p. 18)

Suitable habitat for Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel was observed within the Project site and one round-tailed ground squirrel (subspecies unknown) was detected during the general biological survey. A round-tailed ground squirrel specimen collected in 1954 within approximately 0.25-mile of the survey area was identified as the *chlorus* subspecies in 2009. Based on the proximity to a nearby confirmed collection, the round-tailed ground squirrel observed on site was most likely the *chlorus* subspecies. (RBC, 2022a, p. 18)

- **LeConte's Thrasher:** LeConte's thrasher is designated an SSC and is primarily found in open desert wash, desert scrub, alkali desert scrub, and desert succulent shrub habitats with well-drained soils characteristic of alluvial fans. Though predominately insectivorous, LeConte's thrasher occasionally consumes seeds and small vertebrates. LeConte's thrasher hunts on the ground by prodding leaf litter or soils to flush prey. Nesting occurs above ground in desert washes within dense cactus or spiny shrub cover. (RBC, 2022a, p. 18)

Habitat loss and degradation threaten LeConte's thrasher populations. Suitable habitat is often manipulated by off-road vehicle use or is converted to agriculture, grazed pasture, or developed land. Wildfires which periodically destroy salt bush scrub habitats and soil seed stores further threaten LeConte's thrasher populations. LeConte's thrasher is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP. (RBC, 2022a, p. 18)

Field assessments confirmed the presence of suitable, disturbed patches of creosote bush scrub; LeConte's thrasher has moderate potential to occur within the Survey Area. (RBC, 2022a, p. 18)

- **Palm Springs Pocket Mouse:** Palm Springs pocket mouse is designated as an SSC. Suitable burrowing habitat occurs in creosote scrub, desert scrub, and grasslands with sparse to moderately dense vegetative cover. Palm Springs pocket mice prefer loosely packed or sandy soils for burrowing and seed caching and tend to co-occur with creosote bush, brittlebush (*Encelia farinose*), burrobrush,



and desert tea (*Ephedra californica*). Palm Springs pocket mice are less common in areas that have experienced anthropogenic disturbances and soil compaction through off-road vehicle use. Palm springs pocket mouse is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 18-19)

Suitable habitat for Palm springs pocket mouse was observed within the Survey Area, including the Project site and off-site improvement areas. The Project site and off-site improvement areas primarily consist of disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub and contain vegetation species, such as creosote bush, commonly associated with Palm Springs pocket mouse. Additionally, soil types on site include fine sands (of the Carsitas, Myoma, and Coachella series), which are loosely packed in some regions, though no burrows were observed on site. Palm springs pocket mouse has moderate potential to occur on the Project site and off-site improvement areas based on the presence of disturbed suitable habitat. (RBC, 2022a, p. 19)

- **Prairie Falcon:** Prairie falcon is designated as a WL species when nesting. Suitable prairie falcon habitat is primarily confined to perennial grasslands, savannahs, rangeland, agricultural fields, and desert scrub; however, individuals may occasionally be found in annual grasslands and alpine meadows. Prairie falcon primarily feed on small mammals (especially lagomorphs), birds, and invertebrates; food caching amongst individuals and pairs is common. Primary threats to prairie falcon include hunting and habitat degradation. Declines in prey (e.g., ground squirrel) populations due to wildfires and the conversion of grasslands to monotypic agriculture strain food availability and mining activities and human perturbation of nesting sites further decrease prairie falcon survival rates. Prairie falcon is not a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP; however, the CVMSHCP conserves suitable habitat for this species through the protection of Core Habitat for other species (e.g., Palm Springs pocket mouse). (RBC, 2022a, p. 19)

Suitable disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub habitat and avian and fossorial prey occur on the Project site and off-site improvement areas. Prairie falcon has moderate potential to occur within the Survey Area based on the presence of suitable foraging habitat. (RBC, 2022a, p. 19)

- **Vermillion Flycatcher:** Vermillion flycatcher is designated as an SSC when nesting. Suitable vermilion flycatcher habitat can be found in deserts, scrub, agricultural fields, parks, golf courses, and riparian woodlands, often near a water source. In California, vermilion flycatchers are known to exist in cottonwood-willow woodlands, residential areas, and parks. They commonly nest in willows (*Salix* spp.), cottonwoods (*Populus* spp.), mesquites (*Prosopis* spp.), and western sycamores (*Platanus racemosa*), and occasionally in non-native trees, such as elms (*Ulmus* spp.), olives (*Olea europaea*), black locusts (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), tamarisks (*Tamarix* spp.), and eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.). Vermillion flycatchers prefer to nest along channels and are negatively impacted by development and anthropogenic water use. Depletion of desert ground water and habitat destruction are of concern in certain regions. Flying insects (e.g., members of Diptera, Coleoptera, Orthoptera, and Lepidoptera) make up the majority of the vermilion flycatcher's diet. Vermillion flycatcher is not a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP however, the CVMSHCP conserves suitable habitat for this species through the protection of Core Habitat for other species (e.g., southwestern willow flycatcher [*Empidonax traillii extimus*]). (RBC, 2022a, pp. 19-20)



The Project site and off-site improvement areas provide suitable habitat for vermilion flycatcher in the form of disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub. Mesquite and tamarisk, both suitable for nesting, were observed within the Survey Area. Additionally, a detention basin in the southwestern portion of the Survey Area, agricultural land to the north, and golf courses to the south offer potential water sources. Vermilion flycatcher has a moderate potential to occur within the Survey Area. (RBC, 2022a, p. 20)

- **Yellow Warbler:** Yellow warbler is designated an SSC when nesting. In southern California, yellow warbler nests in open-canopy lowland and foothill riparian woodlands dominated by cottonwoods, alders (*Alnus* spp.), or willows up to 8,000 feet amsl. The species is typically found in California from April to October where it holds a small territory for nesting and foraging. The yellow warbler forages for insects and spiders in the upper canopy of deciduous trees and shrubs. It builds a cup nest 2-16 feet off the ground in in alders, cottonwoods, and willows and usually lays 4-5 eggs. Yellow warblers are threatened by habitat destruction and fragmentation, especially of riparian habitats, and brood-parasitism by brown-headed cowbirds. Yellow warbler was observed during the general biological survey along developed land adjacent to a detention basin within the southwestern portion of the Survey Area. (RBC, 2022a, p. 20)

D. Wildlife Linkages/Corridors

A wildlife corridor can be defined as a physical feature that links wildlife habitat, often consisting of native vegetation that joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat. Corridors enable migration, colonization, and genetic diversity through interbreeding and are therefore critical for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations. Corridors can consist of large, linear stretches of connected habitat (such as riparian vegetation) or as a sequence of stepping-stones across the landscape (discontinuous areas of habitat such as wetlands and ornamental vegetation). Corridors also can be larger habitat areas with known or likely importance to local fauna. (RBC, 2022a, p. 20)

Regional corridors are defined as those linking two or more large patches of habitat, and local corridors are defined as those allowing resident animals to access critical resources (food, cover, and water) in a smaller area that might otherwise be isolated by urban development. A viable wildlife migration corridor consists of more than an unobstructed path between habitat areas. Appropriate vegetation communities must be present to provide food and cover for both transient species and resident populations of less mobile animals. There must also be a sufficient lack of stressors and threats within and adjacent to the corridor for species to use it successfully. (RBC, 2022a, p. 20)

The Project site is situated in the northwest and central regions of the unincorporated community of Thousand Palms to the northwest of a developed residential area. Undeveloped land and a recycling facility border the Project site to the north and sparse commercial development surrounds the site to the south. Additional residential development and vacant lots lie east of the Project site. The off-site improvement areas are unlikely to be used by wildlife species as corridors given that these areas primarily are developed and surrounded by residential development. The Project site is undeveloped and likely conveys wildlife movement in some capacity given that it is adjacent to larger undeveloped tracts of land; however, areas to the north of the Project



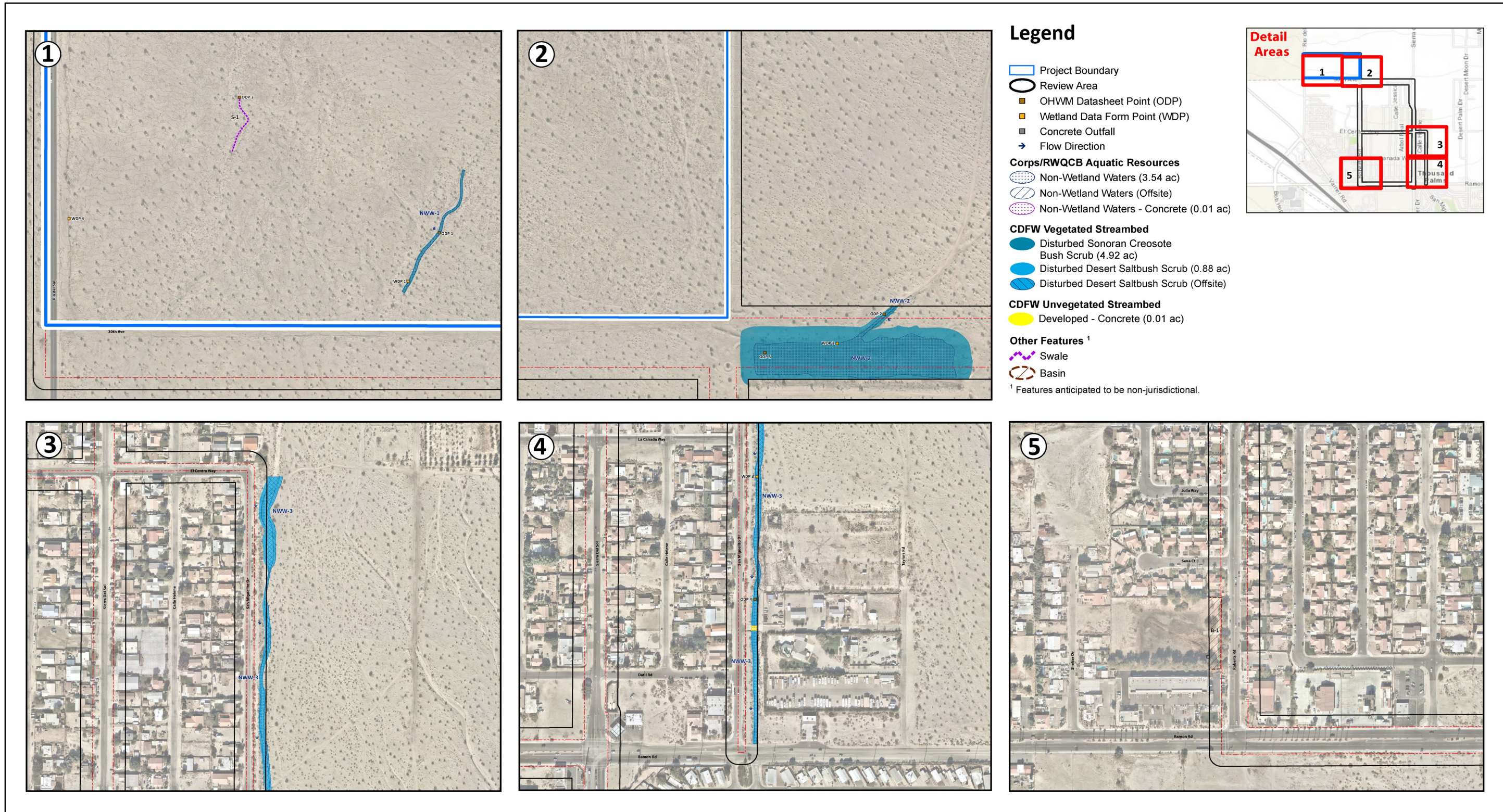
site likely function as the primary regional corridors given their increased distance from development and direct connectivity to high quality habitat. CDFW's Terrestrial Connectivity dataset confirm these assessments, assigning land within the Project site as connectivity ranks 3 (connections with implementation flexibility) and 1 (limited connectivity opportunity), whereas lands north and northeast of the Project site are assigned rank 4 (conservation planning linkages). Although lands northeast of the Project site are within the Thousand Palms Linkage, the CVMSCHP does not designate land within the Project site as part of a linkage or biological corridor. (RBC, 2022a, p. 21)

E. Jurisdictional Aquatic Resources

An aquatic resources report was conducted by RBC and is included as *Technical Appendix C2* to this EIR. The Survey Area supports three aquatic resources, Non Wetland Water (NWW)-1, NWW-2, and NWW-3, that have the potential to be jurisdictional by the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and/or CDFW. Figure 4.4-2, *Jurisdictional Aquatic Resources Map*, depicts the location and extent of mapped jurisdictional areas. It should be noted that although the Project's BR indicates that aquatic resources NNW-1, NNW-2, and NNW-3 may contain up to 3.55 acres (2,647 linear feet) of areas that may be considered jurisdictional by the Corps, on March 3, 2023, the Corps issued a letter to the Project Applicant. According to this letter, it was determined that none of the aquatic resources within the Survey Area comprise water(s) of the United States pursuant to 33 CFR Part 325.9. As such, under existing conditions the Survey Area does not include any areas that are considered jurisdictional by the Corps. Accordingly, no further discussion of federally-regulated aquatic resources under Corps jurisdiction is provided in this subsection. A copy of the letter from the Corps is included as *Technical Appendix C3* to this EIR.

As summarized in Table 4.4-3, *Survey Area Aquatic/Jurisdictional Resources Summary*, the Project site supports a single drainage (referred to herein as NWW-1) comprising approximately 0.13-acre (586 linear feet) that is classified as non-wetland waters of the State and that may be jurisdictional by the RWQCB. NWW-1 also supports approximately 0.16-acre (586 linear feet) of vegetated streambed that comprises CDFW jurisdictional areas. Two additional drainages occur within the overall Survey Area. One of these drainages, identified as NWW-2, occurs just to the southeast of the Project site and comprises approximately 2.84 acres (462 linear feet) that is classified as non-wetland waters of the State and that may be jurisdictional by the RWQCB. NWW-2 also contains 4.76 acres (462 linear feet) of vegetated streambed that comprises CDFW jurisdictional areas. A third drainage, referred to herein as NWW-3, occurs to the east of San Miguelito Drive and occurs outside of areas anticipated to be impacted by power poles to be installed as part of the Project. Drainage NWW-3 comprises 0.58-acre (1,599 linear feet) that is classified as non-wetland waters of the State and that may be jurisdictional by the RWQCB. Drainage NWW-3 also contains 0.88-acre (1,578 linear feet) of vegetated streambed and 0.01-acre (22 linear feet) of unvegetated streambed considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. The Survey Area also supports one swale (Swale [S-]1) and one basin (Basin [B-]1) that are not jurisdictional by the Corps, RWQCB, or CDFW (RBC, 2022a, pp. 21-22)

The primary known hydrologic sources for the observed drainage features are direct precipitation and runoff from the surrounding sparsely developed areas. Based on field observations, the westernmost feature delineated within the south-central portion of the Project site (NWW-1) travels north to south/southwest



Source(s): Rocks Biological Consulting (12-09-2023)

Figure 4.4-2

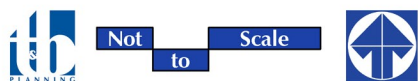




Table 4.4-3 Survey Area Aquatic/Jurisdictional Resources Summary

RWQCB Jurisdictional Areas ¹				
Aquatic Resource ID	Presence of OHWM/Wetland	Vegetation Community	Acreage	Linear Feet
NWW-1	Yes/No	Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub	0.13	586
NWW-2	Yes/No	Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub	2.84	462
NWW-3	Yes/No	Disturbed Desert Saltbush Scrub	0.58	1,599
Totals:			3.55	2,647
CDFW Jurisdictional Areas				
Aquatic Resource ID	Aquatic Resource Type	Vegetation Community	Acreage	Linear Feet
NWW-1	Vegetated Streambed	Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub	0.16	586
NWW-2	Vegetated Streambed	Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub	4.76	462
NWW-3	Unvegetated Streambed	Developed – Concrete	0.01	22
	Vegetated Streambed	Disturbed Desert Saltbush Scrub	0.88	1,578
Totals:			5.82	2,647

1. Although the Project’s BR indicates that areas subject to RWQCB jurisdiction also may be subject to jurisdiction by the Corps, the Corps issued a letter, dated March 3, 2023, clarifying that none of the aquatic resources within the Project’s Survey Area comprise Water(s) of the United States pursuant to 33 CFR Part 325.9. Accordingly, no waters subject to Corps jurisdiction occurs within the Survey Area. A copy of the letter from the Corps is included as EIR *Technical Appendix C3*.

(RBC, 2022a, Tables 3 and 4)

following a slight change in topography before terminating on site; the central feature delineated within the northern portion of the off-site portions of the Survey Area (NWW-2) travels north to south/southwest before terminating in a detention basin; and the easternmost feature delineated off-site within the eastern portion of the Survey Area (NWW-3) travels north to south following a slight change in topography before terminating on site at Ramon Road. (RBC, 2022b, p. 7)

4.4.2 APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations governing the protection of biological resources.

A. *Federal Regulations*

1. *Endangered Species Act (ESA)*

The purpose of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) is to protect and recover imperiled species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. It is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Commerce Department’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The USFWS has primary responsibility for terrestrial and freshwater organisms, while the responsibilities of NMFS are mainly marine wildlife such as whales and anadromous fish such as salmon. Under the ESA, species may be listed as either endangered or threatened. “Endangered” means a species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. “Threatened” means a species is likely to become endangered within the



foreseeable future. All species of plants and animals, except pest insects, are eligible for listing as endangered or threatened. (USFWS, 2017)

The ESA makes it unlawful for a person to take a listed animal without a permit. Take is defined as “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect or attempt to engage in any such conduct.” Through regulations, the term “harm” is defined as “an act which actually kills or injures wildlife. Such an act may include significant habitat modification or degradation where it actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” Listed plants are not protected from take, although it is illegal to collect or maliciously harm them on federal land. Protection from commercial trade and the effects of federal actions do apply for plants. (USFWS, 2017)

Section 7 of the ESA requires federal agencies to use their legal authorities to promote the conservation purposes of the ESA and to consult with the USFWS and NMFS, as appropriate, to ensure that effects of actions they authorize, fund, or carry out are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species. During consultation, the “action” agency receives a “biological opinion” or concurrence letter addressing the proposed action. In the relatively few cases in which the USFWS or NMFS makes a jeopardy determination, the agency offers “reasonable and prudent alternatives” about how the proposed action could be modified to avoid jeopardy. It is extremely rare that a project ends up being withdrawn or terminated because of jeopardy to a listed species. (USFWS, 2017)

Section 10 of the ESA may be used by landowners including private citizens, corporations, tribes, states, and counties who want to develop property inhabited by listed species. Landowners may receive a permit to take such species incidental to otherwise legal activities, provided they have developed an approved habitat conservation plan (HCP). HCPs include an assessment of the likely impacts on the species from the proposed action, the steps that the permit holder will take to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts, and the funding available to carry out the steps. HCPs may benefit not only landowners but also species by securing and managing important habitat and by addressing economic development with a focus on species conservation. (USFWS, 2017)

2. *Clean Water Act Section 401*

Clean Water Act (CWA) § 401 water quality certification provides states and authorized tribes with an effective tool to help protect water quality, by providing them an opportunity to address the aquatic resource impacts of federally issued permits and licenses. Under § 401, a federal agency cannot issue a permit or license for an activity that may result in a discharge to waters of the U.S. until the state or tribe where the discharge would originate has granted or waived § 401 certification. The central feature of CWA § 401 is the state or tribe’s ability to grant, grant with conditions, deny, or waive certification. Granting certification, with or without conditions, allows the federal permit or license to be issued consistent with any conditions of the certification. Denying certification prohibits the federal permit or license from being issued. Waiver allows the permit or license to be issued without state or tribal comment. States and tribes make their decisions to deny, certify, or condition permits or licenses based in part on the proposed project’s compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved water quality standards. In addition, states and tribes consider whether the activity leading to the discharge will comply with any applicable effluent limitations



guidelines, new source performance standards, toxic pollutant restrictions, and other appropriate requirements of state or tribal law. (EPA, 2022c)

Many states and tribes rely on § 401 certification to ensure that discharges of dredge or fill material into a water of the U.S. do not cause unacceptable environmental impacts and, more generally, as their primary regulatory tool for protecting wetlands and other aquatic resources. However, § 401 is limited in scope and application to situations involving federally-permitted or licensed activities that may result in a discharge to a water of the U.S. If a federal permit or license is not required, or would authorize impacts only to waters that are not waters of the U.S., the activity is not subject to the CWA § 401. (EPA, 2022c)

3. *Clean Water Act Section 404*

Section 404 of the CWA establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Wetlands subject to Clean Water Act Section 404 are defined as “areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.” Activities in waters of the United States regulated under this program include fill for development, water resource projects (such as dams and levees), infrastructure development (such as highways and airports) and mining projects. Section 404 requires a permit before dredged or fill material may be discharged into waters of the United States, unless the activity is exempt from Section 404 regulation (e.g. certain farming and forestry activities). (EPA, n.d.)

The basic premise of the program is that no discharge of dredged or fill material may be permitted if: (1) a practicable alternative exists that is less damaging to the aquatic environment; or (2) the nation’s waters would be significantly degraded. Applications for permits must, to the extent practicable: (1) demonstrate steps have been taken to avoid wetland impacts; (2) demonstrate that potential impacts on wetlands have been minimized; and (3) provide compensation for any remaining unavoidable impacts. Proposed activities are regulated through a permit review process. (EPA, n.d.)

An individual permit is required for potentially significant impacts. Individual permits are reviewed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), which evaluates applications under a public interest review, as well as the environmental criteria set forth in the CWA Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines. However, for most discharges that will have only minimal adverse effects, a general permit may be suitable. General permits are issued on a nationwide, regional, or State basis for particular categories of activities. The general permit process eliminates individual review and allows certain activities to proceed with little or no delay, provided that the general or specific conditions for the general permit are met. States also have a role in Section 404 decisions, through state program general permits, water quality certification, or program assumption. (EPA, n.d.)

4. *Executive Order 11990 – Protection of Wetlands*

The purpose of Executive Order (EO) 11990 is to "minimize the destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands." To meet these objectives, the



Order requires federal agencies, in planning their actions, to consider alternatives to wetland sites and limit potential damage if an activity affecting a wetland cannot be avoided. (FEMA, 2023) The Order applies to:

- Acquisition, management, and disposition of federal lands and facilities construction and improvement projects which are undertaken, financed, or assisted by federal agencies;
- Federal activities and programs affecting land use, including but not limited to water and related land resources planning, regulation, and licensing activities. (FEMA, 2023)

The procedures require the determination of whether or not the proposed project will be in or will affect wetlands. If so, a wetlands assessment must be prepared that describes the alternatives considered. The procedures include a requirement for public review of assessments. (FEMA, 2023)

5. Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC Section 703-712)

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) makes it illegal for anyone to take, possess, import, export, transport, sell, purchase, barter, or offer for sale, purchase, or barter, any migratory bird, or the parts, nests, or eggs of such a bird except under the terms of a valid permit issued pursuant to federal regulations. The migratory bird species protected by the MBTA are listed in 50 CFR 10.13. The USFWS has statutory authority and responsibility for enforcing the MBTA (16 U.S.C. 703-712). The MBTA implements Conventions between the United States and four countries (Canada, Mexico, Japan, and Russia) for the protection of migratory birds. (USFWS, n.d.)

B. State Regulations

1. California Endangered Species Act (CESA)

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) states that all native species of fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, invertebrates, and plants, and their habitats, threatened with extinction and those experiencing a significant decline which, if not halted, would lead to a threatened or endangered designation, will be protected or preserved. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) works with interested persons, agencies, and organizations to protect and preserve such sensitive resources and their habitats. CESA prohibits the take of any species of wildlife designated by the California Fish and Game Commission as endangered, threatened, or candidate species. CDFW may authorize the take of any such species if certain conditions are met. (CDFW, n.d.)

Section 2081 subdivision (b) of the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC) allows CDFW to authorize take of species listed as endangered, threatened, candidate, or a rare plant, if that take is incidental to otherwise lawful activities and if certain conditions are met. These authorizations are commonly referred to as incidental take permits (ITPs). (CDFW, n.d.)

If a species is listed by both the federal ESA and CESA, CFGC Section 2080.1 allows an applicant who has obtained a federal incidental take statement (federal Section 7 consultation) or a federal incidental take permit (federal Section 10(a)(1)(B)) to request that the Director of CDFW find the federal documents consistent with



CESA. If the federal documents are found to be consistent with CESA, a consistency determination (CD) is issued and no further authorization or approval is necessary under CESA. (CDFW, n.d.)

A Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) authorizes incidental take of a species listed as endangered, threatened, candidate, or a rare plant, if implementation of the agreement is reasonably expected to provide a net conservation benefit to the species, among other provisions. SHAs are intended to encourage landowners to voluntarily manage their lands to benefit CESA-listed species. California SHAs are analogous to the federal safe harbor agreement program and CDFW has the authority to issue a consistency determination based on a federal safe harbor agreement. (CDFW, n.d.)

2. *Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (NCCP)*

CDFW's Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program takes a broad-based ecosystem approach to planning for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity. The NCCP program began in 1991 as a cooperative effort to protect habitats and species. It is broader in its orientation and objectives than the California and Federal Endangered Species Acts, as these laws are designed to identify and protect individual species that have already declined in number significantly. (CDFW, n.d.)

An NCCP identifies and provides for the regional protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. Working with landowners, environmental organizations, and other interested parties, a local agency oversees the numerous activities that compose the development of an NCCP. CDFW and the USFWS provide the necessary support, direction, and guidance to NCCP participants. (CDFW, n.d.)

There are currently 17 approved NCCPs (includes 6 subarea plans) and more than 9 NCCPs in various stages of planning (includes 2 subarea plans), which together cover more than 8 million acres and will provide conservation for nearly 400 special status species and a wide diversity of natural community types throughout California. (CDFW, n.d.)

3. *California Fish and Game Code, Section 1600, et seq.*

CFGC section 1602 requires an entity to notify CDFW prior to commencing any activity that may do one or more of the following: (1) substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream, or lake; (2) substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream, or lake; or (3) deposit debris, waste or other materials that could pass into any river, stream, or lake. The CFGC indicates that "any river, stream or lake" includes those that are episodic (they are dry for periods of time) as well as those that are perennial (they flow year-round). This includes ephemeral streams, desert washes, and watercourses with a subsurface flow. It may also apply to work undertaken within the flood plain of a body of water. (CDFW, n.d.)

CDFW requires a Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Agreement when it determines that the activity, as described in a complete LSA Notification, may substantially adversely affect existing fish or wildlife resources. An LSA Agreement includes measures necessary to protect existing fish and wildlife resources.



CDFW may suggest ways to modify a project that would eliminate or reduce harmful impacts to fish and wildlife resources. Before issuing an LSA Agreement, CDFW must comply with CEQA. (CDFW, n.d.)

4. *Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977*

The Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) was enacted in 1977 and allows the Fish and Game Commission to designate plants as rare or endangered. There are 64 species, subspecies, and varieties of plants that are protected as rare under the NPPA. The NPPA prohibits take of endangered or rare native plants, 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, n.d.)

5. *Unlawful Take or Destruction of Nests or Eggs (CFGF Sections 3503.5-3513)*

Section 3503.5 of the CFGF specifically protects birds of prey, stating: “It is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any . . . [birds-of-prey] or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.” Section 3513 of the CFGF duplicates the federal protection of migratory birds, stating: “It is unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird as designated in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act or any part of such migratory nongame bird except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.” (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

6. *Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act*

The Porter-Cologne Act is the principal law governing water quality regulation in California. It establishes a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water. The Porter-Cologne Act applies to surface waters, wetlands, and ground water and to both point and nonpoint sources of pollution. Pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act (California Water Code section 13000 et seq.), the policy of the State is as follows:

- That the quality of all the waters of the State shall be protected;
- That all activities and factors affecting the quality of water shall be regulated to attain the highest water quality within reason; and
- That the State must be prepared to exercise its full power and jurisdiction to protect the quality of water in the State from degradation. (SWRCB, 2018)

The Porter-Cologne Act established nine Regional Water Boards (based on hydrogeologic barriers) and the State Water Board, which are charged with implementing its provisions and which have primary responsibility for protecting water quality in California. The State Water Board provides program guidance and oversight, allocates funds, and reviews Regional Water Boards decisions. In addition, the State Water Board allocates rights to the use of surface water. The Regional Water Boards have primary responsibility for individual permitting, inspection, and enforcement actions within each of nine hydrologic regions. The State Water Board and Regional Water Boards have numerous Non-Point Source (NPS)-related responsibilities, including monitoring and assessment, planning, financial assistance, and management. (SWRCB, 2018)



The Regional Water Boards regulate discharges under the Porter-Cologne Act primarily through issuance of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for point source discharges and waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for NPS discharges. Anyone discharging or proposing to discharge materials that could affect water quality (other than to a community sanitary sewer system regulated by an NPDES permit) must file a report of waste discharge. The SWRCB and the RWQCBs can make their own investigations or may require dischargers to carry out water quality investigations and report on water quality issues. The Porter-Cologne Act provides several options for enforcing WDRs and other orders, including cease and desist orders, cleanup and abatement orders, administrative civil liability orders, civil court actions, and criminal prosecutions. (SWRCB, 2018)

The Porter-Cologne Act also requires adoption of water quality control plans that contain the guiding policies of water pollution management in California. A number of statewide water quality control plans have been adopted by the State Water Board. In addition, regional water quality control plans (basin plans) have been adopted by each of the Regional Water Boards and get updated as necessary and practical. These plans identify the existing and potential beneficial uses of waters of the State and establish water quality objectives to protect these uses. The basin plans also contain implementation, surveillance, and monitoring plans. Statewide and regional water quality control plans include enforceable prohibitions against certain types of discharges, including those that may pertain to nonpoint sources. Portions of water quality control plans, the water quality objectives and beneficial use designations, are subject to review by the EPA, when approved they become water quality standards under the CWA. (SWRCB, 2018)

C. Local and Regional Plans and Regulations

1. Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP)

The CVMSHCP is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County. The overall goal of the CVMSHCP is to maintain and enhance biological diversity and ecosystem processes within the region while allowing for future economic growth. The CVMSHCP covers 27 sensitive plant and wildlife species, as well as 27 natural communities. The overall provisions for the Plan are subdivided according to specific resource conservation goals and organized according to geographic areas, i.e., Conservation Areas. These areas are identified as ‘Core,’ ‘Essential’ or ‘Other Conserved Habitat’ for sensitive plant, invertebrate, amphibian, reptile, bird and mammal species plus ‘Essential Ecological Process Areas’ and ‘Biological Corridors and Linkages.’ Each Conservation Area has specific Conservation Objectives that must be satisfied. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.8-51)

The CVMSHCP received final approval on October 1, 2008. This, plus an Implementing Agreement (IA), allows signatories of the IA to issue take authorizations for all species covered by the CVMSHCP, including State and federally-listed species, as well as other identified covered species and their habitats. Each city or local jurisdiction participating in the IA imposes a “development mitigation fee” for projects within its jurisdiction. With payment of the mitigation fee and compliance with the requirements of the CVMSHCP, a project may be deemed compliant with CEQA, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), California



Endangered Species Act (CESA) and the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), and impacts to covered species and their habitat would be deemed less than significant. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.8-51)

The CVMSHCP provides for the long-term survival of protected and sensitive species by designating a contiguous system of habitat to be added to existing public/quasi-public lands. As noted above, the CVMSHCP also includes an impact fee for the purpose of acquiring the requisite conservation lands. A range of biological studies may also be required as part of the CVMSHCP environmental review process to identify the need for specific measures to avoid, minimize and reduce impacts to covered species and their habitat. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.8-51)

2. *Riverside County Oak Tree Management Guidelines*

In March 1993, the County of Riverside issued Oak Tree Management Guidelines to address the treatment of oak woodlands in areas where zoning and/or General Plan density restrictions allow the effective use of clustering. The guidelines are generally considered to be the most effective where minimum lot sizes are 2.5 acres or larger, or where oak woodlands are concentrated in a relatively small portion of a project site. The guidelines include recommendations for oak inventories, land use designs to cluster home sites in order to reduce impacts to oaks and mitigation measures for oak conservation. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.8-53)

3. *Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 – Regulating the Removal of Trees*

Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 regulates the removal of living native trees on parcels of property greater than one-half acre, located above 5,000 feet within the unincorporated area of Riverside County without first obtaining a permit to do so. The purpose of the ordinance is to ensure that the timberlands of Riverside County are protected and the ecological balance of such timberlands is preserved. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.8-53)

4. *Riverside County Ordinance No. 875 - Establishing a Local Development Mitigation Fee for Funding the Preservation of Natural Ecosystem Accordance with the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan*

This ordinance is to establish a Local Development Mitigation Fee to aid in maintaining biological diversity and their supporting natural ecosystem processes; the protection of vegetation communities and natural areas within the county, Coachella Valley and surrounding mountains located in central Riverside County which are known to support threatened, endangered or key sensitive populations of plant and wildlife species; the maintenance of economic development within the unincorporated area of Riverside County by providing a streamlined regulatory process from which development can proceed in an orderly process; and the protection of the existing character of Riverside County and the region through the implementation of a system of reserves to provide permanent open space, community edges and habitat conservation for species covered by the MSHCP. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.2-27)

4.4.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section IV of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to biological resources, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate the Project's impacts to biological resources:



- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 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?
- Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- 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?
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist, are derived from Section IV of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact on biological resources if construction and/or operation of the Project would:

- a. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan;*
- b. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any endangered, or threatened species, as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (Sections 670.2 or 670.5) or in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (Sections 17.11 or 17.12);*
- c. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U. S. Wildlife Service;*
- d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites;*



- e. *Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service;*
- f. *Have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means; or*
- g. *Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project’s impacts to biological resources.

4.4.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

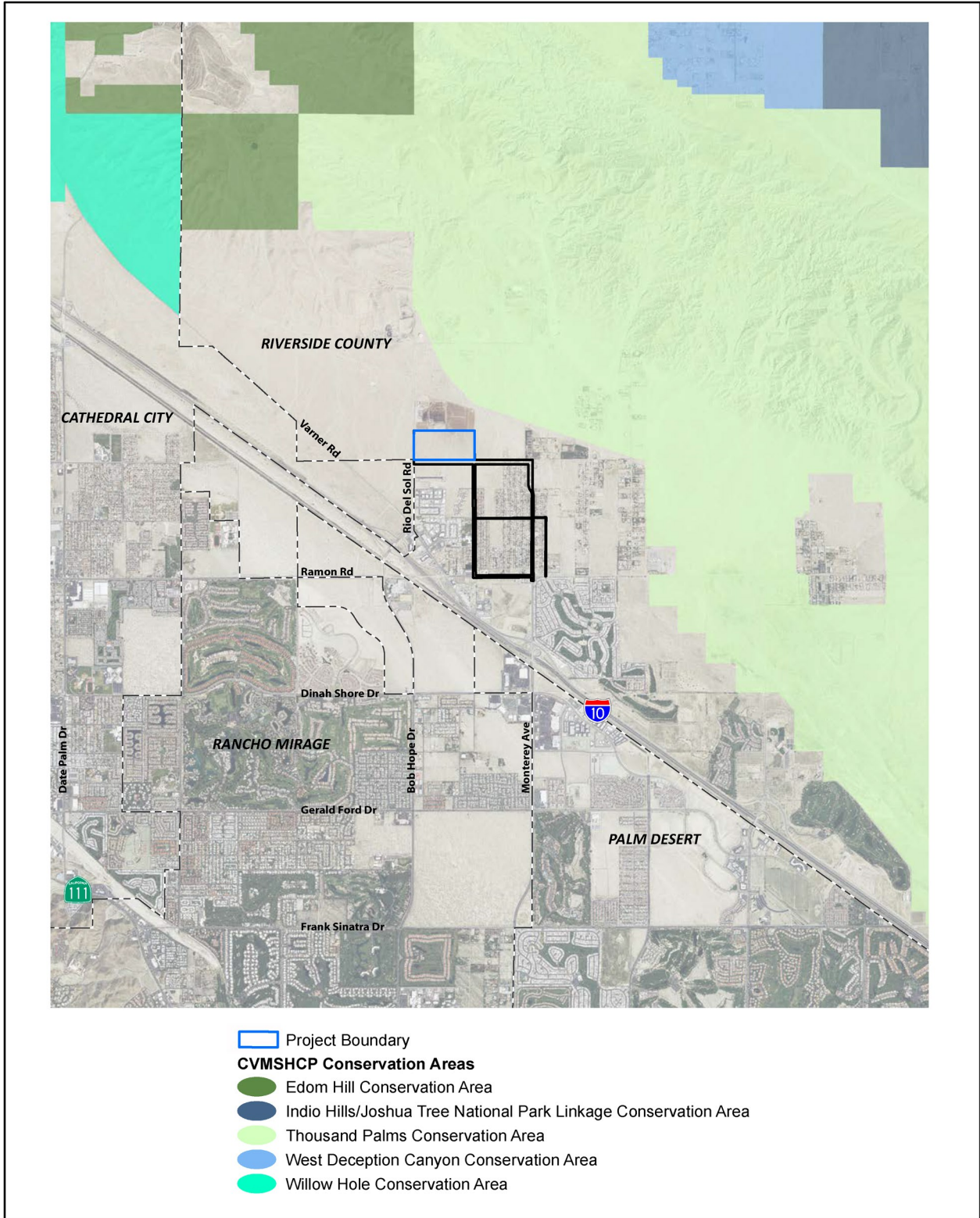
Threshold a.: Would the Project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan?

As previously indicated, the Survey Area (including the Project site) is located within the CVMSHCP plan area. The Project site and off-site improvement areas are not located within a Conservation Area or Core Habitat for any of the CVMSHCP Covered Species. The Thousand Palms Conservation Area is the nearest preserved open space, located approximately 1,200 feet northeast of the Survey Area’s north-central extent, as shown on Figure 4.4-3, *CVMSHCP Conservation Areas*. The proposed Project represents a Covered Activity under the CVMSHCP. As described in Section 7.1 of the CVMSHCP, take authorization will be provided for Covered Activities outside of Conservation areas including “development permitted or approved by Local Permittees. This includes, but is not limited to, new projects approved pursuant to county and city general plans.” (RBC, 2022a, p. 35)

Provided below is an analysis of the Project’s consistency with applicable provisions of the CVMSHCP, including CVMSHCP Section 4.3 (Conservation Areas), Section 4.4 (Required Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation Measures), and Section 4.5 (Land Use Agency Guidelines), based on RBC’s review of the results of the CVMSHCP Open Data Portal Habitat Models. (RBC, 2022a, p. 35)

A. CVMSHCP Conservation Objectives (CVMSHCP Section 4.3)

The Survey Area is not located within a Conservation Area; therefore, it is not subject to the Conservation Objectives set forth in Section 4.3 of the CVMSHCP. The Thousand Palms Conservation Area is the nearest preserved open space, located approximately 1,200 feet northeast of the Survey Area’s northernmost extent. Accordingly, the Project has no potential to conflict with the CVMSHCP conservation objectives pursuant to CVMSHCP Section 4.3, and as such no impact would occur.



Source(s): Rocks Biological Consulting (12-09-2022)

Figure 4.4-3



Not to Scale



CVMShCP Conservation Areas



B. CVMSHCP Required Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures (CVMSHC Section 4.4)

CVMSHCP Section 4.4 describes certain avoidance, minimization, and mitigation requirements for Covered Activities within the Conservation Area. The Project's consistency with the various provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4 is discussed below.

1. Biological Corridors

CVMSHCP Section 4.4 targets specific roads in Conservation Areas, where culverts or under-crossings are required to maintain Biological Corridors. However, the Project site is not targeted for conservation under the CVMSHCP, and the CVMSHCP provides for adequate biological corridors within the Conservation Area. Accordingly, the Project would not conflict with the CVMSHCP requirements for biological corridors, and no impact would occur.

2. Burrowing Owl

CVMSHCP Section 4.4 requires surveys for the burrowing owl and appropriate avoidance of any burrowing owls that may be identified. As previously discussed, no burrowing owl(s), burrowing owl sign, or suitable burrows were observed on site during the general biological survey. Burrowing owl has a low potential to occur within the Survey Area based on the lack of suitable burrows. Despite low potential for occupancy, the Survey Area could support burrowing owls in the future because the species is migratory. Burrowing owl is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP with implementation of mitigation requiring pre-construction surveys. However, in the absence of pre-construction surveys, the Project has the potential to result in impacts to the burrowing owl, which would potentially conflict with the CVMSHCP requirements for mitigation for impacts to this species. Accordingly, prior to mitigation, Project impacts to the burrowing owl would be potentially significant. (RBC, 2022a, p. 17)

3. Covered Riparian Bird Species

Riparian Habitat is addressed by CVMSHCP Section 4.4 and addresses the following natural communities: southern arroyo willow riparian forest, Sonoran cottonwood-willow riparian forest, desert fan palm oasis woodland, and southern sycamore-alder riparian woodland in the Cabazon, Stubbe and Cottonwood Canyons, Whitewater Canyon, Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon, Thousand Palms, Indio Hills Palms, Joshua Tree National Park, Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains, Dos Palmas, Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Delta, and Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Areas. Riparian bird species specifically identified by this provisions of the CVMSHCP include least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, summer tanager, yellow warbler, and yellow-breasted chat.

However, as previously noted, the Project site does not occur within any CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. Based on the results of the Project's BR (*Technical Appendix CI*), the Survey Area does not contain any suitable habitat for the least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, summer tanager, or yellow breasted chat. Although the yellow warbler was detected within the Project's off-site improvement areas along the western side of Robert Road, north of Ramon Road, the yellow warbler is a covered species under the CVMSHCP, which is designed to provide suitable habitat for conservation of this species. Additionally, the



yellow warbler was observed adjacent to a detention basin within areas mapped as “developed,” and the installation of the proposed off-site power poles would not occur within the detention basin. Accordingly, the Project has no potential to result in direct impacts to any active yellow warbler nests. However, there is a potential that covered riparian bird species could establish nests within areas planned for impact by the Project. The CFCG prohibits mortality of native birds, including eggs. Accordingly, prior to mitigation, the Project has the potential to conflict with the CVMSHCP required avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures with respect to nesting riparian birds. This is evaluated as a significant impact for which mitigation would be required.

4. *LeConte’s Thrasher*

As required by CVMSHCP Section 4.4, pre-construction surveys and appropriate avoidance measures are required within suitable habitat for the LeConte’s thrasher within the CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. As previously noted, the Survey Area is not located within the CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. Notwithstanding, the Survey Area contains suitable, disturbed patches of creosote bush scrub that provides habitat for this species. Although the LeConte’s thrasher is a covered species under the CVMSHP, there is nonetheless a potential that LeConte’s thrasher individuals could establish nests within areas planned for development by the Project. As previously noted, the CFCG prohibits mortality of native birds, including eggs. Accordingly, prior to mitigation, Project impacts to the LeConte’s thrasher nesting individuals would be significant requiring mitigation.

5. *Other Species Addressed by CVMSHCP Section 4.4*

CVMSHCP Section 4.4 also addresses several other species; however, the requirements are not applicable to the proposed Project for the reasons discussed below.

The provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4 relating to the following species are not applicable to the proposed Project due to a lack of suitable habitat on site, as documented in Appendix E to the Project’s BR (*Technical Appendix C1*): crissal thrasher; desert tortoise; peninsular bighorn sheep; and triple-ribbed milkvetch. Accordingly, the Project has no potential to conflict with the CVMSHCP with respect to these species.

The provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4 that relate to fluvial sand transport are not applicable to the proposed Project because the Project would not result in any impacts to fluvial transport areas. As such, the Project would have no potential to conflict with CVMSHCP Section 4.4 with respect to fluvial transport areas.

The Provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4 that relate to mesquite hummocks and mesquite bosque natural communities are not applicable to the proposed Project as the Survey Area does not contain any mesquite hummocks and mesquite bosque natural communities. Accordingly, the Project would have no potential to conflict with CVMSHCP Section 4.4 with respect to mesquite hummocks and mesquite bosque natural communities.

The provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4 related to the Palm Springs pocket mouse are not applicable to the proposed Project, as these provisions only apply to habitat in the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon and Willow Hole Conservation Areas, while the Survey Area is located within the Thousand Palms community



and outside of the Thousand Palms Conservation Area. Accordingly, the Project has no potential to conflict with the provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4 related to the Palm Springs pocket mouse.

The provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4 related to the Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus are not applicable to the proposed Project as there is no suitable habitat for this species within the Survey Area.

C. Land Use Adjacency Guidelines (CVMSHCP Section 4.5)

Section 4.5 of the CVMSHCP serves to enforce the avoidance or minimization of indirect effects associated with projects adjacent to or within designated Conservation Areas, and addresses indirect effects due to drainage, toxics, lighting, noise, and invasive plant species. A property is considered adjacent if it shares a border with any parcel of the Conservation Area. The Survey Area is approximately 1,200 feet from the Thousands Palm Conservation Area at its most proximal border; therefore, adherence to the Guidelines is not required by the CVMSHCP. Notwithstanding, RBC recommends adherence to applicable best management practices within the CVMSHCP Guidelines in order to avoid and minimize impacts on adjacent native habitat and as a precautionary measure to ensure compliance with the CVMSHCP. Accordingly, Project impacts due to a potential conflict with the provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.5 would be significant prior to mitigation.

D. CVMSHCP Modeled Habitat

The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) maintains an open data portal of the species habitat models used in preparation of the CVMSHCP. The habitat models indicate occurrence data, occupied habitat, and potential habitat for each CVMSCHP Covered Species. The models provide predictive distribution maps based on the assumption that a particular species has a high probability of occurrence in suitable habitats within its range. The Survey Area supports modeled habitat for six special-status species, as shown in Table 4.4-4, *Assessment of CVMSHCP Modeled Habitat Within the Survey Area*. (RBC, 2022a, p. 35)

Although Modeled Habitat for six Covered Species occurs on site, actual site conditions observed during RBC's general biological surveys vary from those predicted by CVMSHCP modeling. CVMSHCP modelling identifies Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, Coachella Valley milkvetch, and flat-tailed horned lizard as having suitable habitat on site; however, during biological surveys, these species were not identified as having moderate to high potential to occur due to low suitability of habitat. Field assessments confirmed habitat suitability for LeConte's thrasher, Palm Springs pocket mouse, and Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel in concurrence with CVMSHCP modeling. The Survey Area is not located within a Conservation Area; therefore, focused surveys for species with modeled habitat are not required. As such, the Project has no potential to conflict with CVMSHCP policies related to modeled habitat for Covered Species. (RBC, 2022a, p. 36)

E. Conclusion of Project Consistency with the CVMSHCP

The proposed Project would be subject to payment of the CVMSHCP Local Development Mitigation Fee pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 875, which would provide coverage for the Project under the CVMSHCP. Additionally, no portion of the Survey Area is targeted for conservation under the CVMSHCP,



Table 4.4-4 Assessment of CVMSHCP Modeled Habitat Within the Survey Area

Species	Assessment Modeled Habitat
Coachella Valley Jerusalem Cricket (<i>Stenopelmatus cahuilensis</i>)	On-site habitat lacks adequate moisture needed to support this species. Wind deposited sand is limited due to surrounding developed land.
Coachella Valley milkvetch (<i>Astragalus lentiginosus</i> var. <i>coachellae</i>)	On-site habitat has been disturbed by off-road vehicle use and introduction on non-native plants. The natural aeolian sand transport system, which is essential for population viability, has been disrupted by adjacent development.
Flat-tailed horned lizard (<i>Phrynosoma mcallii</i>)	On-site habitat is surrounded by disturbed/developed land which reduces likelihood of species occurrence due to increased direct threats, such as predation by domestic/feral pets and urban adapted native species (e.g., coyote, raven, etc.).
LeConte's thrasher (<i>Toxostoma lecontei</i>)	On-site habitat is suitable for this species.
Palm Springs pocket mouse (<i>Perognathus longimembris bangsi</i>)	On-site habitat is suitable for this species.
Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel (<i>Xerospermophilus tereticaudus chlorus</i>)	On-site habitat is suitable, and species is presumed present.

(RBC, 2022a, Table 9)

and as such the Project has no potential to conflict with the CVMSHCP Conservation Objectives pursuant to CVMSHCP Section 4.3. As discussed above, Project impacts due to a conflict with the CVMSHCP Section 4.4 provisions related to biological corridors, crissal thrasher, desert tortoise, peninsular bighorn sheep, triple-ribbed milkvetch, fluvial sand transport, mesquite hummocks and mesquite bosque natural communities, the Palm Springs pocket mouse, and the Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus are not applicable to the Project for the reasons noted above; thus, the Project has no potential to result in conflicts with these provisions of Section 4.4 of the CVMSHCP. However, the Project has the potential to conflict with the provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4 with respect to burrowing owl, nesting riparian birds, and nesting LeConte's thrasher. In addition, the Project conservatively has the potential to conflict with applicable land use adjacency guidelines included in CVMSHCP Section 4.5. Accordingly, prior to mitigation, the Project would result in a potentially significant impact due to a conflict with the above-listed provisions of the CVMSHCP.

Threshold b.: *Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any endangered, or threatened species, as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (Sections 670.2 or 670.5) or in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (Sections 17.11 or 17.12)?*

Threshold c.: *Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in*



local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U. S. Wildlife Service?

The following discussion examines the potential impacts to plant and wildlife resources that would occur as a result of the proposed Project.

A. *Impacts to Vegetation Communities*

The proposed Project would result in permanent impacts to disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub, disturbed desert saltbush scrub, disturbed habitat, and developed land. Specifically, and as summarized in Table 4.4-5, *Project Impacts to Vegetation Communities*, the proposed Project would result in permanent impacts within the 83.0-acre Project site to approximately 1.5 acres of developed areas, less than 0.1-acre of disturbed areas, and approximately 81.4 acres of impacts to disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub. As previously discussed, the Project’s potential off-site impacts would consist of impacts to 16.7 acres off-site associated with Project-related off-site utility and roadway improvements, as well as potential impacts to up to 45.8 acres within the potential off-site power pole alignments. It should be noted that individual power poles only would create disturbance to an approximate 10-foot by 10-foot area (100 s.f. total per power pole) and, based on a review of existing IID power poles in the local area, the power poles would be spaced at a distance of approximately 180 to 190 feet. Thus, while the Survey Area includes approximately 45.8 acres of potential impact, the actual area of physical impact would be far less than 45.8 acres. Regardless, and assuming that all portions of the Survey Area are impacted as part of Project development, the Project would result in worst-case impacts to up to 40.2 acres of developed areas, less than 0.1-acre of disturbed habitat, 0.6-acre of disturbed desert saltbush scrub, and approximately 104.5 acres of disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub. (RBC, 2022a, p. 24)

Table 4.4-5 Project Impacts to Vegetation Communities

Vegetation Community/ Land Use	Project Site Impacts (Acres)	Potential Off-Site Impacts (Acres) ^{1, 2}	Total Potential Project Impacts (Acres) ^{1, 2}
Developed	1.5	38.7	40.2
Disturbed	<0.1	0.0	<0.1
Disturbed Desert Saltbush Scrub	0.0	0.6	0.6
Disturbed Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub	81.4	23.1	104.5
Totals:²	83.0	62.4	145.4

1. Potential Off-Site Impacts include the alternative alignments for IID power poles on approximately 45.8 acres, in addition to approximately 16.7 acres of Project-related off-site roadway and utility improvements. Within the 45.8 acres of potential power pole alignments, physical impacts only would occur at the locations of the power poles; however, as the precise locations of the power poles are not known at this time, the analysis herein conservatively assumes that the entire 62.5 acres of Off-Site areas would be impacted by Project development.
2. Notes: Values reflect rounding. Additionally, it should be noted that the values shown for on- and off-site impact areas are slightly adjusted from what is shown in Table 5 of the Project’s BR (EIR *Technical Appendix C1*) as the BR incorrectly allocates approximately 2.1 acres to off-site improvement areas that actually would occur within the boundaries of the 83.0-acre Project site. Total impacts (145.4 acres) to the vegetation communities depicted in Table 4.4-5 are consistent with the value presented in Table 5 of the BR for “Total Project Site Impacts.”

(RBC, 2022a, Table 5)



Although impacts on native vegetation communities would occur with Project implementation, such impacts would be offset through payment of CVMSHCP Local Development Mitigation Fees that would be used to acquire and maintain high-quality habitat within the CVMSHCP Reserve. With the payment of the required fee pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 875, Project impacts on native vegetation communities that may provide habitat for sensitive animal species would be less than significant.

B. Impacts to Special-Status Plants

1. Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Plant Species

As discussed in Subsection 4.4.1.B, no federally- or State-listed threatened, endangered, or special-status plant species were observed within the Survey Area. Although Coachella Valley milkvetch, a federally-endangered and CRPR 1B.2 species, has a low potential to occur within the Survey Area, no Project impacts to the Coachella Valley milkvetch would occur with implementation of the proposed Project due to a lack of suitable habitat within the Survey Area. Furthermore, the Survey Area falls within the CVMSHCP area and Coachella Valley milkvetch is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP. With payment of the CVMSHCP development fees, the Project would receive Take Authorization, allowing for direct take of Coachella Valley milkvetch and its habitat. The CVMSHCP does not require projects to comply with any avoidance and minimization measures specific to this species. Coachella Valley milkvetch is considered protected and adequately conserved through the CVMSHCP's designation of Conserved Areas; therefore, if present, impacts to the Coachella Valley milkvetch would be less than significant. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 24-25)

No other federally- or State-listed plant species would be affected by the Project as no other sensitive plant species are present and none have a moderate to high potential to occur on site. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 24-25)

2. Impacts to Other Special-Status Plant Species

As discussed previously, no other special-status plants were observed within the Survey Area. Additionally, no other special-status plant species have a moderate to high potential to occur in the Survey Area. Therefore, the proposed Project would result in no impact to other special-status plant species. (RBC, 2022a, p. 25)

C. Impacts to Special-Status Wildlife

1. Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species

Though highly degraded, the Project site overlaps with critical habitat for Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. While not anticipated to occur, this species is known from the region and has minor potential to be present on site. Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP. With permitting and approval of the Project by the County of Riverside, a CVMSHCP Local Permittee, and mandatory payment of the CVMSHCP development fees as required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 875, the Project would receive Take Authorization, allowing for direct take of Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard and its habitat. The CVMSHCP does not require projects to comply with any avoidance and minimization measures specific to this species. Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard is considered protected and adequately conserved through the CVMSHCP's designation of Conserved Areas; therefore, impacts to Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard would be considered less than significant. Additionally, although the area is mapped as critical habitat for Coachella



Valley fringe-toed lizard by USFWS, the Project has no federal nexus, meaning that the Project has no federal funding or authorizations. Critical habitat designations do not restrict project activities without federal nexus. Accordingly, with mandatory payment of the CVMSHCP development fees, impacts to the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard would be less than significant. (RBC, 2022a, p. 25)

No additional federal- and/or State-listed wildlife species have moderate to high potential to occur or have critical habitat mapped within the Survey Area; therefore, the proposed Project would not result in significant impacts on federal and/or state listed wildlife species. (RBC, 2022a, p. 25)

Other Special-Status Wildlife Species

California horned lark (WL), yellow warbler (SSC), and Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel (SSC) were the only non-listed special status wildlife species detected during Project biological surveys. The Survey Area also has moderate potential to support LeConte's thrasher, prairie falcon, vermilion flycatcher, and Palm Springs pocket mouse. The Project site also has low potential to support burrowing owl. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 25-26)

With Project implementation, direct impacts on California horned lark, LeConte's thrasher, yellow warbler, prairie falcon, vermilion flycatcher, Palm Springs pocket mouse, and Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel could occur in the form of habitat destruction. However, LeConte's thrasher, yellow warbler, Palm Springs pocket mouse, and Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel are Covered Species under the CVMSHCP; through conformance with CVMSHCP regulations and guidelines, their habitat is considered adequately conserved through the establishment of CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. With payment of CVMSHCP Local Development Mitigation Fees to mitigate impacts on native vegetation (as required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 875), Project impacts to LeConte's thrasher, yellow warbler, Palm Springs pocket mouse, and Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel would be less than significant. Although not considered Covered Species under the CVMSHCP, suitable habitat for California horned lark, prairie falcon, and vermilion flycatcher also is conserved through the protection of other species' habitat. Any losses in habitat for these species would not pose a substantial decrease of overall habitat across these species' range. Thus, the Project's impacts to these special-status wildlife species would be less than significant. (RBC, 2022a, p. 26)

However, the Survey Area contains vegetation with the potential to support native nesting birds. The proposed Project has the potential to impact nesting birds if vegetation is removed or ground disturbing activities are initiated during the nesting season (generally February through July). The CFGC prohibits mortality of native birds, including eggs. All habitat and land cover within the Project site has the potential to support nesting birds. The disturbed desert scrub communities have the potential to support a variety of avian species. Ground nesting by species such as California horned lark may also occur in the open areas across the Project site and onsite vegetation may be utilized by scrub-nesting species, such as verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps*) and Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), which were both observed on site. Thus, a significant impact could occur to nesting birds if grading or development were to occur to nesting birds if grading or development were to occur during the nesting season (generally February through July). Accordingly, the Project's potential impacts to nesting birds during the nesting season would be significant prior to mitigation. (RBC, 2022a, pp. 26-27)



With Project implementation, direct impacts on burrowing owl could occur in the form of habitat destruction. However, burrowing owl is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP; through conformance with CVMSHCP regulations and guidelines, burrowing owl habitat is considered adequately conserved through the establishment of CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. Accordingly, Project impacts to burrowing owl habitat would be less than significant with mandatory payment of CVMSHCP development fees as required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 875. However, direct impacts on burrowing owl individuals also may result from potential death, injury, or harassment of nesting birds, their eggs, and their young. Injury or mortality to burrowing owl occurs most frequently during the vegetation clearing stage of construction and affects eggs, nestlings, and recently fledged young that cannot safely avoid equipment. Although no burrowing owl, burrowing owl sign, or suitable burrows were observed within the Survey Area during the general biological survey, there is nonetheless a potential for the Survey Area to become occupied with burrowing owls prior to Project-related construction activities. This is evaluated as a potentially significant impact for which mitigation, in the form of pre-construction burrowing owl surveys, would be required. (RBC, 2022a, p. 26)

Threshold d.: Would the Project 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 Survey Area is approximately 1,200 feet southwest of the Thousand Palms Linkage as designated by the CVMSHCP; however, the Project site itself is not identified as a Conservation Area or wildlife corridor. The area southwest of the Project site is highly developed; thus, although the Survey Area is proximal to a Conservation Area to the northeast, it would not provide significant habitat connectivity considering its other urban borders. The ephemeral drainages within the Survey Area showed evidence of off-road vehicle use and are unlikely to serve as local wildlife corridors. The Survey Area likely does not function as a significant regional or local wildlife corridor given its disturbed state and proximity to development relative to other undeveloped land north of the site. Therefore, impacts to the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife, or to established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors would be less than significant and mitigation would not be required. Additionally, the Project site is not located within a native wildlife nursery site; thus, no impacts to native wildlife nursery sites would occur with Project implementation. (RBC, 2022a, p. 27)

Threshold e.: Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Table 4.4-5 (previously presented) provides a summary of the proposed Project's impacts to vegetation communities and land use types. As shown, the proposed Project would result in impacts to up to 40.2 acres of developed areas, less than 0.1-acre of disturbed areas, 0.6-acre of disturbed desert saltbush scrub, and 104.5 acres of disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub. None of the vegetation communities that would be impacted by the Project consist of riparian habitat, and due to their disturbed nature none of the vegetation communities on site are considered highly sensitive. Although impacts to native vegetation communities would occur with Project implementation, such impacts would be offset through the payment of CVMSHCP Local Development



Mitigation Fees that would be used to acquire and maintain high-quality habitat within the CVMSHCP Reserve. With the payment of the required CVMSHCP fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 875, Project impacts on sensitive native vegetation communities would be less than significant. (RBC, 2022a, p. 24)

Threshold f.: *Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

A. Potential Impacts to Wetlands

Based on the aquatic resources delineation conducted by RBC, three aquatic resources were identified within the Survey Area, in addition to one swale (Swale S-1) and one basin (Basin B-1) that are not expected to be jurisdictional; however, none of the aquatic resources comprise wetland habitat. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on State- or federally-protected wetlands, and no impact would occur.

B. Potential Impacts to Non-Wetland Jurisdictional Waters

As previously stated, the Project site and off-site improvement areas support three aquatic resources: Non-Wetland Water (NWW)-1, NWW-2, and NWW-3, as previously shown on Figure 4.4-2 and as previously summarized in Table 4.4-3. Specifically, the Survey Area supports approximately 3.55 acres (2,647 linear feet) of potential non-wetland waters of the State that are regulated by the RWQCB. The Survey Area also supports approximately 5.81 acres (2,626 linear feet) of vegetated streambed and approximately 0.01-acre (22 linear feet) of unvegetated streambed that are considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. Project impacts to each of these aquatic resources are summarized in Table 4.4-6, *Project Impacts to Aquatic/Jurisdictional Resources*, and are discussed below.

- **Non-Wetland Water 1:** NWW-1 occurs within the boundaries of the 83.0-acre Project site. All areas within the Project site boundaries would be impacted by Project development. Specifically, the Project would result in impacts to 0.13-acre (586 linear feet) of aquatic resources that are considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB, and would result in impacts to 0.16-acre (586 linear feet) of vegetated streambed that is considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. Project impacts to NWW-1 would be significant prior to mitigation.
- **Non-Wetland Water 2:** NWW-2 occurs off site and east of the future intersection of 30th Avenue at Robert Road. This segment of 30th Avenue would not be improved by the Project; however, this segment of 30th Avenue is part of the potential future alignment for IID power pole locations. It is not possible to precisely determine impacts to this aquatic resource, if any, until IID identifies a preferred alignment and specific locations for the power poles. Based on a review of other IID power poles in the Project vicinity (e.g., along Monterey Avenue south of Ramon Road), power poles would be spaced at distances ranging from approximately 180 to 190 feet, and each power pole location is anticipated to result in physical impacts to an approximate 10-foot by 10-foot area (100 s.f. total per power pole).



Table 4.4-6 Project Impacts to Aquatic/Jurisdictional Resources

RWQCB Jurisdictional Areas					
Aquatic Resource ID ²	Presence of OHWM/ Wetland	Total Acreage	Total Linear Feet	Project Impacts	
				Acres	Linear Feet
NWW-1	Yes/No	0.13	586	0.13	586
NWW-2	Yes/No	2.84	462	<0.01 ³	30 ³
NWW-3	Yes/No	0.58	1,599	0.00	0
Totals:		3.55	2,647	0.14³	616³
CDFW Jurisdictional Areas					
Aquatic Resource ID ²	Aquatic Resource Type	Total Acreage	Total Linear Feet	Project Impacts	
				Acres	Linear Feet
NWW-1	Vegetated Streambed	0.16	586	0.16	586
NWW-2	Vegetated Streambed	4.76	462	<0.01 ³	30 ³
NWW-3	Unvegetated Streambed	0.01	22	0.00	0
	Vegetated Streambed	0.88	1,578	0.00	0
Totals:⁴		5.82	2,647	0.17³	616³

1. Although the Project’s BR indicates that areas subject to RWQCB jurisdiction also may be subject to jurisdiction by the Corps, the Corps issued a letter, dated March 3, 2023, clarifying that none of the aquatic resources within the Project’s Survey Area comprise water(s) of the United States pursuant to 33 CFR Part 325.9. A copy of the letter from the Corps is included as EIR *Technical Appendix C3*.
2. NWW = Non-Wetland Water; OHWM = Ordinary High Water Mark.
3. Project impacts to NWW-2 only would occur if the off-site IID power poles are installed along the segment of 30th Avenue between Robert Road and Monte Vista Way, and only would occur if the power poles along this segment are placed within the jurisdictional limits of NWW-2. In the event the power pole alignments or locations do not include this segment of 30th Avenue or if they are not installed within the jurisdictional limits of NWW-2, then no impact to NWW-2 would occur as a result of the Project. In such a case, Project impacts to RWQCB jurisdictional areas would consist of 0.13-acre (586 linear feet), and Project impacts to CDFW jurisdictional areas would consist of 0.16-acre (586 linear feet).
4. Note: Totals reflect rounding.
(RBC, 2022a, Tables 3, 4, 6, and 7)

NWW 2 extends for approximately 462 linear feet along the future alignment of 30th Avenue. Therefore, and assuming all of the power poles along this segment of 30th Avenue occur within the mapped limits of NWW-2, potentially three power poles could occur within the limits of NWW-2 (462 linear feet ÷ 180 linear feet/power pole = 2.57 power poles). Installation of up to three (3) power poles within the mapped jurisdictional limits of NWW-2 would result in worst-case physical impacts to up to 300 s.f. (<0.01-acre) and 30 linear feet of impacts to non-wetland waters considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB and up to 300 s.f. (<0.01-acre) and 30 linear feet of impacts to vegetated streambed considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. Impacts to NWW-2 would not occur if power poles are not installed along the segment of 30th Avenue east of Robert Road or if power poles are installed along this segment but outside of the mapped limits of NWW-2.

- **Non-Wetland Water 3:** As previously shown on Figure 4.4-2, NWW-3 occurs within the Survey Area, but occurs outside of the Project’s potential impact area. As such, Project implementation would completely avoid impacts to 0.58-acre (1,599 linear feet) of non-wetland waters considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB, and would completely avoid impacts to 0.01-acre (22 linear feet) of



unvegetated streambed and 0.88-acre (1,578 linear feet) of vegetated streambed considered jurisdictional by the CDFW.

Accordingly, and assuming the worst-case scenario in which up to three power poles are constructed within the mapped jurisdictional limits for NWW-2, the proposed Project would result in impacts to up to 0.14-acre (616 linear feet) of aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB, and up to 0.17-acre (616 linear feet) of impact to aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. In the event the power pole alignments or locations do not include this segment of 30th Avenue or if they are not installed within the jurisdictional limits of NWW-2, Project impacts to RWQCB jurisdictional areas would be limited to 0.13-acre (586 linear feet), and Project impacts to CDFW jurisdictional areas would consist of 0.16-acre (586 linear feet), all of which would occur within the 83.0-acre Project site. Project impacts to jurisdictional resources represents a significant impact for which mitigation would be required.

Threshold g.: Would the Project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Aside from the CVMSHCP, which is addressed under the analysis of Threshold a., the only other local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources are the Riverside County Oak Tree Management Guidelines and Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 (Regulating the Removal of Trees). There are no oak trees or vegetation communities containing oak trees within the Survey Area. As such, the Project has no potential to result in a conflict with the County's Oak Tree Management Guidelines. Additionally, Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 applies to properties located above 5,000 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in elevation, while the maximum elevation at the Project site is approximately 326 feet amsl; thus, Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 is not applicable to the proposed Project. Accordingly, and aside from potential impacts due to a conflict with the CVMSHCP (as addressed under the analysis of Threshold a.), the Project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, and no impact would occur.

4.4.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

This cumulative impact analysis considers development of the proposed Project in conjunction with other development projects and planned development within the purview of the CVMSHCP. This study area for cumulatively-considerable impacts to biological resources is appropriated because the CVMSHCP encompasses a large area adjacent to the Project site, and provides for the long-term protection of sensitive plant, animal, and plant communities throughout the CVMSHCP area. Additionally, most cumulative development projects within the Project vicinity would be subject to the provisions of the CVMSHCP, and the general range of habitats, species, climate, etc. are consistent throughout the CVMSHCP.

As discussed under Threshold a., the Project would not conflict with the CVMSHCP Conservation Objectives because the Project site is not targeted for conservation under the CVMSHCP. Additionally, the Project would not conflict with the CVMSHCP provisions related to biological corridors. However, the Project has the potential to result in impacts to the burrowing owls, which would represent a conflict with the CVMSHCP. In addition, although the Project would not result in any impacts to least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, summer tanager, or yellow breasted chat, the Project has the potential to result in adverse effects to



the nesting yellow warbler individuals during construction. The Project also has the potential to result in impacts to other nesting bird species, including LeConte's thrasher, and such impacts are prohibited by the CFGC. The Project would comply with all other provisions of CVMSHCP Section 4.4. Additionally, while it is not anticipated that the Project would result in indirect impacts to CVMSHCP Conservation Areas, RBC nonetheless recommends adherence to applicable best management practices within the CVMSHCP Guidelines in order to avoid and minimize impacts on adjacent native habitat and as a precautionary measure to ensure compliance with the CVMSHCP. Therefore, Project impacts to the burrowing owl, yellow warbler, nesting bird species (including LeConte's thrasher), and indirect impacts to the CVMSHCP Conservation Areas represent potential conflicts with the CVMSHCP. As other cumulative developments within the region similarly could conflict with applicable CVMSHCP requirements, the Project's impacts due to a conflict with the CVMSHP would be cumulatively considerable.

As discussed in the analysis of Thresholds b. and c., none of the vegetation communities within the Survey Area are considered sensitive vegetation communities; thus, cumulatively-considerable impacts to sensitive vegetation communities would be less than significant. No federally- or State-listed threatened, endangered, or special-status plant species were observed within the Survey Area, and the Project's potential impacts to the Coachella Valley milkvetch (a covered plant species) would be less than significant with mandatory payment of CVMSHCP fees as required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 875. Although there is a remote potential the Project could result in impacts to Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, this species also is covered under the CVMSHP and Project impacts would be less than significant with mandatory payment of CVMSHP fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 875. The Project would not result in any other impacts to federally- and/or State-listed wildlife species. However, the Survey Area contains vegetation with the potential to support native nesting birds. The proposed Project has the potential to impact nesting birds if vegetation is removed or ground disturbing activities are initiated during the nesting season (generally February through July). The CFGC prohibits mortality of native birds, including eggs. In addition, although no burrowing owl, burrowing owl sign, or suitable burrows were observed within the Survey Area during the general biological survey, there is nonetheless a potential for the Survey Area to become occupied with burrowing owls prior to Project-related construction activities, resulting in a potentially significant impact. As other cumulative developments also have the potential to result in impacts to nesting birds protected by the CFGC and/or the burrowing owl, Project impacts would be cumulatively considerable.

As discussed in the analysis of Threshold d., the Project site does not contain a wildlife nursery site, and no cumulatively-considerable impacts to wildlife nursery sites would occur. Additionally, the Project site does not occur in a wildlife corridor or linkage, and impacts to wildlife movement corridors would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold e., the proposed Project would result in impacts to up to 40.2 acres of developed areas, less than 0.1-acre of disturbed areas, 0.6-acre of disturbed desert saltbush scrub, and 104.5 acres of disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub. None of the vegetation communities that would be impacted by the Project consist of riparian habitat, and due to their disturbed nature none of the vegetation communities within the Survey Area are considered highly sensitive. Moreover, impacts to vegetation communities would be offset through the payment of CVMSHCP Local Development Mitigation Fees that would be used to acquire and maintain high-quality habitat within the CVMSHCP Reserve. As other



cumulative developments also would be subject to payment of CVMSHCP fees, Project impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive vegetation communities would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

As discussed under Threshold f., the Project would not result in any impacts to State- or federally-protected wetlands. However, implementation of the proposed Project would result in significant impacts to up to 0.14-acre (616 linear feet) of aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB, and up to 0.17-acre (616 linear feet) of impact to aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. As other cumulative developments within the region also would have the potential to result in impacts to waters jurisdictional by the RWQCB and/or CDFW, Project impacts would be cumulatively considerable.

As indicated in the analysis of Threshold g., aside from the CVMSHCP, which is addressed under the analysis of Threshold a., the only other local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources are the Riverside County Oak Tree Management Guidelines and Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 (Regulating the Removal of Trees). However, the Project site does not contain any oak trees that would be subject to the County's Oak Tree Management Guidelines, and Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 applies only to properties located above 5,000 feet amsl. Accordingly, Project impacts due to a conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

4.4.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Project would not conflict with the CVMSHCP Conservation Objectives because the Project site is not targeted for conservation under the CVMSHCP. Additionally, the Project would not conflict with the CVMSHCP provisions related to biological corridors. However, the Project has the potential impact burrowing owls, which would represent a conflict with the CVMSHCP if the species is not surveyed for and avoided pre-construction. In addition, the Project has the potential to result in adverse effects to nesting yellow warbler and LeConte's thrasher and to other nesting bird species if the species are not surveyed for and avoided pre-construction. Therefore, the Project's potential impacts to the burrowing owl, nesting bird species (including yellow warbler and LeConte's thrasher), and potential indirect impacts to the CVMSHCP Conservation Areas represent potential conflicts with the CVMSHCP on a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.

Threshold b. and c.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. No sensitive vegetation communities would be impacted by the Project; thus, impacts to sensitive vegetation communities would not occur. Pertaining to plants, no federally- or State-listed threatened, endangered, or special-status plant species would be impacted other than potential impacts to the Coachella Valley milkvetch (a covered plant species), the impact to which would be less than significant with mandatory payment of CVMSHCP fees as required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 875. Pertaining to wildlife species, although there is a remote potential the Project could result in impacts to Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, this species is covered under the CVMSHP and Project impacts would be less than significant with mandatory payment of CVMSHP fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 875. Potential impacts to burrowing owls and nesting birds would be significant on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.



Threshold d.: Less-Than-Significant Impact. The Project site does not contain any wildlife nursery sites. The Project site is approximately 1,200 feet southwest of the CVMSHCP-designated Thousand Palms Linkage and is not within a wildlife corridor. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to wildlife movement corridors and linkages.

Threshold e.: Less-Than-Significant Impact. The Project would physically impact up to 40.2 acres of developed areas, less than 0.1-acre of disturbed areas, 0.6-acre of disturbed desert saltbush scrub, and up to 104.5 acres of disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub. None of these vegetation communities consist of riparian habitat, and due to their disturbed nature are not considered sensitive. Moreover, impacts to vegetation communities would be offset through the payment of CVMSHCP Local Development Mitigation Fees that would be used to acquire and maintain high-quality habitat within the CVMSHCP Reserve. Accordingly, Project impacts to riparian habitats and other sensitive natural plant communities would be less than significant.

Threshold f.: Significant and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Project would not impact any State- or federally-protected wetlands. However, and assuming the worst-case scenario in which up to three power poles are constructed within the mapped jurisdictional limits for NWW-2, the Project would impact up to 0.14-acre (616 linear feet) of aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB, and up to 0.17-acre (616 linear feet) of impact to aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. In the event the power pole alignments or locations do not include this segment of 30th Avenue or if they are not installed within the jurisdictional limits of NWW-2, Project impacts to RWQCB jurisdictional areas would be reduced to 0.13-acre (586 linear feet), and Project impacts to CDFW jurisdictional areas would consist of 0.16-acre (586 linear feet), all of which would occur within the 83.0-acre Project site. Project impacts to aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB and/or CDFW represent a significant impact of the proposed Project on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.

Threshold g.: No Impact. Aside from the CVMSHCP, discussed under Threshold a., the Project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, and no impact would occur.

4.4.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude biological resource impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- Prior to issuance of building permits, the Project Applicant shall make payment of CVMSHCP fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 875, *Establish a Local Development Mitigation Fee for Funding the Preservation of Natural Ecosystems in Accordance with the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan*.
- Prior to issuance of grading permits or other permits authorizing ground-disturbing activities associated with the Project site that would impact jurisdictional waters, the Project Applicant shall provide the



Riverside County Planning Department with copies of a Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) permit from the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for Project impacts to 0.14-acre (616 linear feet) of vegetated and unvegetated streambed and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Permit from CDFW for Project impacts to 0.17-acre (616 linear feet) of vegetated and unvegetated streambed.

- Prior to the installation of IID power poles, IID shall identify the locations of the poles and their physical impact areas. If the physical impact area includes areas under the jurisdiction of the CDFW and RWQCB along 30th Avenue, the Project Applicant or IID shall provide the Riverside County Planning Department with copies of a Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) permit from the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Permit from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for Project impacts of approximately 300 s.f. (<0.01-acre) and 30 linear feet of impacts to non-wetland waters considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB and up to 300 s.f. (<0.01-acre) and 30 linear feet of impacts to vegetated streambed considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. Permits are not required if power poles are not installed along the segment of 30th Avenue east of Robert Road or if power poles are installed along this segment but outside of the mapped limits of jurisdiction areas. If permits are required, the permits may be combined into the same permit for the warehouse component of the Project.
- The Project is required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 915, which is intended to provide minimum requirements for outdoor lighting in order to reduce light trespass. Ordinance No. 915 provides regulations on adequate lighting shielding, glare, and light trespass in order to ensure all development in Riverside County installs lighting in a way that does not jeopardize the health, safety, or general welfare of Riverside County residents or degrade their quality of life. Mandatory compliance with Ordinance No. 915 would ensure that Project-related lighting under long-term operating conditions does not expose nearby CVMSHCP Conservation Areas to excessive Project-related lighting.

Mitigation

MM 4.4-1 Prior to issuance of grading permits or other permits authorizing ground disturbance (e.g., vegetation clearing, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, site watering, equipment staging) for Plot Plan No. 220022, the County shall condition the permit(s) to require the Project Applicant to retain a qualified biologist to perform a burrowing owl survey at all potentially suitable habitat sites within the Project's limits of disturbance within 30 days of the commencement of any ground-disturbing activities at the Project site, as discussed below.

- **Pre-Construction Survey:** The pre-construction survey shall be performed by a qualified biologist that will survey the site for the presence/absence of burrowing owls within 30 days prior to commencement of ground-disturbing activities at any portion of the Project site. If burrowing owls are detected on-site during the pre-construction survey, the owls shall be relocated/excluded from the site outside of the breeding season following accepted



protocols, and subject to the approval of the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) and Wildlife Agencies (i.e., CDFW and/or USFWS).

- Burrowing Owl Management Plan: In the event that burrowing owl is determined to be present, or in the event that an assumption is made that the burrowing owl occurs on-site, a burrowing owl management plan shall be prepared and implemented in coordination with the CVCC and CDFW that shall detail the relocation of owls from the Project site, passively and/or actively. If additional site visits determine the species is absent, then the pre-construction survey (as discussed above) shall instead be implemented.

The conditions of approval shall require that a copy of the results of the pre-construction survey (and all additional surveys), as well as copies of the Burrowing Owl Management Plan, if required, must be provided to the County of Riverside Planning Department for review and approval (in the case of the Burrowing Owl Management Plan) prior to any vegetation clearing and ground disturbance activities.

MM 4.4-2 Prior to the issuance of grading permits for Plot Plan No. 220022, Riverside County shall condition the grading permit(s) to require the following. This note also shall be depicted on the Project's grading plans, and Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with this note and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by Riverside County staff or its designee to confirm compliance. This note also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.

“Vegetation clearing shall be conducted outside of the bird nesting season (generally February 1 through July 31) to the extent feasible. If avoidance of the nesting season is not feasible, a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within no more than 72 hours of such scheduled disturbance, to determine the presence of nests or nesting birds. If active nests are identified, the biologist shall establish appropriate buffers around the vegetation (typically 500 feet for raptors and sensitive species, 300 feet for non-raptors/non-sensitive species). All work within these buffers shall be halted until the nesting effort is finished (i.e., the juveniles are surviving independent from the nest). The biologist shall review and verify compliance with these nesting boundaries and shall verify the nesting effort has finished. Work may resume within the buffer area when no other active nests are found. Alternatively, a qualified biologist may determine that construction can be permitted within the buffer areas and would develop a monitoring plan to prevent any impacts while the nest continues to be active (eggs, chicks, etc.). Upon completion of the survey and any follow-up construction avoidance management, a report shall be prepared and submitted to Riverside County for mitigation monitoring compliance record keeping. If vegetation removal is not completed within 72 hours of a negative survey during nesting season, the nesting survey must be repeated to confirm the absence of nesting birds.”



- MM 4.4-3 Best management practices in compliance within the CVMSHCP Guidelines shall apply to avoid and minimize impacts on adjacent native habitat. Prior to issuance of grading and/or building permits, Riverside County shall review the grading and/or building plans to ensure the following requirements are either depicted on the plans, or included as notes on the building or grading plans. Construction contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with these requirements and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by Riverside County staff or its designee to confirm compliance. These requirements also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.
- Prior to the allowance of nighttime construction work, Riverside County shall review the plans to ensure that a note is included requiring that all lighting be oriented inward toward the Project site and away from the northeastern boundaries of the Project site.
 - Prior to the approval of landscape construction drawings, Riverside County shall review proposed landscape plans to ensure that none of the prohibited ornamental plant species listed in Table 4-113, *Prohibited Invasive Ornamental Plants*, of the CVMSHCP are included in the plans.
 - Prior to issuance of building permits, Riverside County shall review the building plans to ensure that appropriate barriers, such as native landscaping, rocks/boulders, fencing, walls, and/or signage, have been incorporated in the plans to minimize unauthorized public access, domestic animal predation, illegal trespass, or dumping east of the planned alignment of Robert Road in adjacent native habitats.
 - Prior to issuance of grading permits, Riverside County shall review the grading plans to ensure that the plans include a note requiring that the limits of grading/disturbance on site shall be delineated (e.g., through the use of orange construction fencing or other appropriate measures) to ensure that Project-related construction activities, including grading, does not occur outside project boundaries.
- MM 4.4-4 Prior to issuance of grading permits that would affect jurisdictional aquatic resources, the Project Applicant shall provide the Riverside County Planning Department with copies of a Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) permit from the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Permit from CDFW for Project impacts. Project impacts to up to 0.13-acre of RWQCB and up to 0.16-acre of CDFW jurisdictional areas shall be mitigated at a minimum 1:1 mitigation ratio (equal to 0.16-acre) through compensatory mitigation provided on or off site, through payment of in-lieu fees, through purchase of mitigation credits at an approved mitigation bank, and/or as otherwise specified by the permits issued by the RWQCB and/or CDFW.
- MM 4.4-5 Prior to the installation of IID power poles, IID shall identify the locations of the poles and their physical impact areas. If the physical impact area includes areas under the jurisdiction of the CDFW and RWQCB along 30th Avenue, the Project Applicant or IID shall provide the Riverside County Planning Department with copies of a Waste Discharge Requirements



(WDR) permit from the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Permit from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for Project impacts of approximately 300 s.f. (<0.01-acre) and 30 linear feet of impacts to non-wetland waters considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB and up to 300 s.f. (<0.01-acre) and 30 linear feet of impacts to vegetated streambed considered jurisdictional by the CDFW. If permits are required, the permits may be combined into the same permit for the warehouse component of the Project. Project impacts to up to 300 s.f. of RWQCB and CDFW jurisdictional areas shall be mitigated at a minimum 1:1 mitigation ratio (equal to 300 s.f.) through compensatory mitigation provided on or off site, through payment of in-lieu fees, through purchase of mitigation credits at an approved mitigation bank, and/or as otherwise specified by the permits issued by the RWQCB and/or CDFW. Permits and mitigation are not required if power poles are not installed along the segment of 30th Avenue east of Robert Road or if power poles are installed along this segment but outside of the mapped limits of jurisdiction areas.

4.4.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-1 would ensure that appropriate pre-construction surveys are conducted for the burrowing owl, and would further ensure that impacts to any individual burrowing owl(s) that may be identified are avoided, and would require preparation and implementation of a Burrowing Owl Plan in the event any burrowing owl individuals are identified during the pre-construction surveys. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-2 would ensure pre-construction nesting surveys are conducted prior to commencement of construction activities, and further requires appropriate avoidance of any active nests that may be identified. In addition, and although indirect impacts to the CVMSHCP Conservation Areas are not anticipated, implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-3 would ensure that appropriate measures are undertaken in order to preclude impacts to the Conservation Areas. Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce the Project's potential impacts due to a conflict with the CVMSHCP to less-than-significant levels.

Threshold b. and c.: Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-1 would ensure that appropriate pre-construction surveys are conducted for the burrowing owl, and would further ensure that impacts to any individual burrowing owl(s) that may be identified are avoided, and would require preparation and implementation of a Burrowing Owl Plan in the event any burrowing owl individuals are identified during the pre-construction surveys. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-2 would ensure pre-construction nesting surveys are conducted prior to commencement of construction activities, and further requires appropriate avoidance of any active nests that may be identified. Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce Project impacts to the burrowing owl and nesting birds to below a level of significance.

Threshold f.: Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-4 would ensure that Project on-site impacts to approximately impacts to up to 0.13-acre (586 linear feet) of aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB and Project impacts to up to 0.16-acre (586 linear feet) of aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the CDFW are mitigated at a minimum



1:1 ratio in accordance with the Waste Discharge Order to be issued by the RWQCB and the Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) to be issued by the CDFW. Mitigation shall occur through compensatory mitigation provided on or off site, through payment of in-lieu fees, through purchase of mitigation credits at an approved mitigation bank, and/or as otherwise specified by the permits issued by the RWQCB and/or CDFW. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-5 would ensure that impacts to approximately 300 s.f. (<0.01-acre) and 30 linear feet of impacts to non-wetland waters considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB and up to 300 s.f. (<0.01-acre) and 30 linear feet of impacts to vegetated streambed considered jurisdictional by the CDFW that could result from the installation of off-site IID power poles are mitigated at a minimum 1:1 mitigation ratio. Implementation of the required mitigation would ensure that Project impacts to aquatic resources considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB and/or CDFW are mitigated to below a level of significance.



4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The analysis in this Subsection 4.5 is based on a site-specific cultural resources analysis (herein, “CRA”) prepared by CRM Tech, entitled “Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report Majestic Thousand Palms Project,” dated February 9, 2023, and included as *Technical Appendix D* to this EIR (CRM Tech, 2023). All references used in this Subsection are included in EIR Section 7.0, *References*.

It should be noted that confidential information has been redacted from *Technical Appendix D* for purposes of public review. In addition, much of the written and oral communication between Native American tribes, the County of Riverside, and CRM Tech is considered confidential in respect to places that have traditional tribal cultural significance (Gov. Code § 65352.4), and although relied upon in part to inform the preparation of this EIR Subsection, those communications are treated as confidential and are not available for public review. Under existing law, environmental documents must not include information about the location of archeological sites or sacred lands or any other information that is exempt from public disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act (Cal. Code Regs. § 15120(d)).

4.5.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The proposed Project is located in unincorporated Riverside County within the community of Thousand Palms. The following provides a brief discussion on the prehistoric and historic context of the Project area for better understanding the relevance of resources identified within its proximity. Refer to the Project’s CRA (*Technical Appendix D*) for a complete discussion of the prehistoric and historic setting.

A. *Prehistoric Context*

1. *Paleoindian Period*

Numerous investigations on the history of cultural development in southern California have led researchers to propose a number of cultural chronologies for the desert regions. A specific cultural sequence for the Colorado Desert was offered by Schaefer (1994) on the basis of the many archaeological studies conducted in the area. The earliest time period identified is the Paleoindian (ca. 8,000 to 10,000-12,000 years ago), when “small, mobile bands” of hunters and gatherers, who relied on a variety of small and large game animals as well as wild plants for subsistence, roamed the region. These small groups settled “on mesas and terraces overlooking larger washes.” Typical artifacts and features from that period include very simple stone tools, “cleared circles, rock rings, [and] some geoglyph types.” (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 5)

2. *Early Archaic Period and Late Prehistoric Period*

The Early Archaic Period follows and dates to ca. 8,000 to 4,000 years ago. It appears that a decrease in population density occurred at this time and that the indigenous groups of the area relied more on foraging than hunting. Very few archaeological remains have been identified to this time period. The ensuing Late Archaic Period (ca. 4,000 to 1,500 years ago) is characterized by continued low population densities and groups of “flexible” sizes that settled near available seasonal food resources and relied on “opportunistic” hunting of game animals. Groundstone artifacts for food processing were prominent during this time period. The most recent period in Schaefer’s scheme, the Late Prehistoric, dates from ca. 1,500 years ago to the time of the



Spanish missions and saw the continuation of the seasonal settlement pattern. Peoples of the Late Prehistoric Period were associated with the Patayan cultural pattern and relied more heavily on the availability of seasonal “wild plants and animal resources” (Schaefer 1994). It was during this period that brown and buff ware ceramics were introduced into the region. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 5)

B. Ethnohistoric Context

1. Cahuilla

The Coachella Valley is a historical center of Native American settlement, where U.S. surveyors noted large numbers of Indian villages and rancherías occupied by the Cahuilla people in the mid 19th century. The origin of the name “Cahuilla” is unclear, but may originate from their own word *káwiya*, meaning master or boss. The Takic-speaking Cahuilla are generally divided by anthropologists into three groups, according to their geographic setting: the Pass Cahuilla of the San Geronio Pass-Palm Springs area, the Mountain Cahuilla of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains and the Cahuilla Valley, and the Desert Cahuilla of the eastern Coachella Valley. The basic written sources on Cahuilla culture and history include Kroeber (1925), Strong (1929), and Bean (1978), based on information provided by such Cahuilla informants as Juan Siva, Francisco Patencio, Katherine Siva Saubel, and Mariano Saubel. The following ethnohistoric discussion is based primarily on these sources. (CRM Tech, 2023, pp. 5-6)

The Cahuilla did not have a single name that referred to an all-inclusive tribal affiliation. Instead, membership was in terms of lineages or clans. Each lineage or clan belonged to one of two main divisions of the people, known as moieties. Their moieties were named for the Wildcat, or Tuktum, and Coyote, or Istam. Members of clans in one moiety had to marry into clans from the other moiety. Individual clans had villages, or central places, and territories they called their own, for purposes of hunting game, and gathering raw materials for food, medicine, ritual, or tool use. They interacted with other clans through trade, intermarriage, and ceremonies. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 6)

Cahuilla subsistence was defined by the surrounding landscape and primarily based on the hunting and gathering of wild and cultivated foods, exploiting nearly all of the resources available in a highly developed seasonal mobility system. They were adapted to the arid conditions of the desert floor, the lacustral cycles of Holocene Lake Cahuilla, and the cooler temperatures and resources available at higher elevations in the nearby mountains. When the lake was full, or nearly full, the Cahuilla would take advantage of the resources presented by the body of fresh water, building elaborate stone fish traps. Once the lake had desiccated, they relied on the available terrestrial resources. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 6)

The Cahuilla diet included seeds, roots, wild fruits and berries, acorns, wild onions, piñon nuts, and mesquite and screw beans. Medicinal plants such as creosote, California sagebrush, yerba buena, and elderberry were typically cultivated near villages. Common game animals included deer, antelope, big horn sheep, rabbits, wood rats and, when Holocene Lake Cahuilla was present, fish and waterfowl. The Cahuilla hunted with throwing sticks, clubs, nets, traps, and snares, as well as bows and arrow. Common tools included manos and metates, mortars and pestles, hammerstones, fire drills, awls, arrow-straighteners, and stone knives and scrapers. These lithic tools were made from locally sourced material as well as materials procured through trade or travel. They also used wood, horn, and bone spoons and stirrers; baskets for winnowing, leaching,



grinding, transporting, parching, storing, and cooking; and pottery vessels for carrying water, storage, cooking, and serving food and drink. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 6)

Cahuilla oral tradition tells of a time before there were palms in the area, and how the people, birds, and animals enjoyed the palm fruit once it had arrived. The planting of palms by the Cahuilla is well-documented, as is their enhancement of palm stands through the practice of controlled burning. Burning palm stands would increase fruit yield dramatically by eliminating pests such as the palm borer beetle, date scales, and spider mites. Firing palm stands prevented out-of-control wildfires by eliminating dead undergrowth before it accumulated to dangerous levels. The Cahuilla also burned stands of chia to produce higher yields, and deergrass to yield straighter, more abundant stalks for basketry. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 6)

Population data prior to European contact is almost impossible to obtain, but estimates range from 3,600 to as high as 10,000 persons covering a territory of over 2,400 square miles. During the 19th century, the Cahuilla population was decimated as a result of European diseases, most notably smallpox, for which the Native peoples had no immunity. Today, Native Americans of Pass or Desert Cahuilla heritage are mostly affiliated with one or more of the Indian reservations in and near the Coachella Valley, including Morongo, Agua Caliente, Cabazon, Torres Martinez, and Augustine. There has been a resurgence of traditional ceremonies in recent years, and the language, songs, and stories are now being taught to the youngest generations. (CRM Tech, 2023, pp. 6-7)

C. Historic Context

In 1823-1825, José Romero, José Maria Estudillo, and Romualdo Pacheco became the first noted European explorers to travel through the Coachella Valley when they led a series of expeditions in search of a route to Yuma. Due to harsh environmental conditions, few non-Indians ventured into the desert valley during the Mexican and early American periods, save a few sporadic travelers along established trails. The most important of these trails was the Cocomaricopa Trail, an ancient Indian trading route that was “discovered” in 1862 by William David Bradshaw and known after that as the Bradshaw Trail. In much of the Coachella Valley, this historic wagon road traversed a similar course to that of present-day Highway 111. During the 1860s-1870s, the Bradshaw Trail served as the main thoroughfare between coastal southern California and the Colorado River, until the completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1876-1877 brought an end to its heyday. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 7)

Non-Indian settlement in the Coachella Valley began in the 1870s with the establishment of railroad stations along the Southern Pacific Railroad and spread further in the 1880s after public land was opened for claims under the Homestead Act, the Desert Land Act, and other federal land laws. Farming became the dominant economic activity in the valley thanks to the development of underground water sources, often in the form of artesian wells. Around the turn of the century, the date palm was introduced into the Coachella Valley, and by the late 1910s dates were the main agricultural crop and the tree an iconic image celebrating the region as the “Arabia of America.” Then, starting in the 1920s, a new industry featuring equestrian camps, resorts, hotels, and eventually country clubs began to spread throughout the Coachella Valley, transforming it into southern California’s premier winter retreat. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 7)



The community of Thousand Palms, like two other small localities that once existed in the vicinity, Edom and Dry Camp, owes much of its birth to the presence of railroad facilities. In 1904, two homesteaders, Ned McKesson and August Strelow, arrived in the area to establish a citrus ranch and a date garden, respectively, which would become the dual centers of the budding community during the ensuing decades. In 1939, the Southern Pacific Railroad connected its Edom and Dry Camp Sidings into a single, 14,000-foot-long siding and named it the Thousand Palms Siding, after nearby Thousand Palms Canyon and Oasis. Around the same time, the Edom post office was moved to the vicinity of present-day Thousand Palms to be more convenient for its 20 permanent patrons and 15-20 winter residents. It was subsequently renamed Thousand Palms to reflect the new location. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 7)

After the establishment of U.S. Highway 60/70/99 across the Coachella Valley (now Varner Road in the project vicinity), Thousand Palms enjoyed a brief period of prosperity in the 1930s-1950s hosting businesses that catered to the needs of passing travelers, as did many other small towns in the California desert region that found themselves next to major arteries in the 1926 United States Numbered Highway System. The same convenience in location also caught the attention of residential developers, who had only limited success before the advantage was negated by the completion of Interstate Highway 10 in the 1950s. Since then, Edom and Dry Camp have all but disappeared, but Thousand Palms has grown slowly into a community of several thousand permanent residents today. (CRM Tech, 2023, pp. 7-8)

D. Research Methods

The archeological program for the proposed Project consisted of a cultural records search and a Native American Sacred Lands File search, pursued historical background research, and a systematic field survey. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 4)

1. Records Search

The historical/archaeological resources records search for the Project site was provided by the Eastern Information Center (EIC), University of California, Riverside, on April 7, 2022. During the records search, EIC staff examined maps and records on file for previously identified cultural resources and existing cultural resources reports within a one-mile radius of the project area. Previously identified cultural resources include properties designated as California Historical Landmarks, Points of Historical Interest, or Riverside County Historic Landmarks, as well as those listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or the California Historical Resources Inventory. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 8)

2. Historical Research

Historical background research was conducted by professionals at CRM Tech. Sources consulted during the research included published literature in local and regional history, U.S. General Land Office (GLO) land survey plat maps dated 1856, USGS topographic maps dated 1904-1981, and aerial/satellite images taken between 1972 and 2021. The historical maps are accessible at the websites of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and the USGS, and the aerial/satellite images are available at the Nationwide Environmental Title Research (NETR) Online website and through the Google Earth software. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 8)



3. *Field Survey*

On April 14-15, 2022, CRM Tech carried out the field survey of the Project area. The main Project site and off-site improvement alignments, including improvements across open desert land, were surveyed on foot at an intensive level by walking a series of parallel north-south transects spaced 15 meters (approximately 50 feet) apart. The portions of the off-site improvement alignments along paved roads were surveyed at a reconnaissance level by visually inspecting the ground surface from a motor vehicle. (CRM Tech, 2023, pp. 8-9)

On January 3, 2023, CRM Tech returned to the Project area to conduct a supplemental survey to ensure that all portions of the Project area were covered at the appropriate level of intensity. Through these efforts, the ground surface in the entire Project area was inspected systematically and carefully for any evidence of human activities dating to the prehistoric or historic period (i.e., 50 years or older). Other than the areas covered by existing pavement, visibility of the native ground surface was generally excellent (90-95%) due to the sparse vegetation. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 9)

E. Results

1. *Records Search Results*

CRM Tech conducted a records search as part of the Project-specific cultural resources investigation. According to EIC records, the main Project site had not been surveyed for cultural resources prior to the current study, but portions of the off-site areas that may be subject to Project-related improvements had been covered by various past studies on adjacent properties or along the same linear routes. No cultural resources were previously recorded within the 83.0-acre Project boundaries. However, one linear site of historical origin, 33-023935, was recorded outside but adjacent to the western boundary of the Project site. The site represents a segment of Rio Del Sol, which dates at least to 1941 and possibly as early as 1910. At the time of its initial recordation, 33-023935 was deemed ineligible for listing in either the California Register of Historical Resources or the National Register of Historic Places due to the lack of any notable historical associations or other special merits. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 9)

Records identify a total of 79 previous studies completed between 1977 and 2018 within the one-mile scope of the records search conducted with the Eastern Information Center (EIC). These and similar studies resulted in the recordation of 45 additional cultural resources within the one-mile radius, including 20 sites, 7 buildings or groups of buildings, 9 linear features, and 9 isolates (i.e., localities with three or less artifacts). Seven of the sites and two of the isolates were of prehistoric (Native American) origin, including several scatters of artifacts and habitation debris such as ceramic sherds, lithic flakes and points, and groundstone artifacts and artifact fragments. Two of the prehistoric sites consisted of human cremation remains, while each of the prehistoric isolates represented a single ceramic sherd. These prehistoric resources were all clustered to the southeast and the southwest of the Project site location, with none closer than roughly a quarter of a mile (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 9)

The other 36 resources all dated to the historic period, including buildings constructed between circa 1920s and the mid-1940s, refuse scatters and isolated refuse items, and linear features such as the Southern Pacific



(now Union Pacific) Railroad, power transmission lines, water pipelines, and various roads. Among these, the nearest to the project area was Isolate 33-023935, which consisted of three metal cans found on the adjacent property to the north of the Project site in 2013. None of the other sites or isolates were located in the immediate vicinity of the Project area. Site 33-023935 (Rio Del Sol), therefore, is the only previously identified cultural resource that require further consideration during this study. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 9)

2. *Historical Research Results*

Historical maps and aerial photographs consulted during this study suggest that, other than the various public roadways that date originally to the early and mid-20th century, the Project area is relatively low in sensitivity for cultural resources from the historic period. In the 1850s, when the U.S government conducted the earliest systematic land surveys in the Coachella Valley, no human-made features were observed in the Project area, nor within one mile in any direction. By the early 1940s, the town of Thousand Palms had been established nearby, represented at that time by a small cluster of buildings at the intersection of present-day Varner Road and Ramon Road. Meanwhile, Ramon Road and the unpaved forerunners of Rio Del Sol and Sierra Del Sol had become the first notable features known to be present within the boundaries of the Project's potential off-site improvement areas. (CRM Tech, 2023, pp. 11-12)

Between the 1940s and 1950s, growth in the Thousand Palms area greatly accelerated. Most notably, the residential tracts surrounding the southeastern portion of the Project area had taken shape by that time, although the neighborhoods remained rather sparsely populated. The next growth spurt in the Project vicinity took place in the 1970s-1990s period, when the residential neighborhoods were gradually built out and began to expand to the west. Further to the west, commercial development started to reshape the landscape along Rio Del Sol around the turn of the century. Throughout these episodes of growth, the main Project site remained unsettled, undeveloped, and largely unused to the present time. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 12)

3. *Field Survey Results*

During the field survey, two isolates were identified and recorded within the boundaries of the Project site, both dating to the historic period. See Appendix 3 of *Technical Appendix D* to this EIR for additional details. They were designated temporarily as 3857-1H and -2H, pending assignment of permanent identification numbers in the California Historical Resources Inventory by the EIC. Isolate 3857-1H consists of the fragmented remains of an aqua-colored, hobble skirt Coca-Cola bottle with an applied ceramic label (ACL), produced between 1952 through 1957. Isolate 3857-2H consists of the fragmented remains of three similar bottles, one of them also bearing an applied ceramic label. Two of the base fragments display maker's marks used after 1954. The third bottle base has been heavily sandblasted in the desert environment and no longer displays any trademark or maker's mark. (CRM Tech, 2023, pp. 12-13)

No other cultural resources, either prehistoric or historical in origin, were encountered within the Project area. Outside but adjacent to the western boundary of the Project site, Rio Del Sol (Site 33023935) was observed to be a two-lane, asphalt-paved road with soft shoulders. Like the vast majority of other public roadways of historical origin that remain in service today, Rio Del Sol is essentially modern in appearance, and its current configuration reflects much more the results of improvements and maintenance in recent decades than its



historical origin. While several of the other roads that coincide with the linear portions of the Project's potential impact areas also date to the historic period, such as Ramon Road, Sierra Del Sol, and parts of Avenue 30 and El Centro Way, they similarly lack any distinctively historical character or potential for historic significance. Therefore, they do not comprise significant historical resources under CEQA and require no further study. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 13)

4.5.2 APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

A. Federal Regulations

1. National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the NHPA of 1966, the NPS's National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archaeological resources. (NPS, 2023b)

To be considered eligible, a property must meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. This involves examining the property's age, integrity, and significance, as follows:

- **Age and Integrity.** Is the property old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and does it still look much the way it did in the past?
- **Significance.** Is the property associated with events, activities, or developments that were important in the past? With the lives of people who were important in the past? With significant architectural history, landscape history, or engineering achievements? Does it have the potential to yield information through archaeological investigation about our past? (NPS, 2023b)

Nominations can be submitted to a SHPO from property owners, historical societies, preservation organizations, governmental agencies, and other individuals or groups. The SHPO notifies affected property owners and local governments and solicits public comment. If the owner (or a majority of owners for a district nomination) objects, the property cannot be listed but may be forwarded to the NPS for a Determination of Eligibility (DOE). Listing in the NRHP provides formal recognition of a property's historical, architectural, or archaeological significance based on national standards used by every state. (NPS, 2023b)

Under Federal Law, the listing of a property in the National Register places no restrictions on what a non-federal owner may do with their property up to and including destruction, unless the property is involved in a project that receives Federal assistance, usually funding or licensing/permitting. National Register listing does not lead to public acquisition or require public access. (NPS, 2023b)

2. National Historic Landmarks Program

National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Today, over 2,600 historic places bear this national distinction. Working with citizens



throughout the nation, the NHL Program draws upon the expertise of NPS staff who guide the nomination process for new Landmarks and provide assistance to existing Landmarks. (NPS, 2022c)

3. *American Indian Religious Freedom Act*

The American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) requires each executive branch agency with statutory or administrative responsibility for the management of Federal lands, to the extent practicable, permitted by law, and not clearly inconsistent with essential agency functions, to accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites. Where appropriate, agencies are also required to maintain the confidentiality of sacred sites. Each executive branch agency with statutory or administrative responsibility for the management of Federal lands are required to implement procedures to ensure reasonable notice is provided of proposed actions or land management policies that may restrict future access to or ceremonial use of, or adversely affect the physical integrity of, sacred sites. (NOAA, n.d.)

4. *Federal Antiquities Act*

The Antiquities Act is the first law to establish that archaeological sites on public lands are important public resources. It obligates federal agencies that manage the public lands to preserve for present and future generations the historic, scientific, commemorative, and cultural values of the archaeological and historic sites and structures on these lands. It also authorizes the President to protect landmarks, structures, and objects of historic or scientific interest by designating them as National Monuments. (NPS, 2023e)

B. State Regulations

1. *California Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 4308*

Section 4308, *Archaeological Features*, of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code provides that: “No person shall remove, injure, disfigure, deface, or destroy any object of archaeological, or historical interest or value.” (CCR, n.d.)

2. *California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 1427*

Section 4308, *Archaeological Features*, of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code provides that: “No person shall remove, injure, disfigure, deface, or destroy any object of archaeological, or historical interest or value.” (NAHC, n.d.)

3. *California Register of Historic Resources*

The State Historical Resources Commission has designed this program for use by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify, evaluate, register, and protect California's historical resources. The Register is the authoritative guide to the state's significant historical and archaeological resources. The California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archaeological, and cultural significance; identifies historical resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under CEQA. (OHP, n.d.)



In order for a resource to be included on the Register of Historic Resources, the resources must meet one of the following criteria:

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States (Criterion 1).
- Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history (Criterion 2).
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values (Criterion 3).
- Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation (Criterion 4). (OHP, n.d.)

For resources included on the Register of Historic Resources, environmental review may be required under CEQA if property is threatened by a project. Additionally, local building inspectors must grant code alternatives provided under State Historical Building Code. Further, the local assessor may enter into contract with property owner for property tax reduction pursuant to the Mills Act. A property owner also may place his or her own plaque or marker at the site of the resource. (OHP, n.d.)

Consent of owner is not required, but a resource cannot be listed over an owner's objections. The State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) can, however, formally determine a property eligible for the California Register if the resource owner objects. (OHP, n.d.)

4. *Traditional Tribal Cultural Places Act (Senate Bill 18, "SB 18")*

Senate Bill 18 (SB 18) requires local (city and county) governments to consult with California Native American tribes to aid in the protection of traditional tribal cultural places ("cultural places") through local land use planning. SB 18 also requires the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to include in the General Plan Guidelines advice to local governments for how to conduct these consultations. (OPR, 2005)

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. (OPR, 2005)

SB 18 requires local governments to consult with tribes prior to making certain planning decisions and to provide notice to tribes at certain key points in the planning process. These consultation and notice requirements apply to adoption and amendment of both general plans (defined in Government Code § 65300 et seq.) and specific plans (defined in Government Code § 65450 et seq.). Although SB 18 does not specifically mention consultation or notice requirements for adoption or amendment of specific plans, existing state planning law requires local governments to use the same processes for adoption and amendment of specific plans as for general plans (see Government Code § 65453). Therefore, where SB 18 requires consultation and/or notice for a general plan adoption or amendment, the requirement extends also to a specific plan adoption or amendment. (OPR, 2005)



5. *Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52)*

California Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) (2014) Chapter 532 amended Section 5097.94 of, and added Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21802.3, 21083.09, 21084.2 and 21084.3 to the California Public Resources Code, relating to Native Americans. AB 52 was approved on September 25, 2014. By including tribal cultural resources early in the CEQA process, the legislature intended to ensure that local and Tribal governments, public agencies, and project proponents would have information available, early in the project planning process, to identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources. By taking this proactive approach, the legislature also intended to reduce the potential for delay and conflicts in the environmental review process. (OPR, 2017a)

The Public Resources Code now establishes that “[a] project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21084.2.) To help determine whether a project may have such an effect, the Public Resources Code requires a lead agency to consult with any California Native American tribe that requests consultation and is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project. That consultation must take place prior to the determination of whether a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report is required for a project. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21080.3.1.) (OPR, 2017a)

If a lead agency determines that a project may cause a substantial adverse change to tribal cultural resources, the lead agency must consider measures to mitigate that impact. Public Resources Code § 20184.3 (b)(2) provides examples of mitigation measures that lead agencies may consider to avoid or minimize impacts to tribal cultural resources. These rules apply to projects that have a notice of preparation for an environmental impact report or negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration filed on or after July 1, 2015. (OPR, 2017a)

§ 21074 of the Public Resources Code defines “tribal cultural resources.” In brief, in order to be considered a “tribal cultural resource,” a resource must be either:

- (1) listed, or determined to be eligible for listing, on the national, state, or local register of historic resources, or
- (2) a resource that the lead agency chooses, in its discretion, to treat as a tribal cultural resource. (OPR, 2017a)

In the latter instance, the lead agency must determine that the resource meets the criteria for listing in the state register of historic resources. In applying those criteria, a lead agency must consider the value of the resource to the tribe. (OPR, 2017a)



6. State Health and Safety Code

California Health and Safety Code (HSC) § 7050.5(b) requires that excavation and disturbance activities must cease “In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery...” until the coroner can determine regarding the circumstances, manner, and cause of any death. The coroner is then required to make recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains. Further, this section of the code makes it a misdemeanor to intentionally disturb, mutilate or remove interred human remains. § 7051 specifies that the removal of human remains from “internment or a place of storage while awaiting internment” with the intent to sell them or to dissect them with “malice or wantonness” is a public offense punishable by imprisonment in a state prison. Lastly, HSC §§ 8010-8011 establish the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act consistent with the federal law addressing the same. The Act stresses that “all California Indian human remains and cultural items are to be treated with dignity and respect.” It encourages voluntary disclosure and return of remains and cultural items by publicly funded agencies and museums in California. It also outlines the need for aiding California Indian tribes, including non-federally recognized tribes, in filing repatriation claims. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

7. California Code of Regulations Section 15064.5

The California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, § 15064.5 (the State CEQA Guidelines) establishes the procedure for determining the significance of impacts to archaeological and historical resources, as well as classifying the type of resource. Cultural resources are aspects of the environment that require identification and assessment for potential significance. The evaluation of cultural resources under CEQA is based upon the definitions of resources provided in CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5, as follows: (OPR, 2022)

- *A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code § 5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4850 et seq.).*
- *A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant 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 an 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 the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code § 5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852) including the following:*
 - *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 may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.*
- *The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code), or identified in an historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be an historical resource as defined in Public Resources Code sections 5020.1(j) or 5024.1.*

C. Local Regulations

1. Ordinance No. 578 - Establishment of Historic Preservation Districts

This ordinance is intended to facilitate the preservation of areas deemed historically important to the County of Riverside. The ordinance specifies that a Historic Preservation District may be established if the Riverside County Board of Supervisors adopts a resolution that includes the boundaries of the Historic Preservation District and finds that the proposed Historic Preservation District is in conformity with the Cultural and Paleontological section of the Multipurpose Open Space Element of the Riverside County General Plan. It must also find that, for the county, state or nation: the area exemplifies or reflects significant aspects of the cultural, political, economic or social history; the area is identified with historic personages or with important events in history; or, that the area embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a significant architectural period which is inherently valuable for the study of architecture unique to the history of the county, state or nation. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.9-25)

Under this ordinance, no building or structure within the boundaries of an adopted Historic Preservation District can be constructed or altered, except in strict compliance with the plans approved in conjunction with the issuance of a Historic District Alteration Permit by the Riverside County Planning Director. The ordinance also outlines how such certificates are to be reviewed and processed in order to preserve the “historical significance and related construction theme” of the Historic District. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.9-26)

2. Riverside County Historic Preservation Commission

The Riverside County Historical Commission was established in 2005 to advise the Board of Supervisors on historical preservation matters. It is tasked with working to discover and identify persons, events and places of historical importance within Riverside County, and to make recommendations relating to the preservation of appropriate historic sites and structures. To accomplish this, the Commission established criteria and procedures to identify and recognize historic landmarks in Riverside County. These criteria should be used when reviewing a potentially historically or culturally significant site that could be affected by the proposed development. Such resources are noted in the countywide list provided in Table 4.9-A of Riverside County EIR No. 521. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.9-26)



3. *Riverside County Planning Department Procedures*

The Riverside County Archeologist reviews all proposed land use projects subject to CEQA and not otherwise deemed categorically exempt. The Riverside County Archeologist reviews various internal databases for information that might pertain to the age of any buildings found on site, grading permits, ground disturbance activities and building permits. Where buildings are 45 years or older, the project applicant is required to perform an architectural history evaluation to assess potential historic value as part of a Phase I Cultural Resources study. When the study is completed, and if historic-period resources were identified during a survey, a copy of the report is transmitted to the Riverside County Historic Preservation Officer (CHPO) for review and comment. The CHPO sends relevant comments back to the Riverside County Archeologist. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.9-26)

Vacant parcels within areas known to have prehistoric or historic resources trigger a Phase I Cultural Resources study. Similarly, any parcels with environmental, geomorphological or vegetative features known to increase the likelihood of cultural resources being present trigger a “Phase I” cultural resources study. Such studies are required to follow the reporting formula found on the Riverside County Planning Department’s website which mirror the recommendations published by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in 1987. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.9-26)

The Riverside County Archeologist reviews all Phase I cultural resources studies for completeness and reasonable conclusions based on current industry standards in archeology. The Phase I study serves to advise the Riverside County Archeologist on matters relating to any identified prehistoric or historic resources, provide the requisite information to complete the project-related CEQA analysis and guide the Riverside County Archeologist in determining which land use conditions of approval and/or mitigation measures apply to the proposed project. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.9-26)

Copies of studies are provided to tribes, upon their request, as a confidential document. If a proposed project is subject to the requirements of the Traditional Tribal Places Act (commonly referred to as Senate Bill 18), a Phase I report is forwarded to tribes who request it as part of consultation under SB 18. Typically, official tribal consultations are scheduled after the report has been sent to the tribe(s) to maximize consultation efforts. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.9-26)

4.5.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section V of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to cultural resources, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate the Project’s impacts on cultural resources: (OPR, 2018a)

- *Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*
- *Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*
- *Would the Project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*



Significance thresholds set forth in the Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist form are derived from Section V of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines (listed above), as modified by the 2018 updates to the CEQA Guidelines, and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact on cultural resources if construction and/or operation if the Project would:

- a. *Alter or destroy an historic site;*
- b. *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5;*
- c. *Alter or destroy an archaeological site;*
- d. *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5; or*
- e. *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.*

The significance thresholds set forth in the Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist form, as modified by the 2018 updates to the CEQA Guidelines, were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project’s impacts on cultural resources.

