Chowchilla High School Sports Complex and Career Building

Initial Study – Mitigated Negative Declaration

prepared by

Chowchilla Union High School District
805 Humboldt Avenue
Chowchilla, California 93610
Contact: Dr. Justin Miller, Superintendent

prepared with the assistance of

Rincon Consultants, Inc.
7080 North Whitney Ave, Suite 101
Fresno, California 93720

December 2022

RINCON CONSULTANTS, INC.
Environmental Scientists | Planners | Engineers
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AB	Assembly Bill
APCD	Air Pollution Control District
APN	Accessor's Parcel Number
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
ATP	Active Transportation Plan
BAAQMD	Bay Ambient Air Quality Management District
Basin Plan	Water Quality Control Plan
BAT	Best Available Technology Economically Achievable
BCT	Best Conventional Pollutant Control Technology
BIOS	Biogeographic Information and Observation System
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CAA	State Clean Air Acts
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CALGreen	California's Green Building Standards Code
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CalRecyle	California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
CBSC	California Building Standards Commission
CCAP	Climate Change Action Plan
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEC	California Energy Commission
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CRECs	controlled recognized environmental conditions
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNNDB	California Natural Diversity Data Base
CO_{2e}	carbon dioxide equivalent
CPD	Chowchilla Police Department
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CTE Facility	Career Technical Education Facility

CUHSD	Chowchilla Union High School District
CVFD	Chowchilla Volunteer Fire Department
CWA	Clean Water Act
dBA	decibels A
dB	decibel
DOC	Department of Conservation
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substance Control
DWR	Department of Water Resources
ERAs	Exceedance Response Actions
ESA	Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
EV	Electric Vehicles
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GAMAQI	Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts
GWh	gigawatt hours
GWP	global warming potential
High School	Chowchilla High School
HRECs	Historical recognized environmental conditions
HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
Krazan	Krazan and Associates, Inc.
L_{dn}	Day-Night Average Sound Level
L_{eq}	equivalent continuous sound level
LUST	Leaking underground storage tank
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MCTC	Madera County Transportation Commission
MG	million gallons
MGD	million gallons per day
MLD	most likely descendant

MMthm	million U.S. therms
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organizations
MRZ-1	Mineral Resource Zone 1
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NALS	Numeric Action Levels
NDPES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOX	nitrogen oxides
OHP	California Office of Historic Preservation
PA	Public Address
PG&E	Pacific Gas & Electric Co
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter with diameters of 2.5 microns or less
PM_{10}	particulate matter with diameters of ten microns or less
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code
RCNM	Roadway Construction Noise Model
RECs	recognized environmental conditions
ROGs	reactive organic gases
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Boards
SCS	sustainable communities strategy
Sf	square foot/feet
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SJVAB	San Joaquin Valley Air Basin
SLF	Sacred Lands File
SR	State Route
SSJVIC	Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center
ST	short term noise measurements
Subbasin	San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin Chowchilla Subbasin
SVP	Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board

TACs	toxic air contaminants
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USEIA	United States Energy Information Administration
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VOCs	volatile organic compounds
WWTP	wastewater treatment plant

Initial Study

1. Project Title

Chowchilla High School Sports Complex and Career Building

2. Lead Agency Name and Address

Chowchilla Union High School District
805 Humboldt Avenue
Chowchilla, California 93610

3. Contact Person and Phone Number

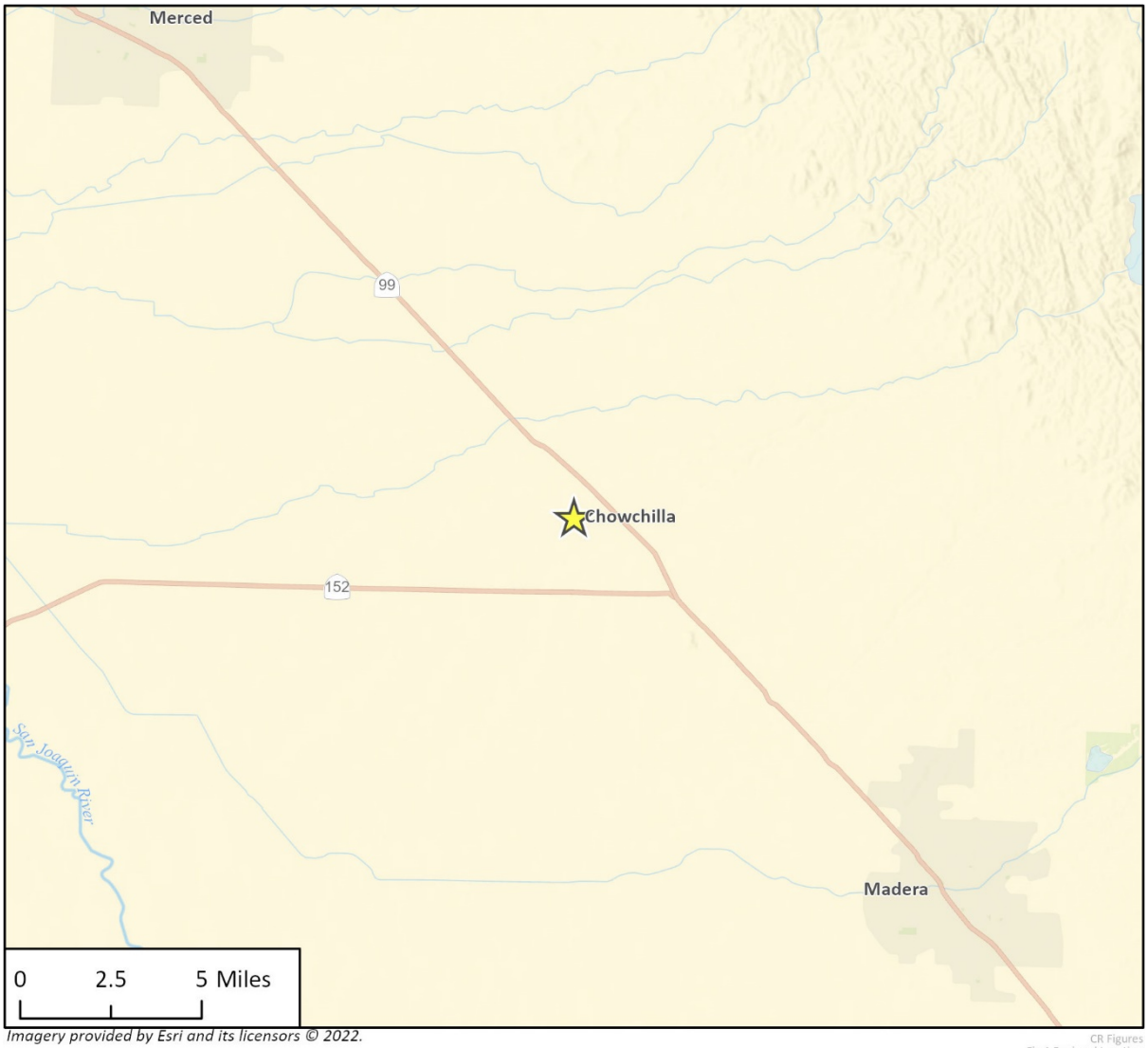
Dr. Justin Miller, Superintendent
Chowchilla Union High School District
805 Humboldt Avenue
Chowchilla, California 93610
(559) 906-4100

4. Project Location

The project site would be located in the City of Chowchilla in northern Madera County, south of State Route (SR) 99 and north of SR 152. The regional location is shown on Figure 1. The project site is adjacent to the Chowchilla High School (High School) and located on Madera County Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 002-300-001, 002-190-001, and 002-098-001, which totals approximately 25.7 acres. The project site includes two separate locations. The project site is shown on Figure 2. The northern project site, located at 725 Humboldt Avenue, is fully developed and consists of the CUHSD Maintenance Operations and Transportation buildings and parking lot, and is approximately 2.4 acres. The southern project site, south of West Mariposa Avenue, was previously developed for industrial use that was demolished between 2005 and 2006. The site is approximately 23.3 acres and is currently vacant. The primary surrounding land use is rural residential development, industrial, a wastewater treatment plant, and active farmland. The project site is located along the eastern edge of the San Joaquin Valley floor. The topography of the site is flat.

The project site includes two separate locations. The northern project site, located at 725 Humboldt Avenue, is fully developed, and consists of the CUHSD Maintenance Operations and Transportation buildings and parking lot. The southern project site, south of West Mariposa Avenue, was previously developed for industrial use that was demolished between 2005 and 2006. The site is currently a vacant field. The primary surrounding land use is rural residential development, industrial, a wastewater treatment plant, and active farmland. The project site is located along the eastern edge of the San Joaquin Valley floor. The topography of the site is flat.

Figure 1 Regional Site Location



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CR Figures
Fig 1 Regional Location

Project Location

N

Figure 2 Project Site

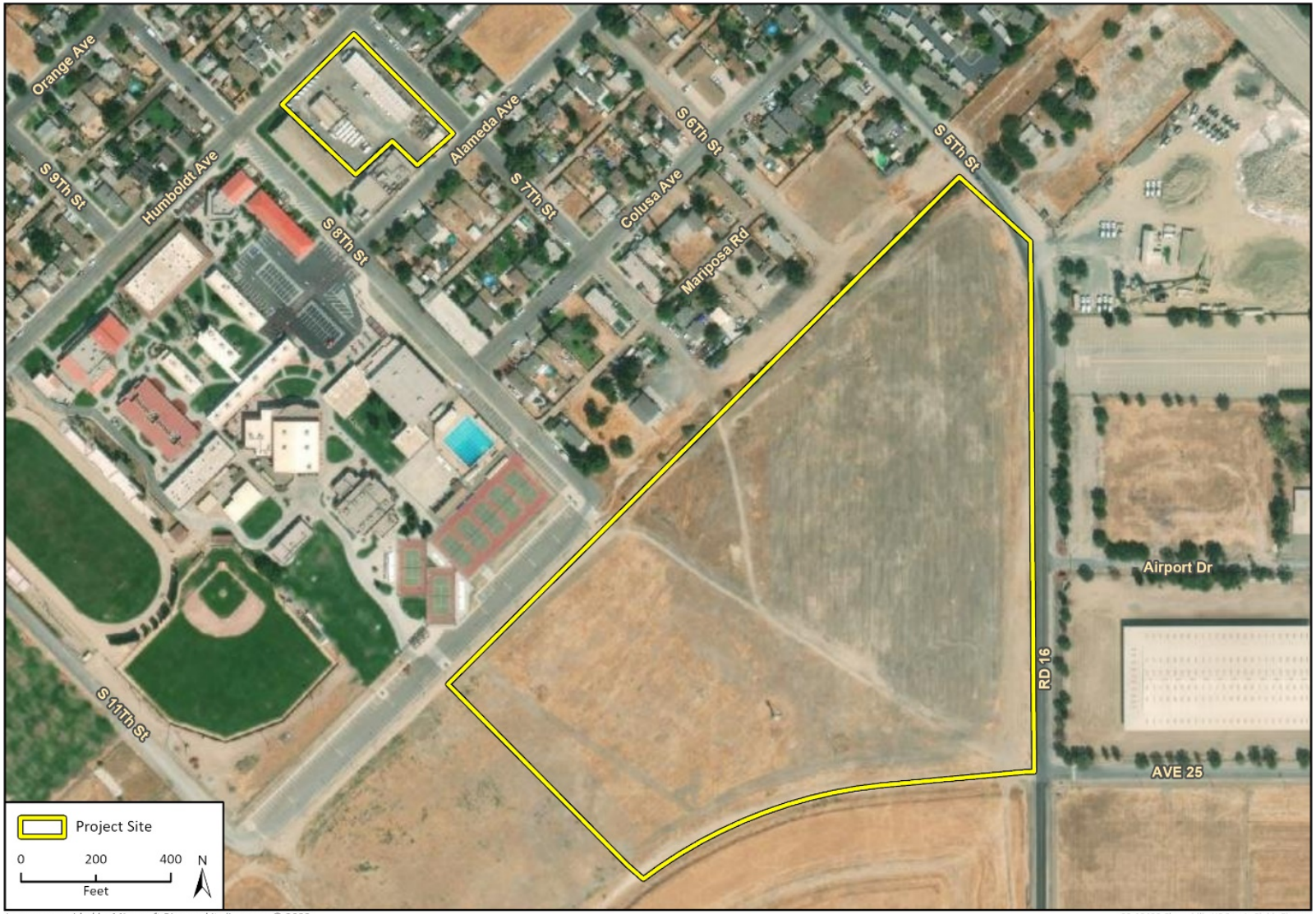
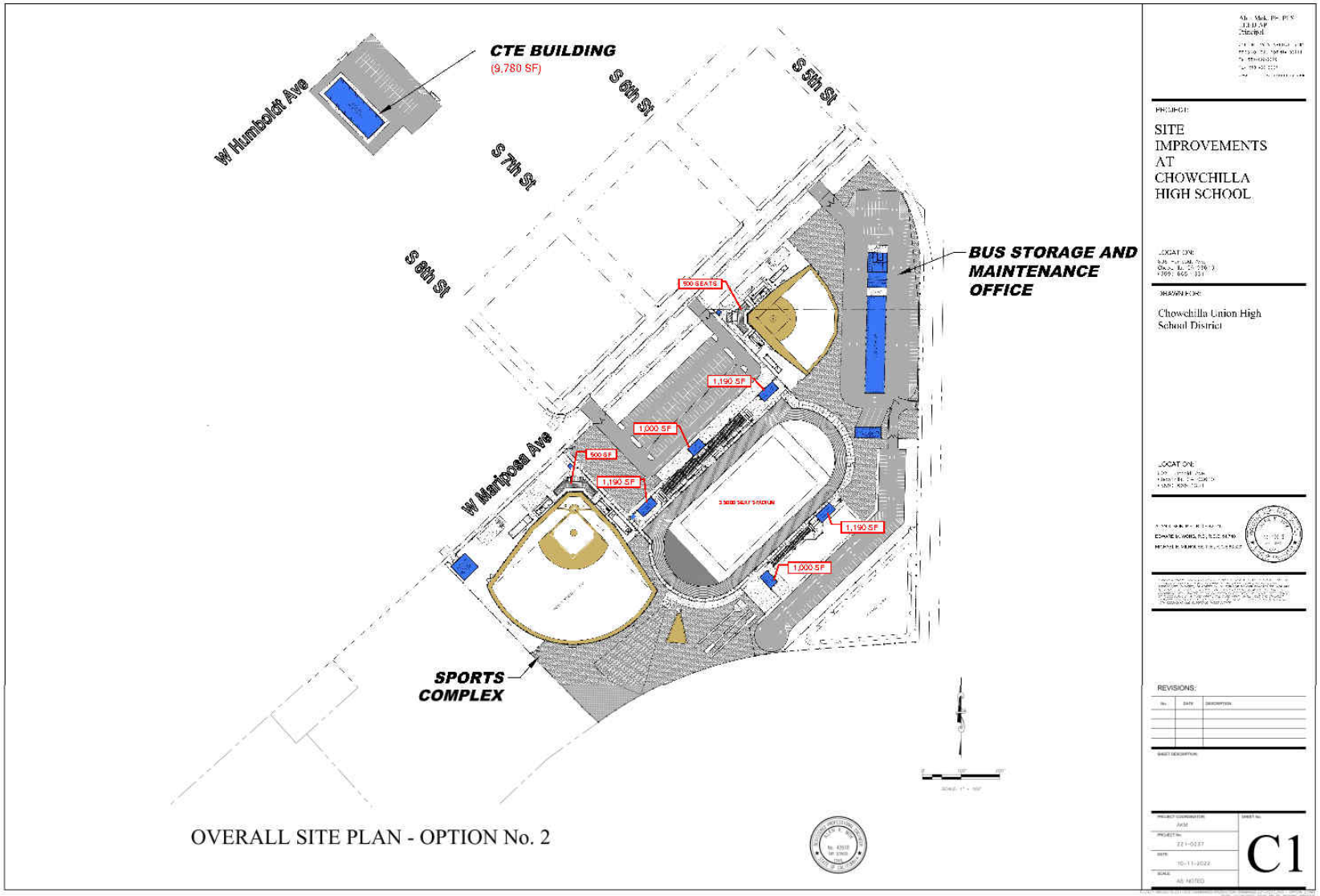


Figure 3 Site Plans



5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address

Chowchilla Union High School District
805 Humboldt Avenue
Chowchilla, California 93610

6. General Plan Designation

The project site has a General Plan land use designation of Public Facilities (City of Chowchilla 2010).

7. Zoning

The parcels are zoned as Public Facilities High School by the City of Chowchilla General Plan (City of Chowchilla 2019).

8. Description of Project

Background

Bond Measure S to support the CUHSD was passed by voters in June of 2022. The bond measure authorized $25.1 million in bonds in part to construct a Career Technical Education (CTE) Facility and install new football, soccer, baseball, and softball fields. The project is to construct those facilities using the funding authorized by Measure S.

Project Components

Chowchilla High School Sports Complex and Career Building Project (herein referred to as "proposed project" or "project") would entail the construction of West Mariposa Ave, a sports complex, demolition of the existing bus garage and parking, relocation of the bus garage and parking, and construction of a CTE Facility. Figure 1 shows the project's regional location. Figure 2 shows the project site. Figure 3 shows the site plans and project components. The project components are described in greater detail below.

West Mariposa Avenue

The project would include the paving and construction of a two-way road, West Mariposa Avenue. West Mariposa Avenue is currently a dirt unpaved road that is located along the northwestern boundary of APN 002-300-001 and APN 002-190-001. The paving of West Mariposa Avenue would provide an additional access point to the existing High School campus, the Sports Complex, the Bus Garage and Parking area, and residential parcels generally north of the Mariposa street alignment.

