



County of Santa Cruz

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) INITIAL STUDY/ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Date: November 16, 2022 **Application Number:** 211209
Project Name: Lakeview Estates Subdivision **Staff Planner:** Randall Adams

I. OVERVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

APPLICANT: Eadie Consultants **APN(s):** 051-411-20
OWNER: Kamilah Deyn Dev. LLC **SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT:** 4

PROJECT LOCATION: The project is located on the southeast corner of Trembley Lane and Cunningham Way in unincorporated Santa Cruz County (FIGURE 1). Santa Cruz County is bounded on the north by San Mateo County, on the south by Monterey and San Benito counties, on the east by Santa Clara County, and on the south and west by the Monterey Bay and the Pacific Ocean.

SUMMARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Proposal to create a seven lot residential subdivision on a 2.3 acre site (FIGURE 2).

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: *All of the following potential environmental impacts are evaluated in this Initial Study. Categories that are marked have been analyzed in greater detail based on project specific information.*

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

DISCRETIONARY APPROVAL(S) BEING CONSIDERED:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Development Permit |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Division | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grading Permit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rezoning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Riparian Exception |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development Permit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAFCO Annexation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Connection Permit | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL IS REQUIRED (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

<u>Permit Type/Action</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Freedom Sanitation District/Annexation	Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

CONSULTATION WITH NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES: *Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?*

No California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the area of Santa Cruz County have requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1.

DETERMINATION:

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

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

DocuSigned by:

Matt Johnston

12/8/2022

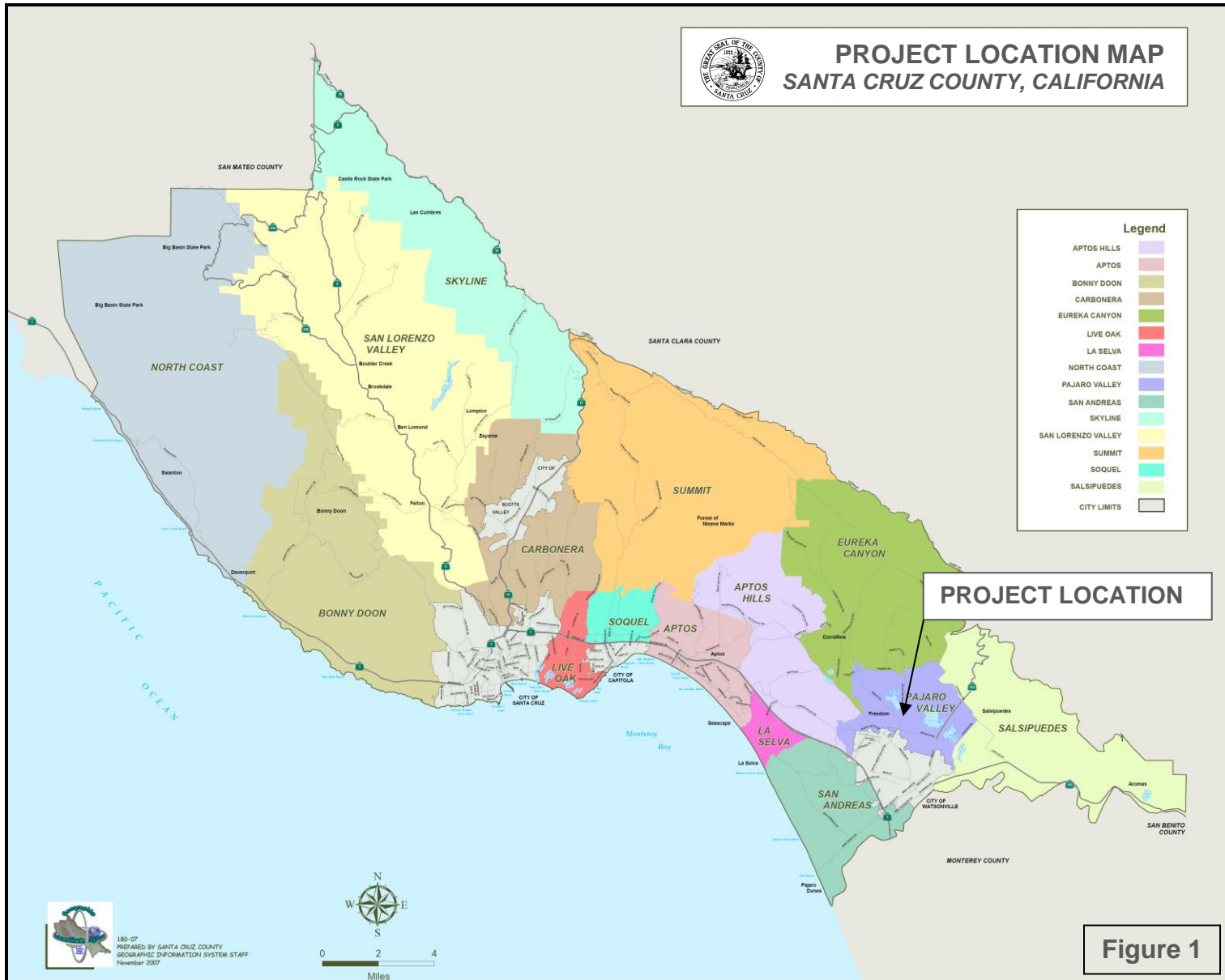
MATT JOHNSTON, Environmental Coordinator

Date



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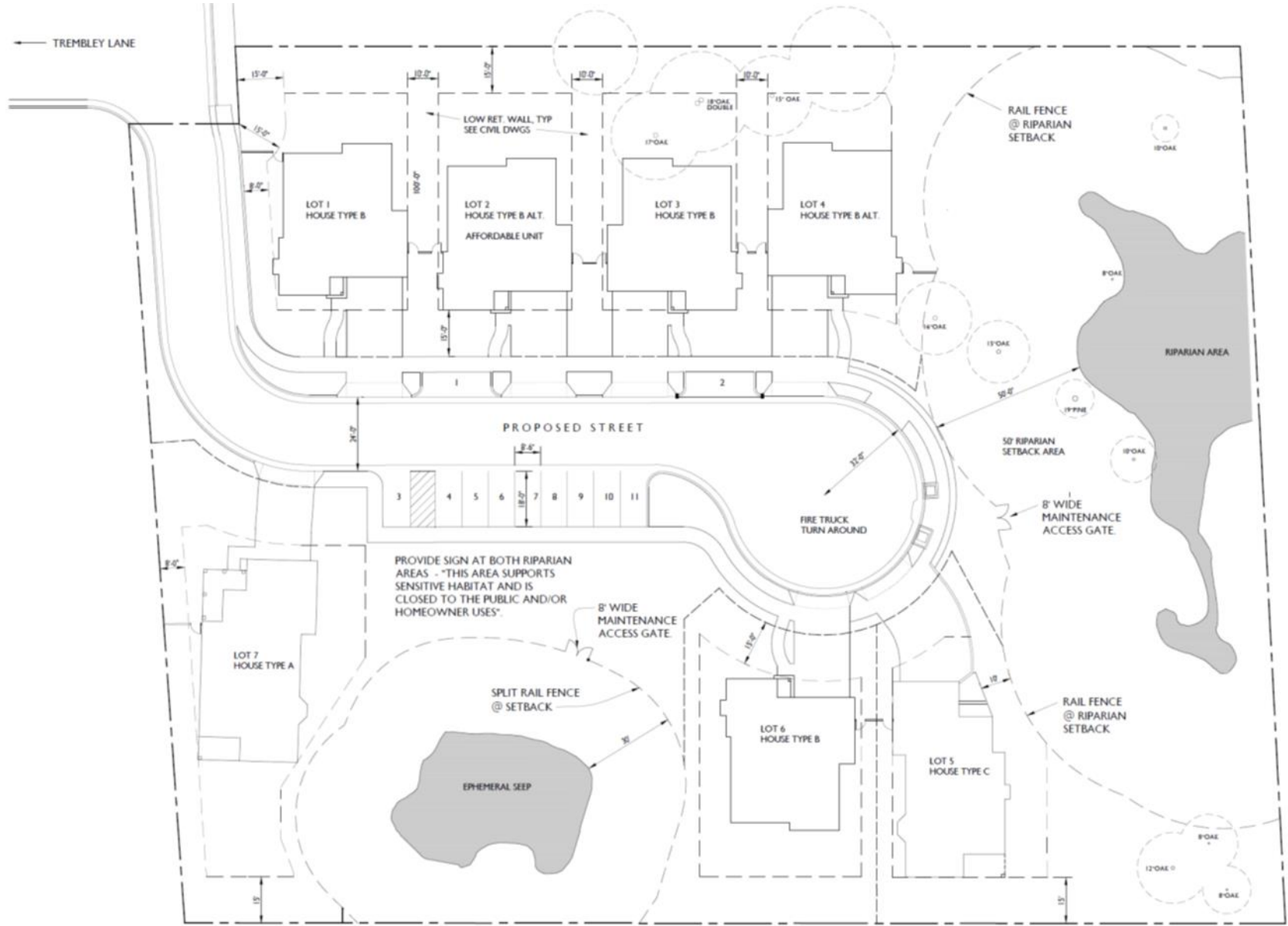
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Project Site Plan

Figure 2



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II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS:**

Parcel Size (acres): 2.3 acres
 Existing Land Use: Vacant
 Vegetation: Grasses, shrubs, small trees
 Slope in area affected by project: 0 - 30% 31 – 100% N/A
 Nearby Watercourse: Stream 553
 Distance To: Varies (between 40 to 135 feet from eastern property boundary)

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND CONSTRAINTS:

Water Supply	Not mapped	Fault Zone:	CFZ/SFZ
Watershed:			
Groundwater	Not mapped	Scenic Corridor:	Not mapped
Recharge:			
Timber or Mineral:	Not mapped	Historic:	Not mapped
Agricultural Resource:	AG-1A (adjacent to the east)	Archaeology:	Mapped arch resource
Biologically Sensitive Habitat:	Wetlands	Noise Constraint:	Not mapped
Fire Hazard:	Not mapped	Electric Power Lines:	N/A
Floodplain:	Not mapped	Solar Access:	Available
Erosion:	Not mapped	Solar Orientation:	East/Southeast
Landslide:	Not mapped	Hazardous Materials:	N/A
Liquefaction:	Low Potential	Other:	Expansive soils

SERVICES:

Fire Protection:	Pajaro Valley FPD	Drainage District:	Zone 7
School District:	PVUSD	Project Access:	Trembley Lane
Sewage Disposal:	Freedom County Sanitation District	Water Supply:	City of Watsonville

PLANNING POLICIES:

Zone District: R-1-10 Special Designation: AIA (Airport Combining District)
 General Plan: R-UL
 Urban Services Line: Inside Outside
 Coastal Zone: Inside Outside

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND SURROUNDING LAND USES:**Natural Environment**

Santa Cruz County is uniquely situated along the northern end of Monterey Bay approximately 55 miles south of the City of San Francisco along the Central Coast. The Pacific Ocean and

Monterey Bay to the west and south, the mountains inland, and the prime agricultural lands along both the northern and southern coast of the county create limitations on the style and amount of building that can take place. Simultaneously, these natural features create an environment that attracts both visitors and new residents every year. The natural landscape provides the basic features that set Santa Cruz apart from the surrounding counties and require specific accommodations to ensure building is done in a safe, responsible and environmentally respectful manner.