4.5.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: Would the Project alter or destroy an historic site?

Threshold b.: Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5?

Based on the Project’s CRA (*Technical Appendix D*), one historic site from the historic period was previously recorded adjacent to the Project area, namely the adjacent roadway segment of Rio Del Sol (Site 33-023935). At the time of its recordation in 2014, Site 33-023935 was found not to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. Based on the results of the Project’s CRA, the cultural resource does not retain any distinctively historical character to relate to its period of origin due to improvements and maintenance in the modern era and does not demonstrate potential for historical significance. As such, Project impacts to Site 33-023935 associated with frontage improvements to Rio Del Sol would be less than significant requiring no mitigation. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 14)

The Project’s CRA found two isolates from the historic period, designated 3857-1H and -2H. Both of the isolates consist of domestic refuse items, a common type of artifact to be found in the southern California desert region, and both contained solely fragments of aqua-colored, hobble skirt Coca-Cola bottles dating to the 1950s era, from which similar artifacts survive in very large numbers. The isolates do not constitute archaeological sites due to the lack of depositional context. Therefore, they are not considered potential “historical resources” and require no further consideration.



Accordingly, and based on the foregoing analysis, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in any known historical resources pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines and impacts would be less than significant. (CRM Tech, 2023, p. 14) Further, given the location of the Project site, there is no reasonable potential that significant historical resources would be located beneath the surface of the site.

Threshold c.: Would the Project alter or destroy an archaeological site?

Threshold d.: Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5?

The records search and field survey conducted by CRM Tech did not identify archeological resources within the Project site or off-site improvement areas. As such, the Project would not result in any impacts to known archaeological sites and would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant. (CRM Tech, 2023, pp. 13-14)

Although impacts to known archaeological resources on the Project site and off-site improvement areas would be less than significant, both the Project site and off-site improvement areas have the potential to contain unidentified archaeological resources beneath the surface of the site. Given the presence of previously-identified archaeological resources within the Project vicinity, there is a potential for the Project site or off-site improvement areas to contain unidentified surface or subsurface archaeological resources. Therefore, Project impacts to previously-undiscovered archaeological resources that may occur in the on- or off-site impact areas of the proposed Project would be significant prior to mitigation.

Threshold e.: Would the Project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

The Project site does not contain a cemetery and no known cemeteries are located within the immediate site vicinity. Field Surveys conducted on the Project site and off-site improvement areas by CRM Tech did not identify the presence of any human remains and no human remains are known to exist beneath the surface of the site. Nevertheless, the remote potential exists that human remains may be unearthed during grading and excavation activities associated with Project construction. If human remains are unearthed during Project construction, the construction contractor would be required by law to comply with California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5, “Disturbance of Human Remains.” According to § 7050.5(b) and (c), if human remains are discovered, the County Coroner must be contacted and if the Coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, the Coroner is required to contact the NAHC by telephone within 24 hours. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code § 5097.98, whenever the NAHC receives notification of a discovery of Native American human remains from a county coroner, the NAHC is required to immediately notify those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The descendants may, with the permission of the owner of the land, or his or her authorized representative, inspect the site of the discovery of the Native American human remains and may recommend to the owner or the person responsible for the excavation work means for treatment or disposition, with appropriate dignity, of the human remains and any associated grave goods. The descendants shall complete their inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48



hours of being granted access to the site. According to Public Resources Code § 5097.94(k), the NAHC is authorized to mediate disputes arising between landowners and known descendants relating to the treatment and disposition of Native American human burials, skeletal remains, and items associated with Native American burials. Impacts to human remains are fully regulated pursuant to California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 and California Public Resources Code § 5097.98, and the Project Applicant would be required to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Accordingly, with mandatory compliance with California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 and California Public Resources Code § 5097.98, Project impacts to human remains would be less than significant.

4.5.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

This cumulative impact analysis considers development of the proposed Project in conjunction with other development projects and planned development within nearby portions of unincorporated Riverside County and the City of Rancho Mirage. This study area was selected for evaluation because it encompasses a broad region with similar geological, biological, and climatic conditions.

As noted above under Thresholds a. and b., no historical resources were identified on site or within the off-site improvement areas that meet the CEQA or CRHR definitions. As such, the Project would not result in any cumulatively-considerable impacts to known historical resources. There is also no reasonable potential that significant historical resources would be located beneath the surface of the site. As such, the Project has no potential to result in cumulatively considerable impacts to significant historical resources.

As described under Thresholds c. and d., no archaeological resources were identified on site or within the off-site improvement areas. As such, the Project would not result in any cumulatively-considerable impacts to known archaeological sites and would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a known archaeological resource pursuant to California Code of Regulation, Section 15064.5. However, there is a possibility that previously-undiscovered subsurface archaeological resources may be impacted by development of the Project as proposed. Other cumulative developments resulting from buildout of the Riverside County General Plan and the general plans of cities within the County also have the potential to result in impacts to archaeological sites or resources, including sites or resources that may be buried beneath the ground surface. As such, the Project's potential impacts to previously-undiscovered archaeological sites or resources would be cumulatively considerable prior to mitigation.

As discussed under Threshold e., the Project would be subject to compliance with the provisions of California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 as well as Public Resources Code § 5097 et. seq. As such, while there is a remote potential for human remains to be uncovered as part of site grading activities, mandatory compliance with these provisions of State law would ensure impacts to human remains would be less than significant. As other cumulative developments similarly would be subject to compliance with California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 as well as Public Resources Code § 5097 et. seq., Project impacts to human remains would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.



4.5.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Thresholds a. and b.: Less-than-Significant Impact. No significant historical resources are located in the area that would be physically disturbed by the Project. Also, given the location of the site and its historic context, there is no reasonable potential that significant historical resources would be unearthed during Project-related construction activities. No impacts would occur.

Thresholds c. and d.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. No archeological resources were identified within the Project area or off-site improvement areas. However, there is a potential for previously-undiscovered historical resources to occur beneath the surface of areas planned for physical impact (i.e., grading) as part of the Project. Potential impacts to previously-undiscovered archeological resources on site or within the off-site improvement areas would be significant on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis prior to mitigation.

Threshold e.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project area does not contain a cemetery and no known cemeteries are located within the immediate site vicinity. The Project Applicant would be required to comply with the applicable provisions of California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 and California Public Resources Code § 5097 et. seq. Mandatory compliance with these provisions of State law would ensure that Project-related potential impacts to human remains that may be buried beneath the ground surface would be less than significant.

4.5.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude cultural resource impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- Unless otherwise required by law, the site of any reburial of Native American human remains or associated grave goods shall not be disclosed and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act. The Coroner, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code Section 6254 (r), parties, and Lead Agencies, will be asked to withhold public disclosure information related to such reburial, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code 6254 (r).
- In the event that human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing construction activities on site or within the Project's off-site improvement areas, compliance with California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 and Public Resources Code § 5097 et. seq. shall be required. State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to Public Resource Code Section 5097.98(b) remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made. The County Coroner shall determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required, and determine if the remains are of Native American origin. In the event



that the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be contacted within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the "Most Likely Descendant." The Most Likely Descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the NAHC is unable to identify a Most Likely Descendant, or if the Most Likely Descendant failed to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being notified by the NAHC, or the Project Applicant rejects the recommendation of the Most Likely Descendant, the Project Applicant shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods on the property in a location not subject to further ground disturbance. Evidence of compliance with this mitigation measure, if human remains are found, shall be provided to Riverside County upon the completion of a treatment plan and final report detailing the significance and treatment finding.

Mitigation

- MM 4.5-1 **Retain a Qualified Archaeologist:** Prior the issuance of a grading permit, the Developer/Permit Applicant shall retain and enter into a monitoring and mitigation service contract with a qualified archaeologist ("Archaeological Monitor") for mitigation monitoring services, and to implement a Cultural Resource Monitoring Program (CRMP). At least 30 days prior to issuance of grading permits, copy of the agreement between the developer/permit applicant and the Archaeological Monitor shall be submitted to the County Planning Department.
- MM 4.5-2 **Native American Monitor:** Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Developer/Permit Applicant shall enter into an agreement with the primary consulting tribe, as identified by the County Archaeologist, for a Native American Monitor. In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor, the Native American Monitor shall attend a pre-grading meeting with the contractors to provide Cultural Sensitivity Training for all construction personnel. In addition, the Native American Monitor shall be on-site during all initial ground disturbing activities and excavation of each portion of the Project site including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading and trenching. In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor, the Native American Monitor have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt the ground disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources. The Developer/Permit Applicant shall submit a fully executed copy of the agreement to the County Archaeologist to ensure compliance with this requirement. Upon verification, the County Archaeologist shall clear this condition. This agreement shall not modify any condition of approval or mitigation measure.
- MM 4.5-3 **Preparation of a CRMP:** The Archaeological Monitor required pursuant to Mitigation Measure MM 4.5-1 shall prepare a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to guide the procedures and protocols of an archaeological mitigation monitoring program that shall be implemented during all onsite and offsite ground-disturbing activities. The CRMP shall include, but not be limited to, the Project grading and development schedule; approved Project



cultural resources mitigation measures and conditions of approval; monitoring procedures; protocols for the identification, assessment, collection, and analysis of any resource(s) observed during grading; curation guidelines; and coordination with project personnel, County staff, and any participating Native American tribe(s). The final CRMP shall be submitted to the County Project planner and/or inspector, the appropriate Project supervisor/engineer/etc., and monitoring Native American tribe(s), if any.

MM 4.5-4 **Preconstruction Meeting:** The Archaeological Monitor shall be invited to a preconstruction meeting with construction personnel and County and tribal representatives. The attending archaeologist shall review the provisions of the CRMP and answer any applicable questions.

MM 4.5-5 **Construction Monitoring:** Full-time monitoring shall occur throughout the entire Project area, including all off-site improvement areas, during ground-disturbing activities. Full-time monitoring shall continue until the Archaeological Monitor required pursuant to Mitigation Measure MM 4.5-1 determines that the overall sensitivity of the Project area has been reduced from high to low as a result of mitigation monitoring. Should the monitor(s) determine that there are no cultural resources within the Project site or off-site improvement areas, or should the sensitivity be reduced to low during monitoring, all monitoring shall cease.

MM 4.5-6 **Unanticipated Discoveries:** If subsurface cultural resources are encountered during construction, if evidence of an archaeological/historical site is observed, or if other suspected historic resources are encountered, all ground-disturbing activity shall cease within 100 feet of the resource. In such a case, the County Archaeologist shall be immediately notified. A meeting shall be convened between the developer, the Archaeological Monitor (as required by Mitigation Measure MM 4.5-1), the Native American tribal representative (or other appropriate ethnic/cultural group representative) required pursuant to Mitigation Measure MM 4.5-2, and the County Archaeologist to discuss the significance of the find. Potentially significant cultural resources could consist of, but are not limited to: stone, bone, fossils, wood, or shell artifacts or features, including structural remains, historic dumpsites, hearths, and middens. Midden features are characterized by darkened soil and could conceal material remains, including worked stone, fired clay vessels, faunal bone, hearths, storage pits, or burials and special attention should always be paid to uncharacteristic soil color changes. Any previously undiscovered resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance under all applicable regulatory criteria. At the meeting with the aforementioned parties, a decision is to be made, with the concurrence of the County Archaeologist, as to whether the identified resource comprises a unique historic resource as defined under § 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and as to the appropriate treatment (documentation, recovery, avoidance, etc.) for the identified cultural resource. Resource evaluations shall be limited to nondestructive analysis. Further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until the appropriate treatment has been accomplished.



- MM 4.5-7 **Curation:** Any archaeological artifacts recovered as a result of mitigation, excluding items covered by the provisions of applicable Treatment Plans or Agreements, shall be donated to the Western Science Center in Hemet or as directed by the County Archaeologist, where they would be afforded long-term preservation. The Developer/Applicant is responsible for all costs and fees associated with curation of the artifacts.
- MM 4.5-8 **Final Phase IV Report:** The results of the mitigation monitoring program shall be incorporated into a final report and submitted to the Riverside County Planning Department for review and approval. Upon approval by the Lead Agency, the final report, including any associated DPR 523 Forms, shall be submitted to the Developer/land Owner, the Eastern Information Center (EIC), and the monitoring tribe(s), if any.

4.5.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Thresholds c. and d.: Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.5-1 through MM 4.5-8 would ensure that any historical resources identified within the Project area during ground-disturbing activities are appropriately treated as directed by the County Archaeologist (and the Native American tribal representative, if any). Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce the Project's potential impacts to subsurface archaeological sites or resources to below a level of significance.



4.6 ENERGY

This Subsection 4.6 is based in part on the information contained in the Project’s Energy Analysis Report (herein, “EA”), Titled “Majestic Thousand Palms (GPA220004, CZ2200013, PPT220022, CEQ220033) Energy Analysis,” dated January 30, 2024, and included as *Technical Appendix E* to this EIR (Urban Crossroads, 2024c). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources.

4.6.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Overview

The most recent data for California’s estimated total energy consumption and natural gas consumption is from 2020, released by the United States (U.S.) Energy Information Administration’s (EIA) California State Profile and Energy Estimates in 2021 and included: (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 7)

- As of 2020, approximately 6,923 trillion British Thermal Unit (BTU) of energy was consumed
- As of 2021, approximately 605 million barrels of petroleum
- As of 2021, approximately 2,101 billion cubic feet of natural gas
- As of 2021, approximately 1 million short tons of coal

According to the EIA, in 2021 the U.S. petroleum consumption comprised about 77% of all transportation energy use, excluding fuel consumed for aviation and most marine vessels. In 2022, about 251,923 million gallons (or about 5.99 million barrels) of finished petroleum products were consumed in the U.S., an average of about 690 million gallons per day (or about 16.4 million barrels per day). In 2021, California consumed approximately 12,157 million gallons in motor gasoline (33.31 million per day) and approximately 3,541 million gallons of diesel fuel (9.7 million per day). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 7)

The most recent data provided by the EIA for energy use in California is reported from 2021 and provided by demand sectors as follows:

- Approximately 37.8% transportation sector
- Approximately 23.2% industrial sector
- Approximately 20.0% residential sector
- Approximately 19.0% commercial sector
- Approximately 19.6% commercial

According to the EIA, California used approximately 247,250 gigawatt hours of electricity in 2021. By sector in 2021, residential uses utilized 36.5% of the State’s electricity, followed by 43.9% for commercial uses, 19.2% for industrial uses, and 0.3% for transportation. Electricity usage in California for differing land uses varies substantially by the type of uses in a building, type of construction materials used in a building, and the efficiency of all electricity-consuming devices within a building. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 7)

According to the EIA, California used approximately 200,871 million therms of natural gas in 2021. In 2021 (the most recent year for which data is available), by sector, industrial uses utilized 33% of the State’s natural



gas, followed by 30% used as fuel in the electric power sector, 21% from residential, 11% from commercial, 1% from transportation uses and the remaining 3% was utilized for the operations, processing and production of natural gas itself. While the supply of natural gas in the United States and production in the lower 48 states has increased greatly since 2008, California produces little, and imports 90% of its supply of natural gas. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 7-8)

In 2022, total system electric generation for California was 287,220 gigawatt hours (GWh). California's massive electricity in-State generation system generated approximately 203,257 GWh which accounted for approximately 70% of the electricity it uses; the rest was imported from the Pacific Northwest (12%) and the U.S. Southwest (17%). Natural gas is the main source for electricity generation at 47.46% of the total in-State electric generation system power as shown in Table 4.6-1, *Total Electricity System Power (California 2022)*. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 8)

Table 4.6-1 Total Electricity System Power (California 2022)

Fuel Type	California In-State Generation (GWh)	% of California In-State Generation	Northwest Imports (GWh)	Southwest Imports (GWh)	Total Imports (GWh)	Total California Energy Mix (GWh)	Total California Power Mix
Coal	273	0.13%	181	5,716	5,897	8,272	2.15%
Natural Gas	96,457	47.46%	44	7,994	8,038	105,356	36.38%
Oil	65	0.03%	-	-	-	37	0.02%
Other (Waste Heat/Petroleum Coke)	315	0.15%	-	-	-	465	0.11%
Unspecified	-	0.00%	12485	7,943	20,428	25,758	7.11%
Total Thermal and Unspecified	97,110	47.78%	12,710	21,653	34,363	25,656	45.77%
Nuclear	17627	8.67%	397	8,342	8,739	18,887	9.18%
Large Hydro	14,607	7.19%	10,803	1,118	11,921	184,431	9.24%
Biomass	5,366	2.64%	771	25	797	6,271	2.15%
Geothermal	11,110	5.47%	253	2,048	2,301	13,214	4.67%
Small Hydro	3,005	1.48%	211	13	225	2,835	1.12%
Solar	40,494	19.92%	231	8,225	8,456	39,458	17.04%
Wind	13,938	6.86%	8,804	8,357	17,161	31,555	10.83%
Total Non-GHG and Renewables	106,147	52.22%	21,471	28,129	49,599	93,333	54.23%
Total Energy	203,257	100.00%	34,180	49,782	83,962	277,764	100.00%

Source: CECs 2022 Total System Electric Generation (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 2-1)

An updated summary of, and context for energy consumption and energy demands within the State is presented in “U.S. Energy Information Administration, California State Profile and Energy Estimates, Quick Facts” excerpted below (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 8):

- In 2022, California was the seventh-largest producer of crude oil among the 50 states, and, as of January 2022, the State ranked third in crude oil refining capacity.



- California is the largest consumer of jet fuel and second-largest consumer of motor gasoline among the 50 states.
- In 2020, California was the second-largest total energy consumer among the states, but its per capita energy consumption was less than in all but three other states.
- In 2022, renewable resources, including hydroelectric power and small-scale, customer-sited solar power, accounted for 49% of California's in-State electricity generation. Natural gas fueled another 42%. Nuclear power supplied almost all the rest.
- In 2022, California was the fourth-largest electricity producer in the nation. The State was also the nation's third-largest electricity consumer, and additional needed electricity supplies came from out-of-State generators.

As discussed in further detail below, California is one of the nation's leading energy-producing states, and California's per capita energy use is among the nation's most efficient (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 8).

B. Electricity

The usage associated with electricity use were calculated using CalEEMod Version 2022.1. The Southern California region's electricity reliability has been of concern for the past several years due to the planned retirement of aging facilities that depend upon once-through cooling technologies, as well as the June 2013 retirement of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (San Onofre). While the once-through cooling phase-out has been ongoing since the May 2010 adoption of the State Water Resources Control Board's once-through cooling policy, the retirement of San Onofre complicated the situation. California Independent Service Operator (ISO) studies revealed the extent to which the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) and the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB) region were vulnerable to low-voltage and post-transient voltage instability concerns. A preliminary plan to address these issues was detailed in the 2013 Integrative Energy Policy Report (IEPR) after a collaborative process with other energy agencies, utilities, and air districts. Similarly, the subsequent 2022 IEPR's provides information and policy recommendations on advancing a clean, reliable, and affordable energy system. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 10)

California's electricity industry is an organization of traditional utilities, private generating companies, and State agencies, each with a variety of roles and responsibilities to ensure that electrical power is provided to consumers. The California ISO is a nonprofit public benefit corporation and is the impartial operator of the State's wholesale power grid and is charged with maintaining grid reliability, and to direct uninterrupted electrical energy supplies to California's homes and communities. While utilities still own transmission assets, the ISO routes electrical power along these assets, maximizing the use of the transmission system and its power generation resources. The ISO matches buyers and sellers of electricity to ensure that enough power is available to meet demand. To these ends, every five minutes the ISO forecasts electrical demands, accounts for operating reserves, and assigns the lowest cost power plant unit to meet demands while ensuring adequate system transmission capacities and capabilities. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 10)

Part of the ISO's charge is to plan and coordinate grid enhancements to ensure that electrical power is provided to California consumers. To this end, utilities file annual transmission expansion/modification plans to



accommodate the State’s growing electrical needs. The ISO reviews and either approves or denies the proposed additions. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, the ISO works with other areas in the western United States electrical grid to ensure that adequate power supplies are available to the State. In this manner, continuing reliable and affordable electrical power is assured to existing and new consumers throughout the State. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 10)

Electricity is currently provided to the Project site by the Imperial Irrigation District (IID). IID provides electric power to more than 158,000 persons in the Imperial Valley and parts of Riverside and San Diego counties. Based on IID’s 2022 Power Content Label Mix, IID derives electricity from varied energy resources including: fossil fuels, hydroelectric generators, nuclear power plants, geothermal power plants, and solar power generation. IID also purchases from independent power producers and utilities, including out-of-state suppliers (14). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 10)

Table 4.6-2, *IID 2022 Power Content Mix*, shows IID’s specific proportional shares of electricity sources in 2021. As indicated, the 2022 OOD Power Mix has renewable energy at 37.7% of the overall energy resources. Geothermal resources are at 11.3%, large hydroelectric sources are at 4.6%, solar energy is at 12.0%, and coal is at 0%. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 10-11)

Table 4.6-2 IID 2022 Power Content Mix

Energy Resources	2022 IID Power Mix
<i>Eligible Renewable</i>	37.7%
Biomass & Waste	7.8%
Geothermal	11.3%
Eligible Hydroelectric	6.6%
Solar	12.0%
Wind	20.0%
<i>Coal</i>	0.0%
<i>Large Hydroelectric</i>	4.6%
<i>Natural Gas</i>	35.3%
<i>Nuclear</i>	3.4%
<i>Other</i>	0.0%
Unspecified Sources of power*	19.0%
Total	100%

“Unspecified sources of power” means electricity from transactions that are not traceable to specific generation sources. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 2-2)

C. Natural Gas

Information about natural gas customers and volumes, supplies, delivery of supplies, storage, service options, and operations is based on information provided by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Refer to pages 11-14 of *Technical Appendix E* for a complete summary of this information. In brief summary, California's natural gas utilities provide service to over 11 million gas meters. SoCalGas and PG&E provide service to about 5.9 million and 4.3 million customers, respectively, while SDG&E provides service to over 800,000 customers. In 2018, California gas utilities forecasted that they would deliver about 4740 million



cubic feet per day (MMcfd) of gas to their customers, on average, under normal weather conditions. The overwhelming majority of natural gas utility customers in California are residential and small commercial customers, referred to as "core" customers. Larger volume gas customers, like electric generators and industrial customers, are called "noncore" customers. Although very small in number relative to core customers, noncore customers consume about 65% of the natural gas delivered by the state's natural gas utilities, while core customers consume about 35%. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 11-14).

Natural gas is available from a variety of in-state and out-of-state sources and is provided throughout the State in response to market supply and demand. Complementing available natural gas resources, biogas may soon be available via existing delivery systems, thereby increasing the availability and reliability of resources in total. The CPUC oversees utility purchases and transmission of natural gas to ensure reliable and affordable natural gas deliveries to existing and new consumers throughout the State. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 14)

D. Transportation Energy Resources

The Project would generate additional vehicle trips with resulting consumption of energy resources, predominantly gasoline and diesel fuel. The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) identified 36.2 million registered vehicles in California, and those vehicles consume an estimated 17.2 billion gallons of fuel each year. Gasoline (and other vehicle fuels) are commercially provided commodities and would be available to the Project patrons and employees via commercial outlets. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 14-15)

California's on-road transportation system includes 396,616 lane miles, more than 26.6 million passenger vehicles and light trucks, and almost 9.0 million medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. While gasoline consumption has been declining since 2008 it is still by far the dominant fuel. California is the second-largest consumer of petroleum products, after Texas, and accounts for 8% of the nation's total consumption. The State is the largest U.S. consumer of motor gasoline and jet fuel, and 83% of the petroleum consumed in California is used in the transportation sector. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 15)

California accounts for less than 1% of total U.S. natural gas reserves and production. As with crude oil, California's natural gas production has experienced a gradual decline since 1985. In 2021, about 33% of the natural gas delivered to consumers went to the State's industrial sector, and about 31% was delivered to the electric power sector. Natural gas fueled more than two-fifths of the State's utility-scale electricity generation in 2021. The residential sector, where three-fifths of California households use natural gas for home heating, accounted for 22% of natural gas deliveries. The commercial sector received 12% of the deliveries to end users, and the transportation sector consumed the remaining 1%. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 15)

4.6.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to energy use and conservation.



A. Federal Regulations

1. Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) promoted the development of intermodal transportation systems to maximize mobility as well as address national and local interests in air quality and energy. ISTEA contained factors that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) were to address in developing transportation plans and programs, including some energy-related factors. To meet the new ISTEA requirements, MPOs adopted explicit policies defining the social, economic, energy, and environmental values guiding transportation decisions. The applicable MPO for the County of Riverside is the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) is the applicable planning document for the area. (FHWA, 2020)

2. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

The TEA-21 was signed into law in 1998 and builds upon the initiatives established in the ISTEA legislation, discussed above. TEA-21 authorizes highway, highway safety, transit, and other efficient surface transportation programs. TEA-21 continues the program structure established for highways and transit under ISTEA, such as flexibility in the use of funds, emphasis on measures to improve the environment, and focus on a strong planning process as the foundation of good transportation decisions. TEA-21 also provides for investment in research and its application to maximize the performance of the transportation system through, for example, deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems, to help improve operations and management of transportation systems and vehicle safety.

B. State Regulations

1. Integrated Energy Policy Report

Senate Bill 1389 (Bowen, Chapter 568, Statutes of 2002) requires the California Energy Commission (CEC) to prepare a biennial integrated energy policy report that assesses major energy trends and issues facing California's electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel sectors and provides policy recommendations to conserve resources; protect the environment; ensure reliable, secure, and diverse energy supplies; enhance the State's economy; and protect public health and safety (Public Resources Code § 25301a). The CEC prepares these assessments and associated policy recommendations every two years, with updates on alternate years, as part of the Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR). (CEC, n.d.)

The 2019 IEPR focuses on changes in its energy system to address climate change and improve air quality in order to ensure that all Californians share in the benefit of the state's clean energy future. The report provides an analysis of electricity sector trends, building decarbonization and energy efficiency, zero-emission vehicles, energy equity, climate change adaptation, electricity reliability in Southern California, natural gas technologies, and electricity, natural gas, and transportation energy demand forecasts. In response to SB 100, which calls for California's electricity system to become 100 percent zero-carbon by 2045, the CEC, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) are leading the way to identify pathways to remove carbon from the state's electricity system. The goal is to utilize the clean electricity system to eliminate the carbon from other portions of California's energy system. (CEC, n.d.)



2. *California Code Title 24, Part 6, Energy Efficiency Standards*

California Code Title 24, Part 6 (also referred to as the California Energy Code) was promulgated by the CEC in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to create uniform building codes to reduce California's energy consumption. To these ends, the California Energy Code provides energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. California's building efficiency standards are updated on an approximately three-year cycle. The 2019 Standards for building construction, which went into effect on January 1, 2020, improved upon the former 2016 Standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. The CEC anticipates that single-family homes built with the 2019 standards will use approximately 7% less energy compared to the residential homes built under the 2016 standards. Additionally, after implementation of solar PV systems, homes built under the 2019 standards will about 53% less energy than homes built under the 2016 standards. Nonresidential buildings will use approximately 30% less energy due to lighting upgrades compared to the prior code. (CEC, n.d.)

3. *California Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS)*

The CEC implements and administers portions of California's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). Under the existing RPS, 25% of retail sales are required to be from renewable sources by December 31, 2016, 33% by December 31, 2020, 40% by December 31, 2024, 45% by December 31, 2027, and 50% by December 31, 2030. SB 100 raises California's RPS requirement to 50% renewable resources target by December 31, 2026, and to achieve a 60% target by December 31, 2030. SB 100 also requires that retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities procure a minimum quantity of electricity products from eligible renewable energy resources so that the total kilowatt hours (kWh) of those products sold to their retail end-use customers achieve 44% of retail sales by December 31, 2024, 52% by December 31, 2027, and 60% by December 31, 2030. In addition to targets under AB 32 and SB 32, Executive Order B-55-18 establishes a carbon neutrality goal for the state of California by 2045; and sets a goal to maintain net negative emissions thereafter. The Executive Order directs the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), the Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and California Air Resources Board (CARB) to include sequestration targets in the Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan consistent with the carbon neutrality goal. (CEC, n.d.)

4. *Pavley Fuel Efficiency Standards (AB 1493)*

In California, AB 1493 establishes fuel efficiency ratings for model year 2009-2016 passenger cars and light trucks. (CARB, n.d.)

5. *Senate Bill 350 (SB 350) – Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015*

In October 2015, the legislature approved, and the Governor signed, SB 350, which reaffirms California's commitment to reducing its GHG emissions and addressing climate change. Key provisions include an increase in the renewables portfolio standard (RPS), higher energy efficiency requirements for buildings, initial strategies towards a regional electricity grid, and improved infrastructure for electric vehicle charging stations. Specifically, SB 350 requires the following to reduce statewide GHG emissions: (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)



- Increase the amount of electricity procured from renewable energy sources from 33 percent to 50 percent by 2030, with interim targets of 40 percent by 2024, and 45 percent by 2027.
- Double the energy efficiency in existing buildings by 2030. This target will be achieved through the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC), the CEC, and local publicly owned utilities.
- Reorganize the Independent System Operator (ISO) to develop more regional electrify transmission markets and to improve accessibility in these markets, which will facilitate the growth of renewable energy markets in the western United States.

6. *Advanced Clean Cars Program*

In 2012, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted a set of regulations to control emissions from passenger vehicle model years 2017 through 2025, collectively called Advanced Clean Cars. Advanced Clean Cars, developed in coordination with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), combined the control of smog-causing (criteria) pollutants and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into a single coordinated package of regulations: the Low-Emission Vehicle III Regulation for criteria (LEV III Criteria) and GHG (LEV III GHG) emissions, and a technology-forcing mandate for zero-emission vehicles (ZEV). The goal of the program is to guide the development of environmentally advanced cars that would continue to deliver the performance, utility, and safety car owners have come to expect. Advanced Clean Cars includes the following elements (CARB, 2020c):

LEV III Criteria: Reducing Smog-Forming Pollution. CARB adopted new emission standards to reduce smog-forming emissions (also known as “criteria pollutants”) beginning with 2015 model year vehicles. The goal of this regulation is to have cars emit 75 percent less smog-forming pollution than the average car sold in 2012 by 2025.

LEV III GHG: Reducing GHG Emissions. California’s GHG regulations are projected to reduce GHG emissions from new vehicles by approximately 40 percent (from 2012 model vehicles) in 2025.

ZEV Regulation: Promoting the Cleanest Cars. The ZEV regulation is designed to achieve the State’s long-term emission reduction goals by requiring auto manufacturers to offer for sale specific numbers of the very cleanest cars available. These vehicle technologies include full battery-electric, hydrogen fuel cell, and plug-in hybrid-electric vehicles. Updated estimates using publicly available information show about 8 percent of California new vehicle sales in 2025 will be ZEVs and plug-in hybrids.

7. *Advanced Clean Trucks Program*

In June, 2020, CARB adopted a new Rule requiring truck manufacturers to transition from diesel trucks and vans to electric zero-emission trucks beginning in 2024 (CARB, 2020d). By 2045, every new truck sold in California will be required to be zero-emission (ibid.). Manufacturers who certify Class 2b-8 chassis or complete vehicles with combustion engines would be required to sell zero-emission trucks as an increasing percentage of their annual California sales from 2024 to 2035 (ibid.). By 2035, zero-emission truck/chassis sales would need to be 55% of Class 2b – 3 truck sales, 75% of Class 4 – 8 straight truck sales, and 40% of truck tractor sales (ibid.). CARB reports that as of 2020, most commercially-available models of zero-emission vans, trucks and buses operate less than 100 miles per day (ibid.). Commercial availability of electric-powered



long-haul trucks is very limited (ibid.). However, as technology advances over the next 20 years, zero-emission trucks will become suitable for more applications, and several truck manufacturers have announced plans to introduce market ready zero-emission trucks in the future (ibid.). When commercial availability of electric-powered long-haul trucks is more readily available, implementation of the Advanced Clean Trucks Regulation is anticipated to significantly reduce GHG emissions and energy usage statewide.

8. Senate Bill 1020 – Clean Energy, Jobs, and Affordability Act of 2022

SB 1020, also known as the Clean Energy, Jobs, and Affordability Act of 2022, revised State policy to include interim targets requiring that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 90 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2035, 95 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2040, 100 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2045, and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2035. SB 1020 also requires each State agency to ensure that zero-carbon resources and eligible renewable energy resources supply 100 percent of electricity procured to serve their agency by December 31, 2035. In addition, SB 1020 requires the State Water Project (SWP) to procure eligible renewable energy and zero-carbon resources as necessary to meet the clean energy requirements specified for all State agencies. Finally, SB 1020 requires the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to develop utility affordability metrics for both electricity and gas service. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

C. Local Regulations

The County of Riverside’s most current Climate Action Plan, updated in November 2019 uses several methods to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency. The regulation most relevant to the project is R2-CE1: Clean Energy, which states:

- *Clean energy includes energy efficiency and clean energy supply options such as highly efficient combined heat and power as well as renewable energy sources. Installing solar photovoltaics panels on residential and commercial building rooftops is an effective way to produce renewable energy on-site. Moreover, when combined with energy storage systems, solar panels could continuously meet residential and commercial energy demand. The Riverside County Settlement Agreement requires that on-site renewable energy production (including but not limited to solar) shall apply to any tentative tract map, plot plan, or conditional use permit that proposes to add more than 75 new dwelling units of residential development or one or more new buildings totaling more than 100,000 gross square feet of commercial, office, industrial, or manufacturing development. Renewable energy production shall be onsite generation of at least 20 percent of energy demand for commercial, office, industrial or manufacturing development, meet or exceed 20 percent of energy demand for multi-family residential development, and meet or exceed 30 percent of energy demand for single-family residential development. These renewable energy requirements should be updated with every CAP Update by the County based on most recent technology advancements. (Riverside County, 2019a, pp. 4-11 and 4-12)*

The County of Riverside also has several other non-mandatory regulations that would serve to benefit the Project. For example, CAP measure R2-L1, *Tree Planting for Shading and Energy Saving*, encourages residents and developers to plant trees to lower outdoor summer temperatures. CAP measure R2-L2, *Light*



Reflecting Surfaces for Energy Saving, advocates for coating surfaces such as roofs and asphalt with substances that reflect sunlight, for example by painting them white or installing rooftop gardens.

4.6.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section VI of Appendix G to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects due to energy consumption, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate a project's impacts on energy resources (OPR, 2018a).

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

The following thresholds are derived directly from Section VI of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's Environmental Assessment form. The proposed Project would have a significant impact on energy resources if construction and/or operation of the Project would:

- a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or*
- b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.*

4.6.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Methodology for Calculating Project Energy Demands

Information from the CalEEMod Version 2022 outputs for the Project's Air Quality Impact Analysis ("AQIA"; EIR *Technical Appendix B1*) was utilized in this analysis, detailing Project related construction equipment, transportation energy demands, and facility energy demands. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 23)

In May 2023, the SCAQMD, in conjunction with the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and other California air districts, released the latest version of the CalEEMod Version 2022.1.1.18. The purpose of this model is to calculate construction-source and operational-source criteria pollutants and GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources as well as energy usage. Accordingly, the latest version of CalEEMod has been used to determine the proposed Project's anticipated transportation and facility energy demands. Outputs from the annual model runs are provided in Appendices 4.1 through 4.3 to the Project's EA (*Technical Appendix E*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 23)

On May 2, 2022, the EPA approved the 2021 version of the EMissions FACtor model (EMFAC2021) web database for use in State Implementation Plan (SIP) and transportation conformity analyses. EMFAC2021 is a mathematical model that was developed to calculate emission rates, fuel consumption, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) from motor vehicles that operate on highways, freeways, and local roads in California, and is used by the CARB to project changes in future emissions from on-road mobile sources. The Project's EA

(*Technical Appendix E*) utilizes the different fuel types for each vehicle class from the annual EMFAC2021 emission inventory in order to derive the average vehicle fuel economy which is then used to determine the estimated annual fuel consumption associated with vehicle usage during Project construction and operational activities. For purposes of analysis, the 2023 through 2025 analysis years were utilized to determine the average vehicle fuel economy used throughout the duration of the Project. Outputs from the EMFAC2021 model run is provided in Appendix 4.4 to the Project’s EA. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 23-24)

Threshold a.: *Would the Project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?*

A. Construction Energy Demands

1. Construction Power Cost and Electricity Usage

The focus within this subsection is the energy implications of the construction process, specifically the power cost from on-site electricity consumption during construction of the proposed Project. For purposes of analysis, construction of the Project is expected to occur from June 2024 and would last through May 2025. The construction schedule utilized in the analysis represents a “worst-case” analysis scenario. The duration of construction activity and associated equipment represents a reasonable approximation of the expected construction fleet. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 24)

Based on the 2023 National Construction Estimator, a typical power cost per 1,000 s.f. of construction per month is estimated to be \$2.50, which was used to calculate the Project’s total construction cost. The proposed Project includes the development of 1,238,992 s.f. of warehouse space, assumed to include 991,194 s.f. of high-cube fulfillment space and 247,798 s.f. of high-cube cold storage. Additionally, the proposed Project includes the development of 1,659,636 s.f. of associated parking areas. As shown on Table 4.6-3, *Construction Power Cost*, the total power cost of the on-site electricity usage during the construction of the Project is estimated to be approximately \$82,719.01. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 24)

Table 4.6-3 Construction Power Cost

Land Use	Power Cost (per 1,000 s.f. of construction per month)	Size (1,000 s.f.)	Construction Duration (months)	Project Construction Power Cost
High-Cube Fulfillment	\$2.50	991.194	11	\$27,257.84
High-Cube Cold Storage	\$2.50	247.798	11	\$6,814.45
Parking Lot	\$2.50	1,659.636	11	\$45,639.99
IIS Substation	\$2.50	109.336	11	\$3,006.74
Construction Power Cost:				\$82,719.01

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-2)

The total Project construction electricity usage is the summation of the products of the power cost (estimated in Table 4.6-3) by the utility provider cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) of electricity. IID’s general service rate schedule were used to determine the Project’s electrical usage. As of January 1, 2015, IID’s general service rate is \$0.093 per kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity for large general services. As shown in Table 4.6-4,



Construction Electricity Usage, the total electricity usage from on-site Project construction related activities is estimated to be approximately 889,452 kWh. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 25)

Table 4.6-4 Construction Electricity Usage

Land Use	Cost per kWh	Project Construction Electricity Usage (kWh)
High-Cube Fulfillment	\$0.09	293,092
High-Cube Cold Storage	\$0.09	73,274
Parking Lot	\$0.09	490,753
IID Substation	\$0.09	32,331
Construction Electricity Usage:		889,452

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-3)

2. Construction Equipment Fuel Estimates

Fuel consumed by construction equipment would be the primary energy resource expended of the course of Project construction. Refer to the equipment assumptions in EIR Table 3-3, *Anticipated Construction Equipment*, and the construction phase durations presented in EIR Table 3-2, *Anticipated Construction Duration*. Consistent with industry standards and typical construction practices, each piece of equipment listed in EIR Table 3-3 would operate up to a total of 8 hours per day. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 25-26)

Project construction activity timeline estimates, construction equipment schedules, equipment power ratings, load factors, and associated fuel consumption estimates are presented in Table 4.6-5, *Construction Equipment Fuel Consumption Estimates*. The aggregate fuel consumption rate for all equipment is estimated at 18.5 horsepower hour per gallon (hp-hr-gal.), obtained from CARB 2018 Emissions Factors Tables and cited fuel consumption rate factors presented in Table D-24 of the Moyer guidelines. For the purposes of this analysis, the calculations are based on all construction equipment being diesel powered, which is consistent with industry standards. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 27)

Diesel fuel would be supplied by existing commercial fuel providers serving the Project area and region. As presented in Table 4.6-5, Project construction activities would consume an estimated 99,390 gallons of diesel fuel. Project construction would represent a “single-event” diesel fuel demand and would not require ongoing or permanent commitment of diesel fuel resources for this purpose. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 30)

3. Construction Trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Construction generates on-road vehicle emissions from vehicle usage for workers, vendors, and haul truck commuting to and from the site. The number of workers, vendor, and haul trips are presented below in Table 4.6-6, *Construction Trips and VMT*. It should be noted that for vendor trips, specifically, CalEEMod only assigns vendor trips to the Building Construction phase. Vendor trips would likely occur during all phases of construction. As such, the CalEEMod defaults for vendor trips have been adjusted based on a ratio of the total vendor trips to the number of days of each subphase of activity. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 30)



Table 4.6-5 Construction Equipment Fuel Consumption Estimates

Construction Activity	Duration (Days)	Equipment	HP Rating	Quantity	Usage Hours	Load Factor	HP-hrs/day	Total Fuel Consumption
Site Preparation	60	Rubber Tired Dozers	367	3	8	0.4	3,523	11,427
		Crawler Tractors	84	4	8	0.37	995	3,226
Grading	90	Excavators	36	2	8	0.38	219	1,065
		Graders	148	1	8	0.41	485	2,362
		Rubber Tired Dozers	367	1	8	0.4	1,174	5,713
		Scrapers	423	2	8	0.48	3,249	15,804
		Crawler Tractors	84	2	8	0.37	497	2,419
Substation Construction	43	Cranes	367	2	8	0.29	1,703	3,958
		Forklifts	82	3	8	0.2	394	915
		Generator Sets	14	1	8	0.74	83	193
		Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	84	3	8	0.37	746	1,734
	109	Welders	46	1	8	0.45	166	385
		Off-Highway Trucks	376	2	8	0.38	2,286	5,314
		Cranes	367	1	8	0.29	851	5,017
		Off-Highway Trucks	376	2	8	0.38	2,286	13,469
Building Construction	153	Cranes	367	1	8	0.29	851	7,042
		Forklifts	82	3	8	0.2	394	3,255
		Generator Sets	14	1	8	0.74	83	685
		Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	84	3	8	0.37	746	6,169
		Welders	46	1	8	0.45	166	1,370
Off-Site Utility and Infrastructure Improvements	64	Excavators	36	1	8	0.38	109	379
		Off-Highway Trucks	376	1	8	0.38	1,143	3,954
		Other Construction Equipment	82	1	8	0.42	276	953
Paving	23	Pavers	81	2	8	0.42	544	677
		Paving Equipment	89	2	8	0.36	513	637
		Rollers	36	2	8	0.38	219	272
Architectural Coating	130	Air Compressors	37	1	8	0.48	142	998
Construction Fuel Demand (Gallons Fuel):								99,390

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-5)

Table 4.6-6 Construction Trips and VMT

Construction Activity	Worker Trips Per Day	Vendor Trips Per Day	Hauling Trips Per Day
Site Preparation	18	40	0
Grading	20	60	140
Substation Construction	520	103	0
Building Construction	520	103	0
Off-Site Utility and Infrastructure Improvements	8	0	0
Paving	15	0	0
Architectural Coating	104	0	0

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-6)



4. *Construction Worker Fuel Estimates*

With respect to estimated VMT for the Project, the construction worker trips (personal vehicles used by workers commuting to the Project from home) would generate an estimated 1,740,277 VMT during the 11 months of construction. Based on CalEEMod methodology, it is assumed that 50% of all construction worker trips are from light-duty-auto vehicles (LDA), 25% are from light-duty-trucks (LDT1¹), and 25% are from light-duty-trucks (LDT2²). Data regarding Project related construction worker trips were based on CalEEMod defaults utilized within the Project-specific AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 30)

Vehicle fuel efficiencies for LDA, LDT1, and LDT2 were estimated using information generated within the 2021 version of the EMFAC developed by CARB. EMFAC2021 is a mathematical model that was developed to calculate emission rates, fuel consumption, and VMT from motor vehicles that operate on highways, freeways, and local roads in California and is commonly used by the CARB to project changes in future emissions from on-road mobile sources. EMFAC2021 was run for the LDA, LDT1, and LDT2 vehicle class within the Riverside (SS) sub-area for the 2024 through 2026 calendar years. Data from EMFAC2021 is shown in Appendix 4.4 to the Project-specific EA (*Technical Appendix E*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 30-31)

As shown in Table 4.6-7, *Construction Worker Fuel Consumption Estimates*, the estimated annual fuel consumption resulting from Project construction worker trips is 119,302 gallons during full construction of the Project. It should be noted that construction worker trips would represent a “single-event” gasoline fuel demand and would not require ongoing or permanent commitment of fuel resources for this purpose. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 32)

5. *Construction Vendor Fuel Estimates*

With respect to estimated VMT, the construction vendor trips (vehicles that deliver materials to the site during construction) would generate an estimated 491,808 VMT along area roadways for the Project over the duration of construction activity. It is assumed that 50% of all vendor trips are from medium-heavy duty trucks (MHD), 50% of all vendor trips are from heavy-heavy duty trucks (HHD), and 100% of all hauling trips are from HHD trucks. These assumptions are consistent with the CalEEMod defaults utilized within the Project-specific AQIA (*Technical Appendix B1*). Vehicle fuel efficiencies for MHDs and HHDs were estimated using information generated within EMFAC2021. EMFAC2021 was run for the MHD and HHD vehicle classes within the Riverside (SS) sub-area for the 2024 through 2025 calendar years. Data from EMFAC2021 is shown in Appendix 4.4 to the Project-specific EA (*Technical Appendix E*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 32)

Based on Table 4.6-8, *Construction Vendor Fuel Consumption Estimates*, it is estimated that 86,563 gallons of fuel would be consumed related to construction vendor trips during full construction of the Project. It should

¹ Vehicles under the LDT1 category have a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of less than 6,000 lbs. and equivalent test weight (ETW) of less than or equal to 3,750 lbs.

² Vehicles under the LDT2 category have a GVWR of less than 6,000 lbs. and ETW between 3,751 lbs. and 5,750 lbs.



Table 4.6-7 Construction Worker Fuel Consumption Estimates

Year	Construction Activity	Duration (Days)	Worker Trips/Day	Trip Length (miles)	VMT	Average Vehicle Fuel Economy (mpg)	Estimated Fuel Consumption (gallons)
2024	LDA						
	Site Preparation	60	9	18.5	9,990	31.15	321
	Grading	90	10	18.5	16,650	31.15	535
	Substation Construction	109	260	18.5	524,290	31.15	16,832
	Building Construction	66	260	18.5	317,460	31.15	10,192
	Architectural Coating	43	52	18.5	41,366	31.15	1,328
	LDT1						
	Site Preparation	60	5	18.5	4,995	23.65	211
	Grading	90	5	18.5	8,325	23.65	352
	Substation Construction	109	130	18.5	262,145	23.65	11,084
	Building Construction	66	130	18.5	158,730	23.65	6,711
	Architectural Coating	43	26	18.5	20,683	23.65	874
	LDT2						
	Site Preparation	60	5	18.5	4,995	23.77	210
	Grading	90	5	18.5	8,325	23.77	350
Substation Construction	109	130	18.5	262,145	23.77	11,028	
Building Construction	66	130	18.5	158,730	23.77	6,677	
Architectural Coating	43	26	18.5	20,683	23.77	870	
2025	LDA						
	Substation Construction	43	260	18.5	206,830	32.28	6,408
	Building Construction	87	260	18.5	418,470	32.28	12,965
	Off-Site Utilities	64	4	18.5	4,736	32.28	147
	Paving	23	8	18.5	3,191	32.28	99
	Architectural Coating	87	52	18.5	83,694	32.28	2,593
	LDT1						
	Substation Construction	43	130	18.5	103,415	24.44	4,231
	Building Construction	87	130	18.5	209,235	24.14	8,667
	Off-Site Utilities	64	2	18.5	2,368	24.14	98
	Paving	23	4	18.5	1,596	24.14	66
	Architectural Coating	87	26	18.5	41,847	24.14	1,733
	LDT2						
	Substation Construction	109	130	18.5	262,145	24.44	10,726
	Building Construction	87	130	18.5	209,235	24.44	8,561
Off-Site Utilities	64	2	18.5	2,368	24.44	97	
Paving	23	4	18.5	1,596	24.44	65	
Architectural Coating	87	26	18.5	41,847	24.44	1,712	
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION WORKER FUEL CONSUMPTION							
							119,302

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-7)



Table 4.6-8 Construction Vendor Fuel Consumption Estimates

Year	Construction Activity	Duration (Days)	Vendor Trips/Day	Trip Length (miles)	VMT	Average Vehicle Fuel Economy (mpg)	Estimated Fuel Consumption (gallons)
2024	MHD						
	Site Preparation	60	20	10.2	12,240	7.58	1,614
	Grading	90	30	10.2	27,540	7.58	3,633
	Substation Construction	43	52	10.2	22,807	7.58	3,008
	Building Construction	66	52	10.2	34,670	7.58	4,573
	HHD (Vendor)						
	Site Preparation	60	20	10.2	12,240	6.19	1,976
	Grading	90	30	10.2	27,540	6.19	4,447
	Substation Construction	43	51.5	10.2	22,588	6.19	3,647
	Building Construction	66	52	10.2	34,670	6.19	5,598
	HHD (Hauling)						
	Grading	90	140	13.9	175,140	6.19	28,278
2025	MHD						
	Substation Construction	109	52	10.2	57,814	7.67	7,533
	Building Construction	87	52	10.2	45,701	7.67	5,955
	HHD (Vendor)						
	Substation Construction	109	51.5	10.2	57,258	6.32	9,065
Building Construction	87	51.5	10.2	45,701	6.32	7,236	
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION VENDOR FUEL CONSUMPTION							86,563

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-8)

be noted that Project construction vendor trips would represent a “single-event” diesel fuel demand and would not require on-going or permanent commitment of diesel fuel resources for this purpose. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 33)

6. Construction Energy Efficiency/Conservation Measures

Starting in 2014, CARB adopted the nation's first regulation aimed at cleaning up off-road construction equipment such as bulldozers, graders, and backhoes. These requirements ensure fleets gradually turnover the oldest and dirtiest equipment to newer, cleaner models and prevent fleets from adding older, dirtier equipment. As such, the equipment used for Project construction would conform to CARB regulations and California emissions standards. It should also be noted that there are no unusual Project characteristics or construction processes that would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive than is used for comparable activities; or equipment that would not conform to current emissions standards (and related fuel efficiencies). Equipment employed in construction of the Project would therefore not result in inefficient wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of fuel. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 33)

Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable CARB regulation regarding retrofitting, repowering, or replacement of diesel off-road construction equipment. Additionally, CARB has adopted the Airborne Toxic Control Measure to limit heavy-duty diesel motor vehicle idling in order to reduce public exposure to diesel particulate matter and other Toxic Air Contaminants. Compliance with anti-idling and emissions regulations would result in a more efficient use of construction-related energy and the minimization or elimination of wasteful or unnecessary consumption of energy. Idling restrictions and the use of newer



engines and equipment would result in less fuel combustion and energy consumption. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 33)

Additional construction-source energy efficiencies would occur due to required California regulations and best available control measures (BACM). For example, CCR Title 13, Motor Vehicles, section 2449(d)(3) Idling, limits idling times of construction vehicles to no more than five minutes, thereby precluding unnecessary and wasteful consumption of fuel due to unproductive idling of construction equipment. Section 2449(d)(3) requires that grading plans shall reference the requirement that a sign shall be posted on-site stating that construction workers need to shut off engines at or before five minutes of idling.” In this manner, construction equipment operators are required to be informed that engines are to be turned off at or prior to five minutes of idling. Enforcement of idling limitations is realized through periodic site inspections conducted by County building officials, and/or in response to citizen complaints. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 33-34)

A full analysis related to the energy needed to form construction materials is not included in this analysis due to a lack of detailed Project-specific information on construction materials. At this time, an analysis of the energy needed to create Project-related construction materials would be extremely speculative and thus has not been prepared. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 34)

In general, construction processes promote conservation and efficient use of energy by reducing raw materials demands, with related reduction in energy demands associated with raw materials extraction, transportation, processing, and refinement. Use of materials in bulk reduces energy demands associated with preparation and transport of construction materials as well as the transport and disposal of construction waste and solid waste in general, with corollary reduced demands on area landfill capacities and energy consumed by waste transport and landfill operations. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 34)

B. Operational Energy Demands

Energy consumption in support of or related to Project operations would include transportation fuel demands (fuel consumed by passenger car and truck vehicles accessing the Project site), fuel demands from operational equipment, and facilities energy demands (energy consumed by building operations and site maintenance activities). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 34)

1. Transportation Fuel Demands

Energy that would be consumed by Project-generated traffic is a function of total VMT and estimated vehicle fuel economies of vehicles accessing the Project site. The VMT per vehicle class can be determined by evaluated in the vehicle fleet mix and the total VMT. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 34)

As with worker and vendors trips, operational vehicle fuel efficiencies were estimated using information generated within EMFAC2021 developed by CARB. EMFAC2021 was run for the Riverside sub-area for the 2024 through 2025 calendar years. Data from EMFAC2021 is shown in Appendix 4.4 to the Project-specific EA (*Technical Appendix E*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 34)



In order to account for the possibility of refrigerated uses (cold storage) that would be accommodated by the high-cube cold storage warehouse proposed, it is assumed that all trucks accessing this land use are presumed to also have transport refrigeration units (TRUs). Therefore, for modeling purposes 93 trucks are assumed to be trucks with TRUs. TRUs are also accounted for during on-site and off-site travel. TRU calculations are based on EMFAC2021. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 34)

As summarized on Table 4.6-9, *Total Project-Generated Traffic Annual Fuel Consumption*, the Project would result in 29,332,699 annual VMT and an estimated annual fuel consumption of 3,043,533 gallons of fuel. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 35)

2. On-Site Cargo Handling Equipment Fuel Demands

It is common for industrial buildings to require the operation of exterior cargo handling equipment in the building’s truck court areas. For this particular Project, on-site modeled operational equipment includes up to four (4) 175 horsepower (hp), natural gas-powered cargo handling equipment – port tractors operating at 4 hours a day for 365 days a year. Project operational activity estimates and associated fuel consumption estimates are based on the annual EMFAC2021 offroad emissions for the 2025 operational year and was used to derive the total annual fuel consumption associated on-site equipment. As presented in Table 4.6-10, *On-Site Cargo Handling Equipment Fuel Consumption Estimates*, Project on-site equipment would consume an estimated 18,567 gallons of natural gas. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 35)

Table 4.6-9 Total Project-Generated Traffic Annual Fuel Consumption

Vehicle Type	Average Vehicle Fuel Economy (mpg)	Annual VMT	Estimated Annual Fuel Consumption (gallons)
LDA	32.28	5,663,846	175,482
LDT1	24.14	508,086	21,046
LDT2	24.44	2,804,524	114,747
MDV	14.96	1,962,604	131,231
MCY	14.96	221,868	14,835
LHDT1	16.40	2,581,298	157,430
LHDT2	14.96	785,635	52,532
MHDT	7.67	1,949,277	253,991
HHDT	6.32	12,855,561	2,035,333
TRUs			86,906
Total (All Vehicles):		29,332,699	3,043,533

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-9)



Table 4.6-10 On-Site Cargo Handling Equipment Fuel Consumption Estimates

Equipment	Quantity	Usage Hours	Days of Operation	EMFAC2021 Fuel Consumption (gal./yr)	EMFAC2021 Activity (hrs./yr)	Total Fuel Consumption
Cargo Handling Equipment	4	4	365	17,909	5,633	18,567
<i>On-Site Cargo Handling Equipment Fuel Demand (Gallons Fuel):</i>						<i>18,567</i>

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-10)

3. Facility Energy Demands

Project building operations activities would result in the consumption of electricity, which would be supplied to the Project by IID. Electricity usage associated with the Project was calculated based on data provided by the Project Applicant and includes 20% of the building user’s electric power from renewable sources. As summarized on Table 4.6-11, *Project Annual Operational Energy Demand Summary*, the Project would consume approximately 8,563,734 kWh/year of electricity. Based on information provided by the Project Applicant, the Project would not use natural gas for the building envelope; thus, natural gas consumption has not been analyzed herein. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 36)

Table 4.6-11 Project Annual Operational Energy Demand Summary

Land Use	Electricity Demand (kWh/year)
High-Cube Fulfillment Center	4,711,274
High-Cube Cold Storage	2,243,230
Parking Lot	1,609,230
<i>Total Project Energy Demand:</i>	<i>8,563,734</i>

(Urban Crossroads, 2024c, Table 4-11)

4. Operational Energy Efficiency/Conservation Measures

Energy efficiency/energy conservation attributes of the Project would be complemented by increasingly stringent State and federal regulatory actions addressing vehicle fuel economies and vehicle emissions standards; and enhanced building/utilities energy efficiencies mandated under California building codes (e.g., Title 24, California Green Building Standards Code). (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 36)

Project annual fuel consumption estimates presented previously in Table 4.6-9 represent likely potential maximums that would occur for the Project. Under subsequent future conditions, average fuel economies of vehicles accessing the Project site can be expected to improve as older, less fuel-efficient vehicles are removed from circulation, and in response to fuel economy and emissions standards imposed on newer vehicles entering the circulation system. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 36)

Enhanced fuel economies realized pursuant to federal and state regulatory actions, and related transition of vehicles to alternative energy sources (e.g., electricity, natural gas, biofuels, hydrogen cells) would likely decrease future gasoline fuel demands per VMT. Location of the Project proximate to regional and local



roadway systems tends to reduce VMT within the region, acting to reduce regional vehicle energy demands. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 36)

C. Conclusion

1. Summary of Construction Energy Demands

The estimated power cost of on-site electricity usage during the construction of the Project is assumed to be approximately \$82,719.01. Additionally, based on the assumed power cost, it is estimated that the total electricity usage during construction, after full Project buildout, is calculated to be approximately 889,452 kWh. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 36-37)

Construction equipment used by the Project would result in single event consumption of approximately 99,390 gallons of diesel fuel. Construction equipment use of fuel would not be atypical for the type of construction proposed because there are no aspects of the Project's proposed construction process that are unusual or energy-intensive, and Project construction equipment would conform to the applicable CARB emissions standards, acting to promote equipment fuel efficiencies. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 37)

CCR Title 13, Title 13, Motor Vehicles, section 2449(d)(3) Idling, limits idling times of construction vehicles to no more than 5 minutes, thereby precluding unnecessary and wasteful consumption of fuel due to unproductive idling of construction equipment. BACMs inform construction equipment operators of this requirement. Enforcement of idling limitations is realized through periodic site inspections conducted by County building officials, and/or in response to citizen complaints. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 37)

Construction worker trips for full construction of the Project would result in the estimated fuel consumption of 119,302 gallons of fuel. Additionally, fuel consumption from construction vendor and hauling trips (MHDs and HHDs) will total approximately 63,609 gallons. Diesel fuel would be supplied by County and regional commercial vendors. Indirectly, construction energy efficiencies and energy conservation would be achieved using bulk purchases, transport and use of construction materials. The 2022 IEPR released by the CEC has shown that fuel efficiencies are getting better within on and off-road vehicle engines due to more stringent government requirements. As supported by the preceding discussions, Project construction energy consumption would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or otherwise unnecessary. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 37)

2. Summary of Operational Energy Demands

Transportation Energy Demands

Annual vehicular trips and related VMT generated by the operation of the Project would result in a fuel demand of 3,043,533 gallons of fuel. Fuel would be provided by current and future commercial vendors. Trip generation and VMT generated by the Project are consistent with other industrial uses of similar scale and configuration, as reflected respectively in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (11th Ed., 2021); and CalEEMod. As such, Project operations would not result in excessive and wasteful vehicle trips and VMT, nor excess and wasteful vehicle energy consumption compared to other industrial uses. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 37)



It should be noted that the state strategy for the transportation sector for medium and heavy-duty trucks is focused on making trucks more efficient and expediting truck turnover rather than reducing VMT from trucks. This is in contrast to the passenger vehicle component of the transportation sector where both per-capita VMT reductions and an increase in vehicle efficiency are forecasted to be needed to achieve the overall state emissions reductions goals. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 37)

Heavy duty trucks involved in goods movements generally are controlled on the technology side and through fleet turnover of older trucks and engines to newer and cleaner trucks and engines. The first battery-electric heavy-heavy duty trucks are being tested in 2023 and SCAQMD is looking to integrate this new technology into large-scale truck operations. The following state strategies reduce GHG emissions from the medium and heavy-duty trucks: (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 38)

- CARB's Mobile Source Strategy focuses on reducing GHGs through the transition to zero and low emission vehicles and from medium-duty and heavy-duty trucks.
- CARB's Sustainable Freight Action Plan establishes a goal to improve freight efficiency by 25% by 2030, deploy over 100,000 freight vehicles and equipment capable of zero emission operation and maximize both zero and near-zero emission freight vehicles and equipment powered by renewable energy by 2030.
- CARB's Emissions Reduction Plan for Ports and Goods Movement (Goods Movement Plan) in California focuses on reducing heavy-duty truck-related emissions focus on establishment of emissions standards for trucks, fleet turnover, truck retrofits, and restriction on truck idling (CARB 2006). While the focus of Goods Movement Plan is to reduce criteria air pollutant and air toxic emissions, the strategies to reduce these pollutants would also generally have a beneficial effect in reducing GHG emissions.
- CARB's On-Road Truck and Bus Regulation (2010) requires diesel trucks and buses that operate in California to be upgraded to reduce emissions. Newer heavier trucks and buses must meet particulate matter filter requirements beginning January 1, 2012. Lighter and older heavier trucks must be replaced starting January 1, 2015. By January 1, 2023, nearly all trucks and buses will need to have 2010 model year engines or equivalent.
- CARB's Heavy-Duty (Tractor-Trailer) GHG Regulation requires SmartWay tractor trailers that include idle-reduction technologies, aerodynamic technologies, and low-rolling resistant tires that would reduce fuel consumption and associated GHG emissions.

Enhanced fuel economies realized pursuant to federal and State regulatory actions, and related transition of vehicles to alternative energy sources (e.g., electricity, natural gas, biofuels, hydrogen cells) likely would decrease future gasoline fuel demands per VMT. Location of the Project proximate to regional and local roadway systems tends to reduce VMT within the region, acting to reduce regional vehicle energy demands. The Project would implement sidewalks, facilitating and encouraging pedestrian access. Facilitating pedestrian and bicycle access would reduce VMT and associated energy consumption. In compliance with the California Green Building Standards Code and County requirements, the Project would promote the use of bicycles as an



alternative mean of transportation by providing short-term and/or long-term bicycle parking accommodations. As supported by the preceding discussions, Project transportation energy consumption would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or otherwise unnecessary. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 38)

On-Site Cargo Handling Equipment Fuel Demands

As previously stated, it is common for industrial buildings to require the operation of exterior cargo handling equipment in the building's truck court areas. On-site cargo handling equipment used by the Project would result in approximately 18,567 gallons of natural gas. On-site equipment use of fuel would not be atypical for the type of construction proposed because there are no aspects of the Project's proposed operations that are unusual or energy-intensive, and Project on-site equipment would conform to the applicable CARB emissions standards, acting to promote equipment fuel efficiencies. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, pp. 38-39)

Facility Energy Demands

Project facility operational energy demands are estimated at 8,563,734 kWh/year of electricity, which would be supplied by IID. Electricity is not currently available at the Project site, requiring installation of the electrical substation that is part of the proposed Project. Based on information provided by the Project Applicant, the Project would not use natural gas. As such, natural gas consumption has not been analyzed in the Project's EA. The Project proposes conventional industrial uses reflecting contemporary energy efficient/energy conserving designs and operational programs. The Project does not propose uses that are inherently energy intensive and the energy demands in total would be comparable to other industrial uses of similar scale and configuration. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 39)

Implementation of the Project would increase the demand for electricity at the Project site and petroleum consumption in the region during operation. However, the electrical consumption demands of the Project during operation would conform to the state's Title 24 and to CALGreen standards, which implement conservation measures. Further, the proposed Project would not directly require the construction of new energy generation or supply facilities and providers of electricity are in compliance with regulatory requirements that assist in conservation, including requirements that electrical providers achieve state-mandated renewable energy production requirements. With compliance with Title 24 conservation standards and other regulatory requirements, the Project would not be wasteful or inefficient or unnecessarily consume energy resources during construction or operation and would result in a less-than-significant impact with respect to consumption of energy resources. Lastly, the Project will comply with the applicable 2022 Title 24 standards. Compliance with applicable Title 24 standards will ensure that the Project energy demands would not be inefficient, wasteful, or otherwise unnecessary. (Urban Crossroads, 2024c, p. 39)

3. Significance of Impacts

As supported by the preceding analyses, Project construction and operations would not result in the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy. The Project aims to achieve energy conservation goals within the State of California. Therefore, Project impacts due to construction- and operational-related energy consumption would be less than significant.



Threshold b: Would the Project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

A summary of the Project’s consistency with applicable regulations and requirements is provided below.

Consistency with Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)

Transportation and access to the Project site is provided primarily by the local and regional roadway systems. The Project would not interfere with, nor otherwise obstruct intermodal transportation plans or projects that may be realized pursuant to the ISTEA because SCAG is not planning for intermodal facilities on or through the Project site.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

The Project site is located along major transportation corridors with proximate access to the Interstate freeway system. The Project site facilitates access, acts to reduce vehicle miles traveled, takes advantage of existing infrastructure systems, and promotes land use compatibilities. The Project supports the strong planning processes emphasized under TEA-21. The Project is therefore consistent with, and would not otherwise interfere with, nor obstruct implementation of TEA-21.

Consistency with 2022 Integrative Energy Policy Report (IEPR)

Electricity would be provided to the Project site by IID. Based on information provided by the Project Applicant, no natural gas would be used as a result of the operation of the Project. The Project is consistent with, and would not otherwise interfere with, nor obstruct implementation of the goals presented in the 2022 IEPR. Additionally, the Project would comply with the applicable Title 24 standards which would ensure that the Project energy demands would not be inefficient, wasteful, or otherwise unnecessary. As such, development of the proposed Project would support the goals presented in the 2022 IEPR.

Consistency with Energy Action Plan

The Project site is located along major transportation corridors with proximate access to the interstate freeway system. The site selected for the Project facilitates access, acts to reduce VMT, and takes advantage of existing infrastructure systems. The Project therefore supports urban design and planning processes identified under the Energy Action Plan, is consistent with, and would not otherwise interfere with, nor obstruct implementation of the State of California Energy Plan.

Consistency with California Code Title 24, Part 6, Energy Efficiency Standards

The 2022 version of Title 24 was adopted by the CEC and became effective on January 1, 2023. The proposed Project would be subject to applicable Title 24 standards. As such, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the 2022 Title 24 standards.



Consistency with AB 1493

AB 1493 is not applicable to the Project as it is a Statewide measure requiring CARB to develop and adopt vehicle emission standards. No feature of the Project would interfere with implementation of the requirements under AB 1493.

Consistency with Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)

California’s Renewable Portfolio Standard is not applicable to the Project as it is a Statewide measure that establishes a renewable energy mix. No feature of the Project would interfere with implementation of the requirements under RPS.

Consistency with SB 350

The proposed Project would use energy from IID, which have committed to diversify their portfolio of energy sources by increasing energy from wind and solar sources. No feature of the Project would interfere with implementation of SB 350. Additionally, the Project would be designed and constructed to implement the energy efficiency measures for new industrial developments and would include several measures designed to reduce energy consumption.

Consistency with the County of Riverside Climate Action Plan (CAP)

The Project would be required to comply with the 2022 Title 24 standards. As documented in EIR Subsection 4.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, and as documented in the Project-specific GHG report (*Technical Appendix G*), the Project would be required to achieve a minimum of 100 points pursuant to the CAP Screening Tables. Additionally, the Project Applicant would be required to provide documentation to the County demonstrating implementation of CAP measure R2-CE1, *Clean Energy*, which includes on-site renewable energy production. As such, no feature of the Project would conflict with the County of Riverside Climate Action Plan.

Conclusion

As indicated in the preceding analysis, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

4.6.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold a., there are no components of the proposed Project that would result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Other cumulative developments involving discretionary approvals also would be subject to CEQA’s requirements to evaluate and address potential impacts due to energy consumption. Although it is possible other cumulative developments could result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, the Project’s projected energy demand during operations would be less-than-cumulatively considerable with mandatory compliance with applicable regulations.



As indicated under the analysis of Threshold b., the Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. As such, the Project has no potential to result in cumulatively-considerable impacts due to a conflict with or obstruction of such plans.

4.6.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Project construction and operations would not result in the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy. Further, the energy demands of the Project can be accommodated within the context of available resources and energy delivery systems. The Project would not engage in wasteful or inefficient uses of energy and aims to achieve energy conservation goals within the State of California. As such, Project impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources would be less than significant requiring no mitigation.

Threshold b: Less-than-Significant Impact. Energy consumed by the Project's operation is calculated to be comparable to, or less than, energy consumed by other single-family residential projects of similar scale and intensity that are operating in California, as the Project would be subject to current regulatory requirements, such as the 2022 version of Title 24, which was not in effect when most existing residential developments were constructed. Based on the analysis presented herein, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.

4.6.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude energy consumption impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- Pavley Fuel Efficiency Standards (AB1493). Establishes fuel efficiency ratings for new vehicles.
- Renewable Portfolio Standards (SB 100): Increases California's RPS requirement to 50% renewable resources target by December 31, 2026, and to achieve a 60% target by December 31, 2030. SB 100 also requires that retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities procure a minimum quantity of electricity products from eligible renewable energy resources so that the total kilowatt hours (kWh) of those products sold to their retail end-use customers achieve 44% of retail sales by December 31, 2024, 52% by December 31, 2027, and 60% by December 31, 2030. In addition to targets under AB 32 and SB 32, Executive Order B-55-18 establishes a carbon neutrality goal for the state of California by 2045; and sets a goal to maintain net negative emissions thereafter. The Executive Order directs the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), the Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and CARB to include sequestration targets in the Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan consistent with the carbon neutrality goal.



- CCR Title 13, Motor Vehicles, Section 2449(d)(3): *Idling*. Grading plans shall reference the requirement that a sign shall be posted on-site stating that construction workers need to shut off engines at or before five minutes of idling.

Mitigation

Project impacts due to energy consumption would be less than significant; therefore, mitigation is not required.



4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The information and analysis in this Subsection 4.7 is based primarily on information contained in a technical report prepared by Sladden Engineering (herein, “Sladden”). The technical study, entitled, “Geotechnical Investigation, Majestic Thousand Palms, NEC Rio Del Sol Road & 30th Avenue,” dated September 17, 2021, and included as *Technical Appendix F* to this EIR (Sladden, 2021). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources used in this analysis.

4.7.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Geologic Setting

The Project site and vicinity including the area of the Project’s off-site improvements are located within the Colorado Desert Physiographic Province (also referred to as the Salton Trough) that is characterized as a northwest-southeast trending structural depression extending from the Gulf of California to the Banning Pass. The Salton Trough is dominated by several northwest trending faults, most notably the San Andreas Fault system. The Salton Trough is bounded by the Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains on the southwest, the San Bernardino Mountains on the north, the Little San Bernardino/Chocolate/Orocopia Mountains on the east, and extends through the Imperial Valley into the Gulf of California on the south. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

A relatively thick sequence (20,000 feet) of sediment has been deposited in the Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Trough from Miocene to present times. These sediments are predominately terrestrial in nature with some lacustrine (lake) and minor marine deposits. The major contributor of these sediments has been the Colorado River. The mountains surrounding the Coachella Valley are composed primarily of Precambrian metamorphic and Mesozoic II “granitic” rock. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

The Salton Trough is an internally draining area with no readily available outlet to the Gulf of California and with portions well below sea level (-253 feet above mean sea level [amsl]). The region is intermittently blocked from the Gulf of California by the damming effects of the Colorado River delta (current elevation +30 feet amsl). Between about 300 AD and 1600 AD (to 1700) the Salton Trough has been inundated by the River’s water, forming ancient Lake Cahuilla (max. elevation +58 feet amsl). Since that time the floor of the Trough has been repeatedly flooded with other “fresh” water lakes (1849, 1861, and 1891), the most recent and historically long lived being the current Salton Sea (1905). The sole outlet for these waters is evaporation, leaving behind vast amounts of terrestrial sediment materials and evaporite minerals. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

The Project site is mapped to be immediately underlain by undifferentiated Quaternary-age dune sand (Qs) and alluvium (Qal). The regional geologic setting for the site vicinity is presented on the Figure 2 of the Project’s Geotechnical Investigation (EIR *Technical Appendix E*). (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

B. Subsurface Conditions

The subsurface conditions at the Project site were investigated by drilling nine (9) exploratory boreholes to depths between approximately 11 to 51 feet below ground surface (bgs) in order to evaluate the subsurface soil conditions. The boreholes were advanced using a truck-mounted Mobile B-61 drill-rig equipped with 8-inch



outside diameter (O.D.) hollow stem augers. A representative of Sladden was on-site to log the materials encountered and retrieve samples for laboratory testing and engineering analysis. During the field investigation conducted by Sladden, disturbed soil was encountered to a depth of approximately one (1) foot bgs. Underlying the disturbed soil and extending to the maximum depths explored, native earth materials were encountered. Generally, the native earth materials consisted of silty sand (SM) and gravelly sand (SP). The native soil appeared grayish brown in in-situ color, dry and fine- to coarse-grained with scattered gravel and cobbles. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3) It is expected that the Project's off site improvement areas contain the same subsurface characteristics.

C. Site Topography

EIR Figure 2-7, *USGS Topographic Map*, in EIR Section 2.0 depicts the topographic conditions of the Project site. As shown, the Project site gently slopes downward from the northeast corner to the southwest corner of the Project site. Elevations on the site range from approximately 280 feet above mean sea level (amsl) near the southwest corner of the Project site to 326 feet amsl near the northeastern corner of the Project site. Overall topographic relief is approximately 46 feet. Areas of the Project's off-site improvements parallel public roadway rights of way and are generally flat and gently sloping.

D. Groundwater

Groundwater was not encountered to a maximum explored depth of approximately 51 feet bgs during the field investigation conducted by Sladden. Based upon the depth to groundwater in the Project vicinity, it is the opinion of Sladden that groundwater does not affect the geologic conditions at the Project site under existing conditions. (Sladden, 2021, p. 4)

E. Seismic Hazards

The southwestern United States is a tectonically active and structurally complex region, dominated by northwest trending dextral faults. The faults of the region often are part of complex fault systems, composed of numerous subparallel faults that splay or step from the main fault traces. Strong seismic shaking could be produced by any of these faults. (Sladden, 2021, p. 4)

The Project site is located within the influence of several fault systems that are considered to be active or potentially active. An active fault is defined by the State of California as a "sufficiently active and well defined fault" that has exhibited surface displacement within the Holocene epoch (about the last 11,000 years). A potentially active fault is defined by the State as a fault with a history of movement within Pleistocene time (between 11,000 and 1.6 million years ago). The nearest faults to the Project site are two segments of the San Andreas Fault (Coachella and Southern segments), both of which are located approximately 2.7 miles from the Project site. (Sladden, 2021, p. 4 and Table 1)

1. Fault Rupture

Surface rupture is expected to occur along preexisting, known active fault traces. However, surface rupture could potentially splay or step from known active faults or rupture along unidentified traces. Based on research



conducted by Sladden, there are no known active faults within or trending towards the Project site. Signs of active surface faulting were not observed during Sladden's review of non-stereo digitized photographs of the site and site vicinity. Additionally, no signs of active surface fault rupture or secondary seismic effects (lateral spreading, lurching etc.) were identified on-site during the field investigation conducted by Sladden. Therefore, Sladden opines that risks associated with primary surface ground rupture at the Project site should be considered "low." (Sladden, 2021, p. 5)

2. *Ground Shaking*

The Project site and vicinity has been subjected to past ground shaking by faults that traverse through the region. Strong seismic shaking from nearby active faults is expected to produce strong seismic shaking at the Project site and in the site's vicinity. Based on site-specific ground motion parameters developed for the property, the site modified peak ground acceleration (PGAm) is estimated to be 0.952g. (Sladden, 2021, p. 6)

3. *Liquefaction*

Liquefaction is the process in which loose, saturated granular soil loses strength as a result of cyclic loading. The strength loss is a result of a decrease in granular sand volume and a positive increase in pore pressures. Generally, liquefaction can occur if all of the following conditions apply: liquefaction-susceptible soil, groundwater within a depth of 50 feet or less, and strong seismic shaking. Groundwater levels in the vicinity of the Project site are in excess of 50 feet below the existing ground surface. The potential for liquefaction impacting the Project site is therefore considered "negligible." (Sladden, 2021, p. 6)

4. *Slope Failure, Landslide, and Rock Fall Hazards*

The Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are situated on relatively level ground and are not immediately adjacent to any slopes or hillsides that could be potentially susceptible to slope instability. No signs of slope instability in the form of landslides, rock falls, earthflows, or slumps were observed at or near the subject site during the investigation conducted by Sladden. As such, risks associated with slope instability at the Project site are considered "negligible." (Sladden, 2021, p. 6)

5. *Tsunamis and Seiches*

Because the Project site and the Project site is situated at an elevated inland location and is not immediately adjacent to any impounded bodies of water, risk associated with tsunamis and seiches at the Project site is considered "negligible" (Sladden, 2021, p. 6). The same applies to the Project's off-site improvement areas.

F. *Soils*

1. *Erosion Potential*

Erosion is the process by which the upper layers of the ground surface (such as soils) are worn and removed by the movement of water or wind. Soils with characteristics such as low permeability and/or low cohesive strength are more susceptible to erosion than those soils having higher permeability and cohesive strength. Additionally, the slope gradient on which a given soil is located also contributes to the soil's resistance to



erosive forces. Because water is able to flow faster down steeper gradients, the steeper the slope on which a given soil is located, the more readily it will erode.

As previously indicated in EIR Table 2-3, *Summary of On-Site Soil Characteristics*, approximately 39.5% of the Project site has a slow rate of runoff, a moderate susceptibility to water erosion, and a slight susceptibility to wind erosion. Approximately 48.5% of the Project site has a slow rate of runoff, a slight susceptibility to water erosion, and a high susceptibility to wind erosion. Approximately 11.9% of the Project site has a very slow rate of runoff, a slight susceptibility to water erosion, and a high susceptibility to wind erosion. (USDA, 1980, p. 12 and 23; USDA, n.d.)

2. *Blowsand*

Within the Project area, there is a natural sand migration process, called “blowsand,” wherein winds blowing across sandy soil picks up the soil and blows it in the direction of the wind. Blowsand is a frequent occurrence in the Project site vicinity.

3. *Expansive Soils*

Expansion Index (EI) testing of select samples was performed in order to evaluate the expansive potential of the materials underlying the site. Based the results of laboratory testing (EI = 0) conducted by Sladden, the materials underlying the site are considered "non-expansive." (Sladden, 2021, p. 6)

4. *Shrinkage and Subsidence*

Sladden estimates that shrinkage of on-site soils should be between 10 and 15 percent. Subsidence of the surfaces that are scarified and compacted should be between 1 and 2 tenths of a foot. These factors will vary depending upon the type of equipment used, the moisture content of the soil at the time of grading, and the actual degree of compaction attained. (Sladden, 2021, p. 8)

4.7.2 APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

The following is a brief description of the federal, state, and local environmental laws and related regulations governing issues related to geology and soils.

A. *Federal Regulations*

1. *Clean Water Act*

The Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulating quality standards for surface waters. The basis of the CWA was enacted in 1948 and was called the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, but the Act was substantially reorganized and expanded in 1972. "Clean Water Act" became the Act's common name with amendments in 1972. Under the CWA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has implemented pollution control programs such as setting wastewater standards for industry, and also has set water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters. The CWA made it unlawful to discharge any pollutant from a point source



into navigable waters, unless a permit was obtained. EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program controls discharges. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or man-made ditches. 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. (EPA, 2023e)

B. State Regulations

1. Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (A-P Act)

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (A-P Act) was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. The A-P Act's main purpose is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active faults. The A-P Act only addresses the hazard of surface fault rupture and is not directed toward other earthquake hazards. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

The A-P Act requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones (known as Earthquake Fault Zones) around the surface traces of active faults and to issue appropriate maps. ["Earthquake Fault Zones" were called "Special Studies Zones" prior to January 1, 1994.] 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 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. However, local agencies can be more restrictive than state law requires. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

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). (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

2. Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (SHMA) of 1990 (Public Resources Code, Chapter 7.8, § 2690-2699.6) directs the Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey to identify and map areas prone to liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and amplified ground shaking. The purpose of the SHMA is to minimize loss of life and property through the identification, evaluation, and mitigation of seismic hazards. (CDC, n.d.)

Staff geologists in the Seismic Hazards Program gather existing geological, geophysical, and geotechnical data from numerous sources to produce the Seismic Hazard Zone Maps. They integrate and interpret these data regionally in order to evaluate the severity of the seismic hazards and designate as Zones of Required Investigation (ZORI) those areas prone to liquefaction and earthquake-induced landslides. Cities and counties are then required to use the Seismic Hazard Zone Maps in their land use planning and building permit processes. (CDC, n.d.)



The SHMA requires site-specific geotechnical investigations be conducted within the ZORI to identify and evaluate seismic hazards and formulate mitigation measures prior to permitting most developments designed for human occupancy. (CDC, n.d.)

3. *Natural Hazards Disclosure Act*

The Natural Hazards Disclosure Act, effective June 1, 1998 (as amended June 9, 1998), requires that sellers of real property and their agents provide prospective buyers with a "Natural Hazard Disclosure Statement" when the property being sold lies within one or more state-mapped hazard areas, including a Seismic Hazard Zone. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

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

Before a development permit can be issued or a subdivision approved, cities and counties must require a site-specific investigation to determine whether a significant hazard exists at the site and, if so, recommend measures to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. The investigation must be performed by state-licensed engineering geologists and/or civil engineers. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

4. *Essential Services Buildings Seismic Safety Act*

In 1986, the California Legislature determined that buildings providing essential services should be capable of providing those services to the public after a disaster. Their intent in this regard was defined in legislation known as the Essential Services Buildings Seismic Safety Act of 1986 and includes requirements that such buildings shall be "...designed and constructed to minimize fire hazards and to resist... the forces generated by earthquakes, gravity, and winds." This enabling legislation can be found in the California Health and Safety Code, Chapter 2, § 16000 through 16022. In addition, the California Building Code defines how the intent of the act is to be implemented in Title 24, Part 1 of the California Building Standards Administrative Code, Chapter 4, Articles 1 through 3. (CAB, n.d.)

5. *California Building Standards Code (Title 24)*

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 is reserved for state regulations that govern the design and construction of buildings, associated facilities, and equipment. These regulations are also known as building standards (reference California Health and Safety Code § 18909). Health and Safety Code (state law) § 18902 gives CCR Title 24 the name California Building Standards Code (CBSC). (CBSC, 2022, p. 1)

The CBSC in CCR Title 24 is published by the California Building Standards Commission and it applies to all building occupancies (see Health and Safety Code §§ 18908 and 18938) throughout the State of California.



Cities and counties are required by state law to enforce CCR Title 24 (reference Health and Safety Code §§ 17958, 17960, 18938(b), and 18948). Cities and counties may adopt ordinances making more restrictive requirements than provided by CCR Title 24, because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions. Such adoptions and a finding of need statement must be filed with the California Building Standards Commission (Reference Health and Safety Code §§ 17958.7 and 18941.5). (CBSC, 2022, p. 1)

6. Porter-Cologne Water Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Act is the principal law governing water quality regulation in California. It establishes a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water. The Porter-Cologne Act applies to surface waters, wetlands, and ground water and to both point and nonpoint sources of pollution. Pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act (California Water Code § 13000 *et seq.*), the policy of the State is as follows:

- That the quality of all the waters of the State shall be protected;
- That all activities and factors affecting the quality of water shall be regulated to attain the highest water quality within reason; and
- That the State must be prepared to exercise its full power and jurisdiction to protect the quality of water in the State from degradation. (SWRCB, 2018)

The Porter-Cologne Act established nine Regional Water Boards (based on hydrogeologic barriers) and the State Water Board, which are charged with implementing its provisions and which have primary responsibility for protecting water quality in California. The State Water Board provides program guidance and oversight, allocates funds, and reviews Regional Water Boards decisions. In addition, the State Water Board allocates rights to the use of surface water. The Regional Water Boards have primary responsibility for individual permitting, inspection, and enforcement actions within each of nine hydrologic regions. The State Water Board and Regional Water Boards have numerous non-point source (NPS) related responsibilities, including monitoring and assessment, planning, financial assistance, and management.

The Regional Water Boards regulate discharges under the Porter-Cologne Act primarily through issuance of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for point source discharges and waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for NPS discharges. Anyone discharging or proposing to discharge materials that could affect water quality (other than to a community sanitary sewer system regulated by an NPDES permit) must file a report of waste discharge. The Storm Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) can make their own investigations or may require dischargers to carry out water quality investigations and report on water quality issues. The Porter-Cologne Act provides several options for enforcing WDRs and other orders, including cease and desist orders, cleanup and abatement orders, administrative civil liability orders, civil court actions, and criminal prosecutions. (SWRCB, 2018)

The Porter-Cologne Act also implements many provisions of the Clean Water Act, such as the NPDES permitting program. The Porter-Cologne Act also requires adoption of water quality control plans that contain



the guiding policies of water pollution management in California. In addition, regional water quality control plans (basin plans) have been adopted by each of the Regional Water Boards and get updated as necessary and practical. These plans identify the existing and potential beneficial uses of waters of the State and establish water quality objectives to protect these uses. The basin plans also contain implementation, surveillance, and monitoring plans. (SWRCB, 2018) The Project site is located in the Colorado River Basin, which is within the purview of Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The RWQCB's Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region (herein, "Basin Plan") is the governing water quality plan for the region.

7. California Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 4308

Section 4308, *Archaeological Features*, of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code provides that: "No person shall remove, injure, disfigure, deface, or destroy any object of archaeological, or historical interest or value." (Westlaw, n.d.)

8. California Public Resources Code

Public Resources Code § 5097.5 states that "A person shall not knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure, or deface, any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, rock art, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over the lands." (FindLaw, n.d.)

Public Resources Code § 30244 states that, "Where development would adversely impact archaeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer, reasonable mitigation measures shall be required." (FindLaw, n.d.)

C. Local Regulations

1. Riverside County Ordinance No. 457 – Riverside County Building and Fire Codes

Every three years, Riverside County's Building and Fire Codes are adapted from the California Building Standards Code (CCR Title 24), which includes both building and fire codes. These codes establish site-specific investigation requirements, construction standards and inspection procedures to ensure that development authorized by the County of Riverside does not pose a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the public. The California Building Standards Code contains minimum baseline standards to guard against unsafe development. This ordinance also adopts, in some cases with modification to a stricter standard, a number of California State's Title 24 codes (fire, building, plumbing, electrical, etc.). The Riverside County Department of Building and Safety provides technical expertise in reviewing and enforcing these codes. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.12-25)



2. *Riverside County Ordinance No. 547 - Implementation of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act*

This ordinance establishes the policies and procedures used by the County of Riverside to implement the A-P Act. Among other things, it requires all projects proposed within an “earthquake fault zone,” as shown on the maps prepared by the State Geologist to comply with the provisions of the A-P Act. It establishes regulations for construction, including for grading, slopes and compaction, erosion control, retaining wall design and earthquake fault zone setbacks. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.12-25)

3. *Riverside County Ordinance 484 – Control of Blowing Dust*

This ordinance establishes requirements for the control of blowing sand within county-designated “Agricultural Dust Control Areas.” It defines activities that may contribute to wind erosion, identifies restrictions on activities within these areas, establishes penalties for violation of the ordinance and identifies procedures necessary to obtain a valid permit. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.12-25)

4.7.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section VII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects due to geological conditions, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate the Project’s impacts resulting from geologic or soil conditions (OPR, 2018a):

- *Would the project 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? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.*
 - *Strong seismic ground shaking?*
 - *Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?*
 - *Landslides?*
- *Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*
- *Would the project 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?*
- *Would the project 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?*
- *Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?*
- *Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*



Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified based on the 2018 updates to Section VII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and indicate significant impacts would occur if the Project or any Project-related component would:

- a. *Be subject to 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;*
- b. *Be subject to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction;*
- c. *Be subject to strong seismic ground shaking;*
- d. *Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, collapse, or rockfall hazards;*
- e. *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 ground subsidence;*
- f. *Be subject to geologic hazards, such as seiche, mudflow, or volcanic hazard;*
- g. *Change topography or ground surface relief features;*
- h. *Create cut or fill slopes greater than 2:1 or higher than 10 feet;*
- i. *Result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems;*
- j. *Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;*
- k. *Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Section 1803.5.3 of the California Building Code (2022), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property;*
- l. *Have soils incapable of adequately supporting use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water;*
- m. *Be impacted by or result in an increase in wind erosion and blow sand, either on or off site.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified by the 2018 updates to the State CEQA Guidelines, were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on geology and soils. It should be noted that the Project's potential impacts to paleontological resources are addressed separately in Subsection 4.14, *Paleontological Resources*, of this EIR.



4.7.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a: *Would the Project be subject to 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?*

Threshold c: *Would the Project be subject to strong seismic ground shaking?*

The Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are located in a seismically-active region; however, no active or potentially active fault is known to exist at the Project site or in its off-site improvement areas nor are these areas situated within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The nearest faults to the Project site are two segments of the San Andreas Fault (Coachella and Southern segments), both of which are located approximately 2.7 miles from the Project site (Sladden, 2021, p. 6). Therefore, impacts due to rupture of a known fault would be less-than-significant.

As previously stated, the Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are located in a seismically active area of southern California and are expected to experience moderate to severe ground shaking during the lifetime of the Project. The risk is not considered substantially different than that of other similar properties in the southern California area. The Project Applicant would be required to construct all proposed structures in accordance with the California Building Standards Code ("CBSC"; also known as Title 24) and the Riverside County Building Code. The CBSC and the Riverside County Building Code have been designed to preclude significant adverse effects associated with strong seismic ground shaking. The CBSC provides standards that must be met to safeguard life or limb, health, property, and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all buildings and structures, and have been specifically tailored for California earthquake conditions. In addition, the CBSC requires development projects to prepare geologic engineering reports to identify site-specific geologic and seismic conditions and implement the site-specific recommendations contained therein to preclude adverse effects involving unstable soils and strong seismic ground-shaking, including, but not limited to, recommendations related to ground stabilization, selection of appropriate foundation type and depths, and selection of appropriate structural systems. Additionally, the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (*Technical Appendix E*) includes site-specific recommendations to attenuate seismic-related hazards.

However, a significant impact could occur if the Project did not comply with the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (*Technical Appendix E*). The Project's Geotechnical Investigation includes recommendations that would reduce seismic risks to an "acceptable level" as defined by the California Code of Regulations. Accordingly, prior to mitigation implementing the Geotechnical Investigation recommendations, the proposed Project has the potential to expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects, including loss, injury, or death, as a result of strong seismic ground shaking. This is considered a significant impact for which mitigation would be required.

Threshold b: *Would the Project be subject to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?*

Liquefaction is the process in which loose, saturated granular soil loses strength as a result of cyclic loading. The strength loss is a result of a decrease in granular sand volume and a positive increase in pore pressures.



Generally, liquefaction can occur if all of the following conditions apply: liquefaction-susceptible soil, groundwater within a depth of 50 feet or less, and strong seismic shaking. As previously noted, groundwater levels in the Project area are in excess of 50 feet below the existing ground surface. The potential for liquefaction impacting the site and off-site improvement areas is therefore considered "negligible." (Sladden, 2021, p. 6) Thus, the Project would not be subject to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, and no impact would occur.

Threshold d: Would the Project 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, collapse, or rockfall hazards?

Landslide Hazards

The Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are situated on relatively level ground and not immediately adjacent to any slopes or hillsides that could be potentially susceptible to slope instability. No signs of slope instability in the form of landslides, rock falls, earthflows, or slumps were observed at or near the subject site during the investigation conducted by Sladden. (Sladden, 2021, p. 6) Accordingly, the Project would not be located on an unstable geologic unit and would not result in on- or off-site landslide hazards, and no impact would occur.

Lateral Spreading

Lateral spreading is a type of liquefaction-induced ground failure associated with the lateral displacement of surficial blocks of sediment resulting from liquefaction in a subsurface layer. Once liquefaction transforms the subsurface layer into a fluid mass, gravity plus the earthquake inertial forces may cause the mass to move downslope towards a free face (such as a river channel or an embankment). Lateral spreading may cause large horizontal displacements and such movement typically damages pipelines, utilities, bridges, and structures.

Lateral spreading is primarily associated with liquefaction hazards. As noted above, based on the Project site's lack of shallow groundwater, liquefaction risks at the Project site are considered to be negligible (Sladden, 2021, p. 6). Thus, the potential for lateral spreading is low. Similar conditions exist in the Project's off-site improvement areas. Accordingly, impacts associated with lateral spreading would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Collapse Hazards

Static settlement of the site would be induced by subjecting the existing grades to design grades (adding fill) and by the proposed structural building loads. The geotechnical report prepared for the Project site includes site-specific recommendations to attenuate potential hazards, including hazards due to collapse. Impacts due to collapse hazards could occur if proposed grading activities are not conducted in accordance with the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Update (*Technical Appendix E*). This is a potentially significant direct impact of the proposed Project for which mitigation would be required.



Rockfall Hazards

A rockfall is a fragment of rock, or block of rocks, that detaches from a vertical to sub-vertical cliff or bluff in a downward motion. The Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are situated on relatively level ground and are not immediately adjacent to any slopes or hillsides that could be potentially susceptible to slope instability, and there are no hillsides in the Project area with prominent rock outcroppings. As such, the Project site is not subject to rockfall hazards. Accordingly, no impact would occur due to rockfall hazards.

Threshold e: Would the Project 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 ground subsidence?

According to mapping information available from Riverside County Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the Project site is mapped as being "susceptible" to ground subsidence (RCIT, n.d.). The geotechnical report prepared for the Project site indicated that the settlement potential can be attenuated through the excavation of fill soils so that native soils can be properly prepared (Sladden, 2021, p. 8). However, a significant impact due to ground subsidence could occur if future development were to fail to comply with the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (*Technical Appendix E*). This is determined to be a potentially significant direct impact of the proposed Project for which mitigation would be required.

Threshold f: Would the Project be subject to geologic hazards, such as seiche, mudflow, or volcanic hazard?

There are no volcanoes in the Project region; thus, no impacts due to volcanic hazards would occur.

A seiche is an underwater wave that oscillates through a body of water which may be triggered by earthquakes or landslides. In general, seiches are small (on the order of a few inches) and are present in larger lakes as a result of the depth, temperature, and contours of the body of water. The Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are situated at an elevated inland location and are not immediately adjacent to any impounded bodies of water. Thus, the risk of seiches affecting the Project site is considered "negligible." (Sladden, 2021, p. 6) No impacts due to seiches would occur with implementation of the Project.

The Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are situated on relatively level ground and are not immediately adjacent to any slopes or hillsides that potentially could be susceptible to slope instability. No signs of slope instability in the form of landslides, rock falls, earthflows, or slumps were observed at or near the subject site during the investigation conducted by Sladden. (Sladden, 2021, p. 6) Accordingly, the Project is not subject to mudflow hazards, and no impact would occur.

Threshold g: Would the Project change topography or ground surface relief features?

Grading associated with the Project would require a total of 727,940 cubic yards (cy) of cut and 607,253 cy of fill, requiring the net export of approximately 120,687 cy of soils. The building pad would be raised out of the floodplain. Although the site's topography would be modified to accommodate the planned development, the site would still appear as a relatively flat property from surrounding public roadways and the Project would not result in a substantial change in topography or ground surface relief features, and impacts would be less than significant. The paving of a segment of Robert Road off-site and the installation of off-site power poles



have no reasonable potential for changing topographic or ground surface relief features. Impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold h: Would the Project create cut or fill slopes greater than 2:1 or higher than 10 feet?

As described in EIR Section 3.0, *Project Description*, manufactured slopes are proposed along the northern site boundary, which would be constructed at a maximum gradient of approximately 2:1 (horizontal:vertical) and would measure up to 16 feet in height. A retaining wall also is proposed at the base of the northern slope that would measure up to four feet in height. Slopes also are proposed around the proposed retention basins in the southern portion of the Project site, which would measure approximately 30 feet in height and would be constructed at a maximum gradient of 3:1. Although the slopes would exceed a height of 10 feet, site-specific recommendations are provided in the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (*Technical Appendix E*), which would ensure that proposed slopes are grossly stable. However, a potentially significant impact could occur if site grading activities do not comply with the site-specific recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation. This is concluded to be a significant direct impact of the proposed Project for which mitigation would be required.

Threshold i: Would the Project result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems?

The Project site is undeveloped and has not been subject to past development. As such, there are no subsurface sewage disposal systems on the Project site under existing conditions. Also, no subsurface sewage disposal systems would be affected by the Project's off-site improvements. Thus, the Project would not result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems, and no impact would occur.

Threshold l: Would the Project have soils incapable of adequately supporting use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

Sewer service to the proposed Project would be provided by the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), and no septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed as part of the Project. As such, no impact associated with septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would occur.

Threshold j: Would the Project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Threshold m: Would the Project be impacted by or result in an increase in wind erosion and blow sand, either on or off site?

Implementation of the Project has the potential to result in soil erosion. The analysis below summarizes the likelihood of the Project to result in substantial soil erosion during temporary construction activities and long-term operation.

Construction-Related Impacts

Proposed grading and construction activities at the Project site would expose underlying soils and disturb surficial soils. Exposed soils would be subject to erosion during rainfall events or high winds due to the removal of stabilizing vegetation and exposure of these erodible materials to wind and water.



Pursuant to the requirements of the SWRCB, the Project Applicant is required to obtain a NPDES permit for construction activities, including proposed grading. The NPDES permit is required for all projects that include construction activities such as clearing, grading, and/or excavation that disturb at least one acre of total land area. The County's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) NPDES Permit requires the Project Applicant to prepare and submit to the County for approval a Project-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP would identify a combination of erosion control and sediment control measures (i.e., Best Management Practices (BMPs)) to reduce or eliminate sediment discharge to surface water from stormwater and non-stormwater source discharges during construction.

In addition, proposed construction activities would be required to comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rule 403, which would reduce the amount of particulate matter in the air and minimize the potential for wind erosion. Rule 403 requires that certain construction practices be followed that limit dust and dirt from leaving the construction site. For example, no dust is allowed to be tracked out of the site by more than 25 feet. In addition, proposed construction activities would be required to comply with applicable County ordinances (i.e., Ordinance Nos. 457 and 460) to protect and enhance the water quality of the County, which requires the Project Applicant to prepare an erosion control plan to be used during the rainy season. With mandatory compliance to the requirements noted in the Project's SWPPP, as well as mandatory compliance to applicable regulatory requirements including but not limited to SCAQMD Rule 403 and Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 457 and 460, the potential for water and/or wind erosion impacts during Project construction would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Long-Term Operational Impacts

Following construction, wind and water erosion on the Project site would be minimized, as the disturbed areas would be landscaped or covered with impervious surfaces. Drainage would be controlled through a storm drain system and all storm flows generated on the Project site would be retained and infiltrated on site and discharge off site at the same locations that occur under existing conditions; thus, the Project would not result in an increase in runoff from the Project site such that erosion hazards downstream would be increased. Further, development of the Project site as proposed would reduce blowsand across the site. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not significantly increase the risk of long-term wind or water erosion on- or off-site, and impacts would be less than significant. Blowsand effects would be reduced compared to existing conditions.

Threshold k: Would the Project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Section 1803.5.3 of the California Building Code (2022), creating substantial risks to life or property?

Expansion Index (EI) testing of select samples was performed in order to evaluate the expansive potential of the materials underlying the Project site. Based the results of laboratory testing (EI = 0) conducted by Sladden, the materials underlying the site are considered "non-expansive." (Sladden, 2021, p. 6) Accordingly, the Project would not be located on expansive soil, as defined in Section 1803.5.3 of the California Building Code (2022), and would not create substantial risks to life or property due to expansive soils; thus, no impact would occur.



4.7.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

With the exception of erosion hazards, potential effects due to geology and soils are inherently restricted to the areas proposed for development and would not contribute to cumulative impacts associated with other existing, planned, or proposed development. That is, thresholds including fault rupture, seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, expansive soils, and other geologic hazards would involve effects to (and not from) the proposed development, and are specific to on-site conditions. Accordingly, addressing these potential hazards for the proposed development would involve using measures to conform to existing requirements, and/or site-specific design and construction efforts that have no relationship to, or impact on, off-site areas. Because of the site-specific nature of these potential hazards and the measures to address them, there would be no connection to similar potential issues or cumulative effects to or from other properties. Cumulatively-considerable impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed under Thresholds j. and m., during near-term construction activities measures would be incorporated into the Project's design to ensure that significant erosion hazards do not occur. Other developments within the cumulative study area would be required to comply with similar requirements, such as the need to obtain an NPDES permit and mandatory compliance with the resulting SWPPPs. Further, all projects in the cumulative study area also would be required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 457 and 460, as well as SCAQMD Rule 403, which would preclude water- and wind-related erosion hazards during construction. Following construction, wind and water erosion on the Project site would be minimized, as the disturbed areas would be landscaped or covered with impervious surfaces. Drainage would be controlled through a storm drain system and all storm flows generated on the Project site would be fully retained and infiltrated on site; thus, the Project would not result in an increase in runoff from the Project site such that erosion hazards downstream would be increased. Therefore, because the Project would result in less-than-significant erosion impacts, and because other projects within the cumulative study area would be subject to similar requirements to control erosion hazards during construction and long-term operation, cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with wind and water erosion hazards are evaluated as less than significant.

4.7.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Thresholds a. and c.: Significant Direct Impact. No active or potentially active fault is known to exist at the Project site nor is the site situated within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Thus, impacts due to rupture of a known earthquake would be less than significant. The Project site and vicinity is subject to seismic ground shaking associated with earthquakes. A significant impact could occur if the Project was not constructed in accordance with the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (*Technical Appendix E*). This is concluded to be a potentially significant impact for which mitigation would be required.

Threshold b.: No Impact. Groundwater levels in the Project area are in excess of 50 feet below the existing ground surface. The potential for liquefaction impacting the Project is therefore considered negligible. Thus, the Project would not be subject to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, and no impact would occur.



Threshold d.: Significant Direct Impact. The areas to be physically impacted by the Project are situated on relatively level ground and are not immediately adjacent to any slopes or hillsides that could be potentially susceptible to slope instability. There are no signs of slope instability in the form of landslides, rock falls, earthflows, or slumps. Accordingly, the Project would not be located on an unstable geologic unit and would not result in on- or off-site landslide hazards, and no impact would occur. Additionally, due to the lack of shallow groundwater, the potential for lateral spreading is low and potential impacts associated with lateral spreading would be less than significant. Static settlement of the Project site would be induced by subjecting the existing grades to design grades (adding fill) and by the proposed structural building loads. The geotechnical report prepared for the Project site includes site-specific recommendations to attenuate potential hazards, including hazards due to collapse. Impacts due to collapse hazards could occur if proposed grading activities are not conducted in accordance with the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Update (*Technical Appendix E*), which is a potentially significant direct impact of the proposed Project for which mitigation would be required.

Threshold e.: Significant Direct Impact. The Project site is susceptible to ground subsidence and a significant impact due to ground subsidence could occur if future development on site were to fail to comply with the site-specific recommendations of the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (*Technical Appendix E*). This is concluded to be a potentially significant direct impact of the proposed Project for which mitigation would be required.

Threshold f.: No Impact. There are no volcanoes in the Project region; thus, no impacts due to volcanic hazards would occur. Areas to be physically impacted by the Project are situated at an elevated inland location and are not immediately adjacent to any impounded bodies of water. Thus, the risk of seiches affecting the Project are considered negligible and no impacts due to seiches would occur with implementation of the Project. Areas to be physically impacted by the Project are situated on relatively level ground and are not immediately adjacent to any slopes or hillsides that could be potentially susceptible to slope instability. There are no signs of slope instability in the form of landslides, rock falls, earthflows, or slumps on or near the site. Accordingly, areas to be physically impacted by the Project are not subject to mudflow hazards, and no impact would occur.

Threshold g.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Areas to be physically impacted by the project have flat and gently sloping topography. The Project would not result in a substantial change in topography or ground surface relief features, and impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold h.: Significant Direct Impact. Manufactured slopes are proposed along the northern Project site boundary, which would be constructed at a maximum gradient of approximately 2:1 (horizontal:vertical) and would measure up to 16 feet in height. A retaining wall also is proposed at the base of the northern slope that would measure up to four feet in height. Slopes also are proposed around the proposed retention basins in the southern portion of the Project site, which would measure approximately 30 feet in height and would be constructed at a maximum gradient of 3:1. Although the slopes would exceed a height of 10 feet, site-specific recommendations are provided in the Project's Geotechnical Investigation (*Technical Appendix E*), which would ensure that proposed slopes are grossly stable. A potentially significant impact could occur if site



grading activities do not comply with the site-specific recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation. This is evaluated as a significant direct impact of the proposed Project for which mitigation would be required.

Threshold i.: No Impact. There are no subsurface sewage disposal systems on the Project site under existing conditions. Thus, the Project would not result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems, and no impact would occur.

Threshold l.: No Impact. Sewer service to the proposed Project would be provided by the CVWD, and no septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed as part of the Project. As such, no impact associated with septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would occur.

Thresholds j. and m.: Less-than-Significant Impacts. The Project would not result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. The Project Applicant would be required to obtain an NPDES permit for construction activities and adhere to a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) as well as SCAQMD Rule 403 and Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 457 and 460. With mandatory compliance to these regulatory requirements, the potential for water and wind erosion impacts during construction would be less than significant. Following development, wind and water erosion on the Project site would be minimized, as the areas disturbed during construction would be landscaped or covered with impervious surfaces and drainage would be controlled through a storm drain system. Existing blowsand effects across the site would be reduced. Furthermore, the Project is required by law to implement a WQMP during operation, which would preclude substantial erosion impacts in the long-term. Accordingly, impacts due to soil erosion, loss of top soil, and blow sand would be less than significant.

Threshold k.: No Impact. The Project would not be located on expansive soil, as defined in Section 1803.5.3 of the California Building Code (2022), and would not create substantial risks to life or property due to expansive soils; thus, no impact would occur.

4.7.7 COUNTY REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable County Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude GHG impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of County Ordinance Nos. 457 and 460. Ordinance No. 457 requires that all projects comply with California Building Codes and the International Building Codes. These codes establish site-specific investigation requirements, construction standards, and inspection procedures to ensure that development does not pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the public, and includes requirements related to erosion. Ordinance No. 460 sets forth soil erosion control requirements and requires preparation and implementation of a wind erosion control plan.



- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of SCAQMD Rule 403, by addressing blowing dust from the Project's construction activities.
- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of the County's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, and the future-required Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Compliance with the NPDES permit and the future-required SWPPPs would ensure an effective combination of erosion control and sediment control measures (i.e., Best Management Practices) are implemented to reduce or eliminate sediment discharge to surface water from stormwater and non-stormwater discharges.

