

Project Title:	Calhoun and Avenue 43 Specific Plan
Case No.	DR 22-1-514, SP 22-11-38 and EA 22-11-566
Assessor's Parcel No.	692-060-023, 692-060-006, 692-060-007, and 692-060-008
Lead Agency Name and Address:	City of Indio 100 Civic Center Mall Indio, CA 92201
Project Location:	East side of I-10, west of Golf Center Parkway, and south of Avenue 43
Project Sponsor's Name and Address:	CRERMG CALHOUN 29, LLC c/o McRae Gomez Companies 8800 N. Gainy Center Drive, Suite 255 Scottsdale, AZ 85258
General Plan Designation(s):	Connected Neighborhood (CN)
Zoning:	Connected Neighborhood (CN-14 and CN-20)
Contact Person:	Kevin Snyder, Community Development Director
Phone Number:	(760) 541-4255
Date Prepared	October 18, 2022

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION..... 4

CHAPTER 2: ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND DETERMINATION 11

I. AESTHETICS..... 14

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES 18

III. AIR QUALITY 22

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES 29

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES 33

VI. ENERGY 37

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS..... 39

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS 44

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS..... 47

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY 51

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING 56

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES 58

XIII. NOISE 59

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING 63

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES..... 65

XVI. RECREATION 68

XVII. TRANSPORTATION 70

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES 76

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS 78

XX. WILDFIRE..... 82

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE 84

LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 Vicinity Map 7

Exhibit 2 Project Location Map 8

Exhibit 3 Project Site Plan 9

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Development Standards 5

Table 2 Maximum Daily Construction-Related Emissions Summary (pounds per day)..... 24

Table 3 Maximum Daily Operations-Related Emissions Summary (pounds per day)..... 26

Table 4 Localized Significance Thresholds Emissions (pounds per day) 27

Table 5 Projected GHG Emissions Summary..... 45

Table 6 Water Demand at the Project Buildout 54

Table 7 Project Student Generation 67

Table 8 Existing (2022) Intersection Delay and Levels of Service 71

Table 9 Project Trip Generation Summary 71

Table 10 Intersection analysis – LOS for Calhoun St. / Avenue 4272
Table 11 Estimated Solid Waste Disposal at the Project Buildout.....81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Typical Elevations 15

APPENDICES

Appendix A Air Quality and GHG Modeling: CalEEMod Outputs..... 86
Appendix B Biological Resources Assessment and CVMSHCP Compliance Report 87
Appendix C Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report 88
Appendix D Paleontological Resources Assessment Report..... 89
Appendix E Noise Impact Analysis 90
Appendix F Focused Traffic Assessment and VMT Screening Analysis..... 91

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Project Location

The Calhoun and Avenue 43 Specific Plan project (referred to hereafter as the Project or SP) is located on the east side of I-10, west of Golf Center Parkway, and south of Avenue 43 in the City of Indio, California (Exhibits 1 and 2). The Project site is currently vacant, contains sparse vegetation and is surrounded by residential and commercial development. The site is approximately 60 acres and consists of Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 692-060-023, 692-060-006, -007, and -008. Project is in the south half of Section 13, Township 5 South Range 7 East, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian.

The Project site is designated as Connected Neighborhood (CN) on the City's General Plan land use map and is zoned Connected Neighborhood with maximum allowed densities ranging from 14 to 20 dwelling units per acre (CN-14 and CN-20)¹. The Connected Neighborhood designation is intended to provide "a range of intensities and housing choices within a walkable neighborhood setting with a short distance of goods and services that meet daily needs."

Project Description

The proposed Calhoun and Avenue 43 Specific Plan establishes the building and development standards within the SP boundaries (Project site). The SP proposes medium-density residential developments consisting of up to 1,200 dwelling units, which is an average density of 20 dwelling units per acre. The residential developments will be pedestrian friendly and include amenities such as community pools, gyms, clubhouses, and open space common areas. The Specific Plan will develop as a rental project, not a for-sale product.

The site is divided into two Planning Areas (PA), PA-1 and PA-2, as shown in Exhibit 3. Each Planning Area will develop as an independent, self-contained neighborhood with its own character and amenities. Development of PA-1 is phase 1, and development of PA-2 is phase 2. The PAs define each portion of the site with approximate acreage breakdowns to allow for flexible site planning while guiding the ultimate development of the property as a cohesive master planned project. PA-1 will contain a mix of single family and townhouse units and PA-2 will be more dense and include a mix of townhouse and traditional multi-family units, as described below.

Planning Area 1 – Phase 1

Planning Area 1 (PA-1) is approximately 29.1 acres and encompasses the eastern half of the Specific Plan area. Development of PA-1 includes half street improvements along the Calhoun Street and Avenue 43 frontages, including landscaping, curbs, gutters, and site access drives. PA 1 proposes 340 residential units consisting of 195 garden style multi-family units and 145 townhomes and detached single-family units. This Planning Area has been designed and a Design Review application is being processed concurrent with the Specific Plan. Development of PA-1 would occur immediately following Specific Plan approval.

¹ Indio's Proposed Zoning and Land Use Map.
<https://raimi.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=dd6ceffaca4e4ce5b26c0310197e94d8>

Planning Area 2 – Phase 2

Planning Area 2 (PA-2) is approximately 30.22 acres and encompasses the western portion of the Project site. Allowable land uses are limited to residential uses. PA-2 proposes up to 860 residential units. The final site plan and housing type will largely depend on future developers but will most likely consist of low-rise (3-stories or less) multi-family units. The site plan and unit mix for PA- 2 has not been developed. This Planning Area will be a second phase of development and will require a subsequent Design Review application.

Development and Design Standards

The SP includes development standards for building height, building setbacks, development density, landscaping, and parking. These standards prevail over City of Indio Municipal Code standards, with the Municipal Code standards remaining applicable for all other aspects of development within the Connected Neighborhood (CN) zoning district.

The following table summarizes the development standards for the Specific Plan areas.

Table 1 Development Standards			
Development Standard	Existing	Proposed	
	CN-20	PA-1	PA-2
Density	14-20 DU/AC	14-20 DU/AC (site average) ²	
Minimum Lot Size	1,800 SF	No Minimum/Not applicable	
Maximum Height (feet)	40'/3-stories	40'/3-stories	40'/3-stories
Building Setbacks (feet, minimum)	Min. 10'/Max. 25'		
Front Perimeter - Avenue 43	-	15'	15'
Side Perimeter - Calhoun	-	10'	10'
Rear Perimeter - I-10	-	15'	N/A
Rear Perimeter - Adjacent to Residential Subdivision	-	10'	10'
Building Separation	15'	10'	10'
Open Space (SF/unit)			
Private Space - Detached	Ground level units: Minimum 100 SF	100 SF	100 SF
Private Space - Attached	Upper level units: Minimum 60 SF	80 SF	80 SF
Common (per unit)	200 SF	200 SF	200 SF
Parking (minimum per unit) ¹			
1 bedroom	1.5	1.5	1.5
2 bedroom	2	2	2
3 or more bedrooms	2	2	2

1. Parking requirements for CN-20 based on “Parking and Loading: Section 3.03 of Unified Development Code.” Minor modifications made to address number of bedrooms instead of housing type.
2. Density transfers are permitted between Planning Area 1 and Planning Area 2, as long as there are 840 to 1,200 total units (14-20 DU/AC) within the Specific Plan boundary.