Sports Complex

The project would include construction of the Sports Complex which includes a 3,500-seat football stadium with artificial turf field, a baseball diamond with 500-seats, a softball diamond with 500-seats, and two 1,190 square foot (sf) concession and restroom buildings on APN 002-300-001 adjacent to the south of the existing High School campus. The new football stadium would not require watering as it would be composed of artificial turf. The new baseball and softball diamond would include grass and would require watering in addition to the existing sports fields that would

continue to be used as practice facilities. During operation, there would be approximately four Friday night games per year that would end at 10:00 p.m. The stadium would include a stadium public address (PA) system. The entrance for the Sport Complex would be from West Mariposa Ave would be a two-way road for bus and vehicle egress and ingress. The project would include the construction of a parking area for the Sports Complex to accommodate 140 on-site vehicle parking spaces for school staff and visitors. On-site landscaping would be included.

Bus Garage and Parking

The current garage and parking area is located along the northern end of the High School campus on APN 002-098-001. The project would relocate the bus garage and parking facilities to the northwestern corner of APN 002-300-001. The existing bus garage and parking area would be demolished. The new bus garage and parking structure would contain staff parking and bus parking with 81 parking spaces, a fourteen-stall bus garage, a bus washing stall, and a 12,540-sf bus garage that would include a 4,500-sf office, a restroom, a driver's lounge, parts room, and dressing room. The Bus and Parking area would include 14 covered spaces for buses, 68 standard parking stalls in the bus storage area, and 81 standard parking stalls for the bus drop-off/staff parking. The bus parking structure would include facilities for electric vehicles (EV). The Bus Garage and Parking structure would include a one-way entrance from West Mariposa Ave and a two-way entrance from Road 16. A 0.9-acre drainage basin with a capacity of 1.36-acre feet would be located near the on-site parking to capture stormwater runoff.

Career Tech Education Facility

The Career Tech Education (CTE) Facility would be constructed where the former bus garage and parking area was located on APN 002-098-001. The CTE Facility would be 9,780 sf and would include classrooms and shop spaces for CHUSD students. The CTE would be accessible via Humboldt Avenue and South 7th Street.

Construction

Construction of the proposed project would occur over an approximately one-year period between approximately January 2024 and January 2025. Construction activities would typically occur Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and would consist of demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, infrastructure installation, paving, site restoration, and architectural coating. No nighttime construction would be required.

The project would be developed in two phases. The new bus yard would first be constructed. Then the sports complex and CTE Facility would be constructed at the same time. The project would require demolition of the existing bus yard to accommodate the new Career Tech education Facility. No hauling trips of debris would be required for the project. No vegetation or tree removal would be required for the project.

The maximum depth of excavation would be approximately three feet. Project construction activities would be subject to the requirements of the statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit, which include preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

Construction equipment and materials staging along with construction worker parking would occur within the project site. Construction vehicles would access the site from West Mariposa Avenue for the construction of the Sports Complex and the Bus Garage and Parking Facility. Construction

vehicles would access the site from South 8th Street for demolition of the existing Bus Garage and Parking Facility and construction of the CTE Facility. Temporary lane closures may be required on South 8th Steet when large trucks are entering or exiting the site.

Operation and Maintenance

General Characteristics

The bus and parking area, the CTE Facility, and the Sports Complex would operate year-round to varying degrees. During the school year (August through May), the project would be at peak operation. The football stadium would host approximately four games per year which would take place on Friday nights and last till 10:00 P.M. Stadium capacity is expected to be 3,500. The project would not introduce a new need for maintenance staff as CHUSD has adequate maintenance staff to accommodate the project.

The project would include exterior lighting. The CTE Facility would include low level lighting fixtures on the exterior of the building and some area lights along the access road similar to those across on the main campus. The CTE Facility lighting would be on from 7:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. The Bus Garage and Parking area would also include low level exterior lighting on the exterior of the buildings. The Bus and Parking area would include security area lights that can increase brightness with motion detection. The exterior lighting would be shielded downwards. The football stadium, baseball diamond, and softball diamond would include lighting that would be used for games or evening practices. The lighting would remain on no later than 12:00 P.M. for clean-up purposes after games. The concession and restroom stand would include low level exterior lighting.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

Surrounding land uses in the vicinity of the APN 002-300-001 and APN 002-190-001 includes undeveloped agricultural fields to the east, south and west, and the High School campus and residential uses to the north. Surrounding land uses for APN 002-098-001 include residences to the north, east, and south and the High School campus to the west. APN 002-098-001 is bordered by Humboldt Ave to the north, South 7th Stret to the east, Alameda Avenue to the south and South 8th Street to the West.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

CUHSD is the lead agency for this project. Other public agencies whose approval may be required for the project include the following:

- City of Chowchilla– grading permit
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) – approval of the SWPPP under the statewide NPDES Construction General Permit and approval of the SWPPP under the statewide NPDES Industrial General Permit
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (APCD) – Authority to Construct/Permit to Operate for backup generator

11. Have California Native American Tribes Traditionally and Culturally Affiliated with the Project Area Requested Consultation Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1?

The California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area include the Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians, Dumna Wo-Wah Tribal Government, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, North Valley Yokuts Tribe, Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, Tule River Indian Tribe, and Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

This project would potentially affect the environmental factors checked below, involving at least one impact that is "Potentially Significant" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

Determination

Based on 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 to the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

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

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

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potential 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.

	12/20/2022
Signature	Date
Dr. Justin Miller	Superintendent
Printed Name	Title

Environmental Checklist

1 Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a 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?	☐	☐	■	☐
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	■	☐

a. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

A scenic vista is a view from a public place (roadway, designated scenic viewing spot, etc.) that is expansive and visually notable. It can be obtained from an elevated position (such as from the top of a hillside) or it can be seen from a roadway with a longer-range view of the landscape. The City of Chowchilla does not have any designated scenic vistas. The CTE Facility would be consistent with the visual character of the High School campus and existing facilities on the site. The Sports Complex and Bus and Garage Parking area would not be on a site considered a scenic vista and therefore would not have a substantial effect on a scenic vista. No scenic vistas would be impacted or obstructed by the proposed project. There would be no impact to scenic vistas.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

The nearest officially designated scenic highway is Interstate 5 (I-5) approximately 33 miles west and SR 140 approximately 31 miles northeast (Caltrans 2018). Given the distance from the officially designated state highways, the project site is not visible from a state scenic highway. Therefore, there would be no impact to scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

NO IMPACT

c. Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a 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?

According to Public Resources Code 21071(a), Chowchilla is classified as a nonurbanized area because its population is less than 100,000 persons and it is not located adjacent to one or more incorporated cities with populations that would add up to 100,000 persons or more when combined with the population of Chowchilla. The site is designated for public facility use, surrounded by the existing school site and low-density residential, with agricultural uses to the east that are inside the City limits designated for Medium Density Residential (City of Chowchilla 2011d). The Sports Complex project site is currently vacant, and it would be compatible and of a similar scale and architecture as surrounding residential uses and High School facilities. The CTE Facility would be constructed in the location of the existing Bus Garage and Parking area and would be of a similar scale and architecture as High School facilities on CHUSD's property. The project would have a less than significant impact on the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?

The proposed project would not require nighttime construction. During operation, the project's buildings would be equipped with security lighting, which would create light while in operation. The lighting would be low level exterior lighting and would be shielded downwards to prevent light from shining outside of the project site. The Bus and Parking Garage area would include security lighting which would increase with brightness when motion is detected. The baseball, softball, and football fields at the Sports Complex would be equipped with stadium lighting for nighttime games. The lighting would remain on at latest, until 12:00 A.M. after games for clean-up purposes. All sources of light would follow all guidelines and regulations from Chapter 18.50.150 - Outdoor lighting standards in the City of Chowchilla Municipal Code. The nearest residence to the Sports Facility and Bus Garage and Parking area is located approximately 115 feet to the northeast. The nearest residence to the CTE Facility is located approximately 60 feet to the northwest. With adherence to Chapter 18.50.150 of the Chowchilla Municipal Code, all lights and light fixtures, shall be located, aimed or shielded so as to minimize light trespassing across property boundaries or skyward. Lighting for recreational facilities, such as the Sports Facility, shall be fully shielded fixtures equipped with automatic timing devices and focused to minimize light glare and light trespass. Therefore, the project's light would be limited to the project site and would minimally affect properties outside of the project site boundary. Thus, the impact would be less than significant.

The proposed project would include new parking and sports facility that may result in increased vehicle traffic, including buses and automobiles. The increase in traffic would generate new glare from vehicle mirrors, windows, and metal surfaces; however, vehicle glare would be typical of what is normally experienced in the area and would not significantly increase sources of glare and would not adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. 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))?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	■
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

The project site is designated as vacant or disturbed land by the department of conservation (Department of Conservation [DOC] 2016). The project site is not located on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Additionally, the site is not currently being used for agricultural purposes, therefore there would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

The project site is not under a Williamson Act contract, nor is it zoned for agricultural uses and activities (City of Chowchilla 2010b) The project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

c. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)); timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526); or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?

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

The project site does not meet the definition of a forestry resource, as defined by California Public Resources Code Section 12220(g): "land that can support ten percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits." The project site does not have a forest land designation. Therefore, the project would not conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, timberland zoned Timberland Production, or result in the loss or conversion of forest land. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

e. Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project site is surrounded by undeveloped agricultural fields to the east, south and west, and the High School campus and residential uses to the north. The northern border of the project site is adjacent to the current school site. The project would not result in the indirect development of adjacent agricultural lands. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

3 Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	■	☐
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	■

Overview

The federal and State Clean Air Acts (CAA) mandate the control and reduction of certain air pollutants. Under these laws, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for "criteria pollutants" and other pollutants. Some pollutants are emitted directly from a source (e.g., vehicle tailpipe, an exhaust stack of a factory, etc.) into the atmosphere, including carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds (VOC)/reactive organic gases (ROG),[1] nitrogen oxides (NO_X), particulate matter with diameters of ten microns or less (PM_{10}) and 2.5 microns or less ($PM_{2.5}$), sulfur dioxide, and lead. Other pollutants are created indirectly through chemical reactions in the atmosphere, such as ozone, which is created by atmospheric chemical and photochemical reactions primarily between ROG and NO_X. Secondary pollutants include oxidants, ozone, and sulfate and nitrate particulates (smog).

Air pollutant emissions are generated primarily by stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources can be divided into two major subcategories:

1 Point sources occur at a specific location and are often identified by an exhaust vent or stack. Examples include boilers or combustion equipment that produce electricity or generate heat.

[1] CARB defines VOC and ROG similarly as, "any compound of carbon excluding carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate," with the exception that VOC are compounds that participate in atmospheric photochemical reactions. For the purposes of this analysis, ROG and VOC are considered comparable in terms of mass emissions, and the term ROG is used in this Initial Study.

2 Area sources are widely distributed and include such sources as residential and commercial water heaters, painting operations, lawn mowers, agricultural fields, landfills, and some consumer products.

Mobile sources refer to emissions from motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions, and can also be divided into two major subcategories:

3 On-road sources that may be legally operated on roadways and highways.

4 Off-road sources include aircraft, ships, trains, and self-propelled construction equipment.

Air pollutants can also be generated by the natural environment, such as when high winds suspend fine dust particles.

Air Quality Standards and Attainment

The project site is located is located in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB), which is under the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). As the local air quality management agency, the SJVAPCD is required to monitor air pollutant levels to ensure that the NAAQS and CAAQS are met and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards. Depending on whether the standards are met or exceeded, the SJVAB is classified as being in "attainment" or "nonattainment." In areas designated as non-attainment for one or more air pollutants, a cumulative air quality impact exists for those air pollutants, and the human health impacts associated with these criteria pollutants, presented in Table 1 are already occurring in that area as part of the environmental baseline condition.

Under state law, air districts are required to prepare a plan for air quality improvement for pollutants for which the district is in non-compliance. The SJVAB is designated a nonattainment area for the state one-hour ozone standard as well as for the federal and state eight-hour ozone standards. The SJVAB is also designated as nonattainment for the state 24-hour and annual arithmetic mean PM_{10} as well as the state annual arithmetic mean and federal 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ standards. The nonattainment statuses of the SJVAB are the result of several factors, such as increased population and unique topographical and meteorological conditions that exacerbate the formation and retention of high levels of air pollution in the SJVAB (SJVAPCD 2016). The SJVAB is unclassified or in attainment for all other ambient air quality standards (SJVAPCD 2018).

Table 1 Health Effects Associated with Non-Attainment Criteria Pollutants

Pollutant	Adverse Effects
Ozone	(1) Short-term exposures: (a) pulmonary function decrements and localized lung edema in humans and animals and (b) risk to public health implied by alterations in pulmonary morphology and host defense in animals; (2) long-term exposures: risk to public health implied by altered connective tissue metabolism and altered pulmonary morphology in animals after long-term exposures and pulmonary function decrements in chronically exposed humans; (3) vegetation damage; and (4) property damage.
Suspended particulate matter (PM_{10})	(1) Excess deaths from short-term and long-term exposures; (2) excess seasonal declines in pulmonary function, especially in children; (3) asthma exacerbation and possibly induction; (4) adverse birth outcomes including low birth weight; (5) increased infant mortality; (6) increased respiratory symptoms in children such as cough and bronchitis; and (7) increased hospitalization for both cardiovascular and respiratory disease (including asthma).
Suspended particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	(1) Excess deaths from short- and long-term exposures; (2) excess seasonal declines in pulmonary function, especially in children; (3) asthma exacerbation and possibly induction; (4) adverse birth outcomes, including low birth weight; (5) increased infant mortality; (6) increased respiratory symptoms in children, such as cough and bronchitis; and (7) increased hospitalization for both cardiovascular and respiratory disease, including asthma.

Source: USEPA 2021a

Air Quality Management

The SJVAB is currently designated nonattainment for the ozone and $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS. The SJVAPCD is required to implement strategies to reduce pollutant levels to achieve attainment of the NAAQS. The SJVAPCD 2016 Ozone Plan and 2018 $PM_{2.5}$ Plan include emissions inventories that identify sources of air pollutants, evaluations for feasibility of implementing potential opportunities to reduce emissions, sophisticated computer modeling to estimate future levels of pollution, and a strategy for how air pollution will be further reduced. The plans also include innovative alternative strategies for accelerating attainment through non-regulatory measures. The 2016 Ozone Plan determines that, with implementation of the proposed control strategy, the SJVAB can expect to reach attainment of the 2008 eight-hour ozone NAAQS by December 31, 2031 (SJVAPCD 2016). The 2018 $PM_{2.5}$ Plan for the 1997, 2006, and 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS includes a strategy for bringing SJVAB into attainment by the respective deadlines of 2023, 2024, and 2025 (SJVAPCD 2021).

Air Emission Thresholds

The SJVAPCD has adopted guidelines for quantifying and determining the significance of air quality emissions in its *Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts* (GAMAQI; SJVAPCD 2015a). The SJVAPCD recommends the use of quantitative thresholds to determine the significance of construction-and operational related emissions of criteria air pollutant emissions. SJVAPCD has two sets of significance thresholds for operational emissions depending on whether the activities are for permitted equipment and activities or non-permitted equipment and activities. Project operation does not include permitted equipment or activities such as the use of back-up generators. Therefore, only the operational thresholds for non-permitted equipment and activities and construction activities are appropriate for evaluating project impacts. These thresholds are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Air Quality Thresholds of Significance

Pollutant	Construction (tons per year)	Operation (tons per year)
Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)	10	10
Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	10	10
Particulate Matter with diameter < 10µm (PM_{10})	15	15
Particulate Matter with diameter < 2.5 µm ($PM_{2.5}$)	15	15
Sulfur Oxide (SO_x)	27	27
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	100	100

Source: SJVAPCD 2015b.

In addition to the annual SJVAPCD thresholds presented above, SJVAPCD has published the *Ambient Air Quality Analysis Project Daily Emissions Assessment* guidance, which is summarized in Section 8.4.2, *Ambient Air Quality Screening Tools*, of the SJVAPCD's GAMAQI (SJVAPCD 2018). The Ambient Air Quality Screening Tools guidance provides a screening threshold of 100 pounds per day to evaluate construction and operational activities include the following pollutants: NO_X, ROG, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, SO_X, and carbon monoxide. An ambient air quality assessment, which includes refined dispersion modeling, would be necessary if an exceedance occurs.

Methodology

Air pollutant emissions generated by project construction and operation were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2020.4.0. CalEEMod uses project-specific information, including the project's land uses, square footages for different uses (e.g., education and parking), and location, to model a project's construction and operational emissions. The analysis reflects the construction and operation of the project as described under *Project Description.*

Construction emissions modeled include emissions generated by construction equipment used on-site and emissions generated by vehicle trips associated with construction, such as worker and vendor trips. CalEEMod estimates construction emissions by multiplying the amount of time equipment is in operation by emission factors. Construction of the proposed project was analyzed based on CUHSD-provided land use type and square footage. The proposed construction start date was assumed to begin in January 2024. Based on CUHSD-provided land uses, the CalEEMod model estimates construction would occur over approximately 12 months. It is assumed all construction equipment used would be diesel-powered. This analysis assumes that the project would comply with all applicable regulatory standards. In particular, the project would comply with SJVAPCD Rule 8201 Construction, Demolition, Excavation, Extraction, And Other Earthmoving Activities and Rule 4601 Architectural Coating. See Appendix AQ for the project's construction-related air pollutant emissions modeling and calculations.

Operational emissions modeled include mobile source emissions (i.e., vehicle emissions), energy emissions, and area source emissions. Mobile source emissions are generated by vehicle trips to and from the project site. Because this project is a relocation of the existing sports complex, no new net traffic generation was assumed. In addition, emissions from water and wastewater was calculated for the watering of the new sports fields and the additional sports lockers and restrooms. Emissions attributed to energy use include natural gas consumption for space and water heating. Area source emissions are generated by landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products and architectural coatings.

a. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Construction and operation of the project would result in emissions of criteria pollutants including ozone precursors, such as ROG and NO_X, as well as particulate matter. The SJVAPCD has prepared several air quality attainments plans to achieve ozone and particulate matter standards, the most recent of which include the 2016 Plan for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard and the 2018 Plan for the 1997, 2006, and 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ Standards. The SJVAB is in attainment for carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and lead; therefore, the SJVAPCD has not developed attainment plans for these pollutants. The SJVAPCD has determined that projects with emissions above the thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants would conflict with and obstruct implementation of the SJVAPCD's air quality plans (SJVAPCD 2015b). As discussed under item (b) and shown in Table 3, the project would not exceed the SJVAPCD's significance thresholds for criteria air pollutant emissions. Therefore, the project would not conflict with applicable air plans, and no impact would occur.