Mitigation

MM 4.7-1 Prior to issuance of grading or building permits, the Riverside County Building and Safety Department shall verify that all of the recommendations given in the Project's geotechnical study, entitled "Geotechnical Investigation, Majestic Thousand Palms, NEC Rio Del Sol Road & 30th Avenue," dated September 17, 2021, prepared by Sladden Engineering, and included as *Technical Appendix E* to the Project's EIR, are incorporated into the construction and grading plans. The recommendations primarily address the need for remedial grading including over-excavation and re-compaction within the building areas to support foundation bearing soil. Recommendations also address building footings, slab on grade construction, and pavement design. Specific recommendations for site preparation are presented in the Earthwork and Grading section of the report. Alternatively, the Project shall comply with the findings and recommendations of any geotechnical studies that may be required in association with future grading and/or building permits.

4.7.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Thresholds a. & c.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.7-1 would ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated into grading and/or building permit applications to address seismic-related hazards in conformance with the CBSC, the Riverside County Building Code, and the Project's site-specific Geotechnical Investigation (EIR *Technical Appendix E*). With implementation of the required mitigation, impacts due to strong seismic ground shaking would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Threshold d.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.7-1 would ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated into future grading and/or building permit applications to address the potential for collapse hazards. With implementation of the required mitigation, impacts due to collapse hazards would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Threshold e.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.7-1 would ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated into future grading and/or building permit applications to address the potential for ground subsidence hazards. With implementation of



the required mitigation, impacts due to ground subsidence hazards would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Threshold h.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.7-1 would ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated into future grading and/or building permit applications to ensure that any slopes higher than 10 feet would be grossly stable. With implementation of the required mitigation, impacts associated with unstable slopes would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.



4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The analysis in this Subsection 4.8 is based in part on a technical study prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc. (herein, “Urban Crossroads”), entitled “Majestic Thousand Palms Greenhouse Gas Analysis” (herein, “GHGA”), dated January 31, 2024, and included as EIR *Technical Appendix G* (Urban Crossroads, 2024d). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of these and other reference sources.

4.8.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Introduction to Global Climate Change (GCC)

Global Climate Change (GCC) is defined as the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, precipitation, and storms. The majority of scientists believe that the climate shift taking place since the Industrial Revolution is occurring at a quicker rate and magnitude than in the past. Scientific evidence suggests that GCC is the result of increased concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the earth’s atmosphere, including carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and fluorinated gases. The majority of scientists believe that this increased rate of climate change is the result of GHGs resulting from human activity and industrialization over the past 200 years. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 8)

An individual project like the Project cannot generate enough GHG emissions to affect a discernible change in global climate. However, the Project may participate in the potential for GCC by its incremental contribution of GHGs combined with the cumulative increase of all other sources of GHGs, which when taken together constitute potential influences on GCC. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 8)

GCC refers to the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, wind patterns, precipitation, and storms. Global temperatures are regulated by naturally occurring atmospheric gases such as water vapor, CO₂, N₂O, CH₄, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆). These particular gases are important due to their residence time (duration they stay) in the atmosphere, which ranges from 10 years to more than 100 years. These gases allow solar radiation into the earth’s atmosphere, but prevent radiative heat from escaping, thus warming the earth’s atmosphere. GCC can occur naturally as it has in the past with the previous ice ages. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 8)

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are often referred to as GHGs. GHGs are released into the atmosphere by both natural and anthropogenic activity. Without the natural GHG effect, the earth’s average temperature would be approximately 61 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) cooler than it is currently. The cumulative accumulation of these gases in the earth’s atmosphere is considered to be the cause for the observed increase in the earth’s temperature. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 8)

B. Greenhouse Gases

1. Greenhouse Gases and Health Effects

GHGs trap heat in the atmosphere, creating a GHG effect that results in global warming and climate change. Many gases demonstrate these properties and are discussed below. For the purposes of analysis, emissions of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O were evaluated because these gases are the primary contributors to GCC from development



projects. Although there are other substances such as fluorinated gases that also contribute to GCC, these fluorinated gases were not evaluated as their sources are not well-defined and do not contain accepted emissions factors or methodology to accurately calculate these gases. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, pp. 8-9)

Water

Water is the most abundant, important, and variable GHG in the atmosphere. Water vapor is not considered a pollutant; in the atmosphere it maintains a climate necessary for life. Changes in its concentration are primarily considered to be a result of climate feedbacks related to the warming of the atmosphere rather than a direct result of industrialization. Climate feedback is an indirect, or secondary, change, either positive or negative, that occurs within the climate system in response to a forcing mechanism. The feedback loop in which water is involved is critically important to projecting future climate change. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

As the temperature of the atmosphere rises, more water is evaporated from ground storage (rivers, oceans, reservoirs, soil). Because the air is warmer, the relative humidity can be higher (in essence, the air is able to ‘hold’ more water when it is warmer), leading to more water vapor in the atmosphere. As a GHG, the higher concentration of water vapor is then able to absorb more thermal indirect energy radiated from the Earth, thus further warming the atmosphere. The warmer atmosphere can then hold more water vapor and so on and so on. This is referred to as a “positive feedback loop.” The extent to which this positive feedback loop would continue is unknown as there are also dynamics that hold the positive feedback loop in check. As an example, when water vapor increases in the atmosphere, more of it would eventually condense into clouds, which are more able to reflect incoming solar radiation (thus allowing less energy to reach the earth’s surface and heat it up). (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

The main source of water vapor is evaporation from the oceans (approximately 85%). Other sources include evaporation from other water bodies, sublimation (change from solid to gas) from sea ice and snow, and transpiration from plant leaves. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

There are no known direct health effects related to water vapor at this time. It should be noted however that when some pollutants react with water vapor, the reaction forms a transport mechanism for some of these pollutants to enter the human body through water vapor. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) is an odorless and colorless GHG. Since the industrial revolution began in the mid-1700s, the sort of human activity that increases GHG emissions has increased dramatically in scale and distribution. Data from the past 50 years suggests a corollary increase in levels and concentrations. As an example, prior to the industrial revolution, CO₂ concentrations were fairly stable at 280 parts per million (ppm). Today, they are around 370 ppm, an increase of more than 30%. Left unchecked, the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere is projected to increase to a minimum of 540 ppm by 2100 as a direct result of anthropogenic sources. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

CO₂ is emitted from natural and manmade sources. Natural sources include: the decomposition of dead organic matter; respiration of bacteria, plants, animals, and fungus; evaporation from oceans; and volcanic outgassing.



Anthropogenic sources include: the burning of coal, oil, natural gas, and wood. CO₂ is naturally removed from the air by photosynthesis, dissolution into ocean water, transfer to soils and ice caps, and chemical weathering of carbonate rocks. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

Outdoor levels of CO₂ are not high enough to result in negative health effects. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) high concentrations of CO₂ can result in health effects such as: headaches, dizziness, restlessness, difficulty breathing, sweating, increased heart rate, increased cardiac output, increased blood pressure, coma, asphyxia, and/or convulsions. It should be noted that current concentrations of CO₂ in the earth's atmosphere are estimated to be approximately 370 ppm, the actual reference exposure level (level at which adverse health effects typically occur) is at exposure levels of 5,000 ppm averaged over 10 hours in a 40-hour workweek and short-term reference exposure levels of 30,000 ppm averaged over a 15-minute period. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

Methane (CH₄)

Methane (CH₄) is an extremely effective absorber of radiation, although its atmospheric concentration is less than CO₂ and its lifetime in the atmosphere is brief (10-12 years), compared to other GHGs. CH₄ in the atmosphere is generated by many different sources, such as fossil fuel production, transport and use, from the decay of organic matter in wetlands, and as a byproduct of digestion by ruminant animals such as cows. Determining which specific sources are responsible for variations in annual increases of CH₄ is complex, but scientists estimate that fossil fuel production and use contributes roughly 30% of the total CH₄ emissions. These industrial sources of CH₄ are relatively simple to pinpoint and control using current technology. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

CH₄ is extremely reactive with oxidizers, halogens, and other halogen-containing compounds. Exposure to high levels of CH₄ can cause asphyxiation, loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, weakness, loss of coordination, and an increased breathing rate. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

Nitrous Oxide (N₂O)

Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) also known as laughing gas, is a colorless GHG. Concentrations of N₂O also began to rise at the beginning of the industrial revolution. In 1998, the global concentration was 314 parts per billion (ppb). N₂O is produced by microbial processes in soil and water, including those reactions which occur in fertilizer containing nitrogen. In addition to agricultural sources, some industrial processes (fossil fuel-fired power plants, nylon production, nitric acid production, and vehicle emissions) also contribute to its atmospheric load. It is used as an aerosol spray propellant, i.e., in whipped cream bottles. It is also used in potato chip bags to keep chips fresh. It is used in rocket engines and in race cars. N₂O can be transported into the stratosphere, be deposited on the earth's surface, and be converted to other compounds by chemical reaction. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

N₂O can cause dizziness, euphoria, and sometimes slight hallucinations. In small doses, it is considered harmless. However, in some cases, heavy and extended use can cause Olney's Lesions (brain damage) (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)



Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)

CFCs are gases formed synthetically by replacing all hydrogen atoms in CH₄ or ethane (C₂H₆) with chlorine and/or fluorine atoms. CFCs are nontoxic, nonflammable, insoluble and chemically unreactive in the troposphere (the level of air at the earth's surface). CFCs have no natural source. They are found in aerosol sprays, blowing agents for foams and packing materials, as solvents, and as refrigerants. In confined indoor locations, working with CFC-113 or other CFCs is thought to result in death by cardiac arrhythmia (heart frequency too high or too low) or asphyxiation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

In confined indoor locations, working with CFC-113 or other CFCs is thought to result in death by cardiac arrhythmia (heart frequency too high or too low) or asphyxiation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)

HFCs are synthetic, man-made chemicals that are used as a substitute for CFCs. Out of all the GHGs, they are one of three groups with the highest global warming potential (GWP, described below). The HFCs with the largest measured atmospheric abundances are (in order), Fluoroform (HFC-23), 1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane (HFC-134a), and 1,1-difluoroethane (HFC-152a). Prior to 1990, the only significant emissions were of HFC-23. HFC-134a emissions are increasing due to its use as a refrigerant. HFCs are manmade for applications such as automobile air conditioners and refrigerants. No health effects are known to result from exposure to HFCs. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

Perfluorocarbons (PFCs)

PFCs have stable molecular structures and do not break down through chemical processes in the lower atmosphere. High-energy ultraviolet rays, which occur about 60 kilometers above earth's surface, are able to destroy the compounds. Because of this, PFCs have exceptionally long lifetimes, between 10,000 and 50,000 years. Two common PFCs are tetrafluoromethane (CF₄) and hexafluoroethane (C₂F₆). The EPA estimates that concentrations of CF₄ in the atmosphere are over 70 parts per trillion (ppt). The two main sources of PFCs are primary aluminum production and semiconductor manufacture. No health effects are known to result from exposure to PFCs. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF₆)

Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF₆) is an inorganic, odorless, colorless, nontoxic, nonflammable gas. It also has the highest GWP of any gas evaluated (23,900) The EPA indicates that concentrations in the 1990s were about 4 ppt. SF₆ is used for insulation in electric power transmission and distribution equipment, in the magnesium industry, in semiconductor manufacturing, and as a tracer gas for leak detection. In high concentrations in confined areas, the gas presents the hazard of suffocation because it displaces the oxygen needed for breathing. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

Nitrogen Trifluoride (NF₃)

Nitrogen Trifluoride (NF₃) is a colorless gas with a distinctly moldy odor. The World Resources Institute (WRI) indicates that NF₃ has a 100-year GWP of 17,200. NF₃ is used in industrial processes and is produced

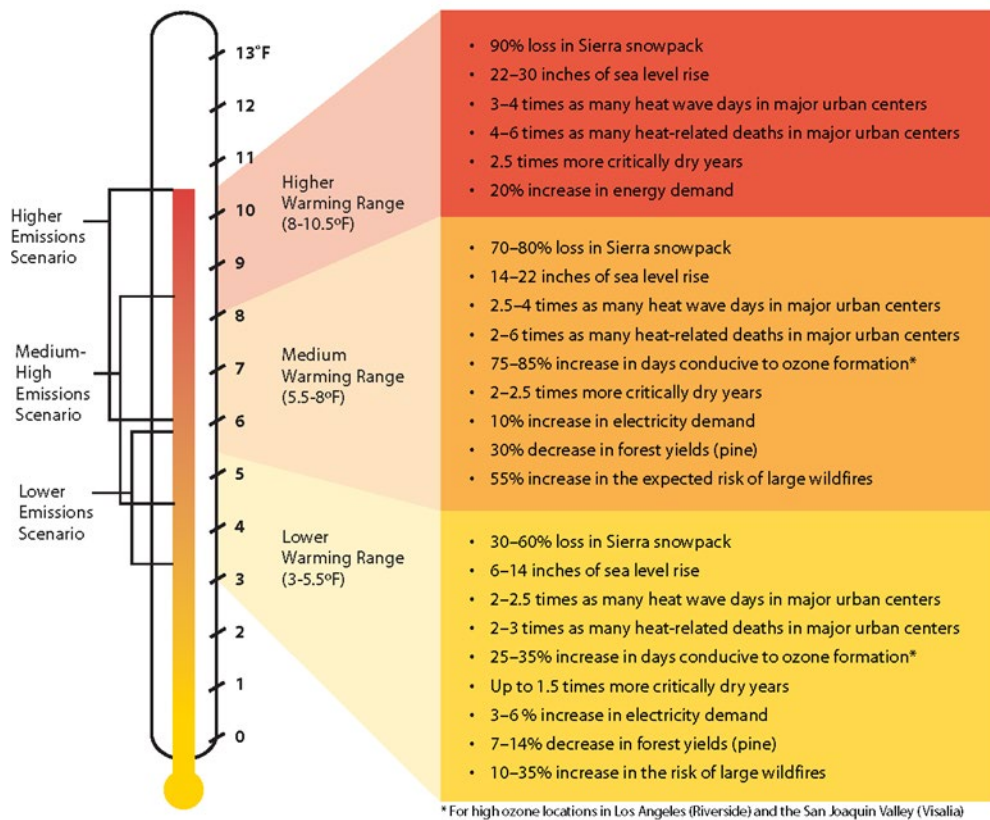


in the manufacturing of semiconductors, Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) panels, types of solar panels, and chemical lasers. Long-term or repeated exposure may affect the liver and kidneys and may cause fluorosis. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-1)

2. Potential Global Warming Effects

The potential health effects related directly to the emissions of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O as they relate to development projects such as the Project are still being debated in the scientific community. Their cumulative effects to GCC have the potential to cause adverse effects to human health. Increases in Earth’s ambient temperatures would result in more intense heat waves, causing more heat-related deaths. Scientists also purport those higher ambient temperatures would increase disease survival rates and result in more widespread disease. Climate change would likely cause shifts in weather patterns, potentially resulting in devastating droughts and food shortages in some areas. Figure 4.8-1, *Summary of Project Global Warming Impact 2070-2099 (As Compared with 1961-1990)* presents the impact of global warming. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 13)

Figure 4.8-1 Summary of Project Global Warming Impact 2070-2099 (As Compared with 1961-1990)



(Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Exhibit 2-A)



3. *Global Warming Potential (GWP)*

GHGs have varying Global Warming Potential (GWP) values. GWP of a GHG indicates the amount of warming a gas cause over a given period of time and represents the potential of a gas to trap heat in the atmosphere. CO₂ is utilized as the reference gas for GWP, and thus has a GWP of 1. CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e) is a term used for describing the difference GHGs in a common unit. CO₂e signifies the amount of CO₂ which would have the equivalent GWP. The atmospheric lifetime and GWP of selected GHGs are summarized on Table 4.8-1, *GWP and Atmospheric Lifetime of Select GHGs*. As shown in Table 4.8-1, GWP for the 6th Assessment Report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)’s scientific and socio-economic assessment on climate change, range from 1 for CO₂ to 25,200 for SF₆. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 15)

Table 4.8-1 GWP and Atmospheric Lifetime of Select GHGs

Gas	Atmospheric Lifetime (years)	GWP (100-year time horizon)
		6 th Assessment Report
CO ₂	Multiple	1
CH ₄	12 .4	28
N ₂ O	121	273
HFC-23	222	14,600
HFC-134a	13.4	1,526
HFC-152a	1.5	164
SF ₆	3,200	25,200

Source: IPCC Second Assessment Report, 1995 and IPCC Sixth Assessment Report, 2022 (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-2)

C. *Greenhouse Gas Inventories*

1. *Global*

Worldwide anthropogenic GHG emissions are tracked by the IPCC for industrialized nations (referred to as Annex I) and developing nations (referred to as Non-Annex I). Human GHG emissions data for Annex I nations are available through 2020. Based on the latest available data, the sum of these emissions totaled approximately 28,026,643 gigagrams (Gg) CO₂e¹, as summarized on Table 4.8-2, *Top GHG Producing Countries and the European Union*. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 15)

2. *United States*

As noted in Table 4.8-2, the United States, as a single country, was the number two producer of GHG emissions in 2020. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 15)

¹ The global emissions are the sum of Annex I and non-Annex I countries, without counting Land-Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF). For countries without 2020 data, the United Nations’ Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) data for the most recent year were used U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, “Annex I Parties – GHG total without LULUCF,” The most recent GHG emissions for China and India are from 2014 and 2016, respectively.



Table 4.8-2 Top GHG Producing Countries and the European Union

Emitting Countries	GHG Emissions (Gg CO ₂ e)
China	12,300,200
United States	5,981,354
European Union (27-member countries)	3,706,110
India	2,839,420
Russian Federation	2,051,437
Japan	1,148,122
Total	28,026,643

(Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 2-3)

3. State of California

California has significantly slowed the rate of growth of GHG emissions due to the implementation of energy efficiency programs as well as adoption of strict emission controls but is still a substantial contributor to the United States (U.S.) emissions inventory total. The California Air Resource Board (CARB) compiles GHG inventories for the State of California. Based upon the 2022 GHG inventory data (i.e., the latest year for which data are available) for the 2000-2020 GHG emissions period, California emitted an average 369.2 million metric tons of CO₂e per year (MMTCO₂e/yr) or 369,200 Gg CO₂e (6.17% of the total United States GHG emissions). (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 16)

D. Effects of Climate Change in California

1. Public Health

Higher temperatures may increase the frequency, duration, and intensity of conditions conducive to air pollution formation. For example, days with weather conducive to ozone formation could increase from 25 to 35% under the lower warming range to 75 to 85% under the medium warming range. In addition, if global background ozone levels increase as predicted in some scenarios, it may become impossible to meet local air quality standards. Air quality could be further compromised by increases in wildfires, which emit fine particulate matter that can travel long distances, depending on wind conditions. Based on *Our Changing Climate Assessing the Risks to California by the California Climate Change Center*, large wildfires could become up to 55% more frequent if GHG emissions are not significantly reduced. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 16)

In addition, under the higher warming range scenario, there could be up to 100 more days per year with temperatures above 90°F in Los Angeles and 95°F in Sacramento by 2100. This is a significant increase over historical patterns and approximately twice the increase projected if temperatures remain within or below the lower warming range. Rising temperatures could increase the risk of death from dehydration, heat stroke/exhaustion, heart attack, stroke, and respiratory distress caused by extreme heat. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 16)



2. *Water Resources*

A vast network of man-made reservoirs and aqueducts captures and transports water throughout the State from northern California rivers and the Colorado River. The current distribution system relies on Sierra Nevada snowpack to supply water during the dry spring and summer months. Rising temperatures, potentially compounded by decreases in precipitation, could severely reduce spring snowpack, increasing the risk of summer water shortages. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 17)

If temperatures continue to increase, more precipitation could fall as rain instead of snow, and the snow that does fall could melt earlier, reducing the Sierra Nevada spring snowpack by as much as 70 to 90%. Under the lower warming range scenario, snowpack losses could be only half as large as those possible if temperatures were to rise to the higher warming range. How much snowpack could be lost depends in part on future precipitation patterns, the projections for which remain uncertain. However, even under the wetter climate projections, the loss of snowpack could pose challenges to water managers and hamper hydropower generation. It could also adversely affect winter tourism. Under the lower warming range, the ski season at lower elevations could be reduced by as much as a month. If temperatures reach the higher warming range and precipitation declines, there might be many years with insufficient snow for skiing and snowboarding. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 17)

The State's water supplies are also at risk from rising sea levels. An influx of saltwater could degrade California's estuaries, wetlands, and groundwater aquifers. Saltwater intrusion caused by rising sea levels is a major threat to the quality and reliability of water within the southern edge of the Sacramento/San Joaquin River Delta – a major fresh water supply. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 17)

3. *Agriculture*

Increased temperatures could cause widespread changes to the agriculture industry reducing the quantity and quality of agricultural products statewide. First, California farmers could possibly lose as much as 25% of the water supply needed. Although higher CO₂ levels can stimulate plant production and increase plant water-use efficiency, California's farmers could face greater water demand for crops and a less reliable water supply as temperatures rise. Crop growth and development could change, as could the intensity and frequency of pest and disease outbreaks. Rising temperatures could aggravate ozone pollution, which makes plants more susceptible to disease and pests and interferes with plant growth. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 17)

Plant growth tends to be slow at low temperatures, increasing with rising temperatures up to a threshold. However, faster growth can result in less-than-optimal development for many crops, so rising temperatures could worsen the quantity and quality of yield for a number of California's agricultural products. Products likely to be most affected include wine grapes, fruits, and nuts. In addition, continued GCC could shift the ranges of existing invasive plants and weeds and alter competition patterns with native plants. Range expansion could occur in many species while range contractions may be less likely in rapidly evolving species with significant populations already established. Should range contractions occur, new or different weed species could fill the emerging gaps. Continued GCC could alter the abundance and types of many pests, lengthen pests' breeding season, and increase pathogen growth rates. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 17)



4. *Forests and Landscapes*

GCC has the potential to intensify the current threat to forests and landscapes by increasing the risk of wildfire and altering the distribution and character of natural vegetation. If temperatures rise into the medium warming range, the risk of large wildfires in California could increase by as much as 55%, which is almost twice the increase expected if temperatures stay in the lower warming range. However, since wildfire risk is determined by a combination of factors, including precipitation, winds, temperature, and landscape and vegetation conditions, future risks would not be uniform throughout the state. In contrast, wildfires in northern California could increase by up to 90% due to decreased precipitation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 18)

Moreover, continued GCC has the potential to alter natural ecosystems and biological diversity within the State. For example, alpine and subalpine ecosystems could decline by as much as 60 to 80% by the end of the century as a result of increasing temperatures. The productivity of the state's forests has the potential to decrease as a result of GCC. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 18)

5. *Rising Sea Levels*

Rising sea levels, more intense coastal storms, and warmer water temperatures could increasingly threaten the State's coastal regions. Under the higher warming range scenario, sea level is anticipated to rise 22 to 35 inches by 2100. Elevations of this magnitude would inundate low-lying coastal areas with saltwater, accelerate coastal erosion, threaten vital levees and inland water systems, and disrupt wetlands and natural habitats. Under the lower warming range scenario, sea level could rise 12-14 inches. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 18)

4.8.2 APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

The following is a brief description of the federal, state, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to GHG emissions.

A. *International Regulations*

1. *Kyoto Protocol*

The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which commits its Parties by setting internationally binding emission reduction targets. Recognizing that developed countries are principally responsible for the current high levels of GHG emissions in the atmosphere as a result of more than 150 years of industrial activity, the Protocol places a heavier burden on developed nations under the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities." (UNFCCC, n.d.)

The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, on December 11, 1997 and entered into force on February 16, 2005. The detailed rules for the implementation of the Protocol were adopted at Conference of the Parties (COP) 7 in Marrakesh, Morocco, in 2001, and are referred to as the "Marrakesh Accords." Its first commitment period started in 2008 and ended in 2012. (UNFCCC, n.d.)

On December 8, 2012, in Doha, Qatar, the "Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol" was adopted. The amendment includes:



- New commitments for Annex I Parties to the Kyoto Protocol who agreed to take on commitments in a second commitment period from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2020;
- A revised list of greenhouse gases (GHG) to be reported on by Parties in the second commitment period; and
- Amendments to several articles of the Kyoto Protocol which specifically referenced issues pertaining to the first commitment period and which needed to be updated for the second commitment period. (UNFCCC, n.d.)

On December 21, 2012, the amendment was circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as Depositary, to all Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in accordance with Articles 20 and 21 of the Protocol. (UNFCCC, n.d.)

During the first commitment period, 37 industrialized countries and the European Community committed to reduce GHG emissions to an average of five percent against 1990 levels. During the second commitment period, Parties committed to reduce GHG emissions by at least 18 percent below 1990 levels in the eight-year period from 2013 to 2020; however, the composition of Parties in the second commitment period is different from the first. (UNFCCC, n.d.)

2. *The Paris Agreement*

The Paris Agreement builds upon the Convention and – for the first time – brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort. (UNFCCC, n.d.)

The Paris Agreement’s central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Additionally, the agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change. To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework will be put in place, thus supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries, in line with their own national objectives. The Agreement also provides for enhanced transparency of action and support through a more robust transparency framework. (UNFCCC, n.d.)

The Paris Agreement requires all Parties to put forward their best efforts through “nationally determined contributions” (NDCs) and to strengthen these efforts in the years ahead. This includes requirements that all Parties report regularly on their emissions and on their implementation efforts. (UNFCCC, n.d.)

In 2018, Parties will take stock of the collective efforts in relation to progress towards the goal set in the Paris Agreement and to inform the preparation of NDCs. There will also be a global stock-taking every five years to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and to inform further individual actions by Parties. (UNFCCC, n.d.)



The Paris Agreement entered into force on November 4, 2016, thirty days after the date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55% of the total global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession with the Depository. (UNFCCC, n.d.)

On June 1, 2017, President Donald Trump announced he would begin the process of withdrawing the United States from the Paris Agreement. In accordance with articles within the Paris Agreement, the earliest effective date for the United States' withdrawal from the Agreement was November 4, 2020, at which time the withdraw became official. On January 20, 2021, President Biden signed the executive order for the United States to rejoin the Paris Agreement, which became official on February 19, 2021.

B. Federal Regulations

1. Clean Air Act

Coinciding with the 2009 meeting of international leaders in Copenhagen, on December 7, 2009, the EPA issued an Endangerment Finding under § 202(a) of the Clean Air Act (CAA), opening the door to federal regulation of GHGs. The Endangerment Finding notes that GHGs threaten public health and welfare and are subject to regulation under the CAA. To date, the EPA has not promulgated regulations on GHG emissions, but it has begun to develop them. (EPA, 2023a; DOJ, 2021)

Previously the EPA had not regulated GHGs under the CAA because it asserted that the Act did not authorize it to issue mandatory regulations to address Global Climate Change (GCC) and that such regulation would be unwise without an unequivocally established causal link between GHGs and the increase in global surface air temperatures. In *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency et al.* (127 S. Ct. 1438 [2007]); however, the U.S. Supreme Court held that GHGs are pollutants under the CAA and directed the EPA to decide whether the gases endangered public health or welfare. The EPA had also not moved aggressively to regulate GHGs because it expected Congress to make progress on GHG legislation, primarily from the standpoint of a cap-and-trade system. However, proposals circulated in both the House of Representative and Senate have been controversial and it may be some time before the U.S. Congress adopts major climate change legislation. The EPA's Endangerment Finding paves the way for federal regulation of GHGs with or without Congress. (EPA, 2023a; DOJ, 2021)

C. State Regulations

1. Title 24 Building Energy Standards

The California Energy Commission (CEC) first adopted Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce energy consumption in the state. Although not originally intended to reduce GHG emissions, increased energy efficiency, and reduced consumption of electricity, natural gas, and other fuels would result in fewer GHG emissions from residential and nonresidential buildings subject to the standard. The standards are updated periodically to allow for the consideration and inclusion of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The latest revisions (2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards) became effective on January 1, 2023. The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards already were 7 percent more efficient



than the previous (2016) Building Energy Efficiency Standards for residential construction and 30 percent more efficient than the previous Standards for non-residential construction. (The 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards already were 28 percent more efficient for residential construction and 5 percent more efficient for nonresidential construction than the 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards they replaced.) (CEC, 2018)

Part 11 of Title 24 is referred to as the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code). The purpose of the CALGreen Code is to “improve public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: (1) Planning and design; (2) Energy efficiency; (3) Water efficiency and conservation; (4) Material conservation and resource efficiency; and (5) Environmental air quality.” The CALGreen Code is not intended to substitute or be identified as meeting the certification requirements of any green building program that is not established and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC). Unless otherwise noted in the regulation, all newly constructed buildings in California are subject of the requirements of the CALGreen Code. (CEC, 2018)

2. *California Assembly Bill No. 1493 (AB 1493)*

AB 1493 required the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to adopt the nation’s first GHG emission standards for automobiles. On September 24, 2009, CARB adopted amendments to the “Pavley” regulations that reduced GHG emissions in new passenger vehicles from model year 2009 through 2016. The U.S. EPA granted California the authority to implement GHG emission reduction standards for new passenger cars, pickup trucks, and sport utility vehicles on June 30, 2009. It is expected that the Pavley regulations reduced GHG emissions from California passenger vehicles by about 22 percent in 2012 and about 30 percent in 2016, all while improving fuel efficiency and reducing motorists’ costs. CARB has since adopted a new approach to cars and light trucks by combining the control of smog-causing pollutants and GHG emissions into a single coordinated package of standards. The new approach also includes efforts to support and accelerate the numbers of plug-in hybrids and zero-emission vehicles in California. (CARB, n.d.)

3. *Executive Order S-3-05*

Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 documents GHG emission reduction goals, creates the Climate Action Team and directs the Secretary of the California EPA to coordinate efforts with meeting the GHG reduction targets with the heads of other state agencies. The EO requires the Secretary to report back to the Governor and Legislature biannually to report: progress toward meeting the GHG goals; GHG impacts to California; and applicable Mitigation and Adaptation Plans. EO S-3-05 goals for GHG emissions reductions include: reducing GHG emissions to 2000 levels by the year 2010; reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020; and reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. (CA State Library, 2005)

4. *California Assembly Bill 32 – Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*

In September 2006, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 required California to reduce its GHG emissions to 1990 levels by



2020, which represented a reduction of approximately 15 percent below emissions expected under a “business as usual” scenario (CARB, 2018). Among other items, AB 32 specifically required that CARB prepare and approve a Scoping Plan for achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective reductions in GHG emissions from sources or categories of sources of GHGs by 2020 and update the Scoping Plan every five years.

In December 2008, CARB approved the initial Scoping Plan, which included a suite of measures to sharply cut GHG emissions. In May 2014, CARB approved the First Update to the Scoping Plan (Update), which built upon the initial Scoping Plan with new strategies and recommendations. The Update highlighted California’s progress toward meeting the near-term 2020 GHG emission reduction goals, highlighted the latest climate change science and provided direction on how to achieve long-term emission reduction goal described in Executive Order S-3-05. In December 2017, CARB adopted the Second Update to the Scoping Plan, which identified the State’s post-2020 reduction strategy. The Second Update reflected the 2030 target of a 40 percent GHG emissions reduction below 1990 levels set by SB 32. The Second Update built upon the Cap- and-Trade Regulation; the Low Carbon Fuel Standard; much cleaner cars, trucks and freight movement; cleaner, renewable energy; and strategies to reduce methane emissions from agricultural and other wastes to reduce GHG emissions. (CARB, 2017)

In December 2022, CARB released the *Final 2022 Scoping Plan Update (2022 Scoping Plan)*, which identifies the State’s strategies to reduce GHG emissions by 85% and achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. The *2022 Scoping Plan* reflects an accelerated target of an 85% reduction in GHG emissions compared to 1990 levels by 2045. This third update relies on key programs in place, including the Cap-and-Trade Regulation and the LCFS, while stressing the need to increase their pace and scale.

In order to meet these targets, the *2022 Scoping Plan* would require contributions from all sectors of the economy and includes an enhanced focus on reducing fossil fuel demand by 94% by 2045 compared to 2022 consumption. Major elements of the *2022 Scoping Plan* framework include:

- *Maintaining progress on meeting SB 32 GHG reduction targets of at least 40% below 1990 emissions by 2030.*
- *Implementation of strategies for reducing California’s dependence on petroleum by providing consumers with clean energy options.*
- *Integrating equity and protecting California’s most impacted communities.*
- *Incorporation of natural and working lands to the state’s GHG emissions, as well as their role in achieving carbon neutrality.*
- *Use of all viable tools to address climate change, including carbon capture and sequestration, as well as direct air capture.*
- *Implementing SB 350, which expands the RPS to 50% RPS and doubles energy efficiency savings by 2030.*
- *Post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program that includes declining caps.*
- *California Sustainable Freight Action Plan, which improves freight system efficiency, utilizes near-zero emissions technology, and deployment of ZEV trucks.*



- *Implementing the proposed Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Strategy (SLPS), which focuses on reducing CH₄ and HCF emissions by 40% and anthropogenic black carbon emissions by 50% by year 2030.*
- *Continued implementation of SB 375.*
- *20% reduction in GHG emissions from refineries by 2030.*
- *Development of a Natural and Working Lands Action Plan to secure California's land base as a net carbon sink.*

In addition to the statewide strategies listed above, the 2022 Scoping Plan also identifies local governments as essential partners in achieving the State's long-term GHG reduction goals and identifies local actions to reduce GHG emissions. As part of the previous 2017 Scoping Plan, CARB recommended that local governments achieve a community-wide goal to achieve emissions of no more than 6 metric tons of CO₂e (MTCO₂e) or less per capita by 2030 and 2 MTCO₂e or less per capita by 2050. However, because the state is now pursuing carbon neutrality no later than 2045, CARB now recommends that local governments instead focus on developing locally appropriate, plan-level targets that align with the goal of carbon neutrality rather than focusing on a 2050 target. CARB identifies several "priority areas," including transportation electrification, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction, and building decarbonization, as these are the GHG reduction opportunities over which local governments have the most authority and the highest GHG reduction potential. (CARB, 2022)

5. *California Senate Bill No. 1368 (SB 1368)*

In 2006, the State Legislature adopted Senate Bill (SB) 1368 (Perata, Chapter 598, Statutes of 2006), which directs the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to adopt a GHG emission performance standard (EPS) for the future power purchases of California utilities. SB 1368 seeks to limit carbon emissions associated with electrical energy consumed in California by forbidding procurement arrangements for energy longer than five years from resources that exceed specified emissions criteria. Accordingly, SB 1368 effectively prevents California's utilities from investing in, otherwise financially supporting, or purchasing power from new coal plants located in or out of the State. SB 1368 will lead to dramatically lower GHG emissions associated with California energy demand. (CEC, n.d.)

6. *Executive Order S-01-07*

Executive Order (EO) S-01-07 is effectively known as the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS). The Executive Order seeks to reduce the carbon intensity of California's passenger vehicle fuels by at least 10 percent by 2020. The LCFS requires fuel providers in California to ensure that the mix of fuel they sell into the California market meet, on average, a declining standard for GHG emissions measured in CO₂e grams per unit of fuel energy sold. (CA State Library, 2007)

7. *Senate Bill 1078*

Senate Bill (SB) 1078 establishes the California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program, which requires electric utilities and other entities under the jurisdiction of the California Public Utilities Commission to meet 20% of their renewable power by December 31, 2017 for the purposes of increasing the diversity, reliability, public health, and environmental benefits of the energy mix. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)



8. *Senate Bill 107*

SB 107 directed California Public Utilities Commission's Renewable Energy Resources Program to increase the amount of renewable electricity (Renewable Portfolio Standard) generated per year, from 17% to an amount that equals at least 20% of the total electricity sold to retail customers in California per year by December 31, 2010. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

9. *Executive Order S-14-08*

On November 17, 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-14-08, revising California's existing Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) upward to require all retail sellers of electricity to serve 33% of their load from renewable energy sources by 2020. In order to meet this new goal, a substantial increase in the development of wind, solar, geothermal, and other "RPS eligible" energy projects would be needed. Executive Order S-14-08 sought to accelerate such development by streamlining the siting, permitting, and procurement processes for renewable energy generation facilities. To this end, S-14-08 issued two directives: (1) the existing Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative will identify renewable energy zones that can be developed as such with little environmental impact, and (2) the California Energy Commission (CEC) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will collaborate to expedite the review, permitting, and licensing process for proposed RPS-eligible renewable energy projects. (CA State Library, 2008)

10. *Senate Bill 97*

Senate Bill 97 (SB 97) was enacted in in 2007 to recognize the need to analyze GHGs as a part of the State CEQA process. SB 97 required the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop, and the Natural Resources Agency to adopt, amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines addressing the analysis and mitigation of GHGs. As part of the administrative rulemaking process, the Natural Resources Agency developed a Final Statement of Reasons explaining the legal and factual bases, intent, and purpose of the State CEQA Guidelines amendments. The amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines implementing SB 97 became effective on March 18, 2010. Of note, the State CEQA Guidelines state that a lead agency has discretion to determine whether to use a quantitative model or methodology, or rely on a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards to evaluate GHGs. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

CEQA emphasizes that GHG effects are cumulative, and should be analyzed in the context of CEQA's requirements for cumulative impacts analysis. (See State CEQA Guidelines § 15130(f)). State CEQA Guidelines § 15064.4(b) provides direction for lead agencies for assessing the significance of impacts of greenhouse gas emissions:

1. The extent to which the project may increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting;
2. Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project; or
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 greenhouse gas emissions. Such



regulations or requirements must be adopted by the relevant public agency through a public review process and must include specific requirements that reduce or mitigate the project's incremental contribution of greenhouse gas emissions. If there is substantial evidence that the possible effects of a particular project are still cumulatively considerable notwithstanding compliance with the adopted regulations or requirements, an EIR must be prepared for the project.

The State CEQA Guideline amendments do not identify a threshold of significance for GHG emissions, nor do they prescribe assessment methodologies or specific mitigation measures. Instead, they call for a "good-faith effort, based on available information, to describe, calculate or estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project." The amendments encourage lead agencies to consider many factors in performing a CEQA analysis and preserve lead agencies' discretion to make their own determinations based upon substantial evidence. The amendments also encourage public agencies to make use of programmatic mitigation plans and programs from which to tier when they perform individual project analyses.

11. *Senate Bill 375*

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (Sustainable Communities Act, SB 375, Chapter 728, Statutes of 2008) supports the State's climate action goals to reduce GHG emissions through coordinated transportation and land use planning with the goal of more sustainable communities. Under the Sustainable Communities Act, CARB set regional targets for GHG emissions reductions from passenger vehicle use. In 2010, CARB established these targets for 2020 and 2035 for each region covered by one of the State's metropolitan planning organizations (MPO). CARB periodically reviews and updates the targets, as needed. (CARB, n.d.)

Each of California's MPOs must prepare a "sustainable communities strategy" (SCS) as an integral part of its regional transportation plan (RTP). The SCS contains land use, housing, and transportation strategies that, if implemented, would allow the region to meet its GHG emission reduction targets. Once adopted by the MPO, the RTP/SCS guides the transportation policies and investments for the region. CARB must review the adopted SCS to confirm and accept the MPO's determination that the SCS, if implemented, would meet the regional GHG targets. If the combination of measures in the SCS would not meet the regional targets, the MPO must prepare a separate "alternative planning strategy" (APS) to meet the targets. (CARB, n.d.)

12. *Executive Order B-30-15*

On April 29, 2015, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-30-15, which sets a goal to reduce GHG emissions in California to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The 2030 target serves as a benchmark goal on the way to achieving the GHG reductions goal set by former Governor Schwarzenegger via Executive Order S-3-05 (i.e., 80 percent below 1990 greenhouse gas emissions levels by 2050). (CA State Library, 2015)

13. *Senate Bill 32*

On September 8, 2016, Governor Jerry Brown signed the Senate Bill (SB) 32 and its companion bill, Assembly Bill (AB) 197. SB 32 requires the state to reduce statewide GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, a reduction target that was first introduced in Executive Order B-30-15. The new legislation builds upon



the AB 32 goal of 1990 levels by 2020 and provides an intermediate goal to achieving S-3-05, which sets a statewide greenhouse gas reduction target of 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

14. California Climate Crisis Act (AB 1279)

AB 1279, also known as the California Climate Crisis Act, declares that it is the policy of the State to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, but no later than 2045; to achieve and maintain net negative greenhouse gas emissions thereafter; and to ensure that by 2045, Statewide anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to at least 85% below the 1990 levels. The bill requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to work with relevant State agencies to ensure that updates to the CARB Scoping Plan identify and recommend measures to achieve these policy goals and to identify and implement a variety of policies and strategies that enable carbon dioxide removal solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies in California. AB 1279 also requires CARB to submit an annual report evaluating progress towards these policies. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

15. Clean Energy, Jobs, and Affordability Act of 2022 (Senate Bill 1020)

SB 1020, also known as the Clean Energy, Jobs, and Affordability Act of 2022, revised State policy to include interim targets requiring that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 90 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2035, 95 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2040, 100 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2045, and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2035. SB 1020 also requires each State agency to ensure that zero-carbon resources and eligible renewable energy resources supply 100 percent of electricity procured to serve their agency by December 31, 2035. In addition, SB 1020 requires the State Water Project (SWP) to procure eligible renewable energy and zero-carbon resources as necessary to meet the clean energy requirements specified for all State agencies. Finally, SB 1020 requires the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to develop utility affordability metrics for both electricity and gas service. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

16. Carbon sequestration: Carbon Capture, Removal, Utilization, and Storage Program (Senate Bill 905)

SB 905 requires CARB to establish a Carbon Capture, Removal, Utilization, and Storage (CCRUS) Program and adopt regulations for a model unified permit program for the construction and operation of CCRUS projects. SB 905 is intended to accelerate the deployment of carbon management technologies and ensuring they are deployed in a safe and equitable way. SB 905 requires the CCRUS Program to ensure that carbon dioxide capture, removal, and sequestration projects include specified components including, among others, certain monitoring activities. In addition, SB 905 requires that by January 1, 2025, CARB shall adopt regulations for a unified permit application for the construction and operation of carbon dioxide capture, removal, or sequestration projects to expedite the issuance of permits or other authorizations for the construction and operation of those projects. SB 905 also requires the establishment of a centralized public database to track the deployment of carbon capture, utilization, or storage (CCUS) technologies and carbon dioxide removal (CDR) technologies. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)



17. *Assembly Bill 1757*

AB 1757 directs the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to determine an ambitious range of targets for natural carbon sequestration, and for nature-based climate solutions, that reduce GHG emissions for 2030, 2038, and 2045 to support State goals to achieve carbon neutrality and foster climate adaptation and resilience. Additionally, AB 1757 requires these targets to be integrated into the CARB Scoping Plan and other State policies. It also includes provisions to avoid double counting emission reductions, updates the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy, develops GHG tracking protocols, and biennially post progress made in achieving the targets on CNRA’s internet website. In addition, AB 1757 requires CARB to develop standard methods for State agencies to consistently track greenhouse gas emissions and reductions, carbon sequestration, and, where feasible, additional benefits from natural and working lands over time. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

D. *Regional Regulations*

1. *Connect SoCal 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)*

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) under California State law, established as an association of local governments and agencies that voluntarily convene as a forum to address regional issues. Under federal law, SCAG is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and under State law as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency and a Council of Governments. The SCAG region encompasses six counties (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura) and 191 cities in an area covering more than 38,000 square miles.

SCAG’s *2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)*, also referred to as *Connect SoCal*, develops long-range regional transportation plans including a sustainable communities strategy and growth forecast components, regional transportation improvement programs, regional housing needs allocations and other plans for the region. The RTP/SCS provides objectives for meeting air pollution emissions reduction targets set forth by the California Air Resources Board (CARB); these objectives were provided in direct response to Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) which was enacted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks through integrated transportation, land use, housing, and environmental planning. The Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategies identifies the Project site as being located in an area with a “Standard Suburban” land use pattern, which is defined as auto-oriented development with a minimal mix of land uses.

The *Goods Movement Technical Report* of *Connect SoCal* recognizes that the SCAG region is the premier trade gateway for the United States. *Connect SoCal* acknowledges that the SCAG region has witnessed continued growth for warehousing, distribution, cold storage and truck terminal facilities, with a majority of the growth for national and regional distribution facilities occurring in the Inland Empire. Through *Connect SoCal*, SCAG is working on various regional strategies to maintain the SCAG region as an important trade gateway while addressing regional transportation efficiency and environmental sustainability.



E. Local Regulations

1. County of Riverside CAP

The Riverside County Climate Action Plan (CAP), was adopted in December 2015 and most recently updated in November 2019 (“CAP Update”), qualifies as a plan for the reduction of GHG emissions as defined by State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.5(b). The CAP was designed under the premise that Riverside County, and the community it represents, is uniquely capable of addressing emissions associated with sources under Riverside County’s jurisdiction, and that Riverside County’s emission reduction efforts should coordinate with the State strategies of reducing emissions in order to accomplish these reductions in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The 2019 CAP Update establishes GHG emission reduction programs and regulations that correlate with and support evolving State GHG emissions reduction goals and strategies. The CAP Update includes reduction targets for year 2030 and year 2050. These reduction targets require the County to reduce emissions by at least 525,511 MTCO₂e/yr below the Adjusted Business As Usual (ABAU) scenario by 2030 and at least 2,982,948 MTCO₂e/yr below the ABAU scenario by 2050. To evaluate consistency with the CAP Update, the County has implemented CAP Update Screening Tables (Screening Tables) to aid in measuring the reduction of GHG emissions attributable to certain design and construction measures incorporated in development projects. To this end, the Screening Tables establish categories of GHG Implementation Measures. Under each Implementation Measure category, mitigation or project design features (collectively “features”) are assigned point values that correspond to the minimum GHG emissions reduction that would result from each feature. Projects that yield at least 100 points are considered to be consistent with the GHG emissions reduction quantities anticipated in the County’s GHG Technical Report and support the GHG emissions reduction targets established under the CAP Update. The potential for such projects to generate direct or indirect GHG emissions that would result in a significant impact on the environment; or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHG would be considered less than significant. (Riverside County, 2019)

4.8.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

A. Thresholds of Significance

While estimated Project-related GHG emissions can be quantified, the direct impacts of such emissions on GCC and global warming cannot be determined on the basis of available science. There is no evidence at this time that would indicate that the emissions from a project the size of the proposed Project would directly or indirectly affect the global climate.

AB 32 states, in part, that “[g]lobal warming poses a serious threat to the economic well-being, public health, natural resources, and the environment of California.” Because global warming is the result of GHG emissions, and GHGs are emitted by innumerable sources worldwide, the proposed Project would have no potential to result in a direct impact to global warming; rather, Project-related contributions to GCC, if any, only have potential significance on a cumulative basis. Therefore, the analysis below focuses on the Project’s potential to contribute to GCC in a cumulatively-considerable way.

Section VIII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects due to GHGs, and includes the following threshold questions (OPR, 2018a):



- *Would the project generate GHGs, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?*
- *Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?*

The following thresholds are derived directly from Section VIII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's Environmental Assessment form, and address typical adverse effects associated with GHG emissions. The proposed Project would have a significant impact on GHG emissions if the Project or any Project-related component would:

- Generate GHGs, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment;*
or
- Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.*

The above-listed thresholds for GHGs do not prescribe specific methodologies for performing an assessment, do not establish specific thresholds of significance, and do not mandate specific mitigation measures. Rather, the State CEQA Guidelines emphasize the lead agency's discretion to determine the appropriate methodologies and thresholds of significance consistent with the manner in which other impact areas are handled in CEQA. With respect to GHG emissions, State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a) states that lead agencies "shall make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate" GHG emissions resulting from a project. The State CEQA Guidelines note that an agency has the discretion to either quantify a project's GHG emissions or rely on a "qualitative analysis or other performance-based standards." A lead agency may use a "model or methodology" to estimate GHG emissions and has the discretion to select the model or methodology it considers "most appropriate to enable decision makers to intelligently take into account the project's incremental contribution to climate change." Section 15064.4(b) provides that the lead agency should consider the following when determining the significance of impacts from GHG emissions on the environment:

1. The extent a 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.
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 (14 CCR 15064.4(b)).

In addition, Section 15064.7(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines specifies that "[w]hen adopting or using thresholds of significance, a lead agency may consider thresholds of significance previously adopted or



recommended by other public agencies, or recommended by experts, provided the decision of the lead agency to adopt such thresholds is supported by substantial evidence.” The State CEQA Guidelines also clarify that the effects of GHG emissions are cumulative and should be analyzed in the context of CEQA’s requirements for cumulative impact analysis. As a note, the State CEQA Guidelines were amended in response to SB 97. In particular, the State CEQA Guidelines were amended to specify that compliance with a GHG emissions reduction plan renders a cumulative impact insignificant.

Per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(3), a project’s incremental contribution to a cumulative impact can be found not cumulatively considerable if the project would comply with an approved plan or mitigation program that provides specific requirements that would avoid or substantially lessen the cumulative problem within the geographic area of the project. To qualify, such plans or programs must be specified in law or adopted by the public agency with jurisdiction over the affected resources through a public review process to implement, interpret, or make specific the law enforced or administered by the public agency. Examples of such programs include a “water quality control plan, air quality attainment or maintenance plan, integrated waste management plan, habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plans, [and] plans or regulations for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.” Put another way, State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(3) allows a lead agency to make a finding of less than significant for GHG emissions if a project complies with adopted programs, plans, policies, and/or other regulatory strategies to reduce GHG emissions.

The significance of the Project’s GHG emissions is evaluated consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b)(2) 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 GHG emissions.

The Riverside County 2019 CAP Update aims to reduce GHG emissions from development projects under County jurisdiction. The CAP Update builds on State and regional policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions consistent with the SB 32 2030 GHG reduction target and Statewide post-2030 reduction goals. The CAP Update identifies a two-step approach in evaluating GHG emissions. First, a screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr is used to determine if additional analysis is required. Projects that exceed 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr will be required to quantify and disclose the anticipated GHG emissions then either 1) demonstrate GHG emissions at project buildout year levels of efficiency and include project design features and/or mitigation measures to reduce GHG emissions or 2) garner 100 points through the CAP Update Screening Tables. Projects that garner at least 100 points (equivalent to an approximate 49% reduction in GHG emissions) may be determined to be consistent with the reduction quantities anticipated in the County’s GHG Technical Report, and consequently may be considered consistent with the CAP Update. As such, projects that achieve a total of 100 points or more normally are considered to have a less-than-significant individual and cumulative impact on GHG emissions.

4.8.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Modeling

In May 2023 the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), in conjunction with other California air districts, including SCAQMD, released the latest version of CalEEMod Version 2022.1.1.18.



The purpose of this model is to calculate construction-source and operational-source criteria pollutants and GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources, and to quantify applicable air quality and GHG reductions achieved from mitigation measures. Accordingly, the latest version of CalEEMod has been used to determine GHG emissions. Output from the model runs for construction and operational activity are provided in Appendices 3.1 through 3.3 of the Project’s GHGA (*Technical Appendix G*). CalEEMod includes GHG emissions from the following source categories: construction, area, energy, mobile, waste, water, refrigerants, stationary, on-site cargo equipment and Transport Refrigeration Units (TRUs). (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 44)

A full life-cycle analysis (LCA) for construction and operational activity is not included in this analysis due to the lack of consensus guidance on LCA methodology at this time. Life-cycle analysis (i.e., assessing economy-wide GHG emissions from the processes in manufacturing and transporting all raw materials used in the Project development, infrastructure, and on-going operations) depends on emission factors or econometric factors that are not well established for all processes. At this time, a LCA would be extremely speculative and thus has not been prepared. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 44)

Additionally, the SCAQMD recommends analyzing direct and indirect project GHG emissions generated within California and not life-cycle emissions because the life-cycle effects from a project could occur outside of California, might not be very well understood, or documented, and would be challenging to mitigate. Additionally, the science to calculate life cycle emissions is not yet established or well defined; therefore, SCAQMD has not recommended, and is not requiring, life-cycle emissions analysis. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 44)

B. Project Impacts due to Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Threshold a.: Would the Project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Construction Emissions

Project construction activities would generate CO₂ and CH₄ emissions. The Project’s Air Quality Impact Analysis (“AQIA”, EIR *Technical Appendix B1*) contains detailed information regarding Project construction activities. Construction-related emissions are expected from the following construction activities: site preparation, grading, substation construction, building construction, off-site utility improvements, off-site infrastructure improvements, paving, and architectural coating. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 45)

The anticipated construction durations previously were summarized in EIR Table 3-2, and anticipated construction equipment by construction phase previously was summarized in EIR Table 3-3. The construction schedule utilized in the analysis represents a “worst-case” analysis scenario should construction occur any time after the respective dates since emission factors for construction decrease as time passes and the analysis year increases due to emission regulations becoming more stringent. The duration of construction activity and associated equipment represents a reasonable approximation of the expected construction fleet and durations. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 45)



For construction phase Project emissions, GHGs are quantified and amortized over the life of the Project. To amortize the emissions over the life of the Project, the SCAQMD recommends calculating the total GHG emissions for the construction activities, dividing it by a 30-year Project life then adding that number to the annual operational phase GHG emissions. As such, construction emissions were amortized over a 30-year period and added to the annual operational phase GHG emissions. The amortized construction emissions are presented in Table 4.8-3, *Amortized Annual Construction Emissions*. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, pp. 46-47)

□ Operational Emissions

Operational activities associated with the Project would result in emissions of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O from the following primary sources: area source emissions; energy source emissions; mobile source emissions; on-site cargo handling equipment emissions; transportation refrigeration (TRU) emissions; water supply, treatment, and distribution; solid waste; refrigerants; and stationary emissions. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 47)

Table 4.8-3 Amortized Annual Construction Emissions

Year	Emissions (MT/yr)				
	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	Refrigerants	Total CO ₂ e
2024	2,184.00	0.07	0.15	1.99	2,231.00
2025	1,018.00	0.04	0.05	1.18	1,035.00
Total GHG Emissions	3,202.00	0.11	0.20	3.17	3,266.00
Amortized Construction Emissions	106.73	0.00	0.01	0.11	108.87

1. CalEEMod annual construction-source emissions are presented in Appendix 3.1 to the Project’s GHGA (*Technical Appendix G*).

(Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 3-3)

Area Source Emissions

Landscape Maintenance Equipment

Landscape maintenance equipment would generate emissions from fuel combustion and evaporation of unburned fuel. Equipment in this category would include lawnmowers, shredders/grinders, blowers, trimmers, chain saws, and hedge trimmers used to maintain the landscaping of the Project. It should be noted that as October 9, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed AB 1346. The bill aims to ban the sale of new gasoline-powered equipment under 25 gross horsepower (known as small off-road engines [SOREs]) by 2024. For purposes of analysis, the emissions associated with landscape maintenance equipment were calculated based on assumptions provided in CalEEMod. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, pp. 47-48)

Energy Source Emissions

Combustion Emissions Associated with Natural Gas and Electricity

GHGs are emitted from buildings as a result of activities for which electricity and natural gas are typically used as energy sources. Combustion of any type of fuel emits CO₂ and other GHGs directly into the atmosphere; these emissions are considered direct emissions associated with a building. The building energy use emissions do not include street lighting. Based on information provided by the Project Applicant, the Project is also not expected to utilize natural gas for the building envelope, and therefore would not generate



any emissions from direct consumption of natural gas. GHGs are also emitted during the generation of electricity from fossil fuels; these emissions are considered to be indirect emissions. Electricity usage associated with the Project was calculated based on data provided by the Project Applicant and includes 20% of the building user's electric power from on-site renewable sources. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 48)

Mobile Source Emissions

The Project-related GHG emissions derive primarily from vehicle trips generated by the Project, including employee trips to and from the site and truck trips associated with the proposed uses. Trip characteristics available from the Project's Traffic Analysis ("TA"; *Technical Appendix K1*) were utilized in the analysis. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 48)

Approach for Analysis of the Project

In order to determine emissions from passenger car vehicles, CalEEMod defaults for trip length and trip purpose were utilized. Based on the Project's Supplemental Truck Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis ("Supplemental VMT Analysis"; EIR *Technical Appendix K3*), a passenger vehicle trip length of 15.6 miles was utilized. This analysis assumes that passenger cars include Light-Duty-Auto vehicles (LDA), Light-Duty-Trucks (LDT1² and LDT2³), Medium-Duty-Vehicles (MDV), and Motorcycles (MCY) vehicle types. In order to account for emissions generated by passenger cars, the fleet mix shown in Table 3-4 of the Project's GHGA (*Technical Appendix G*) was utilized. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 48)

To determine emissions from trucks for the proposed industrial uses, the analysis incorporated a truck trip length of 92.8 miles based on the Project's Supplemental VMT Analysis (EIR *Technical Appendix K2*) and an assumption of 100% primary trips. This trip length assumption is higher than the CalEEMod defaults for trucks. In order to be consistent with the Project's TA (EIR *Technical Appendix K1*), trucks are broken down by truck type. The truck fleet mix is estimated by rationing the trip rates for each truck type based on information provided by the SCAQMD recommended truck mix, by axle type. Heavy trucks are broken down by truck type (or axle type) and are categorized as either Light-Heavy-Duty Trucks (LHDT1⁴ and LHDT2⁵)/2 axle, Medium-Heavy-Duty Trucks (MHDT)/3-axle, and Heavy-Heavy-Duty Trucks (HHDT)/4+-axle. To account for emissions generated by trucks, the fleet mix in Table 3-5 of the Project-specific GHGA (EIR *Technical Appendix G*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 49)

On-Site Cargo Handling Equipment Emissions

It is common for industrial buildings to require the operation of exterior cargo handling equipment in the building's truck court areas. For this Project, on-site modeled operational equipment includes up to four 175

² Vehicles under the LDT1 category have a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of less than 6,000 lbs. and equivalent test weight (ETW) of less than or equal to 3,750 lbs.

³ Vehicles under the LDT2 category have a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of less than 6,000 lbs. and ETW of between 3,751 lbs and 5,750 lbs.

⁴ Vehicles under the LHDT1 category have a GVWR of 8,501 to 10,000 lbs.

⁵ Vehicles under the LHDT2 category have a GVWR of 10,001 to 14,000 lbs.



horsepower (hp), natural gas-powered cargo handling equipment – port tractor operating four hours a day for 365 days of the year. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 49)

TRU Emissions

In order to account for the possibility of refrigerated uses, trucks associated with the cold-storage land use are assumed to also have TRUs. For modeling purposes, 186 two-way truck trips during have been estimated to include TRUs (e.g., all truck trips that would be associated with up to 150,526-sf of high-cube cold storage use, as summarized in the Project-specific TA (EIR *Technical Appendix K1*). TRUs are accounted for during on-site and off-site travel. The TRU calculations are based on EMISSIONS FACTOR MODEL version 2021 (EMFAC2021), developed by the CARB. EMFAC2021 does not provide emission rates per hour or mile as with the on-road emission model and only provides emission inventories. Emission results are produced in tons per day while all activity, fuel consumption and horsepower hours were reported at annual levels. The emission inventory is based on specific assumptions including the average horsepower rating of specific types of equipment and the hours of operation annually. These assumptions are not always consistent with assumptions used in the modeling of project level emissions. Therefore, the emissions inventory was converted into emission rates to accurately calculate emissions from TRU operation associated with Project-level details. This was accomplished by converting the annual horsepower hours to daily operational characteristics and converting the daily emission levels into hourly emission rates based on the total emission of each criteria pollutant by equipment type and the average daily hours of operations. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, pp. 49-50)

Water Supply, Treatment, and Distribution

Indirect GHG emissions result from the production of electricity used to convey, treat, and distribute water and wastewater. The amount of electricity required to convey, treat, and distribute water depends on the volume of water as well as the sources of the water. Unless otherwise noted, CalEEMod default parameters were used. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 50)

Solid Waste

Industrial land uses would result in the generation and disposal of solid waste. A percentage of this waste would be diverted from landfills by a variety of means, such as reducing the amount of waste generated, recycling, and/or composting. The remainder of the waste not diverted would be disposed of at a landfill. GHG emissions from landfills are associated with the anaerobic breakdown of material. GHG emissions associated with the disposal of solid waste associated with the proposed Project were calculated by CalEEMod using default parameters. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 50)

Refrigerants

Air conditioning (A/C) and refrigeration equipment associated with the building are anticipated to generate GHG emissions. CalEEMod automatically generates a default A/C and refrigeration equipment inventory for each project land use subtype based on industry data from the USEPA. CalEEMod quantifies refrigerant emissions from leaks during regular operation and routine servicing over the equipment lifetime and then derives average annual emissions from the lifetime estimate. Note that CalEEMod does not quantify emissions from the disposal of refrigeration and A/C equipment at the end of its lifetime. Per 17 CCR 95371, new



facilities with refrigeration equipment containing more than 50 pounds of refrigerant are prohibited from utilizing refrigerants with a GWP of 150 or greater as of January 1, 2022. GHG emissions associated with refrigerants were calculated by CalEEMod using default parameters. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 50)

□ Emissions Summary and Analysis

As previously indicated, Riverside County adopted CAP in December 2015, which was most recently updated in November 2019 (“CAP Update”). The purpose of the CAP Update is to provide guidance on how to analyze GHG emissions and determine significance during the CEQA review of proposed development projects within the County. To address the State’s requirement to reduce GHG emissions, the County prepared its CAP Update with the goal of reducing GHG emissions within the County by 49% below “existing” 2008 levels by the year 2030. The County’s target is consistent with the AB 32 target and ensures that the County will be providing GHG reductions locally that will complement State efforts to reduce GHG emissions. The County’s target also is consistent with the SB 32 target that expands on AB 32 to reduce GHG emissions to 40% below the 1990 levels by 2030. Because the County’s CAP Update addresses GHG emissions reductions and is consistent with the requirements of AB 32, SB 32, and international efforts to reduce GHG emissions, compliance with the CAP Update fulfills the description of mitigation found in the State CEQA Guidelines. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 51)

As previously noted, the CAP Update identifies a two-step approach in evaluating GHG emissions. First, a screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr is used to determine if additional analysis is required. Projects that exceed the 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr are required to quantify and disclose the anticipated GHG emissions then either: 1) demonstrate GHG emissions at project buildout year levels of efficiency and includes project design features and/or mitigation measures to reduce GHG emissions; or 2) garner 100 points through the Screening Tables. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 51)

The estimated Project-related GHG emissions are summarized on Table 4.8-4, *Project GHG Emissions*. Detailed operation model outputs for the Project are presented in Appendix 3.2 of the Project’s GHGA (*Technical Appendix G*). As shown on Table 4.8-4, construction and operation of the Project would generate approximately 33,130.16 MTCO₂e/yr. Accordingly, the proposed Project would exceed the County’s screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr, resulting in a cumulatively-considerable impact prior to mitigation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 52)

Threshold b: Would the Project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

As previously stated, pursuant to Section 15604.4 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency may rely on qualitative analysis or performance-based standards to determine the significance of impacts from GHG emissions. As such, the Project’s consistency with AB 32, SB 32, and the County’s CAP are discussed below. It should be noted that the Project’s consistency with SB 32 (as identified through compliance with the 2022 Scoping Plan) also satisfies consistency with AB 32 since the 2022 Scoping Plan is based on the overall targets established by AB 32 and SB 32. Consistency with the 2008 and 2017 Scoping Plans is not necessary, since both of these plans have been superseded by the 2022 Scoping Plan. Project consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan and County’s CAP Update is evaluated in the following discussion. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, p. 52)



Table 4.8-4 Project GHG Emissions

Emission Source	Emissions (MT/yr)				
	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	Refrigerants	Total CO ₂ e
Annual construction-related emissions amortized over 30 years	106.73	0.00	0.01	0.11	108.87
Mobile Source	27,184.00	0.26	3.53	35.20	28,278.00
Area Source	18.10	< 0.005	< 0.005	0	18.20
Energy Source	865.00	0.13	0.02	0	873.00
Water Usage	232.00	9.34	0.22	0	533.00
Waste	104.00	10.40	0	0	364.00
Refrigerants	0	0	0	41.80	41.80
Stationary Source	11.40	< 0.005	< 0.005	0	11.50
On-Site Equipment Source					1,471.05
TRUs Source					1,430.74
Total CO₂e (All Sources)	33,130.16				

(Urban Crossroads, 2024d, Table 3-6)

2022 Scoping Plan Consistency

The Project would not impede the State’s progress towards carbon neutrality by 2045 under the 2022 Scoping Plan. The Project would be required to comply with applicable current and future regulatory requirements promulgated through the 2022 Scoping Plan. Some of the current transportation sector policies the Project will comply with (through vehicle manufacturer compliance) include: Advanced Clean Cars II, Advanced Clean Trucks, Advanced Clean Fleets, Zero Emission Forklifts, the Off-Road Zero-Emission Targeted Manufacturer rule, Clean Off-Road Fleet Recognition Program, In-use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation, Off-Road Zero-Emission Targeted Manufacturer rule, Clean Off-Road Fleet Recognition Program, Amendments to the In-use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation, carbon pricing through the Cap-and-Trade Program, and the Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Additionally, the Project includes design features related to water and solid conservation that would further reduce Project GHG emissions. As such, the Project would be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan, and impacts would therefore be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, pp. 52-53)

County of Riverside CAP Consistency

The County of Riverside approved the CAP Update on December 17, 2019. The CAP Update was designed under the premise that the County, and the community it represents, is uniquely capable of addressing emissions associated with sources under Riverside County’s jurisdiction, and that Riverside County’s emission reduction efforts should coordinate with the state strategies of reducing emissions in order to accomplish these reductions in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

In order to evaluate consistency with the CAP Update, the County provided Screening Tables to aid in measuring the reduction of GHG emissions attributable to certain design and construction measures incorporated into development projects. The County’s CAP currently evaluates and quantifies reductions out to Year 2030. The CAP states that “[t]hrough 2050, Riverside County would continue implementation of the Screening Tables. During this time, the reduction measures implemented through the Screening Tables would



continue to reduce GHG missions from new development. Additionally, it is assumed that the State measures would keep being updated and reinforced to further reduce emissions. With these assumptions, Riverside County’s emissions would decrease to a level below the reduction target by 2050.” Thus, compliance with the CAP Update would serve to meet and support the reduction targets established Senate Bill 32 and the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, pp. 53-54)

Pursuant to the CAP Update and associated Screening Tables, projects that garner at least 100 points (equivalent to an approximate 49% reduction in GHG emissions below 2008 baseline levels) are determined to be consistent with the reduction quantities anticipated in the County’s GHG Technical Report, and consequently would be consistent with the CAP. Absent implementation of Screening Table Measures, the Project could be considered inconsistent with the County CAP Update. This is a potentially significant impact for which mitigation is required. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, pp. 53-54)

The CAP Update also includes measure R2-CE1, which requires on-site renewable energy production. This measure is required for any tentative tract map, plot plan, or conditional use permit that proposes to add more than 100,000 gross square feet of commercial, office, industrial, or manufacturing development. Renewable energy production shall be onsite generation of at least 20% of energy demand for commercial, office, industrial or manufacturing development. Although it is anticipated that Riverside County would condition the proposed Project to ensure Project consistency with CAP measure R2-CE1, and although the PPT 220022 Site Plan already includes a note requiring the proposed warehouse building to be designed to support solar panels (as shown on EIR Figure 3-5), a significant impact due to a conflict with CAP measure R2-CE1 is conservatively identified and mitigation requiring compliance with measure R2-CE1 would be required. (Urban Crossroads, 2024d, pp. 53-54)

☐ SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)

According to SCAG’s 2024-2050 RTP/SCS (also known as “Connect SoCal”), employment within unincorporated Riverside County in 2019 was approximately 87,100 jobs with an anticipated increase to approximately 148,800 jobs by 2050, a growth of approximately 61,700 jobs. The jobs created by the proposed Project represent a nominal percentage of the anticipated increase in jobs, and therefore, would not result in long-term operational employment growth that exceeds planned growth projections in the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS, or result in employment growth that would substantially add to traffic congestion. Additionally, EIR Table 4.11-1 and the analysis of Project consistency with Connect SoCal as previously presented under the analysis of Threshold a. in EIR Subsection 4.11, *Land Use and Planning*, demonstrate that the Project would not conflict with any Connect SoCal goals. Accordingly, Project impacts due to a conflict with the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS would be less than significant.

4.8.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

As discussed in Subsection 4.8.1, there is no evidence at this time that would indicate that the emissions from a project the size of the Project would directly or indirectly affect the global climate. As such, Project impacts due to GHG emissions are inherently cumulative in nature.



As discussed under the analysis of Threshold a., the Project would result in approximately 33,130.1 MTCO₂e/yr, which would exceed the CAP Update screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. Accordingly, GHG emissions associated with construction and long-term operation of the Project represents a cumulatively-considerable impact for which mitigation would be required.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold b., the Project would be consistent with or otherwise would not conflict with the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan and the SCAG 2024-2050 RTP/SCS. However, the Project has the potential to conflict with the Riverside County CAP Update if the Project were unable to achieve 100 points pursuant to the CAP Screening Tables or if the Project were to fail to comply with CAP Update Measure R2-CE1. This is evaluated as a cumulatively-considerable impact of the proposed Project for which mitigation would be required.

4.8.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a: Significant Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Project would result in the emissions of approximately 33,130.16 MTCO₂e/yr of GHGs, which would exceed the CAP Update screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. Accordingly, prior to mitigation, the Project's GHG emissions would represent a significant cumulatively-considerable impact on the environment.

Threshold b: Significant Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Project would be consistent with or otherwise would not conflict with the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan and the SCAG 2024-2050 RTP/SCS. However, the Project has the potential to conflict with the Riverside County CAP Update if the Project were unable to achieve 100 points pursuant to the CAP Screening Tables or if the Project were to fail to comply with CAP Update Measure R2-CE1. This is evaluated as a cumulatively-considerable impact of the proposed Project.

4.8.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The Project would be required to comply with all mandates imposed by the State of California and SCAQMD aimed at the reduction of GHG emissions. Those that are applicable to the Project and that would assist in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions are listed below:

- Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB32).
- Pavley Fuel Efficiency Standards (AB1493). Establishes fuel efficiency ratings for new vehicles.
- Title 17 California Code of Regulations (Low Carbon Fuel Standard). Requires carbon content of fuel sold in California to be 10% less by 2020.
- Statewide Retail Provider Emissions Performance Standards (SB 1368). Requires energy generators to achieve performance standards for GHG emissions.
- Renewable Portfolio Standards (SB 100). Requires electric corporations to increase the amount of energy obtained from eligible renewable energy resources to achieve a target of 50% renewable resources by December 31, 2026, and to achieve a 60% target by December 31, 2030. SB 100 also requires that retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities procure a minimum quantity of



electricity products from eligible renewable energy resources so that the total kilowatt hours (kWh) of those products sold to their retail end-use customers achieve 44% of retail sales by December 31, 2024, 52% by December 31, 2027, and 60% by December 31, 2030.

- Senate Bill 32 (SB 32). Requires the state to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, a reduction target that was first introduced in Executive Order B-30-15.

Mitigation

- MM 4.8-1 Prior to issuance of building permits, the Project Applicant shall demonstrate that appropriate building construction measures apply to achieve a minimum of 100 points per Appendix D to the Riverside County 2019 Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update. The conceptual measures anticipated for the Project are listed in Table 3-7 of the Project's Greenhouse Gas Analysis (GHGA) technical reports (appended to the Project's EIR as *Technical Appendix G*). The conceptual measures may be replaced with other measures as listed in Appendix D to the 2019 Riverside County CAP Update, as long as they are replaced at the same time with other measures that in total achieve a minimum of 100 points per Appendix D to the 2019 Riverside County CAP Update. The County shall verify implementation of the identified measures prior to final building inspection.
- MM 4.8-2 Pursuant to Riverside County Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update Measure R2-CE1, prior to issuance of building permits, future implementing building permits that involve more than 100,000 gross square feet of commercial, office, industrial, or manufacturing development shall be required to offset the energy demand through renewable energy production. Renewable energy production shall be onsite generation of at least 20% of energy demand for commercial, office, industrial or manufacturing development. Prior to issuance of each building permit, the Project Applicant shall provide documentation to the County of Riverside Building & Safety Department demonstrating compliance with CAP measure R2-CE1, which shall include calculations of the building's estimated energy demands as well as calculations showing that the on-site renewable energy production would achieve at least 20% of the building's energy demands.

4.8.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Significant and Unavoidable Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019) qualifies as a "Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions," pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b). Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d), a lead agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution to a cumulative effect is not cumulatively considerable if the project complies with the requirements in a previously adopted plan or mitigation program. Additionally, Tier 2 of the SCAQMD interim thresholds for GHG emissions indicates that if a project is consistent with a qualifying local GHG reduction plan, it would not result in a significant impact due to GHG emissions. The CAP Update evaluates and quantifies reductions out to Year 2030. The CAP Update states that "Through 2050, Riverside County would continue implementation of the Screening Tables. During this time, the reduction measures implemented through the Screening Tables would continue to reduce GHG missions from new development. Additionally, it is assumed that the State measures would keep being



updated and reinforced to further reduce emissions. With these assumptions, Riverside County’s emissions would decrease to a level below the reduction target by 2050.” Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would ensure that the proposed Project is fully consistent with the Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019) by requiring the Project Applicant to demonstrate that implementing building permit applications have incorporated measures to achieve a minimum of 100 points pursuant to the CAP Update Screening Tables, and by requiring future that future building permit applications demonstrate that on site renewable energy production equal to at least 20% of the building’s energy demand has been accommodated on site pursuant to CAP measure R2-CE1. Thus, and pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d), because the Project would comply with Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019), and because the CAP Update qualifies as a “Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions,” it could be concluded that the Project’s GHG emissions would be reduced to less-than-significant levels pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b). However, the Project prior to mitigation would emit 33,130.16 MTCO₂e/yr of GHGs, which is more than 10 times the screening threshold identified by the CAP Update of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. Thus, although implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would serve to reduce the Project’s GHG emissions and would assist the County in meeting its GHG reduction targets through 2050, the Project’s level of GHG emissions following mitigation still would be substantial and still would have the potential to have a significant impact on the environment. Accordingly, and despite the Project’s compliance with the CAP Update, the Project’s GHG emissions conservatively are evaluated as a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not currently available.

Threshold b.: Less- Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Projects that garner at least 100 points through application of the CAP Update Screening Table measures are determined to be consistent with the reduction quantities anticipated in the County’s GHG Technical Report, and consequently would be consistent with the CAP Update. Pursuant to Mitigation Measure MM 4.8-1, the Project Applicant would be required to implement Screening Table Measures that would provide a minimum of 100 points pursuant to the CAP Update Screening Tables (Appendix D to the CAP Update). In addition, pursuant to Mitigation Measure MM 4.8-2, future building permit applications would be required to demonstrate that on site renewable energy production equal to at least 20% of the building’s energy demand has been accommodated on site as required by CAP measure R2-CE1. With implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2, the Project would be fully consistent with the 2019 CAP Update. The CAP Update evaluates and quantifies reductions out to Year 2030. The CAP Update states that “Through 2050, Riverside County would continue implementation of the Screening Tables. During this time, the reduction measures implemented through the Screening Tables would continue to reduce GHG missions from new development. Additionally, it is assumed that the State measures would keep being updated and reinforced to further reduce emissions. With these assumptions, Riverside County’s emissions would decrease to a level below the reduction target by 2050.” Thus, compliance with the CAP Update would serve to meet and support the reduction targets established Senate Bill 32 and the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan. As such, with implementation of the required mitigation, Project impacts due to a conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.



4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The information and analysis presented in this Subsection 4.9 is based in part on a technical study that was prepared to determine the presence or absence of hazardous materials on the Project site under existing conditions. This report was prepared by Nova Group (herein, “Nova”), is entitled, “Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Majestic Thousand Palms” (herein, “Phase I ESA”), is dated June 18, 2021, and is included as *Technical Appendix H* to this EIR (Nova, 2021). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources used in this analysis.

4.9.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Definition of Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste

For purposes of this EIR, the term “toxic substance” is defined as a substance which, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may present an unreasonable risk of injury to human health or the environment. Toxic substances include: chemical, biological, flammable, explosive, and radioactive substances.

“Hazardous material” is defined as a substance which, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may: 1) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, disposed of, or otherwise mismanaged; or 2) cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in irreversible or incapacitating illness.

Hazardous waste is defined in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, § 66261.3. The defining characteristics of hazardous waste are: ignitability (oxidizers, compressed gases, and extremely flammable liquids and solids), corrosivity (strong acids and bases), reactivity (explosives or generates toxic fumes when exposed to air or water), and toxicity (materials listed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA] as capable of inducing systemic damage to humans or animals).

Certain wastes are called “Listed Wastes” and are found in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, §§ 66261.30 through 66261.35. Wastes appear on the lists because of their known hazardous nature or because the processes that generate them are known to produce hazardous wastes (which are often complex mixtures).

A “Recognized Environmental Condition (REC)” means the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products on a property under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, groundwater, or surface water of the property. The term is not intended to include de minimis conditions that generally do not present a material risk of harm to public health or the environment and that generally would not be the subject of an enforcement action if brought to the attention of appropriate governmental agencies.

“Controlled Recognized Environmental Condition (CREC)” is defined as a REC resulting from a past release of hazardous substances or petroleum products that has been addressed to the satisfaction of the applicable



regulatory authority, with hazardous substances or petroleum products allowed to remain in place subject to the implementation of required controls.

“Historical Recognized Environmental Condition (HREC)” is defined as a past release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products that has occurred in connection with the property and has been addressed to the satisfaction of the applicable regulatory authority or meeting unrestricted use criteria established by a regulatory authority, without subjecting the property to any required controls.

B. Historical Review, Regulatory Review, and Field Reconnaissance

1. Historical Review

Based on a historical review conducted by Nova, no evidence was found indicating the Project site had been subject to past development. As such, the historical research did not identify prior uses that may have resulted in an RECs in connection with the Project site. Additionally, the historical research did not identify prior adjacent/adjoining property uses such that are expected to have resulted in RECs that could affect the Project site. Although the existing recycling facility to the north of the Project site has multiple listings in federal, State and local databases, none of the listings pertain to releases of hazardous materials or wastes. (Nova, 2021, pp. 16-17)

2. Regulatory Records Review

Nova Group researched federal, State, and local environmental records databases to identify properties with reported environmental issues. The records review identified one facility that appears to be mapped on the Project site by Environmental Risk Information Services (ERIS). This facility was registered as a sand and gravel quarry in 2002. Nova did not observe evidence of past quarrying operations on the Project site (i.e., changes in gradient or topography, residual infrastructure, changes in age/type of vegetation, etc.). Review of historical aerial imagery also did not show any substantial changes to the Project site from before or after 2002. The ERIS listing appears to be miss-plotted as there is no evidence of any past quarry activities on the Project site. Additionally, while several properties in the Project vicinity have been identified as containing potential RECs, based on a review of regulatory status conducted by Nova, a review of relative distance from the Project site, and/or due to topographic considerations, the identified facilities are not considered RECs that could adversely affect the Project site. (Nova, 2021, pp. 12-13)

3. Field Reconnaissance

Nova conducted a field reconnaissance of the Project site on June 16, 2021. Based on the field reconnaissance, Nova concluded the following (Nova, 2021, pp. 18-22):

- There is no evidence of past storage of hazardous substances or petroleum produces on site;
- There is no evidence of past management or disposal of hazardous substances or petroleum products on site;



- There is no evidence that the Project site contained operations or equipment/materials involving the use of hazardous substances or petroleum products;
- No drums were observed on site;
- Unidentified substance containers suspected of containing hazardous substances or petroleum products were not observed during the field reconnaissance;
- No evidence of aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) or underground storage tanks (USTs) were observed on site;
- No strong, pungent, or noxious odors were not noted at the time of the field reconnaissance;
- No evidence of sumps or catch basins was observed, and no pools of liquids/standing surface water containing liquid likely to be a hazardous substance or petroleum product were observed;
- No electrical or hydraulic equipment with the potential to contain PCBs was observed;
- No signs of dumping, filling, or other earthmoving activities were observed;
- No obvious indication of hazardous material or petroleum product or hazardous waste releases, such as stained areas or stressed vegetation, was observed during the field reconnaissance;
- No solid waste, pits, ponds, or lagoons were observed on site;
- No indication of industrial wastewater disposal or treatment systems were observed on site;
- No wells were observed on site;
- No septic systems were observed on site; and
- No evidence of on-Property landfilling was observed or reported during the Property reconnaissance.

Based on the results of the field reconnaissance, no RECs, CRECs, or HRECs were identified in association with the Project site.

4. Vapor Migration

Based on Nova's field reconnaissance, review of historical sources, and review of regulatory databases, no current or historical usage of chemicals of concern at the Project site or reported release or other indication of subsurface contamination from on-site sources was evident. Additionally, no release or material threat of a release to the subsurface from off-site sources was identified. As such, a vapor migration concern was not identified for the Project site during the course of the Phase I ESA (Nova, 2021, p. 14).

C. Airport Hazards

The Project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or within an airport land use plan. The closest airport to the Project site is the Palm Springs International Airport (PSIA), which is located approximately 5.2 miles west of the Project site. According to Map PS-1 of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) for the PSIA, the Project site is located outside of the compatibility zones for the



PSIA (ALUC, 2005, Map PS-1). Additionally, there are no private airports or heliports within two miles of the Project site (Google Earth, 2021).

4.9.2 APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to hazards and hazardous materials.

A. Hazardous Materials Regulations and Plans

1. Federal Regulations

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA)

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as CERCLA or Superfund, provides a Federal "Superfund" to clean up uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous-waste sites as well as accidents, spills, and other emergency releases of pollutants and contaminants into the environment. Through CERCLA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was given power to seek out those parties responsible for any release and assure their cooperation in the cleanup. EPA cleans up orphan sites when potentially responsible parties cannot be identified or located, or when they fail to act. Through various enforcement tools, EPA obtains private party cleanup through orders, consent decrees, and other small party settlements. EPA also recovers costs from financially viable individuals and companies once a response action has been completed. (EPA, 2023f)

EPA is authorized to implement the Act in all 50 states and U.S. territories. Superfund site identification, monitoring, and response activities in states are coordinated through the state environmental protection or waste management agencies. (EPA, 2023f)

The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986 reauthorized CERCLA to continue cleanup activities around the country. Several site-specific amendments, definitions clarifications, and technical requirements were added to the legislation, including additional enforcement authorities. Also, Title III of SARA authorized the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). (EPA, 2023f)

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) gives EPA the authority to control hazardous waste from the "cradle-to-grave." This includes the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. RCRA also set forth a framework for the management of non-hazardous solid wastes. The 1986 amendments to RCRA enabled EPA to address environmental problems that could result from underground tanks storing petroleum and other hazardous substances. (EPA, 2023g)

The Federal Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA) are the 1984 amendments to RCRA that focused on waste minimization and phasing out land disposal of hazardous waste as well as corrective action for releases. Some of the other mandates of this law include increased enforcement authority for EPA, more



stringent hazardous waste management standards, and a comprehensive underground storage tank program. (EPA, 2023g)

❑ **Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (HMTA)**

The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act of 1975 (HMTA) empowered the Secretary of Transportation to designate as hazardous material any "particular quantity or form" of a material that "may pose an unreasonable risk to health and safety or property." (OSHA, n.d.)

Hazardous materials regulations are subdivided by function into four basic areas:

- Procedures and/or Policies 49 CFR Parts 101, 106, and 107
- Material Designations 49 CFR Part 172
- Packaging Requirements 49 CFR Parts 173, 178, 179, and 180
- Operational Rules 49 CFR Parts 171, 173, 174, 175, 176, and 177 (OSHA, n.d.)

The HMTA is enforced by use of compliance orders [49 U.S.C. 1808(a)], civil penalties [49 U.S.C. 1809(b)], and injunctive relief (49 U.S.C. 1810). The HMTA (Section 112, 40 U.S.C. 1811) preempts state and local governmental requirements that are inconsistent with the statute, unless that requirement affords an equal or greater level of protection to the public than the HMTA requirement. (OSHA, n.d.)

❑ **Hazardous Materials Transportation Uniform Safety Act of 1990**

In 1990, Congress enacted the Hazardous Materials Transportation Uniform Safety Act (HMTUSA) to clarify the maze of conflicting state, local, and federal regulations. Like the HMTA, the HMTUSA requires the Secretary of Transportation to promulgate regulations for the safe transport of hazardous material in intrastate, interstate, and foreign commerce. The Secretary also retains authority to designate materials as hazardous when they pose unreasonable risks to health, safety, or property. (OSHA, n.d.)

The statute includes provisions to encourage uniformity among different state and local highway routing regulations, to develop criteria for the issuance of federal permits to motor carriers of hazardous materials, and to regulate the transport of radioactive materials. (OSHA, n.d.)

❑ **Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)**

Congress passed the Occupational and Safety Health Act (OSHA) to ensure worker and workplace safety. Their goal was to make sure employers provide their workers a place of employment free from recognized hazards to safety and health, such as exposure to toxic chemicals, excessive noise levels, mechanical dangers, heat or cold stress, or unsanitary conditions. (EPA, 2023c)

In order to establish standards for workplace health and safety, the Act also created the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) as the research institution for OSHA. OSHA is a division of the U.S. Department of Labor that oversees the administration of the Act and enforces standards in all 50 states. (EPA, 2023c)



☐ Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 provides EPA with authority to require reporting, record-keeping and testing requirements, and restrictions relating to chemical substances and/or mixtures. Certain substances are generally excluded from TSCA, including, among others, food, drugs, cosmetics, and pesticides. TSCA addresses the production, importation, use, and disposal of specific chemicals including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), asbestos, radon, and lead-based paint. (EPA, 2023h)

Various sections of TSCA provide authority to:

- Require, under Section 5, pre-manufacture notification for "new chemical substances" before manufacture
- Require, under Section 4, testing of chemicals by manufacturers, importers, and processors where risks or exposures of concern are found
- Issue Significant New Use Rules (SNURs), under Section 5, when it identifies a "significant new use" that could result in exposures to, or releases of, a substance of concern.
- Maintain the TSCA Inventory, under Section 8, which contains more than 83,000 chemicals. As new chemicals are commercially manufactured or imported, they are placed on the list.
- Require those importing or exporting chemicals, under Sections 12(b) and 13, to comply with certification reporting and/or other requirements.
- Require, under Section 8, reporting and record-keeping by persons who manufacture, import, process, and/or distribute chemical substances in commerce.
- Require, under Section 8(e), that any person who manufactures (including imports), processes, or distributes in commerce a chemical substance or mixture and who obtains information which reasonably supports the conclusion that such substance or mixture presents a substantial risk of injury to health or the environment to immediately inform EPA, except where EPA has been adequately informed of such information. EPA screens all TSCA b§8(e) submissions as well as voluntary "For Your Information" (FYI) submissions. The latter are not required by law, but are submitted by industry and public interest groups for a variety of reasons. (EPA, 2023h)

2. *State Regulations*

☐ Cal/OSHA and the California State Plan

Under an agreement with OSHA, since 1973 California has operated an occupational safety and health program in accordance with Section 18 of the federal OSHA. The State of California's Department of Industrial Relations administers the California Occupational Safety and Health Program, commonly referred to as Cal/OSHA. The State of California's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) is the principal agency that oversees plan enforcement and consultation. In addition, the California State program has an independent Standards Board responsible for promulgating State safety and health standards, and reviewing variances. It also has an Appeals Board to adjudicate contested citations and the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement to investigate complaints of discriminatory retaliation in the workplace. (OSHA, n.d.)



Pursuant to 29 CFR 1952.172, the California State Plan applies to all public and private sector places of employment in the state, with the exception of federal employees, the United States Postal Service, private sector employers on Native American lands, maritime activities on the navigable waterways of the United States, private contractors working on land designated as exclusively under federal jurisdiction and employers that require federal security clearances. Cal/OSHA is the only agency in the state authorized to adopt, amend, or repeal occupational safety and health standards or orders. In addition, the Standards Board maintains standards for certain things not covered by federal standards or enforcement, including: elevators, aerial passenger tramways, amusement rides, pressure vessels and mine safety training. The Cal/OSHA enforcement unit conducts inspections of California workplaces in response to a report of an industrial accident, a complaint about an occupational safety and health hazard, or as part of an inspection program targeting industries with high rates of occupational hazards, fatalities, injuries or illnesses. (OSHA, n.d.)

California Hazardous Waste Control Law

The Hazardous Waste Control Law (HWCL) (Health and Safety Code [HSC], Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Section 25100, et seq.) is the primary hazardous waste statute in California. The HWCL implements RCRA as a “cradle-to-grave” waste management system in the state. It specifies that generators have the primary duty to determine whether their wastes are hazardous and to ensure its proper management. The HWCL also establishes criteria for the reuse and recycling of hazardous wastes used or reuse as raw materials. The HWCL exceeds federal requirements by mandating source reduction planning and broadening requirements for permitting facilities that treat hazardous waste. It also regulates a number of waste types and waste management activities not covered by federal law (RCRA). (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

California Code of Regulations (CCR), Titles 22 and 26

A variety of California Code of Regulation (CCR) titles address regulations and requirements for generators of hazardous waste. Title 22 contains detailed compliance requirements for hazardous waste generators, transporters, and facilities for treatment, storage, and disposal. Because California is a fully-authorized state according to RCRA, most regulations (i.e., 40 CFR 260, et seq.) have been duplicated and integrated into Title 22. However, because the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) regulates hazardous waste more stringently than the EPA, the integration of state and federal hazardous waste regulations that make up Title 22 does not contain as many exemptions or exclusions as does 40 CFR 260. As with the HSC, Title 22 also regulates a wider range of waste types and waste management activities than does RCRA. To aid the regulated community, California has compiled hazardous materials, waste, and toxics-related regulations from CCR, Titles 3, 8, 13, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24 and 27 into one consolidated listing: CCR Title 26 (Toxics). However, the hazardous waste regulations are still commonly referred to collectively as “Title 22.” (DTSC, n.d.; DTSC, 2019)

Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act

Proposition 65, officially known as the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.6, Section 25249.5, et seq), protects the state’s drinking water sources from being contaminated with chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm, and



requires businesses to inform Californians about exposures to such chemicals. Proposition 65 requires the state to maintain and update a list of chemicals known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

□ **California Water Code**

The California Water Code is the principal state law regulating water quality in California. Water quality provisions must be complied with as contained in numerous code sections including: 1) the Health and Safety Code for the protection of ground and surface waters from hazardous waste and other toxic substances; 2) the Fish and Game Code for the prevention of unauthorized diversions of any surface water and discharge of any substance that may be deleterious to fish, plant, animal, or bird life; 3) the Harbors and Navigation Code for the prevention of the unauthorized discharge of waste from vessels into surface waters; and 4) the Food and Agriculture Code for the protection of groundwater which may be used for drinking water supplies. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), through provisions of the Fish & Game Code (§§ 1601 - 1603) is empowered to issue agreements for any alteration of a river, stream, or lake where fish or wildlife resources may be adversely affected. CDFW regulates wetland areas only to the extent that those wetlands are part of a river, stream, or lake as defined by CDFW. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Surface water quality is the responsibility of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), water supply and wastewater treatment agencies, and city and county governments. The principal means of enforcement by the RWQCB is through the development, adoption, and issuance of water discharge permits. RWQCB basin plans establish water quality objectives that are defined as the limits or levels of water quality constituents or characteristics for the reasonable protection of beneficial uses of water. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

□ **Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program**

California's Unified Program, overseen but the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), protect Californians from hazardous waste and hazardous materials by ensuring local regulatory agencies consistently apply statewide standards when they issue permits, conduct inspections, and engage in enforcement activities. The Unified Program is a consolidation of multiple environmental and emergency management programs, including the following:

- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act (APSA) Program;
- Area Plans for Hazardous Materials Emergencies;
- California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program;
- Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories (Business Plans);
- Hazardous Materials Management Plan (HMMP) and Hazardous Materials Inventory Statements (HMIS) (California Code)
- Hazardous Waste Generator and Onsite Hazardous Waste Treatment (tiered permitting) Programs; and
- Underground Storage Tank Program.



State agency partners involved in the implementation of the Unified Program are responsible for setting program element standards, working with CalEPA to ensure program consistency, and providing technical assistance to the California Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs) and Program Agencies (PAs). The state agencies involved with the Unified Program include CalEPA, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshall (CAL FIRE-OSFM), and the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board). (CalEPA, 2021)

❑ **Uniform Fire Code**

The Uniform Fire Code, Article 80 (Section 80.103 of the Uniform Fire Code as adopted by the State Fire Marshal pursuant to HSC Section 13143.9), includes specific requirements for the safe storage and handling of hazardous materials. These requirements are intended to reduce the potential for a release of hazardous materials and for mixing of incompatible chemicals, and specify the following specific design features to reduce the potential for a release of hazardous materials that could affect public health or the environment:

- Separation of incompatible materials with a noncombustible partition;
- Spill control in all storage, handling, and dispensing areas; and
- Separate secondary containment for each chemical storage system. The secondary containment must hold the entire contents of the tank, plus the volume of water needed to supply the fire suppression system for a period of 20 minutes in the event of catastrophic spill. (FindLaw, 2019a)

❑ **License to Transport Hazardous Materials**

Caltrans regulates hazardous materials transportation on all interstate roads (California Vehicle Code, Section 32000.5, et seq). Within California, the State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing federal and State regulations and for responding to transportation emergencies are the California Highway Patrol and Caltrans. Together, federal and State agencies determine driver-training requirements, load labeling procedures, and container specifications for vehicles transporting hazardous materials. (FindLaw, 2019b)

❑ **California Hazardous Materials Release Response Plan and Inventory Law of 1985**

The Business Plan Act requires preparation of Hazardous Materials Business Plans and disclosure of hazardous materials inventories, including an inventory of hazardous materials handled, plans showing where hazardous materials are stored, an emergency response plan, and provisions for employee training in safety and emergency response procedures for businesses that handle, store, or transport hazardous materials in amounts exceeding specified minimums (California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Article 1). Statewide, DTSC has primary regulatory responsibility for management of hazardous materials, with delegation of authority to local jurisdictions that enter into agreements with the State. Local agencies are responsible for administering these regulations.

Several state agencies regulate the transportation and use of hazardous materials to minimize potential risks to public health and safety, including CalEPA and the California Emergency Management Agency. The



California Highway Patrol and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) enforce regulations specifically related to the transport of hazardous materials. Together, these agencies determine container types used and license hazardous waste haulers for hazardous waste transportation on public roadways. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Senate Bill 1137 (SB 1137)

SB 1137 is intended to protect the public health of California’s communities by creating a minimum health and safety distance of 3,200-feet between sensitive receptors, such as a residence, school, childcare facility, playground, hospital, or nursing home and an oil and gas production well. Specifically, the bill prohibits the California Geological Energy Management Division (CalGEM) from approving the drilling, re-drilling, or significant alteration of any oil and gas well within this “health protection zone.” SB 1137 also requires oil and gas facility operators in these protection zones to implement strict pollution controls, and to develop response plans to protect the health of Californians currently living within 3,200 feet of an existing oil well. SB 1137 also requires operators of wells/facilities to provide an individual indemnity bond sufficient to pay the full cost of properly plugging and abandoning the well and decommissioning the facility in order to prevent operators from failing to properly decommission.

California Public Utilities Commission General Order 95: Rules for Overhead Electric Line Construction

The California Public Utilities Commission’s (CPUC’s) General Order (G.O.) 95 specifies requirements for overhead transmission line design, construction, and maintenance, including a number of requirements to avoid or minimize potential safety hazards. These requirements include standards related to vegetation management and maintenance of minimum vegetation clearances from high-voltage lines to minimize potential fire hazard. (CPUC, n.d.)

Fire Prevention Standards for Electric Utilities

The Fire Prevention Standards for Electric Utilities (14 CCR 1250-1258) provide definitions, maps, specifications, and clearance standards for projects under the jurisdiction of PRC Sections 4292 and 4293 in State Fire Responsibility Areas (SRAs).

B. Airport and Aircraft Hazards Regulations and Plans

1. State Regulations

State Aeronautics Act

The State Aeronautics Commission Act of 1947 created the Division of Aeronautics (“Division”), and was later amended by statute to read the State Aeronautics Act (Aeronautics Act) in 1961. The Aeronautics Act is divided into six chapters, the first five of which have not received significant cleanup legislation since its enabling in 1947. The first chapter begins with general provisions and definitions and explains the Legislature’s intent for a State aviation program. Chapter two explains Caltrans’ role in administering the Division, and explains the role of the California Transportation Commission (CTC). Chapter three includes



many of the safety considerations from Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations that help keep airports and the surrounding communities safe and compatible with flight operations. Chapter four deals with airport and heliport permitting, air navigation facilities, noise guidelines, funding, and importantly, the formation and authority of Airport Land Use Commissions (ALUC). Chapter five covers the investigations and hearings on matters covered in the Aeronautics Act. Finally, Chapter six introduces airport planning and specifically introduces the intent of the CASP and how it can be used to support California aviation. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

California Environmental Quality Act

The operation of airports and aircraft is the responsibility of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), but the requirement to document potential hazards related to airports and air activities when a new project is proposed is contained in CEQA, specifically PRC Section 21096, which states: (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

“(a) If a lead agency prepares an environmental impact report for a project situated within airport land use compatibility plan boundaries, or, if an airport land use compatibility plan has not been adopted, for a project within two nautical miles of a public airport or public use airport, the Airport Land Use Planning Handbook published by the Division of Aeronautics of the Department of Transportation, in compliance with section 21674.5 of the Public Utilities Code and other documents, shall be utilized as technical resources to assist in the preparation of the environmental impact report as the report relates to airport-related safety hazards and noise problems.

(b) A lead agency shall not adopt a negative declaration for a project described in subdivision (a) unless the lead agency considers whether the project will result in a safety hazard or noise problem for persons using the airport or for persons residing or working in the project area.”

2. IID Regulations and Requirements

Substation Design Requirements

New substations are required to be constructed pursuant to IID’s Substation Site Requirements. The requirements address property conditions, fencing, landscaping, access, access gates, and security (IID, 2020)

IID Regulation No. 23, Clearance Requirements for Power Line Corridors

IID’s Regulation No. 23 addresses clearance requirements around power lines. No person is allowed to cause interference with or pose a threat to the reliability of IID’s transmission or distribution lines or create a safety hazard to the public by encroaching upon IID’s rights-of-way in violation of the standards set forth in Regulation No. 23. Within IID rights-of-way, it is prohibited to build or expand structures, modify power line ground clearances, dig or otherwise undermine power line structures, modify drainage or protection berms, stack material, plant trees or other vegetation that would grow closer than minimum required clearances, ignite fires, and other similar activities. (IID, Regulation No. 23)



IID Regulation No. 26, Requirements for Embellishment of Distribution Power Equipment

IID's Regulation No. 26 requires that work on high voltage power equipment be performed only by personnel authorized by IID. Also, work practices are required to meet the requirements of IID's Regulation No. 26 and applicable federal, state, and local jurisdiction, regulations, ordinances, and industry best practices such as, National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), California Title 8 (Cal OSHA), International Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), CPUC General Order 95 and 128, and the IID Developers Guide. (IID, Regulation No. 26)

3. Local Plans and Regulations

Emergency Response I-10 Closure Plan

The Coachella Association of Governments (CVAG) prepared an emergency response plan for the scenario of Interstate 10 (I-10) being completely closed in one or both of the eastbound or westbound directions. The Plan describes the participating entities and dispatches for CalFire, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans District 8, the California Office of Emergency Services, the Riverside Office of Emergency Services, and Riverside County Sheriff's Department, and describes evacuation measures as that include turning traffic around at ramps, median turnarounds, and diverting traffic to southbound arterials where vehicles can use one or more east-west arterials. In extreme cases, CHP may request that median barriers be removed by any means feasible to facilitate turnarounds between ramps west of Dillon Road, in close coordination with Caltrans. (CVAG, 2008)

Riverside County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

In April 2023 the County of Riverside Emergency Management Department (EMD) published a Multi-Jurisdictional LHMP for the purposes of identifying the County's hazards, reviewing and assessing past disaster occurrences, estimating the probability of future occurrences, and setting goals to reduce or eliminate potential risks to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards. The LHMP addresses a variety of hazard types including but not limited to wildland fire, electrical outages, extreme weather, pipeline disruptions, and hazardous materials incidents. (Riverside EMD, 2023)

Riverside County Ordinance No. 615

Riverside County Ordinance No. 615 (Hazardous Waste Generation, Storage, Handling and Disposal) was promulgated for the purpose of monitoring establishments where hazardous waste is generated, stored, handled, disposed, treated or recycled and to regulate the issuance of permits and the activities of establishments where hazardous waste is generated. This ordinance designates RCDEH to enforce the provisions of HSC Division 20, Chapter 6.5, § 25100, et seq., and the "Environmental Health Standards for the Management of Hazardous Waste," as specified in CCR Title 22, Division 4.5, pertaining to the generation, storage, handling, disposal, treatment and recycling of hazardous waste. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-57)



Riverside County Ordinance No. 617

Riverside County Ordinance No. 617 (Underground Storage Tanks Containing Hazardous Substances) implements § 25280 et seq. of the California HSC to ensure that hazardous substances stored in underground tanks are done so safely and in a manner that prevents contamination. It does so by establishing appropriate construction standards for new underground storage tanks and requiring maintenance, monitoring and inspection of existing tanks. The ordinance also establishes a Local Oversight Program for “unauthorized releases of petroleum and petroleum-related materials from leaking underground tanks systems which require remedial action...to prevent long-term threats to the public health, water quality and environment.” The RCDEH manages these programs. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-57)

Riverside County Ordinance No. 651

Riverside County Ordinance No. 651 (Disclosure of Hazardous Materials and Business Emergency Plans) implements the State of California’s “Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Law” (HSC, Chapter 6.95), to establish a system for permitting businesses handling hazardous materials. It serves to enforce minimum material standards and designates the Riverside County Community Health Agency as the agency responsible for administering and enforcing HSC Chapter 6.95. The RCDEH may require compliance with the applicable articles of the most-current Fire Codes. Pursuant to HSC § 25500, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors may also impose additional, more stringent requirements on businesses that handle hazardous materials. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-57)

4.9.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section IX of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects due to hazards and hazardous materials, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate a project’s impacts due to hazards and hazardous materials (OPR, 2018a).

- *Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*
- *Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*
- *Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*
- *Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?*
- *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?*



- *Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*
- *Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?*

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, are derived from Section IX of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact from hazards and hazardous materials if construction and/or operation of the Project would:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;*
- Create a significant hazard to the public, or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;*
- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan;*
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;*
- Be located on a site, which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public, or the environment;*
- Result in an inconsistency with an Airport Master Plan;*
- Require review by the Airport Land Use Commission;*
- For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two (2) miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area; or*
- For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, or heliport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts due to hazards and hazardous materials. It should be noted that the issue of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires is addressed separately in EIR Subsection 4.21, *Wildfire*.



4.9.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: *Would the Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

Threshold b.: *Would the Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

Implementation of the Project would result in the construction and long-term operation of a warehouse development supported by a new IID electric substation. The analysis below evaluates the potential for the Project to result in a substantial hazard to people or the environment due to existing site conditions, construction activities, and long-term operation.

Impact Analysis for Existing Site Conditions

As indicated above under subsection 4.9.1.B, based on a review of historical documents and regulatory records, and based on the site reconnaissance, Nova concluded that there are no indications of RECs, CRECs, or HRECs in association with the Project site. Based on these findings, there are no conditions associated with the Project site's existing condition or surroundings that would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, disposal, or accidental release of hazardous materials. Accordingly, no impact would occur associated with the Project site's existing conditions.

Impact Analysis for Temporary Construction-Related Activities

Heavy equipment (e.g., dozers, excavators, tractors) would be operated on the Project site and for off-site infrastructure improvements during construction. This heavy equipment likely would be fueled and maintained by petroleum-based substances such as diesel fuel, gasoline, oil, and hydraulic fluid, which are considered hazardous if improperly stored or handled. In addition, materials such as paints, adhesives, solvents, and other substances typically used in construction would be used during construction. Improper use, storage, or transportation of hazardous materials can result in accidental releases or spills, potentially posing health risks to workers, the public, and the environment. This is a standard risk on all construction sites, and there would be no greater risk for improper handling, transportation, or spills associated with the Project than would occur on any other similar construction site. Construction contractors would be required to comply with all applicable federal, State, and local laws and regulations regarding the transport, use, and storage of hazardous construction-related materials, including but not limited to requirements imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DTSC, as well as the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) pertaining to water quality as discussed in EIR Subsection 4.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*. With mandatory compliance with applicable hazardous materials regulations, the Project would not create significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during the construction phase. A less-than-significant impact would occur.

Impact Analysis for Long-Term Operation

The future occupants of the proposed warehouse building are not yet known. However, the future building occupant(s) likely will include general high cube warehousing and/or similar uses and it is possible that



hazardous materials could be used during the course of a future building user's daily operations. State and federal Community-Right-to-Know laws allow public access to information about the amounts and types of chemicals in use at local businesses.

Regarding the proposed IID substation, operation of the substation would involve infrequent use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel, paints, solvents, transformer oil, or similar substances). However, the infrequent use of these materials could still potentially create a significant hazard for workers, the public, or environment if they were to spill or otherwise be accidentally released. Operation and maintenance of the new power lines would require minimal, if any, use of hazardous materials.

Laws also are in place that require businesses to plan and prepare for possible chemical emergencies. Any business that occupies the proposed building on the Project site and that handles hazardous materials (as defined in Section 25500 of California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95), as well as IID for operation of the substation, would require a permit from the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (RCDEH) in order to register the business as a hazardous materials handler. Such businesses also are required to comply with California's Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Law, which requires immediate reporting to Riverside County Fire Department and the State Office of Emergency Services regarding any release or threatened release of a hazardous material, regardless of the amount handled by the business. In addition, any business handling at any one time, greater than 500 pounds of solid, 55 gallons of liquid, or 200 cubic feet of gaseous hazardous material, is required, under Assembly Bill 2185 (AB 2185), to file a Hazardous Materials Business Emergency Plan (HMBEP). A HMBEP is a written set of procedures and information created to help minimize the effects and extent of a release or threatened release of a hazardous material. The intent of the HMBEP is to satisfy federal and State Community Right-To-Know laws and to provide detailed information for use by emergency responders.

If storage or use of hazardous materials occur on the Project site, the business owners and operators would be required to comply with all applicable federal, State, and local regulations to ensure proper use, storage, use, emission, and disposal of hazardous substances (as described above). With mandatory regulatory compliance, the Project is not expected to pose a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, storage, emission, or disposal of hazardous materials, nor would the Project increase the potential for accident conditions which could result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. In addition, the Project would be required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 651.5, which establishes specific requirements for the storage of hazardous materials and requirements for reporting and permitting the use, handling, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials.

With mandatory regulatory compliance, along with mandatory compliance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 651.5, potential hazardous materials impacts associated with long-term operation of the Project are determined to be less than significant and mitigation is not required.



Threshold c.: Would the Project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?

The Project site does not contain any emergency facilities nor does it serve as an emergency evacuation route. There are no emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans in effect in the immediate Project area. However, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVWD) has an Emergency Response I-10 Closure Plan to address the situation of I-10 being closed in one or both directions (CVAG, 2008). In this situation, Varner Road south of the Project site is identified as an alternative route (CVAG, 2008, p. 7).

During construction and long-term operation of the Project, adequate emergency access for emergency vehicles would be required to be maintained along public streets that abut the Project site. Furthermore, improvements planned as part of the Project are not anticipated to adversely affect traffic operations in the local area, including along nearby segments of Rio del Sol or any of the off-site areas where power poles would be installed. During the Project's construction, a traffic control plan would be implemented as a condition of County approval to ensure that adequate traffic flow is maintained on public roadways, including for emergency vehicles. As part of the County's discretionary review process, Riverside County reviewed the Project's application materials to ensure that appropriate emergency ingress and egress would be available to and from the Project site and that circulation on the Project site was adequate for emergency vehicles. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan, and no impact would occur.

Threshold d.: Would the Project emit hazardous emissions, or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

There are no lands within 0.25-mile of the Project site that are planned for future development with schools. The nearest school to the Project site is the Della S. Lindley Elementary School, located at 31495 Robert Road, approximately 0.6-mile south of the Project site. Installation of off-site IID power pole and line infrastructure has the potential to occur within 0.25-mile of Della S. Lindley Elementary School depending on the ultimate selection of power pole placement by IID. The installation of the electric utility infrastructure may involve short-term use of hazardous materials during construction (for approximately 4 days at each pole location) but as described above under the analysis for Thresholds a. and b., the use of and transport of hazardous substances or materials during construction would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations that would preclude substantial public safety hazards. No hazardous materials would be used for periodic maintenance of the power poles. Accordingly, although minor amounts of hazardous materials may be used during IID's power pole installation process, compliance with regulatory requirements would preclude the Project from emitting hazardous emissions, or handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances in a manner that would adversely affect school students or visitors, and impacts therefore would be less than significant.



Threshold e.: Would the Project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

The Phase I ESA prepared for the Project site (*Technical Appendix H*) included a review of regulatory databases, and determined that the Project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (Nova, 2021, pp. 9-17). The Project's off-site infrastructure alignments also were researched and also are not on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (Envirostor Database, 2023). As such, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment due to the Project site's inclusion on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, and no impact would occur.

Threshold f.: Would the Project result in an inconsistency with an Airport Master Plan?

Threshold g.: Would the Project require review by the Airport Land Use Commission?

Threshold h.: For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

The Project site and the Project's off-site improvement areas are not located within the boundaries of any Airport Master Plans, and no impact due to an inconsistency with an Airport Master Plan would occur. As previously indicated, the closest public airport is the PSIA, which is located roughly 5.2 miles west of the Project site. According to Map PS-1 of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Policy Document, the Project site is located outside of the compatibility zones for the PSIA, indicating that the Project site is not subject to airport-related hazards associated with this facility. (ALUC, 2005) The Project site also is not located within the Airport Influence Area (AIA) or compatibility zones for any other airports. As such, the Project would not require review by the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). Additionally, due to the distance between the Project site and the PSIA, the Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area. Accordingly, impacts due to public airport-related hazards would be less than significant.

Threshold i.: For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, or heliport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

There are no private airstrips or heliports within a 10-mile radius of the Project site, and the Project does not include any airport-related components (Google Earth, 2021). Accordingly, the Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area due to private airstrips or heliports, and no impact would occur.

4.9.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

Because the issue of hazards and hazardous materials tend to be site-specific in nature, the cumulative study area includes existing and planned developments within a one-mile radius of each site. A one-mile radius is



appropriate because that is the standard distance used in regulatory database searches of properties that may generate or store toxic materials.