Utilities and Service Providers

The following agencies and companies will provide service to the Project site:

1. Sanitary Sewer: Valley Sanitary District (VSD)
2. Water: Indio Water Authority (IWA)
3. Electricity: Imperial Irrigation District (IID)
4. Gas: Southern California Gas Company
5. Telephone: Frontier Communications
6. Trash disposal: Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services

Surrounding Land Uses:

North: Avenue 43; Single family homes; Indio Towne Center (commercial development)

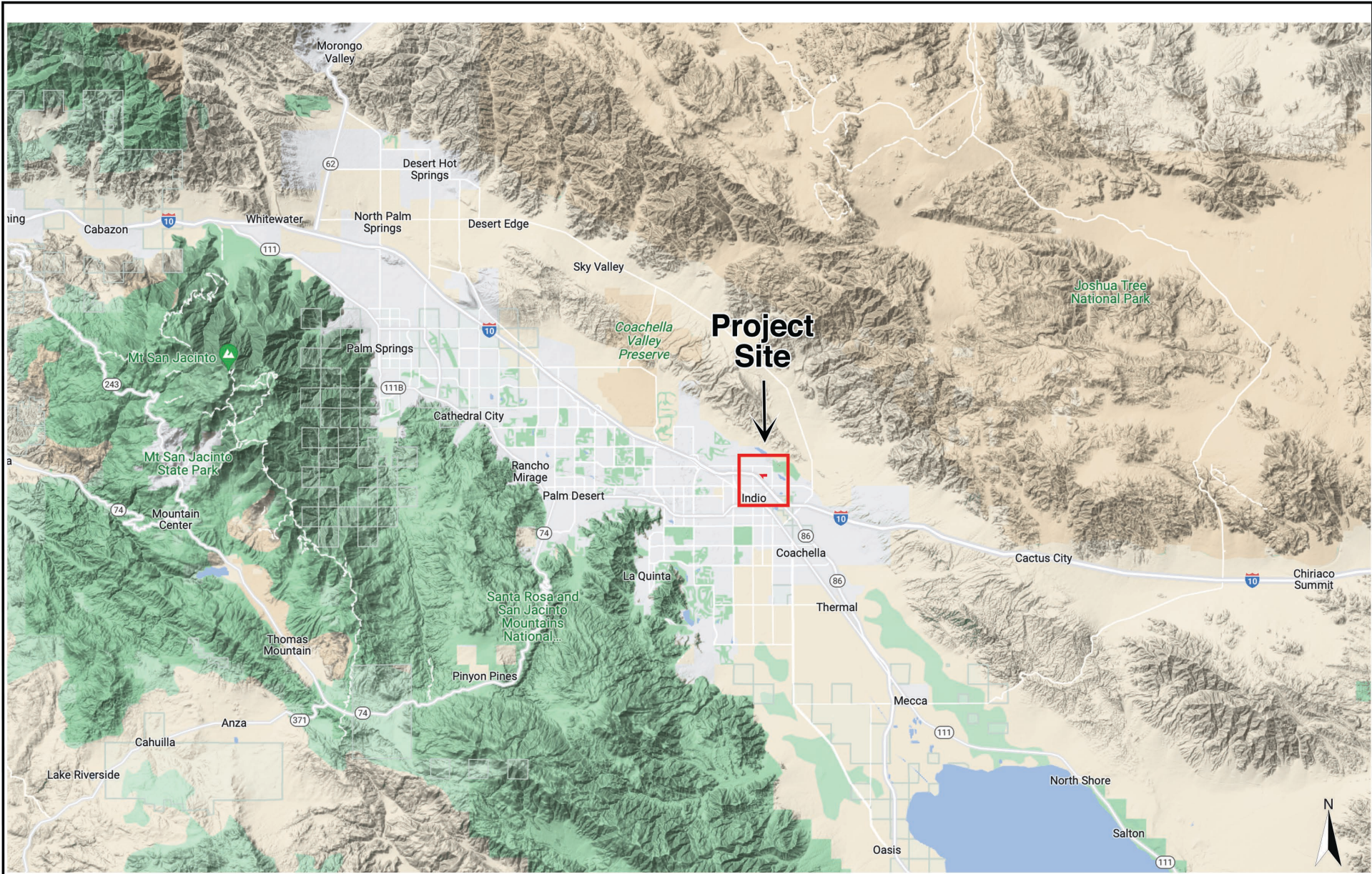
South: I-10; Single family homes

East: Single family homes

West: I-10

Other public agencies whose approval is required.

None.



Source: Google Maps, 2022

10.21.22



**Calhoun and Avenue 43 Specific Plan Initial Study
Vicinity Map
Indio, California**

Exhibit

1



Source: Google Earth, 2022

10.21.22



Planning Area 2

MULTI-FAMILY
30.22 ACRES
860 UNITS

Planning Area 1

SFFR - INDIO

TOTAL BUILDING AREA: +/- 391,758 S.F.
 SITE AREA: +/- 1,267,596 S.F. (29.1 ACRES)
 CURRENT ZONING: RL (RESIDENTIAL LOW)
 LOT COVERAGE: 26.9%, F.A.R.: 0.31
 LOT COVERAGE ALLOWED: 50%

340 UNITS TOTAL
 DENSITY: 11.68 DU/ACRE

PRELIMINARY UNIT MIX SCHEDULE:

GARDEN STYLE MULTI-FAMILY: 195 UNITS TOTAL
 1-BEDROOM: 52 UNITS
 2-BEDROOM: 85 UNITS
 3-BEDROOM: 58 UNITS

TOWNHOME/ DETACHED SFFR: 145 UNITS TOTAL
 1-BEDROOM: 59 UNITS
 2-BEDROOM: 44 UNITS
 3-BEDROOM: 42 UNITS

577 PARKING SPACES REQUIRED
 705 PARKING SPACES PROVIDED
 2.10 SPACES PER UNIT

Source: Creation, 10.20.2022

10.21.22

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:

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

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

CHAPTER 2: ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND DETERMINATION

DETERMINATION: The City of Indio Planning Department finds

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project have been made 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 “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.



Manuel Rocha,
Assistant Planner
City of Indio

1/4/23

Date

PURPOSE OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study has been prepared consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15063, to determine if the Project, as proposed, may have a significant effect upon the environment. Based upon the findings contained within this report, the Initial Study will be used in support of the preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to Projects like the one involved (e.g., the Project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on Project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the Project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a Project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as Project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from “Earlier Analyses,” as described in (5) below, may be cross referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures, which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the Project.

- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a Project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impacts to less than significance.

I. 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 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 which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			✓	

Sources: Riverside County General Plan policy C19.1; California Scenic Highway Program SB1463; City of Indio Public Works Engineering Standards.

Environmental Setting

The City of Indio, including the Project site, is located in the Coachella Valley which is a 45-mile-long desert valley in Riverside County, southeast from the San Bernardino Mountains to the northern shore of the Salton Sea. The Project occurs in an urban environment in the northeastern portion of the city. The area surrounding the site currently includes single family homes, an interstate freeway, and a regional shopping center.

The Indio Hills, Little San Bernardino, San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountain ranges, provide scenic views throughout the City. The Indio Hills and Little San Bernardino Mountains are located to the northeast of the City. The San Jacinto range is located to the west and northwest of the city, and the Santa Rosas occur to the south and southwest of the City. There are no state-designated scenic highways in the City of Indio. However, Interstate-10 (I-10) and Dillon Road are identified by the Riverside County General Plan as County-eligible scenic highways.