Table 3 Project Operational Emissions, 2024

Emissions (tons/year)	Maximum Daily Emissions	SJVAPCD Significance Threshold	Significant Impact?
ROG	<1	10	**No**
NO_x	<1	10	**No**
CO	4	100	**No**
SO_x	<1	27	**No**
PM_{10}	<1	15	**No**
$PM_{2.5}$	<1	15	**No**

ROG = reactive organic gas, NO_X = nitrogen oxides, CO = carbon monoxide, SO_X = sulfur oxides, PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less, $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

Notes: All calculations were made using CalEEMod v.2020.4.0. See Appendix AQ for calculations. Some numbers may not add up due to rounding. Emission data is pulled from CalEEMod's "mitigated" results, which is a term of art for the modeling output and is not equivalent to mitigation measures that may apply to the CEQA impact analysis. The CalEEMod "mitigated" results account for compliance with regulations (Rule 8021) and project design features.

NO IMPACT

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

Construction Emissions

Project construction would generate temporary air pollutant emissions associated with fugitive dust (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) and exhaust emissions from heavy construction equipment and construction vehicles. In addition, ROG emissions that would be released during the drying phase of architectural coatings. Table 4 summarizes the estimated annual emissions of criteria air pollutants during project construction. As shown therein, construction-related emissions would not exceed SJVAPCD thresholds. In addition, pursuant to the SJVAPCD's Rule 9510, *Indirect Source Review*, the project would be subject to reduce construction NOx and PM_{10} emissions by 20 percent and 45 percent, respectively, since it would develop more than 9,000 sf of education space, which is the ambient air quality analysis screening level threshold for educational developments. Therefore, project construction would not 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. Impacts would be less than significant.

As shown in Table 4, maximum daily emissions associated with project construction would not exceed the SJVAPCD's 100-pounds-per-day screening threshold during construction. Therefore, an ambient air quality assessment is not required for construction activities.

Table 4 Maximum Daily Project Construction Emissions

	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Maximum Daily Emissions	8	9	51	<1	4	2
SJVAPCD Screening Threshold	100	100	100	100	100	100
Screening Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

lbs/day = pounds per day, ROG = reactive organic gas, NO_X = nitrogen oxides, CO = carbon monoxide, SO_X = sulfur oxides, PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less, $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

Notes: All calculations were made using CalEEMod v.2020.4.0. See Appendix AQ for calculations. Some numbers may not add up due to rounding. Emission data is pulled from CalEEMod's "mitigated" results, which is a term of art for the modeling output and is not equivalent to mitigation measures that may apply to the CEQA impact analysis. The CalEEMod "mitigated" results account for compliance with regulations (Rule 8021) and project design features. Emissions presented are the highest of the winter and summer modeled emissions.

Because the SJVAPCD annual and daily thresholds would not be exceeded, project construction would not 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. In addition, pursuant to the SJVAPCD's Rule 9510, *Indirect Source Review*, the project would be subject to reducing construction NOx and PM_{10} emissions by 20 percent and 45 percent, respectively, since it would develop more than 9,000 sf of education space, the ambient air quality analysis screening level threshold for educational developments. Thereby, under Rule 9510, the SJVAPCD would require any construction equipment greater than 50 horsepower used or associated with the project to be a less-polluting type of construction equipment by utilizing add-on controls, cleaner fuels, or through the use of newer lower emitting equipment. Therefore, impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

Operational Emissions

Operation of the project would generate criteria air pollutant emissions associated with area sources (e.g., fireplaces, architectural coatings, consumer products, and landscaping equipment), energy sources (i.e., use of natural gas for space and water heating and cooking), and mobile sources (i.e., vehicle trips to and from the project site). Table 5 summarizes the project's annual operational emissions by emission source. As shown therein, operational emissions would not exceed SJVAPCD regional thresholds for criteria pollutants thereby making operational emissions impacts less than significant. Because the operational emissions do not exceed the thresholds, project operation would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment.

Table 5 Project Operational Emissions

	Pollutant (tons/year)					
Emissions Source	**ROG**	**NO_x**	**CO**	**SO_2**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Area	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Energy	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Mobile	<1	<1	2	<1	<1	<1
Total	**<1**	**<1**	**2**	**<1**	**<1**	**<1**
SJVAPCD Thresholds	10	10	100	27	15	15
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

lbs/day = pounds per day; VOC = Volatile organic compounds, NOX = nitrogen oxides, CO = carbon monoxide, SO2 = sulfur dioxide, PM10 = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less, PM2.5 = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

Source: All emissions modeling was completed made using CalEEMod. See Appendix AQ for modeling results. Some numbers may not add up due to rounding. Emission data is pulled from "mitigated" results, which account for compliance with regulations (including SJVAPCD Rules 8021 and 4601) and project design features. Emissions presented are the highest of the winter and summer modeled emissions.

In addition to annual operational emissions, project-related operational emissions must also be compared to the SJVAPCD's 100-pounds-per-day ambient air quality screening threshold for ROG, NO_x, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. As shown in Table 6, maximum daily emissions associated with project operation would not exceed the SJVAPCD's 100-pounds-per-day screening threshold during construction. Therefore, an ambient air quality assessment is not required for operational activities.

Table 6 Maximum Daily Project Operational Emissions

	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	ROG	**NO_X**	**CO**	**SO_2**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Maximum Daily Emissions	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
SJVAPCD Screening Threshold	100	100	100	100	100	100
Screening Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

lbs/day = pounds per day, ROG = reactive organic gas, NO_X = nitrogen oxides, CO = carbon monoxide, SO_X = sulfur oxides, PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less, $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

Notes: All calculations were made using CalEEMod v.2020.4.0. See Appendix AQ for calculations. Some numbers may not add up due to rounding. Emission data is pulled from CalEEMod's "mitigated" results, which is a term of art for the modeling output and is not equivalent to mitigation measures that may apply to the CEQA impact analysis. The CalEEMod "mitigated" results account for compliance with regulations (Rule 8021) and project design features. Emissions presented are the highest of the winter and summer modeled emissions.

Because the SJVAPCD annual and daily thresholds would not be exceeded, project's operational activities would not 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. In addition, pursuant to the SJVAPCD's Rule 9510, *Indirect Source Review*, the project would be subject to reduce operational NOx and PM_{10} emissions by 33 percent and 50 percent, respectively, since it would develop more than 9,000 sf of education space, which is the ambient air

quality analysis screening level threshold for educational developments. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c. Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Certain population groups, such as children, the elderly, and people with health problems, are particularly sensitive to air pollution. According to SJVAPCD, sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residential dwelling unit(s). The nearest sensitive receptor to the project site is the High School adjacent to the project site, where based on Education Data Partnership, just over 1,000 students are enrolled yearly. Localized air quality impacts to sensitive receptors typically result TACs, which are discussed in the following subsections.

Toxic Air Contaminants

TACs are defined by California law as air pollutants that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. The following subsections discuss the project's potential to result in impacts related to TAC emissions during construction and operation.

Construction

Construction-related activities would result in temporary project-generated emissions of diesel particulate matter (DPM) exhaust emissions from off-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment for site preparation, grading, building construction, and other construction activities. DPM was identified as a toxic air contaminant (TAC) by CARB in 1998. The potential cancer risk from the inhalation of DPM (discussed in the following paragraphs) outweighs the potential non-cancer health impacts (CARB 2022) and is therefore the focus of this analysis.

Generation of DPM from construction projects typically occurs in a single area for a short period. Construction of the proposed project would occur over approximately 12 months. The dose to which receptors are exposed is the primary factor used to determine health risk. Dose is a function of the concentration of a substance or substances in the environment and the extent of exposure that person has with the substance. Dose is positively correlated with time, meaning that a longer exposure period would result in a higher exposure level for the Maximally Exposed Individual. The risks estimated for a Maximally Exposed Individual are higher if a fixed exposure occurs over a longer period of time. According to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, health risk assessments, which determine the exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic emissions, should be based on a 70-year exposure period; however, such assessments should be limited to the period/duration of activities associated with the project. Thus, the duration of proposed construction activities (i.e., 12 months) is less than 1 percent of the total exposure period used for a 30-year health risk calculation. Current models and methodologies for conducting health-risk assessments are associated with longer-term exposure periods of 9, 30, and 70 years, which do not correlate well with the temporary and highly variable nature of construction activities in addition to a short duration, resulting in difficulties in producing accurate estimates of health risk (Bay Area Air Quality Management District [BAAQMD] 2017).

The maximum PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would occur during the site preparation and grading activities, which would last for approximately 30 days. DPM generated by project construction

would not create conditions where the probability is greater than 20 in one million of contracting cancer for the Maximally Exposed Individual (the SJVAPCD's carcinogenic risk threshold) or to generate ground-level concentrations of non-carcinogenic TACs that exceed a Chronic or Acute Hazard Index greater than one for the Maximally Exposed Individual (the SJVAPCD's hazard index thresholds). Therefore, project construction would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

CARB's *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (2005) provides recommendations regarding the siting of new sensitive land uses near potential sources of air toxic emissions (e.g., freeways, distribution centers, rail yards, ports, refineries, chrome plating facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline dispensing facilities). The proposed project is not considered new land uses that generate substantial TAC emissions based on review of the air toxic sources listed in CARB's guidelines. It is expected that quantities of hazardous TACs generated on-site (e.g., cleaning solvents, paints, landscape pesticides, etc.) for the types of proposed land uses would be below thresholds warranting further study under the California Accidental Release Program. Because the project would not include substantial TAC sources and is consistent with CARB guidelines, it would not result in the exposure of off-site sensitive receptors to significant amounts of carcinogenic or toxic air contaminants. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

During construction activities, heavy equipment and vehicles would emit odors associated with vehicle and engine exhaust and during idling. However, these odors would be intermittent and temporary and would cease upon completion, and odors disperse with distance. Overall, project construction would not generate other emissions, such as those leading to odors, affecting a substantial number of people. Construction-related impacts would be less than significant.

SJVACPD has identified some common types of facilities that have been known to produce odors in the SJVAB. Table 6 of SJVAPCD's GAMAQI shows the screening distances that have the potential to generate substantial odor complaints. The uses in the table include wastewater treatment plants, landfills or transfer stations, refineries, composting facilities, asphalt batch plant, chemical manufacturing, fiberglass manufacturing, painting/coating operations, food processing facility, feed lot/dairy, and rendering plant (SJVAPCD 2015a). The proposed project is not associated with operational odors in the SJVAB. In addition, solid waste generated by the proposed on-site uses would be properly stored in lidded dumpsters and/or trash cans and collected by a contracted waste hauler, ensuring that on-site waste would be managed and collected in a manner to prevent the proliferation of odors. The SJVAPCD does not have an individual rule or regulation that specifically addresses odors; however, odors would be subject to SJVAPCD's *Rule 4102, Nuisance.* Therefore, the proposed project would not generate other emissions such as those leading to odors affecting a substantial number of people, and no operational impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	■	☐	☐
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	■
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	■
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	■

Regulatory Setting

Federal and State

Regulatory authority over biological resources is shared by federal, State, and local agencies under a variety of laws, ordinances, regulations, and statutes. Primary authority for biological resources lies within the land use control and planning authority of local jurisdictions (in this instance, the CUHSD).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) implements the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA; 16 United States Code [USC] Section 703-711) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC Section 668). The USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) share responsibility for implementing the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) (16 USC Section [§] 153 et seq.). Generally, the USFWS implements the FESA for terrestrial and freshwater species, while the NMFS implements the FESA for marine and anadromous species.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is a trustee agency for biological resources throughout the State under CEQA and has direct jurisdiction under the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC). Under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), the CDFW and USFWS, respectively, have direct regulatory authority over species formally listed as threatened or endangered (and listed as rare for CDFW). Native and/or migratory bird species are protected under the MBTA and CFGC Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3511.

The CDFW also has authority to administer the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) (CFGC Section 1900 et seq.). The NPPA requires the CDFW to establish criteria for determining if a species, subspecies, or variety of native plant is endangered or rare. Under Section 1913(c) of the NPPA, the owner of land where a rare or endangered native plant is growing is required to notify the CDFW at least 10 days in advance of changing the land use to allow for salvage of the plant(s).

Laws and regulations found within the Clean Water Act (CWA), CFGC, California Water Code, and California Code of Regulations (CCR) protect wetlands and riparian habitat. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has regulatory authority over wetlands and other waters of the United States under Section 404 of the CWA. The State Water Resources Control Board and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) ensure water quality protection in California pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and Section 13263 of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. The CDFW regulates certain waters features, such as streams and lakes, under the CFGC Section 1600 et seq.

Local

The City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan *Open Space and Conservation Element* includes one implementation measure (OS-13.3.B) that requires the environmental review process to include the protection of endangered wildlife and their habitats. Additionally, the City of Chowchilla Municipal code limits the removal of trees on public property. Section 12.16.030 - Cutting, trimming and planting on public property—Approval required states “No person shall cut, trim, prune, plant, remove, injure or interfere with any tree, shrub or plant upon any street, park, pleasure ground, boulevard, alley or public place of the city without prior permission and approval therefor from the superintendent of streets.” CUHSD is not required by State law to follow local land use regulations but does attempt to adhere to local requirements to the extent feasible.

Methodology

Literature Review and Field Survey

Information contained in this section consists of a review of relevant literature and database query results, a reconnaissance-level field survey to determine what sensitive biological resources occur or may occur at the project site, and an evaluation of the proposed activity in the context of potentially occurring biological resources to determine potentially significant impacts under CEQA. The potential presence of special-status species and other sensitive biological resources is based on the literature review and a field survey designed to assess habitat suitability for special-status species and presence/absence of other sensitive biological resources (e.g., wetlands). The potential for impacts to these resources was evaluated based on this methodology, the proposed project description, and expected construction activity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rincon reviewed relevant databases and literature for baseline information on biological resources occurring and potentially occurring at the project site and in the immediate surrounding area prior to conducting a reconnaissance-level field survey (described below). The review included the following sources:

- California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB; CDFW 2022a) and Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS; CDFW 2022b) for the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle encompassing the project site (*Chowchilla*) and the eight surrounding quadrangles (*Le Grand, Bonita Ranch, Berenda, El Nido, Firebaugh NE, Poso Farm, Bliss Ranch,* and *Plainsburg*)
- Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2022a)
- Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC; USFWS 2022a)
- Critical Habitat Portal (USFWS 2022b)
- National Wetlands Inventory (NWI; USFWS 2022c)
- National Hydrography Dataset (NHD; USGS 2022)
- Web Soil Survey (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service [USDA, NRCS] 2022)

FIELD SURVEY

Rincon conducted a reconnaissance-level field survey to assess the potential habitat suitability for special-status species, evaluate and map vegetation communities and land cover types, document and map the presence of any sensitive biological resources, identify potential jurisdictional waters or wetlands, document any wildlife connectivity/movement features, and record all observation of plant and wildlife species within the project site. Rincon conducted the site visit on October 25, 2022, between the hours of 1400 and 1500. The temperature was approximately 73 degrees Fahrenheit. A biologist conducted the survey by walking pedestrian transects over the entire project site, inspecting the site for the potential to support special-status species and other sensitive biological resources.

Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types

NON-NATIVE ANNUAL GRASSLAND

Non-native annual grasslands occur within the southern project site and primarily consist of non-native introduced species, dominated by slender oat (*Avena barbata*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), and soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*) (Figure 4). Non-native annual grasslands closely correspond to the Wild Oats and Annual Brome Grasslands Alliance described in A Manual of California Vegetation, Second Edition (MCV2; Sawyer et al. 2009). At the time of the field survey, annual plant species within the grassland communities were generally dead; however, native and non-native, weedy species such as jimsonweed (*Datura wrightii*), turkey-mullein (*Croton setiger*), common mallow (*Malva neglecta*), common knotweed (*Polygonum arenastrum*), Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), and horse nettle (*Solanum elaeagnifoliudm*) were observed and identifiable. One tree was observed in this area, a Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) near the center of the site. Parts of this area also appear to be regularly disced. California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*) burrows were observed throughout the non-native annual grassland.

ACCESS ROAD

Dirt roads cross the project site and a review of arial imagery indicates these access roads vary in location from year to year. These roads are typically bare ground with little or no vegetation. During the field survey, Chinese parsley (*Heliotropium curassavicum*) was observed growing along the edges of the access roads.

DEVELOPED

Developed areas in the project site are located to the north, at the Maintenance Operations and Transportation buildings, and along the eastern edge of the project site at Road 16, including paved roads, a parking lot, and the CUHSD Maintenance Operations and Transportation buildings.

Figure 4 Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types

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

Special-Status Species

Special-status species are those plants and animals listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or NMFS under the FESA; those listed or proposed for listing as rare, threatened, or endangered by the CDFW under the CESA or NPPA; animals designated as "Species of Special Concern," "Fully Protected," or "Watch List" by the CDFW; and plants with a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1 or 2, which are defined as:

- List 1A = Plants presumed extinct in California
- List 1B.1 = Rare or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously endangered in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat)
- List 1B.2 = Rare or endangered in California and elsewhere; fairly endangered in California (20-80 percent occurrences threatened)
- List 1B.3 = Rare or endangered in California and elsewhere, not very endangered in California (<20 percent of occurrences are threatened or no current threats known)
- List 2 = Rare, threatened or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere

Special-Status Plants

A review of resource agency databases and lists for known special-status plant species occurrences in the nine USGS quadrangles containing and surrounding the project site identified 15 special-status plant species with potential to occur on the project site. Based on the disturbed and developed nature of the site and each species' specific habitat requirements, none of these species are expected to occur. Specifically, the project site does not contain vernal pools, alkaline or sandy soils, or native vegetation communities required by special-status plant species and is largely isolated from natural habitats by surrounding development. Therefore, no impacts to special-status plants would occur.