As discussed under the analysis of Thresholds a. and b., under existing conditions the Project site does not contain any RECs, CRECs, or HRECs that could create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. There are no conditions associated with the Project's construction or operations that would result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, or conditions that could create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts would be less than significant.

The areas to be physically impacted by the Project not contain any emergency facilities nor would the Project impact an emergency evacuation route. Other cumulative developments would be reviewed by the County of Riverside to ensure no interference with emergency access and evacuation routes would occur. Accordingly, the Project has no potential to result in cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with emergency evacuation plans or evacuation routes, and impacts would be less than significant.

The Project site is located approximately 0.6-mile from the nearest school, but proposed IID power poles and lines may occur within 0.25-mile of a school depending on IID selected pole locations. As discussed under Threshold d., the use of and transport of hazardous substances or materials associated with the Project's construction and long-term operational activities would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations that would preclude substantial public safety hazards. As such, cumulatively-considerable hazardous materials impacts to nearby schools would be less than significant.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold e., the Project site and associated off-site infrastructure alignments are not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

The Project site is located outside of the compatibility zones for the PSIA, indicating that the Project site is not subject to airport-related hazards and has no potential to conflict with an Airport Master Plan. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts due to an inconsistency with an Airport Master Plan would not occur. Additionally, impacts due to a conflict with an ALUCP would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

There are no private airports or heliports within a 10-mile radius of the Project site; thus, cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

4.9.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Thresholds a. and b.: Less-than-Significant Impact. There are known hazardous materials located within areas that would be physically impacted by the Project. During Project construction and operation, mandatory compliance with federal, State, and local regulations would ensure that the Project as proposed would not



create a significant hazard to the public or environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Threshold c: No Impact. The Project would not impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No emergency facilities exist on the Project site or in the Project's off-site infrastructure alignments, and the site does not serve as an emergency evacuation route. Thus, no impact would occur.

Threshold d: Less-than-Significant Impact. The nearest school to the Project site is the Della S. Lindley Elementary School, located approximately 0.6-mile south of the Project site but within 0.25-mile of potential IID power pole and utility line installation. With mandatory regulatory compliance, the Project would not emit hazardous emissions, or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of the school, and no impact would occur.

Threshold e: No Impact. Areas that would be physically impacted by the Project are not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. As such, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment due to the Project site's inclusion on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, and no impact would occur.

Thresholds f., g., and h.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or within an airport land use plan, and there are no components of the proposed Project that would affect airport operations. The closest airport is the PSIA located roughly 5.2 miles west of the Project site. The Project site is located outside of the compatibility zones for the PSIA, indicating that the Project site is not subject to airport-related hazards. Therefore, the Project would not result in an inconsistency with an Airport Master Plan, would not require review by the Airport Land Use Commission, and would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area. Impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold i: No Impact. There are no active private airstrips or heliports within a 10-mile radius of the Project site. Accordingly, the Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area due to private airstrips or heliports, and no impact would occur.

4.9.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude hazards and hazardous materials impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- All future businesses operating on the Project site, as well as IID for operation of the proposed substation, would be subject to compliance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 651.1, which sets



forth requirements for handling hazardous materials, requires a permit for handling certain types and quantities of hazardous materials, requires businesses to report their hazardous materials inventory, identifies different classifications of hazardous materials handlers, and requires reporting of spills or releases or threatened releases of a hazardous material to the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) and to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

- All future contracts with construction contractors shall comply with all applicable regulations and requirements promulgated by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
- Project site occupants shall comply with Title 22, Division 4.5 of the California Code of Regulations, which requires residents and employees to dispose of household hazardous waste, including pesticides, batteries, old paint, solvents, used oil, antifreeze, and other chemicals, at a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.
- Project site occupants shall comply with Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 11 of the California Code of Regulations which requires fluorescent lamps, batteries, and mercury thermostats be recycled or taken to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.

Mitigation

The Project would result in less-than-significant hazards and hazardous materials impacts; therefore, mitigation measures are not required.



4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The information and analysis presented in this Subsection is based in part on two technical studies that were prepared for the Project by PBLA Engineering, Inc. (herein, “PBLA”). The first report addresses hydrology and drainage, is entitled, “Preliminary Drainage Study, Thousand Palms, Building 1,” is dated October 2023, and is included as *Technical Appendix I2* to this EIR (PBLA, 2023a). The second report addresses water quality is entitled, “Preliminary Water Quality Management Plan for Thousand Palms – Building 1” (herein, “WQMP”), is dated January 2023, and is included as *Technical Appendix II* to this EIR (PBLA, 2023b). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources.

4.10.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Regional Hydrology

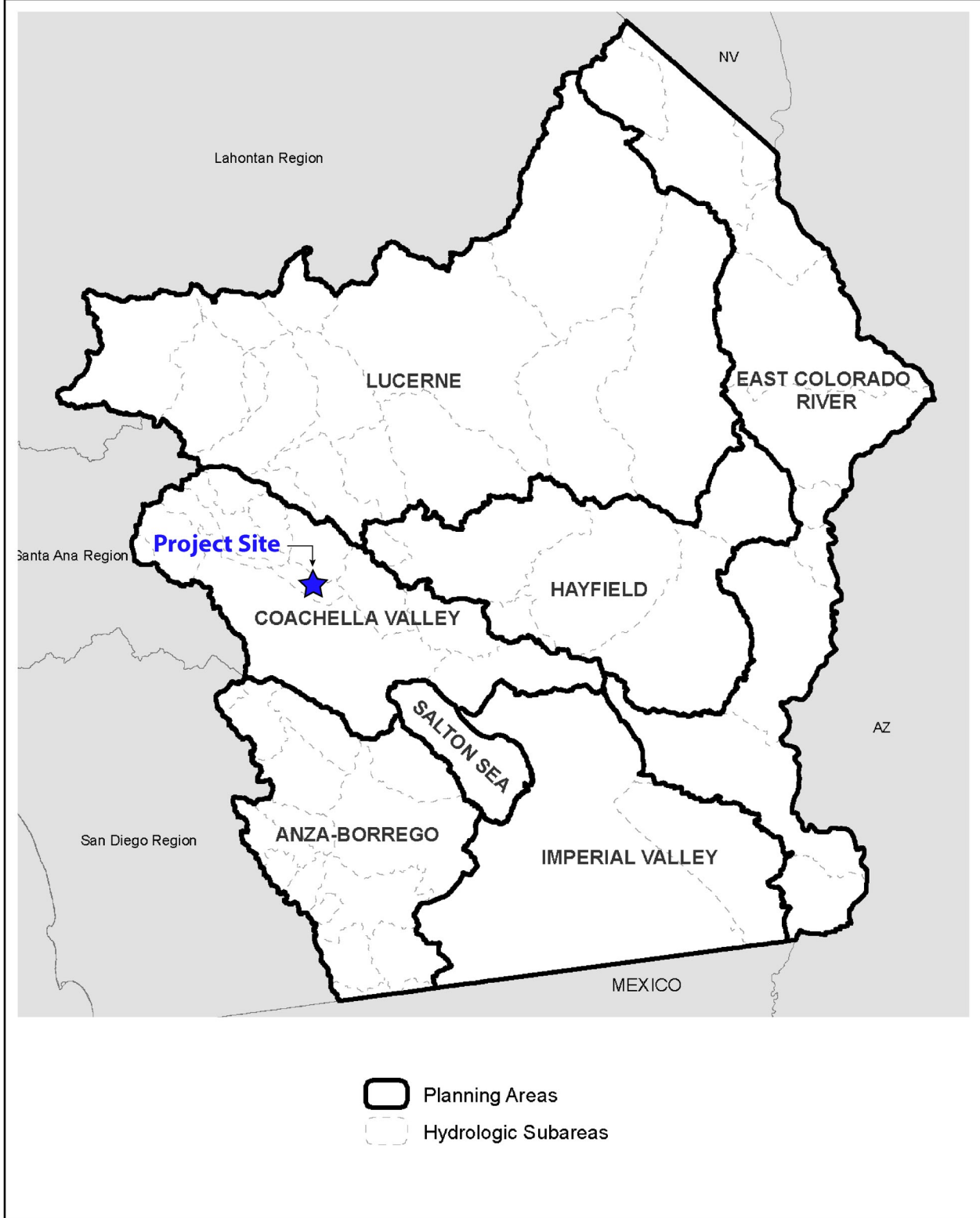
The Project site is located within the Whitewater Hydrologic Unit (HU) of the Coachella Valley Planning Area (Planning Area) of the Colorado River Basin Region (Region). The various Planning Areas within the Region and the Project site’s location relative thereto are presented on Figure 4.10-1, *Colorado River Basin Planning Areas*. As shown, the Coachella Valley Planning Area lies almost entirely in Riverside County and covers 1,920 square miles in the west central portion of the Region. The San Bernardino Mountains and the Little San Bernardino Mountains form the northern boundary of the Planning Area, while the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains and the Salton Sea shoreline form the western and southern boundaries, respectively. (RWQCB, 2019, p. 1-12)

Average annual precipitation in the Planning Area ranges from less than three inches in the valleys to 40 inches in the San Bernardino Mountains. Seasonal snows fall on the higher elevations in the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains. In the valleys, precipitation from summer thunderstorms often exceeds that of winter. Runoff resulting from rains and snowmelt at the higher elevations is the major source of groundwater replenishment. Perennial streams include the upper reaches of the San Gorgonio and Whitewater Rivers, and Palm Canyon, Tahquitz, Snow, Deep Canyon, Chino, and Andreas Creeks. (RWQCB, 2019, p. 1-12)

The Whitewater River is the major drainage course in the Planning Area. There is perennial flow in the mountains, but because of diversions and percolation into the basin, the River becomes dry further downstream. The constructed downstream extension of the River channel, known as the Coachella Valley Storm Water Channel, serves as a drainage way for irrigation return flows, treated community wastewater, and storm runoff. There is one relatively large surface water impoundment. Lake Cahuilla, at the terminus of the Coachella Canal, serves as a storage reservoir to regulate irrigation water demands, and also is used for recreational purposes. (RWQCB, 2019, p. 1-12)

B. Site Hydrology

Under existing conditions, the Project site is vacant and unimproved with exception of the improved portions of Rio Del Sol located along the western site boundary. The natural drainage pattern flows north to south between 2.5% and 3.5%. The Project site receives run-on sheet flow drainage on the eastern half of the site;



Source(s): California Regional Water Quality Control Board (01-08-2019)

Figure 4.10-1



Not to Scale



Colorado River Basin Planning Areas



however, the western half does not due to the adjacent property development to the north as organics materials recycling facility. The measured infiltration rate on the Project site is estimated at 9.5 inches per hour (in/hr), indicating that a majority of the runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site infiltrates into the groundwater table, with runoff discharging from the Project site only during unusually high periods of precipitation. Ultimately, all runoff in the Project area discharges into the Whitewater River, the nearest segment of which occurs approximately 4.5 miles southwest of the Project site in Cathedral City. (PBLA, 2023a, pp. 1, 3; Google Earth, 2021)

C. Flood Hazards

According to mapping information available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the Project area (FIRM Map No. 06065C1585G), the Project site is located within Flood Zone AO, which indicates that the Project site is subject to “[f]lood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain),” although the average depth of flooding is undetermined (FEMA, 2008). Additionally, according to Riverside County GIS, the majority of the Project site is identified within “Areas of Flooding Sensitivity” (RCIT, n.d.)

D. Water Quality

The Project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). As indicated in the Project’s WQMP (*Technical Appendix II*), the only receiving water for the Project site is the Whitewater River. The Whitewater River is not listed as “impaired” in accordance with the Clean Water Act (CWA) 303(d) list regulations. (PBLA, 2023b, p. 1-6)

E. Groundwater

1. Groundwater Overview

In the Coachella Valley Planning Area, groundwater generally is unconfined except in the lower areas of the Coachella Valley. A clay aquitard, a result of past sedimentation in the old lake bed, extends from the Salton Sea to some distance west of Indio, overlying the domestic-use aquifers. The clay layer underlies lenses of permeable sediments and perched groundwaters which are replenished by percolating irrigation water. The planning area is faulted extensively, altering groundwater movement. The Mission Creek, Banning, and San Andreas Faults form effective barriers to groundwater movement. The Indio Hills, Garnet Hills, and Mecca Faults form partial barriers. (RWQCB, 2019, p. 1-12)

2. Groundwater Replenishment

The Coachella Valley’s annual average of 3 inches of rain along with snowmelt from surrounding mountains is not nearly enough to naturally replenish what is pumped from the local groundwater basin to meet water demands. Consequently, the Coachella Valley groundwater basin was in overdraft for many years, as more water was pumped out from the aquifer than was percolated back in. (CVWD, n.d.) Efforts to recharge the groundwater basin in the Coachella Valley began in 1919 when the Coachella Valley County Water District (CVWD) constructed facilities to capture natural flows from the Whitewater River channel to recharge the upper portion of the Whitewater River Subbasin. In 1973, the CVWD and Desert Water Agency (DWA) began



importing Colorado River water to the Whitewater recharge facility. The imported water was obtained from Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) via the Colorado River Aqueduct in exchange for State Water Project water, for the purpose of increasing groundwater recharge in the upper portion of the Whitewater River Subbasin. Colorado River water transported by the Coachella Canal is used by CVWD to recharge the lower portion of the Whitewater River Subbasin at two sites in the Eastern Coachella Valley. (RWQCB, 2019, pp. 1-12 and 1-13)

3. *Groundwater Quality*

Groundwater quality in the Coachella Valley varies with depth and location within the basin and is affected by natural occurring minerals and compounds present in the source rock of the aquifer that are then dissolved into the groundwater. As all CVWD-provided municipal water supplies are extracted from its wells, CVWD conducts groundwater quality monitoring in accordance with federal and State drinking water requirements. Based on water quality reports from 2019, CVWD-provided drinking water complies with all federal and State drinking water quality standards and does not exceed any Maximum Contaminant Levels. (CVWD, 2021, p. 3.7-6)

The CVWD undertakes groundwater replenishment activities at its Whitewater River Groundwater Replenishment Facility (“Facility”), which relies on imported water from the Colorado River Aqueduct. Colorado River water used for direct delivery and recharge in the Coachella Valley has higher total dissolved solid (TDS) concentrations on average than most of the groundwater within the Subbasin. Since the initiation groundwater replenishment activities at the Facility, TDS levels in wells near the recharge areas have increased from a range of 150 to 300 milligrams per liter (mg/L) to 300 to 600 mg/L TDS. However, increased salinity levels appear to be geographically limited to the immediate replenishment area as wells located more than 8 miles away from the Facility have shown little change in quality over time. While the range of TDS in the shallowest layers of the aquifer within the western portion of the Whitewater River Subbasin may be above the Storm Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) recommended consumer acceptance contaminant level of 500 mg/L, no recorded values are near or above the State of California’s upper consumer acceptance contaminant level of 1,000 mg/L or the short-term consumer acceptance contaminant level of 1,500 mg/L. Neither the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) nor the State of California have set an enforceable, primary maximum contaminant level (MCL) for TDS. (CVWD, 2021, pp. 3.7-6 through 3.7-10)

In March 2020, a soil field sampling program was conducted at the existing facility. The purpose of the soil field sampling program was to obtain soil and sediment samples from within, and adjacent to, the replenishment ponds appropriate to evaluate whether constituents that could affect water quality are accumulating in, or leaching from, the soils and sediments within the Facility. Overall, the data obtained from the soil sampling and leach tests demonstrate that the Colorado River Aqueduct water has not left any significant dissolved solids behind on the soils beneath the Facility and that the soils are not leaching any significant quantity of minerals, salts, or metals into the Colorado River Aqueduct water as it percolates to the underlying aquifer. These results indicate that changes to facility operations, such as a change in the amount of recharge or a change in the TDS level of the recharge water, would not result in the release of additional TDS to the groundwater, since there is no significant mass of salts, minerals, or metals being retained in the soils. (CVWD, 2021, pp. 3.7-11 and -12)



4.10.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to hydrology and water quality.

A. Federal Regulations

1. Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulating quality standards for surface waters. The basis of the CWA was enacted in 1948 and was called the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, but the Act was substantially reorganized and expanded in 1972. "Clean Water Act" became the Act's common name with amendments in 1972. Under the CWA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has implemented pollution control programs such as setting wastewater standards for industry, and also has set water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters. The CWA made it unlawful to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters, unless a permit was obtained. EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program controls discharges. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or man-made ditches. 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. (EPA, 2023e)

2. Federal Flood Insurance Program

The U.S. Congress established the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) with the passage of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968. The NFIP is a Federal program enabling property owners in participating communities to purchase insurance as a protection against flood losses in exchange for State and community floodplain management regulations that reduce future flood damages. Participation in the NFIP is based on an agreement between communities and the Federal Government. If a community adopts and enforces a floodplain management ordinance to reduce future flood risk to new construction in floodplains, the Federal Government will make flood insurance available within the community as a financial protection against flood losses. This insurance is designed to provide an insurance alternative to disaster assistance to reduce the escalating costs of repairing damage to buildings and their contents caused by floods. The Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration (FIMA) within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for administering the NFIP and administering programs that provide assistance for mitigating future damages from natural hazards. (FEMA, 2021)

3. Executive Order 11988 – Floodplain Management

Executive Order 11988 requires federal agencies to avoid to the extent possible the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of flood plains and to avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative. In accomplishing this objective, "each agency shall provide leadership and shall take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, to minimize the



impact of floods on human safety, health, and welfare, and to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by flood plains in carrying out its responsibilities" for the following actions: (FEMA, 2020b)

- acquiring, managing, and disposing of federal lands and facilities;
- providing federally-undertaken, financed, or assisted construction and improvements; and
- conducting federal activities and programs affecting land use, including but not limited to water and related land resources planning, regulation, and licensing activities.

B. State Regulations

1. Porter-Cologne Water Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Act is the principal law governing water quality regulation in California. It establishes a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water. The Porter-Cologne Act applies to surface waters, wetlands, and ground water and to both point and nonpoint sources of pollution. Pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act (California Water Code § 13000 et seq.), the policy of the State is as follows: (SWRCB, 2014)

- That the quality of all the waters of the State shall be protected;
- That all activities and factors affecting the quality of water shall be regulated to attain the highest water quality within reason; and
- That the State must be prepared to exercise its full power and jurisdiction to protect the quality of water in the State from degradation.

The Porter-Cologne Act established nine Regional Water Boards (based on hydrogeologic barriers) and the State Water Board, which are charged with implementing its provisions and which have primary responsibility for protecting water quality in California. The State Water Board provides program guidance and oversight, allocates funds, and reviews Regional Water Boards decisions. In addition, the State Water Board allocates rights to the use of surface water. The Regional Water Boards have primary responsibility for individual permitting, inspection, and enforcement actions within each of nine hydrologic regions. The State Water Board and Regional Water Boards have numerous non-point source (NPS) related responsibilities, including monitoring and assessment, planning, financial assistance, and management. (SWRCB, 2014)

The Regional Water Boards regulate discharges under the Porter-Cologne Act primarily through issuance of NPDES permits for point source discharges and waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for NPS discharges. Anyone discharging or proposing to discharge materials that could affect water quality (other than to a community sanitary sewer system regulated by an NPDES permit) must file a report of waste discharge. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) can make their own investigations or may require dischargers to carry out water quality investigations and report on water quality issues. The Porter-Cologne Act provides several options for enforcing WDRs and other orders, including cease and desist orders, cleanup and abatement orders, administrative civil liability orders, civil court actions, and criminal prosecutions. (SWRCB, 2014)



The Porter-Cologne Act also implements many provisions of the Clean Water Act, such as the NPDES permitting program. The Porter-Cologne Act also requires adoption of water quality control plans that contain the guiding policies of water pollution management in California. In addition, regional water quality control plans (basin plans) have been adopted by each of the Regional Water Boards and get updated as necessary and practical. These plans identify the existing and potential beneficial uses of waters of the State and establish water quality objectives to protect these uses. The basin plans also contain implementation, surveillance, and monitoring plans. (SWRCB, 2014) The Project site is located in the Colorado River Basin Region, which is within the purview of Colorado River Basin RWQCB. The Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin is the governing water quality plan for the region (RWQCB, 2019).

2. *California Water Code*

The California Water Code is the principal state law regulating water quality in California. Water quality provisions must be complied with as contained in numerous code sections including: 1) the Health and Safety Code for the protection of ground and surface waters from hazardous waste and other toxic substances; 2) the Fish and Game Code for the prevention of unauthorized diversions of any surface water and discharge of any substance that may be deleterious to fish, plant, animal, or bird life; 3) the Harbors and Navigation Code for the prevention of the unauthorized discharge of waste from vessels into surface waters; and 4) the Food and Agriculture Code for the protection of groundwater which may be used for drinking water supplies. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), through provisions of the Fish & Game Code (§§ 1601 - 1603) is empowered to issue agreements for any alteration of a river, stream, or lake where fish or wildlife resources may be adversely affected. CDFW regulates wetland areas only to the extent that those wetlands are part of a river, stream, or lake as defined by CDFW. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Surface water quality is the responsibility of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), water supply and wastewater treatment agencies, and city and county governments. The principal means of enforcement by the RWQCB is through the development, adoption, and issuance of water discharge permits. RWQCB basin plans establish water quality objectives that are defined as the limits or levels of water quality constituents or characteristics for the reasonable protection of beneficial uses of water. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

3. *California Toxics Rule (CTR)*

The California Toxics Rule (CTR) fills gap in California's water quality standards necessary to protect human health and aquatic life beneficial uses. The CTR criteria are similar to those published in the National Recommended Water Quality Criteria. The CTR supplements, and does not change or supersede, the criteria that EPA promulgated for California waters in the National Toxics Rule (NTR). The human health NTR and CTR criteria that apply to drinking water sources (those water bodies designated in the Basin Plans as municipal and domestic supply) consider chemical exposure through consumption of both water and aquatic organisms (fish and shellfish) harvested from the water. For waters that are not drinking water sources (e.g., enclosed bays and estuaries), human health NTR and CTR criteria only consider the consumption of contaminated aquatic organisms. The CTR and NTR criteria, along with the beneficial use designations in the



Basin Plans and the related implementation policies, are the directly applicable water quality standards for toxic priority pollutants in California waters. (SWRCB, 2016, pp. 14-15)

4. *CDFG Code Section 1600 et seq. (Lake- or Streambed Alteration Agreement Program)*

Fish and Game Code § 1602 requires an entity to notify CDFW prior to commencing any activity that may do one or more of the following: (CDFW, n.d.)

- Substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream, or lake;
- Substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream, or lake;
or
- Deposit debris, waste or other materials that could pass into any river, stream, or lake.

It should be noted that "any river, stream or lake" includes those that are episodic (they are dry for periods of time) as well as those that are perennial (they flow year-round). This includes ephemeral streams, desert washes, and watercourses with a subsurface flow. It may also apply to work undertaken within the flood plain of a body of water. (CDFW, n.d.)

CDFW requires a Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Agreement when it determines that the activity, as described in a complete LSA Notification, may substantially adversely affect existing fish or wildlife resources. An LSA Agreement includes measures necessary to protect existing fish and wildlife resources. CDFW may suggest ways to modify a project that would eliminate or reduce harmful impacts to fish and wildlife resources. Before issuing an LSA Agreement, CDFW must comply with CEQA. (CDFW, n.d.)

5. *Watershed Management Initiative (WMI)*

The State and Regional Water Boards are currently focused on looking at entire watersheds when addressing water pollution. The Water Boards adopted the Watershed Management Initiative (WMI) to further their goals. The WMI establishes a broad framework overlying the numerous federal and State mandated priorities. As such, the WMI helps the Water Boards achieve water resource protection, enhancement and restoration while balancing economic and environmental impacts. (SWRCB, 2017) The integrated approach of the WMI involves three main ideas:

- Use water quality to identify and prioritize water resource problems within individual watersheds. Involve stakeholders to develop solutions.
- Better coordinate point source and nonpoint source regulatory efforts. Establish working relationships between staff from different programs.
- Better coordinate local, state, and federal activities and programs, especially those relating to regulations and funding, to assist local watershed groups. (SWRCB, 2017)

6. *Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)*

The 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires governments and water agencies of high and medium priority basins to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of



pumping and recharge. Under SGMA, these basins should reach sustainability within 20 years of implementing their sustainability plans. The DWR categorizes the priority of groundwater basins. For critically over-drafted basins, that will be 2040. For the remaining high and medium priority basins, 2042 is the deadline. The SGMA also requires local public agencies and Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in high- and medium-priority basins to develop and implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) or Alternatives to GSPs. GSPs are detailed road maps for how groundwater basins will reach long term sustainability. (DWR, n.d.) (DWR, 2020)

C. Local Regulations

1. Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region

The California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (§ 13000 (“Water Quality”) et seq., of the California Water Code), and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendment of 1972 (also referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA)) require that comprehensive water quality control plans be developed for all waters within the State of California. The Project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Colorado River Basin RWQCB. Water quality information for the Colorado River Basin is contained in the “Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region” (Basin Plan), which was most recently updated in January 2019. This document is herein incorporated by reference and is available for public review at the Colorado River Basin RWQCB office located at 73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100, Palm Desert, CA 92260. The purpose of the Basin Plan is to: i) identify beneficial uses for surface and ground waters, (ii) include narrative and numerical water quality objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the state's anti-degradation policy, and (iii) describe implementation programs and other actions that are necessary to achieve the water quality objectives established in the Basin Plan.

4.10.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section X of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to hydrology and water quality, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate the Project’s impacts on hydrology and water quality:

- *Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality;*
- *Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin;*
- *Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:*
 - *Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site;*
 - *Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site;*



- *Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or*
- *Impede or redirect flood flows;*
- *In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; or*
- *Would the project conflict with or otherwise obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.*

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, are derived from Section X of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact to hydrology and water quality if construction and/or operation of the Project would:

- a. *Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality;*
- b. *Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin;*
- c. *Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces;*
- d. *Result in substantial erosion or siltation on-site or off-site;*
- e. *Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-site or off-site;*
- f. *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;*
- g. *Impede or redirect flood flows;*
- h. *In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk the release of pollutants due to project inundation; or*
- i. *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on hydrology and water quality.



4.10.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: *Would the Project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?*

Threshold b.: *Would the Project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?*

Threshold i.: *Would the Project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?*

Potable water service to the Project site would be provided by the CVWD, and the Project would not involve direct groundwater extraction via existing or proposed groundwater wells. Additionally, with implementation of the Project's proposed drainage plan, all runoff tributary to the Project site and generated on the Project site would be directed to proposed retention basins within the southern portions of the Project site. The significant majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be fully detained on site and allowed to infiltrate into the groundwater table. Thus, the Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impeded sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Impacts would be less than significant.

The Project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Colorado River Basin RWQCB. Water quality information for the Colorado River Basin Region is contained in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region (Basin Plan), as most recently updated in January 2019. Additionally, the Project site is located within the jurisdiction of the CVWD which manages groundwater resources for the region. However, as previously indicated, the CVWD replenishes groundwater within the Basin through imported water from the Colorado River Aqueduct. As such, there is no sustainable groundwater management plan in effect for the Project area. Because all runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be subject to retention and water quality treatment prior to infiltration into the groundwater basin, the Project has no potential to adversely affect groundwater supplies or groundwater quality, and has no potential to conflict with a sustainable groundwater management plan. No impact to groundwater quality or supplies would occur with implementation of the Project.

The California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (§ 13000 ("Water Quality") et seq., of the California Water Code), and the federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendment of 1972 (also referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA)) require that comprehensive water quality control plans be developed for all waters within the State of California. The Project site is located within the Whitewater Hydrologic Unit (HU) of the Coachella Valley Planning Area (Planning Area) of the Colorado River Basin Region (Region), which is under the jurisdiction of the Colorado River Basin RWQCB. Water quality information for the Region is contained in the Colorado River Basin RWQCB's Basin Plan, as most recently updated in January 2019. This document is herein incorporated by reference and is available for public review at the Colorado River Basin RWQCB office located at 73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100, Palm Desert, CA 92260.

The CWA requires all states to conduct water quality assessments of their water resources to identify water bodies that do not meet water quality standards. Water bodies that do not meet water quality standards are



placed on a list of impaired waters pursuant to the requirements of Section 303(d) of the CWA. The only receiving water for runoff from the Project site is the Whitewater River, which does not have any listed Section 303(d) impairments. As such, the Project has no potential to contribute to any Section 303(d) water quality impairments.

Specific provision of the CWA applicable to the proposed Project is CWA Section 402, which authorizes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program that covers point sources of pollution discharging to a water body. The NPDES program also requires operators of construction sites one acre or larger to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and obtain authorization to discharge stormwater under an NPDES construction stormwater permit.

Provided below is a discussion of the Project's potential to conflict with the Colorado River Region Basin Plan both during construction and long-term operation.

Construction-Related Water Quality

Construction of the proposed Project would involve clearing, grading, paving, utility installation, building construction, and landscaping activities, which would generate potential water quality pollutants such as silt, debris, chemicals, paints, and other solvents with the potential to adversely affect water quality. As such, short-term water quality impacts have the potential to occur during construction of the Project in the absence of any protective or avoidance measures. Minor construction-related effects to water quality also could occur off-site along the segment of Robert Road to be paved and at IID pole locations.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Colorado River Basin RWQCB and the County of Riverside, the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit for construction activities. The NPDES permit is required for all projects that include construction activities, such as clearing, grading, and/or excavation that disturb at least one acre of total land area. In addition, the Project would be required to comply with the RWQCB's Basin Plan. Compliance with the NPDES permit and the Basin Plan involves the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP for construction-related activities. The SWPPP is required to specify the Best Management Practices (BMPs) that the Project would be required to implement during construction activities to ensure that all potential pollutants of concern are prevented, minimized, and/or otherwise appropriately treated prior to being discharged from the subject property. Mandatory compliance with the SWPPP would ensure that the proposed Project does not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements during construction activities. Therefore, with mandatory adherence to the future required SWPPP, runoff associated with Project-related construction activities on site would not conflict with the Basin Plan requirements, and impacts would be less than significant. However, if installation of off-site IID power poles are not covered by the Project's SWPPP, short-term construction-related erosion impacts have the potential to be significant during off-site power pole installation. This is evaluated as a potentially significant impact for which mitigation would be required.



Operational Water Quality Impacts

As noted above, the only receiving water for the property's drainage is the Whitewater River, which does not have any listed Section 303(d) impairments. In order to assess the Project's potential for water quality impacts, Project-specific Hydrology and Water Quality Technical Appendices were prepared for the Project and are included as *Technical Appendices I2 and I1*, respectively. Given that IID off-site pole locations would disturb at most 10 feet by 10 feet of ground at each pole location for installation and that the poles would not change the topography or impede natural flow patterns, technical analysis of off-site infrastructure components of the Project is not required.

To meet NPDES requirements, the Project's proposed storm drain system is designed to route first flush runoff to retention basins and landscaped areas that would be constructed on the Project site. First flush is the initial surface runoff of a rainstorm. During this phase, water pollution entering storm drains in areas with high proportions of impervious surfaces is typically more concentrated compared to the remainder of the storm. The vast majority of site runoff would be retained on site and would infiltrate into the groundwater table. The future required retention basins and landscaped areas would be designed to retain runoff and provide water quality treatment, and would reduce pollutants of concern in runoff infiltrating beneath the Project site, such as pollutants that could cause or contribute to impairments such as heavy metals, nutrients, sediment/turbidity, trash/debris, and oil/grease. Because all runoff generated on site would be appropriately treated prior to infiltration into the groundwater table, the proposed Project would not conflict with the Colorado River Region Basin Plan, and impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Threshold c.: *Would the Project 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?*

Threshold f.: *Would the Project 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?*

The Project is designed to comply with California Drainage Law, which requires water that flows onto the site to be discharged from the site in the same location(s) and at no greater amount that occurs under existing conditions. Water flowing onto the Project site from the north would be captured in a diversion channel system, conveyed around the proposed building, and discharged into a basin at the southerly portion of the Project site. In food conditions, water would flow over the basin slope and discharge over 30th Avenue in the same manner as occurs under existing conditions.

With implementation of the Project's proposed drainage plan, all runoff tributary to the Project site and generated on the Project site would be directed to proposed retention basins within the southern portions of the Project site. The vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be fully detained on site and allowed to infiltrate into the groundwater table. The proposed retention basins are sized to accommodate peak runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site. As such, the Project has no potential to substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, and a less-than-significant impact would occur. Additionally, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would



infiltrate into the groundwater table via the proposed retention basins, the Project has no potential to exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Additionally, the retention basins have been designed to treat the Project's pollutants of concern, including heavy metals, nutrients, sediment/turbidity, trash/debris, and oil/grease, thereby ensuring that the Project does not provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Impacts would be less than significant.

Given that IID off-site pole locations would disturb at most 10 feet by 10 feet of ground at each pole location for installation and that the poles would not change the topography or impede natural flow patterns, technical analysis of off-site infrastructure components of the Project is not required, as impacts would clearly be less than significant. The power pole structures would include minimal areas of new impervious surfaces and would not substantially increase stormwater discharges at pole locations.

Threshold d: Would the Project result in substantial erosion or siltation on-site or off-site?

A. Construction-Related Erosion Impacts

The Project has been designed to generally maintain the existing topographic sloping direction of the site, with minor modifications as necessary to accommodate site development, proposed drainage conditions, and sewer flows. Nonetheless, construction of the proposed warehouse and IID substation components of the Project would involve substantial ground disturbance during clearing and grading of the site. In addition, on-site erosion could occur if graded slopes are not stabilized prior to ultimate development and/or landscaping. The proposed grading activities would generate fair amounts of silt which could be carried off-site during a heavy rainfall or wind event. Should such an event occur in the absence of any preventative measures to contain silt and other soils on-site, erosion and/or siltation downstream could result.

Pursuant to requirements of the SWRCB and the Colorado River Region Basin Plan, the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a NPDES permit for construction activities on the site. The NPDES permit is required for all projects that include construction activities, such as clearing, grading, and/or excavation that disturb at least one (1) acre of total land area. Compliance with the NPDES permit involves the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP for construction related activities. The SWPPP would specify BMPs to minimize the potential for erosion and siltation to occur and would include specific Project site measures to address the potential for the caving in of temporary excavations. Typical BMPs that are implemented at construction sites to protect water quality include the implementation of straw bale barriers, plastic sheeting/erosion control blankets, and outlet protection measures. With mandatory adherence to the SWPPP requirements, effects associated with construction-related erosion, siltation, water quality, and flooding on downstream water sources and flood control systems would be maintained at a level below significance.

Regarding IID off-site pole locations, each pole to be placed would disturb at most 10 feet by 10 feet of ground. Because IID has not yet identified the exact location of the poles and it is unknown if the pole installations would be covered by the larger Project's NPDES permit and SWPPP, construction-related activities to install the off-site power poles and utility lines have the potential to cause short term erosion. This is regarded as a potentially significant impact if disturbance activities are not covered by the Project's NEPDS permit and SWPPP.



B. Post-Development Erosion Impacts

Implementation of the Project would result in the conversion of the Project site from vacant and undeveloped land to that of a light industrial warehouse development and an IID electric substation. With development of the Project site, large portions of the Project site would consist of impervious surfaces, with areas of pervious surfaces largely confined to landscaped areas and the proposed retention basins. Thus, the potential for erosion hazards on site would be substantially decreased as compared to existing conditions with buildout of the Project site. As such, long-term erosion impacts on site would be less than significant. Furthermore, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be conveyed to the proposed on-site retention basins and allowed to infiltrate into the groundwater table, the Project has no potential to result in an increase in runoff from the Project site that could cause or contribute to erosion hazards downstream. Therefore, long-term impacts due to erosion on and off site would be less than significant with implementation of the proposed Project.

Given that IID off-site pole locations would be impervious and limited to the 2 to 7-foot diameter of the poles, there would be no long-term erosion effects associated with the poles and overhead lines. The power pole structures would include minimal areas of new impervious surfaces and would have no long-term effect on erosion.

Threshold e.: Would the Project substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-site or off-site?

Threshold g.: Would the Project impede or redirect flood flows?

As previously indicated, according to mapping information from FEMA’s FIRM program, the Project site is located within Flood Zone AO, which indicates that the Project site is subject to “[f]lood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain),” although the average depth of flooding is undetermined (FEMA, 2008). Additionally, according to Riverside County GIS, the majority of the Project site is identified within “Areas of Flooding Sensitivity” (RCIT, n.d.) However, as a standard regulatory requirement (see Code of Federal Regulations Title 44 Parts 60, 65, and 72), the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) from FEMA prior to the issuance of grading permits. As part of the CLOMR, the Project Applicant would be required to demonstrate that the hydrology changes proposed as part of the Project would meet minimum National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) standards. The CLOMR would identify site elevations needed to ensure that future development on site is not subject to flood hazards. Following completion of grading activities, and prior to issuance of building permits, the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) from FEMA officially revising FIRM Map No. 06065C1585G to show changes to floodplains, regulatory floodways, and/or flood elevations. With completion of the CLOMR and LOMR processes, the portions of the Project site planned for development with light industrial warehouse and electric substation uses would be removed from the mapped floodplain, and would no longer be subject to flooding. Accordingly, with mandatory completion of the CLOMR and LOMR processes, the Project would not impede or redirect flood flows. Additionally, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be retained on site and would infiltrate into the



groundwater table, the Project has no potential to increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site. Impacts would be less than significant.

Given that IID off-site pole locations would be impervious and limited to the 2 to 7-foot diameter of the poles, there is no reasonable potential that the poles would result in flooding or impede flood flows. The power pole structures would include minimal areas of new impervious surfaces and would have no long-term effect on flooding.

Threshold h.: In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the Project risk the release of pollutants due to Project inundation?

Please refer to the analysis of Thresholds e. and g. for a discussion of flood hazards. As indicated therein, under existing conditions the Project site is located within Flood Zone AO, indicating the Project site is subject to inundation due to floods. However, the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA, which would ensure that the warehouse and electrical substation portions of the Project are removed from the mapped floodplain. With completion of the CLOMR and LOMR processes, the Project would not risk the release of pollutants due to site inundation from floods, and impacts would be less than significant.

The Project site is located approximately 72 miles from the Pacific Ocean, and as such there is no potential for the Project site to be inundated with tsunamis.

A seiche is an underwater wave that oscillates through a body of water which may be triggered by earthquakes or landslides. In general, seiches are small (on the order of a few inches) and are present in larger lakes as a result of the depth, temperature, and contours of the body of water. The Project site is situated at an elevated inland location and is not immediately adjacent to any impounded bodies of water. Thus, there is no reasonable potential for the risk of seiches to affect the Project site. As such, the Project would not be subject to inundation due to seiches, and no impact would occur. (Sladden, 2021, p. 6)

4.10.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The cumulative impact analysis considers construction and operation of the proposed Project in conjunction with other development projects in the vicinity of the Project site and resulting from full buildout of the Riverside County General Plan and the general plans of other local jurisdictions that are located within the Colorado River Basin Region.

As discussed under the analysis of Thresholds a., b., and i., the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to surface and groundwater quality during on-site construction because the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit for construction activities. Compliance with the NPDES permit and the Colorado River Region Basin Plan involves the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP for construction-related activities. The SWPPP is required to specify BMPs that the Project would be required to implement during construction activities to ensure that all potential pollutants of concern are prevented, minimized, and/or otherwise appropriately treated prior to being discharged from the subject



property. Other cumulative developments within the cumulative study area also would be required to comply with the NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit and would be required to implement BMPs during construction activities to preclude water quality impacts that could impair downstream waters or groundwater. As such, construction-related surface and groundwater quality impacts, as well as impacts due to a conflict with the Colorado River Region Basin Plan, would be less-than-cumulatively considerable during construction activities on site. However, if installation of off-site IID power poles are not covered by the Project's SWPPP, short-term construction-related erosion impacts have the potential to be significant during off-site power pole installation. As other cumulative developments also have the potential to result in construction-related water quality impacts, the Project's potential erosion impacts during construction of the off-site IID power poles represent a potentially significant impact for which mitigation would be required. With respect to long-term impacts to water quality, the Project's proposed storm drain system is designed to route first flush runoff to proposed on-site retention basins, which would allow for a majority of runoff to infiltrate into the groundwater table. The retention basins have been designed to retain runoff and provide water quality treatment and would reduce pollutants of concern in runoff leaving the Project site. Other cumulative developments would similarly be required to incorporate BMPs to treat water quality pollutants of concern. Accordingly, the Project's impacts would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

As indicated under the analysis of Thresholds c. and f., although grading would be required to implement the proposed Project, grading proposed as part of the Project generally would maintain the site's existing drainage patterns except as needed for proper site drainage and sewer flows. As such, the Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Project site or surrounding areas, and impacts would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis. Additionally, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be routed to retention basins and allowed to infiltrate into the groundwater table, the Project would not result in the alteration of any downstream receiving waters on either a direct or cumulatively-considerable basis. Additionally, because the Project would not result in an increase in peak runoff from the Project site, the Project would not contribute runoff water that could exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, and cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold d., during construction the Project would be subject to compliance with the applicable NPDES permit, which requires the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP to address erosion hazards associated with construction activities. Other cumulative developments similarly would be required to prepare and implement a SWPPP, and mitigation measure MM 4.10-1 is included below to address best management practices for IID power pole installations. As such, erosion-related hazards during construction activities would be less-than-cumulatively considerable. Additionally, implementation of the proposed Project would result in the conversion of the site from undeveloped land to that of a proposed warehouse development that also includes an electric substation. With development of the Project site, large portions of the Project site would consist of impervious surfaces, with areas of pervious surfaces largely confined to landscaped areas. Thus, the potential for erosion hazards on site would be substantially decreased as compared to existing conditions with buildout of the Project site. Additionally, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be retained on site, the Project has no potential to



cause or cumulatively contribute to erosion hazards downstream. As such, long-term erosion impacts would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

Although the Project site is subject to flooding under existing conditions, the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA demonstrating that the warehouse and electric substation portions of the Project site are removed from the mapped floodplain. With completion of the CLOMR and LOMR processes, the Project would not impede or redirect flood flows and would not risk the release of pollutants due to Project site inundation. Thus, cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

Areas planned for development on site are not subject to inundation due to tsunamis or seiches. As such, cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with the release of pollutants due to Project site inundation from tsunamis and seiches also would not occur.

4.10.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Thresholds a., b., and i.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Project would be served potable water by the CVWD, and no groundwater wells are proposed on site; thus, Project direct impacts to groundwater supplies would be less than significant. Additionally, the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be routed to the proposed on-site retention basins and would be allowed to infiltrate into the groundwater table, thereby ensuring that the Project would not adversely affect groundwater recharge. Additionally, water quality impacts during on-site construction activities, including potential impacts due to a conflict with the Colorado River Region Basin Plan and potential impacts to groundwater quality, would be less than significant. However, if installation of off-site IID power poles are not covered by the Project's SWPPP, short-term construction-related erosion impacts have the potential to be significant during off-site power pole installation. This is evaluated as a potentially significant impact for which mitigation would be required. With implementation of the proposed Project under long-term conditions, all runoff generated on site would be appropriately treated by the Project's BMPs. Thus, the Project would not adversely affect surface or groundwater quality. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality; would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge; and would not conflict with the Colorado River Region Basin Plan or result in adverse groundwater quality impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

Thresholds c. and f.: Less-than-Significant Impact. With implementation of the Project's proposed drainage plan, all runoff tributary to the Project site and generated on the Project site would be directed to proposed retention basins within the southern portions of the Project site. The vast majority of runoff would be allowed to infiltrate into the groundwater table. As such, implementation of the proposed Project would not result in an increase in peak runoff from the Project site and therefore would not result in the alteration of the existing alignment of any downstream receiving waters. Additionally, the Project would not contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant.



Threshold d.: Significant Direct Impact. With mandatory adherence to the SWPPP requirements, Project-related effects associated with construction-related erosion, siltation, water quality, and flooding on downstream water sources and flood control systems would be maintained at a level below significance. However, if installation of off-site IID power poles are not covered by the Project's SWPPP, short-term construction-related erosion impacts have the potential to be significant during off-site power pole installation. During long-term operation of the Project, large portions of the Project site would consist of impervious surfaces, substantially decreasing erosion potential as compared to existing conditions. Additionally, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would infiltrate into the groundwater table via the proposed retention basins, the Project has no potential to exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Additionally, the retention basins have been designed to treat the Project's pollutants of concern, including heavy metals, nutrients, sediment/turbidity, trash/debris, and oil/grease, the Project would not provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Operational impacts would be less than significant.

Thresholds e. and g.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Although the Project site occurs within a mapped floodplain, as a standard regulatory requirement (see Code of Federal Regulations Title 44 Parts 60, 65, and 72), the Project Applicant would be required to obtain a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA prior to the issuance of grading and building permits, respectively, which would ensure the developed portions of the Project site are removed from the mapped floodplain. Accordingly, with completion of the CLOMR and LOMR processes, the Project would not impede or redirect flood flows. Additionally, because the vast majority of runoff tributary to or generated on the Project site would be fully retained on site and would infiltrate into the groundwater table, the Project has no potential to increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site. Impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold h. Less-than-Significant Impact: The Project would be required to obtain a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA, which would ensure that the warehouse and electrical substation portions of the Project are removed from the mapped floodplain. With completion of the CLOMR and LOMR processes, the Project would not risk the release of pollutants due to site inundation from floods, and impacts would be less than significant. The Project site is located approximately 72 miles from the Pacific Ocean, and as such there is no potential for the Project site to be inundated with tsunamis. The Project site is situated at an elevated inland location and is not immediately adjacent to any impounded bodies of water, and the risk of seiches affecting the Project site are considered "negligible." As such, the Project would not be subject to inundation due to seiches, and no impact would occur.

4.10.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude hydrology and water quality impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.



- Prior to issuance of grading permits, the Project Applicant shall obtain a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to identify measures that will be undertaken to remove the areas proposed for warehouse and IID electrical substation development from the mapped floodplains on site.
- Prior to issuance of a shell building permit, the Project Applicant shall obtain a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) from FEMA to verify that the Project site has been graded in such a manner as to remove areas planned for development with warehouse and IID substation uses from areas subject to flooding hazards.
- The Project Applicant is required to comply with the provisions of the required NPDES permit, and the required SWPPP. Compliance with the NPDES permit and the SWPPP would identify and implement an effective combination of erosion control and sediment control measures (i.e., Best Management Practices) to reduce or eliminate discharge to surface water from storm water and non-stormwater discharges.

Mitigation

MM 4.10-1: If the installation of off-site IID power poles and overhead lines are not covered by the Construction General Permit and SWPPP required for the Project's warehouse and substation uses (e.g., total ground disturbance associated with the action is less than 1.0 acre), the following best management practices shall be required of the contractor as conditions of approval for the pole installation permit:

- a) Limit pole installation construction to forecasted dry periods and days with forecasted wind speeds of less than 20 m.p.h.
- b) Minimize soil disturbance areas to the smallest feasible area.
- c) Implement practices to reduce erosion of exposed soil and stockpiles, including watering for dust control, establishing perimeter silt fences, and/or placing fiber rolls.
- d) Implement practices to maintain water quality, including establishing silt fences, stabilized areas where construction equipment will operate, and storm-drain inlet protection.
- e) Revegetate disturbed areas or apply a soil binder to loose soil in disturbed areas as soon as feasible following construction activity.

4.10.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Thresholds a., b., and i.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.10-1 would reduce the potential for construction-related soil erosion and erosion-related water quality impacts during installation of IID power poles and lines by requiring best management practices during construction activities. Impacts would be less than significant with adherence to the mitigation measure.

Threshold d.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.10-1 would reduce the potential for construction-related soil erosion and erosion-related water



quality impacts during installation of IID power poles and lines by requiring best management practices during construction activities. Impacts would be less than significant with adherence to the mitigation measure.



4.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This Subsection 4.11 discusses consistency of the proposed Project with applicable land use and planning policies adopted by Riverside County and other governing agencies for the purpose of reducing adverse effects on the physical environment. This Subsection also addresses present and future land uses, zoning, and the physical arrangement of uses on the land. Information used to support the analysis in this subsection was also obtained in part from the Riverside County General Plan (Riverside County, 2021a), the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP) (Riverside County, 2021b), and the Riverside County GIS database (RCIT, n.d.).

4.11.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. *Existing On-Site and Adjacent Land Uses*

Under existing conditions, the 83.0-acre Project site consists of vacant and undeveloped desert land. Research of past conditions conducted by Nova Group determined that the Project site has never been subject to improvements or development (Nova, 2021, p. 17).

Land uses in the immediate vicinity of the Project site are depicted on EIR Figure 2-3. As shown, there is an existing organic materials recycling facility (SA Recycling) located north of and abutting the western +/- half of the northern Project boundary, with remaining lands to the north comprising undeveloped lands. To the immediate east of the Project site is the planned alignment of Robert Road, beyond which is undeveloped open space and agricultural uses, while single-family residences occur to the southeast of the Project site. To the south of the Project site are undeveloped lands (the western portion of which is planned as a recreational vehicle (RV) parking lot), beyond which are several light industrial/business park uses and single family residences. To the west of the Project site is undeveloped open space, with Varner Road occurring approximately 0.4-mile southwest of the Project site. The I-10 freeway is located approximately 0.9-mile southwest of the Project site.

B. *Existing On-Site and Surrounding Land Use Designations*

The prevailing planning document for the Project site and its surrounding area in unincorporated Riverside County is the Riverside County General Plan. The Project site is located within the WCVAP portion of the Riverside County General Plan. As previously depicted on EIR Figure 2-4, the County's General Plan and WCVAP designate the western +/- half of the 83.0-acre Project site for "Light Industrial (LI)" land uses, and designates the eastern +/- half of the Project site for "Medium Density Residential (MDR)" land uses (RCIT, n.d.). The LI land use designation is intended to accommodate industrial and related uses including warehousing/distribution, assembly and light manufacturing, repair facilities, and supporting retail uses. The MDR land use designation is intended to accommodate single-family attached and detached residences with a density range of 5 to 8 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and on lot sizes ranging from 4,000 to 6,500 s.f. (Riverside County, 2021a, Table LU-4).

As also previously depicted on EIR Figure 2-4, lands to the north of the western +/- half of the Project site also are designated for LI land uses, while lands to the north of the eastern +/- half of the Project site are designated for MDR land uses. Lands east of the Project site also are designated for MDR uses. Lands to the southeast



of the Project site are designated for “Medium-High Density Residential (MHDR)” land uses. Lands to the south of the eastern +/- half of the Project site are designated for “High Density Residential (HDR)” land uses, while lands to the south of the western +/- half of the Project site are designated for LI land uses. The MHDR land use designation is intended to accommodate single-family attached and detached residences with a density range of 5 to 8 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) on lot sizes ranging from 4,000 to 6,500 s.f. The HDR land use designation is intended to accommodate single-family attached and detached residences, including townhouses, stacked flats, courtyard homes, patio homes, townhouses, and zero lot line homes. The Project site is within the sphere-of-influence of the City of Cathedral City. Lands to the west and southwest of the Project site across Rio Del Sol are located within Cathedral City and are designated by the North City Extended Specific Plan “Light Industry” land uses and are designated as “I – Industrial” land uses by the Cathedral City General Plan. Lands to the west of the Project site on the west side of Rio Del Sol are under tribal ownership and do not have any General Plan land use designations. Cathedral City’s “I – Industrial” land use designation provides for the development of any and all industrial uses operating entirely in enclosed buildings, and those requiring limited and screenable outdoor storage. (Riverside County, 2021a, Table LU-4; Cathedral City, 2009, p. III-7)

C. Existing On-Site and Surrounding Zoning Classifications

The Riverside County Land Use Ordinance is intended to implement the Riverside County General Plan’s land use plan. Under existing conditions, the western +/- half of the Project site is zoned for “Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC)” land uses, while the eastern +/- half of the Project site is zoned for “Residential Agricultural (R-A).” The M-SC zoning classification allows for most light manufacturing and industrial uses defined under the Standard Industrial Classification Code (SIC) with Plot Plan approval. The R-A zoning classification allows for one-family dwellings as well as a variety of agricultural uses, including field crops, vegetable gardening, tree crops, and greenhouses, while limited sales of agricultural products also are allowed. (Riverside County, 2021c; RCIT, n.d.)

Lands to the north of the western +/- half of the Project site also are zoned M-SC, while lands north of the eastern +/- half of the Project site are zoned R-A. Lands to the east of the Project site also are zoned R-A. Lands to the south of the eastern +/- half of the Project site are zoned “One-Family Dwellings (R-1),” while lands to the south of the western +/- half of the Project site are zoned M-SC. Lands to the southwest of the Project site are located in Cathedral City and are zoned by the North City Specific Plan for “Edom Hill - Light Industrial” land uses, with portions of these areas also being subject to a Hillside Overlay. Although lands to the west of the Project site are under tribal ownership, these lands are nonetheless zoned for “Controlled Development Areas (W-2).” The R-1 zoning classification is intended to allow for one-family dwellings along with limited agricultural uses. The “Edom Hill - Light Industrial” zoning classification within Cathedral City is intended to promote, but not require, “green” industrial uses, including recycling facilities, solar and wind energy facilities, and other environmentally-sensitive, “clean” industrial uses in an integrated setting (Cathedral City, 2007, p. 11-3). The W-2 zoning classification allows for one-family dwellings and agricultural uses. (Riverside County, 2021c; RCIT, n.d.)



D. Applicable Land Use and Planning Policies

1. Riverside County General Plan

The Riverside County General Plan is a policy document that reflects the Riverside County’s vision for the future. The General Plan was comprehensively revised in 2003 and most recently updated in 2021. The General Plan is organized into nine separate elements, including Land Use, Circulation, Multipurpose Open Space, Safety, Noise, Housing, Air Quality, Healthy Communities (including Environmental Justice), and Administration. Each General Plan Element is instrumental to achieving the County’s long-term development goals. Each element contains a series of policies that guide the course of action the County must take to achieve the County’s vision for future development. (Riverside County, 2021a)

In addition, the General Plan divides the County into 19 Area Plans. The purpose of these Area Plans is to provide more detailed land use and policy direction regarding local issues such as land use, circulation, open space, and other topical areas. The Project site is located within the WCVAP of the General Plan. The WCVAP was most recently updated on September 28, 2021. The following subsection provides a summary of each General Plan Element, while the WCVAP is discussed in the following subsection.

Land Use Element

The General Plan Land Use Element functions as a guide to planners, the general public, and decision makers as to the ultimate pattern of development. The Land Use Element designates the general distribution, general location, and extent of land uses, such as housing, business, industry, open space, agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and public/quasi-public uses. These designations are reflected on the General Plan Land Use Map, which categorizes individual parcels of land into five basic categories known as “Foundation Components”: Rural, Rural Community, Community Development, Agriculture, and Open Space. As reflected on the General Plan Land Use Map, the Land Use Element provides for a balanced mixture of land uses, including commercial, office, industrial, agriculture, and open space. For each of the various land use designations, the General Plan provides standards for residential density and non-residential intensity, and provides specific policies intended to ensure that product types, densities, and intensities respond to a multitude of market segments. The Land Use Element governs how land is to be utilized; therefore, many of the issues and policies contained in other plan elements are linked in some degree to this element. The Project site is currently located in the Community Development Foundation Component. The Project site is designated by the General Plan Land Use Plan for LI and MDR land uses. (Riverside County, 2021a, p. LU-1)

Circulation Element

The purpose of the Circulation Element is to provide for the movement of goods and people, including pedestrians, bicycles, transit, train, air, and automobile traffic flows within and through the community. Efficient traffic circulation is important to economic viability and the creation and preservation of a quality living environment (Riverside County, 2021a, p. C-1). The Circulation Element designates future road improvements and extensions; addresses non-motorized transportation alternatives; and identifies funding options. The various roadway improvements and extensions contemplated by the Circulation Element are reflected on the General Plan Circulation Plan. The various roadway



classifications depicted on the Circulation Plan correspond to specific roadway cross-sections, which provide specific standards for right-of-way (ROW) widths, lane configurations, medians, and landscaping requirements. The Riverside County General Plan and WCVAP classify Varner Road, located approximately 0.4-mile southwest of the Project site, and Ramon Road, located approximately 1.0-mile south of the Project site, as “Arterial (128-foot Right-of-Way [ROW])” roadways. Rio Del Sol Road and 30th Avenue, as well as Gravel Pit Road (located 0.75-mile north of the Project site) and Sierra del Sol (located approximately 0.5-mile east of the Project site), are classified by the Circulation Element as “Secondary (100-foot ROW)” facilities. No other roadways in the immediate vicinity of the Project site are classified as General Plan Circulation Element roadways. (Riverside County, 2021b, Figure 7)

The General Plan Circulation Element also identifies planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities. There is a proposed Class II bike path along portions of Varner Road in the vicinity of the Project site, although the General Plan does not identify any bicycle or trail facilities along or within the Project site. (Riverside County, 2021b, Figure 8)

Multipurpose Open Space Element

The Multipurpose Open Space Element addresses forms of open space in the County, including scenic, habitat, and recreation. This element has the purpose of addressing the protection and preservation of natural resources, agriculture, and open space areas; managing mineral resources; preserving and enhancing cultural resources; and providing recreational opportunities for the residents of Riverside County. The Multipurpose Open Space Element also contains figures that detail the locations of water resources, vegetation communities, parks, forests, recreation areas, mineral resources, and cultural resources within the County. Together with the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), the Multipurpose Open Space Element seeks to preserve and protect identified open space areas in order to maintain or improve environmental quality. (Riverside County, 2021a, p. OS-1)

Safety Element

The Safety Element has the primary objective of reducing death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social impact of potential hazards within the County. The Safety Element serves to develop a framework by which safety considerations are introduced into the land use planning process; facilitate the identification and mitigation of hazards for new development; strengthen existing codes, project review, and permitting processes; present policies directed at identifying and reducing hazards in existing development; and strengthen earthquake, flood, inundation, and wildland fire preparedness planning and post-disaster reconstruction policies. Within the Safety Element, policies are presented which pertain to seismic, slope and soil instability; flood and inundation; fire safety; hazardous waste and materials; and disaster preparedness, response, and recovery hazards. The Safety Element was last updated in September 2021 to address California Senate Bill 379, which required the County to include climate adaptation and resiliency strategies in its Safety Element. (Riverside County, 2021a, pp. S-1 - S-2)



Noise Element

The purpose of the Noise Element is to identify sources of noise generation in the County and provide policies to ensure development does not expose people to unacceptable noise levels. The establishment of desirable maximum noise levels and implementation of noise regulations are also included as part of the Noise Element. The Noise Element provides a systematic approach to identifying and managing noise problems in the community; quantifies existing and projected noise levels; addresses excessive noise exposure; and directs community planning for regulation of noise. The Noise Element includes policies, standards, criteria, programs, diagrams, a reference to action items, and maps related to the protection of public health and welfare with respect to noise. (Riverside County, 2021a, p. N-3)

Housing Element

The 2021-2029 Housing Element identifies and establishes County policies intended to fulfill the housing needs of existing and future residents in Riverside County. It establishes policies that guide County decision-making and sets forth an action plan to implement its housing goals. The Housing Element includes a review of previous housing goals, an assessment of the effectiveness of those goals, and an assessment of housing needs. Additionally, the Housing Element includes an inventory of resources and constraints related to meeting housing needs in the County; an analysis of affordable housing developments and programs intended to preserve such housing; community goals for the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing; and a program which sets forth a five-year schedule of actions that the County is undertaking or intends to undertake in implementing the polices set forth in the Housing Element. (Riverside County, 2021d, p. H-3)

Air Quality Element

The intent of the Air Quality Element is to provide background information on the physical and regulatory environment affecting air quality in the County. This element also identifies goals, policies, and programs that are meant to balance the County's actions regarding land use, circulation, and other issues potentially affecting air quality. This element works in conjunction with local and regional air quality planning efforts to address ambient air quality standards set forth by the United States (U.S.) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The Air Quality Element sets ambient air quality standards for various air pollutants based on State and federal standards. The Element also contains policies regarding sensitive receptors, mobile and stationary pollution sources, energy efficiency and conservation, jobs and housing, and transportation. (Riverside County, 2021a, pp. AQ-3 - AQ-31)

Healthy Communities Element

The Healthy Communities Element provides a framework for translating the General Plan vision for a healthy Riverside County into reality by identifying policies aimed at achieving that vision. The Element addresses areas where public health and planning intersect, including transportation and active living; access to nutritious foods; access to health care; mental health; quality of life; and environmental health. This Element addresses overall health; land uses and community design; transportation system (with an emphasis on non-motorized transportation); arts and culture; social capital; complete



communities; parks, trails, and open space; access to healthy foods and nutrition; healthcare and mental healthcare; schools, recreational centers, and daycare centers; and environmental health. The County of Riverside incorporated environmental justice polices into the General Plan Healthy Communities Element in September 2021. The environmental justice policies apply to the Environmental Justice Communities identified in Land Use Element Figure LU-4.1. The Project site is located within an Environmental Justice Community boundary (Thousand Palms Environmental Justice Community). (Riverside County, 2021a, pp. HC-1 - HC-12)

Administration Element

The Administration Element focuses on the administration of the General Plan, which is the sole responsibility of Riverside County, under the authority of the Board of Supervisors. Administration of the General Plan policies includes establishing, maintaining, and applying tools and procedures for interpreting the intent of the General Plan and applying the interpretation to a variety of circumstances. This Element details the vision for Riverside County, General Planning Principles, Countywide Elements and Planning Policies/Area Plan, Appendices of the General Plan, and other administrative topics. (Riverside County, 2021a, pp. AQ-1 - AQ-20)

2. *Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP)*

As noted above, the Project site is located within the WCVAP of the Riverside County General Plan. The WCVAP contains policies that guide the physical development and land uses in the unincorporated western portion of the Coachella Valley. The WCVAP provides a description of the location, physical characteristic, and special features, in addition to a Land Use Plan, policies, and exhibits to better understand the physical, environmental, and regulatory characteristics that comprise the area. Each section of the WCVAP addresses critical issues facing the Western Coachella Valley community. The WCVAP includes sections detailing the features, policy areas, land use, circulation, multipurpose open space, and hazards. (Riverside County, 2021b)

According to WCVAP Figure 6, *Western Coachella Valley Area Plan Mt. Palomar Nighttime Lighting Policy Area*, the Project site is located within Zone B of the Mt. Palomar Nighttime Lighting Policy Area, indicating that land uses in the Project area are subject to compliance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 655 (Regulating Light Pollution). Additionally, WCVAP Figure 9, *Western Coachella Valley Area Plan Scenic Highways*, indicates that I-10, located approximately 0.9-mile southwest of the Project site is identified as a “County Eligible” scenic highway, while State Route 111 (SR-111) in the City of Palm Springs, located approximately 8.1 miles west of the Project site, is classified as a “State Eligible” scenic highway. (Riverside County, 2021b, Figures 6 and 9; Google Earth, n.d.)

3. *Riverside County Land Use Ordinance*

The Riverside County Land Use Ordinance is intended to implement the Riverside County General Plan’s Land Use Plan. Under existing conditions, the western +/- half of the Project site is zoned for “Manufacturing – Service Commercial (M-SC)” land uses, while the eastern +/- half of the Project site is zoned for “Residential Agricultural (R-A).” Refer to Subsection 4.11.1.C for a more thorough discussion of the site’s existing zoning classifications. (RCIT, n.d.)



4. *Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP)*

The CVMSHCP is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County. The overall goal of the CVMSHCP is to maintain and enhance biological diversity and ecosystem processes within the region while allowing for future economic growth. The CVMSHCP covers 27 sensitive plant and wildlife species, as well as 27 natural communities. The overall provisions for the Plan are subdivided according to specific resource conservation goals and organized according to geographic areas, i.e., Conservation Areas. These areas are identified as ‘Core,’ ‘Essential’ or ‘Other Conserved Habitat’ for sensitive plant, invertebrate, amphibian, reptile, bird and mammal species plus ‘Essential Ecological Process Areas’ and ‘Biological Corridors and Linkages.’ Each Conservation Area has specific Conservation Objectives that must be satisfied. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.8-51)

The CVMSHCP received final approval on October 1, 2008. This, plus an Implementing Agreement (IA), allows signatories of the IA to issue take authorizations for all species covered by the CVMSHCP, including state and federally-listed species, as well as other identified covered species and their habitats. Each city or local jurisdiction participating in the IA imposes a “development mitigation fee” for projects within its jurisdiction. With payment of the mitigation fee and compliance with the requirements of the CVMSHCP, a project may be deemed compliant with CEQA, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), CESA and FESA, and impacts to covered species and their habitat would be deemed less than significant. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.8-51)

The CVMSHCP provides for the long-term survival of protected and sensitive species by designating a contiguous system of habitat to be added to existing public/quasi-public lands. As noted above, the CVMSHCP also includes an impact fee for the purpose of acquiring the requisite conservation lands. A range of biological studies may also be required as part of the CVMSHCP environmental review process to identify the need for specific measures to avoid, minimize and reduce impacts to covered species and their habitat. (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.8-51)

5. *Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)*

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) under California State law, established as an association of local governments and agencies that voluntarily convene as a forum to address regional issues. Under federal law, SCAG is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and under State law as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency and a Council of Governments (COG). The SCAG region encompasses six counties (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura) and 191 cities in an area covering more than 38,000 square miles. SCAG develops long-range regional transportation plans including sustainable communities strategy and growth forecast components, regional transportation improvement programs, regional housing needs allocations and other plans for the region. (SCAG, n.d.)



As an MPO and public agency, SCAG develops transportation and housing strategies that transcend jurisdictional boundaries that affect the quality of life for southern California as a whole. In April 2024, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted *Connect SoCal (2024-2050 Regional Transportations Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (herein, “RTP/SCS”). The RTP/SCS includes long-range regional transportation plans, regional transportation improvement programs, regional housing needs allocations, and other plans for the region. The RTP/SCS also provides objectives for meeting emissions reduction targets set forth by CARB; these objectives were provided in a direct response to Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) which was enacted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks through integrated transportation, land use, housing and environmental planning. (SCAG, 2024) The RTP/SCS is updated periodically to allow for the consideration and inclusion of new transportation strategies and methods.

Connect SoCal includes a Technical Appendix titled “Goods Movement” that is applicable to the Project because the Project entails a use that is closely associated with, and relies directly on, the goods movement system (e.g., manufacturing, construction, retail trade, wholesale trade and transportation, and warehousing). In April 2018 SCAG published *Industrial Warehousing in the SCAG Region*. According to the document, the SCAG region is a vibrant hub for international and domestic trade because of its large transportation base and extensive multimodal transportation system. The SCAG region’s freight transportation system includes warehouses and distribution centers; the Ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Hueneme; airports; rail intermodal terminals; rail lines, and local streets, State highways and interstates. Together the system enables the movement of goods from source to market, facilitating uninterrupted global commerce. The region is home to approximately 34,000 warehouses with 1.17 billion square feet (s.f.) of warehouse building space, and undeveloped land that could accommodate an additional 338 million s.f. of new warehouse building space. These regions attract robust logistics activities, and are a major reason the region is a critical mode in the global supply chain. (SCAG, 2018, p. ES-1)

6. South Coast Air Quality Management District Air Quality Management Plan (SCAQMD AQMP)

California Health & Safety Code § 40702 et seq., the California Clean Air Act, requires that an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) be developed and then updated every three years for air basins with non-attainment status. As discussed in EIR Section 4.3, *Air Quality*, the Project site is located in the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB). The SSAB is within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), the agency charged with bringing air quality in the SSAB into conformity with federal and State air quality standards. Air quality within the SSAB is regulated by the SCAQMD and standards for air quality are documented in the SCAQMD’s 2022 AQMP. Although air quality in the SSAB has improved over the past several decades, according to the SCAQMD, the SSAB currently does not meet National Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) attainment status for ozone (“O₃”; 8-hour standard) and particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM₁₀). The SSAB currently is considered non-attainment under the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) due to levels of ozone (1-hour and 8-hour standards) and PM₁₀. (SCAQMD, 2017)

The SCAQMD AQMP is a plan for the regional improvement of air quality. Projects such as the proposed Project relate to the air quality planning process through the growth forecasts that were used as inputs into the regional transportation model. If a proposed project is consistent with these growth forecasts, and if all



available emissions reduction strategies are implemented as effectively as possible on a project-specific basis, then the project is consistent with the AQMP.

4.11.2 APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to land use and planning.

A. Federal Regulations

1. Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77

Federal Regulation Title 14 Part 77 establishes standards and notification requirements for objects affecting navigable airspace. Notification allows the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to identify potential aeronautical hazards in advance to prevent or minimize the adverse impacts to the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace. Any person/organization who intends to sponsor certain construction or alterations must notify the Administrator of the FAA: (FAA, 2020a)

B. State Regulations

1. Porter-Cologne Water Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Act is the principal law governing water quality regulation in California. It establishes a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water. The Porter-Cologne Act applies to surface waters, wetlands, and ground water and to both point and nonpoint sources of pollution. The Porter-Cologne Act also requires adoption of water quality control plans that contain the guiding policies of water pollution management in California. In addition, regional water quality control plans (basin plans) have been adopted by each of the Regional Water Boards and get updated as necessary and practical. These plans identify the existing and potential beneficial uses of waters of the State and establish water quality objectives to protect these uses. The basin plans also contain implementation, surveillance, and monitoring plans. (SWRCB, 2014)

2. California Planning and Zoning Law

The legal framework in which California cities and counties exercise local planning and land use functions is set forth in the California Planning and Zoning Law, §§ 65000 - 66499.58. Under State of California planning law, each city and county must adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan. State law gives cities and counties wide latitude in how a jurisdiction may create a general plan, but there are fundamental requirements that must be met. These requirements include the inclusion of seven mandatory elements described in the Government Code, including a section on land use. Each of the elements must contain text and descriptions setting forth objectives, principles, standards, policies, and plan proposals; diagrams and maps that incorporate data and analysis; and mitigation measures. (OPR, n.d.)



3. *Subdivision Map Act*

The Subdivision Map Act (“Map Act”) vests in the cities and counties the power to regulate and control the design and improvement of subdivisions within its boundaries. The authority for a city or county to regulate land use, including subdivisions, flows from the general police power. However, the Map Act sets forth certain mandates that must be followed for subdivision processing. The Map Act’s primary goals are: 1) To encourage orderly community development by providing for the regulation and control of the design and improvement of the subdivision, with a proper consideration of its relation to adjoining areas; 2) To ensure that the areas within the subdivision that are dedicated for public purposes will be properly improved by the subdivider so that they will not become an undue burden on the community; and 3) To protect the public and individual transferees from fraud and exploitation. The Map Act is applied in conjunction with other State land use laws such as the general plan, specific plans, zoning, CEQA, and the Permit Streamlining Act. The Map Act provides for regulation of land divisions by a city or county and is interpreted and enforced by the city or county. (Curtin, Jr. & Merritt, 2002, p. 2)

4. *Office of Planning and Research (OPR) General Plan Guidelines*

Each city and county in California must prepare a comprehensive, long term general plan to guide its future. To assist local governments in meeting this responsibility, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) is required to adopt and periodically revise guidelines for the preparation and content of local general plans pursuant to Government Code § 65040.2. The General Plan Guidelines are advisory, not mandatory. Nevertheless, it is the state’s only official document explaining California’s legal requirements for general plans. Planners, decision-making bodies, and the public depend upon the General Plan Guidelines for help when preparing local general plans. The courts have periodically referred to the General Plan Guidelines for assistance in determining compliance with planning law. For this reason, the General Plan Guidelines closely adheres to statute and case law. It also relies upon commonly accepted principles of contemporary planning practice. (OPR, 2017a, p. 1)

5. *State Aeronautics Act*

The State Aeronautics Commission Act of 1947 created the Division of Aeronautics (“Division”), and was later amended by statute to read the State Aeronautics Act (Aeronautics Act) in 1961. The Aeronautics Act itself is divided into seven chapters. Chapter Four deals with airport and heliport permitting, air navigation facilities, noise guidelines, funding, and importantly, the formation and authority of Airport Land Use Commissions (ALUC). Chapter Five covers the investigations and hearings on matters covered in the Aeronautics Act. Chapter Six introduces airport planning. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

6. *Senate Bill 375 (SB 375)*

SB 375 contains five major components. The first is regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions targets, which Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) update every eight years in conjunction with the revision schedule of housing and transportation elements. Second, MPOs are required to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that provides a plan for meeting regional targets. The SCS and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) must be consistent with each other, including action items and financing decisions.



If the SCS does not meet the regional target, the MPO must produce an Alternative Planning Strategy that details an alternative plan to meet the target. The MPO for the Project areas is the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Third, SB 375 requires that regional housing elements and transportation plans be synchronized on 8-year schedules. In addition, Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation numbers must conform to the SCS. If local jurisdictions are required to rezone land as a result of changes in the housing element, rezoning must take place within three years. Fourth, SB 375 provides CEQA streamlining incentives for preferred development types. Finally, MPOs must use transportation and air emissions modeling techniques consistent with guidelines prepared by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, cities, and counties are encouraged, but not required, to use travel demand models consistent with the CTC guidelines. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

7. SCAG Connect SoCal

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) under California State law, established as an association of local governments and agencies that voluntarily convene as a forum to address regional issues. Under federal law, SCAG is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and under State law as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency and a Council of Governments. The SCAG region encompasses six counties (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura) and 191 cities in an area covering more than 38,000 square miles. SCAG develops long-range regional transportation plans including sustainable communities strategy and growth forecast components, regional transportation improvement programs, regional housing needs allocations and other plans for the region. (SCAG, n.d.)

Connect SoCal is SCAG's 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). *Connect SoCal* includes a Technical Appendix titled "Goods Movement" that is applicable to the Project because the Project entails a use that is closely associated with, and relies directly on the goods movement system (e.g., manufacturing, construction, retail trade, wholesale trade and transportation, and warehousing). In April 2018 SCAG published *Industrial Warehousing in the SCAG Region*. According to the document, the SCAG region is a vibrant hub for international and domestic trade because of its large transportation base and extensive multimodal transportation system. The SCAG region's freight transportation system includes warehouses and distribution centers; the Ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Hueneme; airports; rail intermodal terminals; rail lines, and local streets, state highways and interstates. Together the system enables the movement of goods from source to market, facilitating uninterrupted global commerce. The region is home to approximately 34,000 warehouses with 1.17 billion square feet of warehouse building space, and undeveloped land that could accommodate an additional 338 million square feet of new warehouse building space. These regions attract robust logistics activities, and are a major reason the region is a critical mode in the global supply chain. (SCAG, 2018, p. ES-1)

8. Senate Bill 330 – Housing Crisis Act of 2019

To accelerate housing production, Senate Bill 330 (SB 330) made changes to land use and zoning law to remove barriers and impediments to building new housing in urban areas of the State. The provisions of SB 330 that prohibit downzoning of residential property for non-residential use apply only to "affected counties,"



which are defined by SB 330 as “a census designated place, based on the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, that is wholly located within the boundaries of an urbanized area, as designated by the United States Census Bureau.” HCD has published a list of 141 CDPs in 22 counties that are identified as “affected counties.” The Project site and surrounding areas are not included on the list of “affected counties” pursuant to SB 330. (HCD, n.d.)

C. Local Regulations

1. Riverside County Board of Supervisors Good Neighbor Policy for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses

The County of Riverside Board of Supervisors *Good Neighbor Policy for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses* (“Good Neighbor Policy”) provides a framework through which large-scale logistics and warehouse projects, such as that proposed by the Project, can be designed and operated in a way that lessens their impact on surrounding communities and the environment. It is meant to apply Best Management Practices to help minimize potential impacts to sensitive receptors and is intended to be used in conjunction with the County’s Land Use Ordinance, which provides development requirements for said projects. This policy provides a series of development and operational criteria applicable to logistics and warehouse projects that include any building larger than 250,000 square feet in size that are implemented to supplement project-level mitigation measures in order to further reduce impacts related to logistics and warehousing development and operations. It should be noted that the currently-proposed Project consists of applications for a General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan Amendment, and Change of Zone, and no site-specific development applications (e.g., plot plans, etc.) are proposed at this time. As the Good Neighbor Policy requirements relate to site-specific development and construction activities, the requirements of the Good Neighbor Policy would be enforced as part of the County’s review of future site-specific development applications, such as implementing plot plans. (Riverside County, 2019b)

4.11.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section XI of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, as updated in December 2018, addresses typical adverse effects to land use and planning, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate the Project’s impacts on land use and planning (OPR, 2018a):

- a. *Would the Project physically divide an established community?*
- b. *Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?*

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist, and are derived from Section XI of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact on land use and planning if construction and/or operation of the Project would:



- a. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; or
- b. Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community (including a low-income or minority community).

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's standard Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on land use and planning. It should be noted that the Project's consistency with the CVMSHCP, which is the only habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan applicable to the Project site, is evaluated in EIR Subsection 4.4, *Biological Resources*, under the analysis of Threshold a., and the analysis concludes that impacts due to a conflict with the CVMSHCP would be less than significant with mitigation and/or payment of fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 875. Additionally, an analysis of Project consistency with the SCAQMD AQMP is addressed in EIR Subsection 4.3, *Air Quality*, under the analysis of Threshold a. Project consistency with the CVMSHCP and SCAQMD AQMP is not further discussed in this Subsection.

4.11.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: *Would the Project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?*

A. Project Consistency with General Plan and Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP)

Under existing conditions, the western +/- half of the Project site is designated by the General Plan and WCVAP for LI land uses, while the eastern +/- half is designated for MDR land uses. The Project Applicant proposes a General Plan Amendment (GPA 220004) to change the land use designation on the eastern +/- half of the Project site from MDR to LI. With approval of GPA 220004, the Project would be consistent with the General Plan and WCVAP land use designations for the 83.0-acre property. Moreover, impacts associated with the proposed land use has been evaluated throughout this EIR. Where significant impacts are identified, mitigation measures are identified to reduce impacts to the maximum feasible extent. Based on the foregoing analysis, the proposed Project would not result in a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, and impacts would be less than significant.

A General Plan Policies Consistency Analysis was prepared for the proposed Project in order to demonstrate the Project's consistency with applicable General Plan policies, and is included as *Technical Appendix M*. For more information regarding the Project's consistency with specific applicable Riverside County General Plan and WCVAP policies, please refer to *Technical Appendix M*. As concluded therein, the Project would be consistent with or substantially conform to applicable General Plan and WCVAP policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding or reducing significant environmental effects. Accordingly, impacts due to a conflict with applicable General Plan or WCVAP policies would be less than significant.



B. Project Consistency with Connect SoCal

In April 2024, SCAG adopted the 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), also referred to as “Connect SoCal.” The RTP/SCS seeks to improve mobility, promote sustainability, facilitate economic development, and preserve the quality of life for the residents in the region. The long-range visioning plan balances future mobility and housing needs with goals for the environment, the regional economy, social equity and environmental justice, and public health. The goals included in the RTP/SCS are pertinent to the proposed Project. These goals are meant to provide guidance for considering the proposed Project within the context of regional goals and policies. An analysis of the Project’s consistency with the relevant goals of Connect SoCal is presented below in Table 4.11-1, *Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals*. As indicated, the Project would not conflict with any Connect SoCal goals, and no impact would occur.

Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
Mobility	
<i>System Preservation and Resilience</i>	
01. Prioritize repair, maintenance and preservation of the SCAG region's existing transportation assets, following a "Fix-It-First" principle	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 01 provides direction to County and regional staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
02. Promote transportation investments that advance progress toward the achievement of asset management targets, including the condition of the National Highway System pavement and bridges and transit assets (rolling stock, equipment, facilities and infrastructure)	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 02 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Complete Streets</i>	
03. Pursue the development of Complete Streets that comprise a safe, multimodal network with flexible use of public rights-of-way for people of all ages and abilities using a variety of modes (e.g., people walking, biking, rolling, driving, taking transit)	<u>Consistent.</u> As part of the Project, the Project Applicant would improve Rio Del Sol Road and 30 th Avenue along the Project site’s frontages with these roadways to include landscaped parkways with curb-separated sidewalk, which would promote non-vehicular modes of transportation in the local area.
04. Ensure the implementation of Complete Streets that are sensitive to urban, suburban or rural contexts and improve transportation safety for all, but especially for vulnerable road users (e.g., people, especially older adults and children, walking and biking)	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 04 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
05. Facilitate the implementation of Complete Streets and curb space management strategies that accommodate and optimize new technologies, micromobility devices and first/last mile connections to transit and last-mile delivery	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 05 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project. Additionally, the Project would not affect any existing connections to transit in the local area.
06. Support implementation of Complete Streets improvements in Priority Equity Communities, particularly with respect to Transportation Equity Zones, as a way to enhance mobility, safety and access to opportunities	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 06 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.



Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
<i>Transit and Multimodal Integration</i>	
07. Encourage and support the implementation of projects, both physical and digital, that facilitate multimodal connectivity, prioritize transit and shared mobility, and result in improved mobility, accessibility and safety	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 07 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
08. Support connections across the public, private and nonprofit sectors to develop transportation projects and programs that result in improved connectivity	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 08 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
09. Encourage residential and employment development in areas surrounding existing and planned transit/rail stations	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 09 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
10. Support the implementation of transportation projects in Priority Equity Communities, particularly with respect to Transportation Equity Zones, as a way to enhance mobility, safety and access to opportunities	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 10 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
11. Create a resilient transportation system by preparing for emergencies and the impacts of climate change	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 11 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Transportation System Management</i>	
12. Pursue efficient use of the transportation system using a set of operational improvement strategies that maintain the performance of the existing transportation system instead of adding roadway capacity, where possible	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 12 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
13. Prioritize transportation investments that increase travel time reliability, including build-out of the regional express lanes network	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 13 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Transportation Demand Management</i>	
14. Encourage the development of transportation projects that provide convenient, cost-effective and safe alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel (e.g., trips made by foot, on bikes, via transit, etc.)	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 14 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers and relates to transportation projects, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
15. Encourage jurisdictions and TDM practitioners to develop and expand local plans and policies to promote alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel for residents, workers and visitors	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 15 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
16. Encourage municipalities to update existing (legacy) TDM ordinances by incorporating new travel modes and new technology and by incorporating employment and residential sites of certain populations – for example, employers who have less than 250 employees (below the 250 or more employees threshold identified in AQMD’s Rule 2202)	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 16 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Technology Integration</i>	
17. Support the implementation of technology designed to provide equal access to mobility, employment, economic	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 17 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and



Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
opportunity, education, health and other quality-of-life opportunities for all residents within the SCAG region	is not applicable to the proposed Project.
18. Advocate for data sharing between the public and private sectors to effectively evaluate the services' benefits and impacts on communities while protecting data security and privacy	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 18 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
19. Advocate for technology that is adaptive and responsive to ensure it remains up to date and meets the evolving needs of users and stakeholders	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 19 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
20. Promote technology that has the capacity to facilitate economic growth, improve workforce development opportunities, and enhance safety and security	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 20 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
21. Proactively monitor and plan for the development, deployment and commercialization of new technology as it relates to integration with transportation infrastructure	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 21 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Safety</i>	
22. Eliminate transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries (especially those involving vulnerable road users, such as people, especially older adults and children, walking and biking) on the regional multimodal transportation system	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 22 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
23. Integrate the assessment of equity into the regional transportation safety and security planning process, focusing on the analysis and mitigation of disproportionate impacts on disadvantaged communities	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 23 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project. Additionally, the Project site is not located within a SB 535-designated Disadvantaged community, and the Project does not include any components related to regional transportation safety or security.
24. Support innovative approaches for addressing transit safety and security issues so that impacts to transit employees and the public are minimized and those experiencing issues (e.g., unhoused persons) are supported	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 24 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
25. Support the use of transportation safety and system security data in investment decision-making, including consideration of new highway and transit/rail investments that would address safety and security needs	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 25 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Funding the System/Users Fees</i>	
26. Promote stability and sustainability for core state and federal transportation funding sources	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 26 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
27. Establish a user fee-based system that better reflects the true cost of transportation, provides firewall protection for new and existing transportation funds, and represents equitable distribution of costs and benefits	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 27 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project. Additionally, the Project's Traffic Study (EIR <i>Technical Appendix K1</i>) identifies improvements, fair share contributions, and fee



Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
	contributions to the County’s DIF and/or TUMF programs, which would ensure that all study area intersections would operate at an acceptable Level of Service (LOS).
28. Pursue funding tools that promote access to opportunity and support economic development through innovative mobility programs	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 28 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
29. Promote national and state programs that include return-to-source guarantees while maintaining the flexibility to reward regions that continue to commit substantial local resources	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 29 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
30. Leverage locally available funding with innovative financing tools to attract private capital and accelerate project delivery	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 30 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
31. Promote local funding strategies that maximize the value of public assets while improving mobility, sustainability and resilience	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 31 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Communities	
<i>Priority Development Areas</i>	
32. Promote the growth of origins and destinations, with a focus on future housing and population growth, in areas with existing and planned urban infrastructure that includes transit and utilities	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 32 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
33. Promote the growth of origins and destinations, in areas with a proclivity toward multimodal options like transit and active transportation, to reduce single occupant vehicle (SOV) dependency and vehicle miles traveled	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 33 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
34. Seek to realize scale economies or a critical mass of jobs and destinations in areas across the region that can support non-SOV options and shorter trip distances, combined trips and reduced vehicle miles traveled	<u>Consistent.</u> The Project Applicant proposes to develop a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building, which would increase employment opportunities in the local area and would establish development intensities that could support future transit in the local area.
<i>Housing the Region</i>	
35. Encourage housing development in areas with access to important resources and amenities (economic, educational, health, social and similar) to further fair housing access and equity across the region	<u>Not Applicable.</u> The proposed Project includes a proposed 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building and potential IID substation, and the Project does not include any proposed housing.
36. Encourage housing development in transit-supportive and walkable areas to create more interconnected and resilient communities	<u>Consistent.</u> The Project Applicant proposes to develop a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building, which would increase employment opportunities in the local area and would establish development intensities that could support future transit in the local area.
37. Support local, regional, state and federal efforts to produce and preserve affordable housing while meeting additional housing needs across the region	<u>Not Applicable.</u> The proposed Project includes a proposed 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building and potential IID substation, and the Project does not include any proposed housing.



Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
38. Prioritize communities that are vulnerable to displacement pressures by supporting community stabilization and increasing access to housing that meets the needs of the region	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 38 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
39. Promote innovative strategies and partnerships to increase homeownership opportunities across the region with an emphasis on communities that have been historically impacted by redlining and other systemic barriers to homeownership for people of color and other marginalized groups	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 39 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
40. Advocate for and support programs that emphasize reducing housing cost burden (for renters and homeowners), with a focus on the communities with the greatest needs and vulnerabilities	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 40 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
41. Support efforts to increase housing and services for people experiencing homelessness across the region	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 41 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>15-Minute Communities</i>	
42. Promote 15-minute communities as places with a mix of complementary land uses and accessible mobility options that align with and support the diversity of places (or communities) across the region. These are communities where residents can either access their most basic, day-to-day needs within a 15-minute walk, bike ride or roll from their home or as places that result in fewer and shorter trips because of the proximity of complementary land uses	<u>Consistent.</u> The Project Applicant proposes to develop a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building, which would increase employment opportunities in the local area and would establish development intensities that could support future transit in the local area.
43. Support communities across the region to realize 15-minute communities through incremental changes that improve equity, quality of life, public health, mobility, sustainability, resilience and economic vitality	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 43 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
44. Encourage efforts that elevate innovative approaches to increasing access to neighborhood destinations and amenities through an array of people-centered mobility options	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 44 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Equitable Engagement and Decision-Making</i>	
45. Advance community-centered interventions, resources and programming that serve the most disadvantaged communities and people in the region, like Priority Equity Communities, with strategies that can be implemented in the short-to-long-term	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 45 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
46. Promote racial equity that is grounded in the recognition of the past and current harms of systemic racism and one that advances restorative justice	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 46 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
47. Increase equitable, inclusive, and meaningful representation and participation of people of color and	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 47 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and



Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
disadvantaged communities in planning processes	is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Environment	
<i>Sustainable Development</i>	
48. Promote sustainable development and best practices that enhance resource conservation, reduce resource consumption and promote resilience	<u>Consistent.</u> As presented throughout this EIR, the Project’s impacts to the environment would be less than significant or would be reduced to the maximum feasible extent with the implementation of mitigation measures. Additionally, the analysis presented in EIR Subsection 4.6, <i>Energy</i> , with mandatory compliance with applicable federal and State regulations and requirements, including the provisions of the Title 24 Building Energy Standards, Project construction and operation would not result in the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy.
49. Support communities across the region to advance innovative sustainable development practices	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 49 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
50. Recognize and support the diversity of communities across the region by promoting local place-making, planning and development efforts that advance equity, mobility, resilience and sustainability	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 50 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Air Quality</i>	
51. Reduce hazardous air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality throughout the region through planning and implementation efforts	<u>Consistent.</u> As evaluated herein and in EIR Subsections 4.3, <i>Air Quality</i> , and 4.8, <i>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</i> , mitigation measures have been imposed on the Project to reduce the Project’s air quality and GHG emissions to the maximum feasible extent.
52. Support investments that reduce hazardous air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 52 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
53. Reduce the exposure and impacts of emissions and pollutants and promote local and regional efforts that improve air quality for vulnerable populations, including but not limited to Priority Equity Communities and the AB 617 Communities	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 53 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Clean Transportation</i>	
54. Accelerate the deployment of a zero-emission transportation system and use near-zero-emission technology to offer short-term benefits where zero-emissions solutions are not yet feasible or commercially viable	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 54 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
55. Promote equitable use of and access to clean transportation technologies so that all may benefit from them	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 55 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
56. Consider the full environmental life cycle of clean	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 56 provides direction to



Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
transportation technologies, including upstream production and end of life as an important part of meeting SCAG’s objectives in economic development and recovery, resilience planning and achievement of equity	County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
57. Maintain a technology-neutral approach in the study of, advancement of and investment in clean transportation technology	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 57 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Natural and Agricultural Lands Preservation</i>	
58. Prioritize the climate mitigation, adaptation, resilience and economic benefits of natural and agricultural lands in the region	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 58 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
59. Support conservation of habitats that are prone to hazards exacerbated by climate change, such as wildfires and flooding	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 59 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
60. Support regional conservation planning and collaboration across the region	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 60 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
61. Encourage the protection and restoration of natural habitat and wildlife corridors	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 49 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project. Additionally, the Project site is located in an area that is planned for future development and contains no sensitive natural habitat and is not a part of any wildlife movement corridors.
62. Encourage the conservation and viability of agricultural lands to protect the regional and local food supply and ensure the sustainability of local agriculture as a vital part of the region’s economy	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 49 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project. In addition, the Project site is located in an area that is planned for future development, and the Project site contains no agricultural lands under existing conditions.
63. Encourage policy development of the link between natural and agricultural conservation with public health	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 63 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Climate Resilience</i>	
64. Prioritize the most vulnerable populations and communities subject to climate hazards to help the people, places and infrastructure that are most at risk for climate change impacts. In doing so, recognize that disadvantaged communities are often overburdened	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 64 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
65. Support local and regional climate and hazard planning and implementation efforts for transportation, land use, and other factors	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 65 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
66. Support nature-based solutions to increase regional resilience of the natural and built environment	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 66 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
67. Promote sustainable water use planning, practices and	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 67 provides direction to



Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
storage that improve regional water security and resilience in a drier environment	County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
68. Support an integrated planning approach to help local jurisdictions meet housing production needs in a drier environment	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 68 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Economy	
Goods Movement	
69. Leverage and prioritize investments, particularly where there are mutual co-benefits to both freight and passenger/commuter rail	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 69 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
70. Prioritize community and environmental justice concerns, together with economic needs, and support workforce development opportunities, particularly around deployment of zero-emission and clean technologies and their supporting infrastructure	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 70 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
71. Explore and advance the transition toward zero-emission and clean technologies and other transformative technologies, where viable	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 71 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
72. Advance comprehensive, systems-level planning of corridor/supply chain operational strategies that is integrated with road and rail infrastructure and inland port concepts	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 72 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
73. Ensure continued, significant investment in a safe, secure, clean and efficient transportation system – including both highways and rail – to support the intermodal movement of goods across the region	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 73 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Broadband	
74. Support ubiquitous regional broadband deployment and access to provide the necessary infrastructure and capability for Smart Cities strategies—to ensure the benefits of these strategies improve safety and are distributed equitably	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 74 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
75. Develop networks that are efficient, scalable, resilient and sustainable to support transportation systems management, operations services and “tele-everything” strategies that reduce vehicle miles traveled, optimize efficiency and accommodate future growth of regional economies	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 75 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
76. Encourage investments that provide access to digital activities that support educational, financial and economic growth	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 76 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
77. Advocate for current, accurate data to identify opportunity zones and solutions that support the development of broadband services to community anchor institutions and local businesses	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 77 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
78. Promote an atmosphere that allows for healthy	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 78 provides direction to



Table 4.11-1 Analysis of Consistency with Connect SoCal Goals

2024-2050 RTP/SCA Regional Planning Policies	Project Consistency
competition and speed-driven innovative solutions while remaining technologically neutral	County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
79. Use a bottom-up approach to identify and support a community's broadband needs	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 79 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Universal Basic Mobility</i>	
80. Encourage partnerships and policies to broaden safe and efficient access to a range of mobility services that improve connections to jobs, education and basic services	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 80 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project. Notwithstanding, the Project site is located in a portion of the County with access to public transit, basic services, and employment opportunities.
81. Promote increased payment credentials for disadvantaged community members and the transition of cash users to digital payment technologies to address payment barriers	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 81 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Workforce Development</i>	
82. Foster a positive business climate by promoting regional collaboration in workforce and economic development between cities, counties, educational institutions and employers	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 82 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
83. Encourage inclusive workforce development that promotes upward economic mobility	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 83 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
84. Support entrepreneurial growth with a focus on underrepresented communities	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 84 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
85. Foster a resilient workforce that is poised to effectively respond to changing economic conditions (e.g., market dynamics, technological advances and climate change)	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 85 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
86. Inform and facilitate data-driven decision-making about the region's workforce	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 86 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
<i>Tourism</i>	
87. Consult and collaborate with state, county and local agencies within the region that are charged with promoting tourism and transportation	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 87 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.
88. Encourage the reduced use of cars by visitors to the region by working with state, county and local agencies (e.g., park services, transportation agencies) to highlight and increase access to alternative options, including transit, passenger rail and active transportation	<u>Not Applicable.</u> RTP/SCS Policy 88 provides direction to County and regional agency staff and decision makers, and is not applicable to the proposed Project.



C. Project Consistency with Riverside County Board of Supervisors Good Neighbor Policy for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses

An analysis of the proposed Project's consistency with the Riverside County Board of Supervisors Good Neighbor Policy for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses (Board of Supervisors Policy F3) was prepared as part of the Project's application materials. As indicated in EIR *Technical Appendix O*, the Project would be fully consistent with all applicable provisions of the County's Good Neighbor Guidelines and no impact would occur.

D. Conclusion

Based on the foregoing analysis, the proposed Project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, and impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold b: Would the Project disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community (including a low-income or minority community)?

Under existing conditions, the nearest residential use occurs approximately 0.25-mile east of the Project site, with additional residential neighborhoods occur approximately 0.27-mile south of the Project site. While lands within the Project vicinity are planned for future development with residential uses, lands to the north consist of an existing organic materials recycling facility and planned open space areas, while lands to the west of the Project site are under tribal ownership and are not planned for future residential use. Off-site infrastructure consisting of the paving of a segment of Robert Road and the installation of IID power poles and power lines would occur within or parallel to public rights-of-way and have no potential to significantly physically disrupt or divide an established community. There are no components of the proposed Project that would disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established or planned community. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.11.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold a., the proposed Project would not conflict with any of the policies included in the Riverside County General Plan or WCVAP, and would not conflict with Connect SoCal. Other developments within the western Riverside County region similarly would be required to demonstrate compliance with applicable General Plan and Connect SoCal policies. Thus, the Project's impacts due to a conflict with a land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold b., the Project would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community (including a low-income or minority community). As such, cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

4.11.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project would not conflict with the General Plan, WCVAP, Connect SoCal, Riverside County Board of Supervisors "Good Neighbor Policy" for Logistics and



Warehouse/Distribution Uses, or any other land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold b.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community (including a low-income or minority community), and impacts would be less than significant.

4.11.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Impacts to land use and planning would be less than significant; therefore, mitigation measures are not required.



4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

This Subsection 4.12 describes the potential mineral resources that are located beneath the Project site and in the vicinity and evaluates the potential effects that the Project may have on these resources. The following analysis is based in part on information obtained in the County’s General Plan (Riverside County, 2021a). The analysis in this subsection also is based, in part, on information from the Project’s geotechnical technical study, which was prepared by Sladden Engineering (“Sladden”), is entitled, “Geotechnical Investigation, Majestic Thousand Palms, NEC Rio Del Sol Road & 30th Avenue,” is dated September 17, 2021, and is included as *Technical Appendix F* to this EIR (Sladden, 2021). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of these and other reference sources.

4.12.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. *Geology*

The Project site is located within the Colorado Desert Physiographic Province (also referred to as the Salton Trough) that is characterized as a northwest-southeast trending structural depression extending from the Gulf of California to the Banning Pass. The Salton Trough is dominated by several northwest trending faults, most notably the San Andreas Fault system. The Salton Trough is bounded by the Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains on the southwest, the San Bernardino Mountains on the north, the Little San Bernardino/Chocolate/Orocopia Mountains on the east, and extends through the Imperial Valley into the Gulf of California on the south. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

The Project site has been mapped to be immediately underlain by undifferentiated Quaternary-age dune sand (Qs) and alluvium (Qal). The regional geologic setting for the site vicinity is presented on the Figure 2 of the Project’s Geotechnical Investigation (EIR *Technical Appendix F*). (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

The subsurface conditions at the site were investigated by drilling nine exploratory boreholes to depths between approximately 11 to 51 feet below ground surface (bgs) in order to evaluate the subsurface soil conditions. Disturbed soil was encountered to a depth of approximately 1 foot bgs. Underlying the disturbed soil and extending to the maximum depths explored, native earth materials were encountered. Generally, the native earth materials consisted of silty sand (SM) and gravelly sand (SP). The native soil appeared grayish brown in in-situ color, dry and fine- to coarse-grained with scattered gravel and cobbles. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

B. *Mineral Resources Potential*

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) Public Resources Code (PRC), Sections (§§) 2710-2796 provides a comprehensive surface mining and reclamation policy with the regulation of surface mining operations to assure that adverse environmental impacts are minimized and mined lands are reclaimed to a usable condition. The SMARA requires the State Geologist to classify land according to the presence, absence, or likely occurrence of significant mineral deposits in certain areas of the State subject to urban expansion or land uses incompatible with mining. The State classification system is broken out into four general zones, as shown below in Table 4.12-1, *Mineral Resources Zones*. According to mapping information available from the California Department of Conservation (CDC), the Project site is classified as MRZ-3,



which indicates that the Project site occurs in an area of undetermined mineral resource significance (CDC, 1987). Accordingly, the Project site does not contain any areas of known mineral resources under existing conditions.

Table 4.12-1 Mineral Resources Zones

Zone	Significance
MRZ-1	Areas where the available geologic information indicates no significant mineral deposits or a minimal likelihood of significant mineral deposits.
MRZ-2a	Areas where the available geologic information indicates that there are significant mineral deposits.
MRZ-2b	Areas where the available geologic information indicates that there is a likelihood of significant mineral deposits.
MRZ-3a	Areas where the available geologic information indicates that mineral deposits are likely to exist, however, the significance of the deposit is undetermined.
MRZ-4	Areas where there is not enough information available to determine the presence or absence of mineral deposits.

(Riverside County, 2021a, pp. OS-37 to OS-38)

4.12.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to mineral resources.

A. *State Regulations*

1. *Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975*

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA, Public Resources Code, §§ 2710-2796) provides a comprehensive surface mining and reclamation policy with the regulation of surface mining operations to assure that adverse environmental impacts are minimized and mined lands are reclaimed to a usable condition. SMARA also encourages the production, conservation, and protection of the state’s mineral resources. Public Resources Code § 2207 provides annual reporting requirements for all mines in the state, under which the State Mining and Geology Board is also granted authority and obligations. (CDC, n.d.)

SMARA, Chapter 9, Division 2 of the Public Resources Code, requires the State Mining and Geology Board to adopt State policy for the reclamation of mined lands and the conservation of mineral resources. These policies are prepared in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, (Government Code) and are found in California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 2, Chapter 8, Subchapter 1. (CDC, n.d.)



B. Local Regulations

1. Riverside County Ordinance No. 555, Implementing SMARA

This ordinance addresses the importance of mineral extraction to the economic well-being of Riverside County. It regulates all surface mining operations in the unincorporated portions of Riverside County, as authorized by SMARA, to ensure that: (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.14-14)

- The production and conservation of minerals is encouraged while considering and balancing values relating to recreation, watershed, wildlife, range and forage, and aesthetic enjoyment. And, at the same time, eliminating or minimizing the residual hazards to public health and safety.
- The adverse effects of surface mining operations are prevented or minimized and that mined lands are reclaimed to a useable condition readily adaptable for alternative land use.
- The reclamation of mined lands is carried out in a way that permits the continued mining of minerals.

4.12.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section XII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to mineral resources, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate the Project's impacts on mineral resources:

- *Would the Project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?*
- *Would the Project result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.*

Significance thresholds as implemented by Riverside County are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist form, which are derived from Section XII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact on mineral resources if construction and/or operation of the Project would:

- a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State;*
- b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan;*
- c. Be an incompatible land use located adjacent to a State classified or designated area or existing surface mine; or*
- d. Expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing or abandoned quarries or mines.*



The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on mineral resources.

4.12.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State?

According to the CDC, the Project site and the Project's off-site infrastructure improvement areas are classified as MRZ 3, which includes "areas containing mineral deposits the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data" (CDC, 1987). Therefore, the Project site does not contain any known mineral resources that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State. Further, the Project site is located on an alluvial fan is not designated by the County for resource extraction activities. Accordingly, with implementation of the proposed Project there would be no impact to known mineral resources.

Threshold b.: Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

The Project site and the Project's off-site infrastructure improvement areas are not designated as a mineral resource recovery site by the County's General Plan or the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP). Additionally, the Project site does not occur within any specific plans or other land use plans that identify the Project site as a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Accordingly, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan, and no impact would occur.

Threshold c.: Be an incompatible land use located adjacent to a State classified or designated area or existing surface mine?

As mapped by the CDC, lands located approximately 0.75-mile north of the Project site and 1.1 miles northeast of the Project site are mapped as MRZ-2, indicating that these areas "...where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists." Both of these properties appear to be subject to on-going mining operations by Desert Redi-Mix and All American Stone. The Project consists of the proposed development of a 1,238,992 square foot (s.f.) warehouse building and an Imperial Irrigation District (IID) joint electric substation. The proposed warehouse and electric substation uses would not be an incompatible use with on-going mining operations to the north and north-east. Furthermore, due to the distance between the Project site and these active mining operations, the Project has no potential to result in any incompatibilities with these resource extraction activities. No impact would occur.

Threshold d.: Expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing, or abandoned quarries or mines?

Records on past uses of the site indicate that no quarrying or mining activities ever occurred on the Project site (Nova, 2021, p. 11 and 17). However, there are several existing mines within the Project vicinity, the closest of which occurs is Ready Mix that occurs approximately 0.75-mile to the north of the Project site. Due to the



considerable distance between the Project site and the existing mines, the Project has no potential to expose the Project site's future workers on site to mining-related hazards. Impacts would therefore be less than significant.

4.12.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

This cumulative impact analysis considers development of the proposed Project in conjunction with other development projects within the western Coachella Valley region. This cumulative study area was selected because the western Coachella Valley region encompasses large areas that include geologic conditions similar to those that occur on the Project site, and because this study area encompasses a large portion of the local market for the production and consumption of mineral resources.

As mapped by the CDC, the Project site is classified as MRZ-3 and contains no known mineral resource deposits. As such, the Project has no potential to result in cumulatively-considerable impacts due to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or residents of the State. No cumulatively-considerable impacts would occur.

Riverside County's General Plan and the WCVAP do not designate the Project site or immediately surrounding areas as a mineral resource recovery site, and there are no other land use plans that identify the site or surrounding areas for containing mineral resources. As such, the Project has no potential to result in cumulatively-considerable impacts due to the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. No cumulatively-considerable impacts would occur.

Although lands within 0.75-mile of the Project site are subject to on-going mining operations by Ready Mix, the Project's proposed warehouse and electric substation uses would not be an incompatible use with on-going mining operations to the north. Additionally, the Project site has no potential to result in a land use conflict with existing mining operations due to the considerable distance between the Project site and the nearest mine. Accordingly, no cumulatively-considerable impacts to State classified or designated areas or existing surface mines would occur.

Although there are several existing mines within the Project vicinity, the closest of which occurs approximately 0.75-mile to the north of the Project site, due to distance between the Project site and the existing mines, the Project has no potential to expose future workers on site to mining-related hazards. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

4.12.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: No Impact. According to the CDC, land that would be physically impacted by the Project is classified as MRZ 3, which includes "areas containing mineral deposits the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data." Therefore, the Project is not proposed on land that contains known mineral resources that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State. Accordingly, Project would have no adverse impact to known mineral resources.



Threshold b.: No Impact. Land that would be physically impacted by the Project is not designated as a mineral resource recovery site by the County's General Plan or the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP). Additionally, the Project site does not occur within any specific plans or other land use plans that identify the Project site as a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Accordingly, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan, and no impact would occur.

Threshold c.: No Impact. Although lands within 0.75-mile of the Project site are subject to on-going mining operations, the Project's proposed warehouse and electric substation uses and associated off-site infrastructure would not be incompatible uses with on-going mining operations to the north. Additionally, the Project has no potential to result in a land use conflict with existing mining operations due to the distance between the Project site and the nearest mine. No impact would occur.

Threshold d.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Although there are several existing mines within the Project site's vicinity, the closest of which occurs approximately 0.75-mile to the north of the Project site, due to distance between the Project site and the existing mines, the Project has no potential to expose future workers on site to mining-related hazards. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.12.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

The Project would result in less-than-significant mineral resources impacts; therefore, mitigation measures are not required.



4.13 NOISE

This Subsection 4.13 addresses the environmental issue of noise. The information in this Subsection is based in part on a technical report prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc. (herein, “Urban Crossroads”), titled, “Majestic Thousand Palms (GPA220004, CZ2200013, PPT20022, CEQ220033) Noise and Vibration Analysis” (herein, “NVA”), date January 11, 2024, and included as *Technical Appendix J* to this EIR (Urban Crossroads, 2024e). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources.