The Project site is currently vacant and undeveloped. Development of the Project site will result in the construction of up to 1,200 multi-family residential units including a mix of single- and multi-family units (See Figure 1 Typical Elevations). The SP allows building heights of up to 40 feet or 3-stories.

Figure 1
Typical Elevations



Discussion of Impacts

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project site is located in an urbanized area of Indio that supports a mix of development, including residential and commercial land uses. The Project proposes multi-family residential uses with a maximum building height of 40 feet or 3 stories.

The lands immediately to the north, east, and south of the site are currently developed as residential uses, and consist primarily of single- story buildings, as well as some two-story buildings. The lands immediately to the northwest of the Project site are currently developed as commercial uses. The I-10 freeway runs adjacent to the west/southwest boundary of the site.

The Project site is located approximately 6 miles northeast of the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills, 1.5 miles south of the Indio Hills, and 4.4 miles southwest of the Little San Bernardino Mountains. Scenic views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains and Indio Hills are to the north and east of the Project site, and views of the Santa Rosa Mountains are to the south and southwest. Currently lower elevations of the mountain ranges are partially blocked in all directions by intervening development.

All buildings proposed within PA-1 will be a maximum of 22 feet in height, which is consistent with surrounding structures. However, the SP allows developed of up to 40 feet, meaning development in PA-2 has the potential to be taller than the surrounding structures and would block southern and western views from viewers located north and east of the site, respectively.

Currently, the residences to the north of the site have limited, distant views of the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south. The proposed Project would obstruct these views to the south; however, the taller structures would be limited to PA-2 and SP requires a 15-foot setback from Avenue 43, which would help alleviate these impacts. Existing homes to the east and south would have views obstructed to the west and north; but would still view the Indio Hills and Little San Bernardino mountains to the northeast, and the Santa Rosa mountains to the south, as they currently do. The nearest resident west of the site is located approximately 750 feet away and separated by the I-10 freeway and Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel. Due to distance from the Project site, residents/viewers from the west/southwest would not experience a significant change in northeasterly views. The upper elevations of the Indio Hills and Little San Bernardino mountains would be visible above buildings within the Project site.

The mountains are located sufficiently far enough away from the Project site that views of much of the mid- and upper elevations would be preserved. With the construction of the proposed Project, views of the foothills will be reduced in some directions but not eliminated. Overall, impacts will be less than significant.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed site is not located along a state scenic highway and does not contain any scenic resources, including trees, rock outcroppings or historic buildings. No impact to these resources will occur.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The subject property is currently vacant. The ultimate development of the site will result in the construction of single- and multi-family residential buildings of up to 3 stories and include residential amenities such as clubhouses, pools/spas, and open spaces. The proposed Project includes landscaping and high-quality mid-century-inspired design to minimize any visual degradation of the site. The SP includes development standards and guidelines that require building articulation, quality construction, and a coordinated architectural style. The Project will be developed consistent with existing City zoning standards, and will not conflict with these standards, and therefore, impacts associated with visual character are expected to be less than significant.

- d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project is located in an urban environment that includes existing sources of light and glare associated with nearby residential and commercial land uses. Nearby sources of light include exterior lighting on commercial and residential buildings, street lighting on Avenue 43 and surrounding residential streets, and passing vehicle headlights. Currently, there are no existing sources of light on the Project site.

During the construction phase, there would be no need to add security lighting for construction areas or construction staging areas, because nighttime construction is not anticipated. Therefore, impacts related to new sources of light and glare during construction would be less than significant.

The eventual development of single and multi-family residential buildings on the site can be expected to generate increased levels of light and glare from interior and exterior building lighting, safety and security lighting, landscape lighting, and vehicles accessing the site during the day and nighttime. The Project will not, however, require the use of high intensity outdoor lighting. Glare can also be expected from building windows during the day and nighttime. However, lighting and glare levels are not expected to exceed typical levels within the surrounding urban environment. The Project will be designed in accordance with the City's standards and will properly shield light fixtures to minimize spillage onto adjacent properties. The City's Code of Ordinances Design Standards will be incorporated to assure that the Proposed Project's light and glare impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Non required.

Monitoring: Non required.

<p>II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES</p>				
<p>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.</p>	<p>Potentially Significant Impact</p>	<p>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?</p>			<p>✓</p>	
<p>b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?</p>			<p>✓</p>	
<p>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))?</p>			<p>✓</p>	
<p>d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?</p>			<p>✓</p>	

<p>II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES</p>				
<p>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.</p>	<p>Potentially Significant Impact</p>	<p>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>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?</p>			<p>✓</p>	

Sources: Draft EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Finder; Riverside County – Map My County; Cultural Resources Assessment prepared for the Project by CRM TECH (August 2022); City of Indio Zoning Designations Map (revised June 2009).

Environmental Setting

The City of Indio historically played an important role in agricultural production in the eastern Coachella Valley. Agricultural activities have, however, decreased over time. Areas of limited agricultural activity still occur, primarily in the southern and eastern parts of the city, including 3,327 acres of State-designated Prime or Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance.² However, more than half of that land (1,729.7 acres) is not in agriculture, and has been disturbed or development.

The City’s General Plan does not include Forestry or Forest Production designations, nor does the city have zones for these uses. The city occurs on the Coachella Valley floor, and no forestry or forest production lands occur in the desert climate.

² Draft EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update (March 2019), Table 4.2-1

Discussion of Impacts

a-c) Less Than Significant Impact.

Conversion of farmland: A portion of the Project site is designated as Farmland of Local Importance based on maps prepared by the California Resources Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.³ The City’s General Plan EIR analyzed important farmlands, and field-verified the lands identified by the State as Prime, Unique, or Locally Important for their actual land use.⁴ This analysis found that PA-1 is currently fallow, while PA-2 is not in agriculture.⁵

According to aerial images of the site, the Project area was entirely under agricultural cultivation in 1953, but fields in the southern portion of the site went fallow at some point before 1972.⁶ Farming operations in the Project area continued through 1996 to 2005, at which point the eastern portion of the site was cleared and graded for a residential development that ultimately never came to fruition. The site has since been mostly vacant and has been designated for residential development since at least 2009.⁷

The loss of 59.32 acres of Locally Important Farmland represents a 1.78% loss in totally agricultural land in the city. This does not represent a significant loss in agricultural land, and impacts will be less than significant.

None of the parcels adjacent to the Project site are designated as Farmland of Local Importance, and thus the proposed development will have no additional impacts on farmlands.

Williamson Act: The Project site is not under Williamson Act contract.⁸ The SP area is zoned for residential development, and has been for many years. The Project will not conflict with zoning for agricultural uses or a Williamson Act contract. No impact is anticipated.

d, e) Less Than Significant Impact.

Forest Land: The City of Indio does not contain any forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned for Timberland production. Thus, the proposed Project will not result in the loss or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.⁹

As discussed above, the Project site has not been in agricultural production since 2005. While a portion of the site is designated as Farmland of Local Importance, the proposed Project would not cause impact to agricultural resources beyond what is accounted for in the City of Indio

³ California Important Farmland Finder, California Department of Conservation. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>

⁴ Draft EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update (March 2019), Figure 4.2-1

⁵ Ibid, Figure 4.2-2

⁶ Cultural Resources Assessment prepared for the Project by CRM TECH, August 2022.

⁷ City of Indio Zoning Designations Map (revised June 2009).

⁸ Riverside County – Map My County v10. https://gis1.countyofriverside.us/Html5Viewer/?viewer=MMC_Public

⁹ Draft EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update (March 2019) – Page 7-1.