The California Coastal Zone affects nearly one third of the land in the urbanized area of the unincorporated County with special restrictions, regulations, and processing procedures required for development within that area. Steep hillsides require extensive review and engineering to ensure that slopes remain stable, buildings are safe, and water quality is not impacted by increased erosion. The farmland in Santa Cruz County is among the best in the world, and the agriculture industry is a primary economic generator for the County. Preserving this industry in the face of population growth requires that soils best suited to commercial agriculture remain active in crop production rather than converting to other land uses.

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The subject property is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Trembley Lane and Cunningham Way in the Pajaro Valley Planning Area. The property is at the eastern edge of single family residential neighborhoods accessed off of Green Valley Road in the Wastonville area. Agriculturally designated parcels are located to the east. Some residentially designated parcels in the area are not fully developed to the densities designated in the General Plan and the subject property is one of the remaining undeveloped parcels in the project vicinity.

The parcel slopes gradually from 130 feet above sea level on the western portion to 95 feet in the eastern portion of the project. The property is adjacent to an unnamed creek (identified as Stream 533) located approximately 40 to 135 feet from the east property boundary and a small ephemeral seep is located on the southern portion of the site. An oak woodland area along the northern property boundary extends into the rear yards of three of the proposed lots. College Lake is located approximately 900 feet southeast of the project.

Prior work has been completed in preparation for the current subdivision application. This work has included pre-application consultations, technical report reviews, and an Agricultural Buffer Setback Reduction approval from the Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission. Key technical reviews and approvals include:

-REV171005: Review and acceptance of acceptance of Geology and Geotechnical reports in June of 2017.

-141229: Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) approval of a buffer reduction in February of 2018. Combined with the riparian setbacks from wetland areas, the minimum

distance from the adjoining agricultural lands to the east is 114 feet to the proposed Lot 4 and 75 feet to the proposed Lot 5.

-REV191105: Review and acceptance of biotic reports in November of 2019 which included wetland and buffer delineations and a restoration plan for wetland areas on the property.

DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This application is a proposal to divide an existing 2.3 acre parcel to create seven single family residential lots. The residential subdivision would be a common interest development with separate individual parcels for each building envelope and common area yards and landscaping surrounding each proposed building site. The subdivision format allows each homeowner to own the land underlying the home and some yard area, with the remaining land area to be held in common by the Homeowners Association (HOA). Detached single family dwellings are proposed on each building site, with three and four bedroom designs ranging between 2,500 to 2,700 square feet in habitable area, with two-car garages. Parking for the development would be provided on site, including 14 spaces in garages, 14 spaces on driveways, and street parking for 11 cars, with one accessible parking space.

The property includes two separate seeps that have been identified as wetland areas subject to riparian protections, and the proposed development avoids these riparian areas based on the biotic resources evaluations that have been provided by the applicant and reviewed by Environmental Planning staff. The site is also located within a mapped earthquake fault zone and agricultural resources are located to the east of the property. The proposed development would be set back from these resources and constraints as determined by technical reviews and the recommendation of the Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission.

The existing oak woodland on the property would be retained. However, due to construction related disturbance and the proposed removal of one oak tree, two oak woodland restoration areas are proposed at the northwest and southwest edges of the buffer area for Stream 533. A total of nine new oak trees would be planted in the proposed oak woodland restoration areas.

Grading will be required to prepare the site for development and to ensure that the site is properly drained. Grading volumes for the proposed development would be approximately 1,500 cubic yards (cut) and 1,000 cubic yards (fill), with 500 cubic yards to be exported from the site. New impervious surfaces including building, asphalt, concrete and pavers would total approximately 32,000 square feet. Storm water drainage would be captured and treated on site in an underground retention/detention chamber located in the proposed cul de sac. Treated stormwater would be released on site via a dispersion trench to flow across vegetated areas on the east side of the property. Utilities would be connected to existing facilities located at the property frontage, with the use of a force main to connect to the existing sanitary sewer main at Trembley Lane and Cunningham Way.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

A. AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Except as provided in Public Resources Code section 21099, would the project:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Discussion: The project is located in residential neighborhoods located off of Green Valley Road in the Watsonville area. The project would not directly impact any public scenic vistas in the area.

2. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Discussion: The project site is not located along a designated state scenic highway, a County-designated scenic road, public viewshed area, scenic corridor, or scenic resource area. Therefore, no impact is anticipated.

3. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Discussion: The project is designed to be consistent with County Code sections that regulate height, bulk, density, setback, landscaping, and design of new structures in the County, including County Code Chapter 13.11, Site, Architectural and Landscape Design Review, including all applicable design guidelines.

4. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Discussion: The project would create an incremental increase in night lighting. However, this increase would be small, and would be similar in character to the lighting associated with the surrounding existing uses.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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B. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Discussion: The project site does not contain any lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. In addition, the project does not contain Farmland of Local Importance. Therefore, no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide or Farmland of Local Importance would be converted to a non-agricultural use. No impact would occur from project implementation.

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Discussion: The project site is zoned R-1-10-AIA, which is not considered to be an agricultural zone. Additionally, the project site's land is not under a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, the project does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. No impact is anticipated.

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3. 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))? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

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Discussion: The project is not located near land designated as Timber Resource. Therefore, the project would not affect the resource or access to harvest the resource in the future.

4. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Discussion: No forest land occurs on the project site or in the immediate vicinity. No impact is anticipated.

5. 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?

Discussion: The project site does not contain any lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Farmland of Local Importance as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. The project is located adjacent to land mapped as an agriculture resource (Agricultural Soil Type 1A - Prime Farmland) on the eastern property boundary. The potential impacts to adjacent agricultural land that could result from a subdivision of the subject property have been evaluated by the Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission (APAC). Upon a review of the information contained in the staff report, APAC recommended a reduced agricultural buffer setback to the proposed subdivision under Application 141229 at a noticed public hearing on February 15, 2018. No impacts to the adjacent agricultural land are anticipated as a result of the proposed subdivision. For these reasons, no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide, or Farmland of Local Importance would be converted to a non-agricultural use. In addition, the project site contains no forest land, and no forest land occurs within two mile(s) of the project site. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

C. AIR QUALITY

The significance criteria established by the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD)¹ has been relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

1. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

¹ Formerly known as the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD).

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Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Discussion: The project would not conflict with or obstruct any long-range air quality plans of the MBARD. Because general construction activity related emissions (i.e., temporary sources) are accounted for in the emission inventories included in the air quality plans, impacts to air quality plan objectives are less than significant.

General estimated basin-wide construction-related emissions are included in the MBARD emission inventory (which, in part, form the basis for the air quality plans cited below) and are not expected to prevent long-term attainment or maintenance of the ozone and particulate matter standards within the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB). Therefore, temporary construction impacts related to air quality plans for these pollutants from the project would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required, since they are presently estimated and accounted for in the District's emission inventory, as described below. No stationary sources would be constructed that would be long-term permanent sources of emissions.

The project would result in new long-term operational emissions from vehicle trips (mobile emissions), the use of natural gas (energy source emissions), and consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscape maintenance equipment (area source emissions). Mobile source emissions constitute most operational emissions from this type of land use development project. However, emissions associated with buildout of this type of project is not expected to exceed any applicable MBARD thresholds. No stationary sources would be constructed that would be long-term permanent sources of emissions. Therefore, impacts to regional air quality as a result of long-term operation of the project would be less than significant.

Santa Cruz County is located within the NCCAB. The NCCAB does not meet state standards for ozone (reactive organic gases [ROGs] and nitrogen oxides [NOx]) and fine particulate matter (PM₁₀). Therefore, the regional pollutants of concern that would be emitted by the project are ozone precursors and PM₁₀.

The primary sources of ROG within the air basin are on- and off-road motor vehicles, petroleum production and marketing, solvent evaporation, and prescribed burning. The primary sources of NOx are on- and off-road motor vehicles, stationary source fuel combustion, and industrial processes. In 2010, daily emissions of ROGs were estimated at 63 tons per day. Of this, area-wide sources represented 49%, mobile sources represented 36%, and stationary sources represented 15%. Daily emissions of NOx were estimated at 54 tons per day with 69% from mobile sources, 22% from stationary sources, and 9% from area-wide sources. In addition, the region is "NOx sensitive," meaning that ozone formation due to local emissions is more limited by the availability of NOx as opposed to the availability of ROGs (MBUAPCD, 2013b).