4.13.1 FUNDAMENTALS OF NOISE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SOUND

Noise is simply defined as "unwanted sound." Sound becomes unwanted when it interferes with normal activities, when it causes actual physical harm, or when it has adverse effects on health. Noise is measured on a logarithmic scale of sound pressure level known as a decibel (dB). A-weighted decibels (dBA) approximate the subjective response of the human ear to broad frequency noise sources by discriminating against very low and very high frequencies of the audible spectrum. They are adjusted to reflect only those frequencies which are audible to the human ear. Figure 4.13-1, *Typical Noise Levels*, presents a summary of the typical noise levels and their subjective loudness and effects that are described in more detail below. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 7)

Figure 4.13-1 Typical Noise Levels

COMMON OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	COMMON INDOOR ACTIVITIES	A - WEIGHTED SOUND LEVEL dBA	SUBJECTIVE LOUDNESS	EFFECTS OF NOISE
THRESHOLD OF PAIN		140	INTOLERABLE OR DEAFENING	HEARING LOSS
NEAR JET ENGINE		130		
		120		
JET FLY-OVER AT 300m (1000 ft)	ROCK BAND	110		
LOUD AUTO HORN		100	VERY NOISY	SPEECH INTERFERENCE
GAS LAWN MOWER AT 1m (3 ft)		90		
DIESEL TRUCK AT 15m (50 ft), at 80 km/hr (50 mph)	FOOD BLENDER AT 1m (3 ft)	80	LOUD	
NOISY URBAN AREA, DAYTIME	VACUUM CLEANER AT 3m (10 ft)	70		
HEAVY TRAFFIC AT 90m (300 ft)	NORMAL SPEECH AT 1m (3 ft)	60	MODERATE	SLEEP DISTURBANCE
QUIET URBAN DAYTIME	LARGE BUSINESS OFFICE	50		
QUIET URBAN NIGHTTIME	THEATER, LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM (BACKGROUND)	40		
QUIET SUBURBAN NIGHTTIME	LIBRARY	30	FAINT	NO EFFECT
QUIET RURAL NIGHTTIME	BEDROOM AT NIGHT, CONCERT HALL (BACKGROUND)	20		
	BROADCAST/RECORDING STUDIO	10		
LOWEST THRESHOLD OF HUMAN HEARING	LOWEST THRESHOLD OF HUMAN HEARING	0	VERY FAINT	

Source: Environmental Protection Agency Office of Noise Abatement and Control, *Information on Levels of Environmental Noise Requisite to Protect Public Health and Welfare with an Adequate Margin of Safety (EPA/ONAC 550/9-74-004) March 1974.* (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 2-A)



B. Range of Noise

Since the range of intensities that the human ear can detect is so large, the scale frequently used to measure intensity is a scale based on multiples of 10, the logarithmic scale. The scale for measuring intensity is the decibel scale. Each interval of 10 decibels indicates a sound energy 10 times greater than before, which is perceived by the human ear as being roughly twice as loud. The most common sounds vary between 40 dBA (very quiet) to 100 dBA (very loud). Normal conversation at three feet is roughly 60 dBA, while loud jet engine noises equate to 110 dBA at approximately 100 feet, which can cause serious discomfort. Another important aspect of noise is the duration of the sound and the way it is described and distributed in time. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 7-8)

C. Noise Descriptors

Environmental noise descriptors are generally based on averages, rather than instantaneous, noise levels. The most used figure is the equivalent continuous sound pressure level (Leq). Leq is not measured directly but is calculated from sound pressure levels typically measured in dBA. Leq represents a steady state sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given sample period and is commonly used to describe the “average” noise levels within the environment. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 8)

Peak hour or average noise levels, while useful, do not completely describe a given noise environment. Noise levels lower than peak hour may be disturbing if they occur during times when quiet is most desirable, namely evening and nighttime (sleeping) hours. To account for this, the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), representing a composite 24-hour noise level is utilized. The CNEL is the weighted average of the intensity of a sound, with corrections for time of day, and averaged over 24 hours. The time-of-day corrections require the addition of 5 decibels to dBA Leq sound levels in the evening from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., and the addition of 10 decibels to dBA Leq sound levels at night between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. These additions are made to account for the noise sensitive time periods during the evening and night hours when sound appears louder. CNEL does not represent the actual sound level heard at any time, but rather represents the total sound exposure. Riverside County relies on the 24-hour CNEL level to assess land use compatibility with transportation-related noise sources. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 8)

D. Sound Propagation

When sound propagates over a distance, it changes in level and frequency content. The way noise reduces with distance depends on the factors described below. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 8)

1. Geometric Spreading

Sound from a localized source (i.e., a stationary point source) propagates uniformly outward in a spherical pattern. The sound level attenuates (or decreases) at a rate of 6 dB for each doubling of distance from a point source. Highways consist of several localized noise sources on a defined path and hence can be treated as a line source, which approximates the effect of several point sources. Noise from a line source propagates outward in a cylindrical pattern, often referred to as cylindrical spreading. Sound levels attenuate at a rate of 3 dB for each doubling of distance from a line source. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 8)



2. *Ground Absorption*

The propagation path of noise from a highway to a receiver is usually very close to the ground. Noise attenuation from ground absorption and reflective wave canceling adds to the attenuation associated with geometric spreading. Traditionally, the excess attenuation has also been expressed in terms of attenuation per doubling of distance. This approximation is usually sufficiently accurate for distances of less than 200 feet. For acoustically hard sites (i.e., sites with a reflective surface between the source and the receiver, such as a parking lot or body of water), no excess ground attenuation is assumed. For acoustically absorptive or soft sites (i.e., those sites with an absorptive ground surface between the source and the receiver such as soft dirt, grass, or scattered bushes and trees), an excess ground attenuation value of 1.5 dB per doubling of distance is normally assumed. When added to the cylindrical spreading, the excess ground attenuation results in an overall drop-off rate of 4.5 dB per doubling of distance from a line source. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 8-9)

3. *Atmospheric Effects*

Receivers located downwind from a source can be exposed to increased noise levels relative to calm conditions, whereas locations upwind can have lowered noise levels. Sound levels can be increased at large distances (e.g., more than 500 feet) due to atmospheric temperature inversion (i.e., increasing temperature with elevation). Other factors such as air temperature, humidity, and turbulence can also have significant effects. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 9)

4. *Shielding*

A large object or barrier in the path between a noise source and a receiver can substantially attenuate noise levels at the receiver. The amount of attenuation provided by shielding depends on the size of the object and the frequency content of the noise source. Shielding by trees and other such vegetation typically only has an “out of sight, out of mind” effect. That is, the perception of noise impact tends to decrease when vegetation blocks the line-of-sight to nearby residents. However, for vegetation to provide a substantial, or even noticeable, noise reduction, the vegetation area must be at least 15 feet in height, 100 feet wide, and dense enough to completely obstruct the line-of sight between the source and the receiver. This size of vegetation may provide up to 5 dBA of noise reduction. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 9)

E. Noise Control

Noise control is the process of obtaining an acceptable noise environment for an observation point or receiver by controlling the noise source, transmission path, receiver, or all three. This concept is known as the source-path-receiver concept. In general, noise control measures can be applied to these three elements. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 9)

F. Noise Barrier Attenuation

Effective noise barriers can reduce noise levels by 10 to 15 dBA, cutting the loudness of traffic noise in half. A noise barrier is most effective when placed close to the noise source or receiver. Noise barriers, however,



do have limitations. For a noise barrier to work, it must block the line-of-sight path of sound from the noise source. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 9)

G. Land Use Compatibility With Noise

Some land uses are more tolerant of noise than others. For example, schools, hospitals, churches, and residences are more sensitive to noise intrusion than are commercial or industrial developments and related activities. As ambient noise levels affect the perceived amenity or livability of a development, so too can the mismanagement of noise impacts impair the economic health and growth potential of a community by reducing the area's desirability as a place to live, shop and work. For this reason, land use compatibility with the noise environment is an important consideration in the planning and design process. The FHWA encourages state and local governments to regulate land development in such a way that noise-sensitive land uses are either prohibited from being located adjacent to a highway, or that the developments are planned, designed, and constructed in such a way that noise impacts are minimized. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 10)

H. Community Response to Noise

Approximately 16% of the population has a very low tolerance for noise and will object to any noise not of their making. Consequently, even in the quietest environment, some complaints may occur. 20 to 30% of the population will not complain even in very severe noise environments. Thus, a variety of reactions can be expected from people exposed to any given noise environment. Surveys have shown that community response to noise varies from no reaction to vigorous action for newly introduced noises averaging from 10 dB below existing to 25 dB above existing. According to research originally published in the Noise Effects Handbook, the percentage of high annoyance ranges from approximately 0 percent at 45 dB or less, 10 percent are highly annoyed around 60 dB, and increases rapidly to approximately 70 percent being highly annoyed at approximately 85 dB or greater. Despite this variability in behavior on an individual level, the population can be expected to exhibit the following responses to changes in noise levels as shown in Figure 4.13-2, *Noise Level Increase Perception*. A change of 3 dBA is considered barely perceptible, and changes of 5 dBA are considered readily perceptible. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 10)

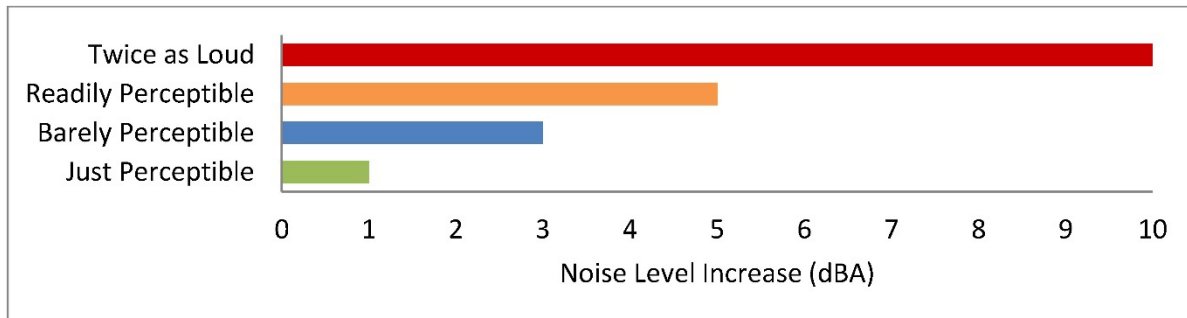
I. Vibration

Per the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) *Transit Noise Impact and Vibration Assessment*, vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. The rumbling sound caused by the vibration of room surfaces is called structure-borne noise. Sources of ground-borne vibrations include natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or human-made causes (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous, such as factory machinery, or transient, such as explosions. As is the case with airborne sound, ground-borne vibrations may be described by amplitude and frequency. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 11)

There are several different methods that are used to quantify vibration. The peak particle velocity (PPV) is defined as the maximum instantaneous peak of the vibration signal. The PPV is most frequently used to describe vibration impacts to buildings but is not always suitable for evaluating human response (annoyance)



Figure 4.13-2 Noise Level Increase Perception



(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 2-B)

because it takes some time for the human body to respond to vibration signals. Instead, the human body responds to average vibration amplitude often described as the root mean square (RMS). The RMS amplitude is defined as the average of the squared amplitude of the signal and is most frequently used to describe the effect of vibration on the human body. Decibel notation (VdB) is commonly used to measure RMS. VdB serves to reduce the range of numbers used to describe human response to vibration. Typically, ground-borne vibration generated by man-made activities attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of the vibration. Sensitive receivers for vibration include structures (especially older masonry structures), people (especially residents, the elderly, and sick), and vibration-sensitive equipment and/or activities. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 11)

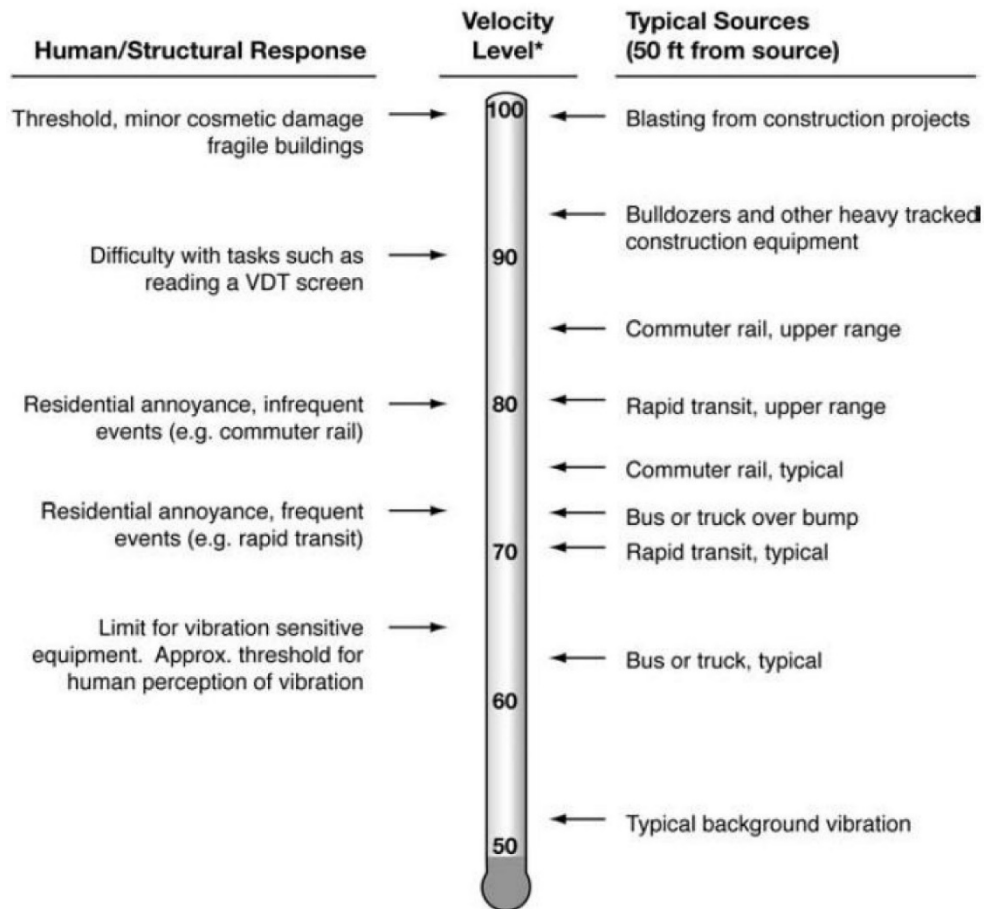
The background vibration-velocity level in residential areas is generally 50 VdB. Ground-borne vibration is normally perceptible to humans at approximately 65 VdB. For most people, a vibration-velocity level of 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible levels. Typical outdoor sources of perceptible ground-borne vibration are construction equipment, steel-wheeled trains, and traffic on rough roads. If a roadway is smooth, the ground-borne vibration is rarely perceptible. The range of interest is from approximately 50 VdB, which is the typical background vibration-velocity level, to 100 VdB, which is the general threshold where minor damage can occur in fragile buildings. Figure 4.13-3, *Typical Levels of Ground-Borne Vibration*, illustrates common vibration sources and the human and structural response to ground-borne vibration. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 11)

4.13.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

To assess the existing noise level environment, 24-hour noise level measurements were taken at four locations in the Project study area. The receiver locations were selected to describe and document the existing noise environment within the Project study area. Figure 4.13-4, *Noise Measurement Locations*, provides the boundaries of the Project study area and the noise level measurement locations. To fully describe the existing noise conditions, noise level measurements were collected by Urban Crossroads, Inc. on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 25)



Figure 4.13-3 Typical Levels of Ground-Borne Vibration



* RMS Vibration Velocity Level in VdB relative to 10^{-6} inches/second

Source: Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual.
(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 2-C)



Figure 4.13-4 Noise Measurement Locations



(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 5-A)



B. Measurement Procedure and Criteria

To describe the existing noise environment, the hourly noise levels were measured during typical weekday conditions over a 24-hour period. By collecting individual hourly noise level measurements, it is possible to describe the equivalent daytime and nighttime hourly noise levels and calculate the 24-hour CNEL. The long-term noise readings were recorded using Piccolo Type 2 integrating sound level meter and dataloggers. The Piccolo sound level meters were calibrated using a Larson-Davis calibrator, Model CAL 150. All noise meters were programmed in "slow" mode to record noise levels in "A" weighted form. The sound level meters and microphones were equipped with a windscreen during all measurements. All noise level measurement equipment satisfies the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard specifications for sound level meters ANSI S1.4-2014/IEC 61672-1:2013. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 25)

C. Noise Measurement Locations

The long-term noise level measurements were positioned as close to the nearest sensitive receiver locations as possible to assess the existing ambient hourly noise levels surrounding the Project site. Both Caltrans and the FTA recognize that it is not reasonable to collect noise level measurements that can fully represent every part of a private yard, patio, deck, or balcony normally used for human activity when estimating impacts for new development projects. This is demonstrated in the Caltrans general site location guidelines which indicate that, *“sites must be free of noise contamination by sources other than sources of interest. Avoid sites located near sources such as barking dogs, lawnmowers, pool pumps, and air conditioners unless it is the express intent of the analyst to measure these sources. Further, FTA guidance states that it is not necessary nor recommended that existing noise exposure be determined by measuring at every noise-sensitive location in a project area. Rather, the recommended approach is to characterize the noise environment for clusters of sites based on measurements or estimates at representative locations in the community.”* (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 25)

Based on recommendations of Caltrans and the FTA, it is not necessary to collect measurements at each individual building or residence, because each receiver measurement represents a group of buildings that share acoustical equivalence. In other words, the area represented by the receiver shares similar shielding, terrain, and geometric relationship to the reference noise source. Receivers represent a location of noise sensitive areas and are used to estimate the future noise level impacts. Collecting reference ambient noise level measurements at the nearby sensitive receiver locations allows for a comparison of the before and after Project noise levels and is necessary to assess potential noise impacts due to the Project’s contribution to the ambient noise levels. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 25-26)

D. Noise Measurement Results

The noise measurements presented below focus on Leq. Leq represents a steady state sound level containing the same total energy as a time-varying signal over a given sample period. Table 4.13-1, *Ambient Noise Level Measurement*, identifies the hourly daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) noise levels at each noise level measurement location. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 26)



Table 4.13-1 Ambient Noise Level Measurement

Location ¹	Description	Energy Average Noise Level (dBA L _{eq}) ²		CNEL
		Daytime	Nighttime	
L1	Located southeast of the Project site near the single-family residence at 72758 30th Avenue.	46.0	45.3	52.3
L2	Located southeast of the Project site near the single-family residence at 30525 Roseview Lane.	45.2	44.5	51.4
L3	Located south of the Project site near the single-family residence at 30524 Robert Road.	53.9	46.7	56.1
L4	Located south of the Project site near the Legacy Apartments at 72940 El Centro Way.	47.8	47.9	54.5

¹ See Figure 4.13-4 for the noise level measurement locations.

² Energy (logarithmic) average levels. The long-term 24-hour measurement worksheets are included in Appendix 5.2 of the Project NVA (*Technical Appendix J*).

"Daytime" = 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; "Nighttime" = 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 5-1)

Table 4.13-1 provides the equivalent noise levels used to describe the daytime and nighttime ambient conditions. These daytime and nighttime energy average noise levels represent the average of all hourly noise levels observed during these time periods expressed as a single number. Appendix 5.2 of the Project's NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) provides summary worksheets of the noise levels for each hour as well as the minimum, maximum, L₁, L₂, L₅, L₈, L₂₅, L₅₀, L₉₀, L₉₅, and L₉₉ percentile noise levels observed during the daytime and nighttime periods, (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 24)

4.13.3 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to noise.

A. Federal Regulations

1. Noise Control Act of 1972

The Noise Control Act of 1972 establishes a national policy to promote an environment for all Americans free from noise that jeopardizes their health and welfare. The Act also serves to (1) establish a means for effective coordination of federal research and activities in noise control; (2) authorize the establishment of federal noise emission standards for products distributed in commerce; and (3) provide information to the public respecting the noise emission and noise reduction characteristics of such products. (EPA, 2022i)

While primary responsibility for control of noise rests with State and local governments, federal action is essential to deal with major noise sources in commerce, control of which requires national uniformity of treatment. The United States (U.S.) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is directed by Congress to coordinate the programs of all federal agencies relating to noise research and noise control. (EPA, 2022i)



2. Federal Transit Administration

The FTA has published a Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA), which provides guidance for preparing and reviewing the noise and vibration sections of environmental documents. In the interest of promoting quality and uniformity in assessments, the manual is used by project sponsors and consultants in performing noise and vibration analyses for inclusion in environmental documents. The manual sets forth the methods and procedures for determining the level of noise and vibration impact resulting from most federally-funded transit projects and for determining what can be done to mitigate such impact. (FTA, 2006, pp. p. 1-1)

The NVIA also establishes criteria for acceptable ground-borne vibration, which are expressed in terms of RMS velocity levels in decibels, and the criteria for acceptable ground-borne noise expressed in terms of A-weighted sound levels. As shown in Table 4.13-2, *Ground-Borne Vibration and Ground-Borne Noise Impact Criteria for General Assessment*, the FTA identifies three categories of land uses and provides Ground-Based Vibration (GBV) and Ground-Based Noise (GBN) criteria for each category of land use. (FTA, 2006, pp. 8-3 and 8-4)

Table 4.13-2 Ground-Borne Vibration and Ground-Borne Noise Impact Criteria for General Assessment

Land Use Category	GBV Impact Levels (VdB re 1 micro-inch /sec)			GBN Impact Levels (dB re 20 micro Pascals)		
	Frequent Events ¹	Occasional Events ²	Infrequent Events ³	Frequent Events ¹	Occasional Events ²	Infrequent Events ³
Category 1: Buildings where vibration would interfere with interior operations.	65 VdB ⁴	65 VdB ⁴	65 VdB ⁴	N/A ⁴	N/A ⁴	N/A ⁴
Category 2: Residences and buildings where people normally sleep.	72 VdB	75 VdB	80 VdB	35 dBA	38 dBA	43 dBA
Category 3: Institutional land uses with primarily daytime use.	75 VdB	78 VdB	83 VdB	40 dBA	43 dBA	48 dBA

Notes:

1. "Frequent Events" is defined as more than 70 vibration events of the same source per day. Most rapid transit projects fall into this category.
2. "Occasional Events" is defined as between 30 and 70 vibration events of the same source per day. Most commuter trunk lines have this many operations.
3. "Infrequent Events" is defined as fewer than 30 vibration events of the same kind per day. This category includes most commuter rail branch lines.
4. This criterion limit is based on levels that are acceptable for most moderately sensitive equipment such as optical microscopes. Vibration-sensitive manufacturing or research will require detailed evaluation to define the acceptable vibration levels. Ensuring lower vibration levels in a building often requires special design of the HVAC systems and stiffened floors.
5. Vibration-sensitive equipment is generally not sensitive to ground-borne noise.

(FTA, 2006, Table 8-1)



3. *Federal Aviation Administration*

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulates the maximum noise level that an individual civil aircraft can emit through requiring aircraft to meet certain noise certification standards. These standards designate changes in maximum noise level requirements by "stage" designation. The standard requires that the aircraft meet or fall below designated noise levels. For civil jet aircraft, there are four stages identified, with Stage 1 being the loudest and Stage 4 being the quietest. For helicopters, two different stages exist, Stage 1 and Stage 2. As with civil jet aircraft, Stage 2 is quieter than Stage 1. In addition, the FAA is currently working to adopt the latest international standards for helicopters, which will be called Stage 3 and will be quieter than Stage 2. (FAA, 2020b)

The FAA has undertaken a phase out of older, noisier civil aircraft, resulting in some stages of aircraft no longer being in the fleet. Currently within the contiguous US, civil jet aircraft over 75,000 pounds maximum take-off weight must meet Stage 3 and Stage 4 to fly. In addition, aircraft at or under 75,000 pounds maximum take-off weight must meet Stage 2, 3, or 4 to operate within the U.S. In addition, by December 31, 2015, all civil jet aircraft, regardless of weight must meet Stage 3 or Stage 4 to fly within the contiguous U.S. Both Stage 1 and Stage 2 helicopters are allowed to fly within the U.S. (FAA, 2020b)

The U.S. noise standards are defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 14 Part 36 – *Noise Standards: Aircraft Type and Airworthiness Certification* (14 CFR Part 36). The FAA publishes certificated noise levels in the advisory circular, *Noise Levels for U.S. Certificated and Foreign Aircraft*. This advisory circular provides noise level data for aircraft certificated under 14 CFR Part 36 and categorizes aircraft into their appropriate "stages." Any aircraft that is certified for airworthiness in the U.S. needs to also comply with noise standard requirements to receive a noise certification. The purpose of the noise certification process is to ensure that the latest available safe and airworthy noise reduction technology is incorporated into aircraft design and enables the noise reductions offered by those technologies to be reflected in reductions of noise experienced by communities. As noise reduction technology matures, the FAA works with the international community to determine if a new stringent noise standard is needed. If so, the international community through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) embarks on a comprehensive analysis to determine what that new standard will be. (FAA, 2016)

The current FAA noise standards applicable to new type certifications of jet and large turboprop aircraft is Stage 4. It is equivalent to the ICAO Annex 16, Volume 1 Chapter 4 standards. Recently, the international community has established and approved a more stringent standard within the ICAO Annex 16, Volume 1 Chapter 14, which became effective July 14, 2014. The FAA adopted this standard and promulgated the rule for Stage 5 effective for new type certificates after December 31, 2017 and December 31, 2020, depending on the weight of the aircraft. The Final Rule for Stage 5 was published in the Federal Register on October 4, 2017. (FAA, 2016)

For helicopters, the FAA has noise standards for a Stage 3 helicopter that became effective on May 5, 2014. These more stringent standards apply to new type helicopters and are consistent with ICAO Annex 16, Volume 1 Chapter 8 and Chapter 11. (FAA, 2016)



The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, in Section 513, had a prohibition on operating certain aircraft weighing 75,000 pounds or less not complying with Stage 3 noise levels, and on July 2, 2013, the FAA published a Final Rule in the Federal Register for the *Adoption of Statutory Prohibition the Operation of Jets Weighing 75,000 Pounds or Less That Are Not Stage 3 Noise Compliant*. In 1990, Congress passed the Aviation Noise and Capacity Act, which required that by the year 2000 all jet and large turboprop aircraft at civilian airports be Stage 3. (FAA, 2016)

4. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

The FHWA is the agency responsible for administering the federal-aid highway program in accordance with federal statutes and regulations. The FHWA developed the noise regulations as required by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-605, 84 Stat. 1713). The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 23 Part 772 (23 CFR 772), *Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise*, applies to highway construction projects where a state department of transportation has requested federal funding for participation in a project. The regulation requires the highway agency to investigate traffic noise impacts in areas adjacent to federally-aided highways for proposed construction of a highway on a new location or the reconstruction of an existing highway to either significantly change the horizontal or vertical alignment or increase the number of through-traffic lanes. If the highway agency identifies impacts, it must consider abatement. The highway agency must incorporate all feasible and reasonable noise abatement into the project design. (FHWA, 2022)

The FHWA regulations for mitigation of highway traffic noise in the planning and design of federally aided highways are contained in 23 CFR 772. The regulations require the following during the planning and design of a highway project:

- Identification of traffic noise impacts;
- Examination of potential mitigation measures;
- The incorporation of reasonable and feasible noise mitigation measures into the highway project; and
- Coordination with local officials to provide helpful information on compatible land use planning and control. (FHWA, 2022)

The regulations contain noise abatement criteria, which represent the upper limit of acceptable highway traffic noise for different types of land uses and human activities. The regulations do not require meeting the abatement criteria in every instance. Rather, they require highway agencies make every reasonable and feasible effort to provide noise mitigation when the criteria are approached or exceeded. Compliance with the noise regulations is a prerequisite for the granting of federally aided highway funds for construction or reconstruction of a highway. (FHWA, 2022)

5. OSHA Hearing Conservation Program

The OSHA hearing conservation program is designed to protect workers with significant occupational noise exposures from hearing impairment even if they are subject to such noise exposures over their entire working



lifetimes. Standard 29 CFR Part 1910 indicates the noise levels under which a hearing conservation program is required to be provided to workers exposed to high noise levels. (OSHA, 2002) This analysis does not evaluate the noise exposure of construction workers within the Project site based on CEQA requirements, and instead, evaluates the Project-related construction noise levels at the nearby sensitive receiver locations in the Project study area. Further, periodic exposure to high noise levels in short duration, such as Project construction, is typically considered an annoyance and not impactful to human health. It would take several years of exposure to high noise levels to result in hearing impairment.

B. State Regulations

1. Building Standards Code

The State of California’s noise insulation standards are codified in the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Building Standards Administrative Code, Part 2, and the California Building Standards Code. These noise standards are applied to new construction in California for the purpose of controlling interior noise levels resulting from exterior noise sources. The regulations specify that acoustical studies must be prepared when noise-sensitive structures, such as residential buildings, schools, or hospitals, are developed near major transportation noise sources, and where such noise sources create an exterior noise level of 60 dBA CNEL or higher. Acoustical studies that accompany building plans for noise-sensitive land uses must demonstrate that the structure has been designed to limit interior noise in habitable rooms to acceptable noise levels. For new residential buildings, schools, and hospitals, the acceptable interior noise limit for new construction is 45 dBA CNEL. (BSC, n.d.)

2. California Noise Insulation Standards

The California Noise Insulation Standards (CCR Title 25 Section 1092) establish uniform minimum noise insulation performance standards for new hotels, motels, dormitories, apartment houses, and dwellings other than detached single-family dwellings. Specifically, Title 25 specifies that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources shall not exceed 45 dBA Ldn/CNEL (i.e., the same levels that the EPA recommends for residential interiors) in any habitable room of a new dwelling. An acoustical study must be prepared for proposed multiple unit residential and hotel/motel structures where outdoor Ldn/CNEL is 60 dBA or greater. The study must demonstrate that the design of the building would reduce interior noise to 45 dBA Ldn/CNEL or lower. Because noise levels can increase over time in developing areas, Title 25 also specifies that dwellings are to be designed so that interior noise levels will meet this standard for at least 10 years from the time of building permit application. (MLA, n.d.)

3. OPR General Plan Guidelines

Though not adopted by law, the 2017 California General Plan Guidelines, published by the California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR), provides guidance for local agencies in preparing or updating general plans. The General Plan Guidelines provide direction on the required noise element portion of the general plans. The purpose of the noise element is to limit the exposure of the community to excessive noise levels. Local governments must “analyze and quantify” noise levels and the extent of noise exposure through actual measurement or the use of noise modeling. Technical data relating to mobile and point sources must be collected and synthesized into a set of noise control policies and programs that “minimizes the



exposure of community residents to excessive noise.” Noise level contours must be mapped and the conclusions of the element used as a basis for land use decisions. The element must include implementation measures and possible solutions to existing and foreseeable noise problems. Furthermore, the policies and standards must be sufficient to serve as a guideline for compliance with sound transmission control requirements. A general plan’s noise element directly correlates to the land use, circulation, and housing elements. The noise element must be used to guide decisions concerning land use and the location of new roads and transit facilities since these are common sources of excessive noise levels. The noise levels from existing land uses, including mining, agricultural, and industrial activities, must be closely analyzed to ensure compatibility, especially where residential and other sensitive receptors have encroached into areas previously occupied by these uses. (OPR, 2017b, pp. 131-132)

C. Local Regulations

1. Riverside County General Plan

The Riverside County General Plan Noise Element was adopted to control and abate environmental noise, and to protect the citizens of Riverside County from excessive exposure to noise. The Noise Element specifies the maximum allowable exterior noise levels for new developments impacted by transportation noise sources such as arterial roads, freeways, airports, and railroads. In addition, the Noise Element identifies several policies to minimize the impacts of excessive noise levels throughout the community and establishes noise level requirements for all land uses. To protect Riverside County residents from excessive noise, the Noise Element contains the following policies related to the Project:

- N 1.1 Protect noise-sensitive land uses from high levels of noise by restricting noise-producing land uses from these areas. If the noise-producing land use cannot be relocated, then noise buffers such as setbacks, landscaping, or block walls shall be used.*
- N 1.2 Guide noise-tolerant land uses into areas irrevocably committed to land uses that are noise producing, such as transportation corridors or within the projected noise contours of any adjacent airports.*
- N 1.3 Consider the following uses noise sensitive and discourage these uses in areas in excess of 65 CNEL:*
 - o Schools*
 - o Hospitals*
 - o Rest Homes*
 - o Long Term Care Facilities*
 - o Mental Care Facilities*
 - o Residential Uses*
 - o Libraries*
 - o Passive Recreation Uses*
 - o Places of Worship*
- N 1.4 Determine if existing land uses will present noise compatibility issues with proposed projects by undertaking site surveys.*



- N 1.5 Prevent and mitigate the adverse impacts of excessive noise exposure on the residents, employees, visitors, and noise-sensitive uses of Riverside County.*
- N 4.1 Prohibit facility-related noise, received by any sensitive use, from exceeding the following worst-case noise levels:*
- a. 45 dBA 9-minute L_{eq} between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.;*
 - b. 65 dBA 9-minute L_{eq} between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.*
- N 13.1 Minimize the impacts of construction noise on adjacent uses within acceptable standards.*
- N 13.2 Ensure that construction activities are regulated to establish hours of operation in order to prevent and/or mitigate the generation of excessive or adverse impacts on surrounding areas.*
- N 13.3 Condition subdivision approval adjacent to developed/occupied noise-sensitive land uses (see policy N 1.3) by requiring the developer to submit a construction-related noise mitigation plan to the [County] for review and approval prior to issuance of a grading permit. The plan must depict the location of construction equipment and how the noise from this equipment will be mitigated during construction of this project, through the use of such methods as:*
- i. Temporary noise attenuation fences;*
 - ii. Preferential location and equipment; and*
 - iii. Use of current noise suppression technology and equipment.*
- N 14.1 Enforce the California Building Standards that sets standards for building construction to mitigate interior noise levels to the tolerable 45 CNEL limit. These standards are utilized in conjunction with the Uniform Building Code by the County's Building Department to ensure that noise protection is provided to the public. Some design features may include extra-dense insulation, double-paned windows, and dense construction materials.*
- N 16.3 Prohibit exposure of residential dwellings to perceptible ground vibration from passing trains as perceived at the ground or second floor. Perceptible motion shall be presumed to be a motion velocity of 0.01 inches/second over a range of 1 to 100 Hz.*

To ensure noise-sensitive land uses are protected from high levels of noise (N 1.1), Table N-1 of the Noise Element identifies guidelines to evaluate proposed developments based on exterior and interior noise level limits for land uses and requires a noise analysis to determine needed mitigation measures if necessary. The Noise Element identifies residential use as a noise-sensitive land use (N 1.3) and discourages new development in areas with transportation related levels of 65 dBA CNEL or greater existing ambient noise levels. To prevent and mitigate noise impacts for its residents (N 1.5), County of Riverside requires exterior noise attenuation measures for sensitive land use exposed to transportation related noise levels higher than 65 dBA CNEL. In addition, the County of Riverside had adopted an interior noise level limit of 45 dBA CNEL. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 14)

Policy N 4.1 of the Noise Element sets a stationary-source exterior noise limit to not to be exceeded for a cumulative period of more than ten minutes in any hour of 55 dBA L_{eq} for daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00



p.m., and 45 dBA L_{eq} during the noise-sensitive nighttime hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. To prevent high levels of construction noise from impacting noise-sensitive land uses, policies N 13.1 through 13.3 identify construction noise mitigation requirements for new development located near existing noise-sensitive land uses. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 14-15)

Land Use Compatibility

The noise criteria identified in the Riverside County General Plan Noise Element (Table N-1) are guidelines to evaluate the land use compatibility of transportation related noise. The compatibility criteria, shown on Table 4.13-3, *Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure*, provides the County with a planning tool to gauge the compatibility of land uses relative to existing and future exterior noise levels. Table 4.13-3 describes categories of compatibility and not specific noise standards. Residentially-designated land uses in the Project study area are considered normally acceptable with exterior noise levels below 60 dBA CNEL, and conditionally acceptable with exterior noise levels of up to 70 dBA CNEL. For conditionally-acceptable exterior noise levels, approaching 80 dBA CNEL for Project land uses, new construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and the needed noise insulation features are included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 15)

Riverside County Exterior Stationary Source Noise Standards

Riverside County has set stationary-source hourly average L_{eq} exterior noise limits to control loading dock activity, parking lot vehicle activities, roof-top air conditioning units, trash enclosure activity, truck movements, sports field activities, basketball court activity, dog park activity, amphitheater with stage and outdoor play area associated with the development of the proposed Project. The County considers noise generated using motor vehicles to be a stationary noise source when operated on private property such as at a loading dock. These facility-related noises, as projected to any portion of any surrounding property containing a habitable dwelling, hospital, school, library or nursing home, must not exceed the following worst-case noise levels. Policy N 4.1 of the Riverside County General Plan Noise Element sets a stationary-source average L_{eq} exterior noise limit not to be exceeded for a cumulative period of more than ten minutes in any hour of 65 dBA L_{eq} for daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and 45 dBA L_{eq} during the noise-sensitive nighttime hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 15)

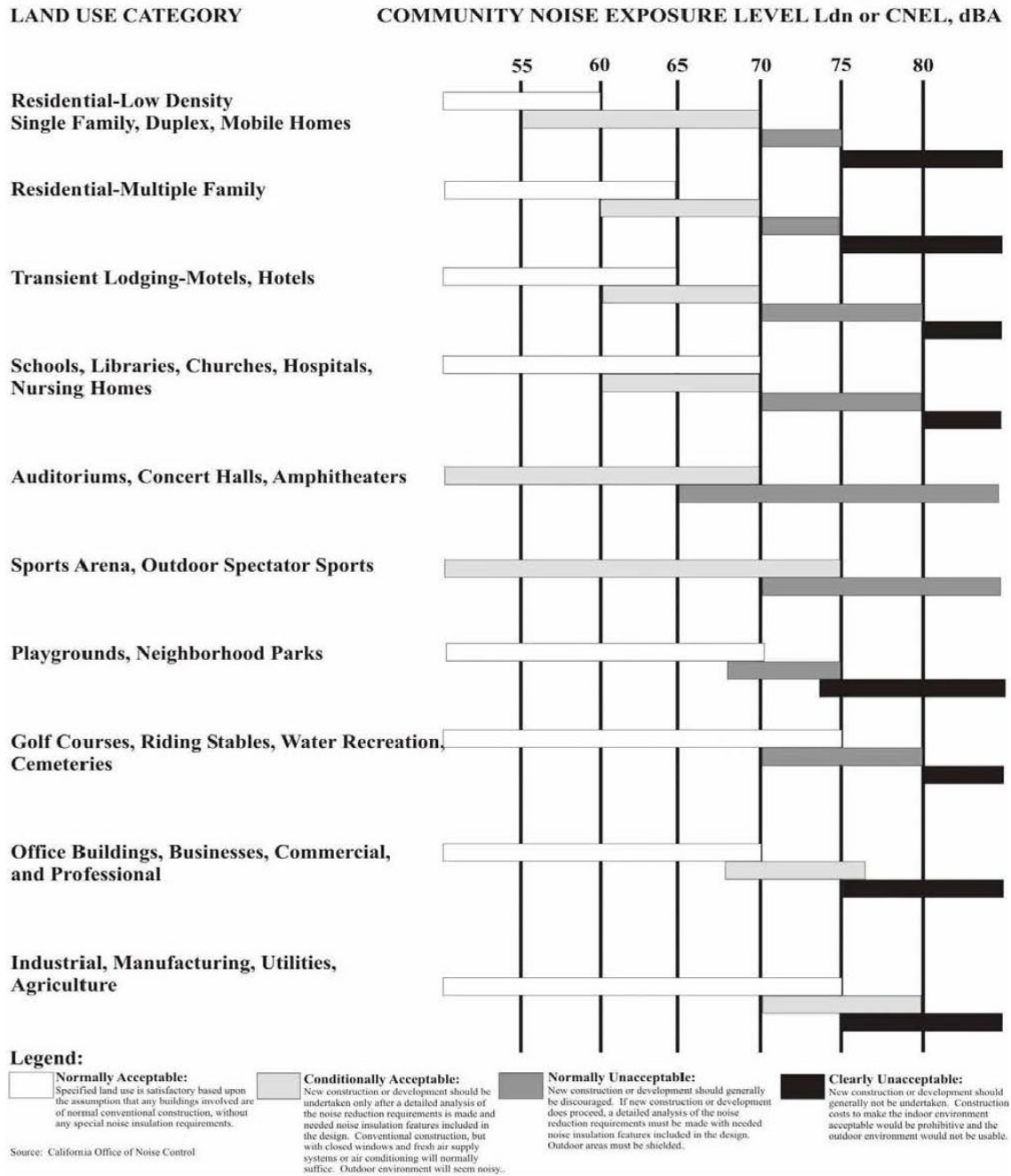
2. *Riverside County Ordinance No. 847 (Regulating Noise)*

Construction Noise Standards

To control noise impacts associated with the construction of projects, such as the proposed Project, Riverside County has established limits to the hours of construction activities. Section 2.i of Riverside County Ordinance No. 847 (herein, “Noise Ordinance”) indicates that noise associated with any private construction activity located within one-quarter of a mile from an inhabited dwelling is considered exempt between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., during the months of June through September, and 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., during the months of October through May. However, neither the County’s General Plan nor County Code establish numeric maximum acceptable construction source noise levels at potentially affected receivers for CEQA analysis purposes. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 17)



Table 4.13-3 Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure



(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 3-A)



Operational Noise Standards

To analyze noise impacts originating from a designated fixed location or private property such as the proposed Project, stationary-source (operational) noise such as the expected loading dock activity, tractor trailer parking, parking lot vehicle activities, IID Substation, diesel pump, roof-top air conditioning units, trash enclosure activity, and truck movements, typically are evaluated against standards established under a jurisdiction's Municipal Code. Riverside County Ordinance No. 847 (Regulating Noise) includes standards related to stationary noise impacts that exceed the standards identified in the General Plan. Specifically, Section 4 of Ordinance No. 847, *General sound level standards*, identifies residential exterior noise level limits of 55 dBA L_{eq} during the daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and 45 dBA L_{eq} during the noise-sensitive nighttime hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., commercial exterior noise level limits of 65 dBA L_{eq} during the daytime hours, and 55 dBA L_{eq} during the noise-sensitive nighttime hours, and public facility exterior noise level limits of 65 dBA L_{eq} during the daytime hours, and 45 dBA L_{eq} during the noise-sensitive nighttime hours. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 15-16)

Based on several discussions with the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (DEH), Office of Industrial Hygiene (OIH), it is important to recognize that Riverside County Municipal Code noise level standards, incorrectly identify maximum noise level (L_{max}) standards that should instead reflect the average L_{eq} noise levels. Moreover, Riverside County's DEH OIH's April 15th, 2015, *Requirements for determining and mitigating, non-transportation noise source impacts to residential properties*, also identifies operational (stationary-source) noise level limits using the L_{eq} metric, consistent with the direction of the Riverside County General Plan guidelines and standards provided in the Noise Element. Therefore, the analysis herein was conducted consistent with direction of the County of Riverside DEH OIH guidelines and standards using the average L_{eq} noise level metric for stationary-source (operational) noise level evaluation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 17)

3. *Vibration Standards*

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground-borne vibration, depending on the equipment and methods used, distance to the affected structures and soil type. Construction vibration is generally associated with pile driving and rock blasting. Other construction equipment such as air compressors, light trucks, hydraulic loaders, etc., generates little or no ground vibration. To analyze vibration impacts originating from the operation and construction of the Project, vibration-generating activities are appropriately evaluated against standards established under the Municipal Code, if such standards exist. However, the Riverside County does not identify specific construction vibration level limits. Therefore, for analysis purposes, the Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual vibration damage are used to assess potential temporary construction-related impacts at adjacent building locations. The nearest noise sensitive buildings adjacent to the Project site can best be described as "older residential structures" with a maximum acceptable continuous vibration threshold of 0.3 PPV (in/sec). (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 19)



4.13.4 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

A. Significance Thresholds

Section XIII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to noise, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate a project's impacts on noise:

- Would the project result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?
- Would the project result in the generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or noise levels?
- For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan, or where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Additionally, the following thresholds are derived from Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist and are used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts due to noise. Thus, for purposes of analysis herein, significant impacts to noise would occur if the Project or any Project-related component would:

- a. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels;*
- b. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels;*
- c. Result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies; or*
- d. Generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels.*

B. Construction-Related Noise and Vibration Limits

1. General Construction Noise Level Limits

According to the FTA, local noise ordinances are typically not very useful in evaluating construction noise. They usually relate to nuisance and hours of allowed activity, and sometimes specify limits in terms of maximum levels, but are generally not practical for assessing the impact of a construction project. Project construction noise criteria should account for the existing noise environment, the absolute noise levels during construction activities, the duration of the construction, and the adjacent land use. Due to the lack of standardized construction noise thresholds, the FTA provides guidelines that can be considered reasonable



criteria for construction noise assessment. The FTA identifies two types of construction noise assessment criteria, general and detailed. For general construction noise assessments, the analysis is limited to the two noisiest pieces of equipment with an hourly daytime exterior noise level threshold for residential land use of 90 dBA $L_{eq(1hr)}$. However, for long-term construction projects that would expose sensitive receivers to noise for extended periods of time, the FTA considers a daytime 8-hour average exterior construction noise level of 80 dBA $L_{eq(8hr)}$. Therefore, to evaluate whether the Project would generate potentially significant short-term noise levels at nearby noise sensitive residential receiver locations, a daytime exterior construction noise level of 80 dBA L_{eq} is used as a reasonable threshold to assess construction noise level impacts based on the FTA detailed analysis construction noise criteria with a nighttime exterior construction noise level of 70 dBA L_{eq} . (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 18)

2. Construction Vibration Standards

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground-borne vibration, depending on the equipment and methods used, distance to the affected structures and soil type. Construction vibration is generally associated with pile driving and rock blasting. Other construction equipment such as air compressors, light trucks, hydraulic loaders, etc., generates little or no ground vibration. To analyze vibration impacts originating from the operation and construction of the Project, vibration-generating activities are appropriately evaluated against standards established under the Municipal Code, if such standards exist. However, Riverside County does not identify specific construction vibration level limits. Therefore, the analysis within this Subsection relies on the Caltrans *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*. The nearest noise sensitive buildings adjacent to the Project site can best be described as “older residential structures,” and based on Caltrans guidance, the maximum acceptable continuous vibration threshold is 0.3 PPV (in/sec). (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 19)

C. Operational Noise Level Increases

Noise level increases resulting from the Project are evaluated at the closest sensitive receiver locations. Under CEQA, consideration must be given to the magnitude of the increase, the existing baseline ambient noise levels, and the location of noise-sensitive receivers to determine if a noise increase represents a significant adverse environmental impact. This approach recognizes that there is no single noise increase that renders a noise impact significant. This is primarily because of the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance and differing individual experiences with noise. Thus, an important way of determining a person’s subjective reaction to a new noise is the comparison of it to the existing environment to which one has adapted – the so-called ambient environment. In general, the more a new noise level exceeds the previously existing ambient noise level, the less acceptable the new noise level will typically be judged. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 21)

Sensitive receivers are generally defined as locations where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could otherwise adversely affect the use of the land. Noise-sensitive land uses are generally considered to include schools, hospitals, single-family dwellings, mobile home parks, churches, libraries, and recreation areas. Moderately noise-sensitive land uses typically include multi-family dwellings, hotels, motels, dormitories, outpatient clinics, cemeteries, golf courses, country clubs, athletic/tennis clubs, and equestrian clubs. Land uses that are considered relatively insensitive to noise include business, commercial, and



professional developments. Land uses that are typically not affected by noise include: industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture, undeveloped land, parking lots, warehousing, liquid and solid waste facilities, salvage yards, and transit terminals. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 43)

1. Noise-Sensitive Receptors

The Federal Interagency Committee on Noise (FICON) developed guidance to be used for the assessment of project-generated increases in noise levels that consider the ambient noise level. The FICON recommendations are based on studies that relate aircraft noise levels to the percentage of persons highly annoyed by aircraft noise. Although the FICON recommendations were specifically developed to assess aircraft noise impacts, these recommendations are often used in environmental noise impact assessments involving the use of cumulative noise exposure metrics, such as the CNEL and L_{eq} . (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 21)

The approach used in the analysis recognizes that there is no single noise increase that renders a noise impact significant, based on a 2008 California Court of Appeal ruling on *Gray v. County of Madera*. For example, if the ambient noise environment is quiet (<60 dBA) and the new noise source greatly increases the noise levels, an impact may occur if the noise criteria may be exceeded. Therefore, for this analysis, a readily perceptible 5 dBA or greater project-related noise level increase is considered a significant impact when the without project noise levels are below 60 dBA. Per the FICON, in areas where the without project noise levels range from 60 to 65 dBA, a 3 dBA barely perceptible noise level increase appears to be appropriate for most people. When the without project noise levels already exceed 65 dBA, any increase in community noise louder than 1.5 dBA or greater is considered a significant impact if the noise criteria for a given land use is exceeded, since it likely contributes to an existing noise exposure exceedance. The FICON guidance provides an established source of criteria to assess the impacts of substantial temporary or permanent increase in baseline ambient noise levels. Based on the FICON criteria, the amount to which a given noise level increase is considered acceptable is reduced when the without Project (baseline) noise levels are already shown to exceed certain land-use specific exterior noise level criteria. The specific levels are based on typical responses to noise level increases of 5 dBA or readily perceptible, 3 dBA or barely perceptible, and 1.5 dBA depending on the underlying without Project noise levels for noise-sensitive uses. These levels of increases and their perceived acceptance are consistent with guidance provided by both the Federal Highway Administration and Caltrans. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 21-22)

2. Non-Noise-Sensitive Receivers

The Riverside County Noise Element, Table N-1, Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure, was used to establish the satisfactory noise levels of significance for non-noise-sensitive land uses in the Project study area. As shown in Table 4.13-3, the normally acceptable exterior noise level for non-noise-sensitive warehouse/industrial land uses are 75 dBA CNEL. Noise levels greater than 75 dBA CNEL are considered conditionally acceptable per the Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 22)

To determine if Project-related traffic noise level increases are significant at off-site non-noise-sensitive land uses, a barely perceptible 3 dBA criteria is used. When the without Project noise levels are greater than the



normally acceptable 75 dBA CNEL land use compatibility criteria, a barely perceptible 3 dBA or greater noise level increase is considered a significant impact since the noise level criteria is already exceeded. The noise level increases used to determine significant impacts for non-noise-sensitive land uses is generally consistent with the FICON noise level increase thresholds for noise-sensitive land uses but instead rely on the County of Riverside General Plan Noise Element, Table N-1, Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure normally acceptable 75 dBA CNEL exterior noise level criteria. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 22)

D. Vibration

As described above, the vibration impacts originating from the construction of Project, vibration-generating activities are appropriately evaluated using the Caltrans vibration damage thresholds to assess potential temporary construction-related impacts at adjacent building locations. The nearest noise sensitive buildings adjacent to the Project site can best be described as “older residential structures” with a maximum acceptable continuous vibration threshold of 0.3 PPV (in/sec). (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 22)

E. Summary of Significance Criteria

Noise impacts shall be considered significant if any of the conditions listed in Table 4.13-4, *Significance Criteria Summary*, would occur as a direct result of the proposed Project. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 23)

Table 4.13-4 Significance Criteria Summary

Analysis	Receiving Land Use	Condition(s)	Significance Criteria	
			Daytime	Nighttime
Off-Site Traffic	Noise-Sensitive ¹	If ambient is < 60 dBA CNEL	≥ 5 dBA CNEL Project increase	
		If ambient is 60 - 65 dBA CNEL	≥ 3 dBA CNEL Project increase	
		If ambient is > 65 dBA CNEL	≥ 1.5 dBA CNEL Project increase	
	Non-Noise-Sensitive ²	If ambient is > 75 dBA CNEL	≥ 3 dBA CNEL Project increase	
Operational	Noise-Sensitive	Exterior Noise Level Standards ³	55 dBA L _{eq}	45 dBA L _{eq}
		If ambient is < 60 dBA Leq ¹	≥ 5 dBA L _{eq} Project increase	
		If ambient is 60 - 65 dBA Leq ¹	≥ 3 dBA L _{eq} Project increase	
		If ambient is > 65 dBA Leq ¹	≥ 1.5 dBA L _{eq} Project increase	
Construction	Noise-Sensitive	Noise Level Threshold ⁴	80 dBA L _{eq}	70 dBA L _{eq}
		Vibration Level Threshold ⁵	0.3 PPV (in/sec)	

¹ FICON, 1992.

² County of Riverside General Plan Noise Element, Table N-1.

³ County of Riverside General Plan Municipal Code, Section 9.52.040.

⁴ Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual.

⁵ Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Manual, April 2020 Table 19

"Daytime" = 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; "Nighttime" = 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 4-1)



4.13.5 METHODOLOGY FOR CALCULATING PROJECT-RELATED NOISE IMPACTS

A. *Sensitive Receiver Locations*

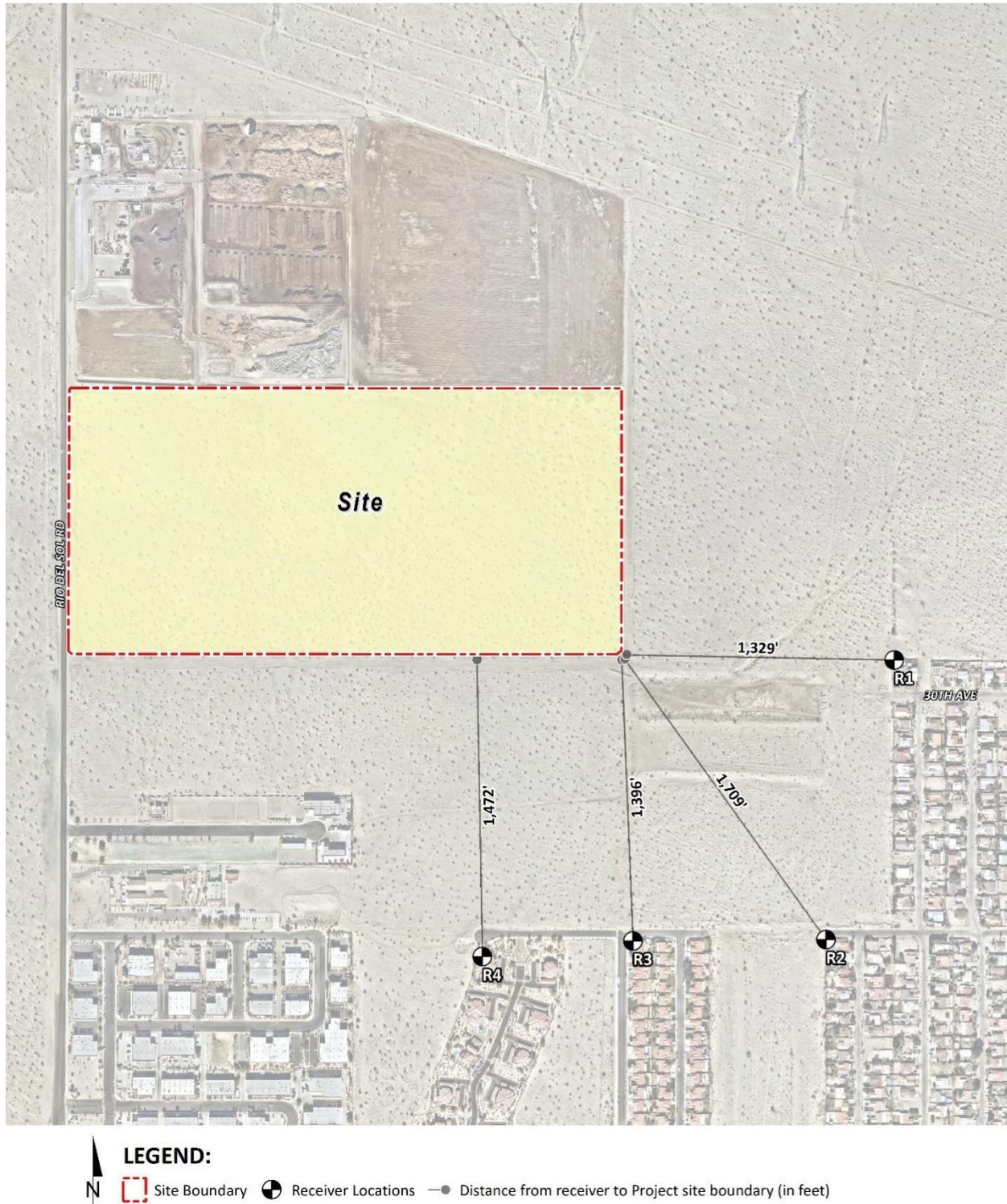
To assess the potential for long-term operational and short-term construction noise impacts, sensitive receiver locations, as shown on Figure 4.13-5, *Receiver Locations*, were identified as representative locations for analysis. Sensitive receivers are generally defined as locations where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could otherwise adversely affect the use of the land. Noise-sensitive land uses are generally considered to include schools, hospitals, single-family dwellings, mobile home parks, churches, libraries, and recreation areas. Moderately noise-sensitive land uses typically include multi-family dwellings, hotels, motels, dormitories, outpatient clinics, cemeteries, golf courses, country clubs, athletic/tennis clubs, and equestrian clubs. Land uses that are considered relatively insensitive to noise include business, commercial, and professional developments. Land uses that are typically not affected by noise include industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture, undeveloped land, parking lots, warehousing, liquid and solid waste facilities, salvage yards, and transit terminals. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 43)

To describe the potential off-site Project noise levels, four receiver locations in the vicinity of the Project site were identified. The selection of receiver locations is based on FHWA guidelines and is consistent with additional guidance provided by Caltrans and the FTA. Other sensitive land uses in the Project study area that are located at greater distances than those identified herein will experience lower noise levels than those presented herein due to the additional attenuation from distance and the shielding of intervening structures. Distance is measured in a straight line from the Project boundary to each receiver location. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 43)

- Location R1: Location R1 represents the existing noise sensitive residence at 72758 30th Avenue, approximately 1,329 feet southeast of the Project site. Receiver R1 is placed in the private outdoor living areas facing the Project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L1, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.
- Location R2: Location R2 represents the existing noise sensitive residence at 30525 Roseview Lane, approximately 1,709 feet southeast of the Project site. Receiver R2 is placed in the private outdoor living areas facing the Project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L2, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.
- Location R3: Location R3 represents the existing noise sensitive residence at 30524 Robert Road, approximately 1,396 feet south of the Project site. Since there are no private outdoor living areas (backyards) facing the Project site, receiver R3 is placed at the building façade. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L3, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.
- Location R4: Location R4 represents the existing noise sensitive Legacy Apartments at 72940 El Centro Way, approximately 1,472 feet south of the Project site. Since there are no private outdoor living areas (backyards) facing the Project site, receiver R4 is placed at the building façade. A 24-hour



Figure 4.13-5 Receiver Locations



(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 8-A)



noise measurement was taken near this location, L4, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

B. Construction Noise and Vibration Methodology

1. Construction Noise Methodology

To describe the Project construction noise levels, construction noise analysis was prepared using reference construction equipment noise levels from the FHWA published the Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM), which includes a national database of construction equipment reference noise emission levels. The RCNM equipment database, provides a comprehensive list of the noise generating characteristics for specific types of construction equipment. In addition, the database provides an acoustical usage factor to estimate the fraction of time each piece of construction equipment is operating at full power (i.e., its loudest condition) during a construction operation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 53)

Using the reference construction equipment noise levels and the CadnaA noise prediction model, calculations of the Project construction noise level impacts at the nearby sensitive receiver locations were completed. Consistent with FTA guidance for general construction noise assessment, Table 4.13-5, *Construction Reference Noise Levels*, presents the combined noise levels for the loudest construction equipment, assuming they operate at the same time. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 55)

Table 4.13-5 Construction Reference Noise Levels

Construction Stage	Reference Construction Activity	Reference Noise Level @ 50 Feet (dBA Leq) ¹	Combined Noise Level (dBA Leq) ²	Combined Sound Power Level (PWL) ³
Site Preparation	Crawler Tractors	78	80	112
	Hauling Trucks	72		
	Rubber Tired Dozers	75		
Grading	Graders	81	83	115
	Excavators	77		
	Compactors	76		
Building Construction	Cranes	73	81	113
	Tractors	80		
	Welders	70		
Paving	Pavers	74	83	115
	Paving Equipment	82		
	Rollers	73		
Architectural Coating	Cranes	73	77	109
	Air Compressors	74		
	Generator Sets	70		

¹ FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM).

² Represents the combined noise level for all equipment assuming they operate at the same time consistent with FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment guidance.

³ Sound power level represents the total amount of acoustical energy (noise level) produced by a sound source independent of distance or surroundings. Sound power levels calibrated using the CadnaA noise model at the reference distance to the noise source.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 10-1)



2. Off-Site Roadway and Utility Improvements

To support the Project development, there would be grading, trenching, and paving for off-site improvements associated with roadway construction and utility installation for the Project. The loudest phase of construction associated with off-site roadway and utility improvements would likely be grading/excavation activities, which would generate similar noise levels compared to the grading/excavation phase of the proposed Project’s on-site construction activities as outlined in Table 4.13-5. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 56-57)

3. Nighttime Concrete Pour Reference Noise Level Measurements

Nighttime concrete pouring activities likely would occur as a part of Project building construction activities. To estimate the noise levels due to nighttime concrete pouring activities, sample reference noise level measurements were taken during a nighttime concrete pouring at a construction site. Urban Crossroads, Inc. collected short-term nighttime concrete pour reference noise level measurements during the noise-sensitive nighttime hours between 1:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. The reference noise levels describe the expected concrete pour noise sources that may include concrete mixer truck movements and pouring activities, concrete paving equipment, rear mounted concrete mixer truck backup alarms, engine idling, air brakes, generators, and workers communicating/whistling. To describe the nighttime concrete pour noise levels associated with the construction of the Project, the analysis herein relies on reference sound pressure level of 67.7 dBA L_{eq} at 50 feet representing a sound power level of 100.3 dBA L_w . While the Project noise levels would depend on the actual duration of activities and specific equipment fleet in use at the time of construction, the reference sound power level of 100.3 dBA L_w is used to describe the expected Project nighttime concrete pour noise activities. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 58)

4. Construction Vibration Methodology

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the equipment and methods employed. The operation of construction equipment causes ground vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. Ground vibration levels associated with various types of construction equipment are summarized on Table 4.13-6, *Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment*. Based on the representative vibration levels presented for various construction equipment types, it is possible to estimate the potential Project construction vibration levels using the vibration assessment methods defined by the FTA, as more fully described in subsection 10.7 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*). (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 60)

Table 4.13-6 Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	PPV (in/sec) at 25 feet
Small bulldozer	0.003
Jackhammer	0.035
Loaded Trucks	0.076
Large bulldozer	0.089
Vibratory Roller	0.210
Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual	

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 10-5)



C. *Operational Noise Methodology*

Following is a summary of the methodology used to evaluate Project-related operational noise impacts. Refer to Section 9 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) for a complete discussion of the methodology and modeling inputs and assumptions.

1. *Reference Noise Levels*

To estimate the Project operational noise impacts, reference noise level measurements were collected from similar types of activities to represent the noise levels expected with the development of the proposed Project. Subsection 9.2 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) provides a detailed description of the reference noise level measurements shown on Table 4.13-7, *Reference Noise Level Measurements*, which were used to estimate the Project operational noise impacts. The projected noise levels assume the worst-case noise environment with the loading dock activity, tractor trailer parking, parking lot vehicle activities, IID Substation, diesel pump, roof-top air conditioning units, trash enclosure activity, and truck movements all operating at the same time. These sources of noise activity likely would vary throughout the day. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 45)

Table 4.13-7 Reference Noise Level Measurements

Reference Noise Source	Noise Source Height (Feet)	Min./Hour ¹		Reference Noise Level (dBA L _{eq}) @ 50 Feet	Sound Power Level (dBA) ²
		Day	Night		
Loading Dock Activity	8'	60	60	65.7	111.5
Tractor Trailer Parking	8'	60	60	62.8	103.4
Parking Lot Vehicle Movements	5'	60	60	52.6	81.1
IID Substation	8'	60	60	55.6	87.3
Roof-Top Air Conditioning Units	5'	39	28	57.2	88.9
Trash Enclosure Activity	5'	60	30	57.3	89.0
Diesel Pump House	8'	60	60	42.2	73.9
Truck Movements	8'	60	60	59.8	93.2

¹ Anticipated duration (minutes within the hour) of noise activity during typical hourly conditions expected at the Project site. "Daytime" = 7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.; "Nighttime" = 10:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m.

² Sound power level represents the total amount of acoustical energy (noise level) produced by a sound source independent of distance or surroundings. Sound power levels calculated using the CadnaA noise model at the reference distance to the noise source. Numbers may vary due to size differences between point and area noise sources.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 9-1)

2. *Measurement Procedures*

The reference noise level measurements presented in Section 9 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) were collected using a Larson Davis LxT Type 1 precision sound level meter (serial number 01146). The LxT sound level meter was calibrated using a Larson-Davis calibrator, Model CAL 200, was programmed in "slow"



mode to record noise levels in "A" weighted form and was located at approximately five feet above the ground elevation for each measurement. The sound level meters and microphones were equipped with a windscreen during all measurements. All noise level measurement equipment satisfies the ANSI standard specifications for sound level meters ANSI S1.4-2014/IEC 61672-1:2013. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 45)

Loading Dock Activity

The reference loading dock activities are intended to describe the typical outdoor operational noise activities associated with the Project. This includes truck idling, reefer activity (refrigerator truck/cold storage), deliveries, backup alarms, trailer docking including a combination of tractor trailer semi-trucks, two-axle delivery trucks, and background operation activities. Since the noise levels generated by cold storage loading dock activity can be slightly higher due to the use of refrigerated trucks or reefers this analysis conservatively assumes that all loading dock activity is associated with cold storage facilities. The reference noise level measurement was taken in the center of the loading dock activity area and represents multiple concurrent noise sources resulting in a combined noise level of 65.7 dBA Leq at a uniform distance of 50 feet. Specifically, the reference noise level measurement represents one truck located approximately 30 feet from the noise level meter with another truck passing by to park roughly 20 feet away, both with their engines idling. Throughout the reference noise level measurement, a separate docked and running reefer truck was located approximately 50 feet east of the measurement location. Additional background noise sources included truck pass-by noise, truck drivers talking to each other next to docked trucks, and air brake release noise when trucks parked. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 47)

Tractor Trailer Parking Activity

To evaluate the noise levels associated with tractor trailer parking, truck idling, backup alarms, trailer movements and storage activities, Urban Crossroads collected a reference noise level measurement at an existing parcel hub facility to describe the potential operational noise levels associated with Project operational activities. The measured reference noise level at 50 feet from activity was measured at 62.8 dBA Leq. The reference noise level measurement includes a semi-truck with trailer pass-by event, background switcher cab trailer towing, drop-off, idling, and backup alarm events. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 47-48)

Parking Lot Vehicle Movements

To describe the on-site parking lot activity, a long-term 29-hour reference noise level measurement was collected in the center of activity within the staff parking lot of an Amazon warehouse distribution center. At 50 feet from the center of activity, the parking lot produced a reference noise level of 52.6 dBA Leq. Parking activities are expected to take place during the full hour (60 minutes) throughout the daytime and evening hours. The parking lot noise levels are mainly due cars pulling in and out of parking spaces in combination with car doors opening and closing. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 48)

IID Substation

IID proposes to construct and operate a new 50 MW joint substation in the southeastern corner of the Majestic Thousand Palms Project Site. The substation is designed in two 25 MW banks, for a total of 50 MW. At full build-out, the substation's primary equipment would include one 92kV circuit breakers, two 25 megavolt-



ampere (MVA) transformers, and up to eight distribution circuits at full build-out. Equipment would reach a maximum height of 15 feet and would be surrounded by a security fence with secured access gates. It is expected that the primary source of noise from the IID Substation will be generated by the power transformers. These transformers typically generate a noise level ranging from 60 to 80 dBA. Therefore, an unmitigated reference noise level of approximately 80.0 dBA Leq at 3 feet is used in this analysis to estimate the IID Substation noise levels. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 48)

Roof-Top Air Conditioning Units

The noise level measurements describe a single mechanical roof-top air conditioning unit. The reference noise level represents a Lennox SCA120 series 10-ton model packaged air conditioning unit. At the uniform reference distance of 50 feet, the reference noise levels are 57.2 dBA Leq. Based on the typical operating conditions observed over a four-day measurement period, the roof-top air conditioning units are estimated to operate for and average 39 minutes per hour during the daytime hours, and 28 minutes per hour during the nighttime hours. These operating conditions reflect peak summer cooling requirements with measured temperatures approaching 96 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) with average daytime temperatures of 82°F. For this noise analysis, the air conditioning units are expected to be located on the roof of the Project buildings. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 48)

Trash Enclosure Activity

To describe the noise levels associated with a trash enclosure activity, Urban Crossroads collected a reference noise level measurement at an existing trash enclosure containing two dumpster bins. The trash enclosure noise levels describe metal gates opening and closing, metal scraping against concrete floor sounds, dumpster movement on metal wheels, and trash dropping into the metal dumpster. The reference noise levels describe trash enclosure noise activities when trash is dropped into an empty metal dumpster, as would occur at the Project Site. The measured reference noise level at the uniform 50-foot reference distance is 57.3 dBA Leq for the trash enclosure activity. The reference noise level describes the expected noise source activities associated with the trash enclosures for the Project's proposed building. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 48-49)

Diesel Pump House

A reference noise level measurement was taken by Urban Crossroads, Inc. at the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) pump site number 5676, located at 38-130 Portola Avenue in the City of Palm Desert to describe the diesel pump house activity expected at the Project facilities. The two-minute reference noise level measurement indicates that pump activity generates noise levels of 69.8 dBA Leq at 3 feet. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 49)

Truck Movements

The truck movements reference noise level measurement was collected over a period of 1 hour and 28 minutes and represents multiple heavy trucks entering and exiting the outdoor loading dock area producing a reference noise level of 59.8 dBA Leq at 50 feet. The noise sources included at this measurement location account for trucks entering and existing the Project driveways and maneuvering in and out of the outdoor loading dock activity area. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 49)



3. *CadnaA Noise Prediction Model*

To fully describe the exterior operational noise levels from the Project, Urban Crossroads developed a noise prediction model using the Computer Aided Noise Abatement (CadnaA) computer program. CadnaA can analyze multiple types of noise sources using the spatially accurate Project site plan, georeferenced Nearmap aerial imagery, topography, buildings, and barriers in its calculations to predict outdoor noise levels. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 49)

Using the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9613-2 protocol, CadnaA calculates the distance from each noise source to the noise receiver locations, using the ground absorption, distance, and barrier/building attenuation inputs to provide a summary of noise level at each receiver and the partial noise level contributions by noise source. Consistent with the ISO 9613 protocol, the CadnaA noise prediction model relies on the reference sound power level (L_w) to describe individual noise sources. While sound pressure levels (e.g., L_{eq}) quantify in decibels the intensity of given sound sources at a reference distance, L_w is connected to the sound source and is independent of distance. L_w varies substantially with distance from the source and diminishes from intervening obstacles and barriers, air absorption, wind, and other factors. Sound power is the acoustical energy emitted by the sound source and is an absolute value that is not affected by the environment. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 49)

The operational noise level calculations provided herein account for the distance attenuation provided due to geometric spreading, when sound from a localized stationary source (i.e., a point source) propagates uniformly outward in a spherical pattern. A default ground attenuation factor of 0.5 was used to account for mixed ground representing a combination of hard and soft surfaces consistent with study area conditions. Appendix 9.1 to the Project's NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) includes the detailed noise model inputs. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 49)

D. Off-Site Traffic Modeling Methodology

1. FHWA Traffic Noise Prediction Model

The expected roadway noise level increases from vehicular traffic were calculated by Urban Crossroads using a computer program that replicates the FHWA Traffic Noise Prediction Model FHWA-RD-77-108. The FHWA Model arrives at a predicted noise level through a series of adjustments to the Reference Energy Mean Emission Level (REMEL). In California the national REMELs are substituted with the California Vehicle Noise (Calveno) Emission Levels. Adjustments are then made to the REMEL to account for: the roadway classification (e.g., collector, secondary, major, or arterial); the roadway active width (i.e., the distance between the center of the outermost travel lanes on each side of the roadway); the total average daily traffic (ADT); the travel speed; the percentages of automobiles, medium trucks, and heavy trucks in the traffic volume; the roadway grade; the angle of view (e.g., whether the roadway view is blocked); the site conditions ("hard" or "soft" relates to the absorption of the ground, pavement, or landscaping); and the percentage of total ADT which flows each hour throughout a 24-hour period. Research conducted by Caltrans has shown that the use of soft site conditions is appropriate for the application of the FHWA traffic noise prediction model used in the analysis. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 29)



□ **Off-Site Traffic Noise Prediction Model Inputs**

Table 6-1 of the Project's NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) presents the roadway parameters used to assess the Project's off-site transportation noise impacts. NVA Table 6-1 identifies the 12 study area roadway segments, the distance from the centerline to adjacent land use based on the functional roadway classification per the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element, and the vehicle speeds. The ADT volumes used in the analysis area presented on Table 6-2 of the Project's NVA are based on the Project's Traffic Impact Analysis ("TIA"; *Technical Appendix K1*) for the following traffic scenarios: Existing, Existing plus project, Existing plus Ambient Growth plus Cumulative (2025) without Project Conditions, Existing plus Ambient Growth plus Cumulative (2025) with Project Conditions, Horizon Year (2045) without Project Conditions, and Horizon Year (2045) with Project Conditions. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 29)

The ADT volumes vary for each roadway segment based on the existing traffic volumes and the combination of Project traffic distributions. The analysis herein relies on comparative analysis of the off-site traffic noise impacts at the boundary of the right-of-way of the receiving adjacent land use, without and with project ADT traffic volumes from the Project's TIA (*Technical Appendix K1*). Consistent with the Project's TIA, the Project is anticipated to generate a net total of 2,640 two-way trips per day (actual vehicles) that include 564 truck trips. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 29-30)

To quantify the off-site noise levels, the Project related truck trips were added to the heavy truck category in the FHWA noise prediction model. The addition of the Project-related truck trips increases the percentage of heavy trucks in the vehicle mix. This approach recognizes that the FHWA noise prediction model is significantly influenced by the number of heavy trucks in the vehicle mix. Table 6-3 of the Project's NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) provides the time of day (daytime, evening, and nighttime) vehicle splits. The daily Project truck trip-ends were assigned to the individual off-site study area roadway segments based on the Project truck trip distribution percentages documented in the Project's TIA (*Technical Appendix K1*). Using the Project truck trips in combination with the Project trip distribution, Urban Crossroads calculated the number of additional Project truck trips and vehicle mix percentages for each of the study area roadway segments. Table 6-4 of the Project's NVA shows the traffic flow by vehicle type (vehicle mix) used for all without Project traffic scenarios, and Tables 6-5 to 6-7 of the Project's NVA show the vehicle mixes used for the with Project traffic scenarios. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 31)

Due to the added Project truck trips, the increase in Project traffic volumes and the distributions of trucks on the study area road segments, the percentage of autos, medium trucks and heavy trucks will vary for each of the traffic scenarios. This explains why the existing and future traffic volumes and vehicle mixes vary between seemingly identical study area roadway segments. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 31)



4.13.6 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two (2) miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?*

The Project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or within an airport land use plan. The closest airport is the Palm Springs International Airport (PSIA) located over 5 miles southwest of the Project site. According to Map PS-3 (Noise Compatibility Contours) from the PSIA Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), the Project site is located well outside of the 60 dBA CNEL noise contour for this facility. As such, the Project site would not be exposed to excessive noise levels from airport operations. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant. (ALUC, 2005, Map PS-3)

Threshold b.: *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?*

There are no private airstrips in the Project vicinity. The nearest private airport facility is the Crown Aero (Bermuda Dunes Airport), located approximately 8.5 miles southeast of the Project site within unincorporated Riverside County. According to Map BD-3 of the Bermuda Dunes Airport ALUCP, the Project site is located well outside of the 55 dBA CNEL contour for the Bermuda Dunes Airport. Accordingly, the Project would not expose people residing or working in the area to excessive private airport-related noise, and impacts would be less than significant. (RCALUC, 2004)

Threshold c.: *Would the Project result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*

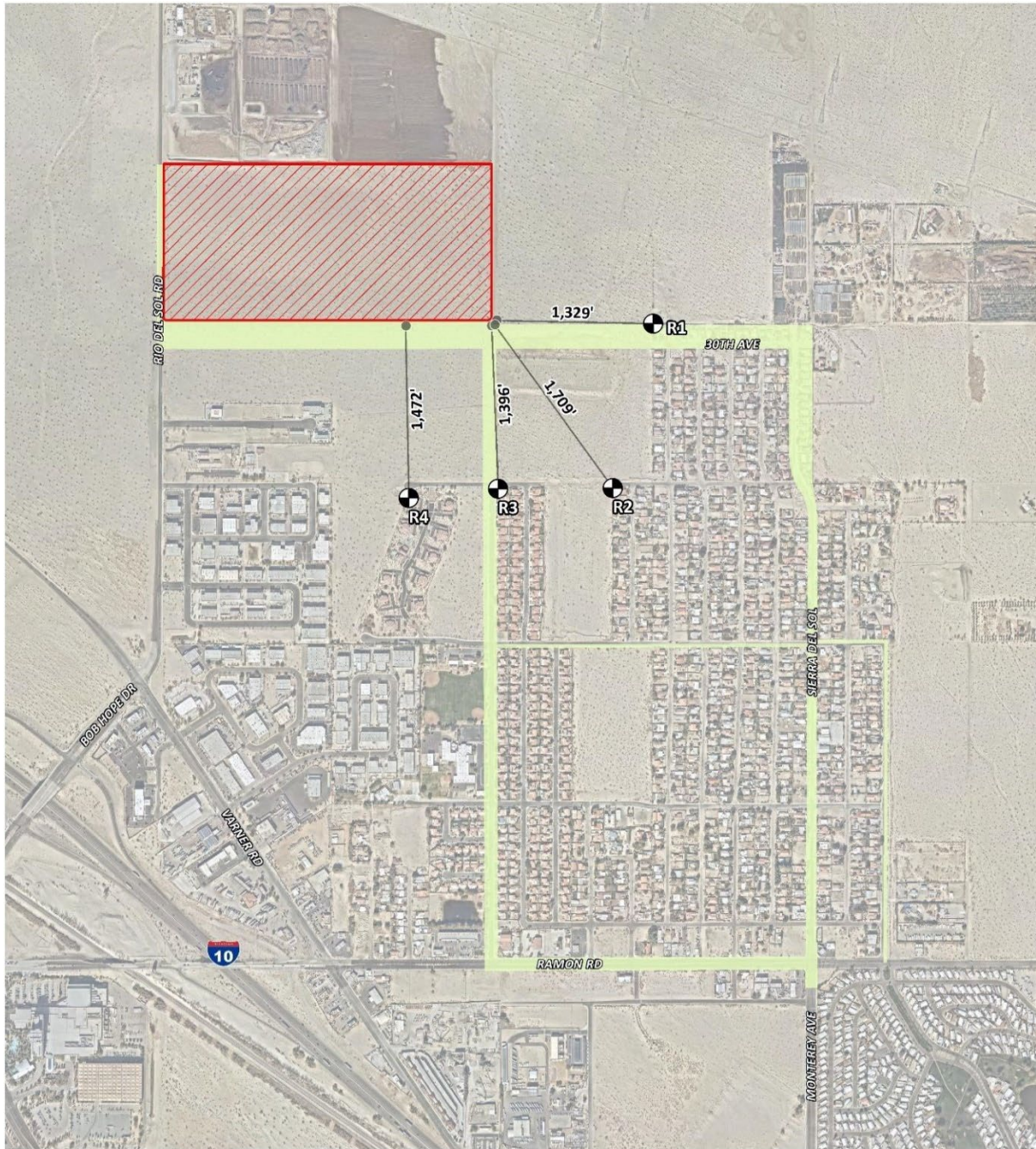
The Project has the potential to result in the generation of substantial noise levels associated with construction activities, site operations, and Project-related traffic. Each is discussed below.

A. Construction Noise Impacts





The following is an analysis of the potential average dBA Leq impacts resulting from short-term construction activities associated with the development of the Project. Figure 4.13-6, *Construction Noise Source Locations*, shows the on-site construction noise source activity including the off-site roadway and utility improvements in relation to the nearest sensitive receiver locations previously depicted on Figure 4.13-5. Project-related construction activities would include grading, trenching, and paving for off-site improvements associated with roadway construction and utility installation for the Project. It is expected that the off-site construction activities would not take place at one location for more than four days. Construction noise from this off-site work would, therefore, be relatively short term and the noise levels would be reduced as construction work moves linearly along the selected alignment and farther from sensitive uses. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 53)



Figure 4.13-6 Construction Noise Source Locations



LEGEND:

-  Project Site Construction Activity
-  Off-Site Construction Activity
-  Receiver Locations
-  Distance from receiver to Project site boundary (in feet)

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 10-A)



2. Construction Noise Levels

The FTA *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual* recognizes that construction projects are accomplished in several different stages and outlines the procedures for assessing noise impacts during construction. Each stage has a specific equipment mix, depending on the work to be completed during that stage. As a result of the equipment mix, each stage has its own noise characteristics; some stages have higher continuous noise levels than others, and some have higher impact noise levels than others. The Project construction activities are expected to occur in the following stages: demolition; site preparation; grading; building construction; paving; and architectural coating. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 53)

3. Construction Noise Analysis

Using the reference construction equipment noise levels and the CadnaA noise prediction model, calculations of the Project construction noise level impacts at the nearest sensitive receiver locations were completed. As shown in Table 4.13-8, *Construction Equipment Noise Level Summary*, the construction noise levels are expected to range from 46.9 to 55.4 dBA Leq, and the highest construction levels are expected to range from 52.9 to 55.4 dBA Leq at the nearest receiver locations. Appendix 10.1 to the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) includes the detailed CadnaA construction noise model inputs. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 55)

Table 4.13-8 Construction Equipment Noise Level Summary

Receiver Location ¹	Construction Noise Levels (dBA Leq)					
	Site Preparation	Grading	Building Construction	Paving	Architectural Coating	Highest Levels ²
R1	51.9	54.9	52.9	54.9	48.9	54.9
R2	49.9	52.9	50.9	52.9	46.9	52.9
R3	52.1	55.1	53.1	55.1	49.1	55.1
R4	52.4	55.4	53.4	55.4	49.4	55.4

¹ Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown on Figure 4.13-6.

² Construction noise level calculations based on distance from the construction activity, which is measured from the Project site boundary to the nearest receiver locations. CadnaA construction noise model inputs are included in Appendix 10.1 to the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*).

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 10-2)

4. Typical Construction Noise Level Compliance

To evaluate whether the Project would generate potentially significant short-term noise levels at nearby receiver locations, a construction-related noise level threshold of 80 dBA Leq is used as a reasonable threshold to assess the daytime construction noise level impacts. The construction noise analysis shows that the nearest receiver locations would satisfy the reasonable daytime 80 dBA Leq significant threshold during Project construction activities, as shown on Table 4.13-9, *Construction Noise Level Compliance*. Therefore, the noise impacts due to Project construction noise between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., during the months of June through September, and 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., during the months of October through May would be less than significant at all receiver locations. Although the Project’s noise impacts during typical construction activities would be less than significant, Urban Crossroads recommends imposing noise abatement measures



during construction to further reduce construction-related noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors. Accordingly, it is conservatively assumed that a significant construction-related noise impact would occur for which mitigation would be required. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 56)

Table 4.13-9 Construction Noise Level Compliance

Receiver Location ¹	Construction Noise Levels (dBA L _{eq})		
	Highest Construction Noise Levels ²	Threshold ³	Threshold Exceeded? ⁴
R1	54.9	80	No
R2	52.9	80	No
R3	55.1	80	No
R4	55.4	80	No

¹ Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown on Figure 4.13-6.

² Highest construction noise level calculations based on distance from the construction noise source activity to the nearest receiver locations as shown on Table 4.13-8.

³ Construction noise level thresholds as shown on Table 4.13-4.

⁴ Do the estimated Project construction noise levels exceed the construction noise level threshold?

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 10-3)

5. Off-Site Roadway and Utility Improvements Construction Noise Analysis

The loudest phase of construction associated with off-site roadway and utility improvements would likely be grading/excavation activities, which would generate similar noise levels compared to the grading/excavation phase of the proposed project’s on-site construction activities previously outlined on Table 4.13-5.(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 56-57)

Approximately 8,646 feet of 92 kV above-ground power line would be needed to connect the proposed IID substation to the local electric grid. New poles would be installed along the selected alignment. The actual transmission line route has not yet been established; however, several transmission line extension routing options are under consideration. This includes potential off-site transmission line extensions on sections of Sierra del Sol, Avenue 30, Ramon Road, Robert Road, Sierra del Sol, and El Centro Way as previously shown in Figure 4.13-6. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 57)

It is expected that the off-site construction activities would not take place at any one location for more than four days. Construction noise from this off-site work would, therefore, be relatively short-term and the noise levels would be reduced as construction work moves linearly along the selected alignment and farther from sensitive uses. Notwithstanding, and although not required to address a potentially significant impact, Urban Crossroads recommends implementation of noise abatement measures during the off-site power line construction activities to further reduce construction-related noise impacts from Project construction and off-site roadway and utility improvements. Thus, although impacts are anticipated to be less than significant, Project noise impacts due to off-site construction and installation of the required power pole and power line conservatively are evaluated as a significant impact requiring mitigation. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 57).



6. Nighttime Concrete Pour Noise Analysis

Nighttime concrete pouring activities are often used to support reduced concrete mixer truck transit times and lower air temperatures than during the daytime hours and are generally limited to the actual building pad area as shown on Figure 4.13-7, *Nighttime Concrete Pour Noise Source and Receiver Locations*. Since the nighttime concrete pours would take place outside the permitted by Riverside County Ordinance No. 847 (Regulating Noise Section), the Project Applicant will be required to obtain authorization for nighttime work from the County of Riverside. Any nighttime construction noise activities are evaluated against the FTA nighttime exterior construction noise level threshold of 70 dBA L_{eq} for noise sensitive residential land use. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 58)

As shown on Table 4.13-10, *Nighttime Concrete Pour Noise Level Compliance*, the noise levels associated with the nighttime concrete pour activities are estimated to range from 37.5 to 40.0 dBA L_{eq} . The analysis shows that the unmitigated nighttime concrete pour activities would satisfy the FTA 70 dBA L_{eq} nighttime residential noise level threshold at all the nearest noise sensitive receiver locations. Therefore, the noise impacts due to Project construction nighttime concrete pour noise activity would be less than significant at all receiver locations with prior authorization for nighttime work from the County of Riverside. Notwithstanding, Urban Crossroads recommends noise abatement measures during construction activities. Accordingly, Project-related nighttime concrete pouring noise impacts conservatively are evaluated as a significant impact of the proposed Project. Appendix 10.2 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) includes the CadnaA nighttime concrete pour noise model inputs. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 58)

Table 4.13-10 Nighttime Concrete Pour Noise Level Compliance

Receiver Location ¹	Concrete Pour Construction Noise Levels (dBA L_{eq})		
	Exterior Noise Levels ²	Threshold ³	Threshold Exceeded? ⁴
R1	39.6	70	No
R2	37.5	70	No
R3	39.6	70	No
R4	40.0	70	No

¹ Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown on Exhibit 10-A.

² Nighttime Concrete Pour noise model inputs are included in Appendix 10.2.

³ Construction noise level thresholds as shown on Table 4-1.

⁴ Do the estimated Project construction noise levels exceed the construction noise level threshold?
(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 10-4)

B. Operational Noise Impacts

The following is an analysis of the potential stationary-source operational noise impacts at the nearest receiver location resulting from the operation of the proposed Project. Figure 4.13-8, *Operational Noise Source Locations*, identifies the noise source locations used to assess the hourly average L_{eq} operational noise levels. The operational noise analysis includes the planned 12-foot-high screen walls surrounding the northern and southern loading dock areas as well as the eastern tractor trailer parking lot. As shown in Figure 4.13-8, the screen wall is designed for screening, privacy, noise control, and security. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 45)



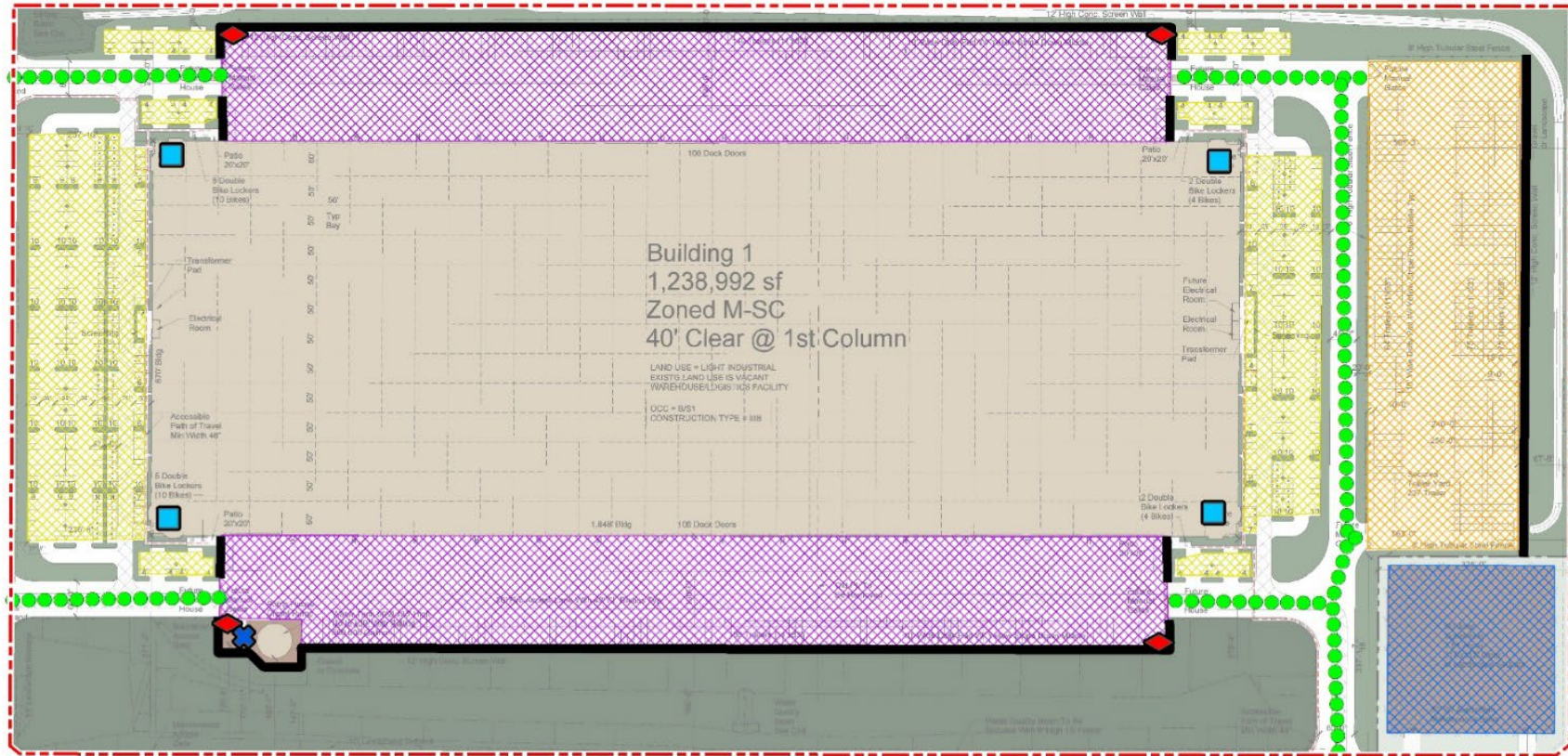
Figure 4.13-7 Nighttime Concrete Pour Noise Source and Receiver Locations



(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 10-B)



Figure 4.13-8 Operational Noise Source Locations



LEGEND:



- Site Boundary
- Parking Lot Vehicle Activity
- Trash Enclosure Activity
- Planned 12-Foot High Screenwall
- Loading Dock Activity
- IID Substation
- Diesel Pump
- Tractor Trailer Parking Activity
- Roof-Top Air Conditioning Unit
- Truck Movements

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Exhibit 9-A)



2. Operational Noise Sources

The operational noise analysis is intended to describe noise level impacts associated with the expected typical of daytime and nighttime activities at the Project site. Consistent with similar warehouse uses, the Project business operations would primarily be conducted within the enclosed building, except for traffic movement, parking, as well as loading and unloading of trucks at designated loading bays. The on-site Project-related noise sources are expected to include: loading dock activity, tractor trailer parking, parking lot vehicle activities, IID Substation, diesel pump, roof-top air conditioning units, trash enclosure activity, and truck movements. It is important to note that the following projected noise levels assume the worst-case noise environment with the loading dock activity, tractor trailer parking, parking lot vehicle activities, IID Substation, diesel pump, roof-top air conditioning units, trash enclosure activity, and truck movements all operating at the same time. These sources of noise activity will likely vary throughout the day. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 45)

3. Project Operational Noise Levels

Using the reference noise levels to represent the proposed Project operations that include loading dock activity, tractor trailer parking, parking lot vehicle activities, IID Substation, diesel pump, roof-top air conditioning units, trash enclosure activity, and truck movements, Urban Crossroads calculated the operational source noise levels that are expected to be generated at the Project site and the Project-related noise level increase that would be experienced at each of the sensitive receiver locations. Table 4.13-11, *Daytime Project Operational Noise Levels*, shows the Project operational noise levels during the daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The daytime hourly noise levels at the off-site receiver locations are expected to range from 38.4 to 41.6 dBA Leq. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 50)

Table 4.13-11 Daytime Project Operational Noise Levels

Noise Source ¹	Operational Noise Levels by Receiver Location (dBA Leq)			
	R1	R2	R3	R4
Loading Dock Activity	39.1	35.7	37.8	38.9
Tractor Trailer Parking	36.6	33.3	34.5	34.1
Parking Lot Vehicle Movements	16.8	14.1	15.5	15.1
IID Substation	21.9	19.5	21.4	20.7
Roof-Top Air Conditioning Units	21.6	18.9	21.1	22.3
Trash Enclosure Activity	15.0	12.7	14.1	15.0
Diesel Pump House	5.1	5.0	7.6	9.6
Truck Movements	31.8	29.5	31.5	31.5
Total (All Noise Sources):	41.6	38.4	40.2	40.8

¹ See Figure 4.13-8 for the noise source locations. CadnaA noise model calculations are included in Appendix 9.1 to the Project’s NVA (Technical Appendix J).

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 9-2)

Table 4.13-12, *Nighttime Project Operational Noise Levels*, shows the Project operational noise levels during the nighttime hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. The nighttime hourly noise levels at the off-site receiver locations are expected to range 38.4 to 41.6 dBA Leq. The difference between the daytime and nighttime noise



levels is largely related to the duration of noise activity (Table 4.13-7). Appendix 9.1 to the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) includes the detailed noise model inputs. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 50-51)

Table 4.13-12 Nighttime Project Operational Noise Levels

Noise Source ¹	Operational Noise Levels by Receiver Location (dBA Leq)			
	R1	R2	R3	R4
Loading Dock Activity	39.1	35.7	37.8	38.9
Tractor Trailer Parking	36.6	33.3	34.5	34.1
Parking Lot Vehicle Movements	16.8	14.1	15.5	15.1
IID Substation	21.9	19.5	21.4	20.7
Roof-Top Air Conditioning Units	19.2	16.5	18.7	19.9
Trash Enclosure Activity	15.0	12.7	14.1	15.0
Diesel Pump House	5.1	5.0	7.6	9.6
Truck Movements	31.8	29.5	31.5	31.5
Total (All Noise Sources):	41.6	38.4	40.2	40.8

¹ See Figure 4.13-8 for the noise source locations. CadnaA noise model calculations are included in Appendix 9.1 to the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*).

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 9-3)

4. Project Operational Noise Level Compliance

To demonstrate compliance with local noise regulations, the Project-only operational noise levels are evaluated against exterior noise level thresholds based on the Riverside County exterior noise level standards at nearby noise-sensitive receiver locations. Table 4.13-13, *Operational Noise Level Compliance*, shows the operational noise levels associated with the proposed Project would satisfy the Riverside County daytime and nighttime exterior noise level standards. Therefore, the operational noise impacts are considered less than significant at the nearest noise-sensitive receiver locations. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 51)

Table 4.13-13 Operational Noise Level Compliance

Receiver Location ¹	Project Operational Noise Levels (dBA Leq) ²		Noise Level Standards (dBA Leq) ³		Noise Level Standards Exceeded? ⁴	
	Daytime	Nighttime	Daytime	Nighttime	Daytime	Nighttime
R1	41.6	41.6	55	45	No	No
R2	38.4	38.4	55	45	No	No
R3	40.2	40.2	55	45	No	No
R4	40.8	40.8	55	45	No	No

¹ See Figure 4.13-5 for the receiver locations.

² Proposed Project operational noise levels as shown on Table 4.13-11 and Table 4.13-12.

³ Exterior noise level standards, as shown on Table 4.13-4.

⁴ Do the estimated Project operational noise source activities exceed the noise level standards?

"Daytime" = 7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.; "Nighttime" = 10:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e)



5. Project Operational Noise Level Increases

To describe the Project operational noise level increases, the Project operational noise levels are combined with the existing ambient noise levels measurements for the nearest receiver locations potentially impacts by Project operational noise sources. Since the dB units used to measure noise are logarithmic units, the Project-operational and existing ambient noise levels cannot be combined using standard arithmetic equations. Instead, they must be logarithmically added using the following formula: (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 51)

$$SPL_{Total} = 10\log_{10}[10^{SPL1/10} + 10^{SPL2/10} + \dots 10^{SPLn/10}]$$

Where “SPL1,” “SPL2,” etc. are equal to the sound pressure levels being combined, or in this case, the Project-operational and existing ambient noise levels. The difference between the combined Project and ambient noise levels describes the Project noise level increases to the existing ambient noise environment. Noise levels that would be experienced at receiver locations when Project-source noise is added to the daytime and nighttime ambient conditions are presented on Table 4.13-14, *Daytime Project Operational Noise Level Increases*, and Table 4.13-15, *Nighttime Operational Noise Level Increases*. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e)

As shown in Table 4.13-14, the Project would generate a daytime operational noise level increases ranging from 0.2 to 1.4 dBA Leq at the nearest receiver locations. As shown in Table 4.13-15, the Project would generate a nighttime operational noise level increases ranging from 0.8 to 1.5 dBA Leq at the nearest receiver locations. Project-related operational noise level increases would satisfy the operational noise level increase significance criteria presented in Table 4.13-4, and therefore the Project noise level increases at the sensitive receiver locations would be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 51-52)

Table 4.13-14 Daytime Project Operational Noise Level Increases

Receiver Location ¹	Total Project Operational Noise Level ²	Measurement Location ³	Reference Ambient Noise Levels ⁴	Combined Project and Ambient ⁵	Project Increase ⁶	Increase Criteria ⁷	Increase Criteria Exceeded?
R1	41.6	L1	46.0	47.4	1.4	5.0	No
R2	38.4	L2	45.2	46.0	0.8	5.0	No
R3	40.2	L3	53.9	54.1	0.2	5.0	No
R4	40.8	L4	47.8	48.6	0.8	5.0	No

¹ See Figure 4.13-5 for the receiver locations.

² Total Project daytime operational noise levels as shown on Table 4.13-11.

³ Reference noise level measurement locations as shown on Figure 4.13-4.

⁴ Observed daytime ambient noise levels as shown on Table 4.13-1.

⁵ Represents the combined ambient conditions plus the Project activities.

⁶ The noise level increase expected with the addition of the proposed Project activities.

⁷ Significance increase criteria as shown on Table 4.13-4.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e)



Table 4.13-15 Nighttime Operational Noise Level Increases

Receiver Location ¹	Total Project Operational Noise Level ²	Measurement Location ³	Reference Ambient Noise Levels ⁴	Combined Project and Ambient ⁵	Project Increase ⁶	Increase Criteria ⁷	Increase Criteria Exceeded?
R1	41.6	L1	45.3	46.8	1.5	5.0	No
R2	38.4	L2	44.5	45.5	1.0	5.0	No
R3	40.2	L3	46.7	47.6	0.9	5.0	No
R4	40.8	L4	47.9	48.7	0.8	5.0	No

¹ See Figure 4.13-5 for the receiver locations.

² Total Project nighttime operational noise levels as shown on Table 4.13-12.

³ Reference noise level measurement locations as shown on Figure 4.13-4.

⁴ Observed nighttime ambient noise levels as shown on Table 4.13-1.

⁵ Represents the combined ambient conditions plus the Project activities.

⁶ The noise level increase expected with the addition of the proposed Project activities.

⁷ Significance increase criteria as shown on Table 4.13-4.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e)

C. Off-Site Transportation Noise Impacts

To assess the off-site transportation CNEL noise levels impacts associated with the proposed Project, noise contours were developed based on the Project’s TIA (*Technical Appendix K1*). Noise contour boundaries represent the equal levels of noise exposure and are measured in CNEL from the center of the roadway. The noise contours do not consider the effect of any existing noise barriers or topography that may attenuate ambient noise levels. In addition, because the noise contours reflect modeling of vehicular noise on area roadways, they appropriately do not reflect noise contributions from the surrounding stationary noise sources within the Project study area. Refer to Subsection 7.1 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) for a discussion of traffic noise contours developed for the Project, which are presented in NVA Tables 7-1 through 7-6. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 35)

1. Existing Project Traffic Noise Level Increases

An analysis of existing traffic noise levels plus traffic noise generated by the proposed Project has been included herein to fully analyze all the existing traffic scenarios identified in the Project’s TIA (*Technical Appendix K2*). However, the analysis of existing off-site traffic noise levels plus traffic noise generated by the proposed Project scenario would not actually occur since the Project would not be fully constructed and operational until Year 2025 conditions. Table 7-1 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) shows the Existing without Project conditions CNEL noise levels. The Existing without Project exterior noise levels are expected to range from 70.2 to 79.5 dBA CNEL, without accounting for any noise attenuation features such as noise barriers or topography. Table 7-2 of the Project’s NVA shows the Existing with Project conditions would range from 73.6 to 79.5 dBA CNEL. Table 4.13-16, *Existing With Project Traffic Noise Level Increase*, shows that the Project off-site traffic noise level increases would range from 0.0 to 4.2 dBA CNEL on the study area roadway segments. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 38)



Table 4.13-16 Existing With Project Traffic Noise Level Increase

ID	Road	Segment	Receiving Land Use ¹	CNEL at Receiving Land Use (dBA) ¹			Incremental Noise Level Increase Threshold ²	
				No Project	With Project	Project Addition	Limit	Exceeded?
1	Rio Del Sol Rd.	n/o 30th Av.	Non-Sensitive	70.2	73.6	3.4	n/a	No
2	Rio Del Sol Rd.	s/o 30th Av.	Non-Sensitive	70.2	74.4	4.2	n/a	No
3	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o Varner Rd.	Non-Sensitive	76.0	76.8	0.8	3.0	No
4	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o I-10 WB Ramps	Non-Sensitive	78.5	78.8	0.3	3.0	No
5	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o I-10 EB Ramps	Non-Sensitive	78.7	78.8	0.1	3.0	No
6	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o Ramon Rd.	Non-Sensitive	79.3	79.3	0.0	3.0	No
7	Varner Rd.	w/o Rio Del Sol Rd.	Non-Sensitive	74.1	74.3	0.2	n/a	No
8	Varner Rd.	e/o Rio Del Sol Rd.	Non-Sensitive	74.9	75.0	0.1	n/a	No
9	Ramon Rd.	w/o Bob Hope Dr.	Sensitive	79.5	79.5	0.0	1.5	No
10	Ramon Rd.	e/o Bob Hope Dr.	Non-Sensitive	79.1	79.1	0.0	3.0	No
11	Ramon Rd.	w/o Varner Rd.	Non-Sensitive	75.7	75.8	0.1	3.0	No
12	Ramon Rd.	e/o Varner Rd.	Sensitive	76.0	76.0	0.0	1.5	No

¹ Based on a review of existing aerial imagery. Noise sensitive uses limited to existing residential land uses.

² The CNEL is calculated at the boundary of the right-of-way of each roadway and the property line of the receiving land use.

³ Does the Project create an incremental noise level increase exceeding the significance criteria (Table 4.13-4)?

"n/a" Per the County of Riverside General Plan Noise Element Table N-1, a barely perceptible 3 dBA or greater noise level increase is considered a significant impact when the ambient non-noise sensitive noise level is greater than the normally acceptable 75 dBA CNEL land use compatibility criteria.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 7-7)

2. Project Traffic Level Increases – Existing Plus Ambient Growth Plus Cumulative

Table 7-3 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) presents the Existing plus Ambient Growth plus Cumulative (EAC) without Project conditions CNEL noise levels. The EAC without Project exterior noise levels are expected to range from 70.6 to 79.5 dBA CNEL, without accounting for any noise attenuation features such as noise barriers or topography. Table 7-4 of the Project’s NVA shows that the EAC with Project conditions are expected to range 73.8 to 79.6 dBA CNEL. Table 4.13-17, *EAC 2025 with Project Traffic Noise Level Increases*, shows that the Project off-site traffic noise level increases would range from 0.0 to 3.7 dBA CNEL, and would not exceed the noise level increase thresholds of significance. Therefore, Project traffic-related noise impacts under EAC 2025 conditions would be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 38)

3. Horizon Year Project Traffic Noise Level Increases

Table 7-5 of the Project’s NVA (*Technical Appendix J*) presents the HY 2045 without Project condition CNEL noise levels. The HY 2045 without Project exterior noise levels range from 71.0 to 82.3 dBA CNEL, without accounting for any noise attenuation features such as noise barrier or topography. Table 7-6 of the Project’s NVA shows that the HY 2045 with Project conditions are expected to range from 74.0 to 82.3 dBA CNEL. Table 4.13-18, *HY 2045 with Project Traffic Noise Level Increases*, shows that the Project off-site traffic noise



Table 4.13-17 EAC 2025 with Project Traffic Noise Level Increases

ID	Road	Segment	Receiving Land Use ¹	CNEL at Receiving Land Use (dBA) ¹			Incremental Noise Level Increase Threshold ²	
				No Project	With Project	Project Addition	Limit	Exceeded?
1	Rio Del Sol Rd.	n/o 30th Av.	Non-Sensitive	70.6	73.8	3.2	n/a	No
2	Rio Del Sol Rd.	s/o 30th Av.	Non-Sensitive	70.9	74.6	3.7	n/a	No
3	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o Varner Rd.	Non-Sensitive	76.8	77.5	0.7	3.0	No
4	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o I-10 WB Ramps	Non-Sensitive	79.0	79.2	0.2	3.0	No
5	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o I-10 EB Ramps	Non-Sensitive	78.9	79.0	0.1	3.0	No
6	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o Ramon Rd.	Non-Sensitive	79.5	79.6	0.1	3.0	No
7	Varner Rd.	w/o Rio Del Sol Rd.	Non-Sensitive	74.2	74.3	0.1	n/a	No
8	Varner Rd.	e/o Rio Del Sol Rd.	Non-Sensitive	75.2	75.2	0.0	3.0	No
9	Ramon Rd.	w/o Bob Hope Dr.	Sensitive	79.5	79.5	0.0	1.5	No
10	Ramon Rd.	e/o Bob Hope Dr.	Non-Sensitive	79.1	79.1	0.0	3.0	No
11	Ramon Rd.	w/o Varner Rd.	Non-Sensitive	75.8	75.8	0.0	3.0	No
12	Ramon Rd.	e/o Varner Rd.	Sensitive	76.1	76.1	0.0	1.5	No

¹ Based on a review of existing aerial imagery. Noise sensitive uses limited to existing residential land uses.

² The CNEL is calculated at the boundary of the right-of-way of each roadway and the property line of the receiving land use.

³ Does the Project create an incremental noise level increase exceeding the significance criteria (Table 4.13-4)?

"n/a" Per the County of Riverside General Plan Noise Element Table N-1, a barely perceptible 3 dBA or greater noise level increase is considered a significant impact when the ambient non-noise sensitive noise level is greater than the normally acceptable 75 dBA CNEL land use compatibility criteria.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 7-8)



Table 4.13-18 HY 2045 with Project Traffic Noise Level Increases

ID	Road	Segment	Receiving Land Use ¹	CNEL at Receiving Land Use (dBA) ¹			Incremental Noise Level Increase Threshold ²	
				No Project	With Project	Project Addition	Limit	Exceeded?
1	Rio Del Sol Rd.	n/o 30th Av.	Non-Sensitive	71.0	74.0	3.0	n/a	No
2	Rio Del Sol Rd.	s/o 30th Av.	Non-Sensitive	71.3	74.8	3.5	n/a	No
3	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o Varner Rd.	Non-Sensitive	77.2	77.8	0.6	3.0	No
4	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o I-10 WB Ramps	Non-Sensitive	79.5	79.8	0.3	3.0	No
5	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o I-10 EB Ramps	Non-Sensitive	79.4	79.5	0.1	3.0	No
6	Bob Hope Dr.	s/o Ramon Rd.	Non-Sensitive	80.3	80.4	0.1	3.0	No
7	Varner Rd.	w/o Rio Del Sol Rd.	Non-Sensitive	74.6	74.7	0.1	n/a	No
8	Varner Rd.	e/o Rio Del Sol Rd.	Non-Sensitive	75.6	75.7	0.1	3.0	No
9	Ramon Rd.	w/o Bob Hope Dr.	Sensitive	80.5	80.5	0.0	1.5	No
10	Ramon Rd.	e/o Bob Hope Dr.	Non-Sensitive	82.3	82.3	0.0	3.0	No
11	Ramon Rd.	w/o Varner Rd.	Non-Sensitive	78.9	78.9	0.0	3.0	No
12	Ramon Rd.	e/o Varner Rd.	Sensitive	78.4	78.4	0.0	1.5	No

¹ Based on a review of existing aerial imagery. Noise sensitive uses limited to existing residential land uses.

² The CNEL is calculated at the boundary of the right-of-way of each roadway and the property line of the receiving land use.

³ Does the Project create an incremental noise level increase exceeding the significance criteria (Table 4.13-4)?

"n/a" Per the County of Riverside General Plan Noise Element Table N-1, a barely perceptible 3 dBA or greater noise level increase is considered a significant impact when the ambient non-noise sensitive noise level is greater than the normally acceptable 75 dBA CNEL land use compatibility criteria.

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 7-9)

level increases range from 0.0 to 3.5 dBA CNEL, and would not exceed the noise level increase thresholds of significance. Therefore, Project traffic-related noise impacts under HY 2045 conditions would be less than significant. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, p. 39)

Threshold d.: Would the Project result in the generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

The construction and operation of the proposed Project has the potential to result in ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise during both construction and long-term operation. Each is discussed below.

A. Construction-Related Vibration Impacts

Using the vibration source level of construction equipment previously presented on Table 4.13-6 and the construction vibration assessment methodology published by the FTA, it is possible to estimate the Project vibration impacts. Table 4.13-19, *Project Construction Vibration Levels*, presents the expected Project related vibration impacts at the nearby receiver locations. At distances ranging from 1,329 to 1,709 feet from Project construction activities, construction vibration velocity levels are estimated to range from 0.000 to 0.001 in/sec PPV. Based on a maximum acceptable continuous vibration threshold of 0.3 PPV (in/sec), the typical Project construction vibration levels would fall below the building damage thresholds at all the noise sensitive receiver



Table 4.13-19 Project Construction Vibration Levels

Location ¹	Distance to Const. Activity (Feet) ²	Typical Construction Vibration Levels PPV (in/sec) ³						Thresholds PPV (in/sec) ⁴	Thresholds Exceeded? ⁵
		Small bulldozer	Jackhammer	Loaded Trucks	Large bulldozer	Vibratory Roller	Highest Vibration Level		
R1	1,329'	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.3	No
R2	1,709'	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.3	No
R3	1,396'	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.3	No
R4	1,472'	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.3	No

¹ Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown on Figure 4.13-6.

² Distance from receiver building facade to Project construction boundary (Project site boundary).

³ Based on the Vibration Source Levels of Construction Equipment (Table 4.13-6).

⁴ Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, April 2020, Table 19, p. 38.

⁵ Does the peak vibration exceed the acceptable vibration thresholds?

"PPV" = Peak Particle Velocity

(Urban Crossroads, 2024e, Table 10-6)

locations. Therefore, the Project-related vibration impacts would be less than significant during typical construction activities at the Project site. Moreover, the vibration levels reported at the sensitive receiver locations are unlikely to be sustained during the entire construction period but will occur rather only during the times that heavy construction equipment is operating adjacent to the Project site perimeter. (Urban Crossroads, 2024e, pp. 60-61)

B. Operational-Related Vibration Impacts

Under long-term conditions, the Project would not include or require equipment or activities that would result in perceptible groundborne vibration beyond the Project Site. Caltrans has issued a publication entitled, "Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual," dated April 2020 (Caltrans, 2020). As noted by Caltrans:

"Because vehicles traveling on highway are supported on flexible suspension systems and pneumatic tires, these vehicles are not an efficient source of ground vibration. They can, however, impart vibration into the ground when they roll over pavement that is not smooth. Continuous traffic traveling on a smooth highway creates a fairly continuous but relatively low level of vibration. Where discontinuities exist in the pavement, heavy truck passages can be the primary source of localized, intermittent vibration peaks. These peaks typically last no more than a few seconds and often for only a fraction of a second. Because vibration drops off rapidly with distance, there is rarely a cumulative increase in ground vibration from the presence of multiple trucks." (Caltrans, 2020, p. 10)

All trucks generated by the Project would travel along County roadways that are regularly maintained to prevent discontinuous pavement (e.g., potholes). As such, and based on guidance from Caltrans, the Project's operational traffic-related vibration impacts would be less than significant.



4.13.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The cumulative study area for the issue of noise includes the Project vicinity as well as areas adjacent to roadways evaluated by the Project's TIA (*Technical Appendix K1*). Areas outside of the cumulative study area are too far away to be adversely impacted by noise and ground-borne vibration generated as a result of the proposed Project.