Special-Status Wildlife

A review of resource agency databases and lists for known special-status wildlife species occurrences in the nine USGS quadrangles containing and surrounding the project site identified 19 special-status wildlife species with potential to occur on the project site. Due to the lack of vernal pools, natural vegetation communities, and developed and isolated nature of the site, all but one special status wildlife species can be excluded from the potential to occur on site. The presence of California ground squirrel burrows and sparse vegetation south of Mariposa Avenue provides suitable habitat for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a California Species of Special Concern. Impacts to burrowing owls would be limited to project activity that would directly affect an occupied burrow (temporarily or permanently damage or destroy the burrow) or disrupt active breeding or wintering owls within 500 feet of construction activity. Impacts to occupied burrowing owl burrows would be significant and mitigation measures would be required.

Non-native grasslands, buildings, and bare ground in the project site could be used by migratory birds as nesting habitat. Migratory birds are protected under CFGC Section 3503 and the MBTA. The

bird nesting season generally extends from February 1 through August 31 in California but can vary based upon annual climatic conditions. Thus, construction activities could result in direct impacts to active nests during vegetation removal or disturbance-related nest abandonment. Impacts to most non-listed bird species through nest destruction or abandonment would not be significant; however, this would be a violation of CFGC and the MBTA. Impacts to non-listed special-status birds would be potentially significant if those impacts would jeopardize the viability of a local or regional population. Therefore, mitigation measures would be required to avoid or reduce the project's potentially significant impacts to special-status avian wildlife and avoid violation of the CFGC and MBTA.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Burrowing Owl Avoidance and Minimization

A qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction clearance surveys prior to ground disturbance activities within the parcel south of Mariposa Avenue to confirm the presence or absence of occupied burrowing owl burrows. The surveys shall be consistent with the recommended survey methodology provided by CDFW (2012). Clearance surveys shall be conducted within 30 days prior to construction and ground disturbing activities. If no burrowing owls are observed, no further actions are required. If burrowing owls are detected during the pre-construction clearance surveys, the following measures shall apply:

- If burrowing owls or active burrows are detected during the pre-construction clearance surveys, avoidance buffers shall be implemented in accordance with CDFW (2012) and Burrowing Owl Consortium (1993) minimization mitigation measures. If burrowing owls are detected, prior to ground disturbance, coordination with CDFW by a qualified biologist shall occur to establish the appropriate avoidance buffer distances specific for the project's activities and level of expected disturbance.
- If avoidance of burrowing owls is not feasible, a Burrowing Owl Exclusion Plan and Mitigation and Monitoring Plan shall be developed by a qualified biologist in accordance with CDFW (2012) and Burrowing Owl Consortium (1993). The Plan shall be provided to the applicable local CDFW office prior to implementation. A qualified biologist shall coordinate with the CDFW to determine the appropriate exclusion methods (passive or active relocation) for the project to relocate burrowing owls to a suitable offsite location. Relocation of owls can only occur during the non-breeding season.
- A report of all pre-construction survey efforts shall be submitted to CDFW within 30 days of completion of the survey effort to document compliance. The report shall include the dates, times, weather conditions, and personnel involved in the surveys and monitoring. The report shall also include, if applicable, each observed burrowing owl and/or its burrow, the location coordinates and habitat descriptions. If relocation is required, separate reporting as required within the Burrowing Owl Exclusion Plan and Mitigation and Monitoring Plan shall be submitted to CDFW.

BIO-2 Nesting Bird Avoidance and Minimization

Project construction shall be conducted outside of the nesting season to the extent feasible (September 1 to January 31). If vegetation removal or initial ground-disturbing activities are conducted during the nesting season, a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction nesting bird survey no more than 14 days prior to vegetation removal or initial ground disturbance. Nesting

habitat may include buildings, shrubs, trees, and open ground. The survey shall include all potential nesting habitat in the project site and within 300 feet of the proposed project grading boundaries to identify the location and status of any nests that could potentially be affected by project activities.

If active nests are found within project impact areas or close enough to these areas that project activity would affect breeding success, the biologist shall establish a work exclusion zone around each nest that shall be followed by the contractor. Established exclusion zones shall remain in place until a qualified biologist determines all young in the nest have fledged or the nest otherwise becomes inactive (e.g., due to predation). Appropriate exclusion zone sizes vary dependent upon bird species, nest location, existing visual buffers, ambient sound levels, and other factors; an exclusion zone radius may be as small as 25 feet (for common, disturbance-adapted species) or as large as 300 feet or more for raptors. Exclusion zone size may be reduced from established levels if the qualified biologist determines that work activities outside the reduced radius would not adversely impact the nest.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

b. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

The review of the resource agency databases for sensitive natural communities within the nine USGS quadrangles containing and surrounding the project site identified three sensitive natural communities: Northern Hardpan Vernal Pool, Valley Sacaton Grassland, and Valley Sink Scrub. None of these sensitive natural communities are present within or adjacent to the project site, nor are any other sensitive natural communities, riparian habitats, or critical habitats. Therefore, the project would have no impact on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities.

NO IMPACT

c. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

The review of the resource agency databases for wetlands and waters within the project vicinity did not reveal any potentially jurisdictional areas, and wetlands or waters are present within or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, the project would have no impact on State or federally protected wetlands.

NO IMPACT

d. Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The project site consists of developed and disturbed areas with primarily non-native vegetation. Land use in the vicinity is primarily agricultural, rural residential, and industrial, with no connectivity to natural habitats and is therefore not expected to support wildlife movement. Therefore, no impacts to wildlife movement corridors would occur as a result of project activities.

NO IMPACT

e. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The Mexican fan palm is the only "tree" that would be removed; however, this non-native species is not protected under the City's tree ordinance, nor is CUHSD required to follow local land use regulations. Therefore, the project would not conflict with local policies and ordinances.

NO IMPACT

f. Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

The project site is not located within the boundaries of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. As such, the project would not conflict with the provisions of any such plan. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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5 Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	■	☐	☐
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	■	☐

This section provides an analysis of the project's impacts on cultural resources, including historical and archaeological resources, as well as human remains. CEQA requires a lead agency determine whether a project may have a significant effect on historical resources (Public Resources Code [PRC], Section 21084.1). A historical resource is a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR); a resource included in a local register of historical resources; or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript a lead agency determines to be historically significant (*CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15064.5[a][1-3]).

A resource shall be considered historically significant if it:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
2. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In addition, if it can be demonstrated that a project would cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require reasonable efforts be made to permit any or all of these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. To the extent that resources cannot be left undisturbed, mitigation measures would be required (PRC, Section 21083.2[a], [b]).

PRC, Section 21083.2(g) defines a unique archaeological resource as an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information;
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type; or

3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

In October 2022, Rincon prepared a cultural resources study (Appendix CUL) in support of the project, which included: a cultural resources records search at the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC); a Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) search; and a pedestrian field survey.

The SSJVIC records search was performed to identify previously conducted cultural resources studies, as well as previously recorded cultural resources within the project site and a 0.5-mile radius surrounding it. The records search included a review of available records at the SSJVIC, as well as the National Register of Historic Places, CRHR, the Office of Historic Preservation Historic Properties Directory, the California Inventory of Historic Resources, the Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility list, and historical maps.

The SSJVIC records search and background research identified one cultural resource within a 0.5-mile of the project site. Of these resources, no resources are recorded within the project site.

Rincon contacted the NAHC on October 3, 2022, to request an SLF search of the project site. On November 28, 2022, the NAHC responded with the SLF search results. The SLF check for the project site vicinity was negative.

a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?

The field survey and background research identified one historical age building in the project site, the CUHSD Maintenance Operations Transportation Building. The resource was recommended ineligible for federal, state, or local designation and does not meet the definition of a historical resource pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5(a). The project site also contains two greenhouses. However, they are not over 45 years of age and therefore do not require historical resources eligibility consideration per the guidance of California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). The demolition of these buildings therefore would not constitute a significant impact to historical resources. Additionally, the proposed project does not have the potential to impact the setting of any known adjacent historical resources. As such, the project would have no impact to historical resources.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

This assessment did not identify any archaeological resources within the project site. On November 28, 2022, the NAHC responded with the SLF search results. The SLF check for the project site vicinity was negative.

The lack of surface evidence of archaeological materials does not preclude their subsurface existence. Although the results of the background research and pedestrian survey indicates there is a low potential for encountering intact subsurface archaeological deposits, mitigation measures would be required to ensure that potential impacts to unanticipated archaeological resources, including those that may be considered historical resources, are reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure

CUL-1 Unanticipated Discovery of Cultural Resources

If evidence of any prehistoric or historic-era subsurface archaeological features, deposits or tribal cultural resources are discovered during construction-related earthmoving activities (e.g., ceramic shard, trash scatters, lithic scatters), all ground-disturbing activity proximate to the discovery shall be halted until a qualified archaeologist (36 CFR Section 61) can assess the significance of the find. If the find is a prehistoric archaeological site, the appropriate Native American group shall be notified. If the archaeologist determines that the find does not meet the CRHR standards of significance for cultural resources, construction may proceed. If the archaeologist determines that further information is needed to evaluate significance, a testing plan shall be prepared and implemented. If the find is determined to be significant by the qualified archaeologist (i.e., because the find is determined to constitute either an historical resource or a unique archaeological resource), the archaeologist shall work with the implementing agency to avoid disturbance to the resources, and if complete avoidance is not feasible in light of project design, economics, logistics and other factors, shall recommend additional measures such as the preparation and implementation of a data recovery plan. All cultural resources work shall follow accepted professional standards in recording any find including submittal of standard Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Primary Record forms (Form DPR 523) and location information to the appropriate CHRIS office for the project area. If the find is a prehistoric archaeological site, the culturally affiliated California Native American tribe shall be notified and afforded the opportunity to monitor mitigative treatment. During evaluation or mitigative treatment, ground disturbance and construction work could continue in other parts of the project area that are distant enough from the find not to impact it, as determined by the qualified archaeologist.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

c. Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

No human remains are known to be present within the project site. However, the discovery of human remains is always a possibility during ground disturbing activities. If human remains are found, the State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains, the County Coroner must be notified immediately. If the human remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Coroner will notify the NAHC, which will determine and notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD has 48 hours from being granted site access to make recommendations for the disposition of the remains. If the MLD does not make recommendations within 48 hours, the landowner shall reinter the remains in an area of the property secure from subsequent disturbance. With adherence to existing regulations, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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6 Energy

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	■	☐

Energy Setting

Energy consumption has a direct effect on environmental quality in that consumption of nonrenewable energy resource releases criteria air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions on the atmosphere.

As a state, California is one of the lowest per capita energy users in the United States, ranked 50th in the nation, due to its energy efficiency programs and mild climates (United States Energy Information Administration [USEIA] 2022). Electricity and natural gas are primarily consumed by the built environment for lighting, appliances, heating and cooling systems, fireplaces, and other uses such as industrial processes and transportation. Energy resources consumed by proposed project activities would primarily be petroleum fuels. Petroleum fuels are primarily consumed by on-road and off-road equipment in addition to some industrial processes, with California being one of the top petroleum-producing states in the nation (USEIA 2022). Gasoline, which is used by light-duty cars, pickup trucks, and other vehicles, is the most used transportation fuel in California with 12.5 billion gallons sold in 2020 (California Energy Commission [CEC] 2022). Diesel, which is used primarily by heavy-duty trucks, delivery vehicles, buses, trains, ships, boats and barges, farm equipment, and heavy-duty construction and military vehicles, is the second most used fuel in California with 2.9 billion gallons sold in 2020 (CEC 2022). Energy consumption is directly related to environmental quality in that the consumption of nonrenewable energy resources releases criteria air pollutant and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere. The environmental impacts of air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with the project's energy consumption are discussed in detail in Section 3, *Air Quality*, and Section 8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, respectively.

Pacific Gas & Electric Co.

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. (PG&E) supplies electricity to Chowchilla using transmissions infrastructure operated and maintained by PG&E. PG&E is a privately owned power supplier that provides electricity to Madera County residents and businesses. PG&E is one of the nation's largest electric and gas utility companies, and it maintains 106,681 circuit miles of electric distribution lines and

18,000 circuit miles of interconnected transmission lines (PG&E 2021). According to PG&E's 2020 Integrated Resource Plan, PG&E anticipates meeting a 2030 gross system usage of 82,306 GWh.

As shown in Table 7 , California used 200,475 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity in 2020, of which 30 percent were from renewable resources (CEC 2021b). California also consumed approximately 3,243 million U.S. therms (MMthm) of natural gas is 2020 (CEC 2021b). Table 7 also shows the total electricity and natural gas consumption for the PG&E service area.

Table 7 2020 Electricity and Natural Gas Consumption

Energy Type	Madera County	Pacific Gas & Electric	California	Proportion of PG&E Consumption	Proportion of Statewide Consumption[1]
Electricity (GWh)	1,751	78,518	200,475	2%	<1%
Natural Gas (millions of therms)	54.1	4,508	3,243	1%	1.7%

GWh = gigawatt-hours

[1] For reference, the population of Madera County (158,602 persons) is less than 1.0 percent of the population of California (39,466,855 persons) (California Department of Finance 2021).

Source: CEC 2021

Petroleum and Natural Gas Setting

California is one of the top producers of petroleum in the nations with drilling operations occurring throughout the state but concentrated in Kern and Los Angeles counties. A network of crude oil pipelines connects production areas to oil refineries in the Los Angeles area, the San Francisco Bay area, and the Central Valley. California oil refineries also process Alaskan and foreign crude oil received at ports in Los Angeles, Long Beach, and San Francisco Bay area (CEC 2021c). According to the USEIA, California's field production of crude oil totaled 143,114 million barrels in 2020 (USEIA 2021).

As shown in Table 8, Madera County consumed an estimated 63 million gallons of gasoline and 32 million gallons of diesel fuel in 2020, which was less than 1 percent of statewide gasoline consumption and approximately 2 percent of statewide diesel fuel consumption (CEC 2022).

Table 8 2020 Annual Gasoline and Diesel Consumption

Fuel Type	Madera County (million gallons)	California (million gallons)	Proportion of Statewide Consumption
Gasoline	63	12,572	<1%
Diesel	32	1,744	1.8%

Source: CEC 2022

a. Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Construction Energy Consumption

Energy use during project construction would be primarily in the form of fuel consumption to operate heavy equipment, light-duty vehicles, machinery, and construction worker travel to and from the project site. Energy use would be typical of similar-sized construction projects in the region. Furthermore, the proposed project would utilize construction contractors who demonstrate compliance with the provisions of the California Code of Regulations Title 13 Sections 2449 and 2485, which restrict the idling of heavy-duty diesel vehicles and govern the accelerated retrofitting, repowering, or replacement of heavy-duty diesel on- and off-road equipment. Applicable regulatory requirements such as 2019 California's Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen; California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11), mandate that future infrastructure projects comply with construction waste management practices to divert a minimum of 65 percent of construction and demolition debris. These practices would result in efficient use of energy during construction. Further, in the interest of both environmental awareness and cost efficiency, construction contractors would not be expected to utilize fuel in a manner that is wasteful or unnecessary. As such, construction would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resource during construction. This impact would be less than significant.

Operational Energy Consumption

Operation of the proposed project would result in the additional consumption of natural gas and electricity. However, new development would be subject to the energy conservation requirements of the California Energy Code (Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations, California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings) and the California Green Building Standards Code (Title 24, Part 11 of the California Code of Regulations). The California Energy Code provides energy conservation standards for all new and renovated commercial and residential buildings constructed in California. The California Energy Code applies to the building envelope, space-conditioning systems, and water-heating and lighting systems of buildings and appliances and provides guidance on construction techniques to maximize energy conservation. Minimum efficiency standards are given for a variety of building elements, including appliances; water and space heating and cooling equipment; and insulation for doors, pipes, walls, and ceilings. The California Energy Code emphasizes saving energy at peak periods and seasons and improving the quality of installation of energy efficiency measures. The California Green Building Standards Code sets targets for energy efficiency; water consumption; dual plumbing systems for potable and recyclable water; diversion of construction waste from landfills; and use of environmentally sensitive materials in construction and design, including ecofriendly flooring, carpeting, paint, coatings, thermal insulation, and acoustical wall and ceiling panels. Furthermore. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. This impact would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

The proposed project would involve the construction of a bus garage and storage, parking lot, and educational facility. The City has several policies in place to reduce emissions related to energy consumption in area sources that the proposed project would abide by. Such policies include (City of Chowchilla 2011):

OS-24.1: All public and private development—including homes, commercial, and industrial should be designed to be energy-efficient.

OS-25.1: The City supports the use of green building practices in the planning, design, construction, management, renovation, operations, and demolition of all private buildings and projects, including:

- Land planning and design techniques that preserve the natural environment and minimize disturbance of the land.
- Site development to reduce erosion, minimize paved surfaces and runoff and protect vegetation, especially trees.
- Water conservation indoors and outdoors. o Energy efficiency in heating/cooling systems, appliances, lighting and the building envelope.
- Selection of materials based on recyclability, durability and the amount of energy used to create the material. o Waste reduction, reuse and recycling during construction and throughout the life of the project.
- Other new aspects of green design and construction included in LEED or other certification programs.
- Control nighttime lighting to lower energy use, reduce glare, and prevent illumination of the night sky

As described above, the proposed project would be required to adhere to the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6 which sets requirements for California's Energy Efficiency Standards for residential and non-residential buildings. As such, the proposed project would adhere to design standards that govern indoor/outdoor lighting, mechanical systems, solar, electrical power distribution, among other features (CEC 2019).. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

7 Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
1. 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?	☐	☐	■	☐
2. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	■	☐
3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	■
4. Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	■	☐
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	■
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	■	☐	☐

a.1. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?

a.2. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?