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PM₁₀ is the other major pollutant of concern for the NCCAB. In the NCCAB, highest particulate levels and most frequent violations occur in the coastal corridor. In this area, fugitive dust from various geological and man-made sources combines to exceed the standard. The majority of NCCAB exceedances occur at coastal sites, where sea salt is often the main factor causing exceedance. In 2005 daily emissions of PM₁₀ were estimated at 102 tons per day. Of this, entrained road dust represented 35% of all PM₁₀ emission, windblown dust 20%, agricultural tilling operations 15%, waste burning 17%, construction 4%, and mobile sources, industrial processes, and other sources made up 9% (MBUAPCD, 2008).

Given the modest amount of new traffic that would be generated by the project there is no indication that new emissions of ROG_s or NO_x would exceed MBARD thresholds for these pollutants; and therefore, there would not be a significant contribution to an existing air quality violation.

Project construction may result in a short term, localized decrease in air quality due to generation of PM₁₀. However, standard dust control best management practices (BMPs), such as periodic watering, would be implemented during construction to avoid significant air quality impacts from the generation of PM₁₀.

2. *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?*

Discussion: The primary pollutants of concern for the NCCAB are ozone and PM₁₀, as those are the pollutants for which the district is in nonattainment. Project construction would have a limited and temporary potential to contribute to existing violations of California air quality standards for ozone and PM₁₀ primarily through diesel engine exhaust and fugitive dust. The criteria for assessing cumulative impacts on localized air quality are the same as those for assessing individual project impacts. Projects that do not exceed MBARD’s construction or operational thresholds and are consistent with the AQMP would not have cumulatively considerable impacts on regional air quality (MBARD, 2008). Because the project would not exceed MBARD’s thresholds and is consistent with the AQMP, there would not be cumulative impacts on regional air quality.

3. *Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

Discussion: The project site is located within the Urban Services Line in an area of existing residential development.

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The proposed residential subdivision would not generate substantial pollutant concentrations. Emissions from construction activities represent temporary impacts that are typically short in duration. Impacts to sensitive receptors would be less than significant.

4. *Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?*

Discussion: Land uses typically producing objectionable odors include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The proposed project does not include any uses that would be associated with objectionable odors. Odor emissions from the proposed project would be limited to odors associated with vehicle and engine exhaust and idling from cars entering, parking, and exiting the facility. The project does not include any known sources of objectionable odors associated with the long-term operations phase.

During construction activities, only short-term, temporary odors from vehicle exhaust and construction equipment engines would occur. California ultralow sulfur diesel fuel with a maximum sulfur content of 15 ppm by weight would be used in all diesel-powered equipment, which minimizes emissions of sulfurous gases (sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide, carbon disulfide, and carbonyl sulfide). As the project site is in a coastal area that contains coastal breezes off of the Monterey Bay, construction-related odors would disperse and dissipate and would not cause substantial odors. Construction-related odors would be short-term and would cease upon completion. Therefore, no objectionable odors are anticipated from construction activities associated with the project.

The project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people; therefore, the project is not expected to result in significant impacts related to objectionable odors during construction or operation.

D. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

Discussion: Biotic reports have been prepared for this project including an Aquatic Resource Delineation Report dated May 2018 (Attachment 2), a Special Status Plant Survey dated June

22, 2018, prepared by Coast Range Biological (Attachment 3), and a Wetland Review dated July 22, 2019, prepared by Biotic Resources Group (Attachment 4). These reports have been reviewed and accepted by the Planning Department Environmental Planning section (Attachment 5). A Biotic Restoration Plan dated March 10, 2021, prepared by Biotic Resources Group (Attachment 6) has also been submitted. The biotic reports determined that wetlands, oak woodlands, and habitat for nesting birds occur on the project site and recommends avoidance and minimization measures for protection of these species and/or habitats. Per the submitted biotic reports, the project site does not contain habitat for any other special-status wildlife species and no special-status plants were observed during the biotic surveys. The avoidance and minimization measures in the biotic report, and conditions of approval in the County biotic approval letter have been incorporated into mitigation measures to reduce project related impacts to less than significant.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Migratory birds are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-711). The MBTA makes it unlawful to take, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory bird listed in 50 CFR Part 10 including feathers or other parts, nests, eggs, or products, except as allowed by implementing regulations (50 CFR 21). All migratory bird species are protected by the MBTA. Any disturbance that causes direct injury, death, nest abandonment, or forced fledging of migratory birds, is restricted under the MBTA. Any removal of active nests during the breeding season or any disturbance that results in the abandonment of nestlings is considered a “take” of the species under federal law.

Impacts

The project area provides potential nesting habitat for birds of prey and birds listed by the MBTA. No nests or evidence of past nests were observed in the project area during the general biological surveys. However, nests could become established in the vegetation to be removed before construction begins. As a result, implementation of the following mitigation would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1: Under the MBTA, nests that contain eggs or unfledged young are not to be disturbed during the breeding season. The nesting season for migratory birds and birds of prey is generally 1 February through 31 August. Implementation of the following measures will avoid potential impacts.

- If removal of vegetation, grading activity, or other use of heavy equipment begins outside the February 1 to August 31 breeding season, there will be no need to conduct a preconstruction survey for active nests.

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- Woody vegetation intended for removal shall be removed during the period of September 1st through January 31st, in order to avoid the nesting season.
- If removal of vegetation, grading activity, or other use of heavy equipment is to commence between February 1st and August 31st, a survey for active bird nests shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 15 days prior to the start of such activity. The survey area shall include the project area, and a survey radius around the project area of 50 feet for MBTA birds and 250 feet for birds of prey.
- If no active nest of a bird of prey or MBTA bird is found then no further avoidance and minimization measures are necessary.
- If active nest(s) of MBTA birds or birds of prey are found in the survey area, an avoidance buffer of 50 feet for MBTA birds and 250 feet for birds of prey shall be established around the active nest(s). The biologist shall monitor the nest, and advise the applicant when all young have fledged the nest. Removal of vegetation, grading activity, or other use of heavy equipment may begin after fledging is complete.
- If the biologist determines that a smaller avoidance buffer will provide adequate protection for nesting birds, a proposal for alternative avoidance/protective measures, potentially including a smaller avoidance buffer and construction monitoring, may be submitted to Environmental Planning staff for review and approval prior to removal of vegetation, grading activity, or other use of heavy equipment.
- If removal of vegetation, grading activity, or other use of heavy equipment stops for more than two weeks during the nesting season (February 1st - August 31st) a new survey shall be conducted prior to re-commencement of construction.

See discussion under D-2, below regarding wetland and oak woodland habitats.

2. *Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations (e.g., wetland, native grassland, special forests, intertidal zone, etc.) or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*
-

Discussion: As stated in the response to D-1, above, biotic reports have been prepared for this project including an Aquatic Resource Delineation Report dated May 2018 (Attachment 2), a Special Status Plant Survey dated June 22, 2018, prepared by Coast Range Biological (Attachment 3), and a Wetland Review dated July 22, 2019, prepared by Biotic Resources Group (Attachment 4). These reports have been reviewed and accepted by the Planning

Department Environmental Planning section (Attachment 5). A Biotic Restoration Plan dated March 10, 2021, prepared by Biotic Resources Group (Attachment 6) has also been submitted. The biotic reports determined that wetlands, oak woodlands, and habitat for nesting birds occur on the project site and recommends avoidance and minimization measures for protection of these species and/or habitats. The avoidance and minimization measures recommended in the Biotic Report and Environmental Planning review and acceptance letter have been incorporated into the mitigation measures below to reduce project related impacts to less than significant.

See discussion under D-1, above regarding habitat for nesting birds.

Wetlands

Two wetlands were identified on the parcel during the wetland delineation studies conducted in May of 2018 and confirmed during the July 2019 Wetland Review. Wetland 1 occurs in the southwestern portion of the study area on sloped terrain that appears to receive surface and near-surface runoff from upslope. This wetland is dominated by Himalayan blackberry and spreading rush and was mapped during the 2018 delineation to include a natural seep and a man-made drainage ditch. This feature does not provide habitat for special status wildlife species. Wetland 2 occurs in the eastern portion of the study area in a shallow swale at the toe of a slope. The 2018 Wetland Study and the 2019 Wetland Review consider Wetland 2 as remnant of the riparian corridor of Stream 533, an intermittent stream which crosses the adjacent parcel downslope to the east.

Riparian Corridors, as defined by Santa Cruz County Code Section 16.30.030, are granted protections under the County's Sensitive Habitat Protection and Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinances. Lands extending 100 feet (measured horizontally) from the high-water mark of a lake, wetland, estuary, lagoon or natural body of standing water, lands extending 30 feet (measured horizontally) out from each side of an intermittent stream, and lands containing a riparian woodland are considered Riparian Corridors. Development activities are prohibited within Riparian Corridors unless an Exception is granted, and Riparian Exception Findings (SCCC 16.30.060) must be met for a Riparian Exception to be authorized.

Wetland 1 is an isolated feature dominated by non-native Himalayan blackberry. While this feature meets the three parameters that define a wetland, in its current condition it is highly degraded and has very low habitat value for wildlife or water quality. Wetland 1 is subject to the protections of the defined 100-foot riparian corridor as outlined in SCCC 16.30.030. Encroachment into this buffer would require a Riparian Exception. The July 2019 Wetland Review includes a proposal for a reduction in size of the Riparian Corridor of Wetland 1. Santa Cruz County Code does not offer provisions for a reduction in the size of the protected

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Riparian Corridor, and development within the protected Riparian Corridor may only be authorized via a Riparian Exception, as described above.

Wetland 2 appears to be associated with the remnant riparian corridor of Stream 533 that has been disturbed by previous grading and vegetation removal on the parcel. The scattered oaks along this eastern portion of the property are also associated with the hydrology of Stream 533 that drains from north to south along the lower portions of this sloped parcel. The riparian corridor of intermittent Stream 533 is also considered an urban arroyo. The boundary and buffers associated with this riparian corridor must be mapped and a 10-foot setback from the edge of the buffer is required for all structures. These buffers are dependent on vegetation type and slope and are determined based on the criteria found in the Tables in Section 16.30.040 of the County Code.