As indicated under the analysis of Thresholds a. and b., there are no private airstrips in the Project vicinity and the Project development area is located outside the 60 dBA CNEL noise level contour boundaries for the PSIA. There are no components of the proposed Project that would cause or contribute to increased airport-related noise in the area. As such, impacts associated with public and private airport-related noise would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

The analysis under Threshold c. indicates that the Project would not generate substantial amounts of construction-related noise that could adversely affect nearby sensitive receptors, although the analysis conservatively identifies a potentially significant noise impact during off-site installation of the IID power lines. On-site construction activities associated with the proposed Project and other construction projects in the area may overlap, resulting in cumulative periodic noise increases in the local area; however, construction noise impacts primarily affect the areas immediately adjacent to a construction site. Although lands surrounding the Project site may be under construction simultaneous with the Project, there would be no sensitive receptors within these areas that could be impacted by Project-related cumulative construction noise while these areas are under construction. Accordingly, Project-related construction noise impacts on site would be less-than-cumulatively considerable. Additionally, although the analysis presented herein conservatively identifies a potentially significant impact associated with the off-site installation of IID power poles, due to the short-term duration and limited nature of these activities, these impacts would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

As previously indicated in Table 4.13-11 and Table 4.13-12, the daytime hourly noise levels at the off-site receiver locations are expected to range from 38.4 to 41.6 dBA Leq while the nighttime hourly noise levels at the off-site receiver locations are expected to range from 38.4 to 41.6 dBA Leq. As shown in Table 4.13-13, the operational noise levels associated with the proposed Project would exceed the Riverside County daytime and nighttime exterior noise level standards at the nearest receiver locations. Although the Project's operational noise level increases would be less than significant, the Project's operational noise has the potential to combine with operational noise sources from other developments in the local area, thereby exposing sensitive receptors to noise levels exceeding the County's noise standards; therefore, the Project's impacts due to operational-related noise would be cumulatively considerable.

With respect to traffic-related noise impacts, Table 4.13-17 and Table 4.13-18 (previously presented) show that Project-related traffic noise increases for EAC 2025 and HY 2045 conditions, respectively. The EAC and Horizon Year scenarios account for traffic from ambient growth and cumulative developments. As shown in Table 4.13-17 and Table 4.13-18, Project-related traffic would not expose any sensitive receptors to traffic-related noise levels exceeding the County's thresholds of significance; thus, cumulatively-considerable traffic-related noise impacts would be less than significant.



With respect to construction-related vibration impacts, the data presented previously in Table 4.13-19 shows that at distances ranging from 1,329 to 1,709 feet from Project construction activities, construction vibration velocity levels are estimated 0.000 to 0.001 in/sec PPV, which would be well below the continuous vibration threshold of 0.3 PPV at all receiver locations. Thus, even if Project construction-related vibration were to combine with vibration from cumulative developments, the Project's vibration levels still would not expose any sensitive receptors to vibration levels exceeding 0.3 PPV (in/sec). Thus, Project construction-related vibration impacts would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

Under long-term conditions, the Project would not include or require equipment or activities that would result in perceptible ground-borne vibration beyond the Project site. Caltrans has issued a publication entitled, "Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual," dated April 2020 (Caltrans, 2020). As noted by Caltrans:

"Because vehicles traveling on highway are supported on flexible suspension systems and pneumatic tires, these vehicles are not an efficient source of ground vibration. They can, however, impart vibration into the ground when they roll over pavement that is not smooth. Continuous traffic traveling on a smooth highway creates a fairly continuous but relatively low level of vibration. Where discontinuities exist in the pavement, heavy truck passages can be the primary source of localized, intermittent vibration peaks. These peaks typically last no more than a few seconds and often for only a fraction of a second. Because vibration drops off rapidly with distance, there is rarely a cumulative increase in ground vibration from the presence of multiple trucks." (Caltrans, 2020, p. 10)

All trucks generated by the Project would travel along County roadways that are regularly maintained to prevent discontinuous pavement (e.g., potholes). As such, and based on guidance from Caltrans, the Project's operational traffic-related vibration impacts would be less-than-significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

4.13.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Palm Springs International Airport runway is located more than five miles southwest of the Project site. According to Map PS-3 (Noise Compatibility Contours) from the PSIA Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), the Project site is located well outside of the 60 dBA CNEL noise contour for this facility. As such, the Project site would not be exposed to excessive noise levels from airport operations. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold b.: Less-than-Significant Impact. There are no private airstrips in the Project vicinity. The nearest private airport facility is the Crown Aero (Bermuda Dunes Airport), located approximately 8.5 miles southeast of the Project site within unincorporated Riverside County. According to Map BD-3 of the Bermuda Dunes Airport ALUCP, the Project site is located well outside of the 55 dBA CNEL contour for the Bermuda Dunes Airport. Accordingly, the Project would not expose people residing or working in the area to excessive private airport-related noise, and impacts would be less than significant.



Threshold c.: Significant Direct Impact. Project-related construction noise levels are expected to range from 52.9 to 55.4 dBA Leq, and the highest construction levels are expected to range from 48.9 to 54.9 dBA Leq at the nearest receiver locations. The construction noise analysis shows that the nearby receiver locations would not be exposed to Project-related construction noise levels exceeding the 80 dBA Leq significance threshold; therefore, the noise impacts due to typical Project construction noise would be less than significant at all receiver locations. Notwithstanding, Urban Crossroads recommends noise abatement measures during typical construction activities. Accordingly, Project-related typical construction-related noise impacts conservatively are evaluated as a significant direct impact of the proposed Project. Additionally, Table 4.13-10 shows that Project-related noise impacts during nighttime concrete pouring activities also would not expose any nearby sensitive receptors to noise levels exceeding the FTA 70 dBA L_{eq} nighttime residential noise level threshold at all the nearest noise sensitive receiver locations. Notwithstanding, Urban Crossroads recommends noise abatement measures during construction activities. Accordingly, Project-related nighttime concrete pouring noise impacts conservatively are evaluated as a significant direct impact of the proposed Project. In addition, and although impacts are anticipated to be less than significant, the Project has the potential to result in significant noise impacts during construction of the off-site IID utility poles and power lines; this is evaluated as a significant impact on a direct basis.

With respect to Project operations, the daytime hourly noise levels at the off-site receiver locations are expected to range from 38.4 to 41.6 dBA Leq, while the nighttime hourly noise levels at the off-site receiver locations are expected to range from 38.4 to 41.6 dBA Leq. Project operational-related noise levels would not exceed the daytime noise level standard of 55 dBA Leq and would not exceed the nighttime noise level standard of 45 dBA Leq. Additionally, daytime and nighttime operational noise increases would not exceed 1.5 dBA, and therefore would not exceed the applicable noise increase criteria (5.0 dBA). Accordingly, Project-related operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

Table 4.13-16 through Table 4.13-18 demonstrate that Project traffic-related noise increases would not exceed the noise level increase thresholds under EAC 2025 or HY 2045 conditions. As such, Project-related traffic noise increases would be less than significant.

Threshold d.: Less-than-Significant Impact. At distances ranging from 1,329 to 1,709 feet from Project construction activities, construction vibration velocity levels are 0.000 to 0.001 in/sec PPV and would remain below the continuous vibration threshold of 0.3 PPV at all receiver locations. Therefore, the Project-related vibration impacts would be less than significant during the construction activities at the Project site. Under long-term operating conditions, all trucks generated by the Project would travel along County roadways that are regularly maintained to prevent discontinuous pavement (e.g., potholes); thus, and based on guidance from Caltrans, the Project's operational traffic-related vibration impacts would be less than significant.



4.13.9 COUNTY REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable County Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude noise. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- All construction activities and haul truck deliveries shall adhere to Section 2.i of Riverside County Ordinance No. 847, which prohibits construction activities that make loud noise from occurring between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. during the months of June through September, and between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. during the months of October through May, and on Sundays and federal holidays. Exceptions to these time restrictions may be granted pursuant to Section 7 of Ordinance No. 847 (e.g., if needed to accommodate nighttime concrete pouring activities).
- All future implementing developments shall comply with Riverside County Board of Supervisors Policy F-3, "*Good Neighbor*" Policy for Logistics and Warehouse/Distribution Uses. Applicable measures related to noise, include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:
 - Provision 2.5: Construction contractors shall locate or park all stationary construction equipment so that the emitted noise is directed away from sensitive receptors nearest the project site, to the extent practicable.
 - Provision 3.1: Warehouse/distribution facilities should be generally designed so that truck bays and loading docks are a minimum of 300 feet, measured from the property line of the sensitive receptor to the nearest dock door using a direct straight-line method. This distance may be reduced if the site design include berms or other similar features to appropriately shield and buffer the sensitive receptors from the active truck operations areas. Other setbacks appropriate to the site's zoning classification shall be incorporated in the design.
 - Provision 3.6: On-site speed bumps shall not be allowed except at security/entry gates. Truck loading bays and drive aisles shall be designed to minimize truck noise.
 - Provision 3.7: Dock doors shall be located where they are not readily visible from sensitive receptors or major roads. If it is necessary to site dock doors where they may be visible, a method to screen the dock doors shall be implemented. A combination of landscaping, berms, walls, and similar features shall be considered.
 - Provision 3.8: An additional "wing-wall" shall be installed perpendicular to the loading dock areas to further attenuate noise related to truck activities and also address aesthetics by screening the loading area when adjacent to sensitive receptors.
 - Provision 3.12: Facility construction shall comply with the hours of operation and exterior noise decibel levels as required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 847 ("Noise Ordinance").



- Provision 4.10: If a public address (PA) system is being used in conjunction with a warehouse/distribution facility operations, the PA system shall be oriented away from sensitive receptors and the volume set at a level not readily audible past the property line.
- Provision 4.11: Facility Operation shall comply with the exterior noise decibel levels as required by Ord. 847 (Noise Ordinance), which includes a maximum exterior decibel level of 55 dba (between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.) and 45 dba (between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.) as measured on adjacent occupied residences, or as modified by the most current version of Ordinance No. 847.

Mitigation

MM 4.13-1 Prior to issuance of grading or building permits and prior to issuance of permits for the construction of off-site Imperial Irrigation District (IID) power poles and power lines, Riverside County and/or the IID shall condition the permit(s) to require implementation of the following noise abatement measures. Project construction contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with these requirements and shall permit periodic inspection of the construction site by County of Riverside staff or its designee to confirm compliance. The following requirements also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors. Riverside County shall review all monitoring reports to ensure compliance.

- Construction contractors shall equip all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, with properly operating and maintained mufflers, consistent with manufacturers' standards).
- All stationary construction equipment shall be placed in such a manner so that emitted noise is directed away from any sensitive receivers.
- Construction equipment staging areas shall be located the greatest distance between the staging area and the nearest sensitive receivers.
- The construction contractor shall limit equipment and material deliveries to the same hours specified for construction equipment (between the hours of 6:00am to 6:00pm during the months of June through September and 7:00am to 6:00pm during the months of October through May).
- Electrically powered air compressors and similar power tools shall be used, when feasible, in place of diesel equipment.
- No music or electronically reinforced speech from construction workers shall be allowed.

4.13.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Threshold c.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.13-1 would ensure that appropriate noise attenuation measures are implemented during the construction activities, including during nighttime concrete pouring activities and during construction and installation of the off-site IID power poles and power lines. Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce the Project's potential impacts due to construction-related noise to less-than-significant levels.



4.14 PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This Subsection 4.14 evaluates the Project’s potential to result in direct, indirect, or cumulatively-considerable impacts to paleontological resources. The analysis in this subsection is based, in part, on information from the report titled, “Geotechnical Investigation, Majestic Thousand Palms, NEC Rio Del Sol Road & 30th Avenue,” dated September 17, 2021, and included as *Technical Appendix F* to this EIR (Sladden, 2021). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources used in this analysis.

4.14.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. *Regional and Local Geology*

The Project site is located within the Colorado Desert Physiographic Province (also referred to as the Salton Trough) that is characterized as a northwest-southeast trending structural depression extending from the Gulf of California to the Banning Pass. The Salton Trough is dominated by several northwest trending faults, most notably the San Andreas Fault system. The Salton Trough is bounded by the Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains on the southwest, the San Bernardino Mountains on the north, the Little San Bernardino/Chocolate/Orocopia Mountains on the east, and extends through the Imperial Valley into the Gulf of California on the south. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

A relatively thick sequence (20,000 feet) of sediment has been deposited in the Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Trough from Miocene to present times. These sediments are predominately terrestrial in nature with some lacustrine (lake) and minor marine deposits. The major contributor of these sediments has been the Colorado River. The mountains surrounding the Coachella Valley are composed primarily of Precambrian metamorphic and Mesozoic II “granitic” rock. The site has been mapped to be immediately underlain by undifferentiated Quaternary-age dune sand (Qs) and alluvium (Qal). The regional geologic setting for the site vicinity is presented on the Figure 2 of the Project’s Geotechnical Investigation (EIR *Technical Appendix F*). (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

During the field investigation conducted by Sladden, disturbed soil was encountered to a depth of approximately one (1) foot below ground surface (bgs). Underlying the disturbed soil and extending to the maximum depths explored, native earth materials were encountered. Generally, the native earth materials consisted of silty sand (SM) and gravelly sand (SP). The native soil appeared grayish brown in in-situ color, dry and fine- to coarse-grained with scattered gravel and cobbles. (Sladden, 2021, p. 3)

B. *Paleontological Resources*

Paleontological resources represent the remains of prehistoric life, exclusive of any human remains, and include the localities where fossils were collected as well as the sedimentary rock formations in which they were found. The defining character of fossils or fossil deposits is their geologic age, typically older than recorded human history and/or older than the middle Holocene Epoch, which dates to circa 5,000 radiocarbon years.



Fossils, which are nonrenewable paleontological resources, are important for dating sedimentary rocks and thus determining the time of movement of faults against which those sediments lie. Eastern and western Riverside County have fossiliferous sediments that occur in various settings. In the western portion of Riverside County, fossils occur in sediments lying on the surface of crystalline bedrock or are deposited in or between the major fault zones. The eastern desert portions of Riverside County are marked by fault block mountains that contain older fossil-bearing sediments with younger fossil-containing deposits found around dry lakes, along high stands of the Salton Sea and in terraces left by the Colorado River. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.9-9)

Riverside County has an extensive record of fossil life. The record starts in Jurassic times, 150 million years ago, with diverse marine mollusks. The oldest Tertiary flora in Southern California is found east of Lake Elsinore and dates to around 60 million years ago. Fossils of 23 million-year-old oreodonts and camels, as well as camel tracks, were found in the Orocopia Mountains in central Riverside County. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.9-9)

Marine advances are recorded in Corona and the Salton Trough. Marine sandstones of the Imperial Formation in the Salton Trough are found as far northwest as Cabazon. Three million years ago, near the present Interstate 15/Highway 91 interchange, a white sand beach lapped at the edge of the Pacific Ocean. The subsequent Ice Ages left fossils of giant sloths, mammoths, camels and bison that were preyed upon by giant bear, American lion and sabercats. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.9-9)

Fossil resources generally occur only in areas of sedimentary rock (e.g., sandstone, siltstone, mudstone, claystone, or shale). Because of the infrequency of fossil preservation, fossils, particularly vertebrate fossils, are considered nonrenewable paleontological resources. Occasionally fossils may be exposed at the surface through the process of natural erosion or because of human disturbances; however, they generally lay buried beneath the surficial soils. Thus, the absence of fossils on the surface does not preclude the possibility of their being present within subsurface deposits, while the presence of fossils at the surface is often a good indication that more remains may be found in the subsurface.

C. Paleontological Sensitivity

The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology issued a set of standard guidelines intended to assist paleontologists to assess and mitigate any adverse effects/impacts to nonrenewable paleontological resources. The guidelines defined four categories of paleontological sensitivity for geologic units that might be impacted by a proposed project, as listed below:

- High Potential: Rock units from which vertebrate or significant invertebrate, plant, or trace fossils have been recovered.
- Undetermined Potential: Rock units for which little information is available concerning their paleontological content, geologic age, and depositional environment.
- Low Potential: Rock units that are poorly represented by fossil specimens in institutional collections, or based on general scientific consensus only preserve fossils in rare circumstances.



- No Potential: Rock units that have no potential to contain significant paleontological resources, such as high-grade metamorphic rocks and plutonic igneous rocks.

According to Riverside County GIS, the Project site, the Project's off-site infrastructure alignments, and surrounding areas are mapped as having a "Low Potential (L)" for containing paleontological resources. Areas identified as having "Low Potential (L)" include lands for which previous field surveys and documentation demonstrate as having a low potential for containing significant paleontological resources subject to adverse impacts. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.9-11)

4.14.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to paleontological resources.

A. Federal Regulations

1. Paleontological Resources Preservation Act

The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (PRPA) was signed into law on March 30, 2009 (Public Law 111-11, Title VI, Subtitle D; 16 U.S.C. §§ 470aaa - 470aaa-11). PRPA directs the Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service) and the Department of the Interior (National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Fish and Wildlife Service) to implement comprehensive paleontological resource management programs. Section 6310 of PRPA specifically states, "as soon as practical after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue such regulations as are appropriate to carry out this subtitle, providing opportunities for public notice and comment." (NPS, 2020b)

B. State Regulations

1. California Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 4308

Section 4308, *Archaeological Features*, of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code provides that: "No person shall remove, injure, disfigure, deface, or destroy any object of archaeological or historical interest or value." (Westlaw, n.d.)

2. California Public Resources Code

Public Resources Code § 5097.5 states that a "person shall not knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure, or deface, any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, rock art, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over the lands." Public Resources Code § 30244 states that, "where development would adversely impact archaeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer, reasonable mitigation measures shall be required." (FindLaw, n.d.)



C. Local Regulations

1. Riverside County Planning Department Procedures

In order to ensure the review and protection of paleontological resources for projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and not otherwise categorically exempt, the Riverside County Geologist performs an initial review of Riverside County's database and mapped information for the subject site. When existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has high paleontological sensitivity, a paleontological resource impact mitigation program (PRIMP) is required for the project. The PRIMP shall specify the steps to be taken to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources. If the site warrants protection, then an Environmental Constraint is placed on the approved map for the project, stating that (Riverside County, 2015a, pp. 4.9-26 and -27):

“This site, as delineated on this [Environmental Constraint Sheet] map and as indicated in the county's General Plan, has been mapped as having a high potential for containing significant nonrenewable fossil material. The proposed project's potential to impact paleontological resources has been determined to be possible. Therefore, mitigation of this potential impact in the form of monitoring of all site earth-moving activities and collection/curation of all significant fossils unearthed is required unless proven unnecessary through comprehensive literature research and site inspection.”

When existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has low paleontological sensitivity, no direct mitigation is required unless a fossil is encountered during site development. Should a fossil be encountered, the Riverside County Geologist must be notified and a paleontologist must be retained by the project proponent. The paleontologist documents the extent and potential significance of the paleontological resources on the site and establishes appropriate mitigation measures for further site development. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.9-27)

When existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has undetermined paleontological sensitivity, a report is filed with the Riverside County Geologist documenting the extent and potential significance of the paleontological resources on site and identifying mitigation measures for the fossil and for impacts to significant paleontological resources. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.9-27)

4.14.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section VII of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects on paleontological resources, and includes the following threshold question to evaluate the Project's impacts to paleontological resources (OPR, 2018a):

- Would the Project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified based on the 2018 updates to Section VII of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, and indicate significant impacts would occur if the Project or any Project-related component would:



- a. *Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource, site, or unique geologic feature.*

The significance threshold set forth in Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified by the 2018 updates to the CEQA Guidelines, was used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project’s impacts on paleontological resources.

4.14.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: Would the Project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource, site, or unique geologic feature?

Under existing conditions, the Project site and the Project’s off-site infrastructure alignments exhibit very little topographic variation, and there are no unique geologic features present. As such, the Project has no potential to directly or indirectly destroy a unique geologic feature, and no impact would occur. Based on mapping information provided by Riverside County Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the areas to be physically disturbed by the Project are mapped as having a “Low Potential (L)” for containing paleontological resources (RCIT, n.d.). Areas identified as having “Low Potential (L)” include lands for which previous field surveys and documentation demonstrate as having a low potential for containing significant paleontological resources subject to adverse impacts (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.9-11). As such, paleontological monitoring during Project-related grading and ground-disturbing activities would not be required for the Project. However, there is a low but remote potential that fossils may be discovered during grading and earthmoving activities, which is conservatively concluded to be a potentially significant impact of the proposed Project.

4.14.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

This cumulative impact analysis considers development of the proposed Project in conjunction with other development projects and planned development in the vicinity of the Project site, including buildout of the Riverside County General Plan Land Use Plan and the general plans of cities within the Coachella Valley portion of Riverside County. This cumulative study area was selected for analysis because it encompasses a region in which geological conditions, and thus paleontological sensitivity, are similar to what occurs in the immediate vicinity of the Project site.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold a., the Project site is mapped as having a “Low Potential (L)” for containing paleontological resources, indicating that monitoring for paleontological resources during Project construction is not warranted (RCIT, n.d.). However, there is a remote potential that fossils may be discovered during grading and earthmoving activities. As other cumulative developments within the region also have the potential to result in impacts to paleontological resources, the Project’s remote potential for impacting paleontological resources is evaluated as potentially significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

4.14.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Project would not impact any known paleontological resources or unique geological features. However, there is a remote potential that fossils



may be discovered during grading and earthmoving activities. This is considered a potentially significant impact on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.

4.14.7 COUNTY REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Mitigation

MM 4.14-1 Prior to grading permit issuance, the Riverside County shall verify that the following notes are included on the grading plans. Project contractors shall be required to ensure compliance with these notes and permit periodic inspection of the construction site by Riverside County staff or its designee to confirm compliance. These notes also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors. These requirements only shall apply in the event that a paleontological resource(s) is uncovered during Project grading and earthmoving activities.

1. If paleontological resources are discovered during earth disturbance activities, the discovery shall be cordoned off with a 100-foot radius buffer so as to protect the discovery from further potential damage, and a county-qualified paleontologist shall be consulted to assess the discovery. If the discovery is determined to be significant by the paleontologist, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) shall be initiated, which shall include notification of appropriate personnel involved and monitoring of earth disturbance activities:
 - a. If a paleontological resource(s) are uncovered, monitoring of mass grading and excavation activities in areas identified as likely to contain paleontological resources shall be performed by a qualified paleontologist or paleontological monitor. Monitoring shall be conducted full-time in areas of grading or excavation in undisturbed sedimentary deposits.
 - b. Paleontological monitors shall be equipped to salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays. The monitor must be empowered to temporarily halt or divert equipment to allow removal of abundant or large specimens in a timely manner. Monitoring may be reduced if the potentially fossiliferous units are not present in the subsurface, or, if present, are determined on exposure and examination by qualified paleontological personnel to have low potential to contain fossil resources. The monitor shall notify the project paleontologist, who will then notify the concerned parties of the discovery.
 - c. Paleontological salvage during trenching and boring activities is typically from the generated spoils and does not delay the trenching or drilling activities. Fossils shall be collected and placed in cardboard flats or plastic buckets and identified by field number, collector, and date collected. Notes shall be taken on the map location and stratigraphy of the site, which is photographed before it is vacated, and the fossils are removed to a safe place. On mass grading projects, discovered fossil sites shall be protected by flagging to prevent them from being overrun by earthmovers (scrapers) before salvage begins. Fossils shall be collected in a similar manner, with notes and



photographs being taken before removing the fossils. Precise location of the site shall be determined with the use of handheld GPS units. If the site involves remains from a large terrestrial vertebrate, such as large bone(s) or a mammoth tusk, that is/are too large to be easily removed by a single monitor, a fossil recovery crew shall excavate around the find, encase the find within a plaster and burlap jacket, and remove it after the plaster is set. For large fossils, use of the contractor's construction equipment may be solicited to help remove the jacket to a safe location.

- d. Isolated fossils shall be collected by hand, wrapped in paper, and placed in temporary collecting flats or five-gallon buckets. Notes shall be taken on the map location and stratigraphy of the site, which is photographed before it is vacated, and the fossils are removed to a safe place.
- e. Particularly small invertebrate fossils typically represent multiple specimens of a limited number of organisms, and a scientifically suitable sample can be obtained from one to several five-gallon buckets of fossiliferous sediment. If it is possible to dry screen the sediment in the field, a concentrated sample may consist of one or two buckets of material. For vertebrate fossils, the test is usually the observed presence of small pieces of bones within the sediments. If present, as many as 20 to 40 five-gallon buckets of sediment can be collected and returned to a separate facility to wet-screen the sediment.
- f. In accordance with the "Microfossil Salvage" section of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology guidelines (2010:7), bulk sampling and screening of fine-grained sedimentary deposits (including carbonate-rich paleosols) must be performed if the deposits are identified to possess indications of producing fossil "microvertebrates" to test the feasibility of the deposit to yield fossil bones and teeth.
- g. In the laboratory, individual fossils shall be cleaned of extraneous matrix, any breaks shall be repaired, and the specimen, if needed, shall be stabilized by soaking in an archivally approved acrylic hardener (e.g., a solution of acetone and Paraloid B-72).
- h. Recovered specimens shall be prepared to a point of identification and permanent preservation (not display), including screen-washing sediments to recover small invertebrates and vertebrates. Preparation of individual vertebrate fossils is often more time-consuming than for accumulations of invertebrate fossils.
- i. Identification and curation of specimens into a professional, accredited public museum repository with a commitment to archival conservation and permanent retrievable storage (e.g., Western Science Center [WSC], Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County [LACM], San Diego Natural History Museum [SDNHM], San Bernardino County Museum [SBCM], or Riverside Municipal Museum [RMM]) shall be conducted. The paleontological program shall include a written repository agreement prior to the initiation of mitigation activities. Prior to curation, the lead agency (i.e., Riverside County) shall be consulted on the repository/museum to receive the fossil material.



- j. A final report of findings and significance shall be prepared, including lists of all fossils recovered and necessary maps and graphics to accurately record their original location(s). The report, when submitted to, and accepted by, the appropriate lead agency, shall signify satisfactory completion of the Project program to mitigate impacts to any potential nonrenewable paleontological resources (i.e., fossils) that might have been lost or otherwise adversely affected without such a program in place.

4.14.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Although not anticipated, in the remote event that paleontological resources are uncovered during grading and earthmoving activities, Mitigation Measure MM 4.14-1 would ensure that the area where the resource(s) was identified is subject to monitoring, and would further ensure that any uncovered fossils are appropriately treated. With implementation of Mitigation Measure MM 4.14-1, the Project's potential impacts to previously-undiscovered paleontological resources would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.



4.15 POPULATION AND HOUSING

The following analysis in this Subsection 4.15 discloses existing population and housing data from Riverside County and assesses the potential for impacts on population and housing associated with implementation of the Project. The analysis herein is based on information contained in the Riverside County General Plan (Riverside County, 2021a) and addresses population and housing projections and requirements from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources.

4.15.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Existing On-Site and Adjacent Conditions

As shown on EIR Figure 2-6, the 83.0-acre Project site consists of vacant and undeveloped desert land. Research on past uses of the Project site by Nova Group determined that the Project site has never been subject to improvements or development. (Nova, 2021, p. 17)

As indicated in Section 2.0 of this EIR, the Project site is located in the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP) portion of the Riverside County General Plan. As previously depicted on EIR Figure 2-4, the western +/- half of the 83.0-acre Project site is designated for “Light Industrial (LI)” land uses, while the eastern +/- half of the Project site is designated for “Medium Density Residential (MDR)” land uses (RCIT, n.d.). The LI land use designations is intended to accommodate industrial and related uses including warehousing/distribution, assembly and light manufacturing, repair facilities, and supporting retail uses. The MDR land use designation is intended to accommodate single-family attached and detached residences with a density range of 5 to 8 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and on lot sizes ranging from 4,000 to 6,500 s.f. (Riverside County, 2021a, Table LU-4).

To the north of and abutting the western +/- half of the northern Project boundary is an existing recycling facility, with the remaining lands to the north comprising undeveloped desert lands. To the east of the Project site is the future alignment of Robert Road and undeveloped desert lands. Single-family residences occur to the southeast of the Project site, and to the south of the Project site is undeveloped land, beyond which are light industrial/business park uses and single family residences. Lands to the west of the Project site comprise undeveloped desert land.

B. Population Projections

The Project site is located within the Thousand Palms community of unincorporated Riverside County, and is located within the regional authority of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The SCAG region encompasses six counties (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura) and 191 cities in an area covering more than 38,000 square miles. According to SCAG’s 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (“Connect SoCal”), and as shown in Table 4.15-1, *SCAG Region Projected 2019-2050 Growth Forecast*, in 2019 the SCAG region had a population of approximately 18,827,000 persons. The population within the SCAG region is expected to increase to 23,754,913 persons by 2050, reflecting a 26.2% increase in population over the 31-year period. Between



February and May 2020, the region lost 1.9 million jobs, and the unemployment rate reached an historic high of 17.3 percent. However, by 2022 regional employment returned to its pre-pandemic level of 8.9 million and the unemployment rate dropped to 4.0 percent, a testament to the resilience of the SCAG Region economy. (SCAG, 2024, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Appendix, p. 17 and Table 13)

Table 4.15-1 SCAG Region Projected 2019-2050 Growth Forecast

	2019	2035	2050
Population ¹	18,827,000	22,225,771	23,754,913

1. Population data is based on an average of 3.04 persons per household (pph) and is projected based on the number of households projected through 2050 by the RTP/SCS Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Appendix. The pph value of 3.04 is derived from Table 13 of the Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Appendix by dividing the estimated number of households in 2019 by the estimated 2019 population within the SCAG region. (SCAG, 2024, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Appendix, Table 13)

4.15.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations governing environmental topics related to population and housing.

A. Federal Plans, Policies, and Regulations

1. Fair Housing Act

The federal Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination when they are renting or buying a home, getting a mortgage, seeking housing assistance, or engaging in other housing-related activities. Additional protections apply to federally-assisted housing. (HUD, n.d.)

2. U.S. Census Bureau

The U.S. Census Bureau is the leading source of statistical information about the nation’s people. Population statistics come from decennial censuses, which count the entire U.S. population every ten years, along with several other surveys. The American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing annual survey intended to help communities decide where to target services and resources. Demographic surveys measure income, poverty, education, health insurance coverage, housing quality, crime victimization, computer usage, and many other subjects. Economic surveys are conducted monthly, quarterly, and yearly, and cover selected sectors of the nation’s economy. (USCB, n.d.)

B. State and Regional Plans, Policies, and Regulations

1. State Housing Law

The State law regulating residential occupancies is entitled the “State Housing Law” and is found in Division 13, Part 1.5 of the California Health and Safety Code (HSC), Sections 17910 to 17998.3 Regulations implementing the State Housing Law mandate statewide residential building standards for new construction, which are found in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, also referred to as the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen). (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)



2. *Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)*

SCAG determines regional housing needs and the share of the regional needs to be addressed by Riverside County and its constituent cities. SCAG is a Joint Powers Agency and is the designated Council of Governments (COG), Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the six-county region of Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial counties. SCAG’s Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) and Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) are tools for coordinating regional planning and housing development strategies in southern California. (SCAG, n.d.)

3. *Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)*

State Housing Law (California Government Code Article 10.6, §§ 65580-65590) mandates that local governments, through COGs, identify existing and future housing needs in a RHNA. The RHNA provides recommendations and guidelines to identify housing needs within counties and cities. The County of Riverside addresses its RHNA allocation through its General Plan Housing Element. The RHNA prepared by SCAG projects the County’s share of regional housing need for 2021-2029 as 40,647 housing units. (SCAG, n.d.)

4. *Senate Bill 330 (Housing Crisis Act of 2019) and Senate Bill 8 (2021)*

On October 9, 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed the Housing Crisis Act of 2019 (HCA) into law, commonly known as Senate Bill (SB) 330 (Chapter 654, Statutes of 2019) to respond to the California housing crisis. On September 16, 2021, Gov. Newsom also signed SB 8 (Chapter 161, Statutes of 2021), which is an extension of the HCA. The HCA aims to increase residential unit development, protect existing housing inventory, and expedite permit processing. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

C. Local and Regional Plans, Policies, and Regulations

1. *SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (Connect SoCal)*

SCAG is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) under California State law, established as an association of local governments and agencies that convene as a forum to address regional issues. In April 2024, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted *Connect SoCal (2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy)*. Connect SoCal is intended to create a plan for defining and solving regional problems including housing, traffic, water, air quality, and other regional challenges. Connect SoCal builds upon the elements of existing local general plans and provides a blueprint for where and how the southern California area will grow. (SCAG, 2024)

2. *Riverside County General Plan Housing Element*

The 2021-2029 Housing Element identifies and establishes policies intended to fulfill the housing needs of existing and future residents in Riverside County. It establishes policies that guide County decision-making and set forth an action plan to implement its housing goals. The Housing Element includes a review of previous housing goals, an assessment of the effectiveness of those goals, and an assessment of housing needs. Additionally, the Housing Element includes an inventory of resources and constraints related to meeting



housing needs in Riverside County; an analysis of affordable housing developments and programs intended to preserve such housing; community goals for the maintenance, preservation, improvement and development of housing; and a program which sets forth a five-year schedule of actions that the County is undertaking or intends to undertake in implementing the polices set forth in the Housing Element. (Riverside County, 2021a, pp. H1 to H-3)

4.15.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section XIV of Appendix G to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects due to population and housing, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate the Project's impacts due to population and housing (OPR, 2018a):

- Would the Project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through the extension of infrastructure)? or
- Would the Project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, are derived from Section XIV of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact to population and housing if construction and/or operation of the Project would:

- a. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere;*
- b. Create a demand for additional housing, particularly housing affordable to households earning 80% or less of the County's median income; or*
- c. 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).*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on population and housing.

4.15.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a: *Would the Project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

Under existing conditions, the Project site consists of undeveloped land with no dwelling units or structures located on the Project site, and there are no existing residents on site. Accordingly, the Project would have no potential to displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of



replacement housing elsewhere. The Project's off-site infrastructure alignments occur within or parallel to public rights-of-way and no housing units would be displaced by the installation of the off-site improvements. No impacts would occur.

Threshold b: Would the Project create a demand for additional housing, particularly housing affordable to households earning 80% or less of the County's median income?

The 1,238,992 s.f. light industrial building area proposed as part of the Project would generate approximately 1,203 new, recurring jobs (Riverside County, 2021a, Appendix E, Table E-5). A nominal number of employees also would be associated with the proposed IID electric substation. Although the Project would result in the creation of approximately 1,203 new jobs on the site, Riverside County currently suffers from a poor jobs-housing ratio, wherein there are not enough jobs within the County to prevent the need for County residents to travel outside the region for employment (Riverside County, 2021a, p. LU-27). Thus, by developing the Project site with an employment-generating land use, the Project would assist the County in improving its jobs-housing balance. Furthermore, the Riverside County General Plan designates areas of the County in which lower-income housing can be accommodated to meet the County's RHNA obligations, and does not rely on residential development on the Project site in order to meet its RHNA obligations (Riverside County, 2021a, Appendix P, Figure P-27). Moreover, it is anticipated that any future employees generated by the Project could be accommodated by existing residential communities and/or by future residential uses to be constructed in accordance with the General Plan Land Use Plan or the general plans of cities within the County, and that no additional housing, including housing affordable to households earning 80% or less of the County's median income, would be required to accommodate Project-related employees. Impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold c: Would the Project 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)?

Under existing conditions, the General Plan and WCVAP designate the western +/- half of the Project site (+/- 43.1 acres) for LI land uses and designate the eastern +/- half (+/- 39.9 acres) of the Project site for MDR land uses. According to Appendix E to the County's General Plan, MDR land uses are expected to be developed at a mid-point density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), and residential uses within the WCVAP area are expected to generate approximately 2.56 persons per household (pph). Thus, the site's existing MDR land use designation would be expected to accommodate 140 dwelling units (39.9 ac x 3.5 du/ac = 139.7 du), resulting in a planned population of 530 persons (139.7 households x 3.79 pph = 529.5 persons). Additionally, General Plan Appendix E indicates that LI land uses would be developed on 80% of the gross acreage, would be developed at a "probable" Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.38, and would generate approximately one employee per 1,030 s.f. of building area. Thus, the site's existing LI land use designation is expected to accommodate approximately 554 employees (43.1 gross acres x 0.80 x 0.38 FAR x 43,560 s.f./acre = 570,740.5 s.f.; 570,740.5 s.f. ÷ 1,030 s.f./employee = 554.1 employees). (Riverside County, 2021a, Appendix E, Tables E-1 through E-5)

As part of the Project, the General Plan and WCVAP land use designation for the eastern +/- half of the Project site would be changed to LI. With approval of the Project's GPA, the overall 83.0-acre Project site would be



designated for LI land uses and would accommodate the development of the Project's proposed 1,238,992 s.f. light industrial building. As previously discussed in EIR subsection 3.6.2, the 1,238,992 s.f. of light industrial building proposed as part of the Project would generate approximately 1,203 new, recurring jobs (Riverside County, 2021a, Appendix E, Table E-5). The 1,203 anticipated employees would be slightly greater than the 1,084 total employees and residents (530 residents + 554 employees = 1,084 persons) that would be generated under the site's existing General Plan land use designations. However, Riverside County currently suffers from a poor jobs-housing ratio, wherein there are not enough jobs within the County to prevent the need for County residents to travel outside the region for employment (Riverside County, 2021a, p. LU-27). Thus, by developing the Project site with employment-generating land uses, the Project would assist the County in improving its jobs-housing balance. Housing for these employees does not represent "substantial" unplanned population growth, as there already is sufficient housing in the County to accommodate workers. Accordingly, impacts due to the Project's employment generation would be less than significant.

In addition, the proposed Project would accommodate an IID joint electric substation on site, and new power poles and power lines would need to be constructed to connect the on-site substation to existing IID facilities. The on-site substation is needed because existing electric facilities in the local area do not have adequate power to supply the Project's proposed warehouse building. Although the IID substation could facilitate an increase in growth in the local area, any such growth would not exceed the growth already anticipated for the local area by the County's General Plan and the WCVAP. Specifically, undeveloped lands located along the potential power pole alignments (as previously depicted on EIR Figure 3-6) and within close proximity to the Project site already are designated by the General Plan and WCVAP for a mixture of land uses, including light industrial land uses; residential land uses at densities ranging from 0.2 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) to up to 14 du/ac; recreational land uses; and commercial retail land uses. Given that large portions of the surrounding community contain undeveloped lands that already are designated for urban land uses by the General Plan and WCVAP, the proposed IID joint electric substation is not anticipated to induce substantial unplanned population growth in the local area. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

4.15.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

For purposes of analysis, the cumulative study area for the issue of population and housing encompasses the western portions of Coachella Valley as well as the various cities within this portion of Riverside County. This study area is appropriate because growth in the region is largely controlled by the Riverside County General Plan and WCVAP, as well as the general plans of the various cities within this portion of the County.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold a., under existing conditions the Project site consists of undeveloped land with no dwelling units or residents located on the Project site. Accordingly, the Project would have no potential to displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold b., although the Project would result in the conversion of the eastern +/- half of the Project site from planned residential to planned light industrial uses, Riverside County currently suffers from a poor jobs-housing ratio, wherein there are not enough jobs within the County to prevent the need for County residents to travel outside the region for employment (Riverside County, 2021a, p. LU-



27) Moreover, it is anticipated that any future employees generated by the Project could be accommodated by existing residential communities and/or by future residential uses to be constructed in accordance with the General Plan Land Use Plan or the general plans of cities within the County, and that no additional housing, including housing affordable to households earning 80% or less of the County's median income, would be required to accommodate Project-related employees. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold c., although the 1,203 anticipated employees that would be generated by the Project would be slightly greater than the 1,084 total employees and residents that would be generated with development of the site's pursuant to the site's existing General Plan land use designations, Riverside County currently suffers from a poor jobs-housing ratio, wherein there are not enough jobs within the County to prevent the need for County residents to travel outside the region for employment (Riverside County, 2021a, p. LU-27). Thus, by developing the Project site with employment-generating land uses, the Project would assist the County in improving its jobs-housing balance. Housing for these employees does not represent "substantial" unplanned population growth, as there already is sufficient housing in the County to accommodate workers. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts due to unplanned population growth associated with the Project's proposed warehouse building would be less than significant.

As also indicated under the analysis of Threshold c., although the IID substation could facilitate an increase in growth in the local area, the proposed IID joint electric substation is not anticipated to induce substantial unplanned population growth in the local area because large portions of the surrounding community contain undeveloped lands that already are designated for urban land uses by the General Plan and WCVAP. Moreover, there are no other cumulative developments in the local area that would include facilities, such as electric substations, which could further contribute to cumulatively-considerable unplanned population growth in the local area. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with unplanned population growth that may result from the IID substation would be less than significant.

4.15.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a: No Impact. Areas to be physically disturbed by the Project do not contain any existing residences or housing, and the Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact would occur.

Threshold b: Less-than-Significant Impact. Although the Project would result in the conversion of the eastern +/- half of the Project site from planned residential to planned light industrial uses, Riverside County has poor jobs-housing ratio, wherein there are not enough jobs within the County to support its residences' employment. Thus, by developing the Project site with an employment-generating land use, the Project would assist the County in improving its jobs-housing balance. Furthermore, the Riverside County General Plan does not rely on residential development on the Project site in order to meet its RHNA obligations. Moreover, future employees generated by the Project can be accommodated by existing residential communities and/or by future residential uses to be constructed in accordance with the General Plan Land Use Plan or the general plans of cities within the County, and no additional housing, including housing affordable to households earning 80%



or less of the County's median income, would be required to accommodate Project-related employees. Impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold c: Less-than-Significant Impact. There is no potential for the Project induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly. By developing the Project site with employment-generating land uses, the Project would assist the County in improving its jobs-housing balance. Housing for the Project's employees does not represent substantial unplanned population growth, as there already is sufficient existing and planned housing in the County to accommodate workers. Thus, impacts due to the Project's employment generation would be less than significant. The proposed IID joint electric substation would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the local area because large portions of the Thousand Palms community that would be served by the substation contain already-developed land and undeveloped land that is already designated and planned for urban land uses by the General Plan and WCVAP. Accordingly, impacts associated with unplanned population growth would be less than significant.

4.15.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

No significant environmental impacts related to population and housing would occur as a result of the proposed Project. Thus, no mitigation measures are required.



4.16 PUBLIC SERVICES

This Subsection 4.16 provides information on existing public services and service levels for fire protection, police protection, schools, libraries, and public health facilities, and evaluates impacts to the environment that may result from the demand the Project may have on such services.

4.16.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Fire Protection/Emergency Medical Services

Fire protection services for the Project site are provided by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). The RCFD provides a full range of fire services within Riverside County and contracting cities. The level of service provided is dependent on response times, travel distance, and staffing workload levels established in the Riverside County Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Aid Plan. The Fire Protection Master Plan contains four fire response categories that are used to determine the response times/travel distances for primary and secondary fire stations. The response categories are based on the amount of community build-out presumed in the Master Fire Plan. The Fire Department assumes in any given region that three or more fire engines respond to any reported fire.

The fire station that would serve the Project is Station 35 (Roy Wilson), located at 31920 Robert Road in Thousand Palms, or approximately 1.0-mile south of the Project site. The Project also could be served by RCFD Station 69 (North Rancho Mirage), located at 71751 Gerald Ford Drive in Rancho Mirage, or approximately 3.1 miles southwest of the Project site. The fire stations that could serve the Project site are staffed full-time, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with a minimum three-person crew, including paramedics, operating a “Type 1” structural firefighting apparatus. (Google Earth, 2022)

B. Sheriff Services

The Riverside County Sheriff’s Department provides community policing for the Project area. The Sheriff Station serving the Project area is the Palm Desert Station, located at 73705 Gerald Ford Drive in Palm Desert, CA, 92211, approximately 4.9 miles southwest of the Project site (Google Earth, 2022). In addition to community policing, other services provided by the Sheriff’s Department include, but are not limited to, operating of the emergency 911 system, operating correctional facilities, performing traffic control, and providing crime prevention education. Also, the Sheriff’s Department coordinates with volunteer groups such as Neighborhood Watch Programs and the Community Oriented and Policing Problem Solving (COPPS) Program and the Community Oriented Policing (COP) Program. COPPS shifts the focus of police work from a solely reactive mode by supplementing traditional law enforcement methods with proactive problem-solving approaches that involve the community as well as the police.

Unincorporated Riverside County has set a minimum standard of 1.0 deputy per 1,000 residents. This standard was adopted as part of the “Commitment to Public Safety and Citizens’ Option for Public Safety,” by the Board of Supervisors on September 17, 1996. The Sheriff’s Department has indicated that their desired staffing level is 1.2 deputies per 1,000 residents, while Mitigation Measure 4.15.C of EIR No. 441, which was prepared for the County’s 2003 General Plan, establishes a standard of 1.5 sworn peace officers per 1,000 population.



C. Schools

The Project site is located within the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD). The nearest schools to the Project site include Della S. Lindley Elementary School, located approximately 0.6-mile south of the Project site; James Workman Middle School, located approximately 2.6 miles west of the Project site; and Rancho Mirage High School, located approximately 1.6 miles southwest of the Project site (Google Earth, 2022). In the 2022-2023 school year, the PSUSD had a total enrollment of 21,032 students (DOE, n.d.). As reported by the PSUSD School Fee Justification Study, the PSUSD has a total capacity of 25,699 students (PSUSD, 2022).

D. Libraries

The Project site is located within the Riverside County Public Library System (RCPLS) service area. Riverside County operates a system of 35 libraries and two book mobiles (one serving Coachella Valley and one serving western Riverside County) to serve unincorporated populations. In addition, the Riverside County Library System operates an automated network that currently deploys over 350 computer/terminal workstations in the library branches of the Riverside County Library System, Riverside Public Library, Moreno Valley Library, Murrieta Public Library, Murrieta Valley High School, and College of the Desert. The network can also be accessed by Riverside County residents via the internet. The library system manages the library catalog of the 1.3 million items in the library system and the annual checkout of over 3.5 million books, audios, and videos. For 2010, the Riverside County Library System reported a total of 681,117 registered borrowers utilizing County library services. (Riverside County, 2015a, pp. 4.17-65 and 4.17-66)

The RCPLS does not maintain a specific numerical factor to analyze the needs created by new development. However, the American Library Association suggests that an appropriate service criterion would be availability of convenient library facilities and book reserves at a rate of 0.5 square foot (s.f.) of library space and 2.5 volumes per capita. The County's ability to support the needs of future growth is dependent upon its ability to secure sites for, construct, and stock new libraries on a timely basis. As of 2015, there was no specific funding mechanism for expansion of library facilities. Based on 2010 reported registered borrowers (681,117) and current square footage of library facilities available (333,884), as of 2015 facilities provided approximately 0.49 s.f. of space per registered borrower (not the Riverside County population as a whole). (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.17-66)

The nearest library servicing the proposed Project site is the Desert Center Library, located at 70251 Ramon Road, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270, or approximately 2.0 miles southwest of the Project site (Google Earth, 2022).

E. Health Services

Public health services in Riverside County are provided by the County Department of Public Health. However, most health services are provided by the private sector. The nearest regional health care facility to the Project site is the Eisenhower Health Main Campus, located at 39000 Bob Hope Drive in the City of Rancho Mirage, or approximately 4.5 miles south of the Project site (Google Earth, 2022).



4.16.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to public services.

A. State Regulations

1. Fire Protection Services Regulations and Plans

Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 4290-4299

These sections establish minimum statewide fire safety provisions pertaining to: roads for fire equipment access; signs identifying streets, roads, and buildings; minimum private water supply reserves for emergency fire use; and fire fuel breaks and greenbelts. With certain exceptions, all new construction after July 1, 1991, in potential wildland fire areas, is required to meet these statewide standards. The state requirements, however, do not supersede more restrictive local regulations. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

As defined by CalFire, wildland areas defined as State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) may contain substantial wildfire risks and hazards. They consist of lands exclusive of cities, and federal lands regardless of ownership. The primary financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires within wildlands belongs to the State of California. However, it is not the State of California's responsibility to provide fire protection services to buildings or structures located within the wildlands unless CalFire has entered into a cooperative agreement with a local agency for those purposes pursuant to PRC Section 4142. As such, wildland areas require disclosure of these fire hazards in real estate transactions, and owners of properties in wildland areas are subject to PRC Section 4291 maintenance requirements. The law requires CalFire every five years (1991, 1996, 2001, etc.) to provide maps identifying the boundaries of lands classified as SRAs to the Riverside County Assessor. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

PRC Sections 4102 and 4127 - State Responsibility Areas (SRAs)

PRC Section 4102 specifies that "'State responsibility areas' means areas of the state in which the financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires has been determined by the [State Fire] Board pursuant to Section 4125, to be primarily the responsibility of the state." These areas may contain state or privately-owned forest, watershed, and rangeland. §§ 4126-4127 of the PRC further specify the standards that define what does and does not constitute an SRA. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Parts 2 and 9 – Fire Codes

Part 2 of Title 24 of the CCR refers to the California Building Code which contains complete regulations and general construction building standards of State of California adopting agencies, including administrative, fire and life safety and field inspection provisions. Part 2 was updated in 2008 to reflect changes in the base document from the Uniform Building Code to the International Building Code. Part 9 refers to the California Fire Code, which contains other fire safety-related building standards. In particular, Chapter 7A, "Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure," in the 2010 California Building Code addresses



fire safety standards for new construction and Section 701A.3.2 addresses “New Buildings Located in Any Fire Hazard Severity Zone.” (BSC, n.d.)

CCR Title 14 – Natural Resources

These regulations constitute the basic wildland fire protection standards of the California Board of Forestry. They were prepared and adopted to establish minimum wildfire protection standards in conjunction with building, construction, and development within SRAs. Among other things, Title 14 requires the design and construction of structures, subdivisions, and developments in an SRA provide for basic emergency access and perimeter wildfire protection measures (fire fuel modification zones, etc.). (Westlaw, n.d.)

California Government Code (CGC) Sections 51178-51179 – Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

Section 51178 specifies that the Director of CalFire, in cooperation with local fire authorities, must identify areas that are Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) in Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs), based on consistent statewide criteria and the expected severity of fire hazard. It further specifies that VHFHSZs “shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather and other relevant factors,” including areas subject to Santa Ana winds which are a “major cause of wildfire spread.” Section 51179 states that a local agency (such as a county) must also designate (and map) the VHFHSZs in its jurisdiction by ordinance. (See the discussion on Ordinance No. 787, below, regarding Riverside County’s VHFHSZs). Other portions of the Government Code outline when a local agency may use its discretion to exclude areas from VHFHSZ requirements or add areas not designated by the State of California to its VHFHSZ areas. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

CGC Section 51182 – Defensible Space

Pursuant to this code, a person who “owns, leases, controls, operates or maintains an occupied dwelling or occupied structure in, upon or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered land, brush-covered land, grass-covered land or land that is covered with flammable material” in a very high fire hazard severity zone designated by the local agency pursuant to § 51179, shall at all times maintain a specified amount of “defensible space” to protect structures in high fire hazard areas. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

PRC Section 4213 - Fire Prevention Fees

Pursuant to PRC Section 4213, in July of 2011, the State of California began assessing an annual “Fire Prevention Fee” for all habitable structures within the State’s Responsibility Area (SRA) to pay for fire prevention services. The SRA is the portion of the state where the State of California is financially responsible for the prevention and suppression of wildfires. The SRA does not include lands within incorporated city boundaries, Tribal or federally owned land. As a result of AB 398, California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, the fire prevention fee was suspended as of July 1, 2017. (FindLaw, n.d.)



2. *School Services Regulations and Plans*

Assembly Bill (AB) 16

In 2002, AB 16 created the Critically Overcrowded School Facilities program, which supplements the new construction provisions within the School Facilities Program (SFP). The SFP provides State of California funding assistance for new facility construction projects and modernization projects. The Critically Overcrowded School Facilities program allows school districts with critically overcrowded school facilities, as determined by the California Department of Education (CDE), to apply for new construction projects in advance of meeting all SFP new construction program requirements. Districts with SFP new construction eligibility and school sites included on a CDE list of source schools may apply. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998 (Senate Bill [SB] 50)

Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) was enacted by the State Legislature in 1998, which amended existing state law governing school fees. In particular, SB 50 amended prior California Government Code (CGC) Section 65995(a) to prohibit state or local agencies from imposing school impact mitigation fees, dedications, or other requirements in excess of those provided in the statute in connection with “any legislative or adjudicative act...by any state or local agency involving...the planning, use, or development of real property....” (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

The legislation also amended CGC Section 65996(b) to prohibit local agencies from using the inadequacy of school facilities as a basis for denying or conditioning approvals of any “legislative or adjudicative act [involving] the planning, use or development of real property.” Further, SB 50 established the base amount of allowable developer fees: \$1.93 per square foot for residential construction and \$0.31 per square foot for commercial. These base amounts are commonly called “Level 1 fees” and are the same caps that were in place at the time SB 50 was enacted. Level 1 fees are subject to inflation adjustment every two years. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

In certain circumstances, for residential construction, school districts can impose fees that are higher than Level 1 fees. School districts can impose Level 2 fees, which are equal to 50% of land and construction costs if they: (1) prepare and adopt a school needs analysis for facilities; (2) are determined by the State Allocation Board to be eligible to impose these fees; and (3) meet at least two of the following four conditions: (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

- At least 30% of the district’s students are on a multi-track year-round schedule.
- The district has placed on the ballot within the previous four years a local school bond that received at least 50% of the votes cast.
- The district has passed bonds equal to 30% of its bonding capacity.
- Or, at least 20% of the district’s teaching stations are relocatable classrooms.

Additionally, if the State of California’s bond funds are exhausted, a school district that is eligible to impose Level 2 fees is authorized to impose even higher fees. Commonly referred to as “Level 3 fees,” these fees are



equal to 100% of land and construction costs of new schools required as a result of new developments. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

B. Local Regulations

1. Ordinance No. 787 - Fire Code Standards

This ordinance addresses implementation of the California Fire Code, based on the International Code Council. The codes prescribe performance characteristics and materials to be used to achieve acceptable levels of fire protection and include the WUI fire area building standards mentioned above. Collectively, the ordinance establishes the requirements and standards for fire hazard reduction regulations within Riverside County (including additions and deletions to the California Fire Code) to fully protect the health, safety and welfare of existing and future residents and workers of Riverside County. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-49)

Among other things, this ordinance assures that structural and nonstructural architectural elements of the building do not: a) impede emergency egress for fire safety staffing/ personnel, equipment, and apparatus; nor b) hinder evacuation from fire, including potential blockage of stairways or fire doors. In addition, for the purposes of CFC implementation, the ordinance also adds a statement noting: “In accordance with Government Code sections 51175 through 51189, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are designated as shown on a map titled Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, dated April 8, 2010, and retained on file at the office of the Fire Chief and supersedes other maps previously adopted by Riverside County designating high fire hazard areas.” It also defines a “hazardous fire area” as: “Private or public land not designated as state or local fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ) which is covered with grass, grain, brush or forest and situated in a location that makes suppression difficult resulting in great damage. Such areas are designated on Hazardous Fire Area maps filed with the office of the Fire Chief.” (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-49)

Included in Riverside County Ordinance No. 787 are the California Fire Code, Part 4, Appendix B, for establishing fire flow, duration and pressure requirements for fire flow. The requirements are based on building size, type, materials, purpose, location, proximity to other structures and the type of fire suppression systems installed. The various water districts in Riverside County are required to test fire protection capability for the various land uses per the flow requirements of the Fire Code. In addition, areas of Riverside County not served by water districts are required to meet similar requirements as outlined in PRC Sections 4290-4299. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-49)

2. Riverside County Ordinance No. 659 (Establishing a Development Impact Fee Program)

Riverside County Ordinance No. 659 (Establishing a Development Impact Fee Program) requires that new development pay Development Impact Fees (DIF) to ensure that certain facility obligations are met in order to reasonably serve the subject development. The fees will be used to help establish new County of Riverside facilities that are necessary to meet the increased demand that will come about due to new development. These facilities include new fire and police stations, courts, libraries, regional parks and other facilities necessary to provide services to the residents of Riverside County. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.2-26)



4.16.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section XV of Appendix G to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to public services, and includes the following threshold question to evaluate a project's impacts to public services (OPR, 2018a):

- *Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:*
 - *Fire protection?*
 - *Police protection?*
 - *Schools?*
 - *Parks?*
 - *Other public facilities?*

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, have been updated to reflect the 2018 updates to Section XV of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact on public services if construction and/or operation of the Project would:

- a. *Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities or the need for new or physically altered fire protection 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 facilities;*
- b. *Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered sheriff facilities or the need for new or physically altered sheriff facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for sheriff services;*
- c. *Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities or the need for new or physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for school services;*
- d. *Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered library facilities or the need for new or physically altered library facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for library services; or*



- e. *Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered health care facilities or the need for new or physically altered health care facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for health care services.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified/updated per the 2018 updates to the State CEQA Guidelines, were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project’s impacts on public services.

4.16.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: *Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities or the need for new or physically altered fire protection 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 facilities?*

The Project, which would entail development of the 83.0-acre Project site with a 1,238,992 square foot (s.f.) warehouse building and an IID joint electric substation, would place additional demand on the RCFD, which provides fire protection services in the Project area. Implementation of the Project would cumulatively affect the Department’s ability to service the planned population. The Project would require an Urban-Category II level of service as defined by the Riverside County Fire Protection Master Plan. This classification requires a fire station be within three miles of the Project site, and a full first alarm assignment team operating on the scene within 15 minutes of dispatch. The fire station that would serve the Project is Station 35 (Roy Wilson), located at 31920 Robert Road in Thousand Palms, or approximately 1.0-mile south of the Project site (Google Earth, 2022). The Project also could be served by RCFD Station 69 (North Rancho Mirage), located at 71751 Gerald Ford Drive in Rancho Mirage, or approximately 3.1 miles southwest of the Project site. The Project site would be located within 3.0 miles of the nearest fire station, and a full first alarm assignment team could operate on site within 15 minutes of dispatch. Thus, the RCFD would be able to meet the Urban-Category II Land Use protection goals of the Fire Protection Master Plan for the Project.

As a condition of Project approval, the proposed Project would be required to conform to all mandatory local, State, and federal laws, ordinances, and standards relating to fire safety. Among other items, these requirements include conformance with the Chapter 7A of the California Building Code, which requires that all buildings be constructed with fire retardant roofing material. The access routes in the local area would be required to be maintained throughout construction and buildout of the Project. Additionally, the Project would be subject to the fire code standards established as part of Riverside County Ordinance No. 787 (Fire Code Standards). The Project’s buildings are required by law to include fire sprinklers. Based on the building types, it is highly likely that the building would be equipped with an Early Suppression, Fast Response (ESFR) fire sprinkler system. ESFR systems incorporate high volume, high-pressure sprinkler heads to provide necessary fire protection. While most other sprinkler systems are intended to control the growth of a fire, an ESFR sprinkler system is designed to suppress a fire. To suppress a fire does not necessarily mean that the system will extinguish the fire but rather it is meant to “knock” the fire back down to its original point of origin. ESFR systems provide



buildings with a high margin of fire safety and also allow more time for emergency responders to reach a fire incident before a fire spreads from its point of origin.

Development of the proposed Project would nonetheless impact fire services by placing an additional demand on existing RCFD resources and personnel. As set forth by the Riverside County Fire Protection Master Plan, a new fire station and/or appropriate fire company is required for the development of 2,000 dwelling units or more, or for development of more than 3.0 million square feet of industrial or commercial uses. The Project includes a proposed 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building but does not include any residential uses; thus, the Project would not result in the need for a new fire station in the local area based on this standard. Notwithstanding, the Project could result in an increased number of emergency and public service calls due to the increased presence of structures, traffic, and employees. Although new fire protection facilities ultimately may be needed in the Project area to serve the Project and other future development in the area, it is not possible to identify environmental impacts that may be associated with the development of any new fire protection facilities until a specific proposal and design for the facility is prepared by the RCFD. Accordingly, impacts due to the construction of new or expanded fire protection facilities are too speculative for evaluation in this EIR (State CEQA Guidelines § 15145). Environmental effects of such fire protection facilities and any associated mitigation would be identified through a future CEQA process required in association with any future proposals for new or expanded fire protection facilities.

Additionally, the Project is required to adhere to Riverside County Ordinance No. 659, which requires payment of a Development Impact Fee (DIF) to assist the County in providing for fire protection facilities, including fire stations. Payment of the DIF fee would ensure that funds are available for capital improvements, such as land/equipment purchases and fire station construction. Accordingly, Project-related impacts to fire protection services are evaluated as less than significant and no mitigation beyond payment of DIF fees would be required.

Threshold b.: Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered sheriff facilities or the need for new or physically altered sheriff facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for sheriff services?

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in development of the 83.0-acre Project site with a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building and an IID joint electric substation. The proposed warehouse building would accommodate approximately 1,203 employees, while a nominal number of employees would be associated with the proposed IID electric substation. Development of the property and the introduction of a new business on the site could result in an incremental increase in criminal activity. However, according to the Riverside County Sheriff's Department (RCSD), there is not a direct correlation between employment growth, the number of crimes committed, and the number of RCSD personnel needed to respond to these increases. As the population and use of an area increases, however, additional financing of equipment and manpower needs are required to meet the increased demand. The proposed Project would result in an increase in the cumulative demand for services from the RCSD, which provides police protection services to the Project site. Specifically, the Project would generate a demand for approximately two new sworn officers (1,203 employees x 1.5 officers/1,000 population = 1.8 officers), based on the 1.5 per 1,000 population service standard (Riverside



County, 2015a, Table 4.17-H). Staff necessary to support the additional deputy would include an appropriate level of civilian, investigation, and supervisory personnel. The proposed Project would not, however, in and of itself result in the need for new or expanded sheriff facilities to accommodate new personnel.

The Project is required to adhere to Riverside County Ordinance No. 659, which requires payment of a DIF fee to assist the County in providing for sheriff protection services, including new or expanded facilities. Payment of the DIF fee would ensure that funds are available for capital improvements, such as land/equipment purchases and sheriff facilities construction. Accordingly, Project-related impacts to sheriff protection services are evaluated as less than significant and no mitigation beyond payment of DIF fees would be required.

Therefore, implementation of the Project would not result in the need for new or expanded sheriff facilities, and impacts would be less than significant. The Project's incremental demand for sheriff protection services also would be less than significant because the Project would be required to contribute DIF fees. Accordingly, a less-than-significant impact would occur with respect to sheriff protection services or facilities as a result of implementation of the proposed Project.

Threshold c.: Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities or the need for new or physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for school services?

As previously indicated, the Project site is located within the PSUSD. However, no residential uses are proposed as part of the Project. As such, the Project would not result in a direct demand for new or expanded school services in the local area. Notwithstanding, the Project would employ residents currently living in or moving to the area, which could place additional demand on school facilities in the surrounding areas. Although the PSUSD may need to construct new school facilities to meet the growing demand within this portion of unincorporated Riverside County, there are no current publicly-available plans detailing where such facilities would be built. The Project would not directly cause or contribute to the need for new or expanded school facilities, and it is not possible to identify environmental impacts that may be associated with the construction of new or expanded school facilities until a specific proposal and design for a new facility is prepared by the PSUSD, and an analysis of potential physical environmental impacts resulting from the construction and operation of new or expanded school facilities would be speculative in nature (see State CEQA Guidelines § 15145). Environmental effects of such school facilities and any associated mitigation would be identified through a future CEQA process required in association with any future proposals for new or expanded school facilities. Any mitigation measures required for new or expanded school facilities could be funded, in part, from property taxes and/or through payment of school impact fees (as discussed below).

Although it is not possible to identify physical environmental effects that may result from new or expanded school facilities, the Project Applicant would be required to contribute fees to the PSUSD in accordance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 575. For new development, the PSUSD currently assesses \$0.78 per s.f. of new industrial building area. Pursuant to the Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998, payment of school impact fees constitutes full and complete mitigation for Project-related impacts to school services. Although



the Project would not result in a direct increase in demand for school services, mandatory payment of school impact fees still would be required and would ensure that the Project's impacts to school facilities and services would be less than significant. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation beyond payment of fees would be required.

Threshold d.: Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered library facilities or the need for new or physically altered library facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for library services?

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in development of the 83.0-acre Project site with a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building and an IID joint electric substation. Land uses proposed as part of the Project would not necessarily result in a direct increase in the County's population.

Although use of the internet has resulted in decreased demand being placed on library services nationwide, the County continues to maintain its standards for book titles and library square footage. Library services in Riverside County are provided by the RCPLS. Buildout of the Project would result in up to 1,203 new employees. Assuming that all of the jobs produced by the Project would consist of new residents within the County, in order to attain the RCPLS level of service standard of 2.5 titles-per-capita, the Project-generated employees would require an additional 3,008 titles (2.5 titles-per-capita x 1,203 employees = 3,007.5 titles). To attain the RCPLS standard of 0.5 s.f. of library space per capita, the Project would create the demand for 602 s.f. of additional library space (0.5 s.f. of library space per capita x 1,203 employees = 601.5 s.f.). However, these estimates are conservative in nature because the majority of jobs that would be generated by the Project likely would be filled by existing Riverside County residents, given the county's generally poor jobs-to-housing ratio. Thus, the Project's impacts to the local library system likely would be substantially less than described above. (Riverside County, 2015a, Table 4.17-W)

The provision of additional library space would be addressed through the County's compliance with the adopted level of service standards. Additionally, mandatory compliance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 659 would require the payment of impact fees. These fees would provide funding for library books and library expansion projects. Although new library facilities may be under consideration by the RCPLS in the Project area, it is not possible to identify environmental impacts that may be associated with the development of any new library facilities until a specific proposal and design for the facility is prepared by the RCPLS. Accordingly, impacts due to the construction of new or expanded library facilities are too speculative for evaluation in this EIR (State CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR § 15145). Environmental effects of such library facilities and any associated mitigation would be identified through a future CEQA process required in association with any future proposals for new or expanded library facilities. Any mitigation measures required for new or expanded library facilities could be funded, in part, from property taxes, including increased property taxes resulting from buildout of the Project site. As such, Project impacts to library facilities and resources would be less than significant.



Threshold e.: Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered health care facilities or the need for new or physically altered health care facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for health care services?

As previously indicated, the nearest regional health care facility to the Project site is the Eisenhower Health Main Campus, located at 39000 Bob Hope Drive in the City of Rancho Mirage, or approximately 4.5 miles south of the Project site (Google Earth, 2022). The Project would result in approximately 1,203 new jobs, the majority of which are anticipated to be filled by existing County residents. Using a 1.9 hospital beds per 1,000 persons generation factor, the Project would generate the worst-case demand for approximately two new hospital beds ($1,203 \times 1.9 \div 1,000 = 2.3$). However, as most if not all of the future jobs on the Project site would be filled by existing County residents, the Project's conservatively estimated demand for health care services and hospital beds would not represent a new demand for such resources within the County.

The provision of private health care is largely based on economic factors and demand and is beyond the scope of analysis required for this EIR. However, EIR No. 521 concluded impacts associated with buildout of the Riverside County General Plan would be less than significant, and further notes that: "compliance with...existing General Plan policy and existing Mitigation Measures 4.15.7A and 4.15.7B from EIR No. 441, would further reduce or avoid the insignificant impacts..." (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.17-18). Mitigation Measure 4.15.7A requires the County to perform periodic medical needs assessments to evaluate the current medical demand and level of medical service provided within each area plan every three years. Mitigation Measure 4.15.7B requires the County to fund the new construction and/or expansion of existing medical facilities according to the level of demand for medical services based on the needs assessment required as part of Mitigation Measure 4.15.7A. Furthermore, mandatory compliance with County Ordinance No. 659 requires a DIF payment to the County that is partially allocated to public health services and facilities. While new or expanded health care facilities ultimately may be needed within the County due to the anticipated growth in population, it is not possible to identify environmental impacts that may be associated with the development of any new health care facilities until a specific proposal and design for the facility is prepared. Accordingly, impacts due to the construction of new or expanded health care facilities are too speculative for evaluation in this EIR (State CEQA Guidelines § 15145). As such, impacts to public medical facilities and resources associated with the proposed Project would be less than significant.

4.16.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The cumulative study area for public services encompasses the service area of the RCFD, RCSD, PSUSD, and/or RCPLS, and assumes full buildout of the general plans for jurisdictions within these service areas.

Although the proposed Project would be adequately served by fire protection services based on the proximity and response times estimated from nearby fire station facilities, the Project would nonetheless result in an incremental increase in requests for service, which would affect the fire department's ability to provide acceptable levels of service. These impacts include an increased number of emergency and public service calls due to the increased presence of structures, increased traffic volumes, and increased population. When



considered in the context of on-going cumulative development throughout western Riverside County, such impacts would be cumulatively considerable. However, the proposed Project and all cumulative developments within unincorporated Riverside County would be required to contribute DIF fees pursuant to County Ordinance No. 659. Mandatory DIF fee contributions by the Project and cumulative developments would ensure that adequate funding is provided to the RCFD for the acquisition of additional facilities, equipment, and personnel. Accordingly, the proposed Project's impact to the RCFD is evaluated as less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

Although the Project would be adequately served by sheriff facilities, the increased population that would be generated by the Project, when considered in conjunction with other on-going development throughout western Riverside County, has the potential to adversely affect service response times. However, the proposed Project and all cumulative developments would be required to contribute DIF fees pursuant to County Ordinance No. 659, which would help to provide for adequate equipment and personnel in the Project area. Therefore, with mandatory payment of DIF fees, Project impacts to police protection services would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

The proposed Project would entail development of the site with light industrial land uses and an electric substation, and therefore the Project would not result in a direct demand for school services or the need for new or expanded school facilities. Although the Project may indirectly result in an increase in the population within the PSUSD, the Project Applicant would be required to contribute fees in accordance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 575. Other cumulative developments, including both residential and non-residential developments, similarly would be required to contribute fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 575, or similar ordinances within cities within the service area of these school districts. Pursuant to the Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998, payment of school impact fees constitutes full and complete mitigation for project-related impacts to school services. As such, and with mandatory fee payment, the Project's impacts to school services and facilities would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

The Project would entail development of the Project site with a 1,238,992 s.f. warehouse building and an IID joint electric substation, and therefore the Project would not result in a direct demand for library services. Although the Project may result in an indirect increase in the County's population, the Project is not expected to directly result in the need for new or expanded library services or facilities. Furthermore, it is not possible to identify environmental impacts that may be associated with such new or expanded library facilities until a specific proposal and design for such facilities are prepared by Riverside County. Accordingly, impacts due to the construction of new or expanded library facilities are too speculative for evaluation in this EIR (State CEQA Guidelines § 15145). Environmental effects of such library facilities and associated mitigation would be identified through a future CEQA process required in association with any future proposals for new or expanded library facilities. However, the Project and all cumulative developments would contribute property taxes and would be required to contribute DIF fees to Riverside County pursuant to County Ordinance No. 659, which could be used for the purpose of acquiring book titles and/or additional library square footage. Any mitigation measures required for new or expanded library facilities also could be funded, in part, from property taxes allocated by Riverside County to such purposes. Therefore, because environmental impacts associated with new or expanded library facilities cannot be known at this time and would be determined in the future



once Riverside County identifies a specific proposal for new or expanded library facilities, Project impacts to library services and facilities are evaluated as less than significant on a cumulatively-considerable basis.

The proposed Project, when considered in conjunction with on-going growth and development in western Riverside County, would cumulatively impact the ability of local medical facilities that provide health services. However, the Project and all cumulative developments would be required to comply with County Ordinance No. 659, which requires a DIF payment to the County that is partially allocated to public health services and facilities. With mandatory compliance with Ordinance No. 659, the Project's impacts to health services and facilities would be less than significant on a cumulative basis.

4.16.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project would place additional demand on fire protection facilities but would not result in the need to construct or physically expand a fire station or other fire protection facility. With payment of mandatory DIF fees, the proposed Project's potential direct and cumulatively-considerable impacts to the Riverside County Fire Department would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Threshold b: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project would place additional demand on County Sheriff facilities but would not result in the need to construct or physically expand a Sheriff's substation or other policing facility. With payment of mandatory DIF fees, the proposed Project's potential direct and cumulatively-considerable impacts to the Riverside County Sheriff's Department would be reduced to less-than-significant levels, and the Project would not result in or require the construction of new police protection facilities that could result in a significant impact to the environment.

Threshold c: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project would not directly generate a resident population, and thus would not directly impact school services in the local area. The payment of mandatory school impact fees would ensure that the Project would result in less-than-significant direct and cumulatively-considerable impacts on the ability of the PSUSD to provide for school services.

Threshold d: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project would not directly generate a resident population, and thus would not directly impact library services in the local area. The payment of mandatory DIF fees would be used in part to provide for library space and/or new book volumes. Accordingly, with payment of DIF fees, Project impacts to library services and facilities are less than significant on a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.

Threshold e: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project would not result in the need for the physical construction or expansion of a public health facility. With payment of mandatory DIF fees, the Project would result in less-than-significant direct and cumulatively-considerable impacts to health services facilities, and the Project would not result in or require the construction of new health services facilities that could result in a significant impact to the environment.



4.16.7 COUNTY REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable County Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude impacts resulting from the provision of public services. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- As a condition of Project approval, the Project would be required to conform to all mandatory local, State, and federal laws, ordinances, and standards relating to fire safety. Among other items, these requirements include conformance with the Uniform Building Code Section 1503, which requires that all buildings be constructed with fire retardant roofing material. Access routes in the Project area would be required to be maintained throughout construction and buildout of the proposed Project.
- The Project would be required to adhere to Riverside County Ordinance No. 659, which requires payment of a development impact fee (DIF) to assist the County in providing for fire protection, sheriff, library, and public health care facilities. Payment of the DIF fee would ensure that funds are available for capital improvements, such as land/equipment purchases and fire station construction.
- The Project is required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 575, which requires mandatory payment of school impact fees pursuant to Public Education Code § 17072.10-18.

Mitigation

Impacts resulting from the provision of public services would be less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.



4.17 RECREATION

This Subsection 4.17 provides an overview of the existing parks and recreational facilities that exist within the Project vicinity and that could potentially be directly or indirectly physically affected by implementation of the proposed Project. The analysis herein is based in part on the Riverside County General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element and Healthy Communities Element (Riverside County, 2021a).

4.17.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Federal Parks

The nearest federal park to the Project site is the Coachella Valley National Wildlife Refuge, located approximately 2.9 miles southeast of the Project site. In addition, the Joshua Tree National Park is located approximately 6.9 miles north of the Project site, while the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument is located approximately 13.5 miles south of the Project site. There are no other federal parks within the Project vicinity. (Google Earth, n.d.)

B. State Parks

The nearest State park to the Project site is Indio Hills Palms, located approximately 5.0 miles east of the Project site. Indio Hills Palms consists of wild parkland that is part of the adjacent Coachella Valley Preserve. The park contains palm groves that include Hidden, Pushawalla, Briska, Macomber and Horseshoe palms. In addition, Mount San Jacinto State Park is located approximately 12.0 miles west of the Project site. Mount San Jacinto State Park includes overnight facilities (e.g., campsites, RV sites, etc.), hiking and horse trails, and a variety of day-use activities and facilities such as picnic areas, guided tours, and interpretive exhibits. (Google Earth, n.d.)

C. Regional and Local Parks

There is only one park facility (Century Park) within a 2.0-mile radius of the Project site. Century Park includes a tot lot, shade areas, restrooms, half-court basketball court, tennis court, and an open field play area. (Google Earth, n.d.)

D. Regional Trails and Bikeway Systems

The Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP) identifies the County's long-term objectives for recreational trails and bikeways within the Western Coachella Valley area. As shown on WCVAP Figure 9, *Western Coachella Valley Area Plan Trails and Bikeway System*, there are no trails or bicycle facilities planned within the Project area. The nearest designated trail is a proposed Class II Bike Path that is planned to occur along Varner Road, with the nearest segment occurring approximately 0.6-mile south of the Project site. In addition, a Class I Bike Path is planned along Ramon Road between Varner Road and just east of Shadow Mountain Lane, with the nearest segment occurring approximately 1.0-mile south of the Project site. (Riverside County, 2021b, Figure 8)



4.17.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the State and local environmental laws and related regulations related to recreation.

A. State Regulations

1. Quimby Act, California Government Code § 66477

The State of California's Quimby Act was established by the California Legislature for the purpose of preserving open space and providing park facilities for California's growing communities. The Quimby Act allows local agencies to establish ordinances requiring residential subdivisions to provide land or "in-lieu-of" fees for park and recreation purposes. This State Act requires the dedication of land and/or imposes a requirement of fees for park and recreational purposes as a condition of approval of tentative tract map or parcel map. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

B. Local Regulations

1. Riverside County Ordinance No. 460

Riverside County Ordinance No. 460, § 10.35 (Park and Recreation Fees and Dedications) implements the Quimby Act by establishing a requirement for dedication of three acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, or payment of a fee in lieu of such dedication. An exception exists in cases where a Community Parks and Recreation Plan, as approved by the Board of Supervisors, applies and has determined that the amount of existing neighborhood and community park area exceeds that limit, in which case the Board may determine that the public interest, convenience, health, welfare, and safety requires that a higher standard, not to exceed five acres of land per 1,000 persons residing within the County, shall be devoted to neighborhood and community park purposes. There are no Community Parks and Recreation Plans applicable to the Project area.

4.17.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section XVI of Appendix G to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects to parks and recreation, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate a project's impacts to recreational resources:

- Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, are derived from Section XVI of Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines (listed above), and state that the proposed Project would have a significant impact to parks and recreation if construction and/or operation of the Project would:



- a. *Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment;*
- b. *Increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated;*
- c. *Be located within a Community Service Area (CSA) or recreation and park district with a Community Parks and Recreation Plan (Quimby fees); or*
- d. *Include the construction or expansion of a trail system.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project’s impacts on parks and recreation.

4.17.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a: *Would the Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

Threshold d: *Would the Project include the construction or expansion of a trail system?*

The only trails or recreational facilities that would be constructed as part of the Project are limited to proposed sidewalks and landscaped parkways along the Project site’s frontages with Rio del Sol and 30th Avenue. Although the Project would result in the construction of sidewalks and landscaped parkways along these streets, the sidewalks and landscaped parkways would occur in areas already planned for physical disturbance as part of the Project, and there would be no impacts to the environment specifically related to the construction of these facilities that have not already been addressed throughout this EIR (e.g., for impacts to biological or cultural resources). As such, and assuming implementation of the mitigation measures identified throughout this EIR, impacts associated with proposed sidewalks/parkways would be less than significant.

Threshold b: *Would the Project include the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated?*

The Project involves the proposed development of a 1,238,992 square foot (s.f.) warehouse building and an IID joint electric substation on the 83.0-acre Project site, in addition to off-site road and electric utility infrastructure. The Project’s proposed warehouse, substation, and infrastructure uses would not directly or indirectly generate a population that would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that physical deterioration would occur, as a majority of the Project’s future jobs are anticipated to be filled by existing or future planned residents within the County. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed Project would not result in the increased use or substantial physical deterioration of an existing neighborhood or regional park, and impacts would be less than significant.



Threshold c: Would the Project be located within a Community Service Area (CSA) or recreation and park district with a Community Parks and Recreation Plan (Quimby fees)?

According to Riverside County GIS, the Project site is not located in a Community Service Area (CSA) and is not located within a Community Parks and Recreation Plan. Additionally, the provisions of § 10.35 of Riverside County Ordinance No. 460, which addresses parkland dedication and in-lieu fees, are not applicable to the proposed Project because the Project does not include any residential subdivision of land; thus, the Project would not be subject to payment of in-lieu fees for recreational resources. Accordingly, impacts due to a conflict with a Community Parks and Recreation Plan and due to the need for payment of in-lieu fees for parkland acquisition and construction would be less than significant.

4.17.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

This cumulative impact analysis considers development of the proposed Project in conjunction with other development projects and planned development within two miles of the Project site. Although it is not anticipated that future Project employees would substantially utilize recreational facilities in the local area, this study area was selected because any increased use of local recreation facilities by future Project employees likely would occur in close proximity to the Project site.

As discussed under the analysis of Thresholds a. and d., the only trails or recreational facilities that would be constructed as part of the Project are limited to proposed sidewalks and landscaped parkways along the Project site's frontages with Rio del Sol and 30th Avenue. Although the Project would result in the construction of sidewalks and landscaped parkways along these streets, the sidewalks and landscaped parkways would occur in areas already planned for physical disturbance as part of the Project. Cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with the construction of the proposed sidewalks/parkways have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject heading (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where cumulatively-considerable impacts have been identified associated with Project implementation, mitigation measures have been identified to reduce construction-related impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no components of the planned trails or pedestrian facilities on site that have not already been addressed and accounted for throughout this EIR for the Project site. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts due to the construction of on-site sidewalks/parkways would be less than significant.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold b., the Project does not propose any residential uses or other land use that may generate a population that would directly increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. Although there may be a nominal increase in the use of local recreation facilities, Project employees are not expected to utilize local recreational facilities to the extent that physical deterioration would occur or be accelerated, even when considered in the context of cumulative developments in the area. Although other cumulative developments in the local area that involve residential use and that don't accommodate adequate recreational facilities may result in physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities, the Project's contribution to such effects would be minimal and would be less than significant on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.



As discussed under the analysis of Threshold c., the Project site is not located within a recreational-related CSA, and is not located within a park district with a Community Parks and Recreation Plan. The Project also would not be subject to payment of Quimby fees or fees pursuant to § 10.35 of Riverside County Ordinance No. 460 because the Project does not include any residential uses or residential subdivision of land. Accordingly, impacts due to a conflict with a CSA, due to Quimby fees, or due to a conflict with the park dedication requirements of Riverside County Ordinance No. 460 would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

4.17.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Thresholds a. and d.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The physical construction of sidewalks and landscaped parkways has been addressed under the relevant issue areas identified throughout this EIR (e.g., air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, etc.). Under each of these topics, the Project impacts are determined to be less than significant, or mitigation measures have been identified to reduce impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no components of the planned pedestrian facilities on site that have not already been addressed and accounted for throughout this EIR. Accordingly, Project impacts due to the development of pedestrian facilities on site would be less than significant, requiring no mitigation beyond that which is identified in other portions of this EIR.

Threshold b.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project does not propose any residential uses or other land use that may generate a population that would directly increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed Project would not result in the increased use or substantial physical deterioration of an existing neighborhood or regional park, and impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold c.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project site is not located within a CSA that was established for recreational facilities, the Project site is not located within a Community Parks and Recreation Plan, and the Project is not subject to payment of in-lieu fees (Quimby fees) for recreational facilities pursuant to § 10.35 of Riverside County Ordinance No. 460. Accordingly, impacts due to a conflict with a Community Parks and Recreation Plan and due to the need for payment of in-lieu fees for parkland acquisition and construction would be less than significant.

4.17.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Impacts to recreation would be less than significant; thus, mitigation measures are not required.



4.18 TRANSPORTATION

The analysis in this Section 4.18 is based on several technical studies prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc. (herein, “Urban Crossroads”). The first report addresses Project-related worker Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) pursuant to the Riverside County *Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service Vehicle Miles Traveled* (December 2020) (herein, “County Guidelines”), is entitled, “Majestic Thousand Palms Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis,” is dated July 20, 2023, and included as EIR *Technical Appendix K2* (Urban Crossroads, 2023a). Although not required by the County Guidelines, a second report addresses the Project’s potential impacts to VMT associated with Project-related truck trips, is entitled, “Majestic Thousand Palms Supplemental Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis” (herein, “Truck VMT Analysis”), is dated August 21, 2023, and is included as EIR *Technical Appendix K3* (Urban Crossroads, 2023b). Additionally, and although not relied upon herein to evaluate the Project’s impacts to the environment, the discussion within this Subsection also relies in part on a third technical report prepared by Urban Crossroads, entitled, “Majestic Thousand Palms (GPA 220004, CZ 2200013, PPT220022, CEQ220033) Traffic Analysis” (herein, “TA”), dated July 20, 2023, and included as *Technical Appendix K1* to this EIR (Urban Crossroads, 2023c). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources.

On December 28, 2018, updates to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines were approved by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL). As required by Senate Bill (SB) 743, Threshold b. of the CEQA Guidelines for Transportation now requires an evaluation of impacts due to VMT, which replaced the Level of Service (LOS) criteria (i.e., automobile delay) that was used in the past to evaluate potential effects to transportation under CEQA. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(a), “...a project’s effect on automobile delay shall not constitute a significant environmental impact.”

4.18.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Existing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

The County has adopted the efficiency metric Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per employee to evaluate potential VMT impacts for industrial land use projects. For the County of Riverside, the countywide average Work VMT per employee is 14.2 Work VMT per employee. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, p. 3)

B. Definition of Level of Service (LOS)

Traffic operations of roadway facilities are described using the term "Level of Service" (LOS). Although as noted above the Project’s effects on LOS are not considered to comprise a significant impact under CEQA, a definition of LOS is presented herein for informational purposes. LOS is a qualitative description of traffic flow based on several factors such as speed, travel time, delay, and freedom to maneuver. Six levels are typically defined ranging from LOS A, representing completely free-flow conditions, to LOS F, representing breakdown in flow resulting in stop-and-go conditions. LOS E represents operations at or near capacity, an unstable level where vehicles are operating with the minimum spacing for maintaining uniform flow. (Urban Crossroads, 2023c, p. 13)



C. Study Area Description

Based on consultation with Riverside County staff, the study area for purposes of the Project’s TA includes 10 study area intersections as listed in Table 4.18-1, *Intersection Analysis Locations*. At a minimum, the study area includes intersections where the Project is anticipated to contribute 50 or more peak hour trips per the County’s traffic study guidelines. The “50 peak hour trip” criteria represent a minimum number of trips at which a typical intersection would have the potential to be substantively affected by a given development proposal. The 50 peak hour trip criterion is a traffic engineering rule of thumb that is accepted and widely used within Riverside County for estimating a potential area of influence (i.e., study area). (Urban Crossroads, 2023c, p. 6)

Table 4.18-1 Intersection Analysis Locations

#	Intersection
1	Rio Del Sol Rd. & Driveway 1
2	Rio Del Sol Rd. & Driveway 2
3	Rio Del Sol Rd. & 30th Av.
4	Driveway 3 & 30th Av.
5	Bob Hope Dr./Rio Del Sol Rd. & Varner Rd.
6	Bob Hope Dr. & I-10 WB Ramps
7	Bob Hope Dr. & I-10 EB Ramps
8	Bob Hope Dr. & Ramon Rd.
9	I-10 EB Ramps & Ramon Rd.
10	Varner Rd. & Ramon Rd.

(Urban Crossroads, 2023c, Table 1-1)

D. Existing Traffic

Traffic counts within the Project’s study area were collected by Urban Crossroads in April 2022. Traffic counts were conducted between the hours of 7:00 to 9:00 AM and 4:00 to 6:00 PM. The 2022 weekday AM and weekday PM peak hour count data is representative of typical weekday peak hour traffic conditions in the study area. There were no observations made in the field that would indicate atypical traffic conditions on the count dates, such as construction activity or detour routes and near-by schools were in session and operating on normal schedules. As such, no additional adjustments were made to the traffic counts to establish the baseline condition. The raw manual peak hour turning movement traffic count data sheets are included in Appendix 3.1 to the Project’s TA (EIR *Technical Appendix K1*). Existing weekday and weekend peak hour intersection volumes in the Project’s study area are shown on Exhibit 3-9 of the Project’s TA. (Urban Crossroads, 2023c, p. 23)

E. Area Conditions

Following is a summary of the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Network and a review of existing peak hour intersection operations, traffic signal warrant, and freeway facility operations analyses.



1. *General Plan Circulation Element*

The Project site is located within unincorporated Riverside County. The roadway classifications and planned (ultimate) roadway cross-sections of the major roadways within the study area, as identified in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element, are described in Subsection 3.2 of the Project's TA (*Technical Appendix K1*). Exhibit 3-2 of the TA shows the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and Exhibit 3-3 of the TA illustrates the Riverside County General Plan roadway cross-sections. As shown, Varner Road, located approximately 0.4-mile southwest of the Project site, and Ramon Road, located approximately 1.0-mile south of the Project site, are designated by the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element as "Major Highways (118-foot Right-of-Way (ROW))." Rio Del Sol Road and 30th Avenue are classified by the Circulation Element as "Secondary Highways (100-foot ROW)." No other roadways in the immediate vicinity of the Project site are classified as General Plan Circulation Element roadways. (Urban Crossroads, 2023c, p. 19)

2. *Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities*

The Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element also identifies planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities. There is a planned Class II bike path along portions of Varner Road in the vicinity of the Project site; to the west, the City of Cathedral City's North City Extended Specific Plan shows this path as a Class I facility. The Riverside County General Plan does not identify any bicycle or trail facilities planned along or within the Project site. The City of Cathedral City's North City Extended Specific Plan shows a planned non-exclusive easement for trail purposes on the west side of Rio Del Sol, west of the Project site. Under existing conditions, there are limited pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of the Project site. Field observations and traffic counts conducted in April 2022 indicate light pedestrian and bicycle activity within the study area. (Urban Crossroads, 2023c, p. 23)

3. *Transit Service*

The Project area is served by Sunline Transit Agency (STA). Based on a review of existing transit routes within the vicinity of the Project site, STA Route 4 runs along Ramon Road. There are no bus stops along the Project site's frontages under existing conditions. Transit service is reviewed and updated by STA periodically to address ridership, budget, and community demand needs. Changes in land use can affect these periodic adjustments which may lead to either enhanced or reduced service where appropriate. (Urban Crossroads, 2023c, p. 23)

4. *Existing Conditions Analysis*

Refer to Section 3 of the Project's TA (*Technical Appendix K1*) for a discussion of intersection operations, traffic signal warrants, and off-ramp queuing operations for existing conditions. Generally, there are low traffic volumes on Rio Del Sol in the vicinity of the Project site and no congested conditions.



4.18.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

A. *State Regulations*

1. *Assembly Bill 1358 (AB 1358) – Complete Streets Act*

In September 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed into law Assembly Bill 1358 (AB 1358), the Complete Streets Act. AB 1358 requires that the legislative body of a city or county, upon any substantive revision of the circulation element of the general plan, modify the circulation element to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways, defined to include motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, seniors, movers of commercial goods, and users of public transportation, in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan. By requiring new duties of local officials, AB 1358 imposes a State-mandated local program (CA Legislative Info, 2008). AB 1358 required the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to prepare or amend guidelines for a legislative body to accommodate the safe and convenient travel of users of streets, roads, and highways in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan, and in doing so to consider how appropriate accommodation varies depending on its transportation and land use context. AB 1358 authorized OPR, in developing these guidelines, to consult with leading transportation experts, including, but not limited to, bicycle transportation planners, pedestrian planners, public transportation planners, local air quality management districts, and disability and senior mobility planners. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

2. *Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a multi-year capital improvement program of transportation projects on and off the State Highway System, funded with revenues from the Transportation Investment Fund and other funding sources. STIP programming generally occurs every two years. The programming cycle begins with the release of a proposed fund estimate in July of odd-numbered years, followed by California Transportation Commission (CTC) adoption of the fund estimate in August (odd years). The fund estimate serves to identify the amount of new funds available for the programming of transportation projects. Once the fund estimate is adopted, Caltrans and the regional planning agencies prepare transportation improvement plans for submittal by December 15th (odd years). Caltrans prepares the Interregional Transportation Improvement Plan (ITIP) and regional agencies prepare Regional Transportation Improvement Plans (RTIPs). Public hearings are held in January (even years) in both northern and southern California. The STIP is adopted by the CTC by April (even years). (Caltrans, n.d.)

3. *Senate Bill 743 (SB 743)*

Senate Bill 743 (SB 743, Steinberg, 2013), which was codified in Public Resources Code Section 21099, required changes to the implementing CEQA Guidelines regarding the analysis of transportation impacts. As one appellate court explained: “During the last 10 years, the Legislature has charted a course of long-term sustainability based on denser infill development, reduced reliance on individual vehicles and improved mass transit, all with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Section 21099 is part of that strategy...” (*Covina Residents for Responsible Development v. City of Covina* (2018) 21 Cal.App.5th 712, 729.) Pursuant to Section 21099, the criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts must “promote the



reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses.” (*Id.*, subd. (b)(1); see generally, adopted CEQA Guidelines, § 15064.3, subd. (b) [Criteria for Analyzing Transportation Impacts].) To that end, in developing the criteria, OPR has proposed, and the California Natural Resources Agency (CRNA) has certified and adopted, changes to the CEQA Guidelines that identify VMT as the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project’s transportation impacts. With the CRNA’s certification and adoption of the changes to the CEQA Guidelines, automobile delay, as measured by LOS and other similar metrics, generally no longer constitutes a significant environmental effect under CEQA as of July 1, 2020. (Public Resources Code § 21099, subd. (b)(3).) (OPR, 2018b)

4. *Senate Bill 325 (SB 325) - Transportation Development Act (TDA, Mills-Alquist-Deddeh Act)*

The Mills-Alquist-Deddeh Act (SB 325) was enacted by the California Legislature to improve existing public transportation services and encourage regional transportation coordination. Known as the Transportation Development Act (TDA) of 1971, this law provides funding to be allocated to transit and non-transit related purposes that comply with regional transportation plans. TDA established two funding sources; the Local Transportation Fund (LTF), and the State Transit Assistance (STA) fund. Providing certain conditions are met, counties with a population under 500,000 (according to the 1970 federal census) may also use the LTF for local streets and roads, construction, and maintenance. The STA funding can only be used for transportation planning and mass transportation purposes. (Caltrans, n.d.)

5. *Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 (Senate Bill 1 (SB 1))*

On April 28, 2017, Governor Brown signed Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) (Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017), known as the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017. SB 1 augments the base of the State Transit Assistance program essentially doubling the funding for this program. To provide for SB 1 reporting and transparency, transit agencies are asked to work with Caltrans to report on planned expenditures for these augmented funds. (Caltrans, n.d.)

B. *Regional Regulations*

1. *SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (Connect SoCal)*

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a regional agency established pursuant to California Government Code § 6500, also referred to as the Joint Powers Authority law. SCAG is designated as a Council of Governments (COG), a Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), and a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The Project site is within SCAG’s regional authority. In April 2024, SCAG adopted the *2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)* (“RTP/SCS”; also referred to herein as “Connect SoCal”) with goals to: 1) build and maintain an integrated multimodal transportation network; 2) develop, connect and sustain communities that are livable and thriving; 3) create a healthy region for the people of today and tomorrow; and 4) support a sustainable, efficient and productive regional economic environment that provides opportunities for all residents. Performance measures and funding strategies also are included to ensure that the adopted goals are achieved through implementation of the RTP.



Connect SoCal includes long-range regional transportation plans, regional transportation improvement programs, regional housing needs allocations, and other plans for the region. Connect SoCal also provides objectives for meeting emissions reduction targets set forth by the California Air Resources Board (CARB); these objectives were provided in a direct response to Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) which was enacted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks through integrated transportation, land use, housing, and environmental planning (SCAG, 2020). Connect SoCal is updated periodically to allow for the consideration and inclusion of new transportation strategies and methods.

The Goods Movement Technical Report of Connect SoCal is applicable to the Project because the Project entails a use that is closely associated with, and relies directly on, the goods movement system (e.g., manufacturing, construction, retail trade, wholesale trade and transportation, and warehousing). In April 2018, SCAG published a document entitled, *Industrial Warehousing in the SCAG Region*. According to the document, the SCAG region is a vibrant hub for international and domestic trade because of its large transportation base and extensive multimodal transportation system. The SCAG region's freight transportation system includes warehouses and distribution centers; the Ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Hueneme; airports; rail intermodal terminals; rail lines, and local streets, State highways, and interstates. Together the system enables the movement of goods from source to market, facilitating uninterrupted global commerce. The region is home to approximately 34,000 warehouses with 1.17 billion square feet (s.f.) of warehouse building space, and undeveloped land that could accommodate an additional 338 million s.f. of new warehouse building space. These regions attract robust logistics activities and are a major reason the region is a critical mode in the global supply chain. (SCAG, 2018, p. ES-1)

2. *Riverside County Congestion Management Program (CMP)*

The intent of a Congestion Management Program (CMP) is to more directly link land use, transportation, and air quality, thereby prompting reasonable growth management programs that will effectively utilize new transportation funds, alleviate traffic congestion and related deficiencies, and improve air quality. The Riverside County CMP became effective with the passage of Proposition 111 in 1990 and updated most recently in 2011. The RCTC adopted the 2011 CMP for Riverside County in December 2011. Study Area intersections are identified in Table 4.18-1. There are no Study Area intersections identified as a Riverside County CMP facility. (Urban Crossroads, 2023f, p. 8)

3. *Coachella Valley Association of Governments Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee*

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) established a consolidated Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) program for all of western Riverside County, which was most recently updated in 2018. The establishment of TUMF was based on the desire to establish a single, uniform fee program to mitigate the cumulative impacts of new development on the Coachella Valley's arterial highway system rather than having multiple and potentially uncoordinated fee programs across the region. CVAG is responsible for establishing and updating TUMF payment rates, based on a TUMF Program Nexus Study, which is periodically updated to consider the impact of future development on the subregion's system of highways and arterial roads. The most recent Nexus Study update was approved by the CVAG Executive Committee on April 20, 2018. The Nexus Study demonstrates the relationship between the TUMF fee levels



and the cost of anticipated improvements to the regional roadway network necessitated by new development in the Coachella Valley (CVAG, 2018)

C. Local Regulations

Ordinances specifically applicable to the circulation system are presented below (Riverside County, 2015, p. 4.18-28):

- Ordinance No. 413 – Vehicle Parking: Ordinance No. 413 establishes regulations to vehicle parking on Riverside County roadways.
- Ordinance No. 452 – Speed Limits: Ordinance No. 452 pertains to prima facie speed limits on Riverside County roadways and establishes or amends prima facie speed limits on certain Riverside County roads.
- Ordinance No. 460 – Subdivision of Land: Ordinance No. 460, in conjunction with the Subdivision Map Act, establishes regulations for the division of land and describes procedures. The ordinance also includes the provisions for the establishment of Road and Bridge Benefit Districts and associated fees.
- Ordinance No. 461 – Road Improvement Standards and Specifications: Ordinance No. 461 adopts Road Improvement Standards and Specifications.
- Ordinance No. 499 – Encroachments in County Highways: Ordinance No. 499, subject to the control of the Board of Supervisors, delegates to the Riverside County Transportation Director the administration of the use of county highways, including county roads, for excavations and encroachments; construction, operation, and maintenance of utility facilities; planting, maintenance, and removal of trees; and the issuance, modification, and revocation of permits for such uses.
- Ordinance No. 500 – Permissible vehicle weight on highways, roads and bridges: Ordinance No. 500 establishes weight prohibitions and reductions for vehicles travelling along County roadways.
- Ordinance No. 659 – Development Impact Fee Program (DIF Program): Ordinance No. 659 establishes a development impact fee (DIF) for the development of infrastructure, including County roadways and the installation of traffic signals.
- Ordinance No. 673 – Coachella Valley Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Program: Ordinance No. 673 establishes a TUMF program for the Coachella Valley. The fees are collected by Riverside County and administered by the CVAG to make roadway improvements in the CVAG area that are needed to accommodate growth to year 2040. Facilities eligible for TUMF are designated by CVAG and updated periodically. The TUMF is solely used toward funding the engineering, construction, and purchasing of right-of-way for Regional System projects and any other purpose consistent with this ordinance. The fee may not be used for system maintenance.



- Ordinance No. 748 – Mitigation of Traffic Congestion Through Signalization: Ordinance No. 748 establishes a fee program for the installation of traffic signals based on a priority list. The fee would also have a component for the installation of traffic signal interconnect, and a component for the application of intelligent transportation systems technologies.

4.18.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

A. *Thresholds of Significance*

Section XVII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects related to transportation, and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate a project's impacts to transportation (OPR, 2018a):

- Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?
- Would the project conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?
- Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?
- Would the project result in inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses?

The following thresholds are derived from Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, which incorporate the current Appendix G thresholds pursuant to the 2018 changes to the State CEQA Guidelines, in order to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on transportation. The proposed Project would result in a significant impact to transportation if the Project or any Project-related component would:

- Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities;*
- Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b);*
- Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment);*
- Cause an effect upon, or a need for new or altered maintenance of roads;*
- Cause an effect upon circulation during the project's construction;*
- Result in inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses;*
- Include the construction or expansion of a bike system or bike lanes; or*



The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County’s Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified/updated per the 2018 updates to the State CEQA Guidelines, were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project’s impacts on transportation.

B. Thresholds of Significance for Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT)

1. Screening Thresholds

The County’s Guidelines describe that a project may be determined to have a less-than-significant impact and may be screened out of requiring a project level VMT analysis if it meets at least one of the County’s VMT screening criteria. Projects that do not meet any of the screening criteria require a project-level VMT analysis. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, pp. 1-2)

2. VMT Modeling

The County Guidelines identify RIVTAM as the appropriate tool for conducting VMT analysis for land development projects in the County of Riverside. RIVTAM is an appropriate tool to estimate VMT as it considers interaction between different land uses based on socio-economic data such as population, households, and employment. RIVTAM is a travel forecasting model that represents a sub-area (Riverside County) of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) regional traffic model. RIVTAM was designed to provide a greater level of detail and sensitivity in the Riverside County area as compared to the regional SCAG model. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, p. 2)

3. VMT Metric and Significance Threshold

As stated in the County Guidelines, for industrial land use projects that do not meet any of the screening criteria, the analysis should utilize the efficiency metric of VMT per employee. The measure for VMT threshold listed in the County Guidelines is existing Countywide average VMT per employee with the following significance threshold: (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, p. 3)

“A project would result in a significant project generated VMT impact if its VMT exceeds the existing county-wide average Work VMT per employee.” For the County of Riverside, the countywide average Work VMT per employee is 14.2 Work VMT per employee.”

4.18.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a: Would the Project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

The analysis herein provides an analysis of the Project’s potential to result in a conflict with plans, programs, ordinances, or policies that address the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. A project that generally conforms with and does not obstruct applicable plans, programs, ordinances, and policies is considered to be consistent. The transportation plans, policies, programs, ordinances, and standards that are relevant to the Project are identified in the analysis below.



A. Project Consistency with Connect SoCal

SCAG’s 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) is referred to as “Connect SoCal.” Connect SoCal seeks to improve mobility, promote sustainability, facilitate economic development, and preserve the quality of life for the residents in the region. The long-range visioning plan balances future mobility and housing needs with goals for the environment, the regional economy, social equity and environmental justice, and public health. The goals included in Connect SoCal are pertinent to the proposed Project. These goals are meant to provide guidance for considering the proposed Project within the context of regional goals and policies. An analysis of the Project’s consistency with the relevant goals of Connect SoCal previously was presented in EIR Table 4.11-1 in EIR Subsection 4.11, *Land Use and Planning*. As shown in EIR Table 4.11-1, the Project would not conflict with any Connect SoCal goals, and no impact would occur.

B. Project Consistency with Riverside County Congestion Management Program

The intent of a Congestion Management Program (CMP) is to more directly link land use, transportation, and air quality, thereby prompting reasonable growth management programs that will effectively utilize new transportation funds, alleviate traffic congestion and related deficiencies, and improve air quality. The County of Riverside CMP became effective with the passage of Proposition 111 in 1990 and most recently updated in 2019 as part of the Riverside County Long Range Transportation Study. The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) adopted the 2019 CMP for the County of Riverside in December 2019. None of the Project’s study area intersections are identified as Riverside County CMP intersections. As such, the Project has no potential to conflict with the Riverside County CMP.

C. Project Consistency with Riverside County General Plan and General Plan Circulation Element

EIR *Technical Appendix M* includes an analysis of the Project’s consistency with the policies of the Riverside County General Plan, and demonstrates that the proposed Project is consistent with General Plan policies, including policies contained within the General Plan Circulation Element. Additionally, all roadway improvements proposed as part of the Project (i.e., improvements along Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue) are consistent with the roadway cross-sections identified by the General Plan for these roadways. As such, the Project has no potential to conflict with the circulation-related policies of the Riverside County General Plan, including policies related to transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

D. Project Consistency with Riverside County Transportation-Related Ordinances

The following provides a brief discussion of the applicability and Project consistency with Riverside County ordinances addressing the circulation system, which were previously described in subsection 4.18.2.C.

- Ordinance No. 413 – Vehicle Parking: Ordinance No. 413 establishes regulations to vehicle parking on Riverside County roadways.



- Ordinance No. 452 – Speed Limits: Ordinance No. 452 pertains to prima facie speed limits on Riverside County roadways and establishes or amends prima facie speed limits on certain Riverside County roads.
- Ordinance No. 460 – Subdivision of Land: Ordinance No. 460, in conjunction with the Subdivision Map Act, establishes regulations for the division of land and describes procedures. The ordinance also includes the provisions for the establishment of Road and Bridge Benefit Districts and associated fees.
- Ordinance No. 461 – Road Improvement Standards and Specifications: Ordinance No. 461 adopts Road Improvement Standards and Specifications.
- Ordinance No. 499 – Encroachments in County Highways: Ordinance No. 499, subject to the control of the Board of Supervisors, delegates to the Riverside County Transportation Director the administration of the use of county highways, including county roads, for excavations and encroachments; construction, operation, and maintenance of utility facilities; planting, maintenance, and removal of trees; and the issuance, modification, and revocation of permits for such uses.
- Ordinance No. 500 – Permissible vehicle weight on highways, roads and bridges: Ordinance No. 500 establishes weight prohibitions and reductions for vehicles travelling along County roadways.
- Ordinance No. 659 – Development Impact Fee Program (DIF Program): Ordinance No. 659 establishes a development impact fee (DIF) for the development of infrastructure, including County roadways and the installation of traffic signals.
- Ordinance No. 673 – Coachella Valley Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Program: Ordinance No. 673 establishes a TUMF program for the Coachella Valley. The fees are collected by Riverside County and administered by the CVAG to make roadway improvements in the CVAG area that are needed to accommodate growth to year 2040. Facilities eligible for TUMF are designated by CVAG and updated periodically. The TUMF is solely used toward funding the engineering, construction, and purchasing of right-of-way for Regional System projects and any other purpose consistent with this ordinance. The fee may not be used for system maintenance.
- Ordinance No. 748 – Mitigation of Traffic Congestion Through Signalization: Ordinance No. 748 establishes a fee program for the installation of traffic signals based on a priority list. The fee would also have a component for the installation of traffic signal interconnect, and a component for the application of intelligent transportation systems technologies.

E. Conclusion

Based on the preceding analysis, the proposed Project would not conflict with any of the policies or requirements of Connect SoCal, the Riverside County CMP, the policies contained within the General Plan and General Plan Circulation Element, or with any Riverside County ordinances adopted to address the issue



of transportation. There are no other plans, policies, or programs applicable to the proposed Project. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold b: Would the Project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

SB 743, approved by the State in 2013, was intended to change the way transportation impacts are determined according to CEQA. Updates to the State CEQA Guidelines that were approved in December 2018 included the addition of CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, of which Subdivision b establishes criteria for evaluating a project's transportation impacts based on project type and using automobile VMT as the metric. As a component of OPR's revisions to the State CEQA Guidelines, lead agencies were required to adopt VMT thresholds of significance by July 1, 2020. To aid in this transition, the Governor's OPR released a Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, dated December 2018 ("Technical Advisory"). Based on OPR's Technical Advisory, the County of Riverside adopted their Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service Vehicle Miles Traveled in December of 2020 (herein, "County Guidelines"). The adopted County Guidelines have been utilized to evaluate the Project's potential impacts due to VMT.

The Project does not meet any of the screening criteria for VMT. As such, a Project-level VMT analysis was conducted for the Project. As stated in the County Guidelines, industrial land use projects should utilize the efficiency metric VMT per employee. The measure for VMT threshold listed in the County Guidelines is existing county-wide average VMT per employee with the following significance threshold: "A project would result in a significant project generated VMT impact if its VMT exceeds the existing county-wide average Work VMT per employee." For the County of Riverside, the countywide average Work VMT per employee is 14.2 Work VMT per employee. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, p. 3)

A. Project Work VMT per Employee

In order to evaluate Project Work VMT per employee, land use information such as building square footage must first be converted into a RIVTAM compatible dataset. The RIVTAM model utilizes socio-economic data (SED) (e.g., employment estimates) instead of land use information to estimate vehicle trips. Project employees are estimated by taking total building square footage divided by an appropriate employment factor based on standard employment factors outlined by the County of Riverside's General Plan. As previously indicated in EIR subsection 3.5.4.B, Appendix E to the General Plan indicates that industrial land uses generate approximately one employee per 1,030 s.f. of building area (Riverside County, 2021a, Appendix A, Table E-5). Accordingly, the 1,238,992 s.f. of light industrial building area proposed as part of the Project would generate approximately 1,203 new, recurring jobs ($1,238,992 \text{ s.f.} \div 1,030 \text{ s.f./employee} = 1,202.9 \text{ employees}$). Project SED information was then coded into RIVTAM in a traffic analysis zone (TAZ) that would represent the Project. The RIVTAM model was then run inclusive of the Project's SED inputs. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, p. 3)



As described previously, the County has adopted the efficiency metric VMT per employee to evaluate potential VMT impacts for industrial land use projects. VMT per employee is derived by dividing project-generated home-based work (HBW) VMT by the number of estimated project employees. HBW VMT is obtained from the RIVTAM model using the Production/Attraction (PA) method for calculating VMT, which sums all weekday VMT generated by trips with at least one trip end in the study area (i.e., Project’s TAZ). Productions are land use types that generate trips (residences), and attractions are land use types that attract trips (employment). Productions and attractions are converted from person trips to vehicle trips for the purposes of calculating VMT and are then multiplied by the distance skims to calculate VMT. (Urban Crossroads, 2023a, p. 3)

Table 4.18-3, *Project Work VMT Per Employee*, presents Project generated PA HBW VMT from the RIVTAM model, along with the estimated number of Project employees, and the resulting Work VMT per employee. As shown, Project-generated Work VMT per employee would exceed the County’s adopted threshold by 87.3%. Accordingly, Project would result in a significant impact due to the Project’s HBW VMT.