There are four distant faults that could produce ground shaking in Chowchilla: San Andreas Fault (75 miles west), Origalita Fault (42 miles northwest), Owens Valley Faults (109 miles east-southeast), and the White Wolf Fault (141 miles southeast) (City of Chowchilla 2011). There is no indication of active faults on the project site and the site is not located within a designated Alquist-Priolo Earthquake fault zone (DOC 2021). Additionally, all development is required to comply with the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC), which provides minimum standards to ensure that proposed structures are designed using sound engineering practices and appropriate engineering standards for the seismic area in which a project site is located. Projects designed in accordance with the CBSC would be able to: 1) resist minor earthquakes without damage; 2) resist moderate earthquakes without structural damage, but with some non-structural damage; and 3) resist major earthquakes without collapse, but with some structural, as well as non-structural, damage. Although conformance with the CBSC does not guarantee that substantial structural damage would not occur in the event of a maximum magnitude earthquake, conformance with the CBSC can reasonably be assumed to ensure that the proposed structures would be survivable, allowing occupants to safely evacuate in the event of a major earthquake. The project site is not in a location of known active faults and would be required to comply with the CBCS building codes; thus, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

a.3. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

a.4. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

The project site is generally flat and is surrounded by undeveloped agricultural uses to the east, south, and west. The High School campus and residential uses are to the north of the project site. The site is not located in a landslide zone, or a liquefaction and landslides would not occur due to the flat topography of the area (DOC 2021). Thus, there would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Development of the proposed project would involve construction activities such as stockpiling, grading, excavation, paving, and other earth-disturbing activities that could result in erosion or the loss of topsoil. Construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land surface are subject to the NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ) adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Compliance with the permit requires each qualifying development project to file a Notice of Intent with the SWRCB. Permit conditions require development of a SWPPP, which must describe the site, the facility, erosion and sediment controls, runoff water quality monitoring, means of waste disposal, implementation of approved local plans, control of construction sediment and

erosion control measures, maintenance responsibilities, and non-storm water management controls. Inspection of construction sites before and after storms is also required to identify storm water discharge from the construction activity and to identify and implement erosion controls, where necessary. Adherence to Best Management Practices (BMPs) and the NPDES General Permit would ensure the project would be designed to support erosion control. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c. Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

As described above in items *a.3* and *a.4*, the project site is not located in a landslide zone or a liquefaction zone. The project site is not located near any open faces, such as riverbanks and streams, that would be considered susceptible to lateral spreading. Therefore, the potential for liquefaction and lateral spreading to pose a risk to the proposed development is relatively low. Land subsidence is the gradual, local settling or sinking of the earth's surface with little or no horizontal motion and is typically a result of groundwater depletion. The CBSC building regulations require the preparation of geotechnical reports, which would determine the site's potential for subsidence and recommend necessary design features to ensure the stability of proposed structures. Compliance with CBSC building regulations would reduce impacts related to the lateral spreading and subsidence/settlement hazards to a less than significant level.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Expansive soils are soils that, due to their composition and moisture content, have a potential to undergo significant changes in volume, in the form of either shrinking or swelling. The project site consists of Fresno and El Peco fine Sandy Loams, which has a low susceptibility to expansion due to its low permeability and drainage properties (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA]1966). Additionally, the project would comply with the CBSC requirements to address soil-related hazards. In cases where soil remediation is not feasible, the California Building Code requires structural reinforcement of foundations to resist the forces of expansive soils. Compliance with the requirements of the California Building Code would reduce impacts related to expansive soils to a less than significant level.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

e. Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

The construction or operation of septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems is not included as part of the project. No impacts from septic or alternative wastewater disposal systems would occur.

NO IMPACT

f. Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Paleontological resources, or fossils, are the evidence of once-living organisms preserved in the rock record. They include both the fossilized remains of ancient plants and animals and the traces thereof (e.g., trackways, imprints, burrows, etc.). Paleontological resources are not found in "soil" but are contained within the geologic deposits or bedrock that underlies the soil layer. Typically, fossils are greater than 5,000 years old (i.e., older than middle Holocene in age) and are typically preserved in sedimentary rocks. Although rare, fossils can also be preserved in volcanic rocks and low-grade metamorphic rocks under certain conditions (Society of Vertebrate Paleontology [SVP] 2010). Fossils occur in a non-continuous and often unpredictable distribution within some sedimentary units, and the potential for fossils to occur within sedimentary units depends on several factors. It is possible to evaluate the potential for geologic units to contain scientifically important paleontological resources, and therefore evaluate the potential for impacts to those resources and provide mitigation for paleontological resources if they are discovered during construction of a development project.

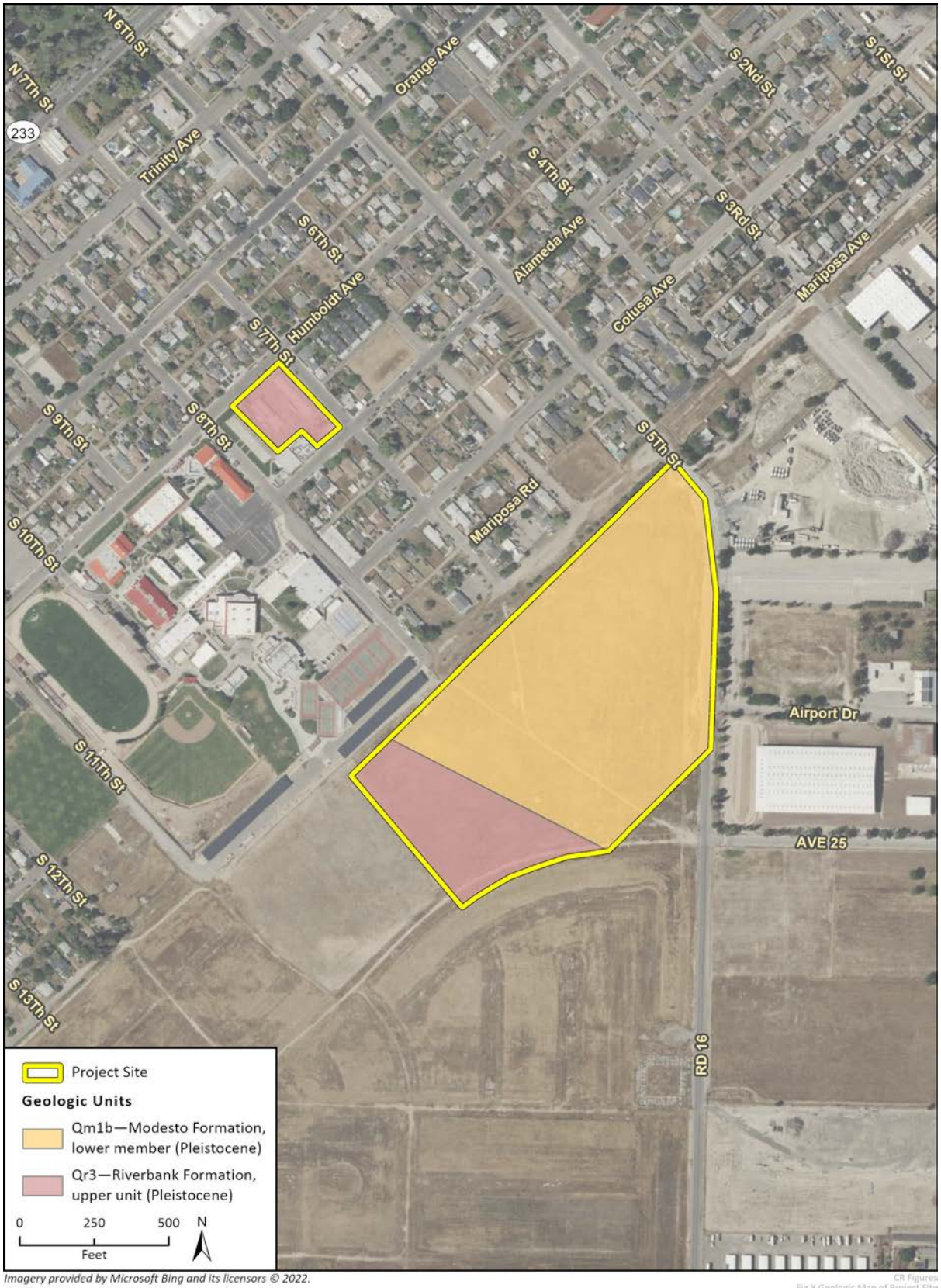
Rincon evaluated the paleontological sensitivity of the geologic units that underlie the project site to assess the project's potential for significant impacts to scientifically important paleontological resources. The analysis was based on the results of a paleontological locality search and a review of existing information in the scientific literature regarding known fossils within geologic units mapped at the project site. According to the SVP (2010) classification system, geologic units can be assigned a high, low, undetermined, or no potential for containing scientifically significant nonrenewable paleontological resources. Following the literature review, a paleontological sensitivity classification was assigned to each geologic unit mapped within the project site. This criterion is based on rock units within which vertebrate or significant invertebrate fossils have been determined by previous studies to be present or likely to be present and the potential for impacts to significant paleontological resources is based on the potential for ground disturbance to directly impact paleontologically sensitive geologic units.

The geology of the region was mapped by Marchand and Allwardt (1978), who identified two geologic units, the lower member of the Modesto Formation and the upper unit of the Riverbank Formation, within the project site (Figure 5).

The lower member of the Modesto Formation underlies the proposed site for the CTE facility (i.e., current garage and parking area) and the southern part of the proposed sports complex (Figure 5). The facies of the Modesto Formation identified by Marchand and Allwardt (1978) in the project site consist of Pleistocene-aged sand, silt, and clay. The Modesto Formation has produced many significant paleontological resources, including ground sloths (*Megalonyx*), mammoths (*Mammuthus*), bison (*Bison*), and camel (*Camelops*) (Jefferson 2010; University of California Museum of Paleontology 2022). Given this fossil-producing history, the lower member of the Modesto Formation has high paleontological sensitivity.

The upper unit of the Riverbank Formation underlies the sports complex site. The particular Riverbank Formation sediments identified by Marchand and Allwardt (1978) within the project site consist of silt, sand, and gravel. The Riverbank Formation has produced many significant paleontological resources, including ground sloth (*Paramylodon*), mammoth (*Mammuthus*), horse (*Equus*), dire wolf (*Aenocyon dirus*), rodents, and reptiles (Jefferson 2010; Paleobiology Database 2022; University of California Museum of Paleontology 2022). Given this fossil-producing history, the Riverbank Formation has high paleontological sensitivity.

Figure 5 Geologic Map of Project Site



Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2022.
Additional data provided by Marchand and Allwardt 1978

Ground disturbing activities in previously undisturbed sediments with high paleontological sensitivity may result in significant impacts to paleontological resources. Impacts would be significant if construction activities result in the destruction, damage, or loss of scientifically important paleontological resources and associated stratigraphic and paleontological data. The activities may include grading, excavation, boring, or any other activity that disturbs the surface or subsurface geologic formations. The project's ground disturbing activities would be up to 3 feet in depth. Given that the project sites are previously developed as a garage (CTE facility) or for agriculture (sports complex), it is not likely that a large volume of previously undisturbed sediments would be impacted. Although there is a low chance of disturbance, to address the potential to impact an unanticipated paleontological resource, mitigation would be required. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would be required to reduce potential impacts to unanticipated paleontological resources by training construction personnel on the appearance of fossils and establishing procedures for the salvage, preparation, and curation of unanticipated paleontological resources.

GEO-1 Unanticipated Fossil Discovery

PALEONTOLOGICAL WORKER ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS PROGRAM

Prior to the start of construction, a Qualified Professional Paleontologist (as defined by SVP [2010]) or their designee shall conduct a paleontological Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training for construction personnel regarding the appearance of fossils and the procedures for notifying paleontological staff should fossils be discovered by construction staff.

UNANTICIPATED DISCOVERY OF PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

In the event a fossil is discovered during project construction, excavations within 50 feet of the find shall be temporarily halted or delayed until the discovery is examined by a Qualified Professional Paleontologist QPP). CUHSD shall include a standard inadvertent discovery clause in every construction contract to inform contractors of this requirement. If the find is determined to be significant by a QPP, CUHSD shall retain a QPP to design and carry out a data recovery plan consistent with the SVP (2010) standards and tasked to direct and carry out all requirements identified in the data recovery plan as necessary to recover and preserve any identified paleontological resources as directed by the data recovery plan to reduce impacts to a less than significant impact.

8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☐	■

Overview

GHG emissions occur both naturally and as a result of human activities, such as fossil fuel burning, decomposition of landfill wastes, raising livestock, deforestation, and some agricultural practices. GHGs produced by human activities include carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. Different types of GHGs have varying global warming potentials (GWP). The GWP of a GHG is the potential of a gas or aerosol to trap heat in the atmosphere over a specified timescale (generally, 100 years). Because GHGs absorb different amounts of heat, a common reference gas (CO_2) is used to relate the amount of heat absorbed to the amount of the gas emitted, referred to as "carbon dioxide equivalent" (CO_2e), which is the amount of GHG emitted multiplied by its GWP. Carbon dioxide has a 100-year GWP of one. By contrast, methane has a GWP of 30, meaning its global warming effect is 30 times greater than CO_2 on a molecule per molecule basis (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] 2021).[2]

Regulatory Framework

In response to climate change, California implemented Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the "California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006." AB 32 codifies the statewide goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and requires CARB to prepare a Scoping Plan that outlines the main state strategies for reducing GHG emissions to meet the 2020 deadline

On September 8, 2016, the Governor signed Senate Bill 32 into law, extending AB 32 by requiring the State to further reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (the other provisions of AB 32 remain unchanged). On December 14, 2017, the CARB adopted the 2017 Scoping Plan, which provides a framework for achieving the 2030 target. AB 1279, "The California Climate Crisis Act," was passed on September 16, 2022, and declares the State would achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, but no later than 2045, and to achieve and

[2] The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (2021) *Sixth Assessment Report* determined that methane has a GWP of 30. However, the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan published by the California Air Resources Board uses a GWP of 25 for methane, consistent with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (2007) *Fourth Assessment Report*. Therefore, this analysis utilizes a GWP of 25.

maintain net negative greenhouse gas emissions thereafter. In addition, the bill states that the State would reduce GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels no later than 2045. Essentially this means that by 2045 California would emit no more than 64.65 MMT CO2e and would continue to reduce emissions thereafter. The 2022 Scoping Plan lays out a path to achieve AB 1279 targets (CARB 2022). The actions and outcomes in the 2022 Scoping Plan would achieve significant reductions in fossil fuel combustion by deploying clean technologies and fuels, further reductions in short-lived climate pollutants, support for sustainable development, increased action on natural and working lands to reduce emissions and sequester carbon, and the capture and storage of carbon.

SB 375, signed in August 2008, enhances the State's ability to reach AB 32 goals by directing CARB to develop regional GHG emission reduction targets to be achieved from vehicles for 2020 and 2035. In addition, SB 375 directs each of the State's 18 major Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to prepare a "sustainable communities strategy" (SCS) that contains a growth strategy to meet these emission targets for inclusion in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In August 2022, MCTC adopted the *2022-2046 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (RTP/SCS). MCTC's RTP/SCS includes a commitment to reduce emissions from transportation sources by promoting compact and infill development to comply with SB 375.

Local Regulations

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

In August 2008, the SJVAPCD Governing Board adopted the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) (SJVAPCD 2008a). The CCAP directed the SJVAPCD Air Pollution Control Officer to develop guidance to assist lead agencies, project proponents, permit applicants, and interested parties in assessing and reducing the impacts of project-specific GHG emissions on global climate change. In 2009, the SJVAPCD adopted the *Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects Under CEQA* and the *District Policy – Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for Stationary Source Projects Under CEQA When Serving as the Lead Agency*. The guidance and policy rely on the use of performance-based standards, otherwise known as Best Performance Standards, to assess significance of project-specific GHG emissions on global climate change during the CEQA review process (SJVAPCD 2009a and 2009b).

a. Would the project generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Project Generated GHG Emissions

Construction and operation of the proposed project would generate GHG emissions. This analysis considers the combined impact of GHG emissions from both construction and operation. Calculations of CO_2, methane, and nitrous oxide emissions are provided to identify the magnitude of potential project effects. Since SJVAPCD has not adopted a numeric threshold to address project-level GHG emissions, construction and operational emissions would be for informational purposes.

Construction Emissions

Project-related construction emissions are confined to a relatively short period in relation to the overall life of the project. Emissions were amortized over the lifetime of the project (i.e., 30 years. Table 9 shows that project construction would result in a total of approximately 766 MT CO_2e and amortized GHG emissions of 26 MT CO_2e.

Table 9 Estimated Construction GHG Emissions

Year	Project Emissions (MT/yr CO_2e)
Total	766
Total Amortized over 30 Years	26

MT of CO_2e = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent. Numbers may not add up due to rounding.
See Appendix AQ for CalEEMod worksheets.

Operational and Total Project Emissions

Operation of the proposed project would generate GHG emissions associated with area sources (e.g., landscape maintenance), energy and water usage, and wastewater and solid waste generation. No new trips are assumed for operations, as this project would relocate uses, therefore, no new emissions from mobile sources would occur. As shown in Table 10, annual operational emissions generated by the proposed project combined with amortized construction emissions would total approximately 102 MT of CO_2e per year. The project would generate approximately 0.6 MT of CO_2e per service population per year, which would not exceed the adjusted 2017 Scoping Plan efficiency threshold of 2.4 MT CO2e for the year 2030.

Table 10 Combined Annual Emissions of Greenhouse Gases

Emission Source	Annual Emissions (CO_2e in metric tons)
Construction	26
Operational	
Area	<1
Energy	65
Solid Waste	6
Water	2
Mobile	0
Total	**102**

MT = metric tons; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents
Notes: Emissions modeling was completed using CalEEMod. See Appendix AQ for modeling results.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

In accordance with SJVAPCD's CEQA thresholds for the evaluation of GHG impacts, a project would not have a significant GHG impact if it is consistent with an applicable GHG-reduction plan. There are several GHG-reduction plans including the City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan, Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) Regional Transportation Plan Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), and the CARB's 2022 Scoping Plan.