In order to conduct work within a County-defined riparian corridor or wetland area, the project must be granted a riparian exception by the County. Conditions of approval listed in the riparian exception must be adhered to. Prior to the approval of any riparian exception, a specific set of findings must be met. Preliminary analysis has determined that the project meets these findings, and the conditions of approval for the riparian exception shall incorporate the following mitigation measures:

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures would reduce significant impacts to a less than significant level.

BIO-2: Potential impacts to riparian corridors and wetland areas shall be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of the following mitigation measures:

1. No work shall occur within a County defined Riparian Corridor unless the Riparian Exception Findings are met, and a Riparian Exception is authorized.
2. The boundaries and buffers for all sensitive habitats must be reviewed and approved by County Environmental Planning Staff prior to final subdivision map approval, and these boundaries and buffers for sensitive habitats shall be included on the final subdivision map and all maps for future development proposed on the parcel.
3. To minimize impacts to oak woodlands and riparian woodland habitat:
 - The boundary and buffers associated with the riparian woodland habitat/urban arroyo of Stream 533, located along the eastern portion of the property, shall be delineated and flagged in the field by a qualified biologist and mapped as sensitive habitat. The 10-foot setback from the edge of the buffer shall also be included on the map.

- The boundaries of oak woodland habitat shall be delineated at or outside of the dripline of oak trees on the property and flagged in the field by a qualified biologist and mapped as sensitive habitat.
 - Prior to construction, high visibility construction fencing shall be installed, with the assistance of a qualified biologist, around areas identified as sensitive habitat to indicate the limits of work (limits of grading) and prevent inadvertent grading or other disturbance within the surrounding sensitive habitats. No work-related activity including equipment staging, vehicular access, and grading shall be allowed outside the limits of work.
 - No excess soil, chemicals, debris, equipment or other materials shall be dumped or stored outside the designated limits of work.
 - Upon project completion, areas of exposed soil shall be re-vegetated with locally native erosion control species. Non-native grasses or forbs may not be used for erosion control.
 - Implementation of standard erosion control best management practices and riparian habitat protection measures shall be adhered to prior, during, and after the construction period to minimize impacts to the intermittent drainage.
 - A permanent low split-rail type fence or other permanent barrier shall be installed between protected woodlands and the residential development.
4. To comply with the Santa Cruz County General Plan Policy 5.1.12, restoration of the degraded sensitive habitat associated with the riparian woodland and Wetland 2 shall be required. A site-specific Habitat Restoration Plan shall be developed for restoration of the mapped riparian woodland and Wetland 2 and shall be submitted to Environmental Planning staff for approval prior to implementation.
- The Habitat Restoration Plan shall be prepared by a qualified professional, and shall include the following minimum elements:
 - Plan for removal of non-native species and a management strategy to control re-establishment of invasive non-native species within the riparian woodland and Wetland 2.
 - Species, size, and locations of all restoration plantings. These plantings shall occur at sizes and ratios determined by the restoration specialist to adequately restore native riparian woodland habitat while maximizing plant health and survivability of individual trees and shrubs.
 - Location and methods of installation of permanent split-rail type fence or other permanent barrier around approved protective buffers.

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- Establishment of a designated wetland planting area within the boundaries of Wetland 2 where native hydrophytic plant species and native erosion seed mix specific to wetlands shall be installed.
 - Information regarding the methods of irrigation for restoration plantings.
 - 5-year management plan for maintenance and monitoring of restored areas to maintain 100% survival of installed container stock in years 1-3, and at least 80% survival in years 4-5. Replacement plants shall be installed as needed during the monitoring period to meet survival rates. Annual reports shall be submitted to the County Planning Department by December 31 of each monitoring year.
 - The project developer shall be responsible for execution of the 5-year management plan for maintenance and monitoring of restored areas until the responsibility is transferred legally to another entity such as an HOA. County Environmental Planning Staff shall be informed of any such transfer of responsibility.
 - Work associated with removal of non-native species, installation of native plant stock, and any other restoration activities outlined in the Habitat Restoration Plan shall be conducted with hand tools unless other methods are approved by County Environmental Planning Staff.
 - Establishment and planting of all restoration and mitigation area(s) as outlined in the final approved Restoration Planting Plan shall be inspected and approved by Environmental Planning staff prior to release of securities for the subdivision improvements.
5. If Riparian Exception Findings are met, and encroachment into the 100-foot riparian corridor of Wetland 1 is authorized, the following shall be adhered to:
- The boundaries of Wetland 1 as delineated in the May 2018 Wetland Delineation shall be assumed correct unless additional analysis is conducted. The location and boundary of Wetland 1 shall be flagged in the field by a qualified biologist, based on presence and location of hydrophytic vegetation, and mapped as sensitive habitat.
 - A protective buffer of at least 30 feet around Wetland 1 shall be established (Final buffers would be determined by Riparian Exception Findings). The area within this buffer shall be mapped as sensitive habitat, and no development shall occur within the County approved protective buffer.

- A permanent low split-rail type fence or other permanent barrier shall be installed between the approved protective buffer of Wetland 1 and the residential development.
- To compensate for encroachment into the 100-foot riparian corridor, Wetland 1 shall be enhanced by removing non-native species and re-vegetating with native hydrophytic plant species and a native erosion seed mix specific to wetlands.
- Wetland 1 shall be included as part of the site-specific Habitat Restoration Plan, and all elements and conditions of this plan shall apply, including details regarding methods for restoration and monitoring of Wetland 1; location of protective buffers and fences; and species, size, and locations of all restoration plantings.

Oak Woodlands

Coast Live Oak Woodland, composed of the *Quercus agrifolia* Woodland Alliance, occurs along the northern study area boundary. Small stands and isolated oak trees also occur in the eastern portion of the study area. This habitat is dominated by a canopy of coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), with an understory of poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), Bermuda buttercup (*Oxalis pescaprae*), and herbaceous species characteristic of Non-Native Grassland described above. Oak woodlands are considered sensitive habitats under the County's Sensitive Habitat Protection Ordinance.

Development in an area located within or adjacent to oak woodland habitat has the potential to impact a sensitive habitat. Per County Code 16.32.090, all development within or adjacent to sensitive habitat areas must mitigate potentially significant impacts to the sensitive habitat. Per the submitted biotic reports and the review letter prepared by Environmental Planning staff, the following mitigations shall be incorporated:

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures would reduce significant impacts to a less than significant level.

BIO-3: Potential impacts to oak woodland habitat areas shall be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of the following mitigation measures:

1. If removal of any oak trees is required as a result of the project, to compensate for impacts resulting from removal of, or damage to, native trees within oak woodlands:
 - All permanently impacted areas of oak woodland habitat shall be compensated for at a 1:1 replacement ratio by creating oak woodland habitat in designated mitigation areas on site.

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- All native oak trees removed or damaged during construction shall be replaced in-kind at a minimum 3:1 replacement ratio within designated oak woodland mitigation areas on site.
- Additional restoration plantings shall occur at sizes and ratios determined by the restoration specialist to establish 1:1 replacement of oak woodland habitat while maximizing plant health and survivability of individual trees and shrubs.
- Details shall be included in the final site-specific Restoration Planting Plan including establishment of designated oak woodland mitigation area(s) on site to achieve a 1:1 habitat replacement ratio, and minimum 3:1 oak tree replacement ratio within these designated areas.

3. *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?*

Discussion:

The subject property contains two wetland areas, as identified in the submitted biotic reports and as discussed in response D-2 above.

Wetlands may be subject to regulation as Waters of the State by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Wetlands are granted further protections under the County’s Sensitive Habitat Protection and Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinances (SCCC 16.30 and 16.32). In order to conduct work within 100 feet of a wetland, the project must be granted a riparian exception. Conditions of approval listed in the Riparian Exception must be adhered to. Prior to the approval of any riparian exception, a specific set of findings must be met. Preliminary analysis has determined that the project meets these findings.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would reduce significant impacts to riparian corridors and wetland areas to a less than significant level (see discussion under D-2 above).

4. *Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*

Discussion: The project does not involve any activities that would interfere with the movements or migrations of fish or wildlife or impede use of a known wildlife nursery site.

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5. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources (such as the Sensitive Habitat Ordinance, Riparian and Wetland Protection Ordinance, and the Significant Tree Protection Ordinance)?

Discussion: Portions of the project are located adjacent to identified wetlands and within a County-defined riparian corridor. See discussions and mitigation measures specified under D-2 above. The project must be granted a Riparian Exception in order to be consistent with the County of Santa Cruz Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection Ordinance. In order for a project to qualify for a Riparian Exception (SCCC Section 16.30.060), a specific set of findings must be made. Preliminary analysis has determined that the project complies with these findings.

The project is therefore consistent with the County of Santa Cruz Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection Ordinance, and impacts from project implementation would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

6. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Discussion: The project would not conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

E. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

1. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?

Discussion: The existing structure(s) on the property is/are not designated as a historic resource on any federal, state or local inventory. As a result, no impacts to historical resources would occur from project implementation.

2. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?

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Discussion: The project site is located within a mapped area that could potentially contain archaeological resources. According to the Archaeological Survey Report prepared by Albion Environmental Inc., dated April 2018 (Attachment 7), there is no evidence of pre-historic cultural resources on the subject property. However, pursuant to section 16.40.040 of the SCCC, if archeological resources are uncovered during construction, the responsible persons shall immediately cease and desist from all further site excavation and comply with the notification procedures given in SCCC Chapter 16.40.040.

3. *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?*

Discussion: Impacts are expected to be less than significant. However, pursuant to section 16.40.040 of the SCCC, and California Health and Safety Code sections 7050.5-7054, if at any time during site preparation, excavation, or other ground disturbance associated with this project, human remains are discovered, the responsible persons shall immediately cease and desist from all further site excavation and notify the Sheriff-Coroner and the Planning Director. If the coroner determines that the remains are not of recent origin, a full archaeological report shall be prepared, and representatives of local Native American Indian groups shall be contacted. If it is determined that the remains are Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission will be notified as required by law. The Commission will designate a Most Likely Descendant who will be authorized to provide recommendations for management of the Native American human remains. Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 5097, the descendants shall complete their inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. Disturbance shall not resume until the significance of the resource is determined and appropriate mitigations to preserve the resource on the site are established.