Table 4.18-2 Project Work VMT Per Employee

	Project
HBW VMT	31,972
Employees	1,203
Project Work VMT per Employee	26.6
County Threshold	14.2
Percent Above Threshold	+87.3%
Potentially Significant?	Yes

(Urban Crossroads, 2023a, Table 2)

B. Project Total VMT

A supplemental VMT analysis also was prepared that includes all vehicle trips (i.e., passenger cars and trucks) and all trip purposes (i.e., not just home-based work trips). As mentioned previously, average trip length information was obtained from RIVTAM for passenger cars. Trip length information was obtained from StreetLight Data’s Truck Volume Metrics for medium heavy-duty trucks (MDT) and heavy heavy-duty trucks (HDT) from the closest large warehouse facility to the Project site, located at 14163 Elm St, Cabazon, CA 92230. Data collected for the survey includes MDT and HDT that originated, ended or passed through the surveyed area over the most recent 12-month period available from StreetLight Data. (Urban Crossroads, 2023b, p. 2)

Based on traffic monitoring data collected for the most recent 12-month period of complete data available from StreetLight Data, and as summarized in Table 4.18-4, *Average Trip Length by Vehicle Type*, the average trip length of MD and HD trucks has been calculated 92.8 miles. (Urban Crossroads, 2023b, p. 3)



Table 4.18-3 Average Trip Length by Vehicle Type

	MDT Avg Trip Length	MDT % of Total	HDT Avg Trip Length	HDT % of Total	Weighted Average Trip Length
Arrowhead	39.1	22.1%	108.1	77.9%	92.8

(Urban Crossroads, 2023b, Table 1)

Table 4.18-5, *Project Total VMT*, presents an estimation of total VMT for the Project, which utilizes vehicle trip generation rates consistent with the Project’s LOS and greenhouse gas analyses, multiplied by the average trip length for each vehicle type. Table 4.18-6, *Project Total VMT per SP*, presents the calculation of the efficiency metric Project generated total VMT per Service Population (SP), which is the product of total VMT generated by the Project divided by its SP (i.e., employees). The efficiency metric VMT per SP is commonly used throughout Southern California to evaluate the efficiency of travel for a given project based on total VMT. (Urban Crossroads, 2023b, p. 3)

Table 4.18-4 Project Total VMT

Vehicle Type	Vehicle Trips	Vehicle Trip Length	VMT
Automobile	2,076	15.6	32,386
Truck	564	92.8	52,339
Total	2,640	-	84,725

(Urban Crossroads, 2023b, Table 2)

Table 4.18-5 Project Total VMT per SP

	Project
SP	1,203
Total VMT	84,725
Total VMT per SP	70.4

(Urban Crossroads, 2023b, Table 3)

Although not specified by County Guidelines, it is reasonable to assume that a project with a VMT per SP that exceeds the existing County-wide average VMT per SP would result in a potentially significant impact, As calculated from RIVTAM, the existing county-wide average VMT per SP is 29.0. The Project is estimated to generate total VMT per service population of 70.4, which would exceed the County’s threshold by 142.8%. Accordingly, the Project would result in a significant impact due to the Project’s VMT per Service Population. (Urban Crossroads, 2023b, pp. 3-4)

Threshold c: Would the Project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment)?

All physical improvements planned as part of the Project would be in conformance with applicable Riverside County standards. The Project site is surrounded by undeveloped land, a segment of Rio Del Sol, and an



organic materials recycling facility, and the Project would not be incompatible with these uses. Although residential uses occur to the southeast of the Project site, all of the Project's truck traffic would be routed along Rio Del Sol and away from the existing residential neighborhoods. As such, the Project's proposed warehouse and electric substation uses are compatible uses in the local area and the Project would not increase transportation-related hazards in the local area. Impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Threshold d: Would the Project cause an effect upon, or a need for new or altered maintenance of roads?

Implementation of the proposed Project would add traffic along local roadways, and therefore would incrementally increase the need for maintenance of local roadway facilities. Although the Project would result in the increased maintenance of roadways and would increase traffic on existing and planned roadways, any incremental increase in the need to maintain public roadway facilities would be offset by tax revenue generated by the Project's proposed land uses. There are no components of the proposed Project that would result in or require a substantial increase in expenditures by Riverside County for public road maintenance such that environmental impacts would result. As such, Project impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold e: Would the Project cause an effect upon circulation during the Project's construction?

The Project has the potential to adversely affect traffic along Rio Del Sol during construction of planned improvements to this roadway. Although lands to the south of the Project site and along Rio Del Sol include existing warehouse and office uses, no improvements are proposed to this portion of Rio Del Sol south of 30th Avenue as improvements would be limited to the Project site's frontage; thus, no impacts would occur to the existing warehouse and office uses to the south of the Project site as a result of Project construction. However, the construction of frontage improvements along Rio Del Sol could affect access to the existing recycling facility to the north of the Project site. In addition, the Project also could result in minor disruptions to traffic during the construction of the off-site IID power poles. The Project's potential effects on circulation during construction conservatively are evaluated as a significant impact for which mitigation would be required in the form of a traffic control plan for implementing developments.

Threshold f: Would the Project result in inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses?

Under long-term operating conditions, the Project would have no effect on emergency access in the local area, and impacts would be less than significant. However, during proposed improvements to Rio Del Sol, there is a potential that the Project could intermittently affect traffic flow to nearby uses including by emergency vehicles, particularly to uses located north of the Project site. Additionally, the Project has the potential to adversely affect emergency access during the construction of the off-site IID power poles. This is conservatively evaluated as a significant impact for which mitigation would be required in the form of a traffic control plan for implementing developments.



Threshold g: Would the Project include the construction or expansion of a bike system or bike lanes?

As part of the Project, Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue along the Project site's frontage would be improved to their ultimate half-width standard as "Secondary Highways (100-foot (ROW)," which would accommodate bike lanes. No other bike lanes or bike facilities are proposed as part of the Project. Impacts associated with improvements to these roadways are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject heading (e.g., biological resources, etc.). There would be no impacts to the environment specifically related to the construction of this community trail that have not already been evaluated and mitigated for throughout this EIR. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

4.18.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

Cumulative impacts associated with transportation were largely evaluated in the preceding subsection 4.18.4. A summary of the impacts identified therein is provided below. Direct impacts are identified in subsection 4.18.4 and are not discussed below. Additionally, impacts that were shown to be less than significant in subsection 4.18.4 are not discussed below. For purposes of analysis, the cumulative study area for the Project consists of the area encompassing the Project's intersection analysis locations, as shown in Table 4.18-1.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold a., the Project would not conflict with any provisions of the Riverside County General Plan or Riverside County ordinances as they pertain to the circulation system, including policies and requirements related to transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. As other cumulative developments similarly would be required to demonstrate consistency with the Riverside County General Plan (or the general plans of cities within the County) and also would be required to comply with all applicable ordinances related to the circulation system, the Project's impacts would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold b., the Project does not meet Riverside County's screening criteria for VMT. As previously shown in Table 4.18-3, the Project-generated work VMT per employee would exceed Riverside County's adopted threshold by 87.3%. Additionally, the Project's VMT per SP would exceed the existing County-wide average VMT per SP by 142.8%. Thus, the Project would result in a significant impact due to VMT. It is likely that other cumulative developments within the cumulative study area also would generate VMT that would exceed Riverside County's adopted thresholds of significance. As such, the Project's impacts due to VMT would be cumulatively considerable.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold c., all physical improvements planned as part of the Project would be in conformance with applicable Riverside County standards. Other cumulative developments would similarly be required to demonstrate to Riverside County that no unsafe geometric design features would result. In addition, land uses immediately surrounding the Project site include undeveloped lands and an existing recycling facility, and the Project's proposed warehouse and electric substation uses would not be incompatible with these existing uses. Although residential uses occur to southeast of the Project site, all of the Project's truck traffic would be routed along Rio Del Sol and away from the existing residential neighborhoods. As such, the Project's proposed warehouse uses are a compatible use and the use type in and of itself would not increase



transportation-related hazards in the local area. Therefore, cumulatively-considerable impacts would be less than significant.

Tax revenue generated by the Project and cumulative developments would offset any increased need for roadway maintenance as a result of new development within Riverside County. There are no components of the proposed Project or other cumulative developments within the Project vicinity that would result in or require a substantial increase in expenditures by Riverside County for public road maintenance such that environmental impacts would result. As such, impacts would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

The Project has the potential to adversely impact circulation in the local area during the construction of proposed improvements along Rio Del Sol and during the installation of the off-site IID power poles, which could intermittently affect ease of access to the north of the Project site and along the ultimate route of the IID power poles. There is a potential that other developments in the local area could be under construction at the same time as the proposed Project, and thus could contribute to near-term adverse circulation effects. Thus, the Project's potential effects upon circulation during the Project's construction would be cumulatively considerable requiring mitigation in the form of a traffic control plan for Project-related construction activities.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold f., under long-term operating conditions, the Project would have no significant adverse effect on emergency access in the local area, and cumulatively-considerable impacts would be less than significant. However, during proposed improvements to Rio Del Sol, there is a potential that the Project could intermittently affect emergency access or access to nearby uses, including uses to the north on Rio Del Sol. Additionally, the Project has the potential to adversely affect emergency access during the construction of the off-site IID power poles. There is a potential that other developments in the local area could be under construction at the same time as the proposed Project, and thus could contribute to near-term intermittent ease of emergency access in the local area. Thus, the Project's near-term impacts to emergency access during construction activities represents a cumulatively-considerable impact for which mitigation would be required.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold g., as part of the Project, Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue along the Project frontage would be improved to their ultimate half-width standard as "Secondary Highways (100-foot (ROW)," which would accommodate bike lanes. Impacts associated with improvements to these roadways are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with the Project's construction phase have been evaluated throughout this EIR. Where impacts were identified, mitigation measures have been identified to reduce impacts to the maximum feasible extent. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with the construction of improvements to Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue (and associated bike lanes) would be less than significant.

4.18.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The only applicable programs, plans, ordinances, or policies addressing the circulation system in the Project area are the Riverside County General Plan and Riverside County ordinances. EIR *Technical Appendix M* includes an analysis of the Project consistency with the policies of the Riverside County General Plan, and demonstrates that the proposed Project would not conflict with



applicable General Plan policies, including policies contained within the General Plan Circulation Element. Additionally, the Project would not conflict with Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 413, 452, 460, 461, 499, 659, 671, 748, or 824, which are the applicable ordinances within the County related to the circulation system. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold b.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. Project-generated Work VMT per employee would be approximately 26.6 miles, which would exceed the County's adopted threshold of 14.2 miles by 87.3%. Additionally, the Project's Total VMT per Service Population would be approximately 70.4 miles, which would exceed the existing County-wide average by 142.8%. Accordingly, the Project would result in a significant impact due to the Project's VMT on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.

Threshold c.: Less-than-Significant Impact. All physical improvements planned as part of the Project would conform with applicable Riverside County standards. The Project's proposed warehouse and electric substation uses are a compatible use in the local area and the Project would not increase transportation-related hazards in the local area. Impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Threshold d.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Although the Project would increase traffic volumes in the area, which would result in an increased need for roadway maintenance, any incremental increase in the need to maintain public roadway facilities would be offset by tax revenue generated by the Project. There are no components of the proposed Project that would result in or require a substantial increase in expenditures by Riverside County for public road maintenance such that environmental impacts would result. As such, Project impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold e.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Project has the potential to intermittently disrupt traffic flow to the existing uses to the north of the Project site along Rio Del Sol during construction of planned improvements to this roadway and during the construction of the off-site IID power poles. The impact could be significant and mitigation for construction-related effects would be required in the form of a traffic control plan for implementing development.

Threshold f.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. Under long-term operating conditions, the Project would have no effect on emergency access in the local area, and impacts would be less than significant. However, during proposed improvements to Rio Del Sol, there is a potential that the Project could intermittently disrupt traffic flow along Rio Del Sol during construction of planned improvements to this roadway, including for emergency vehicles. Additionally, the Project has the potential to adversely affect emergency access during the construction of the off-site IID power poles. The near-term potential emergency access impact could be significant and mitigation would be required in the form of a traffic control plan for implementing development.

Threshold g.: Less-than-Significant Impact. As part of the Project, Rio Del Sol and 30th Avenue along the Project frontage would be improved to their ultimate half-width standard as "Secondary Highways (100-foot



(ROW),” which would accommodate bike lanes. No other bike lanes or bike facilities are proposed as part of the Project. Impacts associated with physical improvements to these roadways are inherent to the Project’s construction phase, and have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject heading (e.g., biological resources, etc.). There would be no impacts to the environment specifically related to the construction of this community trail that have not already been evaluated and mitigated for throughout this EIR. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

4.18.7 COUNTY REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable County Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude transportation impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA’s definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- Prior to issuance of building permits, the Project Applicant shall pay appropriate Development Impact Fee Program (DIF) fees at the rates then in effect in accordance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 659.
- Prior to final building inspection, the Project Applicant shall pay appropriate Coachella Valley Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee Program Ordinance (TUMF) fees at the rates then in effect in accordance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 673.
- The Project shall be subject to compliance with all applicable County ordinances, including Ordinance Nos. 413, 452, 460, 461, 499, 500, and 748.

Mitigation

MM 4.18-1 Prior to the issuance of grading permits or improvement plans affecting Rio Del Sol and/or prior to grading or improvement plans allowing for the construction of the off-site Imperial Irrigation District (IID) power poles, the Project Applicant shall prepare and Riverside County shall approve a temporary traffic control plan to ensure maintained vehicle flow in both directions on Rio Del Sol and along the route of the off-site IID power poles. The temporary traffic control plan(s) shall comply with the applicable requirements of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CMUTD). A requirement to comply with the temporary traffic control plan shall be noted on all grading and building plans and also shall be specified in bid documents issued to prospective construction contractors.

The following measures relate to VMT reduction. The reduction of VMT involves travel behavior change related to individuals’ attitudes, goals, and travel choices. The following mitigation measures are included to encourage these changes but it is acknowledged that Riverside County has no involvement in private lease negotiations among and between private property owners, building owners, and building tenants and has no enforcement authority over leases.



- MM 4.18-2 Local Hire Program: Future building lease or sales agreements shall include a requirement to implement a local hire program, with the goal of attracting employees that live within a 12-mile radius of the Project site.
- MM 4.18-3 Voluntary Commute Trip Reduction Program: Future building lease or sales agreements shall include a requirement to implement a voluntary program to discourage single-occupancy vehicle trips for employees and encourage alternative modes of transportation such as carpooling, taking transit, walking, and biking. Examples of potential Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program features include the following:
- a. Designated Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC): An Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) shall be identified as part of future site operations. The role of ETC is to provide education and point of contact for commute-related questions and commuter benefits.
 - b. Provide designated carpool/vanpool parking in desirable locations on-site, which could encourage employees to carpool/vanpool to work and reduce VMT.
 - c. Marketing of Commuter Benefits for Employees: Provide an on-site message board (physical or digital) to educate employees of commuter options and benefits.
 - d. Bicycle Parking: Provide on-site secure bike parking facilities and bike storage lockers.
 - e. Carpool and Vanpool Ride-Matching Services: Provide information about available carpool/vanpool ride-matching services.
 - f. Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program. Provide a GRH program via local transportation network companies for employees arriving to work by carpool, vanpool, or transit and that may need to leave work early or are unable to use normal commute accommodations.

4.18.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Threshold b.: Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The effectiveness of commute trip reduction measures to reduce VMT are human behavior based. In addition to specific tenancy considerations, locational context is also a major factor relevant to the potential effectiveness of VMT reduction measures. A project can only realize a quantifiable reduction in commute VMT under the most favorable circumstances and ideal local conditions, which are not present in the Project site's context. Although Mitigation Measures MM 4.18-2 and MM 4.18-3 are aimed at reducing the Project's VMT to the maximum practical extent, it is unlikely that the mitigation would reduce the Project's Work VMT or Total VMT per employee to below the County's threshold of significance. Accordingly, Project impacts due to VMT would represent a significant and unavoidable impact on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.



Threshold e.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Mitigation Measure MM 4.18-1 requires the Project Applicant to prepare and obtain Riverside County approval of a temporary traffic control plan prior to issuance of grading permits or improvement plans affecting Rio Del Sol or affecting the off-site route for the installation of IID power poles. Implementation of the required mitigation would ensure that Project-related construction activities would not substantially affect circulation during the Project's construction, including along Rio Del Sol and along the roadways where the IID power poles would be installed. With implementation of the required mitigation, impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Threshold f.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Mitigation Measure MM 4.18-1 requires the Project Applicant to prepare and obtain Riverside County approval of a temporary traffic control plan prior to issuance of grading permits. With implementation of the required mitigation, the Project would not result in inadequate emergency access to nearby uses during the Project's construction phase. Accordingly, with implementation of the required mitigation, impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.



4.19 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The analysis in this Subsection documents the results of the County’s consultation with local Native American Tribes. It should be noted that much of the written and oral communication between Native American tribes and Riverside County is considered confidential in respect to places that have traditional tribal cultural significance (Gov. Code § 65352.4), and although relied upon in part to inform the preparation of this EIR Subsection, those communications are treated as confidential and are not available for public review. Under existing law, environmental documents must not include information about the location of archeological sites or sacred lands or any other information that is exempt from public disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act (Cal. Code Regs. § 15120(d)).

4.19.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Refer to EIR subsection 4.5.1 for a complete description of the cultural setting existing site conditions, and the archaeological and historical resources assessment.

4.19.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the State environmental laws and related regulations addressing Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs). Refer also to EIR subsection 4.5.2 for a complete description of federal, State, and local environmental laws and regulations governing the protection of cultural resources.

A. Traditional Tribal Cultural Places Act (Senate Bill 18, “SB 18”)

Senate Bill 18 (SB 18) requires local (city and county) governments to consult with California Native American tribes to aid in the protection of traditional tribal cultural places (“cultural places”) through local land use planning. SB 18 also requires the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to include in the General Plan Guidelines advice to local governments for how to conduct these consultations. (OPR, 2005)

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. (OPR, 2005)

SB 18 requires local governments to consult with tribes prior to making certain planning decisions and to provide notice to tribes at certain key points in the planning process. These consultation and notice requirements apply to adoption and amendment of both general plans (defined in Government Code § 65300 et seq.) and specific plans (defined in Government Code § 65450 et seq.). Although SB 18 does not specifically mention consultation or notice requirements for adoption or amendment of specific plans, existing state planning law requires local governments to use the same processes for adoption and amendment of specific plans as for general plans (see Government Code § 65453). Therefore, where SB 18 requires consultation and/or notice for a general plan adoption or amendment, the requirement extends also to a specific plan adoption or amendment. (OPR, 2005)



B. Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52)

California Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) (2014) Chapter 532 amended Section 5097.94 of, and added Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21802.3, 21083.09, 21084.2 and 21084.3 to the California Public Resources Code, relating to Native Americans. AB 52 was approved on September 25, 2014. By including tribal cultural resources early in the CEQA process, the legislature intended to ensure that local and Tribal governments, public agencies, and project proponents would have information available, early in the project planning process, to identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources. By taking this proactive approach, the legislature also intended to reduce the potential for delay and conflicts in the environmental review process. (OPR, 2017b)

The Public Resources Code now establishes that “[a] project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21084.2.) To help determine whether a project may have such an effect, the Public Resources Code requires a lead agency to consult with any California Native American tribe that requests consultation and is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project. That consultation must take place prior to the determination of whether a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report is required for a project. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21080.3.1.) (OPR, 2017b)

If a lead agency determines that a project may cause a substantial adverse change to tribal cultural resources, the lead agency must consider measures to mitigate that impact. Public Resources Code § 21084.3 (b)(2) provides examples of mitigation measures that lead agencies may consider to avoid or minimize impacts to tribal cultural resources. These rules apply to projects that have a notice of preparation for an environmental impact report or negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration filed on or after July 1, 2015. (OPR, 2017b)

§ 21074 of the Public Resources Code defines “tribal cultural resources.” In brief, in order to be considered a “tribal cultural resource,” a resource must be either:

- (1) listed, or determined to be eligible for listing, on the national, state, or local register of historic resources, or
- (2) a resource that the lead agency chooses, in its discretion, to treat as a tribal cultural resource. (OPR, 2017b)

In the latter instance, the lead agency must determine that the resource meets the criteria for listing in the state register of historic resources. In applying those criteria, a lead agency must consider the value of the resource to the tribe. (OPR, 2017b)



4.19.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section XVIII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects on tribal cultural resources, and includes the following threshold question to evaluate the Project's impacts to tribal cultural resources (OPR, 2018a):

- *Would the project 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 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 a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?*
 - *A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?*

Significance thresholds are set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified based on the 2018 updates to Section XVIII of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, and indicate significant impacts would occur if the Project or any Project-related component would:

- a. *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 that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe, and that is*
 1. *Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1 (k); or*
 2. *A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.*



4.19.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: *Would the Project 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 that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:*

- 1. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical resources or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k); or*
- 2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1?*

Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) are those resources with inherent tribal values that are difficult to identify through the same means as archaeological resources. These resources can be identified and understood through direct consultation with the tribes who attach tribal value to the resource. Tribal cultural resources may include Native American archaeological sites, but they may also include other types of resources such as a cultural landscape. Also relevant is the category termed “traditional cultural property” (TCP) which is typically associated with cultural resource management performed under federal auspices. “Traditional” in this context refers to those beliefs, customs, and practices of a living community of people that have been passed down through the generations, usually orally or through practice. The traditional cultural significance of a historic property, then, is significance derived from the role the property plays in a community’s historically rooted beliefs, customs, and practices. A TCP can be defined, generally, as one that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that (a) are rooted in that community’s history, and (b) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community. A landscape can be a TCP and by extension a TCR, provided the cultural landscape meets the criteria and that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope. The appropriate treatment of tribal cultural resources is determined through consultation with tribes.

In compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), notices regarding this Project were mailed to all requesting tribes on May 7, 2022.

- No response was received from Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Mission Indians, Cabazon Band, Cahuilla Band of Indians, Colorado River Indian Tribes, Morongo, or Ramona Band of Indians.
- The Torres Martinez Band of Desert Indians responded to the County Archaeologist in an email dated May 12, 2022. Torres Martinez deferred to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians.
- The San Manuel Nation responded in an email dated June 14, 2022, stating that the Project site is outside of the Serrano ancestral territory and did not request consultation.



- The Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians responded in an email letter dated May 9, 2022. Augustine did not request consultation but requested that their office be contacted if any cultural resources were discovered during Project development.
- The Quechan Historic Preservation Office responded on May 14, 2022. The Office declined consultation and deferred to closer tribes.
- The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians requested consultation in an email letter dated June 6, 2022. Project documents were provided to the tribe and, on October 24, 2022, the band recommended tribal monitoring and concluded consultation.

No specific TCRs were identified. However, tribes expressed concerns that the Project has the potential to unearth previously undiscovered subsurface TCRs during construction activities. The tribes requested that a Native American Monitor be present during ground disturbing activities in order for any unanticipated finds to be handled in a timely and culturally appropriate manner. Thus, the potential for discovery of TCRs during Project construction represents a significant impact of the Project for which mitigation would be required.

Additionally, the Project would be required to adhere to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 in the event that human remains are encountered and by ensuring that no further disturbance occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin of the remains. Furthermore, and pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 (b), remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made.

4.19.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

This cumulative impact analysis considers development of the proposed Project in conjunction with other development projects and planned development within the Coachella Valley. This study area was selected for evaluation because it encompasses a broad region with similar geological, biological, and climatic conditions that would potentially yield associated TCRs.

As indicated under the analysis of Threshold a., the Project has the potential to result in impacts to TCRs that may be present beneath the ground surface of areas to be disturbed by Project-related construction activities. Other developments projects in the Coachella Valley have the potential to result in impacts to TCRs, including sites or resources that may be buried beneath the ground surface. As such, potential Project impacts to TCRs would be cumulatively considerable prior to mitigation.

4.19.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Significant Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The Project has the potential to result in significant impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources during ground-disturbing construction activities in the absence of protective measures. As such, potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources represent a potentially significant impact for which mitigation would be required.



4.19.7 COUNTY REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable County Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude TCR impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- Unless otherwise required by law, the site of any reburial of Native American human remains or associated grave goods shall not be disclosed and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act. The Coroner, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code Section 6254 (r), parties, and Lead Agencies, will be asked to withhold public disclosure information related to such reburial, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code Section 6254 (r).
- In the event that human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing construction activities on site or within the Project's off-site improvement areas, compliance with California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 and Public Resources Code § 5097 et. seq. shall be required. State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to Public Resource Code Section 5097.98(b) remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made. The County Coroner shall determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required, and determine if the remains are of Native American origin. In the event that the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be contacted within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the "Most Likely Descendant." The Most Likely Descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the NAHC is unable to identify a Most Likely Descendant, or if the Most Likely Descendant failed to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being notified by the NAHC, or the Project Applicant rejects the recommendation of the Most Likely Descendant, the Project Applicant shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods on the property in a location not subject to further ground disturbance. Evidence of compliance with this mitigation measure, if human remains are found, shall be provided to Riverside County upon the completion of a treatment plan and final report detailing the significance and treatment finding.

Mitigation

Mitigation Measures MM 4.5-1 through MM 4.5-8 shall apply (refer to EIR Subsection 4.5, *Cultural Resources*). The mitigation measures included in EIR Subsection 4.5 include all of the mitigation requirements requested during the Project's Tribal Consultation process.



4.19.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of EIR Mitigation Measures MM 4.5-1 through MM 4.5-8 would ensure monitoring of ground-disturbing activities by an Archaeological Monitor and Tribal Monitor, and further would ensure the appropriate treatment of any Tribal Cultural Resources that may be identified during Project-related ground-disturbing activities. Implementation of the required mitigation would reduce potential Project impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources to below a level of significance.



4.20 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This Subsection 4.20 evaluates the Project's potential to result in impacts on existing utilities and service systems and/or impacts to the environment that could result from the Project's proposed utilities and service system improvements. The analysis is based in part upon the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan (RUWMP), dated June 30, 2021, which is herein incorporated by reference and is available for public review at the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), located at 75525 Hovley Lane East in the City of Palm Desert.¹ The analysis in this Subsection also relies on a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) prepared for the Project approved by the CVWD Board of Directors, authored by Charles Marr Consulting, dated September 15, 2023, and included as *Technical Appendix L* to this EIR (Charles Marr Consulting, 2023). Refer to Section 7.0, *References*, for a complete list of reference sources.

4.20.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Project site is located within the service boundaries of the CVWD for water and sewer service, Imperial Irrigation District (IID) for electricity, and Southern California Gas Company (SCG) for natural gas. Telecommunication services are provided by AT&T, MCI, and Frontier Communications. Solid waste hauling service for the Project site is provided by Burrtec Waste & Recycling Services (Burrtec).

A. Water Service and Supply

Water service to the Project area is provided by the CVWD. The CVWD encompasses approximately 640,000 acres within Riverside County, Northern Imperial County, and northeastern San Diego County. In 2021, the CVWD had approximately 113,481 domestic water connections and served approximately 91,230 acre-feet (AF) of water. (Charles Marr Consulting, 2023, pp. 10-11)

CVWD's urban water uses primarily are supplied from local groundwater obtained from the Indio and Mission Creek Subbasins. In addition to groundwater, CVWD has rights to imported water supplies from the State Water Project (SWP) via exchange agreements with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). SWP Exchange water is used for groundwater recharge and is not used to meet municipal demands. The CVWD also receives Colorado River water used for agricultural, golf course, and landscape irrigation purposes, as well as groundwater recharge. Colorado River water is not used to meet municipal demands. (CVWD, 2021, p. 4-20)

As noted, groundwater is the principal source of potable water supply in the Coachella Valley and CVWD obtains groundwater from both the Indio and Mission Creek Subbasins of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. CVWD has the legal authority to manage the groundwater basin within its boundaries under the County Water District Law (California Water Code section 30000, et seq.) and as a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Table 4.20-1, *CVWD Groundwater Demand*, illustrates the CVWD's groundwater demand in the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin for 2018 through 2022. (Charles Marr Consulting, 2023, p. 16)

¹ Also available online at <http://www.cvwd.org/DocumentCenter/View/5482/Coachella-Valley-RUWMP>



Table 4.20-1 CVWD Groundwater Demand

Groundwater Production (AF)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Indio Subbasin	96,176	93,130	96,661	98,484	97,106
Mission Creek Subbasin	2,786	2,642	3,182	3,062	2,960
Total	98,962	95,772	99,843	101,546	100,066

(Charles Marr Consulting, 2023, Table 3-2)

B. Sewer Service and Treatment

CVWD’s Sanitation Division provides sewer collection and treatment services within the Project area. CVWD owns and operates a large collection system and five water reclamation plants (WRPs): 1, 2, 4, 7, and 10. Two of the WRPs (WRP-7 and WRP-10) generate recycled water for irrigation of golf courses and large landscaped areas. CVWD’s wastewater collection system consists of approximately 1,160 miles of 6-inch through 36-inch diameter sewers, in addition to sewage lift stations and associated force mains. The system contains trunk sewers, generally 10 inches in diameter and larger, that convey the collected wastewater flows to the District’s treatment facilities. (CVWD, 2021, p. 4-21)

Sewer flows collected in the Project area are conveyed to either WRP 7 or WRP 10 for treatment, each of which is discussed below.

- Water Reclamation Plant No. 7 (WRP 7). WRP 7 is located in the northern portion of the City of Indio and has a secondary treatment permit capacity of 5.0 million gallons per day (mgd) and a tertiary treatment capacity of 2.5 mgd. The tertiary treatment system includes dual media filtration and chlorine disinfection to meet Title 22 requirements for recycled water. The recycled water is used for off-site irrigation delivery and is either stored in a covered storage reservoir or pumped offsite to an open reservoir near the Del Webb Sun City Golf Course in Palm Desert. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.19-225)
- Water Reclamation Plant No. 10 (WRP 10). WRP 10 is located in Palm Desert and consists of an activated sludge treatment plant, a tertiary wastewater treatment plant, a lined holding basin, six storage basins and 21 infiltration basins. The plant’s combined secondary wastewater treatment design capacity is 18 mgd. Approximately 60% of this plant’s effluent receives tertiary treatment for reuse and is delivered to customers through an existing recycled water distribution system. Most of the secondary effluent receives tertiary treatment and is used for irrigation of local golf courses. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.19-226)

C. Stormwater Drainage

Under existing conditions, the Project site is unimproved with exception of improved portions of Rio Del Sol that traverse the western boundary of the site. No constructed drainage features otherwise exist on the site. The natural drainage pattern flows north to south between 2.5% and 3.5%. The Project site receives run-on sheet flow drainage on the eastern half of the site; however, the western half does not due to the adjacent



organic materials recycling facility located north of the Project site. The majority of runoff generated on the Project site infiltrates into the groundwater table. (PBLA, 2022a, p. 1)

D. Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Solid waste collection and disposal is provided by the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources (RCDWR) through a franchise agreement with Burrtec, a private company. RCDWR operates five active landfills in addition to holding a contract agreement to dispose of waste at the private El Sobrante Landfill (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.17-36). Solid waste generated in the Project area is conveyed to either the Edom Hill Transfer Station, located approximately 4.0 miles northwest of the Project site, or the Coachella Valley Transfer Station, located approximately 16.0 miles southeast of the Project site. Solid waste collected at these transfer stations is conveyed to the Lamb Canyon Landfill for disposal, located 34.2 miles west of the Project site. The Lamb Canyon Landfill is permitted to receive 5,000 tons per day (tpd) of solid waste, while data from August 2023 shows that the Lamb Canyon Landfill received a daily average of approximately 1,784 tpd (RCDWR, 2023).

E. Other Services

The Project site is located in the service territories of the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) for electricity and Southern California Gas Company (SCG) for natural gas. Telecommunication services are provided by AT&T, MCI, and Frontier Communications. As the Project site is currently vacant, it is not a consumer of these utilities in the existing condition.

4.20.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to utilities and service systems.

A. Federal Regulations

1. Applicable Water Supply Regulations

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulating quality standards for surface waters. The basis of the CWA was enacted in 1948 and was called the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, but the Act was substantially reorganized and expanded in 1972. "Clean Water Act" became the Act's common name with amendments in 1972. Under the CWA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has implemented pollution control programs such as setting wastewater standards for industry, and also has set water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters. The CWA made it unlawful to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters, unless a permit was obtained. EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program controls discharges. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or man-made ditches. 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. (EPA, 2023e)

Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) was established to protect the quality of drinking water in the U.S. This law focuses on all waters actually or potentially designed for drinking use, whether from above ground or underground sources. The Act authorizes EPA to establish minimum standards to protect tap water and requires all owners or operators of public water systems to comply with these primary (health-related) standards. The 1996 amendments to SDWA require that EPA consider a detailed risk and cost assessment, and best available peer-reviewed science, when developing these standards. State governments, which can be approved to implement these rules for EPA, also encourage attainment of secondary standards (nuisance-related). Under the Act, EPA also establishes minimum standards for state programs to protect underground sources of drinking water from endangerment by underground injection of fluids. (EPA, 2023j)

2. *Applicable Energy Conservation Regulations*

United States Department of Energy/Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) is the federal agency responsible for establishing policies regarding energy conservation, domestic energy production and infrastructure. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is an independent federal agency, officially organized as part of the DOE which is responsible for regulating interstate transmission of natural gas, oil and electricity, reliability of the electric grid and approving of construction of interstate natural gas pipelines and storage facilities. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 has also granted FERC with additional responsibilities of overseeing the reliability of the nation's electricity transmission grid and supplementing state transmission siting efforts in national interest electric transmission corridors.

FERC has authority to oversee mandatory reliability standards governing the nation's electricity grid. FERC has established rules on certification of an Electric Reliability Organization (ERO) which establishes, approves and enforces mandatory electricity reliability standards. The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) has been certified as the nation's ERO by FERC to enforce reliability standards in all interconnected jurisdictions in North America. Although FERC regulates the bulk energy transmission and reliability throughout the United States, the areas outside of FERC's jurisdictional responsibility include state level regulations and retail electricity and natural gas sales to consumers which falls under the jurisdiction of state regulatory agencies.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires all new cellular tower construction to be approved by the state or local authority for the proposed site and comply with FCC rules involving environmental review. Additionally, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires construction of new cellular towers to comply with the local zoning authority. (FERC, n.d.)



B. State Regulations

1. Applicable Water Supply Regulations

Water Conservation in Landscaping Act

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act was established to ensure adequate water supplies are available for future uses. To promote the conservation and efficient use of water, the Act requires local agencies to adopt a water efficient landscape ordinance. When such an ordinance had not been adopted, a finding as to why (based on the climatic, geologic, or topographical conditions) such an ordinance is not necessary, must be adopted. In the absence of such an ordinance or findings, the policies and requirements contained in the “model” ordinance drafted by the State of California shall apply within the affected jurisdiction. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Water Recycling in Landscaping Act

In 2000, Senate Bill 2095 (Water Recycling in Landscaping Act) was approved by Governor Davis requiring any local public or private entity that produces recycled water and determines that within 10 years it will provide recycled water within the boundaries of a local agency, to notify the local agency of that fact. In turn, local agencies are required to adopt and enforce within 180 days a specified recycled water ordinance, unless the local agency adopted a recycled water ordinance or other regulation requiring the use of recycled water in its jurisdiction prior to January 1, 2001. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Urban Water Management Planning Act

The Urban Water Management Planning Act (UWMP Act) was proposed and adopted to ensure that water planning is conducted at the local level, as the State of California recognized that two water agencies in the same region could have very different impacts from a drought. The UWMP Act requires water agencies to develop Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) over a 20-year planning horizon, and further required UWMPs to be updated every five years. UWMPs are exempt from compliance with CEQA. (DWR, 2016, p. 1-2)

The UWMPs provide a framework for long term water planning and inform the public of a supplier’s plans for long-term resource planning that ensures adequate water supplies for existing and future demands. This part of the California Water Code (CWC) requires urban water suppliers to report, describe, and evaluate:

- Water deliveries and uses;
- Water supply sources;
- Efficient water uses;
- Demand management measures; and
- Water shortage contingency planning. (DWR, 2016, p. 1-3)

The UWMP Act has been modified over the years in response to the State’s water shortages, droughts, and other factors. A significant amendment was made in 2009, after the drought of 2007-2009 and as a result of the governor’s call for a statewide 20 percent reduction in urban water use by the year 2020. This was the



Water Conservation Act of 2009, also known as SB X7-7. This Act required agencies to establish water use targets for 2015 and 2020 that would result in statewide savings of 20 percent by 2020. Beginning in 2016, retail water suppliers are required to comply with the water conservation requirements in SB X7-7 in order to be eligible for State water grants or loans. Retail water agencies are required to set targets and track progress toward decreasing daily per capita urban water use in their service area, which will assist the State in meeting its 20 percent reduction goal by 2020. (DWR, 2016, p. 1-2)

CA. Water Code § 10610 et seq. (Senate Bill 901)

Signed into law on October 16, 1995, Senate Bill (SB) 901 required every urban water supplier to identify as part of its urban water management plan the existing and planned sources of water available to the supplier over a prescribed 5-year period. The code requires the water service purveyor to assess the projected water demand associated with a proposed project under environmental review. Later provisions of SB 901 required compliance in the event that the proposed Project involved the adoption of a specific plan, amendment to, or revision of the land use element of a general plan or specific plan that would result in a net increase in the state population density. Upon completion of the water assessment, cities and counties may agree or disagree with the conclusions of the water service purveyors, but cannot approve projects in the face of documented water shortfalls without first making certain findings. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Executive Order B-29-15

Executive Order (EO) B-29-15 ordered the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to impose restrictions to achieve a 25-percent reduction in potable urban water usage through February 28, 2016; directed the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to lead a statewide initiative, in partnership with local agencies, to collectively replace 50 million square feet of lawns and ornamental turf with drought tolerant landscapes; and directed the California Energy Commission to implement a statewide appliance rebate program to provide monetary incentives for the replacement of inefficient household devices. (SWRCB, 2020)

Executive Order B-37-16

Signed on May 9, 2016, EO B-37-16 established a new water use efficiency framework for California. The order bolstered the state's drought resilience and preparedness by establishing longer-term water conservation measures that include permanent monthly water use reporting, new urban water use targets, reducing system leaks and eliminating clearly wasteful practices, strengthening urban drought contingency plans, and improving agricultural water management and drought plans. (SWRCB, 2020)

Executive Order B-40-17

Signed on April 7, 2017, EO B-40-17 ended the drought state of emergency in all California counties except Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Tuolumne, where emergency drinking water projects will continue to help address diminished groundwater supplies. It maintains water reporting requirements and prohibitions on wasteful practices. The order was built on actions taken in Executive Order B-37-16, which remains in effect. In a related action, state agencies, including the Department of Water Resources (DWR), released a plan to continue making water conservation a way of life. (SWRCB, 2020)



☐ **Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)**

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) established a new structure for managing California's groundwater resources at a local level by local agencies. SGMA required, by June 30, 2017, the formation of locally-controlled groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) in the State's high- and medium-priority groundwater basins and subbasins (basins). A GSA is responsible for developing and implementing a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) to meet the sustainability goal of the basin to ensure that it is operated within its sustainable yield, without causing undesirable results. The GSP Emergency Regulations for evaluating GSPs, the implementation of GSPs, and coordination agreements were adopted by DWR and approved by the California Water Commission on May 18, 2016. (DWR, n.d.)

☐ **Senate Bill 610 (SB 610)**

SB 610, codified in Water Code Sections 10910-10915, specifies the requirements for water supply assessments (WSAs) and their role in the CEQA process, and defines the role Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) play in the WSA process. SB 610 requires that, for projects subject to CEQA that meet specific size criteria, the water supplier prepare WSAs that determine whether the water supplier has sufficient water resources to serve the projected water demands associated with the projects. SB 610 provides specific guidance regarding how future supplies are to be calculated in the WSAs where an applicable UWMP has been prepared. Specifically, a WSA must identify existing water supply entitlements, water rights, or water service contracts held by the public water system, and prior years' actual water deliveries received by the public water system. In addition, the WSA must address water supplies over a 20-year period and consider normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year conditions. In accordance with SB 610, projects for which a WSA must be prepared are those subject to CEQA that meet any of the following criteria:

- Residential developments of more than 500 dwelling units;
- Shopping centers or business establishments employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space;
- Commercial office buildings employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space;
- Hotels, motels, or both, having more than 500 rooms;
- Industrial, manufacturing, or processing plants, or industrial parks planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area
- Mixed-use projects that include one or more of the projects specified in this subdivision; or
- Projects that would demand an amount of water equivalent to or greater than the amount of water required by a 500-dwelling-unit project. (Water Code Section 912, CEQA Guidelines Section 15155(a).

The WSA must be approved by the public water supplier serving the project at a regular or special meeting and must be incorporated into the CEQA document. The lead agency must then make certain findings related to water supply based on the WSA.



In addition, under SB 610, a water supplier responsible for the preparation and periodic updating of an UWMP must describe the water supply projects and programs that may be undertaken to meet the total project water use of the service area. If groundwater is identified as a source of water available to the supplier, the following additional information must be included in the UWMP: (1) a groundwater management plan; (2) a description of the groundwater basin(s) to be used and the water use adjudication rights, if any; (3) a description and analysis of groundwater use in the past 5 years; and (4) a discussion of the sufficiency of the groundwater that is projected to be pumped by the supplier. (OPR, 2017c, p. 69)

Senate Bill 606 (SB 606)

SB 606 would require an urban retail water supplier to calculate an urban water use objective no later than November 1, 2023, and by November 1 every year thereafter, and its actual urban water use by those same dates. The bill would require an urban retail water supplier to submit a report to the department for these purposes by those dates. SB 606 would authorize the board to issue information orders, written notices, and conservation orders to an urban retail water supplier that does not meet its urban water use objective, as specified. The bill would authorize the board to waive these requirements for a period of up to 5 years, as specified. SB 606 would impose civil liability for a violation of an order or regulation issued pursuant to these provisions, as specified. The bill would also authorize the board to issue a regulation or informational order requiring a wholesale water supplier, urban retail water supplier, or distributor of a public water supply to provide a monthly report relating to water production, water use, or water conservation. (SWRCB, , n.d.)

Assembly Bill 1668 (AB 1668)

AB 1668 requires the State Water Resources Control Board, in coordination with the Department of Water Resources, to adopt long-term standards for the efficient use of water, as provided, and performance measures for commercial, industrial, and institutional water use on or before June 30, 2022. The bill, until January 1, 2025, establishes 55 gallons per capita daily as the standard for indoor residential water use. Beginning January 1, 2025, the bill establishes the greater of 52.5 gallons per capita daily or a standard recommended by the State Water Resources Control Board and beginning January 1, 2030, the bill establishes the greater of 50 gallons per capita daily or a standard recommended by the State Water Resources Control Board. AB 1668 imposes civil liability for a violation of an order or regulation issued pursuant to these provisions, as specified. (SWRCB, n.d.)

California Plumbing Code

Title 24, Part 5 of the California Code of Regulations establishes the California Plumbing Code. The California Plumbing Code sets forth efficiency standards (i.e., maximum flow rates) for all new federally-regulated plumbing fittings and fixtures, including showerheads and lavatory faucets. The 2022 California Plumbing Code, which is based on the 2019 Uniform Plumbing Code, was published by the California Building Standards Commission and went into effect on January 1, 2023. (BCS, n.d.)



California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 20 and 24

Title 20 includes state and federal minimum efficiency requirements for energy and water use in regulated appliances. These appliances include, but are not limited to, water heaters, furnaces, heat pumps, air conditioners, refrigerators, pumps, lamps and ballasts, computers, spray sprinkler bodies and showerheads. Manufacturers are responsible for certifying regulated appliances to the California Energy Commission's Modernized Appliance Efficiency Database System. This serves as the manufacturer's claim that it has met all applicable requirements, including testing, and marking products. (Westlaw, n.d.)

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations is a broad set of requirements for energy conservation, green design, construction and maintenance, fire and life safety, and accessibility that apply to the structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in a building. Title 24 was published by the California Building Standards Commission and applies to all buildings in California. Title 24 receives updates every three years with the latest revisions being in 2019. Title 24 energy compliance requirements apply to new construction and any new installations or retrofits in existing buildings. Older buildings do not have to upgrade their systems, but if they choose to renovate, their new systems must meet Title 24 standards. (BCS, n.d.)

California Water Plan

The California Water Plan is the State's strategic plan for sustainably managing and developing water resources for current and future generations. Required by Water Code Section 10005(a), it presents the status and trends of California's water-dependent natural resources; water supplies; and agricultural, urban, and environmental water demands for a range of plausible future scenarios. The plan is updated every five years; provides a way for various groups to collaborate on findings and recommendations and make informed decisions regarding California's water future; can't mandate actions or authorize spending for specific actions; doesn't make project- or site-specific recommendations nor include environmental review or documentation as would be required by CEQA; and requires policy- and law-makers to take definitive steps to authorize the specific actions proposed in the plan and appropriate funding needed for their implementation.

California Water Plan Update 2018 (Update 2018) provides recommended actions, funding scenarios, and an investment strategy to bolster efforts by water and resource managers, planners, and decision-makers to overcome California's most pressing water resource challenges. It reaffirms State government's unique role and commitment to sustainable, equitable, long-term water resource management; it also introduces implementation tools to inform sound decision-making. The plan's broad and diverse portfolio of recommended actions address California's critical, systemic, and institutional challenges. (DWR, 2018)

California Water Action Plan

The California Water Action Plan is a roadmap for the State's journey towards sustainable water management. The first California Water Action Plan was released in January 2014 under Governor Brown's administration and updated in 2016. The California Water Action Plan discusses the challenges to water in California: uncertain water supplies, water scarcity/drought, declining groundwater supplies, poor water quality, declining native fish species and loss of wildlife habitat, floods, supply disruptions, and population growth and climate change further increasing the severity of these risks. (CDFW, n.d.)



2. *Applicable Solid Waste Regulations*

California Solid Waste Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939, 1989)

The Integrated Waste Management Act (IWMA) established an integrated waste management hierarchy to guide the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) and local agencies in implementation, in order of priority: (1) source reduction, (2) recycling and composting, and (3) environmentally safe transformation and land disposal (it should be noted that the CIWMB no longer exists, and its duties have been assumed by CalRecycle). As part of the IWMA, the CIWMB was given a purpose to mandate the reduction of disposed waste. (CalRecycle, n.d.) The IWMA also required, among other items, each county to prepare, adopt, and submit to the Board an Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) and each city or county plan to include an implementation schedule which shows diversion of 50 percent of all solid waste by January 1, 2000 through source reduction, recycling, and composting activities. (CalRecycle, n.d.)

Waste Reuse and Recycling Act (AB 1327)

The Waste Reuse and Recycling Act (WRRRA) required the CIWMB to approve a model ordinance for adoption by any local government for the transfer, receipt, storage, and loading of recyclable materials in development projects by March 1, 1993. The WRRRA also required local agencies to adopt a local ordinance by September 1, 1993 or allow the model ordinance to take effect. The WRRRA requires all development projects that are commercial, industrial, institutional, or marina in nature and where solid waste is collected and loaded, to provide an adequate area for collecting and loading recyclable materials over the lifetime of the project. The area is required to be provided before building permits are issued. (CalRecycle, n.d.)

Mandatory Commercial Recycling Program (AB 341)

Assembly Bill (AB) 341 (Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011 [Chesbro, AB 341]) directed CalRecycle to develop and adopt regulations for mandatory commercial recycling. CalRecycle initiated formal rulemaking with a 45-day comment period beginning Oct. 28, 2011. The final regulation was approved by the Office of Administrative Law on May 7, 2012. AB-341 was designed to help meet California's recycling goal of 75% by the year 2020. AB 341 requires all commercial businesses and public entities that generate 4 cubic yards or more of waste per week to have a recycling program in place. In addition, multi-family apartments with five or more units are also required to form a recycling program. (CalRecycle, 2020)

2022 California Green Building Standards Code (CAL Green; Part 11 of Title 24, California Code of Regulations)

California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11 is referred to as the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code). The current version of CALGreen became effective January 1, 2023, and is applicable to the planning, design, operation, construction, use, and occupancy of every newly constructed building or structure throughout the State of California (including residential structures and elementary schools). The purpose of the CALGreen Code is to "improve public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: (1)



Planning and design; (2) Energy efficiency; (3) Water efficiency and conservation; (4) Material conservation and resource efficiency; and (5) Environmental air quality.” The CALGreen Code is not intended to substitute or be identified as meeting the certification requirements of any green building program that is not established and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC). Section 5.408.3 of the CALGreen Code requires that 100 percent of trees, stumps, rocks, and associated vegetation and soils resulting from land clearing shall be reused or recycled. For a phased project, such material may be stockpiled on-site until the storage site is developed. Unless otherwise noted in the regulation, all newly constructed buildings in California are subject of the requirements of the CALGreen Code. (CEC, 2018)

Senate Bill 1374 (SB 1374)

Signed in 2002, the Construction and Demolition Waste Materials Diversion Requirements (SB 1374) were codified in Public Resources Code Section 42919. SB 1374 requires that jurisdictions include in their annual AB 939 report a summary of the progress made in diverting construction and demolition waste. The legislation also required that CalRecycle adopt a model ordinance for diverting 50 to 75 percent of all construction and demolition waste from landfills. The model ordinance was adopted by CalRecycle on March 16, 2004. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Assembly Bill 1826 (AB 1826)

AB 1826 requires jurisdictions to implement an organic waste recycling program for businesses, including outreach, education, and monitoring of affected businesses. Additionally, each jurisdiction is to identify a multitude of information, including barriers to siting organic waste recycling facilities, as well as closed or abandoned sites that might be available for new organic waste recycling facilities. AB 1826 defines “organic waste” as food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, non-hazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed in with food waste. It also defines a “business” as a commercial or public entity, including, but not limited to, a firm, partnership, proprietorship, joint stock company, corporation, or association that is organized as a for-profit or nonprofit entity, or a multifamily residential dwelling consisting of five or more units. As of January 1, 2017, businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of organic waste per week are subject to this requirement. Commencing January 1, 2019, businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of commercial solid waste per week also are required to arrange for organic waste recycling services. CalRecycle may reduce this triggering threshold for organics recycling to 2 cubic yards or more of commercial solid waste per week as of January 1, 2020. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

Zero Waste California

Zero Waste California is a state program launched by CalRecycle in 2002 to promote a new vision for the management of solid waste by maximizing existing recycling and reuse efforts, while ensuring that products are designed for the environment and have the potential to be repaired, reused, or recycled. The Zero Waste California program promotes the goals of market development, recycled product procurement, and research and development of new and sustainable technologies. (CalRecycle, n.d.)



Senate Bill 1383

The Senate Bill (SB) 1383 regulations to reduce organics waste disposal and went into effect on January 1, 2022. SB 1383 establishes methane emissions reduction targets in a Statewide effort to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants caused by organics waste disposal. SB 1383 requires that jurisdictions conduct education and outreach on organics recycling to all residents, businesses (including those that generate edible food that can be donated), haulers, solid waste facilities, and local food banks and other food recovery organizations. (CalRecycle, n.d.)

3. *Applicable Energy Conservation Regulations*

California Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (24 CA. Code Regs. 6)

The Building Energy Efficiency Standards were first adopted in 1976 and have been updated periodically since then as directed by statute. In 1975 the Department of Housing and Community Development adopted rudimentary energy conservation standards under their State Housing Law authority that were a precursor to the first generation of the Standards. However, the Warren-Alquist Act was passed one year earlier with explicit direction to the Energy Commission (formally titled the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission) to adopt and implement the Standards. The Energy Commission's statute created separate authority and specific direction regarding what the Standards are to address, what criteria are to be met in developing the Standards, and what implementation tools, aids, and technical assistance are to be provided. (CEC, 2018)

The Standards contain energy and water efficiency requirements (and indoor air quality requirements) for newly constructed buildings, additions to existing buildings, and alterations to existing buildings. Public Resources Code Sections 25402 subdivisions (a)-(b) and 25402.1 emphasize the importance of building design and construction flexibility by requiring the Energy Commission to establish performance standards, in the form of an "energy budget" in terms of the energy consumption per square foot of floor space. For this reason, the Standards include both a prescriptive option, allowing builders to comply by using methods known to be efficient, and a performance option, allowing builders complete freedom in their designs provided the building achieves the same overall efficiency as an equivalent building using the prescriptive option. Reference Appendices are adopted along with the Standards that contain data and other information that helps builders comply with the Standards. (CEC, 2018)

The 2019 update to the Building Energy Efficiency Standards focuses on several key areas to improve the energy efficiency of newly constructed buildings and additions and alterations to existing buildings. The most significant efficiency improvements to the residential Standards include the introduction of photovoltaic into the prescriptive package, improvements for attics, walls, water heating, and lighting. The most significant efficiency improvements to the nonresidential Standards include alignment with the ASHRAE 90.1 2017 national standards. The 2019 Standards also include changes made throughout all of its sections to improve the clarity, consistency, and readability of the regulatory language. (CEC, 2018)



Public Resources Code Section 25402.1 also requires the Energy Commission to support the performance standards with compliance tools for builders and building designers. The Alternative Calculation Method (ACM) Approval Manual adopted by regulation as an appendix of the Standards establishes requirements for input, output, and calculational uniformity in the computer programs used to demonstrate compliance with the Standards. From this, the Energy Commission develops and makes publicly available free, public domain building modeling software in order to enable compliance based on modeling of building efficiency and performance. The ACM Approval Manual also includes provisions for private firms seeking to develop compliance software for approval by the Energy Commission, which further encourages flexibility and innovation. (CEC, 2018)

California Solar Rights and Solar Shade Control Acts

The Solar Rights Act sets parameters for establishing solar easements, prohibits ordinances and private covenants which restrict solar systems, and requires communities to consider passive solar and natural heating and cooling opportunities in new construction. This Act is applicable to all California cities and counties. California's solar access laws appear in the state's Civil, Government, Health and Safety, and Public Resources Codes. California Pub Res Code § 25980 sets forth the Solar Shade Control Act, which encourages the use of trees and other natural shading except in cases where the shading may interfere with the use of active and passive solar systems. (EPIC, 2014; EPIC, 2010)

Alternative Fuels Plan

On September 24, 2009, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted amendments to the "Pavley" regulations that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in new passenger vehicles from 2009 through 2016. These amendments are part of California's commitment toward a nation-wide program to reduce new passenger vehicle GHGs from 2012 through 2016. CARB's September amendments will cement California's enforcement of the Pavley rule starting in 2009 while providing vehicle manufacturers with new compliance flexibility. The amendments will also prepare California to harmonize its rules with the federal rules for passenger vehicles. (CARB, n.d.)

The U.S. EPA granted California the authority to implement GHG emission reduction standards for new passenger cars, pickup trucks, and sport utility vehicles On June 30, 2009. The first California request to implement GHG standards for passenger vehicles, known as a waiver request, was made in December 2005, and was denied by the U.S. EPA in March 2008. That decision was based on a finding that California's request to reduce GHG emissions from passenger vehicles did not meet the Clean Air Act requirement of showing that the waiver was needed to meet "compelling and extraordinary conditions." (CARB, n.d.)

The ARB's Board originally approved regulations to reduce GHGs from passenger vehicles in September 2004, with the regulations to take effect in 2009. These regulations were authorized by the 2002 legislation Assembly Bill 1493 (Pavley). (CARB, n.d.)

The regulations had been threatened by automaker lawsuits and were stalled by the U.S. EPA's delay in reviewing and then initially denying California's waiver request. The parties involved entered a May 19, 2009



agreement to resolve these issues. With the granting of the waiver on June 30, 2009, it is expected that the Pavley regulations will reduce GHG emissions from California passenger vehicles by about 22 percent in 2012 and about 30 percent in 2016, all while improving fuel efficiency and reducing motorists' costs. (CARB, n.d.)

The CARB has adopted a new approach to passenger vehicles – cars and light trucks – by combining the control of smog-causing pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions into a single coordinated package of standards. The new approach also includes efforts to support and accelerate the numbers of plug-in hybrids and zero-emission vehicles in California. (CARB, n.d.)

California Independent System Operator (ISO)

The California ISO is an independent public benefit corporation responsible for operating California's long-distance electric transmission lines. The California ISO is led by a five-member board appointment by the Governor and is also regulated by FERC. While transmission owners and private electric utilities own their lines, the California ISO operates the transmission system independently to ensure that electricity flows comply with federal operational standards. The California ISO analyzes current and future electrical demand and plans for any needed expansion or upgrade of the electric transmission system. (California ISO, n.d.)

California Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

The CPUC establishes policies and rules for electricity and natural gas rates provided by private utilities in California such as Southern California Edison (SCE) and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). Public owned utilities such as the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) do not fall under the CPUC's jurisdiction. The Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act of 2006 (DIVCA) established the CPUC as the sole cable/video TV franchising authority in the State of California. DIVCA took effect January 1, 2007.

The CPUC is overseen by five commissioners appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the state Senate. The CPUC's responsibilities include regulating electric power procurement and generation, infrastructure oversight for electric transmission lines and natural gas pipelines and permitting of electrical transmission and substation facilities. (CPUC, n.d.)

California Energy Commission (CEC)

The CEC is a planning agency which provides guidance on setting the state's energy policy. Responsibilities include forecasting electricity and natural gas demand, promoting and setting energy efficiency standards throughout the state, developing renewable energy resources and permitting thermal power plants 50 megawatts and larger. The CEC also has regulatory specific regulatory authority over publicly owned utilities to certify, monitor and verify eligible renewable energy resources procured. (CEC, n.d.)

Senate Bill 1389 (SB 1389)

Senate Bill (SB) 1389 (Public Resources Code Sections 25300–25323), adopted in 2002, requires the development of an integrated plan for electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuels. Under the bill, the CEC



must adopt and transmit to the Governor and Legislature an Integrated Energy Policy Report every two years. In 2018, the CEC decided to write the Integrated Energy Policy Report in two volumes. The Volume I, which was published on August 1, 2018, highlights the implementation of California's innovative policies and the role they have played in moving toward a clean energy economy. Volume II, which was adopted in February 2019, identifies several key energy issues and actions to address these issues and ensure the reliability of energy resources. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

4.20.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

A. *Thresholds of Significance*

Section XIX of Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses typical adverse effects on utilities and service systems and includes the following threshold questions to evaluate a project's impacts on utilities and service systems (OPR, 2018a):

- Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- Would the project have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?
- Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?
- Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?
- Would the project fail to comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The following thresholds are derived from Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified by the 2018 updates to Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, in order to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts on utilities and service systems. The proposed Project would result in a significant impact to utilities and service systems if the Project or any Project-related component would:

- a. *Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage systems, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects;*
- b. *Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years;*



- c. *Require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities, including septic systems, or expansion of existing facilities, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects;*
- d. *Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may service the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments;*
- e. *Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals;*
- f. *Fail to comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes including the CIWMP (County Integrated Waste Management Plan);*
- g. *Impact the following facilities requiring or resulting in the construction of new facilities or the expansion of existing facilities, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects:*
 - 1. *Electricity;*
 - 2. *Natural gas;*
 - 3. *Communications systems;*
 - 4. *Street lighting;*
 - 5. *Maintenance of public facilities, including roads; or*
 - 6. *Other governmental services.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified per the 2018 updates to the State CEQA Guidelines, were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts to utilities and service systems.

4.20.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: *Would the Project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage systems, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects?*

A. Water Service and Facilities

As described in EIR subsection 3.5.3.G, under existing conditions, there is a 36-inch water main within Rio Del Sol along the Project site's frontage. As part of the Project, 3- to 4-inch domestic water lines are proposed to extend from the southwest and northwest corners of the building and would connect directly to the existing 36-inch water line. Fire water service also would be accommodated by the existing 36-inch water main. As proposed, a 10-inch fire water main is proposed to extend between the existing 36-inch water main and the proposed water tank in the southwestern portion of the Project site. The water tank is intended to ensure there



would be adequate water pressure on site for fire suppression purposes. A series of 10-inch fire water mains and 6-inch fire hydrant lateral lines would extend from the proposed water tank, and fire hydrants would be installed around the proposed building to ensure adequate fire protection.

Impacts associated with the above-described Project-related water facilities are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and impacts have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project's impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project's proposed water improvements. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to water improvements would be less than significant.

B. Wastewater Facilities

As described in EIR subsection 3.5.3.G, under existing conditions there is a 15-inch sewer line located within Rio Del Sol. As part of the Project, a 6-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) sewer line is proposed on site which would extend beneath the building between the northeast and southeast corners of the building, and would extend westerly to the south of the building to Rio Del Sol Road where the sewer line would connect to the existing 15-inch sewer line within Rio Del Sol near the southern driveway entrance along Rio del Sol. An additional 6-inch PVC sewer line is proposed to extend from the northwest corner of the building to the existing 15-inch PVC sewer line just to the south of the northern driveway entrance along Rio Del Sol. Impacts associated with the proposed sewer system are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and impacts have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project's impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project's proposed sewer improvements that have not already been addressed by this EIR. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to sewer improvements would be less than significant.

C. Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater generated by the proposed Project would be conveyed to CVWD Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) No. 7 or No. 10. WRP 7 has a secondary treatment permit capacity of 5.0 million gallons per day (mgd) and a tertiary treatment capacity of 2.5 mgd, while WRP No. 10 has a secondary wastewater treatment design capacity of 18 mgd (Riverside County, 2015a, pp. 4.19-225 and -226).

As shown in Table 4.20-2, *Project-Related Wastewater Generation*, when excluding the 2.51 acres of the Project site that would be developed with an IID joint substation and areas proposed for public ROW dedications (approximately 5.8 acres), at buildout the Project is estimated to generate approximately 112,050 gallons per day (gpd) of wastewater requiring treatment, based on the rates used in EIR No. 521, which was prepared in conjunction with Riverside County's 2015 General Plan Update. The Project's wastewater generation would represent approximately 2.2% of the 5.0 mgd secondary treatment capacity at WRP 7 and approximately 4.5% of the 2.5 mgd tertiary treatment capacity at WRP 10. Additionally, the Project's



wastewater generation would represent 0.6% of the 18 mgd treatment capacity at WRP 10. Accordingly, the Project would not result in or require the expansion of the existing facilities at WRP 7 or WRP 10, and impacts would therefore be less than significant. (Riverside County, 2015, Table 4.19-BJ)

Table 4.20-2 Project-Related Wastewater Generation

Land Use	Acreage	Generation Factors	Wastewater Generation (gpd)
Industrial	74.7 net acres	1,500 gpd/acre	112,050
Total:	--	--	112,050

(Riverside County, 2015, Table 4.19-BJ)

D. Stormwater Drainage System

As described in EIR Subsection 3.5.3.G, under existing conditions the Project site receives run-on sheet flow drainage on the eastern half of the site; however, the western half does not receive any run-on from off-site areas due to the adjacent property development and associated storm drainage system. The proposed Project has been designed to route first-flush flows to one of three retention basins proposed along the southern boundary of the site. The three retention basins, labeled from east to west as Retention Basins B-1, B-2, and B-3, would collect and retain runoff generated on the Project site, runoff that would be tributary to the Project site from 30th Avenue and Rio Del Sol, and runoff that is tributary to the Project site from off-site areas the north. Specifically, runoff generated in the northern truck court and the western portions of the Project site would be conveyed to the west and south via proposed 36- and 48-inch storm drain lines, ultimately discharging directly into the western portion of Retention Basin B-2. Runoff generated in the eastern portion of the Project site would be conveyed to the south by proposed 18- and 36-inch storm drain lines and would discharge directly into the eastern portion of Retention Basin B-1. Retention Basins B-1 and B-2 also would receive a majority of run-on flows from 30th Avenue. Retention Basin B-3 is designed to collect flows generated along Rio Del Sol and the remaining run-on flows from 30th Avenue. In addition, a diversion berm is proposed along the northern edge of the Project site, which would direct run-on flows from the eastern half of the site westerly along the northern property line to a proposed stilling basin proposed in the northwest corner of the Project site. Low flows would not overflow the stilling basin, while peak flows would be conveyed to the east and south along the northern and eastern Project boundaries via a proposed diversion channel to a proposed 96-inch RCP diversion pipe in the southeastern portion of the Project site that would discharge directly into Retention Basin B-1. In addition, run-on flows from the improved portion of Rio Del Sol, as well as a portion of the run-on flows from the improved portion of 30th Avenue, would be conveyed into Retention Basin B-3. The three retention basins have been sized to retain and infiltrate all runoff that is tributary to the site, such that there would be no runoff discharged from the Project site except during unusually high rainfall events. During unusually high rain events, the three retention basins have been designed with emergency overflow spillways that would discharge a majority of the excess runoff directly onto 30th Avenue, with a portion of these flows being discharged onto Rio Del Sol. Specifically, Retention Basins B-1 and B-2 would discharge onto 30th Street once flows within the basin exceed the design elevation of 296.3 feet above mean sea level (amsl), while flows within Retention Basin B-3 would discharge onto 30th Street and Rio Del Sol once flows within the basin exceed the design elevation of 291.0 feet amsl.



Impacts associated with the proposed drainage system are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and impacts have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project's impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project's proposed storm drainage improvements. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to stormwater drainage improvements would be less than significant.

Threshold b.: Would the Project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

CVWD is responsible for supplying the region with its potable and non-potable water needs. The 2020 Coachella Valley Regional UWMP (RUWMP) was adopted on May 17, 2022. The RUWMP provides information on CVWD's projected supplies and demands in five-year increments through the year 2045. CVWD's RUWMP identifies current and future water demands and supplies, and provides a planning framework for water conservation and management decisions. (CVWD, 2021, pp. 1-2 through 1-4)

The RUWMP bases its growth assumptions, in part, based on the land use designations within the CVWD's service areas. At the time the 2020 RUWMP was adopted, the Project site was designated by the Riverside County General Plan as "Medium Density Residential (MDR)" land uses in the eastern +/- half of the Project site (+/- 39.9 acres) and "Light Industrial (LI)" land uses in the western +/- half of the Project site (+/- 43.1 acres). Based on the mid-point densities identified in Appendix E to the County's General Plan, MDR land uses are expected to be developed at a mid-point density of 3.5 du/ac. Thus, based on the site's existing land use designations, the RUWMP anticipated that the Project site would be developed with approximately 140 dwelling units (39.9 acres x 3.5 du/ac = 139.65 du). The Project's proposed General Plan Amendment No. 220004 would redesignate the eastern +/- half of the Project site for LI land uses and no residential uses are proposed on site. As such, the Project would result in a decrease in the number of dwelling units on site as evaluated in and accommodated by the UWMP for the Project site, but would result in more acreage designated for LI land uses. As shown on Table 4.20-3, *Water Demand Comparison – Adopted vs. Project Land Uses*, the Project would require 72.0 AFY less than what was projected in the RUWMP. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with the RUWMP. The RUWMP demonstrates that the CVWD would have sufficient water supplies even during single and multiple dry years to meet the projected demand within its district through the year 2045. Because the Project's anticipated water demand would be well within the demand projections identified by the RUWMP, it can be concluded that the CVWD would have sufficient water supplies to serve the Project based on existing entitlements and resources. Therefore, impacts associated with the Project's water demand would be less than significant. (Charles Marr Consulting, 2023, pp. 28-30)

With respect to physical impacts associated with increased water demands and supply, the CVWD anticipates that retail demands for water within the District will increase from 99,842 AFY of water actually supplied in 2020 to 148,166 AFY by 2045. In response to growth, CVWD will gradually increase groundwater production to meet demands, a portion of which would be used to serve the Project. CVWD also has enacted water-saving policies such as tiered water rates, landscape irrigation conservation, and a new landscape ordinance applicable to the water use of new developments, all of which would serve to reduce future water demands within the



CVWD service area. CVWD also recognizes the need to obtain additional water supplies to meet projected water demands and prevent groundwater overdraft. CVWD is investigating several programs to obtain additional supply or improve the reliability of SWP supplies. These programs include the following: (CVWD, 2021, p. 4-27)

Table 4.20-3 Water Demand Comparison – Adopted vs. Project Land Uses

Land Use	Acres	Dwelling Units	Generation Factors	Projected Water Demand
Water Demand – Adopted Land Uses				
Adopted MDR	39.9	140	1.01 AFY/du	141.4 AFY
Adopted LI	43.1	n/a	0.97 AFY/acre	41.8 AFY
Subtotal:				183.2 AFY
Water Demand – Proposed Land Uses				
Proposed Project	83.0	n/a	Varies ¹	111.2 AFY
Subtotal:				111.2 AFY
Difference (Adopted Land Uses – Proposed Land Uses):				-72.0 AFY

1. Project Total Water Demand is based on the calculations provided by the Project’s WSA, which is included as *Technical Appendix L* to this EIR. The Project’s WSA utilizes higher demand rates than the AFY/acre factors identified by Riverside County EIR No. 521, which was prepared in conjunction with Riverside County’s 2015 comprehensive update to its General Plan. Specifically, using the rates identified by EIR No. 521, the Project would generate a demand for approximately 80.5 AFY (83.0 acres x 0.97 AFY/acre = 80.5 AFY), which is far less than the 111.2 AFY reported by the Project’s WSA.

(Riverside County, 2015, Table 4.19-BI; Riverside County, 2021a, Appendix E, Table E-1)

- **Delta Conveyance Facility Project (DCFP):** The DCFP would construct and operate new conveyance facilities in the Delta, primarily a new tunnel to bypass existing natural channels used for conveyance. New intake facilities would be located in the north Delta along the Sacramento River between Freeport, CA and the confluence with Sutter Slough. A new tunnel would convey water from the new intakes to the existing Banks Pumping Plant and potentially the federal Jones Pumping Plant, both in the south Delta. The new facilities would provide an alternate location for diversion of water from the Delta and would be operated in coordination with the existing south Delta pumping facilities. CVWD and the Desert Water Agency (DWA) have approved an agreement to advance their share of funding for DCFP planning and design costs. Impacts associated with the DCFP project currently are being evaluated as part of an EIR that was circulated for public review in July 2022 (SCH No. 2020010227). The DCFP EIR is herein incorporated by reference pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15150, and is available for public review at the California Department of Water Resources, 901 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814, or can be access online at: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2020010227/3>. (CVWD, 2021, pp. 4-27 and 4-28)
- **Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project:** In 2017, MWD and DWR began preliminary planning for recovery of seepage below the Lake Perris Dam and delivery of the recovered water to MWD in addition to its current allocated water. The project is composed of installing a series of five pumps down-gradient from the face of the Lake Perris Dam that will pump water that has seeped from the



lake into the groundwater. The recovered water will be pumped into a collection pipeline that discharges directly into MWD's Colorado River Aqueduct south of Lake Perris. CVWD and DWA were invited to partner in the project with MWD, and the parties are currently working on an agreement with DWR for funding of environmental analysis, planning, and preliminary design. Impacts associated with the Lake Perris Seepage Recovery Project currently are being evaluated as part of a Draft EIR that was circulated for public review in May 2021 (SCH No. 2019011027). The Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project EIR is herein incorporated by reference pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15150. The Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project EIR is available for public review at the California Department of Water Resources, 1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento, California 95814, or can be access online at: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2019011027/2/Attachment/CTSwfy>. (CVWD, 2021, p. 4-28)

- Sites Reservoir Project: The Sites Reservoir Project would capture and store stormwater flows from the Sacramento River for release in dry years. Sites Reservoir would be situated on the west side of the Sacramento Valley, approximately 10 miles west of Maxwell, CA. When operated in coordination with other Northern California reservoirs such as Shasta, Oroville, and Folsom, which function as the backbone to both the SWP and the Central Valley Project, Sites Reservoir would increase flexibility and reliability of statewide water supplies in drier periods. In 2019, CVWD and DWA both entered into an agreement with the Sites Project Authority for the next phase of planning for the Sites Reservoir. Impacts associated with the Sites Reservoir Project currently are being evaluated as part of a Draft EIR that was recirculated in 2021 (SCH No. 2001112009). The Sites Reservoir Project EIR is herein incorporated by reference pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15150. The recirculated draft Sites Reservoir Project EIR is available for public review at the Site Project Authority (SPA) offices located at 122 Old Highway 99 West Maxwell, CA 95955, or can be accessed online at: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2001112009/4>. (CVWD, 2021, p. 4-28)

Accordingly, while the CVWD would require additional water supplies to serve as groundwater replenishment in order to prevent an overdraft of the groundwater basin, physical impacts to the environment associated with the above-listed programs that would supply the additional sources of groundwater recharge currently are being evaluated in project-level EIRs that are being prepared for the DCFP, Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project, and Sites Reservoir Project. Considering that the proposed Project would result in a decrease in demands for potable water by 72.0 AFY as compared to the site's adopted General Plan land use designations, and because environmental effects of future increases in groundwater recharge already are being evaluated as part of project-level EIRs, it can be concluded that the Project would not result in any new or increased physical impacts to the environment beyond what already is evaluated and disclosed as part of the DCFP, Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project, and Sites Reservoir Project EIRs. Accordingly, physical impacts to the environment associated with the Project's demand for potable water would be less than significant on a Project-level basis.



Threshold c.: Would the Project require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities, including septic systems, or expansion of existing facilities, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects?

No septic systems are proposed as part of the Project. As discussed under the analysis of Threshold a., the Project would be provided sanitary sewer service by the CVWD. A description of proposed sewer improvements is provided in EIR Subsection 3.5.3.G. As discussed therein, a 6-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) sewer line is proposed on site which would extend beneath the building between the northeast and southeast corners of the building, and would extend westerly to the south of the building to Rio Del Sol where the sewer line would connect to the existing 15-inch sewer line within Rio Del Sol near the southern driveway entrance along Rio Del Sol Road. An additional 6-inch PVC sewer line is proposed to extend from the northwest corner of the building to the existing 15-inch PVC sewer line just to the south of the northern driveway entrance along Rio Del Sol.

Impacts associated with the Project's proposed sewer improvements are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and impacts have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project's impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project's proposed sewer improvements that have not already been addressed in pertinent sections of this EIR. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to proposed sewer improvements would be less than significant.

Additionally, the analysis of Threshold a. demonstrates that the Project would not result in or require the expansion of the existing facilities at WRP 7 or WRP 10. As such, the Project would not result in or require new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities, and impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Threshold d.: Would the Project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may service the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold a., wastewater generated by the Project would be conveyed to WRP 7 or WRP 10 for treatment. As previously shown in Table 4.20-2, and excluding the 2.5 acres of the Project site that would be developed with an IID joint substation, at buildout the Project is estimated to generate approximately 112,050 gpd of wastewater requiring treatment. The Project's wastewater generation would represent approximately 2.2% of the 5.0 mgd secondary treatment capacity at WRP 7 and approximately 4.5% of the 2.5 mgd tertiary treatment capacity at WRP 7. Additionally, the Project's wastewater generation would represent 0.6% of the 18 mgd treatment capacity at WRP 10. Accordingly, the existing facilities at WRP 7 or WRP 10 would have sufficient capacity to treat wastewater generated by the Project, and impacts would therefore be less than significant.



Threshold e.: Would the Project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Solid waste generated in the Project area is conveyed to either the Edom Hill Transfer Station, located approximately 4.0 miles northwest of the Project site, or the Coachella Valley Transfer Station, located approximately 16.0 miles southeast of the Project site. Solid waste collected at these transfer stations is conveyed to the Lamb Canyon Landfill for disposal, located 34.2 miles west of the Project site. The Lamb Canyon Landfill is permitted to receive 5,000 tons per day (tpd) of solid waste, while data from August 2023 shows that the Lamb Canyon Landfill received a daily average of approximately 1,784 tpd. Thus, under existing conditions the Lamb Canyon Landfill has an average excess daily capacity of approximately 3,252 tpd. (RCDWR, 2023)

Construction-Related Solid Waste Impacts

Waste would be generated by the Project construction process, primarily comprising discarded materials and packaging. The Project's building construction would occur in one phase and is anticipated to commence in June 2024 with construction activities being completed by May 2025, resulting in approximately 240 working days of construction activities. The Project would entail construction of a light industrial building with 1,238,992 s.f. of building area, an approximately 285 feet by 325 feet IID electric substation (approximately 92,625 s.f. of building area), and a water tank on site with a diameter of 60 feet (approximately 2,827 s.f. of building area). According to data published by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), construction activities generate approximately 4.34 pounds per square foot of solid waste requiring disposal. (EPA, 2009, p. 10) As shown in Table 4.20-4, *Project Solid Waste Generation*, the Project's total construction of 1,334,444 s.f. of building area would result in approximately 5,791,487 pounds (2,896 tons) of construction waste (1,334,444 s.f. x 4.34 pounds/s.f. = 5,791,487 pounds). CALGreen requires builders/owners to divert 65 percent of construction waste from landfills (by recycling, reusing, and other waste reduction strategies), consistent with the State's solid waste reduction goals; therefore, the Project is estimated to generate a total of approximately 2,027,020 pounds (1,014 tons) of construction waste during Project construction activities that would require disposal at local area landfills (5,791,487 pounds x 35% = 2,027,020 pounds). Thus, on a daily basis, the Project's construction activities would generate approximately 4.23 tpd of solid waste requiring disposal at local landfills (1,014 tons ÷ 240 days = 4.23 tpd).

As previously noted, solid waste generated by the Project most likely would be conveyed to the Lamb Canyon Landfill for disposal. The Project's generation of approximately 4.23 tpd of solid waste requiring disposal at local area landfills during construction activities would represent approximately 0.13% of the approximately 3,216 tpd of excess capacity at the Lamb Canyon Landfill. Furthermore, the Lamb Canyon Landfill is not expected to reach its total maximum permitted disposal capabilities during the Project's construction period. Therefore, during construction the Project would not generate solid waste in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, and impacts would be less than significant.



Table 4.20-4 Project Solid Waste Generation

Land Use	Square Footage (s.f.)	Generation Factors	Total Solid Waste Generated (tpy)	Average Solid Waste per Day (tpd)
Construction-Related Solid Waste Generation				
Industrial, Substation, and Water Tank	1,334,444 s.f.	4.34 pounds per s.f.	2,896 tpy ¹	12.1 tpd ¹
Operational-Related Solid Waste Generation				
Industrial	1,238,992 s.f.	10.8 tons/1,000 s.f.	13,381 tpy	36.7 tpd

1. The values reflected for solid waste generation do not account for the CALGreen requirement to divert 65 percent of construction waste from landfills or the CIWMP requirement to divert 50% of solid waste during long-term operations. Assuming a 65% diversion, the Project’s construction activities would result in the generation of approximately 1,014 tpy, or approximately 4.23 tpd. Assuming a diversion of 50% of the Project’s operational solid waste, the Project would result in the generation of approximately 6,691 tpy requiring disposal at local area landfills, or approximately 18.3 tpd. (Riverside County, 2015, Table 4.17-N; EPA, 2009, p. 10)

Long-Term Operational Impacts to Solid Waste

As shown in Table 4.20-4, buildout and occupancy of the Project is estimated to produce approximately 36.7 tpd of solid waste, or approximately 13,381 tpy. Per the Riverside Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP), which applies to the Project, up to 50% of its solid waste would need to be diverted from area landfills. In conformance with the CIWMP, the Project Applicant is required to work with future contract refuse haulers to implement recycling and waste reduction programs for solid wastes.

As noted, solid waste generated by the Project most likely would be conveyed to the Lamb Canyon Landfill for disposal. The Project’s 36.7 tpd of solid waste, which does not account for the CIWMP requirement to divert 50% of solid waste from landfills, would represent 1.1% of the average excess daily capacity at the Lamb Canyon Landfill of 3,252 tpd. Because the Project would generate a relatively small amount of solid waste per day, as compared to the permitted daily capacity for the Lamb Canyon Landfill, it is anticipated that the Lamb Canyon Landfill would have sufficient daily capacity to accept solid waste generated by the Project. As such, because the Lamb Canyon Landfill would have adequate capacity to handle solid waste generated by the Project’s construction and operational phases, impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold f.: *Would the Project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes including the CIWMP (County Integrated Waste Management Plan)?*

The proposed Project would be regulated by the Riverside Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) (RCWRMD, 1996). The CIWMP outlines goals, policies, and programs Riverside County and its cities would implement to create an integrated and cost-effective waste management system that complies with the provisions of AB 939 and its diversion mandates. Additionally, AB 341 made a legislative declaration that it is the policy goal of the State that not less than 75% of solid waste generated be source reduced, recycled, or composted by the year 2020, although the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery may not establish or enforce a diversion rate greater than the 50% as set forth by the CIWMP (per Public Resources Code § 41780.01[b]).



The proposed Project would be regulated by the RCDWR and would be required to comply with the CIWMP's requirement to divert up to 50% of its solid waste from area landfills. In conformance with the CIWMP, the Project Applicant is required to work with future contract refuse haulers to implement recycling and waste reduction programs for solid wastes. Implementation of a waste disposal strategy for the proposed Project would assist Riverside County in achieving the mandated goals of the IWMA by developing feasible waste programs that encourage source reduction, recycling, and composting. The RCDWR is specifically charged with the responsibility of implementing programs that ensure that unincorporated Riverside County achieves 50% diversion of solid waste from landfill disposal as well as monitoring and reporting unincorporated Riverside County's compliance with the CIWMP and AB 939. Additionally, the Project would be subject to the requirements of SB 1383, which includes requirements related to organics recycling in order to reduce the amount of solid waste that ends up in area landfills. With mandatory compliance to AB 939, AB 341, SB 1383, and RCDWR's programs and policies, the Project would result in a less-than-significant impact due to a conflict with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes, including the CIWMP.

Threshold g.: Would the Project impact the following facilities requiring or resulting in the construction of new facilities or the expansion of existing facilities, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects:

- 1. Electricity;***
- 2. Natural Gas;***
- 3. Communications systems;***
- 4. Street lighting;***
- 5. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads; or***
- 6. Other governmental services?***

The Project site is located within the electric service territory of IID. However, under existing conditions the IID does not have sufficient capacity to provide electric service to the proposed Project. Accordingly, as part of the Project, a joint IID electric substation would be constructed on approximately 2.5 acres and would be located at the southeast corner of the Project site. Additionally, power poles are proposed to be installed in the Project vicinity between the on-site substation and existing IID facilities. The potentially impacted areas resulting from power pole installation previously were depicted on EIR Figure 3-6. With construction of the IID substation and off-site power poles, there would be adequate energy supplies in the Project area to serve the Project's proposed warehouse building. Impacts associated with the proposed IID substation and off-site power poles are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and impacts have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project's impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project's proposed electrical service improvements that have not already been addressed in pertinent sections of this EIR. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to proposed electrical service improvements would be less than significant.



There are no anticipated capacity restrictions which could limit the ability of the SoCal Gas Company to provide service to the proposed Project. Points of connection to SoCal Gas Company main lines would be resolved as the proposed Project and other projects planned for the area commence their utility design and interconnection plans. It is anticipated that construction of any off-site natural gas utility connections would occur within existing disturbed public rights-of-way. As such, the construction of these utility connections is evaluated under the appropriate subject headings within this EIR, and no new impacts would occur specifically related to natural gas service that have not already been addressed.

Due to long-range planning efforts by the energy purveyors, Project implementation is not anticipated to result in the need for the construction or expansion of off-site gas generation facilities, although some new distribution lines would be necessary (as discussed above). Any future need for regional energy facilities related to cumulative growth in the service areas of SoCal Gas would be determined by the service agencies as part of their long-range growth projections. Accordingly, provision of gas service to the proposed Project site would not result in any significant environmental impacts not already addressed under relevant sections of this EIR.

Points of connection to telecommunication facilities would be resolved as the proposed Project and other projects planned for the area commence their utility design and interconnection plans. It is anticipated that any off-site construction of communication utility connections would occur within existing disturbed public rights-of-way. As such, the construction of communication utility connections is evaluated under the appropriate subject headings within this EIR. No environmental impacts would occur from the provision of these utilities, as all lines would be installed within the disturbance areas of existing roadway rights-of-way and/or on site within areas already planned for physical impacts as part of the Project.

The Project would require a number of drainage features on site, as discussed under the analysis of Threshold a. Although the Project's proposed drainage facilities would result in physical disturbances, the proposed drainage improvements would be located in on-site areas, impacts to which have been evaluated throughout this EIR, and mitigation is identified where necessary to reduce impacts to a level below significance. Therefore, the construction of stormwater drainage facilities needed to serve the Project would not result in any impacts to the environment beyond what is evaluated, disclosed, and mitigated by other sections of this EIR. Additional mitigation would not be required.

The Project would provide street lighting as required by Riverside County in accordance with Ordinance No. 461 (Roadway Standards) and Ordinance No. 460 (Subdivision of the Land). All physical environmental impacts associated with street lighting and maintenance would occur within the boundaries of the on- and off-site improvement areas, the impacts of which are described throughout this EIR. Therefore, no additional impacts to the environment would occur that are not already addressed by this EIR, and additional mitigation would not be required.

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in improvements to roadways abutting the Project site, including Rio del Sol and 30th Avenue. These improved roadways would require maintenance by Riverside



County. Maintenance of the public roadways abutting the Project site would not result in any significant impacts to the environment. Impacts associated with the proposed improvements to these roadways already are evaluated in appropriate sections of this EIR, and any identified impacts have been mitigated to the maximum feasible extent. Maintenance of the major roadway facilities within the Project site would be funded through the Project developer's payment of Development Impact Fees (DIF) and future building owners' payment of property taxes. Therefore, the maintenance of roadways proposed by the Project would not result in any new impacts to the environment beyond that which is already disclosed and mitigated by this EIR, and a less-than-significant impact would occur.

No known other facilities would require off-site construction or maintenance as a result of the proposed Project.

Based on the foregoing analysis, impacts associated with the construction or expansion of utility facilities would be less than significant or otherwise mitigated to the maximum feasible extent by this EIR. No additional mitigation would be required.

4.20.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The cumulative study area used for the analysis of water and wastewater includes areas within CVWD's service area for water and wastewater services, and is based on the buildout of the Riverside County General Plan and the general plans of cities within CVWD's service area. The cumulative study area for solid waste comprises the Coachella Valley, as most areas within the Coachella Valley are served by Burretec, and the cumulative analysis assumes buildout of the Riverside County General Plan and the general plans of cities within the Coachella Valley. For the remaining issue areas, the cumulative impact analysis considers development of the Project in conjunction with other development projects and planned development in the vicinity of the Project site.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold a., the Project would require a number of improvements related to water, wastewater treatment, and storm drainage systems, although such improvements are inherent to the Project's construction phase. Cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with Project construction activities have been evaluated throughout this EIR, and where necessary mitigation measures have been identified to reduce the Project's cumulatively-considerable effects to the maximum feasible extent. There are no components of the Project's proposed water, wastewater, or storm drainage systems that could result in impacts not already evaluated by other sections of this EIR. Accordingly, impacts associated with the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, and stormwater drainage systems would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

The analysis of Threshold b. demonstrates that the CVWD would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project as well as other reasonably foreseeable future developments during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. The RUWMP evaluates the water demands of cumulative developments within the CVWD's service area, and the Project's proposed land uses would result in lesser water demands than what was projected within the RUWMP. Thus, the Project is within the growth assumptions utilized in the RUWMP. Because the RUWMP demonstrates that the CVWD has the capacity to serve future development within its service area, cumulatively-considerable impacts to water supply would be less than significant. Furthermore, although the



CVWD anticipates a need for increased imported water to be used for groundwater recharge so as to reduce the potential for overdraft conditions, the projects anticipated to provide for the additional water resources, including the DCFP, Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project, and Sites Reservoir Project, all are currently being evaluated by project-level EIRs (SCH Nos. 2020010227, 2019011027, and 2001112009, respectively). Each of the project-level EIRs include an analysis of potentially cumulatively-considerable impacts that could result from implementation of these projects. There are no components of the proposed Project that would result in new or increased cumulatively-considerable impacts to the environment associated with increased imported water that have not already been evaluated, disclosed, and where necessary, mitigated by each of the project-level EIRs. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable physical impacts to the environment resulting from the Project's increase in demand for water supply would be less than significant.

As discussed under the analysis of Thresholds c. and d., the Project would require a number of improvements to provide sewer service to the Project site, although impacts associated with such improvements are inherent to the Project's construction phase. Cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with Project construction activities have been evaluated throughout this EIR, and where necessary mitigation measures have been identified to reduce the Project's cumulatively-considerable effects to the maximum feasible extent. There are no components of the Project's proposed wastewater improvements that would result in impacts not already evaluated by other sections of this EIR. Accordingly, impacts associated with the construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment conveyance facilities would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

The Project's wastewater generation would represent approximately 2.2% of the 5.0 mgd secondary treatment capacity at WRP 7 and approximately 4.5% of the 2.5 mgd tertiary treatment capacity at WRP 10. Additionally, the Project's wastewater generation would represent 0.6% of the 18 mgd treatment capacity at WRP 10. Although the Project and other cumulative developments ultimately could contribute to the need for expanded capacity at WRP 7 and/or WRP 10, impacts associated with such expansion would be subject to CEQA once plans for such expansion have been prepared by the CVWD. As no such plans are currently available, it would be speculative to evaluate potential cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with the proposed expansion (CEQA Guidelines § 15145). Therefore, Project impacts due to wastewater treatment capacity would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

As previously discussed in the analysis provided under Threshold e., solid waste generated by construction and operation of the Project would represent a nominal proportion of the daily disposal capacity at the Lamb Canyon Landfill. The Lamb Canyon Landfill is currently projected to remain open until 2032 and has sufficient daily capacity to handle solid waste generated by the Project and other cumulative developments both during construction and long-term operation. The Project would not directly result in the need for expanded solid waste disposal facilities, as the Lamb Canyon Landfill has sufficient existing capacity to handle solid waste generated by the Project. Rather, the Project's incremental contribution to solid waste generation may contribute to an ultimate need for expanding the solid waste disposal facilities that would serve the Project and/or the construction of additional solid waste disposal facilities. Moreover, it is possible that as other developments in the region are proposed, the RCDWR may opt to construct new solid waste disposal facilities to serve those developments, and such facilities may or may not receive solid waste generated by the Project. Although the Project has the potential to cumulatively contribute to the demand for new or expanded solid



waste disposal facilities, the construction of which could significantly impact the environment, it is too speculative for evaluation in the absence of a proposed expansion or development plan (CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR § 15145). Therefore, the Project's cumulatively-considerable impacts to solid waste disposal facilities are evaluated as less than significant.

The Project would adhere to regulations set forth by local and State regulations (including AB 341 and AB 939) during both construction and long-term operations. Other cumulative developments also would be required to comply with such regulations. As such, the Project as well as other cumulative developments in the area would not result in cumulative impacts with respect to compliance with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid wastes. Impacts would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

Cumulative impacts associated with the provision of facilities for electricity (including the on-site IID substation and off-site power poles), natural gas, communications systems, stormwater drainage, street lighting, maintenance of facilities, construction of off-site sewer and water lines, and other governmental services are evaluated throughout the appropriate issue areas in this EIR. In all cases, where cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with any Project component are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce such impacts to the maximum feasible extent. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts associated with the provision of utility facilities to serve the proposed Project would be less than significant.

4.20.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Although the Project would require construction of new or expanded water, wastewater conveyance, and stormwater drainage systems, impacts associated with the construction of such facilities are evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project's impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project's proposed water, sewer, and drainage improvements that have not already been addressed. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to water, sewer, and drainage improvements would be less than significant. Additionally, the Project's wastewater generation would represent approximately 2.2% of the 5.0 mgd secondary treatment capacity at WRP 7 and approximately 4.5% of the 2.5 mgd tertiary treatment capacity at WRP 10. Additionally, the Project's wastewater generation would represent 0.6% of the 18 mgd treatment capacity at WRP 10. Accordingly, the Project would not result in or require the expansion of the existing facilities at the WRP 7 or WRP 10, and impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Threshold b.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The RUWMP demonstrates that the CVWD would have sufficient water supplies even during single and multiple dry years to meet the projected demand within its district through year 2045. Because the Project's anticipated water demand would be within the demand projections identified by the RUWMP, it can be concluded that the TVWD would have sufficient water supplies to serve the Project based on existing entitlements and resources. Additionally, the Project would not 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. Furthermore, although the CVWD anticipates it will



require an increase in imported water, the CVWD anticipates such demands would be met through the DCFP, Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project, and Sites Reservoir Project. Impacts to the environment associated with these programs currently are being evaluated as part of project-level EIRs for the DCFP, Lake Perris Dam Seepage Recovery Project, and Sites Reservoir Project (SCH Nos. 2020010227, 2019011027, and 2001112009, respectively), and there are no components of the Project's anticipated water demand that would result in increased impacts to the environment beyond what is already evaluated as part of these EIRs. Accordingly, physical impacts to the environment resulting from the Project's incremental increase in demand for potable water would be less than significant on a Project-level basis.

Threshold c.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Impacts associated with the Project's proposed sewer improvements are inherent to the Project's construction phase, and impacts have been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate subject headings (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.). Where significant direct or cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce the Project's impacts to the maximum feasible extent. There are no environmental impacts that would occur specifically related to the Project's proposed sewer improvements that have not already been addressed in pertinent sections of this EIR. As such, with the mitigation measures specified in this EIR, Project impacts due to proposed sewer improvements would be less than significant.

Threshold d.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project's wastewater generation would represent approximately 2.4% of the 5.0 mgd secondary treatment capacity at WRP 7 and approximately 4.8% of the 2.5 mgd tertiary treatment capacity at WRP 7. Additionally, the Project's wastewater generation would represent 0.7% of the 18 mgd treatment capacity at WRP 10. Accordingly, the Project would not result in or require the expansion of the existing facilities at WRP 7 or WRP 10, and impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Threshold e.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Lamb Canyon Landfill would have adequate capacity to handle solid waste generated by the Project's construction and operational phases. The Project would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold f.: Less-than-Significant Impact. With mandatory compliance to AB 939, AB 341, SB 1383, and RCDWR's programs and policies, the Project would not result in a significant impact due to noncompliance with regulations related to solid waste. A less-than-significant impact would occur.

Threshold g.: Less-than-Significant Impact. Impacts associated with the construction or expansion of utility facilities would be less than significant or otherwise mitigated to the maximum feasible extent by this EIR. No additional mitigation would be required.



4.20.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude impacts associated with utilities and service systems. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of the California Solid Waste Integrated Waste Management Act, (AB 939, 1989) which mandates a reduction of disposed waste throughout California.
- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Act (AB 1327) which developed a model ordinance for adoption of recyclable materials in development projects. AB 1327 requires all development projects that are commercial, industrial, institutional, or marina in nature and where solid waste is collected and loaded, to provide an adequate area for collecting and loading recyclable materials over the lifetime of the project. The area is required to be provided before building permits are issued.
- The Project is required to comply with the provisions of the Mandatory Commercial Recycling Program (AB 341): AB 341 made a legislative declaration that it is the policy goal of the state that not less than 75% of solid waste generated be source reduced, recycled, or composted by the year 2020, and required the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, by January 1, 2014, to provide a report to the Legislature that provides strategies to achieve that policy goal and also includes other specified information and recommendations.
- The Project would be subject to the following applicable standard conditions of approval imposed on the Project by the RCDWR:
 - Prior to issuance of a building permit, a Waste Recycling Plan (WRP) shall be submitted to the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources for approval. At a minimum, the WRP must identify the materials (i.e., cardboard, concrete, asphalt, wood, etc.) that will be generated by construction and development, the projected amounts; the measures/methods that will be taken to recycle, reuse, and/or reduce the amount of material; the facilities and/or haulers that will be utilized; and the targeted recycling or reduction rate. During Project construction, the Project site shall have, at a minimum, two bins: one for waste disposal and the other for the recycling of Construction and Demolition (C&D) materials. Additional bins are encouraged to be used for further source separation of C&D recyclable materials. Accurate record keeping (receipts) for recycling of C&D recyclable materials and solid waste disposal must be kept. Arrangements can be made through the franchise hauler.
 - Prior to final building inspection, evidence (i.e., receipts or other type of verification) to demonstrate Project compliance with the approved WRP shall be presented by the Project



proponent to the Planning Division of the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources in order to clear the project for occupancy permits. Receipts must clearly identify the amount of waste disposed and Construction and Demolition (C&D) materials recycled.

- Hazardous materials are not accepted at Riverside County landfills. In compliance with federal, State, and local regulations and ordinances, any hazardous waste generated in association with the Project shall be disposed of at a permitted Hazardous Waste disposal facility. Hazardous waste materials include, but are not limited to, paint, batteries, oil, asbestos, and solvents.

Mitigation

The mitigation measures identified throughout this EIR for Project-related construction impacts (e.g., air quality, biological resources, etc.) shall apply. Project impacts to utilities and service systems would be less than significant; therefore, no additional mitigation is required related to utilities and service system improvements proposed as part of the Project.



4.21 WILDFIRE

4.21.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Under existing conditions, portions of the areas surrounding the Project site are undeveloped and contain sparse natural vegetation typical of desert areas. According to Riverside County Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the Project site and areas surrounding the Project site to the north, east, south, and west are not classified as having a susceptibility to wildfire hazards, indicating that the chance of wildfires affecting these areas is negligible (RCIT, n.d.).

A. Topography

As previously depicted on EIR Figure 2-7, the Project site gently slopes downward from the northeast corner to the southwest corner of the Project site. Elevations on site range from approximately 290 feet above mean sea level (amsl) near the southwest corner of the Project site to 335 feet amsl near the northeastern corner of the Project site. Overall topographic relief is approximately 45 feet.

B. Existing Vegetation

Under existing conditions, vegetation communities/land use categories present on the Project site include developed areas (i.e., improved portions of Rio del Sol) and disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub. Disturbed Sonoran creosote bush scrub is dominated by creosote bush, white dalea (*P. emoryi*), and burro-brush (*Ambrosia dumosa*). Little to no annuals were observed within this habitat during the general biological survey conducted on site by Rocks Biological Consulting. (Rocks, 2022, pp. 11-12) Refer to EIR Subsection 4.4, *Biological Resources*, for additional information about existing vegetation communities on site and within the Project's off-site improvement areas.

C. Fire Hazard Classification

Areas designated as being subject to significant hazard in the State of California are mapped by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) through its Fire and Resources Assessment Program (FRAP). These maps designate areas in California into fire hazard severity zones (FHSZ) based on a hazard scoring system using subjective criteria for fuels, fire history, terrain influences, housing density, potential for catastrophic losses. Lands under the responsibility of CAL FIRE for wildland fire protection are classified as State Responsibility Areas (SRA). SRA boundaries were adopted by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection in January 2011, and updated on July 1, 2016. CAL FIRE designates areas into three Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs): Very High, High, and Moderate. Additionally, local fire protection agencies such as the Riverside County Fire Department are responsible for wildfire protection on lands within their jurisdiction that are classified as Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). The Project site is located in a LRA. (CAL FIRE, 2023)

According to Riverside County Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the Project site has a low susceptibility to wildfire hazards. (RCIT, 2023)



D. Wildfire History

According to the California Wildfire History Map, no recorded wildfires have occurred on the Project site or immediately surrounding properties northeast of I-10. The nearest recorded wildfire was the 1980 Dry Falls Fire, which affected the San Jacinto mountain area, with no identified cause (CalFire, 2023).

4.21.2 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following is a brief description of the federal, State, and local environmental laws and related regulations related to wildfire hazards.

A. Federal Regulations

1. Federal Emergency Management Agency

In March 2003, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA leads federal efforts to prepare the nation for hazards, including wildfire hazards, and manages the federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also undertakes proactive efforts to prepare for emergencies such as training of first responders and management of the U.S. Fire Administration.

2. Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003

On August 22, 2002, President Bush established the Healthy Forests Initiative, directing the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior, and the Council on Environmental Quality, to improve regulatory processes to ensure more timely decisions, greater efficiency, and better results in reducing the risk of catastrophic wildland fires. On June 5, 2003, the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior adopted two new categorical exclusions from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement (EIS): an exclusion for hazardous-fuel reduction and another for rehabilitation of resources and infrastructure damaged by wildfire (68 FR 33814). (DOI, n.d.)

3. Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] §5121) addresses the importance of pre-disaster infrastructure mitigation planning to reduce disaster losses across the United States and is aimed primarily at the control and streamlining of the administration of federal disaster relief and programs. Some of the major provisions of this Act include: a) funding pre-disaster mitigation activities; b) developing experimental multi-hazard maps to better understand risk; and c) establishing state and local government infrastructure mitigation planning requirements. The mitigation planning provisions outlined in this Act establish performance-based standards for mitigation plans and require states to have a public assistance program to develop county government plans (44 CFR Part 201). (CFR, 2000)



B. State Regulations

1. Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 4290-4299

Public Resources Code Sections 4290-4299 establish minimum Statewide fire safety provisions pertaining to: roads for fire equipment access; signs identifying streets, roads, and buildings; minimum private water supply reserves for emergency fire use; and fire fuel breaks and greenbelts. With certain exceptions, all new construction after July 1, 1991, in potential wildland fire areas, is required to meet these Statewide standards. The State requirements, however, do not supersede more restrictive local regulations. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

As defined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire), wildland areas defined as State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) may contain substantial wildfire risks and hazards. They consist of lands exclusive of cities, and federal lands regardless of ownership. The primary financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires within wildlands belongs to the State of California. However, it is not the State of California's responsibility to provide fire protection services to buildings or structures located within the wildlands unless CalFire has entered into a cooperative agreement with a local agency for those purposes pursuant to PRC Section 4142. As such, wildland areas require disclosure of these fire hazards in real estate transactions, and owners of properties in wildland areas are subject to PRC Section 4291 maintenance requirements. The law requires CalFire every five years (1991, 1996, 2001, etc.) to provide maps identifying the boundaries of lands classified as SRAs to the Riverside County Assessor. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

2. Public Resources Code Section 4213 – Fire Prevention Fees

Pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 4213, in July of 2011, the State of California began assessing an annual "Fire Prevention Fee" for all habitable structures within SRAs to pay for fire prevention services. SRAs are the portions of California where the State of California is financially responsible for the prevention and suppression of wildfires. The SRA does not include lands within incorporated city boundaries, Tribal or federally owned land. As a result of AB 398, California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, the fire prevention fee was suspended as of July 1, 2017. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)

3. California Government Code (CGC) Sections 51178 and 51182

The Director of CalFire, in cooperation with local fire authorities, shall identify areas that are Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) in Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs), based on consistent Statewide criteria, and the expected severity of fire hazard. Per California Government Code (CGC) § 51178, a local agency may, at its discretion, exclude from the requirements of § 51182 an area within its jurisdiction that has been identified as a VHFHSZ, if it provides substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of § 51182 are not necessary for effective fire protection within the area. Alternatively, local agencies may include areas not identified as VHFHSZ by CalFire, following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of § 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection within the new area. According to § 51182, such changes made by a local agency shall be final, and shall not be rebuttable by CalFire. (CA Legislative Info, n.d.)



4. California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 14 – Natural Resources

These regulations constitute the basic wildland fire protection standards of the California Board of Forestry. They were prepared and adopted to establish minimum wildfire protection standards in conjunction with building, construction, and development within SRAs. Among other things, Title 14 requires the design, and construction of structures, subdivisions, and developments in an SRA provide for basic emergency access and perimeter wildfire protection measures (fire fuel modification zones, etc.). (Westlaw, n.d.)

5. CCR Title 24, Parts 2 and 9 – Fire Codes

Part 2 of Title 24 of the CCR refers to the California Building Code, which contains complete regulations and general construction building standards of state adopting agencies, including administrative, fire and life safety, and field inspection provisions. Part 2 was updated in 2008 to reflect changes in the base document from the Uniform Building Code to the International Building Code. Part 9 refers to the California Fire Code, which contains other fire safety-related building standards. In particular, Chapter 7A, “Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure,” in the 2010 California Building Code addresses fire safety standards for new construction. In addition, Section 701A.3.2, “New Buildings Located in Any Fire Hazard Severity Zone,” states: (BSC, n.d.)

“New buildings located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone within State Responsibility Areas, any Local Agency Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area designated by the enforcing agency for which an application for a building permit is submitted on or after January 1, 2008, shall comply with all sections of this chapter.”

6. California Public Utilities Commission General Order 95: Rules for Overhead Electric Line Construction

The California Public Utilities Commission’s (CPUC’s) General Order (G.O.) 95 specifies requirements for overhead transmission line design, construction, and maintenance, including a number of requirements to avoid or minimize potential safety hazards. These requirements include standards related to vegetation management and maintenance of minimum vegetation clearances from high-voltage lines to minimize potential fire hazard. (CPUC, n.d.)

C. IID Regulations and Requirements

1. IID Regulation No. 23, Clearance Requirements for Power Line Corridors

IID’s Regulation No. 23 addresses clearance requirements around power lines. No person is allowed to cause interference with or pose a threat to the reliability of IID’s transmission or distribution lines or create a safety hazard to the public by encroaching upon IID’s rights-of-way in violation of the standards set forth in Regulation No. 23. Within IID rights-of-way, it is prohibited to build or expand structures, modify power line ground clearances, dig or otherwise undermine power line structures, modify drainage or protection berms, stack material, plant trees or other vegetation that would grow closer than minimum required clearances, ignite fires, and other similar activities. (IID, Regulation No. 23)



2. IID Regulation No. 26, Requirements for Embellishment of Distribution Power Equipment

IID's Regulation No. 26 requires that work on high voltage power equipment be performed only by personnel authorized by IID. Also, work practices are required to meet the requirements of IID's Regulation No. 26 and applicable federal, state, and local jurisdiction, regulations, ordinances, and industry best practices such as, National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), California Title 8 (Cal OSHA), International Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), CPUC General Order 95 and 128, and the IID Developers Guide. (IID, Regulation No. 26)

D. Local Regulations

1. Riverside County Ordinance No. 787 – Fire Code Standards

Riverside County Ordinance No. 787 addresses implementation of the California Fire Code, based on the International Code Council. The codes prescribe performance characteristics and materials to be used to achieve acceptable levels of fire protection and include the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) fire area building standards mentioned above. Collectively, the ordinance establishes the requirements and standards for fire hazard reduction regulations within Riverside County (including additions and deletions to the California Fire Code) to fully protect the health, safety, and welfare of existing and future residents and workers of Riverside County. (Riverside County, n.d.)

Among other things, this ordinance assures that structural and nonstructural architectural elements of the building do not: a) impede emergency egress for fire safety staffing/ personnel, equipment, and apparatus; nor b) hinder evacuation from fire, including potential blockage of stairways or fire doors. In addition, for the purposes of California Fire Code implementation, the ordinance also adds a statement noting: "In accordance with Government Code sections 51175 through 51189, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are designated as shown on a map titled Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, dated April 8, 2010, and retained on file at the office of the Fire Chief and supersedes other maps previously adopted by Riverside County designating high fire hazard areas." It also defines a "hazardous fire area" as: "private or public land not designated as State or local fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ) which is covered with grass, grain, brush or forest and situated in a location that makes suppression difficult resulting in great damage. Such areas are designated on Hazardous Fire Area maps filed with the office of the Fire Chief." (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-49)

2. Riverside County Ordinance No. 695 – Hazardous Vegetation

Hillsides throughout Riverside County are predominantly mapped as having a substantial fire risk; thus, much of Riverside County is subject to PRC Sections 4291-4299 and Riverside County Ordinance No. 695. This ordinance requires property owners in such areas to reduce fire danger through mowing and other fuel modification methods. This ordinance affects anyone who "owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains any building or structure in, upon, or adjoining any mountainous area or forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, or grass-covered lands or any land covered with flammable material." (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-50)

Among other measures, Ordinance No. 695 requires the abatement of "hazardous vegetation," which is defined in the ordinance as vegetation that is flammable and endangers the public safety by creating a fire hazard. The



type of abatement can depend on the location, terrain, and vegetation present, but typically includes the mowing or discing (plowing up) of vegetation, such as seasonal and recurrent weeds, stubble, brush, dry leaves, and tumbleweeds. Abatement is generally required along roadways and habitable structures either on or adjacent to the property. (Riverside County, 2015a, pp. 4.13-50 to 4.13-51)

Prior to development, Riverside County requires a development within a high fire hazard area (SRA or VHFHSZ Local Responsibility Area [LRA]) to design and implement fuel modification programs for the interface between developed and natural areas within and adjacent to the proposed project area. Such fuel modification plans shall be subject to approval by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). The fuel modification programs shall be achieved through graduated transition from native vegetation to irrigated landscape. The program shall also establish parameters for the percent, age, extent, and nature of native plant removal necessary to achieve Riverside County fire prevention standards to protect human lives and property, while preserving as much natural habitat as practicable. (Riverside County, 2015a, p. 4.13-51)

3. *Riverside County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*

In April 2023 the County of Riverside Emergency Management Department (EMD) published a Multi-Jurisdictional LHMP for the purposes of identifying the County's hazards, reviewing and assessing past disaster occurrences, estimating the probability of future occurrences, and setting goals to reduce or eliminate potential risks to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards, including wildfire. Regarding the topic of Wildland Fire, the LHMP recognizes that wildfire poses a significant risk to the people of California and their homes, and the most significant risk is predominantly associated with wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas. WUI is a general term that applies to development interspersed within or adjacent to landscapes that support wildland fire. The LHMP includes a set of fire hazard strategies (Strategies 4.1 through 4.26) recommended for implementation. (Riverside EMD, 2023)

4. *Emergency Response I-10 Closure Plan*

The Coachella Association of Governments (CVAG) prepared an emergency response plan for the scenario of Interstate 10 (I-10) being completely closed in one or both of the eastbound or westbound directions. The Plan describes the participating entities and dispatches for CalFire, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans District 8, the California Office of Emergency Services, the Riverside Office of Emergency Services, and Riverside County Sheriff's Department, and describes evacuation measures as that include turning traffic around at ramps, median turnarounds, and diverting traffic to southbound arterials where vehicles can use one or more east-west arterials. In extreme cases, CHP may request that median barriers be removed by any means feasible to facilitate turnarounds between ramps west of Dillon Road, in close coordination with Caltrans. (CVAG, 2008)

4.21.3 BASIS FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Section XX of Appendix G to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines identifies the following threshold questions for evaluating impacts due to wildfire:



- If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risk, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations for a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?
- If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project 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?
- If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

The following thresholds are derived from Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist and are supplemented by the thresholds listed in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, in order to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts due to wildfires. The proposed Project would result in a significant impact due to wildfires if the Project or any Project-related component would:

- Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency 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;*
- 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;*
- 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; or*
- Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.*

The significance thresholds set forth in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist, as modified/updated per the 2018 updates to the CEQA Guidelines, were used to evaluate the significance of the proposed Project's impacts due to wildfires.



4.21.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Threshold a.: Would the Project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

There are no emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans in effect in the immediate Project area. However, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVWD) has an Emergency Response I-10 Closure Plan to address the situation of I-10 being closed in one or both directions (CVAG, 2008). In this situation, Varner Road south of the Project site is identified as an alternative route to I-10 (CVAG, 2008, p. 7).