City of Chowchilla General Plan

The 2040 General Plan is a comprehensive blueprint for future land use and development, and covers many topics, with air quality and greenhouse gases being one of them. In the Open Space and Conservation element, it sets out a vision to achieve air quality and GHG reduction. The project's consistency with the 2040 General Plan includes the increase of energy conservation and green building. The proposed project is not required to adhere to the City's General Plan, therefore there would be no conflict with the plan to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

MCTC RTP/SCS

The project would not alter the existing transportation system, including roadways, parking along South 8th Street, and adjacent pedestrian paths, except for the paving of W. Mariposa Avenue immediately west of the project site. The proposed project would be consistent with the plan and would not conflict with MCTC's RTP/SCS or any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. Therefore, the project would not conflict with applicable GHG reduction policies, goals, or plans and would have a less than significant impact with respect to GHG emissions.

2022 Scoping Plan

The proposed project would be required to adhere to California Title 24 Building Standards Code energy efficiency standards regulated by the CEC. The existing bus parking and garage maintenance operations buildings are not energy efficient. The project's improvements to these facilities would help to further reduce the project's GHG emissions and would also help to reduce community wide GHG emissions.

The proposed project would be required to adhere to the SJVAPCD Rule 9510, *Indirect Source Review*, to reduce emissions, per the San Joaquin Air Basin targets. The proposed project is consistent with transportation planning within the MCTC 2022 RTP/SCS which aims to integrate land use and transportation in efforts to achieve sustainable development for reduced emissions from transportation.

Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted to reduce GHG emissions. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	■	☐	☐
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	■	☐	☐
d. Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous material 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?	☐	☐	■	☐
e. For a project located in 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?	☐	☐	■	☐
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	■
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	■

Krazan and Associates, Inc. (Krazan) conducted a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) (Appendix ESA) of the project site in conformance with the scope and limitations of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) E 1527-13 Standard Practice for ESAs: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process guidance documents (Krazan 2022). During the course of this assessment, Krazan identified no evidence of current recognized environmental conditions (RECs) or controlled RECs (CRECs) in connection with the subject site as defined by ASTM E 1527-13. Historical recognized environmental conditions (HRECs) were identified in connection with the subject site. The HRECs identified for the subject site are not considered to be RECs based on the no further action determination status and certification of the subject site by the Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) as of February 13, 2014.

a. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Construction of the project would temporarily increase the transport and use of hazardous materials in the project area through the operation of vehicles and equipment. Such substances include diesel fuel, oil, solvents, and other similar materials brought onto the construction site for use and storage during the construction period. The transport, use, and storage of hazardous materials during construction would be conducted in accordance with applicable federal and State laws, such as the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, California Hazardous Material Management Act, and California Code of Regulations, Title 22.

During operation, the project may require transport of diesel fuel, oil, solvents, and other similar materials for bus maintenance in the bus garage and parking area. However, the transport, use, and storage of hazardous materials during construction would be conducted in accordance with applicable federal and State laws as described above. The CTE Facility and Sports Complex would not require the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore, the project would not create a hazard to the public or environment through the transportation or use of hazardous materials.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

The use, transport, and storage of hazardous materials during construction of the project (e.g., diesel fuel, oil, solvents, and other similar materials) could introduce the potential for an accidental spill or release to occur. The presence of hazardous materials during project construction activities, including but not limited to ground-disturbing activities, could result in an accidental upset or release of hazardous materials if they are not properly stored and secured. Prior to construction activities all potential hazardous materials identified on the project site from the Phase I ESA would be properly removed and disposed of. Hazardous materials used during project construction would be disposed of off-site in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to the California Building and Fire Codes as well as regulations of the federal and State Occupational Safety and Health Administrations. Therefore, the project would not 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 during construction, and impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed under item(a) above, operation and maintenance of the project would involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials for bus maintenance. However, these hazardous materials would be properly stored and handled in accordance with applicable federal and State laws. Therefore, the project would not 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.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c. Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?

The use, transport, and storage of hazardous materials during construction of the project (e.g., diesel fuel, oil, solvents, and other similar materials) could introduce the potential for emitting hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of a school. The presence of hazardous materials during project construction activities, including but not limited to ground-disturbing activities, could result in an accidental upset or release of hazardous materials if they are not properly stored and secured. As described in the Phase I ESA, potentially hazardous small end-dump soil dumps are present on the proposed site but would result in a minimal increase in construction traffic. Therefore, the project would handle potentially hazardous soil within school property and mitigation measures would be required. Implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 would require the removal of end-dump soil piles during project construction and would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

As discussed under item (a) above, operation and maintenance of the project would involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials for bus maintenance. However, these hazardous materials would be properly stored and handled in accordance with applicable federal and State laws. Therefore, the project would not 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.

Mitigation Measure

HAZ-1 Soil Pile Removal and Inspection

The soil piles identified in the Phase I report (Appendix ESA) shall be removed from the subject site by the start of construction on the southern project site. The affected areas shall be inspected for evidence of potential environmental impact following removal. Results from the inspection of the areas shall be reported to the CUHSD and identified cleanup measures to meet State standards for school sites shall be followed prior to project grading and construction.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

d. Would the project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

The following databases compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 were checked for known hazardous materials contamination:

- SWRCB – GeoTracker search for leaking underground storage tanks (LUST) and other cleanup sites (SWRCB 2022);
- DTSC – EnviroStor database for hazardous waste facilities or known contamination sites (DTSC 2022); and
- USEPA Superfund Enterprise Management System Search (USEPA 2022).

The CTE Facility project site is listed in the DTSC EnviroStor database (DTSC 2022). The Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) investigation for the DTSC site at the CTE Facility project site collected soil and soil gas samples and the PEA report concluded that site soils and soil gas do not pose a significant risk to human health or the environment. On May 25, 2007, DTSC approved the PEA with a no further action determination for the site. In addition, there are two SWRCB GeoTracker LUST sites approximately 30 feet east and 1,200 feet southeast of the Sports Complex site along Road 16 (SWRCB 2022). The cases have been closed since 1987 and 1986 respectively and are not classified as active sites. Therefore, the project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment related to location on a hazardous materials site. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

As discussed below in Section 13, *Noise,* the project site is located approximately 0.8 mile west of the Chowchilla Municipal Airport. The Madera Countywide Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan shows noise contours for the Chowchilla Municipal Airport. The project site would be located outside of the airport influence area and the 60 and 65 decibel (dB) Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) noise contours (Madera County Airport Land Use Commission 2015). Therefore, the project is not located within an airport land use plan and would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people working in the project area. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

f. Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The Madera County Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan establishes an emergency management organization and assigns functions and tasks consistent with the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) (County of Madera 2010). This plan provides for the integration and coordination of the planning efforts of Madera County with those of its cities, towns, and unincorporated areas. The intent of the Madera County Operational Area Emergency Operations is to facilitate emergency response and short-term recovery by providing a framework for response to all significant emergencies, regardless of the nature of the event.

The project implementation would not hinder the County's implementation of its emergency response and emergency evacuation plans. During the construction phase, the staging area is expected to remain on-site and not block roadways. Once the proposed project is operational, traffic volume is not expected to increase as the school would serve existing residents within CUHSD boundaries. Therefore, no impact is anticipated.

NO IMPACT

g. Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

As discussed below in Section 20, *Wildfire*, the project is not located in a state responsibility area or land classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. The nearest state responsibility area is about 23 miles east of the project site (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection [CAL FIRE] 2022b). Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

NO IMPACT

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10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	■	☐
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	■	☐
(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	■	☐
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	■	☐
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	■
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

The project would involve grading over the approximately 25.7-acre project site. Since the project would disturb more than 1 acre of land, the project would be required to comply with the NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ) adopted by the SWRCB. The project site is located within the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and would be subject to the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the RWQCB Central Valley Region (RWQCB 2019). The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses of water in the region and establishes narrative and numerical water quality objectives. The NPDES Construction General Permit requires preparation and implementation of a project specific SWPPP, which requires operators to implement pollution prevention controls to minimize the discharge of pollutants from stormwater and spilled or leaked materials. Compliance with applicable regulatory requirements would minimize potential surface water quality impacts associated with sediment erosion during project construction.

During operation, portions of the bus garage and parking area would be subject to the Statewide General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Industrial Activities, Order 2014-0057-DWQ (Industrial General Permit). The bus garage would include vehicle maintenance and equipment cleaning operations. Therefore, project operation would be considered as a facility with Standard Industrial Classifications (SICs) and would be subject to the Industrial General Permit. Only those portions of the facility involved in vehicle maintenance (including vehicle rehabilitation, mechanical repairs, painting, fueling, and lubrication) or other operations identified under this Permit as associated with industrial activity would be subject to the Industrial General Permit (SWRCB 2014). The Industrial General Permit requires the implementation of Best Available Technology Economically Achievable (BAT) and Best Conventional Pollutant Control Technology (BCT) to achieve performance standards, which include effluent limitations, as well as the development of an operational SWPPP and a monitoring plan. The Industrial General Permit sets effluent limitations through Numeric Action Levels (NALs) and requires Exceedance Response Actions (ERAs) if there is exceedance of the NALs. The operational SWPPP identifies the site-specific sources of pollutants and describes the best management practices implemented at the facility to prevent dry weather runoff and to reduce pollutants in storm water discharges.

Implementation of permit requirements, including the requirements in the Construction General Permit and Industrial General Permit described above would prevent or minimize impacts related to water quality and ensure that the project would not cause or contribute to the degradation of water quality in receiving waters. The project would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality, and water quality impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

The City of Chowchilla Water Division of the Public Works Department is the retail water supplier for the City and produces all its water supply through pumping groundwater using City facilities (City of Chowchilla 2020). The City's water supply system consists of seven active wells and two above ground water storage reservoirs.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires all high- and medium-priority basins, designated by Department of Water Resources (DWR), to be sustainably managed. The San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin Chowchilla Subbasin (Subbasin) is designated as a high-priority basin. As discussed in *item* (a), the project would be required to comply with NPDES requirements and project would be served by the City of Chowchilla Water Division of the Public Works Department, which helps ensure that it meets SGMA requirements including monitoring and reporting groundwater supplies. The project would comply with SGMA requirements to ensure that groundwater quality and groundwater levels are not significantly impacted. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with water quality control plans or sustainable groundwater management plans and groundwater impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c.(i) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

c.(iii) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would 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?

c.(ii) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

The Sports Complex and Bus Garage and Parking area site is currently vacant and would require grading of the approximately 23.3-acre site, but with limited cut and fill due to the flatness of the site. In addition, the CTE Facility site would require grading of approximately 2.4 acres of land. Therefore, construction activities for the proposed project would disturb more than 1 acre of land. Therefore, the project would be required to comply with the NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ) adopted by the SWRCB. The project would be required to comply with the NPDES General Construction Permit, which includes preparing a SWPPP and BMPs to prevent erosion and polluted runoff. Such controls include installation of silt fencing and sandbag barriers, covering of stockpiles, use of desilting basins, and post-construction revegetation and drainage requirements. In addition, pursuant to the NPDES Construction General Permit requirements, inspections would be conducted on the project site once every seven calendar days, or once every 14 calendar days and within 24 hours of a 0.25-inch storm event. Compliance with applicable regulatory requirements would minimize potential surface water quality impacts associated with sediment erosion during project construction. In addition, the project would include a drainage basin on the Sport Complex site (as shown in Figure 3) that would accommodate the project site's stormwater flow and would prevent flooding on or off site. The CTE Facility would be connected to the existing stormwater facilities at the project site, and no additional stormwater capacity would be needed. Compliance with the NPDES permit and the project's drainage basin would reduce impacts to less than less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c.(iv) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would impede or redirect flood flows?

The project site is not depicted as being within a floodplain on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps (FEMA 2008). The nearest flood hazard zone is located approximately 0.8 mile south of the project site and has intervening topography of higher elevation; therefore, flooding of the project site due to flood flows is unlikely. As a result, although project construction would increase impervious surfaces, the project would not have the potential to redirect or impede flood flows as it is not subject to flood flows. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

The project area is not located in a tsunami inundation area, nor is there a water body near the project area capable of seiche. The project site is not located in a FEMA flood zone (FEMA 2008). Therefore, the project site is not located in a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones and therefore would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

11 Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	■	☐

a. Would the project physically divide an established community?

The Sports Complex and Bus Garage and Parking area site is currently an unoccupied vacant field. The CTE Facility site is used as the CHUSD bus garage and parking area. The proposed CTE Facility is located on existing school property and the proposed Sports Complex is located on land designated for public use. Development on either area of the project site would not limit or restrict access for existing uses. In addition, the extension of West Mariposa Avenue would add additional access to the project site. The project does not include any new roads, development or infrastructure that would divide established communities. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

The project site has a City of Chowilla General Plan land use designation of Public Facilities, and the parcels are zoned as Public Facilities High School. The current zoning and land use designations permit community facilities, parks, school facilities, libraries, cemeteries, wastewater treatment facilities, storm drainage basins, water recharge areas, public safety facilities, public transportation, and public works facilities. The proposed project would be consistent with the intent of Bond Measure S to support the CUHSD's addition of the CTE facility and installation of a new football, soccer, baseball, and softball fields.

The proposed project would not conflict with the City's General Plan or zoning standards. In addition, as described in Section 3, *Air Quality*, and Section 8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, the proposed project would be consistent with the goals and policies of the CARB's 2022 Scoping Plan and MCTC RTP/SCS. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, and impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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12 Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

b. Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

The Chowchilla 2040 General Plan Planning Area, which includes the City of Chowchilla and its Sphere of Influence, is designated Mineral Resource Zone 1 (MRZ-1), which is an area where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence (City of Chowchilla 2011b). The project site is not located within a State designated production consumption region (City of Chowchilla 2011b). Therefore, no mineral resources would be altered or displaced by the project. There would be no impact.

The project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource, nor would it result in the loss of availability of a mineral resource recovery site. There would be no impact**.**

NO IMPACT

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13 Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	■	☐	☐
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	■	☐	☐
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	■

Setting

Although CUHSD is not required to adhere to local standards, the City standards have been used to set a CEQA level of significance standard for this evaluation. The noise setting is discussed in Appendix NOI.

City of Chowchilla Noise Standards

The Chowchilla 2040 General Plan Noise Element identifies compatible land uses and establishes appropriate development standards (City of Chowchilla 2011c). Under the General Plan, the maximum exterior noise level that is considered "normally acceptable" for unshielded noise sensitive land uses (i.e., residential, schools, hospitals, convalescent, childcare) is 60 decibels (dB) using the A-weighted sound pressure level (dBA) Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)/ Day-Night Average Level (L_{dn}).[3,4] Normally acceptable means that no noise evaluation is needed, and any

[3] Noise that occurs at night tends to be more disturbing than that occurring during the day. Community noise is usually measured using Day-Night Average Level (L_{dn}), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a +10 dBA penalty for noise occurring during nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) hours; it is also measured using Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a +5 dBA penalty for noise occurring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and a +10 dBA penalty for noise occurring from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. (Caltrans 2013a).

[4] dBA is equivalent to the A-weighted sound level. dBA is a decibel scale that approximates the way the human ear responds to frequency levels. A-weighted scales are used for measurement of overall noise levels. Leq is the equivalent noise level that is summed over a one-hour period. Lmax is the highest sound pressure level within a measuring period and Lmin is the lowest sound pressure level within a measuring period.

buildings may be constructed using conventional techniques. Exterior noise levels between 60 and 70 dBA CNEL/L_{dn} fall within the "conditionally unacceptable" range and those in the 70 to 75 dB range are considered "normally unacceptable." The following policies from the Noise Element are used to provide thresholds for the project:

- **Policy N 1.3**: Incorporate noise considerations into the site plan review process particularly with regard to parking and loading areas, ingress/egress points and refuse collection areas.
- **Policy N 1.5:** Review development proposals with respect to the Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Exterior Noise in Table N - 5 and Table N - 6 as follows:
  - **Normally Acceptable:** If the noise level is within the "normally acceptable" level, noise exposure would be acceptable for the intended land use. Development many occur without requiring an evaluation of the noise environment unless the use could generate noise impacts on adjacent uses.
  - **Conditionally Acceptable:** If noise level is within the "conditionally acceptable" level, noise exposure would be acceptable; a specified land use may be permitted only after detailed analysis of the noise environment and the project characteristics to determine whether noise insulation or protection features are required. Such noise insulation features may include measures to protect noise sensitive outdoor activity areas (i.e., residences, schools, parks) or may include building sound insulation treatments such as sound-rated windows to protect interior spaces in sensitive receptors.
  - **Normally Unacceptable:** If the noise level is within the "normally unacceptable" level, analysis and mitigation are required. Development should generally not be undertaken unless adequate noise mitigation options have been analyzed and appropriate mitigation incorporated into the project to reduce the exposure of people to unacceptable noise levels.
  - **Clearly Unacceptable:** If the noise level is within the "clearly unacceptable" level, new construction or development should not be undertaken unless all feasible noise mitigation options have been analyzed and appropriate mitigations incorporated into the project to adequately reduce exposure of people to unacceptable noise levels.
- **Policy N 1.6:** The City of Chowchilla shall allow the development of noise sensitive land uses (which include, but are not limited to, residential neighborhoods, schools, and hospitals) only in areas where existing or projected noise levels are acceptable according to Table N – 5 and Table N - 6. Noise mitigation measures may be required to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas and interior spaces to achieve these levels.
- **Policy N 1.7**: The City of Chowchilla shall require noise analysis for new noise sensitive development in areas subject to noise levels greater than 65 dBA CNEL as part of the environmental review process and to require mitigation measures to reduce noise impacts to acceptable levels. The acoustical analysis shall be the responsibility of the project applicant and be prepared by a qualified person experienced in the fields of environmental noise assessments. The acoustical analysis shall address affects of the project based on existing conditions and build-out conditions of the Chowchilla 2040 General Plan. (See Policy N 4.1).
- **Policy N 4.1:** The City of Chowchilla shall use the Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Exterior Noise (measured in dBA CNEL or L_{dn}) contained in Table N - 5 and Table N - 6 in this Element, as applicable, to direct the siting, design, and insulation of new development to reduce exposure to excessive noise. Where warranted, the City shall employ discretionary review of new development to ensure that the community will be protected from excessive noise levels. The City shall evaluate potential noise impacts and recommend mitigation measures through

discretionary review procedures such as environmental reviews, design review and evaluation of use permits.