General Plan Update EIR. Impacts related to the conversion of forest and agricultural land will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

III. AIR QUALITY				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?			✓	

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Draft 2022 South Coast AQMP; CalEEMod model, version 2020.4.0; United States Environmental Protection Agency Nonattainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants; Travel Assessment prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc; SCAQMD Guidance Document, Chapter 2 Air Quality Issues Regarding Land Use.

Environmental Setting

The City of Indio, including the Project site, is located within the Riverside County portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB). Ozone and particulates are the two primary pollutants of concern to human health in the SSAB. The Coachella Valley, including Indio, has historically had elevated particulate matter (PM) levels, related to fugitive dust caused by construction activities combined with the valley’s wind.¹⁰ Health risks associated with PM and ozone pollution include respiratory issues such as coughing, wheezing, asthma and even high blood pressure. Ambient air quality in the SSAB, including the proposed Project site, does not exceed state or federal standards for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxides, sulfur dioxide, lead, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, or Vinyl Chloride.

The SSAB is under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), the local agency responsible for air quality assessment and improvement in the Coachella Valley and one of 35 air quality regulatory agencies in the State of California. All development within the SSAB is subject to SCAQMD’s 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (2016 AQMP)¹¹ as well as the 2003 Coachella Valley PM State Implementation Plan (2003 CV PM10 SIP).

The SCAQMD operates and maintains regional air quality monitoring stations at numerous locations throughout its jurisdiction. The Project site is location within Source Receptor Area (SRA) 30, (Coachella Valley) which includes monitoring stations in Palm Springs, Indio and Mecca.

¹⁰ City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, 6-11.

¹¹ A draft of the 2022 AQMP is available and currently undergoing public comment. <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/air-quality/clean-air-plans/air-quality-mgt-plan>

Criteria air contaminants (CACs) are pollutants for which state and federal air quality standards (i.e. California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)) have been established. The SSAB exceeds state and federal standards for fugitive dust (designated serious nonattainment for PM₁₀) and ozone (designated extreme nonattainment for O₃).¹² In order to achieve attainment in the region, the 2003 Coachella Valley PM₁₀ Management Plan was adopted, which established strict standards for dust management for development proposals.

The air quality emissions to be generated by the proposed Project, discussed below, were projected using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2020.4.0 (Appendix A).

Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** Under CEQA, air quality impacts could be considered significant if the project does not comply with the applicable Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) or would obstruct the implementation of the policies or goals of the plan. The Project site is located within the SSAB and is subject to the 2016 South Coast Air Quality Management Plan (2016 AQMP) as well as the 2003 Coachella Valley PM State Implementation Plan (2003 CV PM₁₀ SIP).

The 2016 AQMP is a comprehensive plan establishing guidelines and strategies for reducing air pollutants in order to meet national air quality standards. As “extreme” and “severe” nonattainment areas¹³ (for the South Coast and Coachella Valley, respectively), the 2016 AQMP focuses on efforts to ensure the South Coast and Coachella Valley basins attain the 2015 8-hour ozone standard of 70 parts per billion.

The AQMP is based, in part, on the land use plans of the jurisdictions in the region. According to the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, the Project site is designated as Connected Neighborhood (CN) with a density of up to 20 DU/AC. This designation permits a mix of single and multi-family residential development. The Project proposes a single- and multi-family development of 20 DU/AC, is consistent with the CN designation, and therefore compliant with the land use assumptions in the 2016 AQMP.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District works directly with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), among other local, state, and federal government agencies. SCAG adopted the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2020 RTP/SCS) to comply with the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) requirements under the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act. The Growth Management chapter of the RTP/SCS forms the basis of land use and transportation controls of the AQMP. Projects that are consistent with the projections of population forecasts are considered consistent with the AQMP. The proposed Project would be implemented in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations contained in those plans in an effort to meet the applicable air quality standards, because the single- and multi-family residential land use was included in the SCAG analysis.

¹² United States Environmental Protection Agency Nonattainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants (Green Book).

¹³ Designated areas that do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standard According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The proposed Project does not conflict or obstruct the implementation of the SCAQMP, the applicable air quality management plan, because it is consistent with the City’s General Plan Update, which was accounted for in the development of the air quality management plan. No impacts are anticipated.

- b) Less Than Significant Impact.** A project is considered to have significant impacts if there is a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. The SSAB is a nonattainment area for PM₁₀ and Ozone.

The air quality emissions to be generated by the proposed Project were projected using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2020.4.0 (Appendix A). The proposed Project will release criteria air contaminants during the construction and operation phases, as shown in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

Construction Emissions:

The Project will be developed in phases with PA-1 being constructed first. For analysis purposes, however, it is assumed that construction of the entire Project, including both phases, would occur over a five-year period from 2023 to 2027. This approach provides a conservative projection of maximum daily emissions with the potential for multiple project components to be under construction at one time. Construction-related criteria pollutant emissions will be temporary and will end once construction is complete.

Project would result in approximately 60-acres of disturbance and up to 1,200 single-and multi-family residences. A preliminary grading plan has not yet been prepared for the entire site; however, given the relatively flat nature of the site it was assumed that soil materials would balance on-site. The construction period includes site preparation, grading, paving, building construction, and application of architectural coatings.

Table 2						
Maximum Daily Construction-Related Emissions Summary (pounds per day)						
Construction Emissions¹	CO	NO_x	ROG	SO₂	PM₁₀	PM_{2.5}
Daily Maximum	59.7968	34.5612	24.5117	0.1316	10.2630	5.7515
SCAQMD Thresholds	550.00	100.00	75.00	150.00	150.00	55.00
Exceeds?	No	No	No	No	No	No
Source: CalEEMod model, version 2020.4.0						
¹ Average of winter and summer emissions. Standard dust control measures have been applied to the PM emissions.						

Emissions generated by construction activities will not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for any criteria pollutants during construction, as shown in Table 2. The data shown in the table represents daily unmitigated emissions over the 5-year construction period, including summer and winter conditions, assuming standard dust control measures have been applied to the

particulate matter emissions. Applicable best management practices, such as proper maintenance and limited idling of heavy equipment, phased application of architectural coatings, and the use of low-polluting architectural paint and coatings per SCAQMD Rule 1113. In addition, per SCAQMD Rule 403 (403.1 specific to the Coachella Valley), a Dust Control Plan must be prepared and implemented by all contractors during all construction activities, including ground disturbance, grubbing, grading, and materials import and export to further reduce criteria pollutants. The Plan may include but is not limited to the following best management practices:

- Treated and stabilized soil where activity will cease for at least four consecutive days;
- All construction grading operations and earth moving operations shall cease when winds exceed 25 miles per hour;
- Water site and equipment morning and evening and during all earth-moving operations;
- Operate street-sweepers on impacted paved roads adjacent to site;
- Establish and strictly enforce limits of grading for each phase of construction;
- Wash off trucks as they leave the project site to control fugitive dust emissions
- Cover all transported loads of soils, wet materials prior to transport, provide freeboard (space from the top of the material to the top of the truck) to reduce PM10 and deposition of particulate matter during transportation
- Use track-out reduction measures such as gravel pads at project access points to minimize dust and mud deposits on roads affected by construction traffic.

Given that the air quality management district's thresholds for criteria pollutants will not be exceeded, and standard best management practices will be applied during construction, impacts will be less than significant.