During construction and long-term operation of the Project, adequate emergency access for emergency vehicles would be required to be maintained along public streets that abut the Project site. Furthermore, improvements planned as part of the Project are not anticipated to adversely affect traffic operations in the local area, including along nearby segments of Rio del Sol or any of the off-site areas where power poles would be installed. During the Project's construction, a traffic control plan would be implemented as a condition of County approval to ensure that adequate traffic flow is maintained on public roadways, including for emergency vehicles. As part of the County's discretionary review process, Riverside County reviewed the Project's application materials to ensure that appropriate emergency ingress and egress would be available to and from the Project site and that circulation on the Project site was adequate for emergency vehicles. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan, and no impact would occur.

Threshold b.: Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, would the Project exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose Project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Threshold c.: Would the Project 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?

Threshold e.: Would the Project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

The Project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) and is not located within a State Responsibility Area (SRA). Implementation of the proposed Project would result in the conversion of an undeveloped property to a proposed light industrial warehouse development that includes a 1,238,992 square foot (s.f.) warehouse building and an Imperial Irrigation District (IID) joint electric substation, along with hardscape and landscape areas, and off-site road and overhead electrical line infrastructure. Although the Project site is not subject to wildfire hazards under existing conditions, the Project would reduce the potential for wildfire hazards on the site by removing natural vegetation and developing the site with impervious surfaces and irrigated landscaping.

Generally, other than initial vegetation clearing activities, Project construction activities would be confined to areas that have been cleared of vegetation, including access roads and work areas; therefore, these activities



are not anticipated to exacerbate existing risks of wildfire. Vehicles and equipment would primarily use existing roads to access work areas, all of which would be cleared of brush. Additionally, construction contractors would be required to comply with the California Fire Code, including smoking only in designated areas, limiting ignition sources, and keeping appropriate fire-fighting equipment on site. Other sections of the California Fire Code would apply to any welding and hot work performed as part of the warehouse building and substation and power line construction. These requirements would reduce ignition risks during construction activities and potentially allow for construction workers to quickly extinguish any incipient fires. Per the California Fire Code, Project construction activities also would need to provide for fire-fighting vehicle access to all construction sites, which would enable firefighters to effectively respond to and combat any fires at the construction sites.

The Project does not involve placement of people or habitable structures in areas where they would be exposed to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire. As previously indicated, according to Riverside County GIS, the Project site and areas surrounding the Project site to the north, east, south, and west are not classified as having a susceptibility to wildfire hazards, indicating that the chance of wildfires affecting these areas is negligible (RCIT, n.d.). Also, there have been no wildfires on the Project site or in the immediate nearby area in recorded history according to CALFire (CalFire, 2023) Furthermore, the Project site would be developed primarily with non-flammable surfaces (e.g., parking areas, drive aisles, concrete tilt-up buildings, etc.), and landscaping on site would be irrigated.

Regarding the proposed IID substation and overhead electrical lines, and with any electrified equipment, there is potential for accidental ignition of nearby vegetation, particularly during high fire hazard conditions/times of the year. Such an occurrence has potential to expose the surrounding community to pollutant concentrations and/or result in the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. However, in accordance with CPUC G.O. 95, IID would be required to maintain acceptable clearances between the power lines and any nearby trees or other vegetation to minimize the risk of the energized lines igniting wildfires. Also as noted above, the IID substation and associated electrical lines are located in a low fire hazard zone. Routine operation and maintenance activities conducted by IID on the proposed substation and overhead electric lines would include vegetation clearing as needed to provide defensible space while minimizing potential susceptibility to fire.

As such, the Project has no potential to exacerbate wildfire risks, expose Project occupants to wildfire-related pollutant concentrations, or expose occupants to the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold d.: Would the Project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

The Project site is located within an LRA and is not located within an SRA (CalFire, n.d.). Under existing and proposed conditions, the Project site exhibits little topographic variation, and development on site as proposed would not involve any uses containing natural vegetation or other features subject to wildland fire hazards. Thus, improvements proposed as part of the Project would not result in an increase in wildfire hazard-related risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope



instability, or drainage changes, as the Project would not require any fire abatement measures, such as fuel modification zones. Areas surrounding the Project site are not classified as having a susceptibility to wildfire hazards, further indicating that the chance of wildfires affecting these areas is negligible (RCIT, n.d.). Therefore, the Project would not 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, and no impact would occur.

4.21.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The cumulative study area for the issue of wildfire includes areas within a five-mile radius of the Project site. This study area is appropriate for analysis because fire events located more than five miles from the Project site are unlikely to affect the Project, and any fires starting in the Project area likely would not affect lands located more than five miles away.

The Project site does not contain any emergency facilities nor does it serve as an emergency evacuation route, and the Project would not serve as an evacuation route under long-term conditions. During construction and at Project build-out, the proposed Project would be required to maintain adequate access for emergency vehicles. Other cumulative developments similarly would be required to accommodate emergency access and facilities. As such, cumulatively-considerable impacts would be less than significant.

As indicated under the analysis of Thresholds b. and e., the Project site and areas surrounding the Project site to the north, east, south, and west are not classified as having a low susceptibility to wildfire hazards, indicating that the chance of wildfires affecting these areas is negligible. Furthermore, the Project site would be developed primarily with non-flammable surfaces (e.g., parking areas, drive aisles, concrete buildings, etc.), and landscaping on site would be irrigated. The proposed IID substation and associated overhead electrical lines would be routinely maintained for defensible space. There are no components of the proposed Project that would exacerbate wildland fire hazards in the local area. Accordingly, cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

As discussed under the analysis of Threshold c., the Project site and areas surrounding the Project site to the north, east, south, and west are not classified as having a susceptibility to wildfire hazards, indicating that the chance of wildfires affecting these areas is negligible. Furthermore, the Project site would be developed primarily with non-flammable surfaces (e.g., parking areas, drive aisles, buildings, etc.), and all landscaping on site would be irrigated. As such, the Project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment, and no impact would occur. Therefore, cumulatively-considerable impacts would be less than significant.

Under existing and proposed conditions, the Project site exhibits little topographic variation, and development on site as proposed would not involve any uses containing natural vegetation or other features subject to wildland fire hazards. Moreover, improvements proposed as part of the Project would not result in an increase in wildfire hazard-related risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. As such, the Project has no potential to cumulatively



contribute to impacts associated with the exposure of 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. Cumulatively-considerable impacts would not occur.

4.21.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS BEFORE MITIGATION

Threshold a.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project site and surrounding areas are not identified as evacuation routes, and there are no adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans applicable to the Project area. During construction and at Project build-out, the proposed Project would be required to maintain adequate access for emergency vehicles. Accordingly, the Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold b., c. and e.: Less-than-Significant Impact. The Project site and areas surrounding the Project site to the north, east, south, and west are not classified as having a susceptibility to wildfire hazards, indicating that the chance of wildfires affecting these areas is low. Furthermore, the Project site would be developed primarily with non-flammable surfaces (e.g., parking areas, drive aisles, buildings, etc.), and all landscaping on site would be irrigated. As such, the Project has no potential to exacerbate wildfire risks, expose Project occupants to wildfire-related pollutant concentrations, or expose occupants to the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. The Project also would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Impacts would be less than significant.

Threshold d.: No Impact. Under existing and proposed conditions, the Project site exhibits little topographic variation, and development on site as proposed would not involve any uses containing natural vegetation or other features subject to wildland fire hazards. Thus, improvements proposed as part of the Project would not result in an increase in wildfire hazard-related risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Areas surrounding the Project site also are not classified as having a susceptibility to wildfire hazards, indicating that the chance of wildfires affecting these areas is negligible. Therefore, the Project would not 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, and no impact would occur.

4.21.7 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, AND MITIGATION

Applicable Regulations and Design Requirements

The following are regulations and design requirements that apply to the proposed Project and that reduce or preclude wildfire-related impacts. Although compliance with mandatory regulatory requirements does not technically meet CEQA's definition for mitigation, they are specified herein as requirements for the Project.

- The Project's construction is required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 787, which addresses implementation of the California Fire Code.



- Installation and maintenance activities associated with the IID substation and overhead electrical lines are required to comply with IID's Regulation No. 23 (addresses clearance requirements around power lines) and Regulation No. 26 (addresses applicable federal, state, and local safety regulations).

Mitigation

The Project would result in less-than-significant wildfire-related impacts; therefore, mitigation measures are not required.



5.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines require that an EIR disclose the significant environmental effects of a project which cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented (CEQA Guidelines § 15126[b]). As described in detail in Section 4.0 of this EIR, the proposed Project is anticipated to result in several impacts to the environment that cannot be reduced to below a level of significance after the implementation of relevant standard conditions of approval, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and application of feasible mitigation measures. The significant environmental effects of the proposed Project that cannot be feasibly mitigated are as follows:

- Air Quality (AQMP Consistency): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the long-term air quality emissions of the Project, but would not reduce the Project's operational-source NO_x and VOC emissions to a level below SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance. Additionally, the Project's proposed land uses for the eastern +/- half of the Project site are not consistent with the growth forecasts included in the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP. Thus, Project's direct and cumulatively-considerable impacts due to a conflict with or obstruction of the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP would represent a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation measures are not available.
- Air Quality (Air Pollutant Emissions): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the Project's long-term air quality emissions, although the exact reduction amount cannot be quantified. For some measures it would be overly speculative to quantify resulting emissions reductions. For instance, while the Project would install passenger car EV charging stations it cannot be determined how many zero emission vehicles would replace gasoline-fueled vehicles as a result. Additionally, in order to promote alternative fuels, and help support "clean" truck fleets, the developer/successor-in-interest at the Project must provide building occupants with information related to SCAQMD's Carl Moyer Program, or other such programs that promote truck retrofits or "clean" vehicles. Yet it cannot be reasonably predicted how many clean trucks would replace diesel-fueled trucks as a result. With other measures the reduction values cannot be quantified due to limitation in the modeling software, such as the requirement that all future cold storage warehousing be equipped with electrical hookups to eliminate idling of main and auxiliary engines during the loading and unloading process. Thus, even with implementation of these mitigation measures and with compliance with the anticipated regulations implemented by the EPA and CARB to improve truck efficiency, the estimated long-term emissions generated under full buildout of the proposed Project still would exceed the SCAQMD's regional operational significance threshold for VOCs and NO_x and would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations in the SSAB for O₃. Additionally, the predominance of the Project's operational-source emissions would be generated by passenger cars and



trucks accessing the Project site. Neither the Project Applicant nor the County have regulatory authority to control tailpipe or consumer product emissions, and no feasible mitigation measures beyond the measures identified herein exist that would reduce Project operational-source VOC or NO_x emissions to levels that are less than significant. Therefore, the proposed Project's operational emissions of VOCs and NO_x would represent a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not available.

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Significant and Unavoidable Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would ensure that the proposed Project is fully consistent with the Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019) by requiring the Project Applicant to demonstrate that implementing building permit applications have incorporated measures to achieve a minimum of 100 points pursuant to the CAP Update Screening Tables, and by requiring future that future building permit applications demonstrate that on site renewable energy production equal to at least 20% of the building's energy demand has been accommodated on site pursuant to CAP measure R2-CE1. Thus, and pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d), because the Project would comply with Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019), and because the CAP Update qualifies as a "Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions," it could be concluded that the Project's GHG emissions would be reduced to less-than-significant levels pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b). However, the Project prior to mitigation would emit 33,130.16 MTCO₂e/yr of GHGs, which is more than 10 times the screening threshold identified by the CAP Update of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. Thus, although implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would serve to reduce the Project's GHG emissions and would assist the County in meeting its GHG reduction targets through 2050, the Project's level of GHG emissions following mitigation still would be substantial and still would have the potential to have a significant impact on the environment. Accordingly, and despite the Project's compliance with the CAP Update, the Project's GHG emissions conservatively are evaluated as a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not currently available.
- Transportation (Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The effectiveness of commute trip reduction measures to reduce VMT are human behavior based. In addition to specific tenancy considerations, locational context is also a major factor relevant to the potential effectiveness of VMT reduction measures. A project can only realize a quantifiable reduction in commute VMT under the most favorable circumstances and ideal local conditions, which are not present in the Project site's context. Although Mitigation Measures MM 4.18-2 and MM 4.18-2 are aimed at reducing the Project's VMT to the maximum practical extent, it is unlikely that the mitigation would reduce the Project's Work VMT or Total VMT per employee to below the County's threshold of significance. Accordingly, Project impacts due to VMT would represent a significant and unavoidable impact on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.



5.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION SHOULD IT BE IMPLEMENTED

The State CEQA Guidelines require EIRs to address any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented (State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(c)). An environmental change would fall into this category if: a) the project would involve a large commitment of non-renewable resources; b) the primary and secondary impacts of the project would generally commit future generations to similar uses; c) the project involves uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents; or d) the proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project results in the wasteful use of energy).

Determining whether the proposed Project may result in significant irreversible environmental changes requires a determination of whether key non-renewable resources would be degraded or destroyed in such a way that there would be little possibility of restoring them. Natural resources in the form of construction materials and energy resources would be used in the construction of the proposed Project, but development of the Project site as proposed would have no measurable adverse effect on the availability of such resources, including resources that may be non-renewable (e.g., fossil fuels). Construction and operation of the proposed Project would not involve the use of large sums or sources of non-renewable energy. Additionally, the Project is required by law to comply with the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), compliance with which reduces a building operation's energy volume that is produced by fossil fuels. The Project would be subject to regulations to reduce the Project's reliance on non-renewable energy sources. The Project also would be subject to the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, which contains provisions designed to increase energy efficiency and availability of renewable energy. The Project also would be subject to California Energy Code, or Title 24, which contains measures to reduce natural gas and electrical demand, thus requiring less non-renewable energy resources. The Project would avoid the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy during Project construction, operation, maintenance, and/or removal. With mandatory compliance to the energy efficiency regulations and the mitigation measures identified to reduce the Project's GHG impacts, the Project would not involve the use of large sums or sources of non-renewable energy.

EIR Subsection 4.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, provides an analysis of the proposed Project's potential to transport or handle hazardous materials which, if released into the environment, could result in irreversible damage. As concluded in the analysis, compliance with federal, State, and local regulation related to hazardous materials would be required of all contractors working on the property during the Project's construction and of all the future occupants of the Project's buildings. As such, construction and long-term operation of the proposed Project would not have the potential to cause significant irreversible damage to the environment, including damage that may result from upset or accident conditions.

5.3 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

CEQA requires a discussion of the ways in which the proposed Project would be growth inducing. The CEQA Guidelines identify a project as growth inducing if it would foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment (CEQA



Guidelines § 15126.2(d)). New employees and new residential developments represent direct forms of growth. These direct forms of growth have a secondary effect of expanding the size of local markets and including additional economic activity in the area.

A project could indirectly induce growth at the local level by increasing the demand for additional goods and services associated with an increase in population or employment and thus reducing or removing the barriers to growth. This typically occurs in suburban or rural environments where population or employment growth results in increased demand for service and commodity markets responding to the new population of residents or employees. Economic growth would likely take place as a result of the proposed Project's operation as a light industrial development. The Project's construction- and operational-related employees would purchase goods and services in the region, but any secondary increase in employment associated with meeting these goods and services needs would be marginal, accommodated by existing goods and service providers, and highly unlikely to result in any new physical impacts to the environment. Therefore, while the Project would create economic opportunities by introducing new job opportunities to the Project site, this change would not induce substantial new growth in the region.

Under CEQA, growth inducement is not considered necessarily detrimental, beneficial, or of significance to the environment. Typically, growth-inducing potential of a project would be considered significant if it fosters growth or a concentration of population in excess of what is assumed in pertinent master plans, land use plans, or in projections made by regional planning agencies such as the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Significant growth impacts also could occur if a project provides infrastructure or service capacity to accommodate growth beyond the levels currently permitted by local or regional plans and policies. In general, growth induced by a project is considered a significant impact if it directly or indirectly affects the ability of agencies to provide needed public services, or if it can be demonstrated that the potential growth significantly affects the environment in some other way.

Areas immediately surrounding the Project site primarily are characterized by undeveloped lands, with an existing organic materials recycling facility occurring immediately north of the Project site and residential uses occurring to the east and southeast of the Project site. Development of the Project site with up to 1,238,992 square feet (s.f.) of light industrial/warehouse uses would not directly induce surrounding properties to develop, because undeveloped areas in the immediate Project vicinity are already designated by the Riverside County General Plan for future development with light industrial or residential uses. Furthermore, and with exception of the proposed Imperial Irrigation District (IID) joint substation and associated off-site power poles, roadway and utility improvements proposed as part of the Project have been designed to serve the proposed Project, and would not remove infrastructure-related obstacles to development of other off-site properties. Additionally, with improvements, fee payments, and fair-share monetary contributions, as would be imposed as conditions of approval for the Project based on the results of the site-specific Traffic Analysis (EIR *Technical Appendix K1*), all roadways that would serve the Project would have the capacity to accommodate Project and cumulative traffic. Based on the analysis provided in EIR Subsection 4.20, *Utilities and Service Systems*, the Project would be adequately served by water service, sewer service, drainage facilities, and other utilities and service systems (with exception of electricity service, as discussed below). Accordingly, the growth-inducing impacts of the Project would be less than significant. The Project is not expected to induce



growth of land use changes on other parcels in the vicinity, as other lands surrounding the site are either already developed or planned to be developed consistent with their general plan land use designations.

The Project area currently does not have adequate capacity for electricity to accommodate the proposed Project. As a result, an IID joint substation is proposed in the southeastern corner of the Project site on approximately 2.5 acres, and a number of power poles would need to be constructed off site, as discussed in further detail in EIR subsection 3.5.3. Although the IID substation could facilitate an increase in growth in the local area, any such growth would not exceed the growth already anticipated for the local area by the County's General Plan and the WCVAP. Specifically, undeveloped lands located along the potential power pole alignments, as shown on EIR Figure 3-6, and within close proximity to the Project site are designated by the General Plan and WCVAP for a mixture of land uses, including light industrial land uses, residential land uses, recreational land uses, and commercial retail land uses. Given that large portions of the surrounding community contain undeveloped lands that already are designated for urban land uses, the proposed IID joint electric substation is not anticipated to induce substantial unplanned population growth in the local area.

Furthermore, the proposed Project's improvements to the public infrastructure, including roads, drainage infrastructure, and other utility improvements are consistent with Riverside County's General Plan and would not indirectly induce substantial and unplanned population growth in the local area, beyond anticipated growth associated with the proposed on-site IID substation, as discussed above.

5.4 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT DURING THE INITIAL STUDY PROCESS

An Initial Study was not prepared and was not required for the Project. In accordance with CEQA requirements, this Project EIR evaluates all of the environmental topics contained in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, as well as the supplemental topics and thresholds of significance included in Riverside County's Environmental Assessment Checklist.



6.0 ALTERNATIVES

State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(a) describes the scope of analysis that is required when evaluating alternatives to proposed projects, as follows:

“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 selection of 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.”

6.1 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE PROJECT IMPACTS

As discussed in EIR Section 4.0, *Environmental Analysis*, the proposed Project would result in significant adverse environmental effects that cannot be mitigated to below levels of significance after the implementation of Project design features, mandatory regulatory requirements, and feasible mitigation measures. The unavoidable significant impacts are:

- Air Quality (AQMP Consistency): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the long-term air quality emissions of the Project but would not reduce the Project’s operational-source NO_x and VOC emissions to a level below SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance. Additionally, the Project’s proposed land uses for the eastern +/- half of the Project site are not consistent with the growth forecasts included in the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP. Thus, Project’s direct and cumulatively-considerable impacts due to a conflict with or obstruction of the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP would represent a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation measures are not available.
- Air Quality (Air Pollutant Emissions): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.3-1 through MM 4.3-7 would reduce the Project’s long-term air quality emissions, although the exact reduction amount cannot be quantified. For some measures it would be overly speculative to quantify resulting emissions reductions. For instance, while the Project would install passenger car EV charging stations it cannot be determined how many zero emission vehicles would replace gasoline-fueled vehicles as a result. Additionally, in order to promote alternative fuels, and help support “clean” truck fleets, the developer/successor-in-interest at the Project must provide building occupants with information related to SCAQMD’s Carl Moyer Program, or other such programs that promote truck retrofits or “clean”



vehicles. Yet it cannot be reasonably predicted how many clean trucks would replace diesel-fueled trucks as a result. With other measures the reduction values cannot be quantified due to limitation in the modeling software, such as the requirement that all future cold storage warehousing be equipped with electrical hookups to eliminate idling of main and auxiliary engines during the loading and unloading process. Thus, even with implementation of these mitigation measures and with compliance with the anticipated regulations implemented by the EPA and CARB to improve truck efficiency, the estimated long-term emissions generated under full buildout of the proposed Project still would exceed the SCAQMD's regional operational significance threshold for VOCs and NO_x and would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations in the SSAB for O₃. Additionally, the predominance of the Project's operational-source emissions would be generated by passenger cars and trucks accessing the Project site. Neither the Project Applicant nor the County have regulatory authority to control tailpipe or consumer product emissions, and no feasible mitigation measures beyond the measures identified herein exist that would reduce Project operational-source VOC or NO_x emissions to levels that are less than significant. Therefore, the proposed Project's operational emissions of VOCs and NO_x would represent a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not available.

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Significant and Unavoidable Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would ensure that the proposed Project is fully consistent with the Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019) by requiring the Project Applicant to demonstrate that implementing building permit applications have incorporated measures to achieve a minimum of 100 points pursuant to the CAP Update Screening Tables, and by requiring future that future building permit applications demonstrate that on site renewable energy production equal to at least 20% of the building's energy demand has been accommodated on site pursuant to CAP measure R2-CE1. Thus, and pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d), because the Project would comply with Riverside County CAP Update (November 2019), and because the CAP Update qualifies as a "Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions," it could be concluded that the Project's GHG emissions would be reduced to less-than-significant levels pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b). However, the Project prior to mitigation would emit 33,130.16 MTCO₂e/yr of GHGs, which is more than 10 times the screening threshold identified by the CAP Update of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. Thus, although implementation of Mitigation Measures MM 4.8-1 and MM 4.8-2 would serve to reduce the Project's GHG emissions and would assist the County in meeting its GHG reduction targets through 2050, the Project's level of GHG emissions following mitigation still would be substantial and still would have the potential to have a significant impact on the environment. Accordingly, and despite the Project's compliance with the CAP Update, the Project's GHG emissions conservatively are evaluated as a significant and unavoidable impact for which additional mitigation is not currently available.
- Transportation (Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)): Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impact. The effectiveness of commute trip reduction measures to reduce VMT are human behavior based. In addition to specific tenancy considerations, locational context is also a major factor relevant to the potential effectiveness of VMT reduction measures. A project can



only realize a quantifiable reduction in commute VMT under the most favorable circumstances and ideal local conditions, which are not present in the Project site's context. Although Mitigation Measures MM 4.18-2 and MM 4.18-2 are aimed at reducing the Project's VMT to the maximum practical extent, it is unlikely that the mitigation would reduce the Project's Work VMT or Total VMT per employee to below the County's threshold of significance. Accordingly, Project impacts due to VMT would represent a significant and unavoidable impact on both a direct and cumulatively-considerable basis.

6.2 ALTERNATIVES UNDER CONSIDERATION

In compliance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(a), an EIR must 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." The EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative; rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would avoid or substantially lessen significant effects of the project, even if "these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly" (State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(b)).

State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(e) requires that an alternative be included that describes what would reasonably be expected to occur on the property in the foreseeable future if the Project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services (i.e., the "no project" alternative). For development projects that include a revision to an existing land use plan, the "no project" alternative is considered to be the continuation of the existing land use plan into the future. For projects other than a land use plan (for example, a development project on an identifiable property), the "no project" alternative is considered to be a circumstance under which the project does not proceed (State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(e)(3)(A-B)). For the alternatives analysis in this EIR, the potential scenario where the Project site remains in its current undeveloped condition is considered to be the "No Development Alternative (NDA)," while the potential scenario where the existing Riverside County General Plan land use plan is implemented is considered to be the "No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative (NPA)."

The following scenarios are identified by the County of Riverside as potential alternatives to implementation of the proposed Project. The Small Building Alternative (SBA) is considered the Environmentally Superior Alternative pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6.

6.2.1 NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

The No Development Alternative (NDA) considers no development/disturbance on the Project site beyond that which occurs under existing conditions. As such, the Project site would continue to consist of 83.0 acres of vacant and undeveloped land. Under the NDA, no improvements would be made to the Project site and none of the Project's roadway, utility, or other infrastructure improvements would occur. This Alternative was selected by the Lead Agency to compare the environmental effects of the proposed Project with an alternative that would leave the Project site in its existing condition.



6.2.2 NO PROJECT (EXISTING GENERAL PLAN) ALTERNATIVE

The No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative (NPA) assumes development of the 83.0-acre property in accordance with the site’s existing General Plan land uses. The Project site is located within the WCVAP portion of the Riverside County General Plan. Figure 2-4 in EIR Subsection 2.0 depicts the site’s existing General Plan land use designations. As shown, under existing conditions the eastern +/- 39.9 acres of the Project site are designated for “Medium Density Residential (MDR)” land uses, while the eastern +/- 43.1 acres of the Project site are designated for “Light Industrial (LI)” land uses. Based on the midpoint densities and probably intensities specified in Appendix E to the County’s General Plan for residential and light industrial uses, Table 6-1, *No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative Land Use Summary*, provides a summary of the land uses that likely would be developed on site based on the site’s existing General Plan land use designations. As shown in Table 6-1, the NPA would result in approximately 140 dwelling units within the eastern 39.9 acres of the Project site and approximately 570,741 s.f. of light industrial building area within the western portions of the Project site. Due to the reduction in the size of the proposed light industrial building, it is expected that no Imperial Irrigation District (IID) substation would need to be constructed on site. Additionally, and in order to assist with the evaluation of potential traffic-related impacts (e.g., vehicular-related air quality), Table 6-2, *No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative Average Daily Traffic*, provides an estimate of the amount of traffic that would be generated by the NPA. As shown, it is expected that the NPA would result in approximately 2,536 Average Daily Trips (ADT) in terms of actual vehicles, which is a nominal reduction in total ADT as compared to the Project’s anticipated 2,640 ADT, although it should be noted that the number of heavy truck trips under the NPA would be decreased by approximately 48% as compared to the Project. This Alternative was selected by the Lead Agency to compare the environmental effects of the proposed Project with an alternative that would allow for buildout of the Project site in accordance with the site’s existing General Plan land use designations.

Table 6-1 No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative Land Use Summary

Land Use	Acres	Midpoint Density/ Probable Intensity ^{1, 2}	Totals ²
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	39.9	3.5 du/ac	140 du
Light Industrial (LI)	43.1	0.38 FAR	570,741 s.f.

1. Midpoint density/probably intensity are derived from Appendix E to the County’s General Plan. Table E-1 of Appendix E indicates that MDR land uses are expected to be developed at a mid-point density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). For light industrial land uses, Table E-3 of Appendix E indicates that LI land uses are likely to include up to approximately 20% of non-buildable area (e.g., due to roadway right-of-way dedications, etc.), while Table E-4 indicates that the developable portions of lands designated for LI land uses are expected to be developed at a “probable” floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.38.

2. Notes: du = dwelling unit; ac = acre; FAR = floor area ratio.
(Riverside County, 2021a, Appendix E, Tables E-1, E-3, and E-4)



Table 6-2 No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative Average Daily Traffic

Land Use	Intensity ¹	Trip Generation Rates ^{1,2}	Estimate Average Daily Traffic (ADT) ³
Residential Traffic Volumes			
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	140 du	9.44 trips/du/day	1,322
Residential Subtotals:	140 du	--	1,322
Light Industrial Traffic Volumes⁴			
High-Cube Cold Storage Warehouse (20%)	114,148 s.f.	2.120/1,000 s.f.	242
High-Cube Fulfillment Center Warehouse (80%)	456,593 s.f.	2.129/1,000 s.f.	972
Light Industrial Subtotals:	570,741 s.f.	--	1,214
No Project Alternative Totals:	140 du 570,741 s.f.	--	2,536

- Notes: du = dwelling unit; s.f. = square feet.
- Trip Generation Rates are derived from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) publication entitled, “Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition” (2021).
- ADT values reflect actual vehicles and not passenger car equivalents (PCEs).
- For purposes of analysis, and consistent with the analysis presented in this EIR for the proposed Project, it is assumed that approximately 20% of the overall LI building area would include High-Cube Cold Storage Warehouse uses, with the remaining 80% of the building consisting of High-Cube Fulfillment Center Warehouse uses. (Urban Crossroads, 2023f, Table 4-1)

6.2.3 REDUCED PROJECT ALTERNATIVE (RPA)

The Reduced Project Alternative (RPA) considers development of the 83.0-acre Project site with a smaller warehouse building than is proposed for the Project. Specifically, the RPA would allow for development of a 929,244 s.f. warehouse building in lieu of the 1,238,992 s.f. building proposed as part of the Project. The approximately 7.1 acres of the Project site that would not be developed with warehouse uses under the RPA instead would be developed with a truck trailer parking lot to serve the proposed on-site building as well as existing and future light industrial developments in the local area. As with the Project, under the RPA there would be approximately 2.5 acres on site that would be developed with a joint IID electric substation, and similar to the Project the RPA also would require the installation of power poles and power lines off site. This alternative was selected to allow the Lead Agency (Riverside County) to consider a design for the Project site that would reduce the Project’s operational impacts to air quality and GHGs and due to VMT.

6.2.4 SMALL BUILDING ALTERNATIVE (SBA)

Pursuant to the County’s Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service and Vehicle Miles Traveled (December 2020), general light industrial developments with less than 179,000 s.f. of building area are presumed to result in a less-than-significant transportation impact due to VMT. Thus, this alternative was selected to allow the Lead Agency (Riverside County) to consider a design for the Project site that would avoid the Project’s significant and unavoidable impact due to VMT. The Small Building Alternative (SBA) assumes the Project site would be developed with one warehouse building, but the proposed warehouse building would be reduced in size from approximately 1,238,992 s.f. under the proposed Project to approximately 175,000 s.f. under the SBA (representing a reduction in building area by approximately 85.9%). The portions of the



warehouse lot not used for the building would be used for parking and trailer storage. Due to the significant reduction in the size of the building as compared to the proposed Project, it is anticipated that the IID joint electric substation would not need to be constructed on site under the SBA. All other components of the SBA would be the same as the proposed Project, including the proposed infrastructure and roadway improvements. This alternative was selected by the Lead Agency in order to evaluate an alternative that would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts to transportation, which in turn also would reduce the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts due to air quality and due to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The SBA is identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

6.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

An EIR is required to identify any alternatives that were considered by the Lead Agency but were rejected as infeasible. Among the factors described by State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6 in determining whether to exclude alternatives from detailed consideration in the EIR are: a) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, b) infeasibility, or c) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts. With respect to the feasibility of potential alternatives to the proposed Project, State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(f)(1) notes:

“Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries...and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site...”

In determining an appropriate range of alternatives to be evaluated in this EIR, a number of possible alternatives were initially considered and, for a variety of reasons, rejected. Alternatives were rejected because either: 1) they could not accomplish the basic objectives of the Project, 2) they would not have resulted in a reduction of significant adverse environmental impacts, and/or 3) they were considered infeasible to construct or operate. A summary of the alternatives that were considered but rejected are described below.

6.3.1 ALTERNATIVE SITES

CEQA does not require that an analysis of alternative sites always be included in an EIR. However, if the surrounding circumstances make it reasonable to consider an alternative site, then this alternative should be considered and analyzed in the EIR. In making the decision to include or exclude analysis of an alternative site, the *“key question and first step in analysis is whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need to be considered for inclusion in the EIR”* (State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(f) (2)).

Based on a review of aerial photography, the Riverside County General Plan land use map, and a list of approved/pending development proposals within Riverside County and nearby jurisdictions, there are no other available, undeveloped properties of similar size (i.e., approximately 83.0 acres) that are zoned for and adjacent to other properties designated for urban development that would reduce or avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts. For example, development of the Project at an alternative site location would not reduce



or avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable air quality impacts due to NO_x and VOC emissions, as it is not possible to develop 83.0 acres of light industrial land uses without exceeding the SCAQMD's regional thresholds of significance for these pollutants. In addition, a different site location merely would shift the Project's unavoidable impacts due to VMT to a different location, and it is likely that similar or more severe near-term impacts could occur at off-site locations if the Project were instead to be developed in an area with a more balanced ratio of jobs and housing. For these reasons, Riverside County finds that evaluation of an alternative site location is not required for the Project because alternative site locations would not reduce or avoid the Project's significant environmental effects.

6.4 ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

The following discussion compares the impacts of each alternative considered by the Lead Agency with the impacts of the proposed Project, as detailed in EIR Subsection 4.0, *Environmental Analysis*. A conclusion is provided for each impact as to whether the alternative results in one of the following: (1) reduction or elimination of the proposed Project's impact, (2) a greater impact than would occur under the proposed Project, (3) the same impact as the proposed Project, or (4) a new impact in addition to the proposed Project's impacts. Table 6-3, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, located at the end of this Section, compares the environmental hazard and resource impacts of the alternatives with those of the proposed Project and identifies the ability of the alternative to meet the basic objectives of the Project. As described in EIR Subsection 3.4, the fundamental purpose and goal of the Majestic Thousand Palms Project is to develop an economically viable, employment-generating warehouse distribution center that is compatible with the surrounding area and in close proximity with the State Highway system. The specific objectives of the proposed Project are:

- A. Increase employment-generating land uses north of I-10 in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County.
- B. Strengthen the goods movement supply chain in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by locating a supply chain use close proximity to designated truck routes and the State highway system to avoid or shorten vehicular trip lengths on other roadways.
- C. Expand economic development, facilitate job creation, and increase the tax base in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by accommodating and diversifying facilities needed to support the goods movement supply chain.
- D. Increase the electric utility supply and delivery capacity for the Thousand Palms community.
- E. Provide a land use that is not sensitive to potential odor and windblown material as a transitional land use between an existing organic materials recycling facility and other businesses and residences in Thousand Palms to the south.



6.4.1 NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE (NDA)

The No Development Alternative (NDA) considers no development/disturbance on the Project site beyond that which occurs under existing conditions. As such, the Project site would continue to consist of 83.0 acres of vacant and undeveloped land. Under the NDA, no improvements would be made to the Project site and none of the Project's roadway, utility, or other infrastructure improvements would occur. This Alternative was selected by the Lead Agency to compare the environmental effects of the proposed Project with an alternative that would leave the Project site in its existing condition.

A. Aesthetics

The NDA considers no development or disturbance on the Project site beyond which occurs under existing conditions. As such, the 83.0-acre site would remain vacant and undeveloped. Thus, the Project's less-than-significant impacts to scenic vistas would be avoided under this alternative. The Project site is not visible from any officially-designated State or County scenic highway; however, I-10 is identified as a State Eligible scenic highway. Thus, with implementation of the NDA, impacts to eligible State scenic highways would be less than significant and would be reduced in comparison to the proposed Project. Although the Project is not expected to result in significant impacts due to the degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings, implementation of the NDA would retain the site's existing visual character and impacts would be reduced in comparison to the Project. The NDA would not result in the introduction of any new sources of light or glare on site; thus, implementation of the NDA would result in a reduction of the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to conflicts with Ordinance No. 655 and a reduction in the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to light and glare.

B. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Under the NDA, no new development would occur on site. Under existing conditions, the 83.0-acre Project site is classified by the FMMP as containing "Other Land" and is not considered to comprise "Farmland." Accordingly, impacts to FMMP-designated Farmland would not occur under either the Project or NDA, and the level of impact would be the same. There are no lands surrounding the Project site that are zoned for agricultural use; thus, neither the Project nor NDA would result in a conflict with agricultural zoning, and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, the Project site is not utilized for agricultural production, is not located within any agricultural preserves, and is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract; thus, the Project and the NDA would result in less-than-significant impacts due to a conflict with existing agricultural uses, and the level of impact would be similar. The Project site and surrounding areas are not zoned for 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)). As such, neither the Project nor the NDA would result in impacts to forestry resources, and impacts would be the same.

C. Air Quality

Under the NDA, there would be no new construction or development on the Project site. Because no new development or construction would take place, the NDA would have no potential to result in a conflict with



the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP; thus, implementation of the NDA would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts due to a conflict with the 2022 SCAQMD AQMP. Because there would be no development under the NDA there would be no increase in emissions of criteria pollutants; thus, implementation of the NDA would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts due to operational-source VOC and NO_x emissions that would contribute to the region's non-attainment status for ozone (O₃). Although the proposed Project would result in less-than-significant impacts due to localized air quality emissions, including cancer and non-cancer health risks and CO "hot spots," because no new development would occur on site under the NDA, the NDA would result in reduced impacts due to localized air quality emissions. Implementation of the NDA also would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to odors.

D. Biological Resources

Under the NDA, there would be no new construction or development on the Project site. Because the Project site would be left in an undeveloped state in perpetuity, the NDA would completely avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (after mitigation) due to conflict with the CVMSHCP. Implementation of the NDA also would completely avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (after mitigation) to burrowing owl and nesting birds. The NDA also would allow for increased wildlife movement in the local area as compared to the Project; thus, implementation of the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts to wildlife movement corridors. The NDA also would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (after mitigation) to areas considered jurisdictional by the RWQCB and CDFW. Neither the Project nor the NDA would conflict with any other local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; thus, impacts would not occur under the NDA or the proposed Project, and the level of impact would be the same.

E. Cultural Resources

Under the NDA, there would be no new construction or development on the Project site. The NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (following mitigation) to previously undiscovered surface-level or subsurface historical and/or archaeological resources that may be encountered during grading. Additionally, because there would be no new grading on site, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts to buried human remains that may be uncovered during site grading activities. Thus, impacts to cultural resources would be reduced under the NDA in comparison to the Project.

F. Energy

Under the NDA, there would be no increase in demand from the Project site for energy resources. As such, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Neither the Project nor the NDA would conflict with a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, although impacts would be reduced under the NDA in comparison to the Project because the NDA would not result in an increase in the use of energy resources.



G. Geology and Soils

Under the NDA, there would be no new construction or development on the Project site. There are no known faults on or trending towards the Project site; thus, impacts associated with rupture of a known fault would be less than significant under the proposed Project and the NDA, although the level of impact would be reduced under the NDA because no new development would occur on site. Likewise, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) associated with seismic groundshaking. Because no new development would occur, the NDA would result in reduced impacts as compared to the Project's less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to settlement, ground subsidence, and collapse hazards. There are no volcanos in the area, and the Project site is not adjacent to impounded bodies of water bodies of water susceptible to seiches or slopes and hillsides susceptible to instability; thus, no impacts would occur under the Project or NDA, and the level of impact would be similar. Because there would be no new development on site, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (after mitigation) due to cut or fill slopes higher than 10 feet. Neither the Project nor the NDA would result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems, and neither the Project nor the NDA would require septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems on unsuitable soils; thus, impacts would be less than significant and similar under the NDA and proposed Project. During construction of the proposed Project vegetative cover would be removed, increasing the potential for erosion as compared to the site's existing conditions; thus, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant erosion impacts during construction. However, for the proposed Project under long-term conditions, the Project site's potential for erosion would be substantially reduced as compared to existing conditions due to the introduction of impervious surfaces and landscaped areas on site; thus, impacts under long-term conditions due to erosion would be increased under the NDA as compared to long-term operations associated with the Project. Lastly, the soils on-site are considered "non-expansive" soils; thus, impacts would be less than significant and would be similar under the NDA and the Project.

H. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Under the NDA, there would be no new construction or development on the Project site. As such, there would be no increase in GHG emissions from the Project site under the NDA. Accordingly, the NDA would completely avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impact due to GHG emissions. The Project's less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to a conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs also would be avoided with implementation of the NDA.

I. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Under the NDA, there would be no new development on site. The NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to the creation of a significant hazard to the public or environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. There would be no construction activities or changes to operational conditions on site under the NDA; thus, the NDA would result in reduced impacts in comparison to the Project's less-than-significant construction and operational impacts due to hazardous materials. Neither the Project nor the NDA would impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan; thus, impacts under the NDA and proposed Project would be



less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. Because no new development would be constructed on site, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to a conflict with emergency evacuation plans. Although neither the Project nor the NDA would emit hazardous emissions, or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school, impacts to nearby schools would be reduced in comparison to the Project's less-than-significant impacts because there would be no change in the site's existing conditions under the NDA. The Project site is not identified on any lists of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; thus, no impact would occur under the Project or NDA, and the level of impact would be similar. In addition, the Project site is not located within two miles of a public or private airport and is not located within an airport land use plan; thus, no impacts due to airport-related safety hazards would occur under the NDA or proposed Project, and the level of impact would be similar.

J. Hydrology and Water Quality

Under the NDA, there would be no new development on site. The NDA would result in reduced impacts to water quality as compared to the Project's less-than-significant water quality impacts during construction activities. While the risk of erosion would increase during construction of the proposed Project, under long-term operating conditions the Project would result in the introduction of impervious surfaces and landscaped areas; thus, long-term operational erosion impacts would be increased under the NDA due to the lack of impervious surfaces and vegetative cover on portions of the site. While the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts due to groundwater recharge, impacts to groundwater recharge would be reduced under the NDA because there would be no new impervious surfaces on site. Although the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to the site's existing drainage pattern, there would be no changes to the site's drainage patterns under the NDA and impacts therefore would be reduced in comparison to the proposed Project. Similarly, although the Project would not exceed the capacity of any existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, impacts would be reduced in comparison to the Project because there would be no changes to site drainage under the NDA. Additionally, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to flood hazards as the NDA would not entail any new development on site and thus would not require a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) or a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) from FEMA to remove the Project site from the mapped floodplain. The Project site is not subject to inundation from tsunamis or seiches; thus, impacts would be less than significant and would be similar under the Project and NDA.

K. Land Use and Planning

The NDA would not be consistent with the existing land use designations applied to the property by the Riverside County General Plan and WCVAP, and impacts due to land use consistency would be increased as compared to the proposed Project. Neither the Project nor the NDA would conflict with the SCAG 2024-2050 RTP/SCS. Additionally, neither the Project nor the NDA would disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community. Therefore, impacts to land use and planning would be less than significant, although impacts would be slightly increased under the NDA due to its inconsistency with the adopted General Plan land use designations for the site..



L. Mineral Resources

The Project site does not contain any known mineral resources that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State. Accordingly, no impacts to mineral resources would occur under the Project or the NDA, and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, neither the Project nor the NDA would represent an incompatible land use located adjacent to a State classified or designated area or existing surface mine, and neither the NDA nor the Project would expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing, or abandoned quarries or mines. No impacts would occur, and the level of impact would be similar.

M. Noise

The Project site is located outside of areas subject to public and private airport-related noise levels exceeding 60 dBA CNEL for the PSIA and 55 dBA CNEL for the Bermuda Dunes Airport; thus, impacts due to airport-related noise would be less than significant under both the Project and the NDA. The NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (after mitigation) due to construction-related noise impacts. Additionally, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to operational and traffic-related noise because there would be no new development and no increase in traffic generated by the site under the NDA. Additionally, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to construction-related vibration, and also would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to operational-related vibration.

N. Paleontological Resources

Under the NDA, there would be no new construction or development on site. Therefore, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant construction-related impacts (after mitigation) to paleontological resources that may be buried beneath the site's surface.

O. Population and Housing

Neither the Project nor the NDA would eliminate any residents or housing or generate any demand for additional housing; thus, no impact due to the displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing would occur under both the Project and the NDA, and the level of impact would be similar. Although the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts due to substantial unplanned population growth, the NDA would not result in any new development on site; thus, impacts associated with population growth would be reduced under the NDA in comparison to the proposed Project.

P. Public Services

There would be no new development on site under the NDA; thus, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts to fire protection, police protection, school services, library services, and health services.

Q. Recreation

The Project does not propose any residential uses or other land use that may generate a population that would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. Likewise, the NDA



would not result in any new development on site and thus would not generate any increase in demand for recreational resources, nor would any recreational resources be constructed on site under the NDA. Therefore, impacts to recreation would be less than significant and would be similar under the Project and the NDA.

R. Transportation

Under the NDA, there would be no new development on site and thus there would be no increase in traffic generated by the site. As such, the NDA would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts due to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Additionally, because the NDA would not require any transportation-related improvements and would not result in any new development on site, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant hazard-related impacts due to a geometric design feature or due to incompatible uses. The NDA also would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to the need for new or altered maintenance of roads. The NDA would not involve a construction phase, and thus would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (after mitigation) to circulation during construction activities on site. The NDA would not result in any impacts due to emergency access or access to nearby uses; thus, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (after mitigation) to emergency access during construction activities. No new bike lanes or trails would be constructed under the NDA; thus, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to sidewalk/parkway construction.

S. Tribal Cultural Resources

There would be no new development on site under the NDA. Accordingly, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (after mitigation) to tribal cultural resources.

T. Utilities and Service Systems

Under the NDA, there would be no increased demand for water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage; thus, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to the construction of such facilities and due to the provision of water or wastewater treatment services. There would be no increase in demand for water resources under the NDA; thus, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts to water supply. Additionally, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to the construction of wastewater conveyance facilities on and off site and would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts to wastewater treatment capacity. There would be no increase in solid waste generated on site; thus, the NDA would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts due to solid waste treatment capacity. There are no components of the NDA or the proposed Project that would conflict with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes, including the County Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP); thus, impacts would be less than significant, and the level of impact would be similar. The NDA also would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to the construction of facilities for electricity, natural gas, communication systems, and street lighting, or due to increased roadway maintenance.



U. Wildfire

Under the NDA, there would be no new development on site. Although impacts due to wildfire would be less than significant under the proposed Project, the NDA would result in reduced impacts due to wildfires in comparison to the Project because no new structures would be developed on site. However, under the NDA the Project site would remain in its existing condition, and ultimately would consist of natural vegetation that could serve as potential fuel for future wildfires in the local area; thus, long-term impacts due to wildland fire hazards would be increased under the NDA as compared to the proposed Project.

V. Conclusion

Implementation of the NDA would result in no physical environmental impacts beyond those that have historically occurred on the property. Almost all effects of the proposed Project would be avoided or lessened by the selection of the NDA, although a few new impacts, such as long-term erosion impacts, would be increased under this alternative. Because this alternative would avoid most of the Project's impacts, it warrants consideration as the "environmentally superior alternative." However, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(e)(2), if the no project alternative is identified as the environmentally superior alternative, then the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Accordingly, the Small Building Alternative (SBA) is identified as the environmentally superior alternative.

The NDA would fail to meet all of the Project's objectives. Specifically, the NDA would not increase employment-generating land uses north of I-10 in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County. Additionally, the NDA would not strengthen the goods movement supply chain in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by locating a supply chain use close proximity to designated truck routes and the State highway system to avoid or shorten vehicular trip lengths on other roadways. The NDA also would fail to meet the Project's objective to expand economic development, facilitate job creation, and increase the tax base in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by accommodating and diversifying facilities needed to support the goods movement supply chain. Additionally, the NDA would fail to meet the Project's objective to increase the electric utility supply and delivery capacity for the Thousand Palms community. The NDA also would fail to meet the Project's objective to provide a land use that is not sensitive to potential odor and windblown material as a transitional land use between an existing organic materials recycling facility and other businesses and residences in Thousand Palms to the south.

6.4.2 NO PROJECT (EXISTING GENERAL PLAN) ALTERNATIVE (NPA)

As previously described in Subsection 6.2.2, the No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative (NPA) assumes development of the 83.0-acre property in accordance with the site's existing General Plan land uses. The Project site is located within the WCVAP portion of the Riverside County General Plan. Figure 2-4 in EIR Subsection 2.0 depicts the site's existing General Plan land use designations. As shown, under existing conditions the eastern +/- 39.9 acres of the Project site are designated for "Medium Density Residential (MDR)" land uses, while the eastern +/- 43.1 acres of the Project site are designated for "Light Industrial (LI)" land uses. Based on the midpoint densities and probably intensities specified in Appendix E to the County's General Plan for residential and light industrial uses, Table 6-1 (previously presented) provides a summary of



the land uses that likely would be developed on site based on the site's existing General Plan land use designations. As shown in Table 6-1, the NPA would result in approximately 140 dwelling units within the eastern 39.9 acres of the Project site and approximately 570,741 s.f. of light industrial building area within the western portions of the Project site. Due to the reduction in the size of the proposed light industrial building, it is expected that no IID substation would need to be constructed on site. Additionally, and in order to assist with the evaluation of potential traffic-related impacts (e.g., vehicular-related air quality), Table 6-2 (previously presented) provides an estimate of the amount of traffic that would be generated by the NPA. As shown, it is expected that the NPA would result in approximately 2,536 Average Daily Trips (ADT) in terms of actual vehicles, which is a nominal reduction in total ADT as compared to the Project's anticipated 2,640 ADT, although it should be noted that the number of heavy truck trips under the NPA would be decreased by approximately 48% as compared to the Project. This Alternative was selected by the Lead Agency to compare the environmental effects of the proposed Project with an alternative that would allow for buildout of the Project site in accordance with the site's existing General Plan land use designations.

A. Aesthetics

Although the Project site is not located within the viewshed of any officially-designated State or County scenic highways or County-eligible scenic highways, development under the Project and NPA would be visible from I-10, which is designated as a State-eligible scenic highway. Development of LI land uses under the NPA within the western portions of the Project site would require approval and implementation of either a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) or Plot Plan, which would specify site-specific development characteristics, including characteristics related to visual quality. However, development of the MDR land uses would require approval only of a Tentative Tract Map (TTM), which does not necessarily require any plans related to site-specific development characteristics. Thus, while impacts to scenic highways would be less than significant under both the Project and the NPA, the level of impact would potentially be increased under the NPA in comparison to the proposed Project. As with the proposed Project, the NPA would not substantially damage scenic resources; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view; substantially degrade the existing visual quality or character of the site or its surroundings; or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and NPA, and although the level of impact would be slightly increased under the NPA due to the lack of required design plans for the MDR land uses.

B. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Under existing conditions, the entire 83.0 Project site is classified by the FMMP as containing "Other Land," and there are no portions of the Project site mapped as containing Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local Importance. Accordingly, impacts to FMMP-designated Farmland would not occur under either the Project or NPA, and the level of impact would be the same. There are no lands surrounding the Project site that are zoned for agricultural use; thus, neither the Project nor NPA would result in a conflict with agricultural zoning, and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, the Project site is not utilized for agricultural production, is not located within any agricultural preserves, and is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract. As such, neither the Project nor the NPA would result in a conflict with existing agricultural uses, agricultural preserves, or lands subject to a Williamson Act Contract; therefore,



impacts would not occur and the level of impact would be similar. The Project site and surrounding areas are not zoned for 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)). As such, neither the Project nor the NPA would result in impacts to forestry resources, and impacts would be the same.

C. Air Quality

As previously presented in Table 6-2, implementation of the NPA would result in approximately 2,536 vehicular trips per day, which is a nominal reduction compared to the Project's 2,640 vehicular trips per day; thus, it can be concluded that the NPA would result in similar levels of vehicular-related emissions as compared to the Project, although air quality emissions associated with consumer products would increase under the NPA as compared to the Project due to the residential uses proposed under the NPA. The NPA would develop the site in accordance with the site's existing General Plan land use designations, and as such the NPA would not exceed the growth assumptions of the SCAQMD AQMP. However, because the amount of traffic would be similar under the Project and NPA, and because the residential uses that would occur under the NPA would result in an increase in the use of consumer products, it can be concluded that the NPA would result in emissions of VOCs and NO_x that would exceed the SCAQMD regional thresholds for these pollutants; thus, both the Project and NPA would result in significant and unavoidable impacts due to a conflict with the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP, although impacts would be reduced under the NPA since the NPA would be consistent with the AQMP growth forecasts for the Project site. Likewise, both the NPA and the proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts due to regional emissions of VOCs and NO_x that would contribute to the region's non-attainment status for ozone (O₃). While neither the Project nor the NPA would result in significant impacts due to localized emissions, due to the approximately 48% reduction in the amount of truck traffic as compared to the proposed Project implementation of the NPA would result in reduced localized air quality impacts, including impacts due to cancer and non-cancer related health risks. Neither the Project nor the NPA would result in significant impacts related to odors, and the level of impact would be similar.

D. Biological Resources

Areas planned for physical impact and development would be the same under the proposed Project and the NPA, except that no off-site power poles would be installed under the NPA. Thus, impacts to biological resources under the NPA and proposed Project would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in EIR Subsection 4.4, although the level of impact would be slightly reduced under the NPA due to the lack of off-site impacts related to power pole installation.

E. Cultural Resources

Areas planned for physical impact and development would be the same under the proposed Project and the NPA, except that no off-site power poles would be installed under the NPA. As such, while impacts to historical resources, archaeological resources, and human remains would be less than significant under the Project and NPA with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in EIR Subsection 4.5, impacts to



cultural resources would be reduced in comparison to the Project due to the lack of off-site power pole construction.

F. Energy

Energy consumed during construction of the proposed Project and NPA would be similar, and would result in similar less-than-significant impacts due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Under long-term operating conditions, the level of energy demands associated with the NPA would be similar to the proposed Project, although the use of natural gas would increase under the NPA as compared to the proposed Project as the Project's proposed warehouse building would not utilize natural gas. Additionally, as previously presented in Table 6-2, implementation of the NPA would result in approximately 2,536 vehicular trips per day, which is a nominal reduction compared to the Project's 2,640 vehicular trips per day; thus, it can be concluded that the NPA would result in similar levels of transportation-related fuel consumption as the proposed Project, although less diesel fuel would be utilized under the NPA due to the 48% reduction in heavy truck trips. Neither the Project nor the NPA would result in the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy and impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, both the Project and NPA would be required to comply with adopted State and local plans related to energy conservation; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.

G. Geology and Soils

Both the Project and NPA would be required to comply with the site-specific recommendations of a geotechnical study to address potential geologic hazards, which would reduce potential impacts due to geology and soils to less-than-significant levels. There are no known faults on or trending towards the site; thus, impacts associated with rupture of a known fault would be less than significant and similar under the proposed Project and the NPA. However, because the NPA would involve a higher number of residents on site compared to the Project, the Project's less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to strong seismic ground shaking and collapse hazards would be increased under the NPA, although such impacts still would be less than significant. Impacts due to due to settlement, ground subsidence, and collapse hazards would be less than significant (with mitigation) under the NPA and Project and the level of impact would be similar. Both the NPA and the proposed Project would have less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to cut or fill slopes higher than 10 feet, and the level of impact would be similar. Neither the Project nor the NPA would result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems, and neither the Project nor the NPA would require septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems on unsuitable soils; thus, impacts would be less than significant and similar under the NPA and proposed Project. Similarly, impacts due to erosion hazards during construction and long-term operation would be similar under the NPA and proposed Project and impacts would be less than significant.

H. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

As previously presented in Table 6-2, implementation of the NPA would result in approximately 2,536 vehicular trips per day, which is a nominal reduction compared to the Project's 2,640 vehicular trips per day. As previously shown in EIR Table 4.8-4, *Project GHG Emissions*, the vast majority of the Project's GHG



emissions (85.5%) would result from the Project's mobile source emissions. Therefore, due to the nominal reduction in the amount of traffic that would occur under the NPA, the NPA would result in slightly reduced GHG emissions as compared to the proposed Project. As with the Project, the NPA would be required to demonstrate consistency with the County's Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update, which would reduce GHG impacts but would not reduce these impacts to less-than-significant levels. Neither the Project nor the NPA would conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations related to GHGs; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.

I. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Neither the Project nor the NPA would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; thus, impacts would be less than significant, although the level of impact would be slightly reduced under the NPA due to the reduction in the amount of light industrial building area. Similarly, neither the NPA nor the Project would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment, although the level of impact would be slightly reduced under the NPA due to the reduction in the amount of light industrial building area. Neither the Project nor the NPA would impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan; thus, impacts under the NPA and proposed Project would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. Neither the Project nor the NPA would emit hazardous emissions, or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school; thus, impacts would be less than significant, although impacts would be reduced under the NPA due to the reduction in light industrial building area. The Project site is not identified on any lists of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; thus, no impact would occur under the Project or NPA, and the level of impact would be the same. Neither the Project nor the NPA would conflict with an airport master plan, would require review by the Airport Land Use Commission, and neither would result in safety hazards associated with public or private airports; thus, impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and NPA, and the level of impact would be similar.

J. Hydrology and Water Quality

Both the Project and the NPA would be subject to compliance with the Colorado River Region Basin, and would be required to comply with the requirements of the Colorado River Basin RWQCB and Riverside County. This includes the requirement to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Stormwater Permit for construction activities, which requires the preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that would include measures to address water pollution, including sedimentation. Additionally, both the Project and NPA would be subject to NPDES requirements for long-term operations, which would reduce potential water quality impacts (including sediments) from construction to less-than-significant levels. Due to the relatively flat nature of the Project site, it is not expected that the Project or NPA would result in substantial changes to the existing drainage system of the Project site and area; thus, impacts would be less than significant, and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and the NPA would be required to incorporate drainage features (such as detention basins and water quality basins) to ensure that runoff is treated for water quality and is detained prior to discharge such that the



rate of runoff from the Project site does not exceed the rates that occur under existing conditions. Thus, impacts related to exceeding the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage facilities and downstream erosion hazards would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and NPA would entail urban development within a mapped floodplain, which would require approval of a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA to remove the Project site from the mapped floodplain; thus, with approval of a CLOMR and LOMR, impacts due to flood hazards would be less than significant under both the Project and NPA, and the level of impact would be similar. The Project site is not subject to tsunamis or seiches; thus, impacts due to pollution from inundation from flooding, tsunamis, and seiches would be less than significant, and the level of impact would be similar.

K. Land Use and Planning

Assuming the approval of the Project's proposed GPA No. 220004, both the Project and the NPA would be fully consistent with the Riverside County General Plan and WCVAP. Thus, impacts due to a conflict with the General Plan would be less than significant under both the Project and the NPA, although the level of impact would be reduced under the NPA since no General Plan Amendment would be required. Both the Project and NPA also would be consistent with SCAG's 2024-2050 RTP/SCS and the Riverside County General Plan, and as such impacts due to a conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect would be similar and would be less than significant. Additionally, neither the Project nor the NPA would disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.

L. Mineral Resources

The Project site does not contain any known mineral resources that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State. Accordingly, no impacts to mineral resources would occur under the Project or the NPA, and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, neither the Project nor the NPA would represent an incompatible land use located adjacent to a State classified or designated area or existing surface mine, and the NPA and Project would not expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing, or abandoned quarries or mines. No impacts would occur, and the level of impact would be similar.

M. Noise

The Project site is located outside of areas subject to public and private airport-related noise levels exceeding 60 dBA CNEL for the PSIA and 55 dBA CNEL for the Bermuda Dunes Airport; thus, impacts due to airport-related noise would be less than significant under both the Project and the NPA, although the level of impact would be slightly increased under the NPA due to the introduction of residential uses on site. Construction activities would be similar under the Project and NPA; thus, both the Project and NPA would result in less than significant construction-related noise impacts, although impacts would be slightly reduced under the NPA because less nighttime concrete pouring activities would occur under the NPA as compared to the Project. Under long-term operating conditions, the NPA would result in reduced operational-related noise due to the reduction in light industrial building area and the development of residential uses on site, although long-term noise impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and NPA. Additionally, while the NPA would generate similar levels of traffic as the proposed Project, the NPA would involve a reduction in the



number of heavy truck trips by approximately 48%; thus, traffic-related noise impacts would be reduced under the NPA in comparison to the proposed Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and NPA. Both the Project and NPA would result in similar less-than-significant vibration impacts. Additionally, neither the Project nor the NPA would involve uses with the potential to result in vibration impacts; thus, long-term vibration impacts would be less than significant under the Project and NPA, although impacts would be nominally reduced under the NPA due to the reduction in the number of truck trips by approximately 48%.

N. Paleontological Resources

The Project site was determined to have a “Low Potential (L)” for containing paleontological resources. However, there is a remote potential that fossils may be discovered during grading and earthmoving activities, which is evaluated as a potentially significant impact of the proposed Project and the NPA. Both the Project and NPA would result in similar significant but mitigatable impacts to paleontological resources that may be buried beneath the site’s surface, although the level of impact would be reduced under the NPA because no off-site power poles would be constructed under the NPA.

O. Population and Housing

Neither the Project nor the NPA would result in the displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of housing elsewhere; thus, no impact would occur under either the Project or the NPA and the level of impact would be the same. Neither the NPA nor the Project would represent substantial unplanned population growth as the Project site currently is planned for urban land uses by the County’s General Plan; however, because the Project would require approval of a GPA, impacts to population and housing would be slightly increased under the Project as compared to the NPA. Additionally, impacts due to growth inducement would be similar under both the Project and NPA and would be less than significant.

P. Public Services

Both the NPA and proposed Project would entail development of the Project site with urban land uses, which would increase the site’s demand for public services. It is anticipated that the Project and NPA would result in similar demands for fire protection and sheriff services. With mandatory payment of Development Impact Fees (DIF), impacts to fire and sheriff services would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar under the Project and NPA. However, the NPA would result in the development of 140 dwelling units on site, which would result in a direct demand for school services. As the Project would not result in a direct increase in demand for school services, impacts to schools would be increased under the NPA as compared to the Project, although impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with mandatory payment of school impact fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 575. Similarly, because the Project would not result in a direct demand for library services, and because the NPA would result in the development of 140 dwelling units, the NPA would result in increased impacts to library services, although such impacts would be reduced with mandatory payment of DIF fees. The Project and NPA both would result in less-than-significant impacts to health services with mandatory payment of DIF fees, and the level of impact would be similar.



Q. Recreation

Both the proposed Project and NPA would require the construction of sidewalks and parkways along the Project site's frontage; however, the NPA likely would be required to accommodate parkland on site. As such, impacts due to the physical construction of trails and recreational facilities would be increased under the NPA as compared to the Project, although such impacts would be less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures identified by this EIR. Additionally, due to the introduction of residential uses as proposed by the NPA, the NPA would result in increased degradation of existing recreational facilities, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and the NPA. The Project site is not located within a Community Service Area (CSA) for recreational resources; however, the NPA would include residential subdivision of land, and therefore would be required by Riverside County Ordinance No. 348 to either accommodate parkland on site, or to pay in-lieu fees for off-site parkland development/improvement. Accordingly, impacts due to the need to pay Quimby fees would increase under the NPA as compared to the Project, but would be less than significant with mandatory compliance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 348.

R. Transportation

Both the Project and NPA would be required to comply with all applicable transportation-related policies of the Riverside County General Plan, and the Project and NPA also would be subject to compliance with Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 413, 452, 460, 461, 499, 659, 671, 748, or 824, which are the applicable ordinances within the County related to the circulation system. Accordingly, neither the Project nor the NPA would conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. With respect to VMT, and as previously summarized in Table 6-2, the NPA would result in a nominal reduction in the amount of traffic generated by the Project site as compared to the proposed Project (i.e., a reduction of approximately 104 daily vehicular trips). Additionally, the NPA would result in a decrease in the number of heavy truck trips generated by the Project site by approximately 48%, and heavy truck trips on average tend to travel longer distances than passenger vehicle traffic. Thus, impacts due to VMT would be reduced under the NPA as compared to the proposed Project, although the NPA still likely would result in significant unavoidable impacts due to VMT. The NPA would result in the introduction of residential uses in close proximity to light industrial uses; thus, impacts due to incompatible land uses would increase under the NPA as compared to the Project, but still likely would be less than significant. Both the Project and NPA would result in an increase in the need for roadway maintenance, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and NPA and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and NPA would require mitigation to reduce construction-related impacts due to proposed roadway improvements that could affect access and emergency access in the local area, although such impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with mitigation and the level of impact would be similar.

S. Tribal Cultural Resources

Grading activities under the Project and NPA would be the same, except that there would be no power pole construction off site under the NPA. As such, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be reduced



under the NPA in comparison to the proposed Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA with implementation of mitigation measures.

T. Utilities and Service Systems

Both the Project and NPA would require the construction of water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities. The CVWD determined that it has sufficient water resources to accommodate development proposed as part of the Project, while the NPA is fully consistent with the growth assumptions used by CVWD for long-term planning efforts. Thus, because CVWD would be able to provide potable water to both the Project or the NPA, impacts to water supply would be less than significant under both the Project and NPA, although impacts would be slightly increased under the NPA because residential uses result in a higher demand for potable water than light industrial uses on an acre-by-acre basis. Impacts associated with sewer improvements would be similar under the Project and NPA and would be less than significant. However, because medium density residential uses generate more wastewater requiring treatment as compared to light industrial uses, impacts to sewer treatment capacity would be increased under the NPA as compared to the Project, although such impacts still would be less than significant. The NPA likely would result in similar levels of solid waste requiring disposal; thus, impacts to landfill capacity would be similar under the Project and NPA and impacts would be less than significant. All other impacts to utilities and service systems would be similar under the Project and NPA, and would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with implementation of the mitigation measures identified by this EIR.

U. Wildfire

Both the Project and the NPA would introduce urban development to the Project site. However, neither the Project nor the NPA would result in significant impacts due to wildfire-related hazards because the Project area is not considered susceptible to wildland fire hazards. Impacts associated with wildfires would be less than significant under the Project and NPA, and the level of impact would be similar.

V. Conclusion

As compared to the proposed Project, the NPA would have increased impacts under the issue areas of aesthetics; geology and soils; public services; recreation; and utilities and service systems. The NPA would result in the same or similar impacts under the issue areas of agriculture and forestry resources; energy; hydrology and water quality; mineral resources; paleontological resources; and wildfire. The NPA would have reduced impacts under the issue areas of air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; greenhouse gas emissions; hazards and hazardous materials; land use and planning; noise; population and housing; transportation; and tribal cultural resources.

The NPA generally would meet most of the Project's objectives, although generally to a lesser extent. The NPA would be less effective than the proposed Project in increasing employment-generating land uses north of I-10 in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County. Due to the reduction in the amount of warehouse building area under the NPA, the NPA also would be less effective than the Project in strengthening the goods movement supply chain in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by locating a supply chain use close proximity to designated truck routes and the State



highway system to avoid or shorten vehicular trip lengths on other roadways. Similarly, the NPA would be less effective than the proposed Project in expanding economic development, facilitating job creation, and increasing the tax base in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by accommodating and diversifying facilities needed to support the goods movement supply chain. Under the NPA, the IID joint electric substation would not be constructed on site; thus, the NPA would fail to meet the Project's objective to increase the electric utility supply and delivery capacity for the Thousand Palms community. Furthermore, due to the introduction of 140 dwelling units on site under the NPA, the NPA would fail to meet the Project's objective to provide a land use that is not sensitive to potential odor and windblown material as a transitional land use between an existing organic materials recycling facility and other businesses and residences in Thousand Palms to the south.

6.4.3 REDUCED PROJECT ALTERNATIVE (RPA)

The Reduced Project Alternative (RPA) considers development of the 83.0-acre Project site with a smaller warehouse building than is proposed for the Project. Specifically, the RPA would allow for development of a 929,244 s.f. warehouse building in lieu of the 1,238,992 s.f. building proposed as part of the Project. The approximately 7.1 acres of the Project site that would not be developed with warehouse uses under the RPA instead would be developed with a truck trailer parking lot to serve the proposed on-site building as well as existing and future light industrial developments in the local area. As with the Project, under the RPA there would be approximately 2.5 acres on site that would be developed with a joint IID electric substation, and similar to the Project the RPA also would require the installation of power poles and power lines off site. This alternative was selected to allow the Lead Agency (Riverside County) to consider a design for the Project site that would reduce the Project's operational impacts to air quality and GHGs and due to VMT.

A. Aesthetics

Although the Project site is not located within the viewshed of any officially-designated State or County scenic highways or County-eligible scenic highways, development under the Project and RPA would be visible from I-10, which is designated as a State-eligible scenic highway. As with the Project, development of LI land uses would require approval of a plot plan, which would identify Project-specific design components that have been incorporated into the Project's application materials in order to preclude adverse effects to visual quality. Although the RPA would include a smaller building than the proposed Project, the visual characteristics of the RPA when viewed from off-site locations would be substantially similar. Thus, impacts to scenic highways would be less than significant under both the Project and the RPA, and the level of impact would be similar. As with the proposed Project, the RPA would not substantially damage scenic resources; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view; substantially degrade the existing visual quality or character of the site or its surroundings; or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA, although impacts to aesthetics would be slightly reduced under the RPA because no off-site power poles would be constructed as part of the RPA.



B. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Under existing conditions, the entire 83.0 Project site is classified by the FMMP as containing “Other Land,” and there are no portions of the Project site mapped as containing Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local Importance. Accordingly, impacts to FMMP-designated Farmland would not occur under either the Project or RPA, and the level of impact would be the same. There are no lands surrounding the Project site that are zoned for agricultural use; thus, neither the Project nor RPA would result in a conflict with agricultural zoning, and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, the Project site is not utilized for agricultural production, is not located within any agricultural preserves, and is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract. As such, neither the Project nor the RPA would result in a conflict with existing agricultural uses, agricultural preserves, or lands subject to a Williamson Act Contract; therefore, impacts would not occur and the level of impact would be similar. The Project site and surrounding areas are not zoned for 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)). As such, neither the Project nor the RPA would result in impacts to forestry resources, and impacts would be the same.

C. Air Quality

The RPA would result in a reduction in the amount of warehouse building area allowed on site by approximately 25% as compared to the proposed Project. As with the proposed Project, the RPA would not be consistent with the land use modeling inputs assumed for the eastern +/- half of the Project site by the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP. Additionally, while reducing the size of the warehouse building would avoid the Project’s significant and unavoidable operational impacts due to operational emissions of VOCs, the RPA still would exceed the SCAQMD’s Regional Threshold for emissions of NO_x. As such, the RPA would result in a significant and unavoidable impact due to a conflict with the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP, although the level of impact would be reduced in comparison to the Project due to the reduction in emissions by approximately 25%. Construction characteristics of the RPA and proposed Project would be similar and would not exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds for any criteria pollutants. However, and as noted above, while the RPA would avoid the Project’s significant and unavoidable impacts due to operational-related VOC emissions, the RPA still would result in operational emissions of NO_x that would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Threshold for this pollutant; thus, implementation of the RPA would result in a significant and unavoidable impact due to a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant (i.e., ozone) for which the Project region is non-attainment, although the level of impact would be reduced in comparison to the Project. Although the Project and the RPA would result in less-than-significant impacts due to substantial pollutant concentrations, due to the reduction in warehouse building area under the RPA the RPA would result in reduced impacts as compared to the Project in relation to Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) and cancer and non-cancer health risks. Neither the Project nor the RPA would result in significant impacts related to odors, and the level of impact would be similar.

D. Biological Resources

Areas planned for physical impact and development would be the same under the proposed Project and the RPA. Thus, impacts to biological resources under the RPA and proposed Project would be the same, and would



be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in EIR Subsection 4.4.

E. Cultural Resources

Areas planned for physical impact and development would be the same under the proposed Project and the RPA. As such, impacts to historical resources, archaeological resources, and human remains would be identical under the proposed Project and RPA, and would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in EIR Subsection 4.5.

F. Energy

Energy consumed during construction of the proposed Project and RPA would be similar, and would result in similar less-than-significant impacts due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Under long-term operating conditions, the level of energy demands associated with the RPA would be reduced in comparison to the proposed Project due to the reduction in the amount of warehouse building area. Although neither the Project nor the RPA would result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources under long-term conditions, impacts under the RPA would be slightly reduced in comparison to the Project. Additionally, both the Project and RPA would be required to comply with adopted State and local plans related to energy conservation; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.

G. Geology and Soils

Both the Project and RPA would be required to comply with the site-specific recommendations of a geotechnical study to address potential geologic hazards, which would reduce potential impacts due to geology and soils to less-than-significant levels. There are no known faults on or trending towards the site; thus, impacts associated with rupture of a known fault would be less than significant and similar under the proposed Project and the RPA. However, because the RPA would involve fewer employees on site compared to the Project, the Project's less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to strong seismic ground shaking and collapse hazards would be slightly reduced under the RPA and impacts would be less than significant. Impacts due to due to settlement, ground subsidence, and collapse hazards would be less than significant (with mitigation) under the RPA and Project and the level of impact would be similar. Both the RPA and the proposed Project would have less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to cut or fill slopes higher than 10 feet, and the level of impact would be similar. Neither the Project nor the RPA would result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems, and neither the Project nor the RPA would require septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems on unsuitable soils; thus, impacts would be less than significant and similar under the RPA and proposed Project. Similarly, impacts due to erosion hazards during construction and long-term operation would be similar under the RPA and proposed Project and impacts would be less than significant.



H. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Implementation of the RPA would result in a reduction in warehouse building area on site by 25% as compared to the Project. As such, it can be assumed that operational- and vehicular-related GHG emissions would be reduced under the RPA by about 25% as compared to the Project. While both the Project and the RPA would exceed the County's CAP Update screening level threshold of 3,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂e) per year, both the Project and the RPA would be subject to compliance with EIR Mitigation Measure 4.8-1, which requires the Project Applicant to demonstrate that future development on site would achieve a minimum of 100 points pursuant to the CAP Update screening tables (Appendix E to the CAP Update). Notwithstanding, even with a reduction in the size of the proposed building by 25%, GHG emissions associated with this alternative still would be substantial and still would have the potential to result in significant adverse environmental effects. Thus, while GHG impacts would be reduced under this alternative in comparison to the proposed Project, both the Project and the RPA would result in a cumulatively-considerable significant and unavoidable impact due to GHG emissions. Neither the Project nor the RPA would conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations related to GHGs; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.

I. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Neither the Project nor the RPA would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; thus, impacts would be less than significant, although the level of impact would be slightly reduced under the RPA due to the reduction in the amount of light industrial building area. Similarly, neither the RPA nor the Project would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment, although the level of impact would be slightly reduced under the RPA due to the reduction in the amount of light industrial building area. Neither the Project nor the RPA would impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan; thus, impacts under the RPA and proposed Project would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. Neither the Project nor the RPA would emit hazardous emissions, or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school; thus, impacts would be less than significant, although impacts would be reduced under the RPA due to the reduction in light industrial building area. The Project site is not identified on any lists of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; thus, no impact would occur under the Project or RPA, and the level of impact would be the same. Neither the Project nor the RPA would conflict with an airport master plan, would require review by the Airport Land Use Commission, and neither would result in safety hazards associated with public or private airports; thus, impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA, and the level of impact would be similar.

J. Hydrology and Water Quality

Both the Project and the RPA would be subject to compliance with the Colorado River Region Basin, and would be required to comply with the requirements of the Colorado River Basin RWQCB and Riverside County. This includes the requirement to obtain a NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit for construction activities, which requires the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP that would include measures to



address water pollution, including sedimentation. Additionally, both the Project and RPA would be subject to NPDES requirements for long-term operations, which would reduce potential water quality impacts (including sediments) from construction to less-than-significant levels. Due to the relatively flat nature of the Project site, it is not expected that the Project or RPA would result in substantial changes to the existing drainage system of the Project site and area; thus, impacts would be less than significant, and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and the RPA would be required to incorporate drainage features (such as detention basins and water quality basins) to ensure that runoff is treated for water quality and is detained prior to discharge such that the rate of runoff from the Project site does not exceed the rates that occur under existing conditions. Thus, impacts related to exceeding the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage facilities and downstream erosion hazards would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and RPA would entail urban development within a mapped floodplain, which would require approval of a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA to remove the Project site from the mapped floodplain; thus, with approval of a CLOMR and LOMR, impacts due to flood hazards would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA, and the level of impact would be similar. The Project site is not subject to tsunamis or seiches; thus, impacts due to pollution from inundation from flooding, tsunamis, and seiches would be less than significant, and the level of impact would be similar.

K. Land Use and Planning

Assuming the approval of the Project's proposed GPA No. 220004, both the Project and the RPA would be fully consistent with the Riverside County General Plan and WCVAP. Thus, impacts due to a conflict with the General Plan would be less than significant under both the Project and the RPA, and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and RPA also would be consistent with SCAG's 2024-2050 RTP/SCS and the Riverside County General Plan, and as such impacts due to a conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect would be similar and would be less than significant. Additionally, neither the Project nor the RPA would disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.

L. Mineral Resources

The Project site does not contain any known mineral resources that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State. Accordingly, no impacts to mineral resources would occur under the Project or the RPA, and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, neither the Project nor the RPA would represent an incompatible land use located adjacent to a State classified or designated area or existing surface mine, and the RPA and Project would not expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing, or abandoned quarries or mines. No impacts would occur, and the level of impact would be similar.

M. Noise

The Project site is located outside of areas subject to public and private airport-related noise levels exceeding 60 dBA CNEL for the PSIA and 55 dBA CNEL for the Bermuda Dunes Airport; thus, impacts due to airport-related noise would be less than significant under both the Project and the RPA, and the level of impact would be similar. Construction activities would be similar under the Project and RPA; thus, both the Project and RPA



would result in less than significant construction-related noise impacts, although impacts would be slightly reduced under the RPA because less nighttime concrete pouring activities would occur under the RPA as compared to the Project. Under long-term operating conditions, the RPA would result in reduced operational-related noise due to the reduction in light industrial building area, although long-term noise impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA. Additionally, the RPA would result in a reduction in the amount of traffic generated by the Project site by approximately 25%; thus, the RPA would result in reduced off-site traffic-related noise impacts as compared to the Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA. Both the Project and RPA would result in similar less-than-significant construction-related vibration impacts. Additionally, neither the Project nor the RPA would involve uses with the potential to result in vibration impacts; thus, long-term vibration impacts would be less than significant under the Project and RPA, although impacts would be nominally reduced under the RPA due to the reduction in the number of truck trips by approximately 25%.

N. Paleontological Resources

The Project site was determined to have a “Low Potential (L)” for containing paleontological resources. However, there is a remote potential that fossils may be discovered during grading and earthmoving activities, which is evaluated as a potentially significant impact of the proposed Project and the RPA. Because areas of physical impact would be similar under the Project and RPA, both the Project and RPA would result in similar significant but mitigatable impacts to paleontological resources that may be buried beneath the site’s surface.

O. Population and Housing

Neither the Project nor the RPA would result in the displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of housing elsewhere; thus, no impact would occur under either the Project or the RPA and the level of impact would be the same. Neither the RPA nor the Project would represent substantial unplanned population growth as the Project site currently is planned for urban land uses by the County’s General Plan; thus impacts due to unplanned population growth would be less than significant under the RPA and proposed Project, although the level of impact would be reduced under the RPA because the RPA would not include the IID electric substation and thus would not increase the availability of electricity supply in the local area.

P. Public Services

Both the RPA and proposed Project would entail development of the Project site with urban land uses, which would increase the site’s demand for public services. It is anticipated that the Project and RPA would result in similar demands for fire protection and sheriff services. With mandatory payment of Development Impact Fees (DIF), impacts to fire and sheriff services would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar under the Project and RPA. Neither the Project nor the RPA would entail residential development on site, and both would be subject to payment of school impact fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 575; thus, impacts to school services would be less than significant under the Project and RPA, and the level of impact would be similar. Similarly, the Project and RPA would not result in a direct demand for library services; thus, impacts to library facilities would be less than significant under the Project and RPA with payment of DIF fees, and the level of impact would be similar. The Project and RPA both would result in less-



than-significant impacts to health services with mandatory payment of DIF fees, and the level of impact would be similar.

Q. Recreation

Both the proposed Project and RPA would require the construction of sidewalks and parkways along the Project site's frontage; thus, impacts due to the physical construction of trails and recreational facilities would be less than significant and would be similar under the Project and RPA. As neither the Project nor the RPA would include residential uses, the Project and RPA would result in similar less-than-significant impacts due to the physical degradation of existing or planned recreational facilities. The Project site is not located within a Community Service Area (CSA) for recreational resources, and no residential uses or residential subdivisions are proposed as part of the Project; thus, impacts due to a conflict with a CSA or due to the need for payment of Quimby fees would be less than significant under the Project and RPA, and the level of impact would be similar.

R. Transportation

Both the Project and RPA would be required to comply with all applicable transportation-related policies of the Riverside County General Plan, and the Project and RPA also would be subject to compliance with Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 413, 452, 460, 461, 499, 659, 671, 748, or 824, which are the applicable ordinances within the County related to the circulation system. Accordingly, neither the Project nor the RPA would conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. With respect to VMT, the RPA would result in a reduction in light industrial building area on site by approximately 25%. Thus, while the Project and RPA would result in similar levels of VMT on a per-vehicle basis, the RPA would result in a reduction in the total amount of VMT by approximately 25%. Thus, while impacts due to VMT would be significant and unavoidable under both the Project and RPA, impacts would be reduced under the RPA in comparison to the proposed Project. Both the Project and RPA would route heavy truck trips along Rio del Sol and away from existing residential uses located to the southeast of the Project site; thus, impacts due to incompatible land uses would be less than significant under the Project and RPA, and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and RPA would result in an increase in the need for roadway maintenance, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and RPA would require mitigation to reduce construction-related impacts due to proposed roadway improvements that could affect access and emergency access in the local area, although such impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with mitigation and the level of impact would be similar.

S. Tribal Cultural Resources

Areas planned for physical impact and development would be the same under the proposed Project and the RPA. As such, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be identical under the proposed Project and RPA, and would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in EIR Subsection 4.5.



T. Utilities and Service Systems

Both the Project and RPA would require the construction of water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities. The CVWD determined that it has sufficient water resources to accommodate development proposed as part of the Project, while the RPA would include 25% less light industrial building area and thus would have a reduced demand for potable water as compared to the Project. Thus, because CVWD would be able to provide potable water to both the Project or the RPA, impacts to water supply would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA, although impacts would be slightly reduced under the RPA due to the reduction in light industrial building area. Impacts associated with sewer improvements would be similar under the Project and RPA and would be less than significant. However, due to the reduction in light industrial building area under the RPA, the RPA would generate less wastewater requiring treatment; thus, impacts to wastewater treatment capacity would be reduced under the RPA in comparison to the Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the RPA and proposed Project. The RPA would result in a reduction in the amount of solid waste requiring disposal; thus, impacts to landfill capacity would be reduced under the RPA in comparison to the Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA. All other impacts to utilities and service systems would be similar under the Project and RPA, and would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with implementation of the mitigation measures identified by this EIR.

U. Wildfire

Both the Project and the RPA would introduce urban development to the Project site. However, neither the Project nor the RPA would result in significant impacts due to wildfire-related hazards because the Project area is not considered susceptible to wildland fire hazards. Impacts associated with wildfires would be less than significant under the Project and RPA, and the level of impact would be similar.

V. Conclusion

As compared to the proposed Project, the RPA would have reduced impacts in comparison to the proposed Project under the issue areas of air quality; energy; greenhouse gas emissions; hazards and hazardous materials; noise; population and housing; transportation; and utilities and service systems. The RPA would result in the same or similar impacts as the proposed Project under the issue areas of aesthetics; agriculture and forestry resources; biological resources; cultural resources; geology and soils; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; mineral resources; paleontological resources; public services; recreation; tribal cultural resources; and wildfire. The RPA would not result in any increased impacts to the environment in comparison to the proposed Project.

The RPA generally would meet the Project's objectives, although to a lesser extent. Specifically, due to the reduction in light industrial building area, the RPA would be less effective than the proposed Project in increasing employment-generating land uses north of I-10 in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County. Similarly, due to the reduction in light industrial building area, the RPA would be less effective than the proposed Project in strengthening the goods movement supply chain in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by locating a supply chain use close proximity to designated truck routes and the State highway system to avoid or shorten vehicular trip lengths



on other roadways. Additionally, and again due to the reduction in the amount of light industrial building area under the RPA, the RPA would be less effective than the proposed Project in meeting the Project's objective to expand economic development, facilitate job creation, and increase the tax base in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by accommodating and diversifying facilities needed to support the goods movement supply chain. As the RPA would accommodate the IID electric substation on site, the RPA would meet the Project's objective to increase the electric utility supply and delivery capacity for the Thousand Palms community. Similarly, because the RPA would include similar uses as compared to the proposed Project (i.e., light industrial), the RPA would meet the Project's objective to provide a land use that is not sensitive to potential odor and windblown material as a transitional land use between an existing organic materials recycling facility and other businesses and residences in Thousand Palms to the south.

6.4.4 SMALL BUILDING ALTERNATIVE (SBA)

Pursuant to the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service and Vehicle Miles Traveled (December 2020), general light industrial developments with less than 179,000 s.f. of building area are presumed to result in a less-than-significant transportation impact due to VMT. Thus, this alternative was selected to allow the Lead Agency (Riverside County) to consider a design for the Project site that would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impact due to VMT. The Small Building Alternative (SBA) assumes the Project site would be developed with one warehouse building, but the proposed warehouse building would be reduced in size from approximately 1,238,992 s.f. under the proposed Project to approximately 175,000 s.f. under the SBA (representing a reduction in building area by approximately 85.9%). The portions of the warehouse lot not used for the building would be used for parking and trailer storage. Due to the significant reduction in the size of the building as compared to the proposed Project, it is anticipated that the IID joint electric substation would not need to be constructed on site under the SBA. All other components of the SBA would be the same as the proposed Project, including the proposed infrastructure and roadway improvements. This alternative was selected by the Lead Agency in order to evaluate an alternative that would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts to transportation, which in turn also would reduce the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts due to air quality and due to GHG emissions. The SBA is identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

A. Aesthetics

Although the Project site is not located within the viewshed of any officially-designated State or County scenic highways or County-eligible scenic highways, development under the Project and SBA would be visible from I-10, which is designated as a State-eligible scenic highway. As with the Project, development of LI land uses would require approval of a plot plan, which would identify Project-specific design components that have been incorporated into the Project's application materials in order to preclude adverse effects to visual quality. However, the SBA would include a much smaller building than the proposed Project; thus, in comparison to the proposed Project the SBA would have reduced impacts to visual quality when viewed from off-site locations, including reduced impacts to scenic highways. As with the proposed Project, the SBA would not substantially damage scenic resources; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view; substantially degrade the existing visual quality or character of the site or its surroundings; or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations



governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and SBA, although impacts to aesthetics would be reduced under the SBA due to the substantial reduction in building area on site and because no off-site power poles would be constructed as part of the SBA.

B. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Under existing conditions, the entire 83.0 Project site is classified by the FMMP as containing “Other Land,” and there are no portions of the Project site mapped as containing Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local Importance. Accordingly, impacts to FMMP-designated Farmland would not occur under either the Project or SBA, and the level of impact would be the same. There are no lands surrounding the Project site that are zoned for agricultural use; thus, neither the Project nor SBA would result in a conflict with agricultural zoning, and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, the Project site is not utilized for agricultural production, is not located within any agricultural preserves, and is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract. As such, neither the Project nor the SBA would result in a conflict with existing agricultural uses, agricultural preserves, or lands subject to a Williamson Act Contract; therefore, impacts would not occur and the level of impact would be similar. The Project site and surrounding areas are not zoned for 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)). As such, neither the Project nor the SBA would result in impacts to forestry resources, and impacts would be the same.

C. Air Quality

The SBA would result in a substantial reduction in the amount of warehouse building area allowed on site by approximately 85.9% as compared to the proposed Project. Assuming the warehouse building under the SBA is constructed on the western +/- half of the Project site, the SBA would be fully consistent with the growth assumptions utilized by the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP for the Project site. On a daily basis, construction-related air quality emissions would be similar to the proposed Project, although the total amount of construction-related emissions would be substantially reduced as the Project would require a much longer duration (number of days) for building construction. With respect to operational impacts, and assuming an approximate 85.9% reduction in air quality emissions in comparison to the Project, the SBA would result in emissions of VOCs, NO_x, CO, SO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} that would not exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds for these pollutants. Accordingly, implementation of the SBA would completely avoid the Project’s significant and unavoidable impact due to a conflict with the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP. Similarly, the SBA would completely avoid the Project’s significant and unavoidable operational-related air quality impacts due to emissions of VOCs and NO_x that would exceed the SCAQMD Regional Thresholds, thereby contributing to the Salton Sea Air Basin’s (SSAB) non-attainment classification for ozone (O₃). Although the Project and the SBA would result in less-than-significant impacts due to substantial pollutant concentrations, due to the substantial reduction in warehouse building area under the SBA, the SBA would result in substantially reduced impacts as compared to the Project in relation to the SCAQMD’s Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) and cancer and non-cancer health risks. Neither the Project nor the SBA would result in significant impacts related to odors, and the level of impact would be similar.



D. Biological Resources

Areas planned for physical impact and development would be the same under the proposed Project and the SBA, except that no off-site power poles would be installed under the SBA. Thus, impacts to biological resources under the SBA and proposed Project would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in EIR Subsection 4.4, although the level of impact would be slightly reduced under the SBA due to the lack of off-site impacts related to power pole installation.

E. Cultural Resources

Areas planned for physical impact and development would be the same under the proposed Project and the SBA, except that no off-site power poles would be installed under the SBA. As such, while impacts to historical resources, archaeological resources, and human remains would be less than significant under the Project and SBA with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in EIR Subsection 4.5, impacts to cultural resources would be reduced in comparison to the Project due to the lack of off-site power pole construction.

F. Energy

Energy consumed during construction of the SBA would be substantially reduced in comparison to the Project due to the substantial reduction in the size of the proposed warehouse building. Although neither the Project nor the SBA would result in significant impacts due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, impacts would be substantially reduced under the SBA in comparison to the Project. Under long-term operating conditions, the level of energy demands associated with the SBA would be reduced by approximately 85.9%. Although neither the Project nor the SBA would result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources under long-term conditions, impacts under the SBA would be substantially reduced in comparison to the Project. Additionally, both the Project and SBA would be required to comply with adopted State and local plans related to energy conservation; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.

G. Geology and Soils

Both the Project and SBA would be required to comply with the site-specific recommendations of a geotechnical study to address potential geologic hazards, which would reduce potential impacts due to geology and soils to less-than-significant levels. There are no known faults on or trending towards the site; thus, impacts associated with rupture of a known fault would be less than significant and similar under the proposed Project and the SBA. However, because the SBA would involve substantially fewer employees on site compared to the Project, the Project's less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to strong seismic ground shaking and collapse hazards would be substantially reduced under the SBA and impacts would be less than significant. Impacts due to due to settlement, ground subsidence, and collapse hazards would be less than significant (with mitigation) under the SBA and Project and the level of impact would be similar. Both the SBA and the proposed Project would have less-than-significant impacts (with mitigation) due to cut or fill slopes higher than 10 feet, and the level of impact would be similar. Neither the Project nor the SBA would result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems, and neither the Project nor the SBA would require septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems on unsuitable soils; thus, impacts would be less than significant and



similar under the SBA and proposed Project. Similarly, impacts due to erosion hazards during construction and long-term operation would be similar under the SBA and proposed Project and impacts would be less than significant.

H. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Implementation of the SBA would result in a substantial reduction in warehouse building area on site by 85.9% as compared to the Project. As such, it can be assumed that construction-, operational-, and vehicular-related GHG emissions would be substantially reduced under the SBA by about 85.9% as compared to the Project. Specifically, and assuming an 85.9% reduction in construction- and operational-related GHG emissions, the SBA would result in the generation of approximately 4,665 MTCO_{2e} per year (33,130.16 MTCO_{2e}¹/year x 14.1% = 4,679.4 MTCO_{2e}/year). Thus, while both the Project and the SBA would exceed the County's CAP Update screening level threshold of 3,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO_{2e}) per year, both the Project and the SBA would be subject to compliance with EIR Mitigation Measure 4.8-1, which requires the Project Applicant to demonstrate that future development on site would achieve a minimum of 100 points pursuant to the CAP Update screening tables (Appendix E to the CAP Update). However, even with a reduction in the size of the proposed building by 85.9%, GHG emissions associated with this alternative still would be substantial and still would have the potential to result in significant adverse environmental effects as emissions under both the Project and SBA would exceed the County's CAP Update screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO_{2e}/yr. Thus, while GHG impacts would be substantially reduced under this alternative in comparison to the proposed Project, both the Project and the SBA would result in a cumulatively-considerable significant and unavoidable impact due to GHG emissions. Neither the Project nor the SBA would conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations related to GHGs; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.

I. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Neither the Project nor the SBA would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; thus, impacts would be less than significant, although the level of impact would be substantially reduced under the SBA due to the reduction in the amount of light industrial building area by approximately 85.9%. Similarly, neither the SBA nor the Project would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment, although the level of impact would be substantially reduced under the SBA due to the reduction in the amount of light industrial building area by approximately 85.9%. Neither the Project nor the SBA would impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan; thus, impacts under the SBA and proposed Project would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. Neither the Project nor the SBA would emit hazardous emissions, or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school; thus, impacts would be less than significant, although impacts would be reduced under the SBA due to the reduction in light industrial building area. The Project site is not identified on any lists of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to

¹ Refer to EIR Table 4.8-4, *Project GHG Emissions*, which shows that the Project would result in approximately 33,088.26 MTCO_{2e} per year.



Government Code Section 65962.5; thus, no impact would occur under the Project or SBA, and the level of impact would be the same. Neither the Project nor the SBA would conflict with an airport master plan, would require review by the Airport Land Use Commission, and neither would result in safety hazards associated with public or private airports; thus, impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and SBA, and the level of impact would be similar.

J. Hydrology and Water Quality

Both the Project and the SBA would be subject to compliance with the Colorado River Region Basin, and would be required to comply with the requirements of the Colorado River Basin RWQCB and Riverside County. This includes the requirement to obtain a NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit for construction activities, which requires the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP that would include measures to address water pollution, including sedimentation. Additionally, both the Project and SBA would be subject to NPDES requirements for long-term operations, which would reduce potential water quality impacts (including sediments) from construction to less-than-significant levels. Due to the relatively flat nature of the Project site, it is not expected that the Project or SBA would result in substantial changes to the existing drainage system of the Project site and area; thus, impacts would be less than significant, and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and the SBA would be required to incorporate drainage features (such as detention basins and water quality basins) to ensure that runoff is treated for water quality and is detained prior to discharge such that the rate of runoff from the Project site does not exceed the rates that occur under existing conditions. Thus, impacts related to exceeding the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage facilities and downstream erosion hazards would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and SBA would entail urban development within a mapped floodplain, which would require approval of a CLOMR and LOMR from FEMA to remove the Project site from the mapped floodplain; thus, with approval of a CLOMR and LOMR, impacts due to flood hazards would be less than significant under both the Project and SBA, and the level of impact would be similar. The Project site is not subject to tsunamis or seiches; thus, impacts due to pollution from inundation from flooding, tsunamis, and seiches would be less than significant, and the level of impact would be similar.

K. Land Use and Planning

Assuming the approval of the Project's proposed GPA No. 220004, both the Project and the SBA would be fully consistent with the Riverside County General Plan and WCVAP. Thus, impacts due to a conflict with the General Plan would be less than significant under both the Project and the SBA, although the level of impact would be slightly reduced under the SBA because no GPA would be required for the GPA. Both the Project and SBA would be consistent with SCAG's 2024-2050 RTP/SCS and the Riverside County General Plan, and as such impacts due to a conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect would be similar and would be less than significant. Additionally, neither the Project nor the SBA would disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar.



L. Mineral Resources

The Project site does not contain any known mineral resources that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State. Accordingly, no impacts to mineral resources would occur under the Project or the SBA, and the level of impact would be similar. Additionally, neither the Project nor the SBA would represent an incompatible land use located adjacent to a State classified or designated area or existing surface mine, and the SBA and Project would not expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing, or abandoned quarries or mines. No impacts would occur, and the level of impact would be similar.

M. Noise

The Project site is located outside of areas subject to public and private airport-related noise levels exceeding 60 dBA CNEL for the PSIA and 55 dBA CNEL for the Bermuda Dunes Airport; thus, impacts due to airport-related noise would be less than significant under both the Project and the SBA, and the level of impact would be similar. Construction activities would be similar under the Project and SBA, although construction activities would occur over a much shorter duration under the SBA as compared to the Project; thus, both the Project and SBA would result in less than significant construction-related noise impacts, although impacts would be substantially reduced under the SBA due to the reduction in the size of the warehouse building by approximately 85.9%. Under long-term operating conditions, the SBA would result in substantially reduced operational-related noise due to the reduction in light industrial building area by approximately 85.9%, although long-term noise impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and SBA. Additionally, the SBA would result in a reduction in the amount of traffic generated by the Project site by approximately 85.9%; thus, the SBA would result in substantially reduced off-site traffic-related noise impacts as compared to the Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and SBA. Both the Project and SBA would result in similar less-than-significant construction-related vibration impacts. Additionally, neither the Project nor the SBA would involve uses with the potential to result in vibration impacts; thus, long-term vibration impacts would be less than significant under the Project and SBA, although impacts would be nominally reduced under the SBA due to the reduction in the number of truck trips by approximately 85.9%.

N. Paleontological Resources

The Project site was determined to have a “Low Potential (L)” for containing paleontological resources. However, there is a remote potential that fossils may be discovered during grading and earthmoving activities, which is evaluated as a potentially significant impact of the proposed Project and the SBA. Because areas of physical impact would be similar under the Project and SBA, both the Project and SBA would result in similar significant but mitigatable impacts to paleontological resources that may be buried beneath the site’s surface, although impacts to paleontological resources would be reduced under the Project because no off-site power poles would be installed under the SBA.

O. Population and Housing

Neither the Project nor the SBA would result in the displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of housing elsewhere; thus, no impact would occur under either the



Project or the SBA and the level of impact would be the same. Neither the SBA nor the Project would represent substantial unplanned population growth as the Project site currently is planned for urban land uses by the County's General Plan; thus impacts due to unplanned population growth would be less than significant under the SBA and proposed Project, although the level of impact would be reduced under the SBA because the SBA would not require a GPA and would not include the IID electric substation on site.

P. Public Services

Both the SBA and proposed Project would entail development of the Project site with urban land uses, which would increase the site's demand for public services. Due to the substantial reduction in the size of the warehouse building under the SBA, the SBA would result in reduced demands for fire protection and sheriff protection services, although impacts to fire and sheriff services would be less than significant under the Project and SBA with mandatory payment of DIF fees. Neither the Project nor the SBA would entail residential development on site, and both would be subject to payment of school impact fees pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 575; thus, impacts to school services would be less than significant under the Project and SBA, and the level of impact would be similar. Similarly, the Project and SBA would not result in a direct demand for library services; thus, impacts to library facilities would be less than significant under the Project and SBA with payment of DIF fees, and the level of impact would be similar. The Project and SBA both would result in less-than-significant impacts to health services with mandatory payment of DIF fees, and the level of impact would be similar.

Q. Recreation

Both the proposed Project and SBA would require the construction of sidewalks and parkways along the Project site's frontage; thus, impacts due to the physical construction of trails and recreational facilities would be less than significant and would be similar under the Project and SBA. As neither the Project nor the SBA would include residential uses, the Project and SBA would result in similar less-than-significant impacts due to the physical degradation of existing or planned recreational facilities. The Project site is not located within a Community Service Area (CSA) for recreational resources, and no residential uses or residential subdivisions are proposed as part of the Project or SBA; thus, impacts due to a conflict with a CSA or due to the need for payment of Quimby fees would be less than significant under the Project and SBA, and the level of impact would be similar.

R. Transportation

Both the Project and SBA would be required to comply with all applicable transportation-related policies of the Riverside County General Plan, and the Project and SBA also would be subject to compliance with Riverside County Ordinance Nos. 413, 452, 460, 461, 499, 659, 671, 748, or 824, which are the applicable ordinances within the County related to the circulation system. Accordingly, neither the Project nor the SBA would conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; thus, impacts would be less than significant and the level of impact would be similar. However, under the SBA the warehouse building on site would be restricted to 179,000 s.f. in size. Pursuant to Figure 3 (Screening Criteria for Development Projects) of the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service and Vehicle Miles Traveled (December 2020), general light industrial



buildings with area less than or equal to 179,000 s.f. are presumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact due to VMT. As such, implementation of the SBA would completely avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impact due to VMT. Both the Project and SBA would route heavy truck trips along Rio del Sol and away from existing residential uses located to the southeast of the Project site; thus, impacts due to incompatible land uses would be less than significant under the Project and SBA, and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and SBA would result in an increase in the need for roadway maintenance, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and SBA and the level of impact would be similar. Both the Project and SBA would require mitigation to reduce construction-related impacts due to proposed roadway improvements that could affect access and emergency access in the local area, although such impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with mitigation and the level of impact would be similar.

S. Tribal Cultural Resources

Grading activities under the Project and SBA would be the same, except that there would be no power pole construction off site under the SBA. As such, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be reduced under the SBA in comparison to the proposed Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and RPA with implementation of mitigation measures.

T. Utilities and Service Systems

Both the Project and SBA would require the construction of water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities. The CVWD determined that it has sufficient water resources to accommodate development proposed as part of the Project, while the SBA would include 85.9% less light industrial building area and thus would have a substantially reduced demand for potable water as compared to the Project. Thus, while impacts to water supply would be less than significant under both the Project and SBA, impacts would be substantially reduced under the SBA due to the reduction in light industrial building area. Impacts associated with sewer improvements would be similar under the Project and SBA and would be less than significant. However, due to the substantial reduction in light industrial building area under the SBA, the SBA would generate substantially less wastewater requiring treatment; thus, impacts to wastewater treatment capacity would be substantially reduced under the SBA in comparison to the Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the SBA and proposed Project. The SBA would result in a substantial reduction in the amount of solid waste requiring disposal; thus, impacts to landfill capacity would be substantially reduced under the SBA in comparison to the Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both the Project and SBA. All other impacts to utilities and service systems would be similar under the Project and SBA, and would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with implementation of the mitigation measures identified by this EIR.

U. Wildfire

Both the Project and the SBA would introduce urban development to the Project site. However, neither the Project nor the SBA would result in significant impacts due to wildfire-related hazards because the Project area is not considered susceptible to wildland fire hazards. Impacts associated with wildfires would be less than significant under the Project and SBA, and the level of impact would be similar.



V. Conclusion

As compared to the proposed Project, the SBA would have reduced impacts in comparison to the proposed Project under the issue areas of aesthetics; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; energy; geology and soils; greenhouse gas emissions; hazards and hazardous materials; land use and planning; noise; paleontological resources; population and housing; public services; transportation; tribal cultural resources; and utilities and service systems. The SBA would result in the same or similar impacts as the proposed Project under the issue areas of agriculture and forestry resources; hydrology and water quality; mineral resources; recreation; and wildfire. The SBA would not result in any increased impacts to the environment in comparison to the proposed Project.

The SBA generally would meet most of the Project's objectives, although to a substantially lesser extent. Specifically, due to the reduction in light industrial building area, the SBA would be less effective than the proposed Project in increasing employment-generating land uses north of I-10 in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County. Similarly, due to the substantial reduction in light industrial building area, the SBA would be less effective than the proposed Project in strengthening the goods movement supply chain in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by locating a supply chain use close proximity to designated truck routes and the State highway system to avoid or shorten vehicular trip lengths on other roadways. Additionally, and again due to the substantial reduction in the amount of light industrial building area under the SBA, the SBA would be less effective than the proposed Project in meeting the Project's objective to expand economic development, facilitate job creation, and increase the tax base in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by accommodating and diversifying facilities needed to support the goods movement supply chain. As the SBA would not accommodate the IID electric substation on site, the SBA would not meet the Project's objective to increase the electric utility supply and delivery capacity for the Thousand Palms community. Additionally, because the SBA would include similar uses as compared to the proposed Project (i.e., light industrial), the SBA would meet the Project's objective to provide a land use that is not sensitive to potential odor and windblown material as a transitional land use between an existing organic materials recycling facility and other businesses and residences in Thousand Palms to the south.

6.4.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6 requires the identification of the environmentally superior alternative. As discussed herein, implementation of the NDA would result in no physical environmental impacts beyond those that have historically occurred on the property. Because the NDA would avoid most of the Project's impacts, it warrants consideration as the "environmentally superior alternative." However, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(e)(2), if a no project alternative is identified as the environmentally superior alternative, then the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Accordingly, the Small Building Alternative (SBA), as discussed above in subsection 6.4.4, is identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6 because it would result in the largest reduction in the Project's significant environmental effects.



Table 6-3 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Environmental Topic/ Project Objective	Proposed Project Significance of Impacts After Mitigation	Level of Impact Compared to the Proposed Project/Compliance with Project Objectives			
		No Development Alternative (NDA)	No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative (NPA)	Reduced Project Alternative (RPA)	Small Building Alternative (SBA)
Aesthetics	Less than Significant	Reduced	Increased	Similar	Reduced
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Less than Significant	Reduced	Similar	Similar	Similar
Air Quality	Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively Considerable Impact	Reduced to Less-than-Significant Levels	Reduced, but not to Less-than- Significant Levels	Reduced, but not to Less-than- Significant Levels	Reduced to Less-than-Significant Levels
Biological Resources	Less than Significant	Reduced	Reduced	Similar	Reduced
Cultural Resources	Less than Significant	Reduced	Reduced	Similar	Reduced
Energy	Less than Significant	Reduced	Similar	Reduced	Reduced
Geology and Soils	Significant and Unavoidable Cumulatively- Considerable Impact	Reduced to Less-than-Significant Levels	Increased	Similar	Reduced
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less than Significant	Reduced to Less-than-Significant Levels	Reduced, but not to Less-than- Significant Levels	Reduced, but not to Less-than- Significant Levels	Reduced, but not to Less-than- Significant Levels
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Less than Significant	Reduced	Reduced	Reduced	Reduced
Hydrology and Water Quality	Less than Significant	Most Issues: Reduced Erosion/Siltation: Increased	Similar	Similar	Similar
Land Use and Planning	Less than Significant	Reduced	Reduced	Similar	Reduced
Mineral Resources	Less than Significant	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Noise	Less than Significant	Reduced	Reduced	Reduced	Reduced
Paleontological Resources	Less than Significant	Reduced	Similar	Similar	Reduced
Population and Housing	Less than Significant	Reduced	Reduced	Reduced	Reduced
Public Services	Less than Significant	Reduced	Increased	Similar	Reduced
Recreation	Less than Significant	Reduced	Increased	Similar	Similar
Transportation	Significant and Unavoidable Direct and Cumulatively-Considerable Impacts	Reduced to Less-than-Significant Levels	Reduced but not to Less-than- Significant Levels	Reduced but not to Less-than- Significant Levels	Reduced to Less-than-Significant Levels
Tribal Cultural Resources	Less than Significant	Reduced	Reduced	Similar	Reduced
Utilities and Service Systems	Less than Significant	Reduced	Increased	Reduced	Reduced
Wildfire	Less-than-Significant	Mixed (No new buildings would be constructed on site, but the natural vegetation on site would be subject to wildland fire hazards)	Similar	Similar	Similar



Environmental Topic/ Project Objective	Proposed Project Significance of Impacts After Mitigation	Level of Impact Compared to the Proposed Project/Compliance with Project Objectives			
		No Development Alternative (NDA)	No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative (NPA)	Reduced Project Alternative (RPA)	Small Building Alternative (SBA)
Objective A: Increase employment-generating land uses north of I-10 in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County.		No	Yes, but to a lesser extent	Yes, but to a lesser extent	Yes, but to a lesser extent
Objective B: Strengthen the goods movement supply chain in the Western Coachella Valley portion of unincorporated Riverside County by locating a supply chain use close proximity to designated truck routes and the State highway system to avoid or shorten vehicular trip lengths on other roadways.		No	Yes, but to a lesser extent	Yes, but to a lesser extent	Yes, but to a lesser extent
Objective C: Expand economic development, facilitate job creation, and increase the tax base for the County of Riverside by accommodating and diversifying facilities needed to support the goods movement supply chain.		No	Yes, but to a lesser extent	Yes, but to a lesser extent	Yes, but to a lesser extent
Objective D: Increase the electric utility supply and delivery capacity for the Thousand Palms community.		No	No	Yes	No
Objective E: Provide a land use that is not sensitive to odor and windblown material as a transitional land use between an existing organic materials recycling facility and other businesses and residences in Thousand Palms to the south.		No	No	Yes	Yes



7.0 REFERENCES

7.1 PERSONS CONTRIBUTING TO EIR PREPARATION

7.1.1 COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE PLANNING DIVISION

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7.2 DOCUMENTS APPENDED TO THIS EIR

The following reports, studies, and supporting documentation were used in preparing the Majestic Thousand Palms EIR and are bound separately as Technical Appendices. A copy of the Technical Appendices is available for review at the County of Riverside Planning Department, 4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor, Riverside, CA 92502.

- Appendix A: Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Written Comments on the NOP for Majestic Thousand Palms.
- Appendix B1: Urban Crossroads, Inc. 2024a. *Majestic Thousand Palms Air Quality Impact Analysis*, January 30, 2024.
- Appendix B2: Urban Crossroads, Inc. 2024b. *Majestic Thousand Palms Mobile Source Health Risk Assessment*. January 30, 2024.
- Appendix C1: Rocks Biological Consulting. 2022. *Majestic Thousand Palms Project Biological Resources and MSHCP Consistency Report*. December 9, 2022.



- Appendix C2: Rocks Biological Consulting. 2022. *Majestic Thousand Palms Project Aquatic Resources Delineation Report*. October 11, 2022
- Appendix C3: United States Army Corps of Engineers. 2023. *Determination of Need for Department of the Army Permit*. March 3, 2023.
- Appendix D: CRM TECH. 2023. *Historical Archaeological Resources Survey Report Majestic Thousand Palms Project*. February 9, 2023.
- Appendix E: Urban Crossroads, Inc. 2024c. *Majestic Thousand Palms Energy Analysis*. January 30, 2024.
- Appendix F: Sladden Engineering. 2021. *Geotechnical Investigation Majestic Thousand Palms*. September 1, 2021.
- Appendix G: Urban Crossroads, Inc. 2024d. *Majestic Thousand Palms Greenhouse Gas Analysis*. January 30, 2024.
- Appendix H: Nova Group, GBC. 2021. *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment*. June 18, 2021.
- Appendix I1: PBLA Engineering, Inc. 2023a. *Preliminary Water Quality Management Plan*. January 2023.
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- Appendix M: Project Correspondence for Majestic Thousand Palms.
- Appendix N: General Plan Consistency Analysis for Majestic Thousand Palms.



Appendix O: “Good Neighbor Policy” Consistency Analysis

7.3 DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The following reports, studies, and supporting documentation were used in the preparation of this EIR and are incorporated by reference within this EIR. A copy of the following reports, studies, and supporting documentation is a matter of public record and is generally available to the public at the location listed.

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