- **Policy N 4.5:** During all phases of construction, the City of Chowchilla shall take measures to minimize the exposure of neighboring properties to excessive noise levels from construction related activity.
- **Policy N 4.6:** The City of Chowchilla shall limit construction activities to the hours of 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Saturday. No construction shall occur on Sundays or national holidays without a permit from the City.
- **Policy N 4.7:** The following sources of noise are exempt from the standards in Policy N 4.1: motor vehicles on public streets; trains; emergency equipment, vehicles, devices and activities; temporary construction, maintenance, or demolition activities conducted between the hours of 7:00 am and 7:00 pm.

Project Site Noise Environment

The most prevalent source of noise in the project vicinity is recreational sports activities at the existing baseball, softball, and football fields when in use. Secondary noise sources include vehicular traffic on South 11th Street, Humboldt Avenue, and South 18th Street. To characterize ambient sound levels at the project site, three 15-minute short term noise measurements (ST) were conducted on Friday, October 14, 2022. An ExTech 407780A, ANSI Type II integrating sound level meter was used to conduct the noise measurements. ST locations are shown in Figure 6. ST-1 was taken at the terminus of South 7th Street to capture ambient noise levels at the residences north of the proposed sports complex. ST-2 was taken along South 11th Street, approximately 50 feet from the visitor side bleachers at the existing football field, to capture noise from a live football game. ST-3 was taken along South 12th Street, approximately 400 feet from the visitor side bleachers at the existing football field, to capture noise from a live football game at nearby existing residences. Noise from the football game included noise generated from the PA system announcing updates from the football game or playing music and the crowd cheering. Table 11 summarizes the results of the noise measurements.

Table 11 Project Site Vicinity Sound Level Monitoring Results - Short-Term

Measurement Location		Sample Times	Approximate Distance to Primary Noise Source	L_{eq} (dBA)	L_{min} (dBA)	L_{max} (dBA)
ST-1	Terminus of South 7th Street	6:48 – 7:03 p.m.	Approximately 290 feet from the proposed softball field and approximately 400 feet from the proposed football field	52	45	73
ST-2	Along South 11th Street	7:14 – 7:29 p.m.	Approximately 50 feet from the visitor side bleachers of the existing football field	62	47	71
ST-3	Along South 12th Street	7:38 – 7:52 p.m.	Approximately 400 feet from the visitor side bleachers of the existing football field	57	48	73

L_{eq} = average noise level equivalent; dBA = A-weighted decibel; L_{min} = minimum instantaneous noise level; L_{max} = maximum instantaneous noise level [4]

Figure 6 ST Locations

Construction Noise

Construction noise was estimated using the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) (FHWA 2006). Appendix NOI includes the methodology for how RCNM predicts construction noise levels.

Impacts

a. Would the project result in 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?

Construction Noise

Construction activity would result in temporary noise in the project vicinity, exposing surrounding nearby receivers to increased noise levels. Construction noise would typically be higher during the heavier periods of initial construction (i.e., site preparation and grading) and would be lower during the later construction phases (i.e., architectural coating). It is assumed that diesel engines would power all construction equipment. Construction equipment would not all operate at the same time or location. In addition, construction equipment would not be in constant use during the 8-hour operating day.

As described in Section 9, *Project Description*, the project would be constructed in two phases at two different locations. Noise from construction is analyzed separately based on noise generated by construction of the sport complex and construction of the CTE facility. Since the City does not have a quantified construction noise limit, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recommends a construction noise limit of 80 dBA $L_{eq(8\text{-}hr)}$ at residential receptors during the daytime (FTA 2018). Project construction would be consistent with the Chowchilla's construction hours and there would be no nighttime construction work. For the purposes of this analysis, the FTA threshold of 80 dBA $L_{eq(8\text{-}hr)}$ at residential receivers during the daytime is used to assess potential project construction noise impacts.[4] In terms of onsite classroom receivers, under the CALGreen performance method for non-residential uses, a proposed project must demonstrate that interior noise levels do not exceed 50 dBA $L_{eq(1hr)}$. While this criterion is intended for use during design of a new project and not necessarily for the effect of project construction on sensitive receivers, an interior noise threshold of 50 dBA L_{eq} is reasonable to use to assess the potential impact to the onsite learning environment. This interior noise threshold is also comparable to US EPA recommended limits for potential speech interference of 45 – 60 dBA (USEPA 1974).

Sports Complex Construction

The closest sensitive receivers to the proposed sports complex are the single-family residences north of the sports complex project site and the High School north of the sports complex project site. Over the course of a typical construction day, construction equipment would be located as close as 45 feet to the nearest sensitive receivers but would typically be located at an average distance further away due to the nature of construction where equipment is mobile throughout the day. Table 12 identifies the expected noise levels at the closest sensitive receivers from the center of the specific phase based on the conservatively assumed combined use of all construction equipment during each phase of construction.

Table 12 Estimated Noise Levels by Sports Complex Construction Phase at Sensitive Receivers

Construction Activity Phase	L_{eq} dBA		
	RCNM Reference Noise Level at 50 feet	Residences to the North	Chowchilla High School to the North
Site Preparation	90	69	68
Grading	88	67	66
Building Construction	89	71	65
Architectural Coating	76	58	52
Paving	89	77	72

L_{eq} = average noise level equivalent; dBA = A-weighted decibel

Notes: Calculations performed with the FHWA's RCNM software are included in Appendix NOI.

Noise levels rounded to the nearest whole number.

As shown in Table 12, construction noise could be as high as approximately 77 dBA L_{eq} during the paving phase, which would occur approximately 200 feet from the nearest sensitive receivers located north of the sports complex project site. Therefore, construction of the sports complex would not exceed the significance threshold of 80 dBA L_{eq}.

Construction noise at the existing High School would reach up to 72 dBA L_{eq}. A building's exterior-to-interior noise transmission loss is typically 25 – 30 dBA with windows closed. Conservatively assuming an exterior-to-interior transmission loss of 25 dBA, interior classroom noise levels would be 47 dBA L_{eq} or less, which would not exceed the threshold of 50 dBA L_{eq}. Therefore, temporary construction noise impacts to on-site school receptors would be less than significant.

CTE Facility Construction

The closest sensitive receivers to the proposed CTE Facility are the single-family residences north, east, and south of the CTE Facility project site and High School west of the CTE Facility project site. The High School Industrial Arts building is adjacent to the western project site boundary. Over the course of a typical construction day, construction equipment could be located as close as 20 feet to the nearest sensitive receivers but would typically be located at an average distance further away due to the nature of construction where equipment is mobile throughout the day. Table 13 identifies the expected noise levels at the closest sensitive receivers from the center of the specific phase based on the conservatively assumed combined use of all construction equipment during each phase of construction.

Table 13 Estimated Noise Levels by CTE Facility Construction Phase at Sensitive Receivers

	L_{eq} dBA				
Construction Activity Phase	RCNM Reference Noise Level at 50 feet	Residences to the North	Residences to the East	Residences to the South	Chowchilla High School to the West
Demolition	89	78	84	76	78
Site Preparation	90	78	80	78	83
Grading	88	75	78	75	81
Building Construction	89	79	77	75	87
Architectural Coating	76	66	64	62	74
Paving	89	77	83	78	80

L_{eq} = average noise level equivalent; dBA = A-weighted decibel

Notes: Calculations performed with the FHWA's RCNM software are included in Appendix NOI.

Noise levels rounded to the nearest whole number.

As shown in Table 13, construction noise generated during construction of the CTE Facility could be as high as approximately 84 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest residence, which would exceed the significance threshold of 80 dBA L_{eq} and would be potentially significant. During the building construction phase, which would occur approximately 60 feet from the High School Industrial Arts building, construction noise levels could reach up to 87 dBA L_{eq}. A building's exterior-to-interior noise transmission loss is typically 25 – 30 dBA with windows closed. Conservatively assuming an exterior-to-interior transmission loss of 25 dBA, interior classroom noise levels would be 62 dBA L_{eq} or less, which would exceed the threshold of 50 dBA L_{eq}.

Therefore, project construction of the CTE Facility could, at times, exceed the significance thresholds and would be potentially significant. To reduce construction noise below the significance threshold of 80 dBA L_{eq} at residences and 50 dBA L_{eq} at classrooms, Mitigation Measure NOI-1 is required, which includes preparation of a noise control plan containing measures such as implementing noise barriers near sensitive receivers and public noticing procedures to reduce impacts to a less than significant impact.

Operation

Sports Complex Noise

The primary on-site operational noise source from the proposed sports complex would be from recreational use of the baseball, softball, and football fields. This would consist of noise from recreational sports activities, including, but not limited to, noise from a ball hitting a baseball or softball bat, noise from players or nearby spectators, announcements and music from the PA system at the football field, and noise from umpires or referees, such as whistleblowing. The High School has existing baseball, softball, and football fields that generate similar noise levels as the noise that would be generated as part of the proposed sports complex. Since the proposed sports complex would not increase the number of sports fields or the frequency of use at the sports fields, noise levels at the proposed sports complex are anticipated to be similar to the existing fields. Therefore,

the operational recreational noise levels would not substantially change, and noise generated by the sports complex would be less than significant.

On-site noise sources at the proposed sports complex such as landscape maintenance, low-speed traffic on internal driveways, and conversations would be typical of noise generated by a high school. Therefore, noise from these sources would not substantially contribute to overall ambient noise levels in the project vicinity.

Bus Garage and Parking Noise

Bus garage and parking noise would consist of noise from a car or bus door slamming, engine starting up, bus airbrake, car or bus pass-bys, and mechanical noise from heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment. The proposed bus garage and parking facilities would generate similar noise levels as the existing bus garage and parking facilities that are located at the northern end of the High School. The proposed bus garage and parking facilities would be located further away from sensitive receivers than the existing facilities. Therefore, the noise levels are anticipated to remain the same or decrease overall. Noise generated by the proposed bus garage and parking facilities would be less than significant.

CTE Facility Noise

The primary on-site operational noise source from the CTE Facility would be from ground-mounted HVAC equipment outside of the CTE Facility. HVAC noise would be typical, similar to the noise generated by the adjacent Industrial Arts building, which is approximately 25 feet west of the proposed CTE Facility, and the additional neighboring High School buildings. Therefore, HVAC noise would not substantially contribute to ambient noise levels in the project vicinity and CTE facility noise would be less than significant.

Off-Site Traffic Noise

Project implementation would not result in an increase of traffic trips to project area roadways since the project consists of replacing existing facilities and amenities. The number of trips generated by the project is anticipated to remain the same as existing conditions. Therefore, noise generated by off-site traffic would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

NOI-1 Construction Noise Reduction

CUHSD and its construction contractor shall prepare a Construction Noise Control Plan that includes the following measures. The details of the Construction Noise Control Plan shall be included as part of the construction drawings.

- At least 21 days prior to the start of construction activities, all off-site residents within 500 feet of the project site shall be notified of the planned construction activities. The notification shall include a brief project description, the activities that would occur, the hours when construction would occur, and the construction period's overall duration. The notification shall include the telephone numbers of CUHSD's and contractor's authorized representatives that are assigned to respond in the event of a noise or vibration complaint.
- At least 10 days prior to the start of construction activities, a sign shall be posted at the entrance(s) to the job site, clearly visible to the public, that includes permitted construction

days and hours, as well as the telephone numbers of the CUHSD's and contractor's authorized representatives that are assigned to respond in the event of a noise or vibration complaint. If the authorized contractor's representative receives a complaint, the representative shall investigate, take appropriate corrective action, and report the action to the CUHSD.

- During the entire active construction period, equipment, tools, and trucks used for project construction shall utilize the best available noise control techniques (e.g., improved mufflers, use of intake silencers, ducts, engine enclosures, and acoustically attenuating shields or shrouds), wherever feasible. During the entire active construction period, stationary noise sources shall be located as far from sensitive receptors as feasible, muffled, and enclosed within temporary sheds or insulation barriers, or other measures for equivalent noise reduction will be incorporated to the extent feasible.
- The contractor shall use impact tools that are hydraulically or electrically powered wherever feasible. Where the use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used along with external noise jackets on the tools.
- Stockpiling of materials shall be located as far as feasible from nearby noise-sensitive receivers.
- Signs shall be posted at the job site entrance(s) to reinforce the prohibition of unnecessary engine idling. All equipment shall be turned off if not in use for more than 5 minutes.
- Stereos and other amplified noise not necessary for the completion of construction work shall be prohibited.
- During the entire active construction period and to the extent feasible, the use of noise producing signals, including horns, whistles, alarms, and bells shall be for safety warning purposes only. The construction manager shall ensure the use of use smart back-up alarms, which automatically adjust the alarm level based on the background noise level or switch off back-up alarms and replace with human spotters in compliance with safety requirements and laws.
- Erect temporary noise barriers at a height of 15 feet along the perimeter of the property to maintain construction noise levels at or below the performance standard of 80 dBA L_{eq} at off-site residences and 50 dBA L_{eq} inside High School classrooms. Barriers shall be constructed with a solid material that has a density of at least 1.5 pounds per square foot with no gaps from the ground to the top of the barrier.

Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would entail noise reduction measures, including use of mufflers and temporary noise barriers, where necessary to reduce construction noise below the significance thresholds. The combination of these measures including the use of temporary noise barriers would reduce noise levels by at least 15 dBA (FHWA 2011; Bies et al. 2018; Harris 1991). Therefore, project construction noise levels would be mitigated to 72 dBA L_{eq} or less (or an equivalent of 47 dBA L_{eq} or less inside classrooms), which would not exceed the significance thresholds of 80 dBA L_{eq} at off-site residences or 50 dBA L_{eq} inside classrooms, and construction noise impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

b. Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Construction activities known to generate excessive groundborne vibration, such as pile driving, would not be needed for the project. Based on FTA recommendations, limiting vibration levels to below 0.2 in/sec PPV at nonengineered timber and masonry buildings would prevent architectural damage regardless of building construction type (FTA 2018). The greatest anticipated source of vibration during project construction would be from a vibratory roller, which would be used during paving activities.

A vibratory roller may be used within 45 feet of the nearest off-site residential structures to the north of the sports complex project site. A vibratory roller generates up to approximately 0.087 in/sec PPV at a distance of 45 feet (FTA 2018), which would not exceed the significance threshold of 0.2 in/sec PPV.

A vibratory roller may be used within 20 feet of the High School Industrial Arts building, the nearest off-site structure to the west of the CTE Facility project site. A vibratory roller generates up to approximately 0.293 in/sec PPV at a distance of 20 feet (FTA 2018), which would exceed the significance threshold of 0.2 in/sec PPV. Therefore, if a vibratory roller were to operate within approximately 25 feet of a nearby off-site structure, the 0.2 in/sec peak particle velocity (PPV) threshold could be exceeded. Similarly, if grading equipment such as a large dozer operates within approximately 15 feet of a nearby off-site structure, the 0.2 in/sec PPV threshold may be exceeded, and impacts would be potentially significant. Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would be required, which includes use of alternative equipment near off-site receivers to reduce construction-related vibration.

The project does not include substantial vibration sources associated with operation. Therefore, operational vibration impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

NOI-2 Construction Vibration

CUHSD shall require the following measures be included as notes on all construction plans:

- If paving activities occur within 25 feet of off-site buildings or structures, a static roller shall be used in lieu of a vibratory roller.
- Grading and earthwork activities within 15 feet of adjacent structures shall be conducted with off-road equipment that is limited to 100 horsepower or less.

Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would reduce construction vibration levels to below 0.2 in/sec PPV at nearby buildings and structures. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The project site is located approximately 0.8 mile west of the Chowchilla Municipal Airport. The Madera Countywide Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan shows noise contours for the Chowchilla Municipal Airport. The project site would be located outside of the airport influence area and the 60 and 65 dB CNEL noise contours (Madera County Airport Land Use Commission 2015). Therefore, the project would not expose students or people working or visiting in the project area to excessive airport noise levels. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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14 Population and Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The project would serve the existing school and surrounding community and would not increase the school's capacity. Additionally, the project would not involve residential or commercial development that would directly or indirectly result in population growth. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial unplanned population growth and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project site does not currently contain housing or habitable structures, and the project would not result in the removal of housing. Therefore, the project would not displace people or housing. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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15 Public Services

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
	1 Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	■
	2 Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	■
	3 Schools?	☐	☐	☐	■
	4 Parks?	☐	☐	☐	■
	5 Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	■

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

The City of Chowchilla Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD) serves the City and its surrounding unincorporated area. It is the CVFD goal to maintain a ratio of 2.8 firefighters per 1,000 population (City of Chowchilla 2011b). The City's acceptable standard for responding to an emergency service call is 5 minutes. The nearest fire station to the project site is Fire Station No. 1, which is located approximately 0.61 mile to the north at 240 North 1st Street and would provide emergency and evacuation services in the event of a fire. As discussed in Section 20, *Wildfire,* the project site is not located in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) for wildland fires and the project site would not be subject to substantial risk of wildfire. The proposed project would not increase the local population, and thus would not result in substantial adverse impacts or the need for additional fire protection facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

a.2. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities, or the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

Law enforcement services for the City of Chowchilla are provided by the Chowchilla Police Department (CPD). The station nearest to the project is located at 122 Trinity Ave, approximately 0.5 mile from the project site. As the project would not increase school capacity, it would not result in an increase in demand for police services. Therefore, it would not result in substantial adverse impacts to existing police facilities or impact the need for additional facilities or staff. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

a.3. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered schools, or the need for new or physically altered schools, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives?

The project would not induce population growth or demand for schools (see Section 14, *Population and Housing*). The environmental impacts of the proposed project are addressed throughout this document, and the project would not result in the need for off-site schools. Therefore, there would be no impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered schools, or the need for new schools. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

a.4. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered parks, or the need for new or physically altered parks, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives?