Operational Emissions:

Over the life of a project, ongoing emissions will occur – these are referred to as operational emissions. They include areas source emissions, emissions from energy demand (electricity), and mobile source (vehicle) emissions.

The proposed Project will generate approximately 8,088 daily trips.¹⁴ Projected emissions of the Project during its operation at build out, as shown in Table 3, indicate that operational emissions will not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds of significant for any criteria pollutants. Impacts related to operational emissions are thus anticipated to be less than significant.

¹⁴ According to the Focused Traffic Assessment prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc. June 2022.

Table 3 Maximum Daily Operations-Related Emissions Summary (pounds per day)						
	CO	NO _x	ROG	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Operational Emissions¹	259.8210	36.6774	53.6848	0.4303	40.1715	12.1508
SCAQMD Thresholds	550.00	100.00	75.00	150.00	150.00	55.00
Exceeds?	No	No	No	No	No	No
Source: CalEEMod model, version 2020.4.0						
¹ Average of winter and summer emissions.						

Cumulative Contribution: Non-Attainment Criteria Pollutants

Given the dispersing nature of pollutant emissions and aggregate impacts from surrounding jurisdictions, cumulative air quality is evaluated on a regional scale. As previously discussed, the Coachella Valley portion of the SSAB is a nonattainment area for ozone and PM₁₀. Any development resulting in emissions of PM₁₀, ozone, or ozone precursors will contribute to some extent to the existing regional nonattainment designations.

While the SCAQMD does not currently provide thresholds of significance to assess the cumulative emissions of multiple projects, nor does it recommended the quantified analysis of multiple development projects, it is recommended that a project’s potential cumulative contributions be analyzed using the criteria for project-specific impacts. SCAQMD states that if an individual development generates less than significant construction or operational emissions, that it would not generate a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the region is in nonattainment.

PM₁₀, CO, NO_x, and ROG emissions related to the Project are projected to be below the SCAQMD thresholds, as shown in Tables 2 and 3. As discussed above, standard best management practices, including a Dust Control Plan will be implemented in accordance with SCAQMD Rule 403.1. The Project’s will contribute to incremental emissions, but the impacts will not be cumulatively considerable on regional PM₁₀ or ozone levels.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The nearest sensitive receptors to the proposed development are the residents of the single-family homes to the north, east, and south of the Project site. SCAQMD’s Mass Rate Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Look-Up Table was used to determine if the proposed Project has the potential to general significant adverse localized air quality impacts.

Based on the Project’s size and proximity to existing residential developments, the 5-acre site tables (largest site option in LST table) at a distance of 25 meters (nearest measurement option in LST table) were used for air quality analysis. Table 4 shows that on-site emissions concentrations for construction and operations will not exceed LST thresholds. Impacts will be less than significant.

Table 4 Localized Significance Thresholds Emissions (pounds per day)				
	CO	NOx	PM₁₀	PM_{2.5}
Construction				
Maximum Emissions	59.79	34.56	10.26	5.75
LST Threshold	2,292	304	14	8
Exceed?	No	No	No	No
Operation¹				
Area	103.24	11.32	1.37	1.37
LST Thresholds	2,292.00	304.00	14.00	2.00
Exceed?	No	No	No	No
Emissions Source: CalEEMod model, version 2020.4.0 LST Threshold Source: LST Mass Rate Look-up Table, SCAQMD. 1. Operational emissions that affect sensitive receptors are limited to on-site area emissions. Energy and mobile emissions occur off-site.				

Health Impacts

Tables 2 and 3 indicate that the construction and operational phases of the proposed Project will yield criteria emissions below the SCAQMD significance thresholds. It is not scientifically possible with today’s technologies to calculate the degree to which exposure to various levels of criteria pollutant emissions will impact the health of an individual. The effects of criteria pollutants are not experienced equally by everyone, the dispersing nature of pollutants makes the exact locations of impacts difficult to predict, and there are currently no approved methodologies or studies upon which to base assumptions. As such, the extent to which the proposed Project poses a health risk is uncertain but unavoidable. It is anticipated that impacts associated with criteria pollutants and related health effects will overall be less than significant.

- d) **Less Than Significant Impacts.** Some land uses can be sources of odors that, while not necessarily physically harmful, may be unpleasant and distressing to the public. The SCAQMD identifies land uses such as agriculture, chemical plants, composting operations, dairies, fiberglass molding, landfills, refineries, rendering plants, rail yards, and wastewater treatment plants, as more likely to generate odors.¹⁵ The Project proposes the development of residential land uses which may produce some odors from household activities, but are not likely to produce any objectionable odors long term. While some odors may be generated on-site during construction, their production will be short term and, even while ongoing, they are expected to disperse quickly with distance from the construction site.

At buildout, the Project’s residential units will generate typical odors, such as from cooking or other household activities, but the odors generated will not be objectionable. Impacts from objectionable odors are thus anticipated to be less than significant.

¹⁵ SCAQMD Guidance Document, Chapter 2 Air Quality Issues Regarding Land Use, p.2-2.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the Project:	Potential ly Significa nt Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporate d	Less Than Significa nt Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game 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, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US 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?				✓

Sources: Biological Resources Assessment & Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Compliance Report, prepared by Wood Environment & Infrastructure, Inc. for Terra Nova Planning and Research, Inc. June 24, 2022; City of Indio EIR for 2040 General Plan Update; Recirculated Final Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan; California Department of Fish and Game (2012) Staff report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation.

Environmental Setting

The Coachella Valley makes up the westernmost limits of the Sonoran Desert, within the greater Colorado Desert. The Sonoran Desert contains a wide variety of biological resources that are endemic to the region. The land in the City of Indio is comprised of urban areas, vegetation communities, and land covers such as active sand dunes. Most areas with native vegetation occur in portions of the City to the north of the I-10.¹⁶

¹⁶ City of Indio General Plan Update EIR (2022).

The Project site is vacant, consisting of mostly disturbed land with some vegetation. The southern half of the site consists of native vegetation, while the northern half has been routinely disturbed and consists of non-native weedy species.

The Coachella Valley Multiple Species Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) is a comprehensive regional plan that balances growth in the Coachella Valley with the requirements of federal and State endangered species laws. The entire Project site is within the boundaries of and subject to the provisions of the CVMSHCP,¹⁷ but is not located within or adjacent to a CVMSHCP Conservation Area. The East Indio Hills Conservation Area is located approximately 1 mile to the northeast of the Project site but will not be affected by the proposed development.¹⁸

The City of Indio's General Plan (2040), CVMSHCP, and a Biological Resources Assessment of the Project site (Appendix B) were referenced to analyze potential impacts to biological resources associated with the proposed development and are discussed below.