F. ENERGY

Would the project:

1. *Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?*

Discussion: The project, like all development, would be responsible for an incremental increase in the consumption of energy resources during demolition, site grading, and construction due to onsite construction equipment and materials processing. All project

construction equipment would be required to comply with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) emissions requirements for construction equipment, which includes measures to reduce fuel-consumption, such as imposing limits on idling and requiring older engines and equipment to be retired, replaced, or repowered. In addition, the project would comply with General Plan policy 8.2.2, which requires all new development to be sited and designed to minimize site disturbance and grading. As a result, impacts associated with the small temporary increase in consumption of fuel during construction are expected to be less than significant.

The project involves construction of a residential subdivision and is below the threshold to require a traffic impact study. No impacts are expected from project implementation. Therefore, the project will not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

In addition, the County has strategies to help reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These strategies included in the *County of Santa Cruz Climate Action Strategy* (County of Santa Cruz, 2013) are outlined below.

Strategies for the Reduction of Energy Use and GHG Emissions

- Develop a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Program, if feasible.²
- Increase energy efficiency in new and existing buildings and facilities.
- Enhance and expand the Green Business Program.
- Increase local renewable energy generation.
- Public education about climate change and impacts of individual actions.
- Continue to improve the Green Building Program by exceeding the minimum standards of the state green building code (Cal Green).
- Form partnerships and cooperative agreements among local governments, educational institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and private businesses as a cost-effective way to facilitate mitigation and adaptation.
- Reduce energy use for water supply through water conservation strategies.

Strategies for the Reduction of Energy Consumption and GHG Emissions from Transportation

- Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through County and regional long-range planning efforts.
- Increase bicycle ridership and walking through incentive programs and investment in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and safety programs.

² Monterey Bay Community Power (MBCP) was formed in 2017 to provide carbon-free electricity. All Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) customers in unincorporated Santa Cruz County were automatically enrolled in the MBCP in 2018.

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- Provide infrastructure to support zero and low emissions vehicles (plug in, hybrid plug-in vehicles).
- Increase employee use of alternative commute modes: bus transit, walking, bicycling, carpooling, etc.
- Increase the number of electric and alternative fuels vehicles in the County fleet.

Therefore, the project will not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

2. *Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

Discussion: AMBAG’s 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) recommends policies that achieve statewide goals established by CARB, the California Transportation Plan 2040, and other transportation-related policies and state senate bills. The SCS element of the MTP targets transportation-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in particular, which can also serve to address energy use by coordinating land use and transportation planning decisions to create a more energy efficient transportation system.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) prepares a County-specific regional transportation plan (RTP) in conformance with the latest AMBAG MTP/SCS. The 2040 RTP establishes targets to implement statewide policies at the local level, such as reducing vehicle miles traveled and improving speed consistency to reduce fuel consumption.

In 2013, Santa Cruz County adopted a Climate Action Strategy (CAS) focused on reducing the emission of greenhouse gases, which is dependent on increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. The strategy intends to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by implementing a number of measures such as reducing vehicle miles traveled through County and regional long-range planning efforts, increasing energy efficiency in new and existing buildings and facilities, increasing local renewable energy generation, improving the Green Building Program by exceeding minimum state standards, reducing energy use for water supply through water conservation strategies, and providing infrastructure to support zero and low emission vehicles that reduce gasoline and diesel consumption, such as plug in electric and hybrid plug in vehicles.

In addition, the Santa Cruz County General Plan has historically placed a priority on “smart growth” by focusing growth in the urban areas through the creation and maintenance of an

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urban services line. Objective 2.1 (Urban/Rural Distinction) directs most residential development to the urban areas, limits growth, supports compact development, and helps reduce sprawl. The Circulation Element of the General Plan further establishes a more efficient transportation system through goals that promote the wise use of energy resources, reducing vehicle miles traveled, and transit and active transportation options.

Energy efficiency is a major priority throughout the County's General Plan. Measure C was adopted by the voters of Santa Cruz County in 1990 and explicitly established energy conservation as one of the County's objectives. The initiative was implemented by Objective 5.17 (Energy Conservation) and includes policies that support energy efficiency, conservation, and encourage the development of renewable energy resources. Goal 6 of the Housing Element also promotes energy efficient building code standards for residential structures constructed in the County.

The project will be consistent with the AMBAG 2040 MTP/SCS and the SCCRTC 2040 RTP. The project would also be required to comply with the Santa Cruz County General Plan and any implemented policies and programs established through the CAS. In addition, the project design would be required to comply with CALGreen, the state of California's green building code, to meet all mandatory energy efficiency standards. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct any state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

G. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

1. *Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. <i>Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. <i>Strong seismic ground shaking?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. <i>Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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D. Landslides?

Discussion (A through D): All of Santa Cruz County is subject to some hazard from earthquakes, and there are several faults within the County. While the San Andreas fault is larger and considered more active, each fault is capable of generating moderate to severe ground shaking from a major earthquake. Consequently, large earthquakes can be expected in the future. The October 17, 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake (magnitude 7.1) was the second largest earthquake in central California history.

The project site is located within of the limits of the Zayante Fault zone, a State and County mapped fault zone (County of Santa Cruz GIS Mapping, California Division of Mines and Geology, 2001). A geologic investigation for the project was prepared by Easton Geology, dated December 9, 2016 (Attachment 8), and a geotechnical investigation was prepared by Rock Solid Engineering Inc., dated December 9, 2016 (Attachment 9). These reports have been reviewed and accepted by the Environmental Planning Section of the Planning Department (Attachment 10).

The geologic and geotechnical reports identified the location of the property within a State and County mapped fault zone with the potential for high seismic shaking, as well as a history of liquefaction and lateral spreading on the project site. The reports recommend building within the designated geologic envelope and the use of structural mat slabs or waffle-type grade beam foundation designs identified in the reports to reduce the potential impacts related to seismic shaking or liquefaction and lateral spreading on the proposed residential development. The project applicant has incorporated the recommendations of the geologic and geotechnical investigations into the project design.

Implementation of the additional requirements included in the review letter prepared by Environmental Planning staff (Attachment 10) will serve to further reduce the potential risk of seismic shaking, liquefaction, or lateral spreading. Therefore, impacts will be less than significant.

2. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Discussion: Some potential for erosion exists during the construction phase of the project, however, this potential is minimal because the site is not steeply sloped and standard erosion controls are a required condition of the project. Prior to approval of a grading or building permit, the project must have an approved stormwater pollution control plan (SCCC Section 7.79.100), which would specify detailed erosion and sedimentation control measures. The plan would include provisions for disturbed areas to be planted with ground cover and to be

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maintained to minimize surface erosion. Impacts from soil erosion or loss of topsoil would be considered less than significant.

3. *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?*

Discussion: The report cited above (see discussion under G-1 above) concluded that there is a potential risk from strong seismic shaking, liquefaction, and lateral spreading. The recommendations contained in the geologic and geotechnical reports, including development within the designated geologic envelope and utilization of structural mat slabs or waffle-type grade beam foundation designs will be implemented to reduce this potential hazard to a less than significant level.

4. *Be located on expansive soil, as defined in section 1803.5.3 of the California Building Code (2016), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?*

Discussion: According to the geotechnical report for the project there are indications of expansive soils in the project area. The recommendations contained in the geotechnical report, including not using the expansive soils as fill material and the use of structural mat slabs or waffle-type grade beam foundation designs, shall be implemented to adequately reduce this potential hazard to a less than significant level.

5. *Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks, leach fields, or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?*

Discussion: No septic systems are proposed. The project would connect to the Freedom County Sanitation District, following annexation of the property into the district through the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). The applicant would be required to pay standard sewer connection and service fees that fund sanitation improvements within the district as a Condition of Approval for the project.

6. *Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site of unique geologic feature?*

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Discussion: No unique paleontological resources or sites or unique geologic features are known to occur in the vicinity of the project. A query was conducted of the mapping of identified geologic/paleontological resources maintained by the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department, and there are no records of paleontological or geological resources in the vicinity of the project parcel. No direct or indirect impacts are anticipated.

H. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

1. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Discussion: The project, like all development, would be responsible for an incremental increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by usage of fossil fuels during the site grading and construction. In 2013, Santa Cruz County adopted a Climate Action Strategy (CAS) intended to establish specific emission reduction goals and necessary actions to reduce greenhouse gas levels to pre-1990 levels as required under Assembly Bill (AB) 32 legislation. The strategy intends to reduce GHG emissions and energy consumption by implementing measures such as reducing vehicle miles traveled through the County and regional long-range planning efforts and increasing energy efficiency in new and existing buildings and facilities. Implementing the CAS, the MBCP was formed in 2017 to provide carbon-free electricity. All PG&E customers in unincorporated Santa Cruz County were automatically enrolled in the MBCP in 2018. All project construction equipment would be required to comply with the CARB emissions requirements for construction equipment. Further, all new buildings are required to meet the State’s CalGreen building code. As a result, impacts associated with the temporary increase in GHG emissions are expected to be less than significant.

2. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Discussion: See the discussion under H-1 above. No significant impacts are anticipated.

I. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

1. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

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Discussion: The project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. No routine transport or disposal of hazardous materials is proposed. However, during construction, fuel would be used at the project site. Best management practices would be used to ensure that no impacts would occur. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

2. *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?*

Discussion: See discussion under I-1 above. Project impacts would be considered less than significant.

3. *Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*

Discussion: Amesti Elementary School, located at 25 Amesti Road, is approximately one mile to the south of the project site. Although fueling of equipment is likely to occur within the staging area, BMPs to contain spills would be implemented. No impacts are anticipated.