Demand for parks and open space is directly related to population. The proposed project would not result in substantial population growth and therefore would not increase demand for public services, such as parks and open space. The project would not impact parks or alter access to parks. The proposed project would create outdoor recreational spaces for the school community and would not increase demand for park facilities or result in the need for new off-site parks. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

a.5. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of other new or physically altered public facilities, or the need for other new or physically altered public facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

The proposed project would not result in population growth because the expanded facilities are intended to serve the existing community and school population. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial adverse impacts to existing government facilities or impact the need for additional public facilities, such as libraries, roadways, and infrastructure. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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16 Recreation

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

a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

The recreational facilities proposed by the project would replace the existing campus facilities. The project would not increase school's capacity and thus, would not lead to population growth that may lead to an increase in use and deterioration of existing recreational facilities. Therefore, there would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The project's recreational facilities would replace the existing campus facilities and would not require construction or expansion of other existing recreational facilities. Therefore, there would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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17 Transportation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with *CEQA Guidelines* section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	■	☐
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	■	☐

a. Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Several land use plans, policies, and regulations are regionally and locally adopted in the area. These include the City of Chowchilla General Plan Circulation Element, the Madera County Active Transportation Plan (ATP), and MCTC RTP/SCS.

The City of Chowchilla General Plan Circulation Element is intended to set up local goals and guiding policies regarding transportation, such as the intent to make certain that transportation facilities needed to support development are available, to ensure that such facilities occur in a timely manner as to avoid traffic degradation, and to plan for transportation modes available to all segments of the population, including people with restricted mobility (City of Chowchilla 2011).

The Madera County ATP is a county-wide planning effort to enhance walking, bicycling, and transit access throughout Madera County. Overall, the ATP encourages safer and healthier communities by developing comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian networks that provide safe and comfortable access to local parks, schools, workplaces, retail, transit, and other essential destinations. The ATP includes a variety of goals to guide the development of a network of active transportation infrastructure and programs linking communities of all sizes across Madera County, so that walking and bicycling are a common part of everyday life for both residents and visitors. The ATP goals are generally oriented around accessibility and safety, network connectivity, community and economic development, health, equity, education, and strategic implementation (County of Madera 2018a).

The MCTC RTP/SCS is a long-range planning document that establishes a set of regional transportation goals, policies, and actions intended to guide development of the planned multimodal transportation systems in Madera County. Overall, the RTP/SCS aims to improve economic vitality, improve air quality, improve the health of communities, improve transportation

and public safety, promote the conservation of natural resources and undeveloped land, increase regional access to community services, increase regional and local energy independence, and increase opportunities to help shape the community's future (MCTC 2018).

The proposed project would not result in the closure of existing roadways. The project would include construction of one new roadway, the extension of West Mariposa Avenue, to provide project access and better access for the existing neighborhood (See Figure 3). There are no transit stops located in the project vicinity. The nearest bus stop is the Community Sports Center Bus Stop for the Chowchilla - Fairmead bus route located along West Robertson Boulevard; four blocks north of the High School. Project implementation would not alter the roadways, transit stops, or sidewalk, increase commercial or residential development, generate growth, or cause an increase in vehicle traffic in the project vicinity. The West Mariposa Avenue extension would complete access to the existing residential neighborhood and to the bus storage and sports facilities.

The school would remain accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists throughout construction. There are bike lanes along Road 16, however project construction would not include road closure and would not impact Road 16 bicycle infrastructure. Sidewalks surround the perimeter at the CTE Facility site. Sidewalks may be temporarily closed during construction for pedestrian safety. Pedestrian traffic on these sidewalks would be directed to the opposite side of the street with a sidewalk if closure occurs and would not restrict pedestrian access to the area. There are no sidewalks surrounding the Sports Facility and Bus and Garage Parking area site Therefore, the project would not impact the overall use of the roadways, bicycle or pedestrian facilities, or transit facilities in the project vicinity. The project would not conflict with the goals, objectives, or policies addressing the circulation system in the City of Chowchilla General Plan Circulation Element, the Madera County ATP, or the 2018 MCTC RTP/SCS.

Overall, the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle or pedestrian facilities. This impact would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 requires an analysis of a project's effect on vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The proposed project would not involve residential or commercial development that would directly or indirectly result in population growth and is replacing existing sports facilities and bus storage. As a result, the project would not introduce substantial unplanned population growth in its vicinity or new vehicle trips. Instead, the project would serve the existing surrounding community and replace existing facilities located currently at the school site. As the proposed project would only serve the existing and projected student population in the school district and replace existing facilities, it would not result in additional vehicle trips in the region. Vehicle traffic would occur for events held at the Sports Complex. However, people travelling to the existing facilities are already producing vehicle trips, and these would not change as a result of the project. The new facilities would not increase the frequency of events occurring at the school.

Overall, the proposed project would not result in an increase in VMT. This impact would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c. Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment)?

The project site is regionally accessible from SR 99 and SR 152. Direct access to the Sports Complex and Bus and Parking area would be provided by the extension of West Mariposa Ave. The entrance for the Sports Complex would include a two-way road for bus and vehicle egress and ingress. The Bus and Parking area would also include a two-way entrance from Road 16 in addition to a one-way entrance from West Mariposa Ave. The school would remain accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists throughout construction. The proposed project would improve access to the adjacent neighborhood through the extension of Mariposa Avenue. It would not increase hazards due to a new geometric design feature as the extension would be constructed in conformance with City standards. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature.

The project site is surrounded by existing residential and agricultural development. The proposed project would be compatible with surrounding residential and agricultural uses. As such, the project would not introduce incompatible uses, such as unplanned vehicles or new farm equipment, to the project site or the surrounding area. The proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due to incompatible uses. Overall, this impact would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

The proposed project would include extension of West Mariposa Avenue along the northwestern boundary of the Sport Complex and Bus Garage and Parking area. The West Mariposa Avenue extension would improve emergency access to the existing neighborhood and High School by providing an additional access point. The entrance for the Sport Complex would be from West Mariposa Avenue and would include a two-way egress and ingress for buses and vehicles. The Bus Garage and Parking structure would include a one-way entrance from West Mariposa Ave and a two-way entrance from Road 16. The CTE Facility would be accessible from West Humboldt Avenue and South 7th Street. There would be adequate egress and ingress for emergency vehicles to the project site.

Staging equipment and temporary work areas utilized during project construction would be located within the project site and would not require closure of existing roadways in the project vicinity. As a result, the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access. This impact would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in a Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, or 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:				
a. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
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.	☐	☐	☐	☐

AB 52 establishes a formal consultation process for California tribes regarding those resources. The consultation process must be completed before a CEQA document can be certified. Under AB 52, lead agencies are required to "begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project." Native American tribes to be included in the process are those that have requested notice of projects proposed within the jurisdiction of the lead agency.

CUSHD, pursuant to Public Resources 21080.3.1 and AB 52, sent via certified mail notification letters on December 13, 2022, to eight California Native American Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area. The letter was sent to representatives of the Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians, Dumna Wo-Wah Tribal Government, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, North Valley Yokuts Tribe, Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, Tule River Indian Tribe, and Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band.

a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?

b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code 21074 that is 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?

CHUSD circulated sent AB 52 consultation letters to Native American tribes on December 13, 2022Until AB 52 consultation is concluded, there is potential for significant impacts to tribal cultural resources under the proposed project.

19 Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	■	☐
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	■	☐
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	■	☐

a. Would the project 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?

c. *Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

Wastewater

The Wastewater Division of the Chowchilla Public Works Department owns, operates, and maintains the wastewater collection system (City of Chowchilla 2021e). The Chowchilla Water District operates a 1 million gallons per day (MGD) secondary wastewater treatment plant located at 15750 Avenue 24 ½. The permitted capacity of this facility is 1.8 MGD. The average wet weather day flow to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) is 1.1 MGD and the average dry weather day flow is 0.8 MGD (City of Chowchilla 2020). This leaves a remaining capacity of 0.7 MGD or 840,664 gallons per day.

The project's estimated wastewater generation would be approximately 12,931.5 gallons per day assuming a conservative rate of wastewater generation is equal to that of water usage. Under this assumption the project would use approximately 1.5 percent of the available unused capacity. This increase would be within the WWTP's capacity for collection and treatment. Therefore, the WWTP would have sufficient capacity to serve the project and the project would not require the construction of wastewater infrastructure.

Water

The 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) states that Chowchilla has enough water supply to meet current demands, as well as demands during normal water years through 2040. Additionally, according to the 2020 UWMP, based on the 2040 water demand projection, Chowchilla is expected to have adequate water supplies to 2040 for single-dry years and multiple dry years (City of Chowchilla 2020).

Water for the project would be provided by the Water Division of the Chowchilla Public works Department via existing utilities adjacent to the project site. The Water Division meets all of its water supply demands solely through the use of groundwater wells. The water supply system consists of seven wells and two storage tanks (City of Chowchilla 2020). There are no plans to change the current source of water.

The water demand for the City of Chowchilla In 2020 was 832 million gallons (MG) per year. Currently, Chowchilla uses approximately 24 percent of its available water supply. The Chowchilla Water District can provide up to 3,532 MG of groundwater supply annually. Chowchilla's annual demand for potable, raw and other non-potable water in 2020 was 832 MG. This leaves an available 2,700 MG of water supply per year.

The project's estimated water demand would be 4.72 million gallons per year, or 12,931.5 gallons per day which is approximately 0.2 percent of Chowchilla's remaining water supply (Appendix AQ). The project would not demand water supply that would exceed the city's available water supply. The project site would be served by adequate water supplies and therefore, no new facilities would be needed.

Stormwater

As described in Section 2*, Project Description*, the project site would include a stormwater drainage basin near the on-site parking lot to capture stormwater runoff. This basin has been designed to handle the capacity of the runoff generated from the project. It has a capacity of 1.36-acre feet to handle the anticipated runoff generated from the project.

Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications

Electricity and natural gas service in Chowchilla are provided by PG&E. Long-term operation of development projects, including the proposed project, would require permanent grid connections for electricity and natural gas service to power internal and exterior building lighting and heating of buildings and water. Electricity for the project would be provided as needed by PG&E and would not require improvements to provide the utilities. Telecommunications in Chowchilla are provided by several service providers including Xfinity and AT&T. Telecommunications would be provided as needed and facility upgrades would not be necessary. Accordingly, the project would be accommodated adequately by existing electricity, gas, and telecommunication facilities. Therefore, improvement of those facilities, or the provision of new facilities, that could cause significant environmental effects would not occur. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

According to the 2020 UWMP, based on historical data and future projections, the Chowchilla Water District assessed the future water reliability and its ability to meet the demands of its customers through 2045 during normal, single dry, and multiple dry years. With respect to historical data and future projections, it was established that the Chowchilla Water District could provide water to customers even during a 5-year prolonged drought (City of Chowchilla 2020). As shown in Table 14, the Chowchilla Water District would be able to meet water supply demand during normal, dry, and multiple dry years; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Table 14 Water Supply and Demand in Acre-Feet for Normal, Single Dry, and Multiple Dry Year

Normal and Single Dry Year	Year				
	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Normal Year					
Supply Totals	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532
Demand Totals	1,077	1,395	1,806	2,338	3,027
Difference	**2,455**	**2,137**	**1,726**	**1,194**	**505**
Single Dry Year					
Supply Totals	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532
Demand Totals	1,077	1,395	1,806	2,338	3,027
Difference	**2,455**	**2,137**	**1,726**	**1,194**	**505**
	Year				
Multiple Dry Years	**2025**	**2030**	**2035**	**2040**	**2045**
First Year					
Supply Totals	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532
Demand Totals	1,077	1,395	1,806	2,338	3,027
Difference	**2,455**	**2,137**	**1,726**	**1,194**	**505**
Second Year					
Supply Totals	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532
Demand Totals	1,077	1,395	1,806	2,338	3,027
Difference	**2,455**	**2,137**	**1,726**	**1,194**	**505**
Third Year					
Supply Totals	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532
Demand Totals	1,077	1,395	1,806	2,338	3,027
Difference	**2,455**	**2,137**	**1,726**	**1,194**	**505**
Fourth Year					
Supply Totals	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532
Demand Totals	1,077	1,395	1,806	2,338	3,027
Difference	**2,455**	**2,137**	**1,726**	**1,194**	**505**
Fifth Year					
Supply Totals	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532	3,532
Demand Totals	1,077	1,395	1,806	2,338	3,027
Difference	**2,455**	**2,137**	**1,726**	**1,194**	**505**

Source: Chowchilla UWMP 2020

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

e. Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste

In Madera County, municipal solid waste is disposed of at the Fairmead Landfill which is operated by the Waste Management Department. Mid Valley Disposal provides waste hauling for the High School.

Solid waste generation at the project site would increase by an estimated 25,420 pounds per year, or 12.71 tons per year (Appendix AQ). Although there would not be increased capacity, activities from additional classes and activities at the new facilities would increase solid waste produced at the project site. The nearest landfill to the project site is the Fairmead Landfill, located approximately 6.2 miles southeast of the project site. The Fairmead Landfill has a maximum capacity of 1,100 tons per day or about 23 million tons per year (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery [CalRecycle] 2017). The project would produce approximately 12.71 tons of solid waste per year, which is less than 1 percent of the remaining capacity. The estimated closure for the Fairmead Landfill site is 2028. The project would not exceed the landfill's maximum capacity or produce a substantial amount of solid waste of which would cause early closure of the landfill. Therefore, the proposed project would be served by a landfill with sufficient capacity to accommodate its solid waste disposal needs and would not violate any statute or regulation regarding solid waste capacity. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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20 Wildfire

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. *If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

b. *If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

c. *If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

d. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

A FHSZ is a mapped area that designates zones (based on factors such as fuel, slope, and fire weather) with varying degrees of fire hazard (i.e., moderate, high, and very high). While FHSZs do not predict when or where a wildfire will occur, they do identify areas where wildfire hazards could be more severe and therefore are of greater concern. FHSZs are meant to help limit wildfire damage to structures through planning, prevention, and mitigation activities/requirements that reduce risk. The FHSZs serve several purposes: they are used to designate areas where California's wildland urban interface building codes apply to new buildings, they can be a factor in real estate disclosure, and they can help local governments consider fire hazard severity in the safety elements of their general plans.

The project site is in an urbanized area of Chowchilla surrounded by undeveloped agricultural fields, the High School campus, and residential uses. Undeveloped wildland areas are not located near the project site. According to the California FHSZ Viewer, the project site is not located in a FHSZ or Very High FHSZ for wildland fires (CAL FIRE 2022a). In addition, the project is not located in or near a state responsibility area (CAL FIRE 2022b). Therefore, the project site would not be subject to substantial risk of wildfire. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Does the project:				
a. Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	■	☐	☐
b. 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)?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

As discussed in Section 4, *Biological Resources,* the project site is unlikely to contain special status-plants. The presence of California ground squirrel burrows and sparse vegetation south of Mariposa Avenue provides suitable habitat for burrowing owl, a California Species of Special Concern. Impacts to burrowing owls would be limited to project activity that would directly affect an occupied burrow (temporarily or permanently damage or destroy the burrow) or disrupt active breeding or wintering owls within 500 feet of construction activity. Impacts to occupied burrowing owl burrows would be considered significant under CEQA. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would reduce

potential impacts to less than significant level to burrowing owls. Non-native grasslands, buildings, and bare ground in the project site could be used by migratory birds as nesting habitat. Therefore, Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would be required to avoid or reduce the project's potentially significant impacts to special-status avian wildlife. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2, the project would not have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number, or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal.

In Section 5, *Cultural Resources,* Rincon conducted a survey of the project site and did not identify any archeological resources. A Sacred Lands File search was also conducted and did not identify any cultural resources. Upon the completion of the survey and consultation with the NAHC, NRHP, and CRHR, it was determined no historical resources would directly be impacted by the project. In the event of evidence being found of any prehistoric or historic-era subsurface archaeological features, deposits or tribal cultural resources are discovered, the project would implement Mitigation Measure CUL-1. Therefore, it is unlikely that the project would eliminate important examples of major periods of California history or prehistory.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

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

As described in the discussion of environmental checklist Sections 1 through 20, with respect to all environmental issues, the proposed project would not result in significant and unmitigable impacts to the environment. All anticipated impacts associated with project construction and operation would be either less than significant or less than significant with mitigation incorporated. This is largely due to the fact project construction activities would be temporary and project operation would result in minimal changes to the environmental baseline condition.

Cumulatively considerable impacts could occur if the construction of other projects occurs at the same time as the proposed project and in the same vicinity, such that the effects of similar impacts of multiple projects combine to expose adjacent sensitive receptors to greater levels of impact than would occur under the proposed project. For example, if the construction of other projects in the area occurs at the same time as construction of the proposed project, potential impacts associated with noise and traffic to residents in the project area may be more substantial. There are no other planned or pending projects within the immediate vicinity of the project site that could combine with the project to result in cumulative construction-related impacts.

The project is intended to serve the existing student population of CUHSD and not increase capacity. Therefore, the project would not contribute to cumulative impacts related to direct or indirect population growth, such as impacts to public services, recreation, and population and housing. Impacts related to cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, mineral resources, and tribal cultural resources are inherently restricted to the project site and would not contribute to cumulative impacts associated with existing and future development in Chowchilla or Madera County. In addition, air quality and GHG impacts are cumulative by nature, and as discussed in Section 3, *Air Quality*, and Section 8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, the project would not generate air pollutant emissions in excess of SJVAPCD thresholds or GHG emissions that would exceed the SJVAPCD-recommended threshold. Therefore, the project

would not contribute to the existing significant cumulative air quality impacts related to the Basin's nonattainment status for ozone, $PM_{10,}$ and $PM_{2.5,}$ or the existing significant cumulative climate change impact. Furthermore, project impacts to resources such as aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, biological resources, hydrology and water quality, noise, transportation, and utilities and service systems are less then significant and therefore not have the potential to constitute a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative impacts that may occur due to existing and future development in the region. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant impact.

NO IMPACT

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

With the mitigation measures implemented for construction, the project itself, once operational, would not have an adverse environmental impact. The foreseeable environmental impacts from the construction and operation of the project would not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

NO IMPACT

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Appendix AQ

Air Quality Report

Appendix CUL

Cultural Resources Assessment

Appendix ESA

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment

Appendix NOI

Supporting Noise Information