Discussion of Impacts

- a) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The site is currently vacant and consists of disturbed land. The native vegetation on-site can be classified as *Atriplex lentiformis* Shrubland Alliance (Quilbrush scrub), but the sparsity may prevent its function as a vegetation community. No special status plants or vegetation communities were identified on site.¹⁹

A biological resources assessment identified 34 special status biological resources which occur or potentially occur on the Project site. Of the 34 species, only 13 may occur on site. Of the 13 species, five are conserved under the CVMSHCP: burrowing owl, crissal thrasher, Le Contes' thrasher, western yellow bat, and Palm Springs pocket mouse. Any Project related impacts to western yellow bat and Palm Springs pocket mouse will be fully mitigated through payment of the CVMSHCP development/mitigation fee and participation in the CVMSHCP plan.²⁰

A biological field assessment of the site was conducted on April 22, 2022. Two special status species were observed on-site: the burrowing owl and Vaux's swift. The Vaux's swift was observed foraging, but only as a passing migrant, and there is no suitable nesting habitat present on-site. A single burrowing owl was observed on the Project site during the assessment and suitable burrows and habitat for the burrowing owl were observed on the southern portion of the Project site. For these reasons, burrowing owl is considered present on site.²¹ Ground disturbing activities and loud noise created by heavy equipment can cause burrowing owls both on-site or nearby to abandon nests and burrows. The burrowing owl is

¹⁷ Recirculated Final Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan; Figure 8-3

¹⁸ Biological Resources Assessment prepared by Wood Environment & Infrastructure Inc., p.6

¹⁹ Ibid, p.9

²⁰ Ibid, p.15

²¹ Ibid.

managed as a Bird of Concern (BCC) by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and designated as a Species of Concern (CSC) by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). It is also protected from take by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), California Fish and Game Code, and under the CVMSHCP. In order to mitigate significant impact, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 is provided below, which requires the avoidance and relocation of the owl before any ground distributing activities, as well as preconstruction burrowing owl surveys.

The property has the potential to provide nesting opportunities for birds covered under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). As the subject site is vacant, these species would reside seasonally within the subject site. Nesting activities would occur between February 1 to August 31 of any year. Under the provisions of the MBTA, impacts to covered nesting birds would be considered a significant impact. In order to assure that impacts to bird nests covered under the MBTA are reduced to less than significant levels, a pre-construction survey is required if any activity to remove vegetation is proposed during the nesting season, as provided in Mitigation Measure BIO-2, below. With implementation of this mitigation measure, impacts to birds covered by the MBTA will be less than significant.

- b, c) No Impact.** The Project site does not contain any streams, riparian habitat, marshes, protected wetlands, vernal pools or sensitive natural communities protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No Project related impacts will occur.
- d) No Impact.** The Project site is located in an urban area and surrounded by roadways, residential and commercial development. Due to surrounding human activity for many decades, the site does not contain features that are suitable for a migratory wildlife corridor. No impact is anticipated.
- e, f) No Impact.** The proposed Project will not conflict with and local policies or ordinances regarding the preservation of biological resources. It will comply with the City of Indio General Plan Policy CE-7.1, ensuring the development is consistent with federal, state, and regional regulations for habitat and species protection.²² The Project site is located within the CVMSHCP fee area but is not within a conservation area. The northeastern-most portion of the Project site is located approximately 1 mile southwest of the East Indio Hills Conservation Area, but it will not be impacted development of the Project.

The Project will not conflict with any policies or ordinances that protect biological species, or any habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans. Impacts are expected to be less than significant

²² City of Indio General Plan 2040 – Conservation, p. 8-18

Mitigation Measures:

- BIO-1** A pre-construction survey following CDFW 2012 guidelines²³ must be conducted. Unless avoidable, all burrowing owls must be relocated prior to any ground disturbing activities. If burrowing owls remain on-site, a Burrowing Owl Relocation and Management Plan must be prepared to outline how the owls will be relocated per CDFW guidelines. Any owls occurring on-site must be relocated prior to construction, vegetation removal, or grading activities. Relocation will, at a minimum, require prior approval from the CDFW.²⁴
- BIO-2** For any grubbing, grading or other site disturbance or tree or vegetation removal occurring during the nesting season between February 1st and August 31st, a qualified biologist shall conduct at least one nesting bird survey, and more if deemed necessary by the consulting biologist, immediately prior to initiation of project-related ground disturbing activities. If nesting birds are present, no work shall be permitted near the nest(s) until the young birds have fledged. While there is no established protocol for nest avoidance, when consulted, the CDFW generally recommends avoidance buffers of about 500 feet for birds-of-prey, and 100 – 300 feet for songbirds. If ground disturbance occurs outside the nesting season, this requirement shall be waived.

Monitoring:

- BIO-A** Prior to the issuance of any permit to allow ground disturbance on the site, the Project Proponent shall furnish the City with pre-construction surveys for burrowing owl and nesting birds.
Responsible Parties: Project applicant, Project biologist, Planning Department, City Engineer

²³ California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). 2012. Staff report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. CDFG, Sacramento, CA.

²⁴ Biological Resources Assessment prepared by Wood Environment & Infrastructure Inc., p.16.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?				✓

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update. City of Indio EIR for the 2040 General Plan Update. “Calhoun Specific Plan” Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report prepared by CRM TECH, August 2022; California Public Resources Code 5024.1.

Environmental Setting

According to section 15064.5(a)(3)(D) of the CEQA Guidelines, an archaeological resource is any resources that “has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history”. These resources documents evidence of past human endeavors, and may include tools, utensils, carvings, fabric, building foundations, etc.

In past centuries, Native American life in the region was greatly influenced by the inundation and subsequent desiccation of Holocene Lake Cahuilla, an ancient freshwater lake that repeatedly filled the Salton Basin over a period of approximately 2,300 years, until the 1730s. The former lakeshore provided a favorable setting for Native peoples due to the many natural resources offered by the lake, and thus today the former shore is a highly sensitive area for prehistoric archaeological remains. Sites located near the former lakebed during its high stands are generally considered to be of lower archaeological sensitivity.

Numerous prehistoric sites exist in the City of Indio, including habitation sites, temporary camps, lithic and ceramic scatters, quarries, and trails. The sites are most often identified on undeveloped properties or developed land subjected to minimal subsurface disturbance.

The City of Indio falls within the traditional Desert Cahuilla territory, which encompasses much of central southern California. The vicinity of the City is also home to three tribes: the Cabazon Tribal Lands, the Augustine Tribal Lands, and the Torres-Martinez Tribal Lands. Additionally, the Agua Caliente Tribal Lands are northwest of Indio.

Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines generally defines a historic resource as a resource that is: (1) listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register); (2) included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code); or (3) identified as significant in an historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in Section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code). A resource may be

listed in the California Register if it is (1) 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; (4) has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.²⁵

The City's history is linked to the development of the transcontinental railroad and the resulting growth of the local agricultural industry. Non-native settlement of the Coachella Valley began in the 1870s with the establishment of railroad stations. The development of underground water sources supported the dominance of agriculture in the valley, including the lucrative cultivation of date palms after their introduction around the turn of the century. Historic resources, including residential, institutional, commercial, recreational, and agricultural properties that reflect the local cultural heritage, occur in Indio. These resources are managed through the City’s Historic Resource List, established in 2008. The list currently includes 39 buildings eligible for historic designation as well as 19 properties requiring further evaluation.

The following discussion of impacts is based on the results of a Cultural Resources Study prepared by CRM TECH for the Project (Appendix C). The study included a historical/archaeological records search, historical background research, contacting pertinent Native American Representatives, and an intensive-level field study.

Discussion of Impacts

- a, b) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** The Project is located on the former lakebed of Holocene Lake Cahuilla during its last high stand prior to the 1730s. The site would have been submerged entirely by Lake Cahuilla prior to its final desiccation in the 18th century. This generally indicates a lower likelihood of encountering prehistoric resources than areas along the former lakeshore.

Nearly all the land surrounding the Project site has been surveyed for cultural resources prior to development in recent decades, and no significant resources have been found. Combined with the degree of ground disturbance, indicates likely low sensitivity of prehistoric cultural resources.

Eastern Information Center (EIC) Records Search

According to EIR records, all or portions of the Project area have been covered by at least nine cultural resources studies completed between 2004 and 2019. No cultural resources were recorded within the Project boundaries during these or any other past studies.