4. *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?*

Discussion: The project site is not included on the 12/3/2018 list of hazardous sites in Santa Cruz County compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5. Additionally, GeoTracker, EnviroStor, and Environmental Health Services Laserfiche databases indicated no presence of hazardous sites in the project vicinity. No impacts are anticipated from project implementation.

5. *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?*

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Discussion: The subject property is located approximately 1.8 miles northeast of the Watsonville Municipal Airport, and is within the Airport (-AIA) combining zone district. The property is located outside of the airport safety zones and outside of the mapped noise contours projected from airport activities and would be located outside of the 65 L_{dn} noise contour. As a result, the project would be consistent with General Plan Policy 6.11.2 that would limit single-family residential development of no more than one dwelling on an existing lot of record. In addition, because the project is located within the 60L_{dn} aircraft noise contour, the project would be constructed to mitigate interior noise to 45 L_{dn} or less, and to limit the maximum A-weighted noise level of single aircraft overflights to 50 dBA or less (General Plan Policy 6.11.3). Therefore, the project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area. Impacts would be less than significant using standard construction practices such as double-paned windows.

6. *Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

Discussion: The project would not conflict with implementation of the County of Santa Cruz Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2015-2020 (County of Santa Cruz, 2020). Therefore, no impacts to an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan would occur from project implementation.

7. *Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?*

Discussion: See discussion under Wildfire Question T-2. The project 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.

J. HYDROLOGY, WATER SUPPLY, AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

1. *Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?*

Discussion: The project would not discharge runoff either directly or indirectly into a public or private water supply. However, runoff from this project may contain small amounts of chemicals and other household contaminants, such as pathogens, pesticides, trash, and

nutrients. No commercial or industrial activities are proposed that would contribute contaminants. Potential siltation from the project would be addressed through implementation of erosion control BMPs. No water quality standards or waste discharge requirements would be violated and surface or ground water quality would not otherwise be substantially degraded. Impacts would be less than significant.

The project is located adjacent to Stream 533 and has the potential to generate water quality impacts during construction. An erosion control plan is required per section 16.22.060 of the SCCC.

The following water quality protection and erosion and sediment control BMPs will be implemented, based on standard County requirements, to minimize construction-related contaminants and mobilization of sediment to the Stream 553.

The BMPs will be selected to achieve maximum sediment removal and represent the best available technology that is economically achievable and are subject to review and approval by the County. The County will perform routine inspections of the construction area to verify the BMPs are properly implemented and maintained. The County will notify contractors immediately if there is a noncompliance issue and will require compliance.

The BMPs will include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Equipment used in and around drainages and wetlands will be in good working order and free of dripping or leaking engine fluids. All vehicle maintenance will be performed at least 300 feet from all drainages and wetlands. Any necessary equipment washing will be carried out where the water cannot flow into drainages or wetlands.
- Develop a hazardous material spill prevention control and countermeasure plan before construction begins that will minimize the potential for and the effects of hazardous or toxic substances spills during construction. The plan will include storage and containment procedures to prevent and respond to spills and will identify the parties responsible for monitoring the spill response. During construction, any spills will be cleaned up immediately according to the spill prevention and countermeasure plan. The County will review and approve the contractors' toxic materials spill prevention control and countermeasure plan before allowing construction to begin. Prohibit the following types of materials from being rinsed or washed into the streets, shoulder areas, or gutters: concrete; solvents and adhesives; thinners; paints; fuels; sawdust; dirt; gasoline; asphalt and concrete saw slurry; heavily chlorinated water.
- Any surplus concrete rubble, asphalt, or other rubble from construction will be taken to a local landfill.
- An erosion and sediment control plan will be prepared and implemented for the project. It will include the following provisions and protocols. The Storm Water

Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the project will detail the applications and type of measures and the allowable exposure of unprotected soils.

- Discharge from dewatering operations, if needed, and runoff from disturbed areas will be made to conform to the water quality requirements of the waste discharge permit issued by the RWQCB.
- Temporary erosion control measures, such as sandbagged silt fences, will be applied throughout construction of the project and will be removed after the working area is stabilized or as directed by the engineer. Soil exposure will be minimized through use of temporary BMPs, groundcover, and stabilization measures. Exposed dust-producing surfaces will be sprinkled daily, if necessary, until wet; this measure will be controlled to avoid producing runoff. Paved streets will be swept daily following construction activities.
- The contractor will conduct periodic maintenance of erosion and sediment control measures.
- An appropriate seed mix of native species will be planted on disturbed areas upon completion of construction.
- Cover or apply nontoxic soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for 10 days or more) that could contribute sediment to waterways.
- Enclose and cover exposed stockpiles of dirt or other loose, granular construction materials that could contribute sediment to waterways. Material stockpiles will be located in non-traffic areas only. Side slopes will not be steeper than 2:1. All stockpile areas will be surrounded by a filter fabric fence and interceptor dike.
- Contain soil and filter runoff from disturbed areas by berms, vegetated filters, silt fencing, straw wattle, plastic sheeting, catch basins, or other means necessary to prevent the escape of sediment from the disturbed area.
- Use other temporary erosion control measures (such as silt fences, staked straw bales/wattles, silt/sediment basins and traps, check dams, geofabric, sandbag dikes, and temporary re-vegetation or other ground cover) to control erosion from disturbed areas as necessary.
- Avoid earth or organic material from being deposited or placed where it may be directly carried into the channel.

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- Ensure all areas that are disturbed/compacted during construction are stabilized, vegetated, and de-compacted as necessary, so that runoff rates from landscaped and pervious areas do not exceed those from pre-disturbed/natural conditions.

Implementation of the above BMPs would ensure that water quality impacts to Stream 533 and its tributaries are less than significant.

2. *Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?*

Discussion: The project would obtain water from the City of Watsonville and would not rely on private well water. Although the project would incrementally increase water demand, the City of Watsonville has indicated that adequate supplies are available to serve the project (Attachment 11). The project is not located in a mapped groundwater recharge area or water supply watershed and will not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Impacts would be less than significant.

3. *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:*

- A. *result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;*

- B. *substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;*

- C. *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;*

- D. *impede or redirect flood flows?*

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Discussion: A drainage assessment and calculations prepared by Roper Engineering, dated March 22, 2022 (Attachment 12), has been reviewed for potential on site and downstream stormwater drainage impacts and accepted by the County Department of Public Works Stormwater Management Section staff. The drainage study shows that no erosion or other drainage issues are present at the site and no drainage issues or adverse impacts are anticipated from the proposed improvements. The stormwater runoff rate from the property would be controlled by detention pipes under the proposed cul de sac and filtered with biofiltration vaults. Stormwater Management Staff have determined that the existing and proposed storm water facilities are adequate to handle the increase in drainage associated with the project. Impacts would be considered less than significant.

4. *In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?*

Discussion:

Flood Hazards:

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Rate Map, dated May 16, 2012, no portion of the project site lies within a flood hazard zone, and there would be no impact.

Tsunami and Seiche Zones:

There are two primary types of tsunami vulnerability in Santa Cruz County. The first is a teletsunami or distant source tsunami from elsewhere in the Pacific Ocean. This type of tsunami is capable of causing significant destruction in Santa Cruz County. However, this type of tsunami would usually allow time for the Tsunami Warning System for the Pacific Ocean to warn threatened coastal areas in time for evacuation (County of Santa Cruz 2010).

A greater risk to the County of Santa Cruz is a tsunami generated as the result of an earthquake along one of the many earthquake faults in the region. Even a moderate earthquake could cause a local source tsunami from submarine landsliding in Monterey Bay. A local source tsunami generated by an earthquake on any of the faults affecting Santa Cruz County would arrive just minutes after the initial shock. The lack of warning time from such a nearby event would result in higher casualties than if it were a distant tsunami (County of Santa Cruz 2010).

Seiches are recurrent waves oscillating back and forth in an enclosed or semi-enclosed body of water. They are typically caused by strong winds, storm fronts, or earthquakes.

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The project site is located approximately 5.6 miles inland, approximately 5.4 to 5.6 miles beyond the effects of a tsunami. The project site is located approximately .49 miles from Pinto Lake and would not be affected by a seiche. Therefore, there would be no impact.

5. *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?*

Discussion: All County water agencies are experiencing a lack of sustainable water supply due to groundwater overdraft and diminished availability of streamflow. Because of this, coordinated water resource management has been of primary concern to the County and to the various water agencies. As required by state law, each of the County's water agencies serving more than 3,000 connections must update their Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) every five years, with the most recent updates completed in 2021.

County staff are working with the water agencies on various integrated regional water management programs to provide for sustainable water supply and protection of the environment. Effective water conservation programs have reduced overall water demand in the past 15 years, despite continuing growth. The Board of Supervisors and other agencies adopted the Santa Cruz Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP), updated in 2019, which identifies various strategies and projects to address the current water resource challenges of the region. Other efforts underway or under consideration are stormwater management, groundwater recharge enhancement, increased wastewater reuse, and transfer of water among agencies to provide for more efficient and reliable use.

The County is also working closely with water agencies to implement the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) will be developed for two basins in Santa Cruz County that are designated as critically overdrafted, Santa Cruz Mid-County and Corralitos - Pajaro Valley. These plans will require management actions by all users of each basin to reduce pumping, develop supplemental supplies, and take management actions to achieve groundwater sustainability by 2040. A management plan for the Santa Margarita Basin will be completed by 2022, with sustainability to be achieved by 2042.

The project is located in the Corralitos - Pajaro Valley basin.

PVWMA submitted their Basin Management Plan (BMP) as a GSP Alternative in 2016. It was accepted by the Department of Water Resources (DWR), with the caveat that additional work would be required as part of a 5-year update. PVWMA formed a committee inclusive of representatives from a wide range of stakeholder groups to update the BMP. The update was submitted to DWR in December 2021. The BMP includes implementation of several large projects to increase water supply, as well as a conservation goal to decrease water demand.

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The project will comply with SCCC Chapters 13.13 (Water Conservation – Water Efficient Landscaping), 7.69 (Water Conservation) and 7.70 (Water Wells), as well as Chapter 7.71 (Water Systems) section 7.71.130 (Water use measurement and reporting), to ensure that it will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of current water quality control plans or sustainable groundwater management plans such as the Santa Cruz IRWMP and UWMP for the PVWMA.

K. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Physically divide an established community?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Discussion: The project does not include any element that would physically divide an established community. No impact would occur.

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2. <i>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?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

Discussion: The project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. General Plan policy 5.2.3 (Activities Within Riparian Corridors and Wetlands) states: “Development activities, land alterations and vegetation disturbance within riparian corridors and wetlands and required buffers shall be prohibited unless an exception is granted per the Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinance”. Please see complete discussion under Question D-5. Impacts would be considered less than significant.

L. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>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?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Discussion: The site does not contain any known mineral resources that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. Therefore, no impact is anticipated from project implementation.

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2. <i>Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

Discussion: The project site is zoned R-1-10-AIA, which is not considered to be an Extractive Use Zone (M-3) nor does it have a land use designation with a Quarry Designation Overlay (Q) (County of Santa Cruz 1994). Therefore, no potentially significant loss of availability of a known mineral resource of locally important mineral resource recovery (extraction) site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan would occur as a result of this project.

M. NOISE

Would the project result in:

- 1. *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?*

Discussion:

County of Santa Cruz General Plan

The County of Santa Cruz has not adopted noise thresholds for construction noise. The following applicable noise related policy is found in the Public Safety and Noise Element of the Santa Cruz County General Plan (Santa Cruz County 1994).

- Policy 6.9.7 Construction Noise. Require mitigation of construction noise as a condition of future project approvals.

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The General Plan also contains the following table, which specifies the maximum allowable noise exposure for stationary noise sources (operational or permanent noise sources) (Table 2).

Table 2: Maximum Allowable Noise Exposure for Stationary Noise Sources ¹		
	Daytime ⁵ (7:00 am to 10:00 pm)	Nighttime ^{2, 5} (10:00 pm to 7:00 am)
Hourly Leq average hourly noise level, dB ³	50	45
Maximum Level, dB ³	70	65
Maximum Level, dB – Impulsive Noise ⁴	65	60
Notes: 1 As determined at the property line of the receiving land use. When determining the effectiveness of noise mitigation measures, the standards may be applied to the receptor side of noise barriers or other property line noise mitigation measures. 2 Applies only where the receiving land use operates or is occupied during nighttime hours 3 Sound level measurements shall be made with “slow” meter response. 4 Sound level measurements shall be made with “fast” meter response 5 Allowable levels shall be raised to the ambient noise levels where the ambient levels exceed the allowable levels. Allowable levels shall be reduced to 5 dB if the ambient hourly Leq is at least 10 dB lower than the allowable level. Source: County of Santa Cruz 1994		

County of Santa Cruz Code

There are no County of Santa Cruz ordinances that specifically regulate construction or operational noise levels. However, Section 8.30.010 (Curfew—Offensive noise) of the SCCC contains the following language regarding noise impacts:

- (A) No person shall make, cause, suffer, or permit to be made any offensive noise.
- (B) “Offensive noise” means any noise which is loud, boisterous, irritating, penetrating, or unusual, or that is unreasonably distracting in any other manner such that it is likely to disturb people of ordinary sensitivities in the vicinity of such noise, and includes, but is not limited to, noise made by an individual alone or by a group of people engaged in any business, activity, meeting, gathering, game, dance, or amusement, or by any appliance, contrivance, device, tool, structure, construction, vehicle, ride, machine, implement, or instrument.
- (C) The following factors shall be considered when determining whether a violation of the provisions of this section exists:
 - (1) Loudness (Intensity) of the Sound.
 - (a) Day and Evening Hours. For purposes of this factor, a noise shall be automatically considered offensive if it occurs between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. and it is:
 - (i) Clearly discernible at a distance of 150 feet from the property line of the property from which it is broadcast; or
 - (ii) In excess of 75 decibels at the edge of the property line of the property from which the sound is broadcast, as registered on a sound measuring

instrument meeting the American National Standard Institute's Standard S1.4-1971 (or more recent revision thereof) for Type 1 or Type 2 sound level meters, or an instrument which provides equivalent data.

A noise not reaching this intensity of volume may still be found to be offensive depending on consideration of the other factors outlined below.

(b) Night Hours. For purposes of this factor, a noise shall be automatically considered offensive if it occurs between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. and it is:

(i) Clearly discernible at a distance of 100 feet from the property line of the property from which it is broadcast; or

(ii) In excess of 60 decibels at the edge of the property line of the property from which the sound is broadcast, as registered on a sound measuring instrument meeting the American National Standard Institute's Standard S1.4-1971 (or more recent revision thereof) for Type 1 or Type 2 sound level meters, or an instrument which provides equivalent data.

A noise not reaching this intensity of volume may still be found to be offensive depending on consideration of the other factors outlined below.

- (2) Pitch (frequency) of the sound, e.g., very low bass or high screech;
- (3) Duration of the sound;
- (4) Time of day or night;
- (5) Necessity of the noise, e.g., garbage collecting, street repair, permitted construction activities;
- (6) The level of customary background noise, e.g., residential neighborhood, commercial zoning district, etc.; and
- (7) The proximity to any building regularly used for sleeping purposes. [Ord. 5205 § 1, 2015; Ord. 4001 § 1, 1989]

Noise generated during project construction would increase the ambient noise levels in adjacent areas. Construction would be temporary, and construction hours would be limited as a condition of approval. Given the limited duration of construction and the limited hours of construction activity, this impact is considered to be less than significant.

The project would not result in a permanent increase in the ambient noise level. The main source of ambient noise in the project area is traffic noise along Paulsen Road (located to the south of the subject property). However, no substantial increase in traffic trips is anticipated as a result of the project. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2. <i>Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

Discussion: The use of construction and grading equipment would potentially generate periodic vibration in the project area. This impact would be temporary and periodic and is not expected to cause damage; therefore, impacts are not expected to be significant.

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3. <i>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?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

Discussion: The subject property is located approximately 1.8 miles northeast of the Watsonville Municipal Airport, and is within the Airport (-AIA) combining zone district. The property is located outside of the airport safety zones and outside of the mapped noise contours projected from airport activities and would be located outside of the 65 L_{dn} noise contour. As a result, the project would be consistent with General Plan Policy 6.11.2 that would limit single-family residential development of no more than one dwelling on an existing lot of record. In addition, because the project is located within the 60L_{dn} aircraft noise contour, the project would be constructed to mitigate interior noise to 45 L_{dn} or less, and to limit the maximum A-weighted noise level of single aircraft overflights to 50 dBA or less (General Plan Policy 6.11.3). Therefore, the project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area. Impacts would be less than significant using standard construction practices such as double-paned windows.

N. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>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)?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

Discussion: The project is designed at the density and intensity of development allowed by the General Plan and zoning designations for the parcel. Although the project would involve the annexation of the subject property into the Freedom County Sanitation District for sanitary sewer service, the parcel is located within the Urban Services Line where such

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services are intended. The property is adjacent to other parcels that are connected to an urban level of services and the annexation will allow the subject property to be developed at the density and intensity designated in the County General Plan. Consequently, the project and the annexation into the sewer district is not expected to have a significant growth-inducing effect. Impacts would be less than significant.

2. *Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

Discussion: The project would not displace any existing housing. No impact would occur.

O. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

1. *Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:*

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. <i>Fire protection?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. <i>Police protection?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. <i>Schools?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. <i>Parks?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. <i>Other public facilities; including the maintenance of roads?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion (a through e): While the project represents an incremental contribution to the need for services, the increase would be minimal. Moreover, the project meets all of the standards and requirements identified by the local fire agency or California Department of Forestry, as applicable, and school, park, and transportation fees to be paid by the applicant would be used to offset the incremental increase in demand for school and recreational facilities and public roads. Impacts would be considered less than significant.

P. RECREATION

Would the project:

1. *Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that*

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substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

Discussion: The project would not substantially increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. Impacts would be considered less than significant.

2. *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?*

Discussion: The project does not propose the expansion or require the construction of additional recreational facilities. No impact would occur.

Q. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

1. *Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?*

Discussion:

Senate Bill (SB) 743, signed by Governor Jerry Brown in 2013, changed the way transportation impacts are identified under CEQA. Specifically, the legislation directed the State of California’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to look at different metrics for identifying transportation impacts. OPR issued its “Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA” (December 2018) to assist practitioners in implementing the CEQA Guidelines revisions to use vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the preferred metric for assessing passenger vehicle related impacts. The CEQA Guidelines were also updated in December 2018, such that vehicle level of service (LOS) will no longer be used as a determinant of significant environmental impacts, and an analysis of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) will be required as of July 2020. A discussion of consistency with the Santa Cruz County General Plan LOS policy is provide below for informational purposes only.

The project would create a small incremental increase in traffic on nearby roads and intersections, approximately 10 trips/day per new dwelling unit, for a total of 70 new trips. The increase would not cause the LOS at any nearby intersection to drop below LOS D, consistent with General Plan Policy 3.12.1.

The project design includes new sidewalks and a cul de sac to serve the new homes. These improvements would include a request for a Roadway/Roadside Exception to vary from the

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standards for new public roadways. As a private interior access road within a subdivision, the proposed circulation improvements would comply with section 13.11.074 of the County Code, "Access, circulation and parking" to prevent potential hazards to motorists, bicyclists, and/or pedestrians. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

2. *Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1) (Vehicle Miles Traveled)?*

Discussion: In response to the passage of Senate Bill 743 in 2013 and other climate change strategies, OPR amended the CEQA Guidelines to replace LOS with VMT as the measurement for transportation impacts. The "Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA," prepared by OPR (2018) provides recommended thresholds and methodologies for assessing impacts of new developments on VMT. There are also a number of screening criteria recommended by OPR that can be used to determine whether a project will have a less-than-significant impact. The screening criteria include projects that generate less than 110 net new trips, map-based screening, projects within a ½ mile of high quality transit, affordable housing projects, and local serving retail. Since Santa Cruz County has a Regional Transportation Planning Authority and generally conducts transportation planning activities countywide, the county inclusive of the cities is considered a region.