EIC records for a half-mile scope show 18 additional previously completed cultural studies. Six historical/archaeological sites and six isolates were identified during these studies. Identified prehistoric cultural resources consisted primarily of scattered ceramic, groundstone, and flaked-stone artifacts, with two also containing a hearth feature and a possible human

²⁵ California Public Resources Code 5024.1.

cremation. One of the isolates was found in 2002 on the property adjacent to the Project to the east. All other findings were located on the former lakeshore of Lake Cahuilla.

Native American Consultation

CRM TECH submitted a written request to the State of California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a Sacred Lands File records search, as well as requests for information about tribal cultural resources to the nearby Cabazon Band of Mission Indians and the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians.

The NAHC reported that no cultural resources were identified in the Sacred Lands File. CRM TECH met with a representative of the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians and provided the tribe with the results of the records search. The representative also participated in the field survey. No response was received from the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians.

In addition to the consultation undertaken by CRM Tech, the city is conducting Tribal Consultation, in conformance with the requirements of SB 18 and AB 52. This process, and the results of the process, are described in Section XVIII, Tribal Cultural Resources.

Historical Background Research

The first systemic land survey in the Coachella Valley, in the 1850s, notes a Native American Village located one mile southeast of the Project site. The survey found no human made features in the immediate Project vicinity. Records indicate a building and dirt road in the Project area in the 1940s, but they were not longer present by the 1950s. Aerial images indicate that the Project area was under agricultural cultivation in 1953, but that the southern portion of the site were fallow by 1972. Farming operations on the Project site continued through to the early years of the 21st century. The eastern portion of the site was graded in 2005/2006 for a residential project that never came to fruition. Since this activity, the entire Project site has remained undeveloped until the present time.

Field Survey

A field survey was conducted on May 26, 2022. No buildings, structures, objects, features or substantial prehistoric or historic artifacts were found during the field survey. There was no evidence of the building that existed on the property in the 1940s. Modern refuse was found scattered across the site, but there was no potential for any of the items to have historic significance.

Summary

Neither the EIC records search, Native American consultant, historical background research, or field survey found any evidence of historical resources on the Project site. The location of the Project also indicated a low sensitivity for significant prehistorical archeological deposits.

Nonetheless, to protect the potential archaeological resources under the site and reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels, Mitigation Measure CUL-1 is included at the end of this section, consistent with the findings of the cultural resource investigation. With the implementation of this mitigation measure, potential impacts associated with archaeological resources will be reduced to less than significant levels.

- c) **No Impact.** Research by CRM TECH did not indicate evidence of any cemeteries or human remains occurring on the Project site. Should human remains be uncovered during grading, California Health and Safety Code §7050.5 requires that all activity stop, that the coroner be notified and determine the nature of the remains, and whether Native American consultation will be required. The legal requirement ensures that the Project will have no impact to cemeteries or human remains.

Mitigation Measures:

- CUL-1 If buried cultural materials are discovered inadvertently during any earth-moving operations associated with the project, all work within 50 feet of the discovery should be halted or diverted until a qualified archaeologist and/or tribal monitor can evaluate the nature and significance of the finds.

Monitoring:

- CUL-A Within 30 days of the completion of ground disturbing activities on the project site, a report of findings shall be filed with the City. The report will summarize the methods and results of the monitoring program, including an itemized inventory and a detailed analysis of recovered artifacts, upon completion of the field and laboratory work. The report should include an interpretation of the cultural activities represented by the artifacts and a discussion of the significance of all archaeological finds.
Responsible Parties: Project applicant, project archaeologist, Tribal monitor (as necessary), Planning Department, City Engineer.

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

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update. SoCalGas Company Profile; Imperial Irrigation District – Renewable Energy; SoCalGas Aspire 2045 – Sustainability Strategy.

Environmental Setting

Nuclear energy, fossil fuels (oil, coal and natural gas) and renewable sources like wind, solar, geothermal and hydropower are various sources of energy. The electrical energy to the City is provided by Imperial Irrigation District (IID). Natural gas to the City is provided by the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas).²⁶

Discussion of Impacts

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project will consume energy both on a short-term basis during construction and on a long-term basis for operation. Grading and construction involve the consumption of energy as a result of operating heavy equipment, manufacturing materials, and transporting workers and materials. The primary fuel consumed for construction will be petroleum and diesel. The impact of the energy consumption will be less than significant due to the short-term nature of construction. The consumption of petroleum and diesel will not be wasteful or inefficient.

Operational energy demand primarily comes from electricity and natural gas consumption for household activities, on-site lighting, and HVAC systems. Development of the proposed Project will be required to comply with the most current Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards (Energy Code) and Green Building Standards (CalGreen). These standards ensure that the most efficient construction and building technologies are used in order to maximize energy efficiency. Overall, impacts will be less than significant.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** IID is committed to promoting renewable energy generation for its own operations and throughout the community. To date (2022), IID has met or exceeded all Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirements, procuring renewable energy from

²⁶ SoCalGas, Company Profile, <https://www.socalgas.com/about-us/company-profile>, Accessed May 2021.

diverse sources, including biomass, biowaste, geothermal, hydroelectric, solar and wind.²⁷ By 2030, IID aims to source 50 percent of its retail electricity from renewable sources. SoCalGas is also committed to energy and climate sustainability and investing in a diverse portfolio of technologies and applications to decarbonize, including the use of cleaner fuels like renewable natural gas. SoCalGas aspires to achieve net zero GHG emissions in both operations and delivery of energy by 2045.²⁸

The City's Climate Action Plan also promotes local generation of renewable energy. The Project will comply with the solar and zero net energy requirements in the adopted 2019 California Building Code and will not interfere with any state or local plan that promotes renewable energy or energy efficiency. Adherence to the applicable state standards enforced by IID and SoCalGas will ensure the development is consistent with current energy standards and conservation goals laid out in the City's Climate Action Plan. Therefore, impacts related to energy will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

²⁷ Imperial Irrigation District Renewable Energy, <https://www.iid.com/energy/renewable-energy>, (retrieved 7/19/2022).

²⁸ SoCalGas Aspire 2045 – SoCalGas Sustainability Strategy, https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/2022-02/SoCalGas_Sustainability_Strategy_final.pdf, (retrieved 7/19/2022).

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				✓
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			✓	
iii) Seismic related ground failure, including liquefaction?				✓
iv) 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 waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				✓
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		✓		

Sources: City of Indio General Plan; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Biological Resources Assessment & Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Compliance Report, prepared by Wood Environment & Infrastructure, Inc. (2022); Indio Municipal Code 156.035 - Standards for Design and Improvement; Department of Water Resources Groundwater Information System, Groundwater Depth Map; Calhoun Specific Plan Paleontological Resource Assessment Report, prepared by CRM TECH, August 25, 2022.

Environmental Setting

The City of Indio is situated in the Coachella Valley, which lies in the northwestern portion of the Colorado Desert geomorphic region. The Colorado Desert is bound by the Peninsular Ranges on the southwest, the eastern Transverse Ranges to the north, and the southern portion of the Mojave Desert on the northeast.