In June of 2020, the County of Santa Cruz adopted a threshold of 15% below the existing countywide average per capita VMT levels for residential projects, 15% below the existing countywide average per employee VMT for office and other employee-based projects, no net increase in the countywide average VMT for retail projects, and no net increase in VMT for other projects. Based on the countywide travel demand model the current countywide average per capita VMT for residential uses is 10.2 miles. The current countywide per employee average VMT for the service sector (including office land uses) is 8.9 miles, for the agricultural sector is 15.4, for the industrial sector is 13.9, and for the public sector is 8.2. Therefore, the current VMT thresholds for land use projects are 8.7 miles per capita for residential projects. For employee-based land uses the current thresholds are: 7.6 miles per employee for office and services projects, 13.1 miles per employee for agricultural projects, 11.8 miles per employee for industrial projects, and 7 miles per employee for public sector land use projects. The threshold for retail projects and all other land uses is no net increase in VMT. For mixed-use projects, each land use is evaluated separately unless they are determined to be insignificant to the total VMT.

The project is located on a site that currently is currently vacant and does not generate vehicle trips as shown in Table 1. Trips were calculated using the 10th Edition of ITE trip generation rates for land uses. The proposed land use consists of seven new detached residential units.

Based on ITE trip generation rates for (ITE LU Code 210/Single Family Detached Housing), the project will generate 70 vehicle trips as shown in Table 1. The net new number of trips is 70, which is less than 110, and therefore can be presumed to be less than significant.

Land Use	ITE LU Code / Description	Sq.Ft. / Units	ITE Rate	Vehicle Trips
Former Land Use: Vacant	Vacant	0	0	0
New Land Use: Single Family Detached	210/Single Family Detached Housing	7	.99	70
Net Change				70

3. *Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?*

Discussion: The proposed development would result in the construction of seven new single-family dwellings in a residential neighborhood served by a private interior access roadway. The project would take access from Trembley Lane which connects to the County Road network. Road improvements are proposed which would require a Roadway/Roadside Exception to vary from the County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works Design Criteria. The Department of Public Works has reviewed and accepted the proposed roadway design. Impacts would be less than significant.

4. *Result in inadequate emergency access?*

Discussion: The project’s roadway design has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Public Works and would not result in inadequate access for emergency vehicles. Impacts would be less than significant.

R. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. *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:*

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- A. *Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources Code section 5020.1(k), or*
- B. *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.*

Discussion: The proposed project would develop the vacant parcel into a seven unit residential subdivision. Section 21080.3.1(b) of the California Public Resources Code (AB 52) requires a lead agency formally notify a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated within the geographic area of the discretionary project when formally requested. As of this writing, no California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Santa Cruz County region have formally requested a consultation with the County of Santa Cruz (as Lead Agency under CEQA) regarding Tribal Cultural Resources.

The project site is located within a mapped area that could potentially contain archaeological resources. According to the Archaeological Survey Report prepared by Albion Environmental Inc., dated April 2018 (Attachment 7), there is no evidence of pre-historic cultural resources on the subject property.

Therefore, no impact to the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource is anticipated from project implementation.

S. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- 1. *Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

Discussion:

Water

The project would connect to an existing municipal water supply. The City of Watsonville has determined that adequate supplies are available to serve the project (Attachment 12). No impact would occur from project implementation.

Wastewater

The project will require annexation to the Freedom County Sanitation District through the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). A will serve letter from the Freedom County Sanitation District has been provided (Attachment 13) and wastewater treatment facilities are available and have capacity to serve the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

Stormwater

A drainage assessment and calculations prepared by Roper Engineering, dated March 22, 2022 (Attachment 12), has been reviewed for potential on site and downstream stormwater drainage impacts and accepted by the County Department of Public Works Stormwater Management Section staff. The drainage study shows that no erosion or other drainage issues are present at the site and no drainage issues or adverse impacts are anticipated from the proposed improvements. Stormwater Management Staff have determined that the existing and proposed storm water facilities are adequate to handle the increase in drainage associated with the project. Therefore, no additional offsite drainage facilities would be required for the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

Electric Power

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) provides power to existing and new developments in the Santa Cruz County area. As of 2018, residents and businesses in the County were automatically enrolled in MBCP's community choice energy program, which provides locally controlled, carbon-free electricity delivered on PGE's existing lines.

The proposed site is previously undeveloped and not currently served by electric power. Electric power service will be required to serve the site, including underground connections from the existing utilities at the property boundary to the proposed residences. However, no substantial environmental impacts will result from the additional improvements; impacts will be less than significant.

Natural Gas

PG&E serves the urbanized portions of Santa Cruz County with natural gas.

The proposed site is previously undeveloped and not currently served by natural gas. Extension of gas lines are proposed to serve the site, including underground connections from

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the existing utilities at the property boundary to the proposed residences. However, no substantial environmental impacts will result from the additional improvements; impacts will be less than significant.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications, including telephone, wireless telephone, internet, and cable, are provided by a variety of organizations. AT&T is the major telephone provider, and its subsidiary, DirectTV provides television and internet services. Cable television services in Santa Cruz County are provided by Charter Communications in Watsonville and Comcast in other areas of the county. Wireless services are also provided by AT&T, as well as other service providers, such as Verizon.

The following improvements related to telecommunications are required: underground connections from the existing utilities at the property boundary to the proposed residences. However, no substantial environmental impacts from this work are anticipated, and impacts will be less than significant.

2. *Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?*

Discussion: All the main aquifers in this County, the primary sources of the County's potable water, are in some degree of overdraft. Overdraft is manifested in several ways including 1) declining groundwater levels, 2) degradation of water quality, 3) diminished stream base flow, and/or 4) seawater intrusion. Surface water supplies, which are the primary source of supply for the northern third of the County, are inadequate during drought periods and will be further diminished as a result of the need to increase stream baseflows to restore habitat for endangered salmonid populations. In addition to overdraft, the use of water resources is further constrained by various water quality issues.

The City of Watsonville has indicated that adequate water supplies are available to serve the project and has issued a will-serve letter for the project, subject to the payment of fees and charges in effect at the time of service (Attachment 12). The development would also be subject to the water conservation requirements in Chapter 7.69 (Water Conservation) and 13.13 (Water Conservation—Water Efficient Landscaping) of the County Code and the policies of section 7.18c (Water Conservation) of the General Plan. Therefore, existing water supplies would be sufficient to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Impacts would be less than significant.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
3. <i>Result in determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: The Freedom County Sanitation District has indicated that adequate capacity in the sewer collection system is available to serve the project and has issued a sewer service availability letter for the project, subject to the payment of fees and charges in effect at the time of service (Attachment 13). Therefore, existing wastewater collection/treatment capacity would be sufficient to serve the project. No impact would occur from project implementation.

4. <i>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?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Discussion: Due to the small incremental increase in solid waste generation by the project during construction and operations, the impact would not be significant.

5. <i>Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Discussion: The project would comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste disposal. No impact would occur.

T. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

1. <i>Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Discussion: The project is not located in a State Responsibility Area, a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or a County-mapped Critical Fire Hazard Area and will not conflict with emergency response or evacuation plans. Therefore, no impact would occur.

2. <i>Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to,</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Discussion: The project is not located in a State Responsibility Areas, a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or a County-mapped Critical Fire Hazard Area. However, the project design incorporates all applicable fire safety code requirements and includes fire protection devices as required by the local fire agency and is unlikely to exacerbate wildfire risks. Impacts would be less than significant.

3. *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?*

Discussion: The project is not located in a State Responsibility Areas, a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or a County-mapped Critical Fire Hazard Area. Improvements associated with the project are unlikely to exacerbate wildfire risks. Impacts would be less than significant.

4. *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?*

Discussion: The project is not located within a State Responsibility Areas, a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or a County-mapped Critical Fire Hazard Area. Downslope and downstream impacts associated with wildfires are unlikely to result from the project. Regardless, the project design incorporates all applicable fire safety code requirements and includes fire protection devices as required by the local fire agency. Impacts would be less than significant.

U. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. *Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or*

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Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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animal community or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Discussion: The potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory were considered in the response to each question in Section III (A through T) of this Initial Study. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that significant effects associated with this project would result. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

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

Discussion: In addition to project specific impacts, this evaluation considered the project’s potential for incremental effects that are cumulatively considerable. As a result of this evaluation, there were determined to be no potentially significant cumulative effects associated with this project. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

3. *Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*
-

Discussion: In the evaluation of environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse direct or indirect impacts to human beings were considered in the response to specific questions in Section III (A through T). As a result of this evaluation, no potentially adverse effects to human beings associated with this project were identified. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

IV. REFERENCES USED IN THE COMPLETION OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

California Department of Conservation, 1980

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CalFIRE, 2010

Santa Cruz County-San Mateo County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. May 2010.

Caltrans, 2018

California Public Road Data 2017: Statistical Information Derived from the Highway Performance Monitoring System. Released by the State of California Department of Transportation November 2018.

County of Santa Cruz, 1994

1994 General Plan and Local Coastal Program for the County of Santa Cruz, California. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 24, 1994, and certified by the California Coastal Commission on December 15, 1994.

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E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State—January 1, 2011-2018. Released by the State of California Department of Finance May 2018.

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Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual.

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Flood Insurance Rate Map 0384 Federal Emergency Management Agency. Effective on May 16, 2012.

MBUAPCD, 2008

Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD), CEQA Air Quality Guidelines. Prepared by the MBUAPCD, Adopted October 1995, Revised: February 1997, August 1998, December 1999, September 2000, September 2002, June 2004 and February 2008.

MBUAPCD, 2013a

Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, NCCAB (NCCAB) Area Designations and Attainment Status – January 2013. Available online at http://www.mbuapcd.org/mbuapcd/pdf/Planning/Attainment_Status_January_2013_2.pdf

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OPR, 2018

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Attachment 1

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program



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