Geology

The Project site is located within the Colorado Desert Physiographic Province (also referred to as the Salton Trough) that is characterized as a northwest-southeast trending structural depression extending from the Gulf of California to the Banning Pass. Historically, the Salton Trough was the site of Holocene Lake Cahuilla. The Trough is an internally draining area with no readily available outlet to the Gulf of California and with portions well below sea level (-253' msl). The region is intermittently blocked from the Gulf of California by the damming effects of the Colorado River delta (current elevation +30' msl). Between about 300 AD and 1600 AD (to 1700) the Salton Trough has been inundated by the River's water, forming ancient Lake Cahuilla (max. elevation +58' msl). Since that time the floor of the Trough has been repeatedly flooded with other "fresh" water lakes (1849, 1861, and 1891), the most recent and historically long lived being the current Salton Sea (1905). The sole outlet for these waters is evaporation, leaving behind vast amounts of terrestrial sediment materials and evaporite minerals. The surface of the Salton Trough is composed of alluvial, lakebed, and aeolian deposits.²⁹ The Salton Sea is located southeast of the valley.

The geology and seismicity of the Coachella Valley are primarily influenced by the tectonics of the San Andreas and San Jacinto fault systems. The San Andreas Fault is a continental transform fault that extends roughly 750 miles through California. It forms the tectonic boundary between the Pacific Plate and the North American Plate, and its motion is right-lateral strike-slip (horizontal). The San Jacinto Fault Zone (SJFZ) is a major strike-slip fault zone that runs through San Bernardino, Riverside, San Diego, and Imperial Counties in Southern California. The SJFZ is a component of the larger San Andreas transform system and is considered the most seismically active fault zone in the area.

Soils

Episodic flooding of major regional drainages, including the Whitewater River, results in the deposition of sand and gravel on the valley floor. Strong sustained winds emanating from the San Gorgonio Pass cause wind erosion and transport and deposit dry, finely granulated, sandy soils on the central valley floor. Regional soils range from rocky outcrops within the mountains bordering the valley to coarse gravels of mountain canyons and recently laid fine- and medium-grained alluvial (stream deposited) and aeolian (wind deposited) sediments on the central valley floor.

Several different soil types have been identified in the City of Indio area, including most predominantly Gilman fine sandy loam (0 to 2 percent slopes), Indio very fine sandy loam, and Myoma fine sand (0 to 5 percent slopes).³⁰ Gilman fine sandy loam and Indio very fine sandy loam are found on the Project site. Both soils are very deep and well drained,³¹ and generally do not pose expansive soil risks.

²⁹ City of Indio General Plan Update EIR, p.4.6-1

³⁰ City of Indio General Plan Update EIR, p.4.6-3

³¹ Biological Resources Assessment & Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Compliance Report, prepared by Wood Environment & Infrastructure, Inc. (2022).

Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources are the fossilized remains of prehistoric animals and plants. Fossils are usually buried resources, and often cannot be identified on the surface.

During the Holocene era, the Salton Trough contained Lake Cahuilla, a large, freshwater lake. Paleontological resources, including shells, fish bones and teeth, and invertebrate fossils, have been identified in Pliocene age alluvium.³² The majority of the City, including the location of the Project site, is in a high sensitivity area for paleontological resources, due to the presence of ancient Lake Cahuilla. The lakeshore and lakebed have yielded resources associated with the repeated stands of the ancient lake.

A Paleontological Resources Assessment Report was prepared for the Project (see Appendix D).

Discussion of Impacts

- a, i) No Impact.** The Project site is not located within or adjacent to any fault or included in any Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The nearest earthquake fault is the San Andreas Fault (Coachella Section) which is located approximately 1.5 miles northwest of the site. This fault can generate earthquakes of magnitude 7.2. Fault rupture is not expected on the Project site because it does not occur in a Fault Zone. No impact is anticipated.
- a, ii) Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project site is located in a seismically active region where earthquakes originating on local and regional faults can produce severe ground shaking. Buildings proposed for the site will be required to be constructed in accordance with the most recent edition of the California Building Code (CBC) and Indio Municipal Code Section 156.035 to provide collapse-resistant design.³³ According to the CBC, Site Class D may be used to estimate design seismic loading for the proposed structures. As a result of these standards, Project-related impacts associated with seismic ground shaking will be less than significant.
- a, iii) Less than significant impact.** Liquefaction occurs when 3 conditions exist: liquefaction-susceptible soils; groundwater within 50 feet or less below ground surface; and strong seismic shaking. The Project site is located in an area with a moderate liquefaction susceptibility.³⁴ The depth of the groundwater in the area is greater than 50 feet below the ground surface, based on readings from the three wells nearest to the Project site.³⁵ which may reduce this region's susceptibility to liquefaction under severe ground shaking conditions.
- a, iv) No Impact.** The Project site is located in a relatively flat area on the Coachella Valley floor. The nearest hillsides slope of the Indio Hills are approximately 1.5 miles north of the subject property. According to the County of Riverside Risk Assessment map, due to the minimal slopes in the area, the City of Indio does not face low, moderate, high, or existing landslide susceptibility. No impacts associated are expected to occur.

³² City of Indio General Plan Update EIR, p. 4.5-17.

³³ Indio Municipal Code 156.035 - Standards for Design and Improvement.

³⁴ City of Indio General Plan Update EIR, p.4.6-4

³⁵ Department of Water Resources Groundwater Information System, Groundwater Depth for the following wells: IWA7 (74.8 feet, spring 2021), KW_025 (70 feet, fall 2021), and Terra Lago GC South Course (127.8 feet, spring 2021).

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Development of the Project site has the potential to result in the erosion of soils during site preparation, grading, and building construction. However, the applicant will be required to adhere to erosion control measures imposed by the City of Indio through grading and building permit regulations, including adherence to SCAQMD Rule 403.1, that requires a fugitive dust control plan. All grading activities would require grading permits from the Indio Public Works Department and would be required to comply with the standards imposed by the City to limit potential erosion impacts.

At buildout, there would be a low potential for soil erosion due to the predominantly level topography and the construction of buildings, impervious roads and stabilized landscaped areas. Impacts would be less than significant.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** Surface soils of the Project site consist of Gilman fine sandy loam and Indio very fine sandy loam, which are not considered unstable soils or geologic units. Also, the site is not highly susceptible to on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, liquefaction, or collapse due to the distance from mountainous slopes and foothills, and depth of the groundwater.
- d) **No Impact.** Expansive soils typically contain large amounts of clay that expand when water is absorbed and shrink when they dry. As described in Section C above, the site's underlying soils consist of fine and very fine sandy loam. These soils have a low shrink-swell potential. Therefore, no impact associated with expansive soils is expected to occur.
- e) **No Impact.** The Project site is vacant and located in an area served by existing sewage infrastructure. The Project's wastewater demand would be accommodated by connections to existing wastewater infrastructure provided by the Valley Sanitation District (VSD). As such, the Project would not require the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, the Project would have no impact related to the ability of soils to support septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.
- f) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** A paleontological resource assessment was prepared for the Project by CRM TECH, and included a records search, literature review, and systemic field survey (Appendix D). The paleontological resource assessment found that the Project has a low potential of impacting significant paleontological resources in the Holocene surface and near-surface sediments, but the potential is high in the Pleistocene-age deposits potentially present at unknown depths. Based on the presence of Pleistocene sediments at unknown depth, Riverside County categorizes the property at the highest category of paleontological sensitivity, High A. Given this potential sensitivity of the Project site, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 should be implemented requiring a paleontological resource impact mitigation program be developed to prevent significant impacts to nonrenewable paleontological resources or to reduce impacts to a level less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

GEO-1 A paleontological resource impact mitigation program shall be developed in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and the proposed guidelines of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (2010) and should include but not be limited to the following components:

- All earth-moving operations within the project area reaching beyond a depth of three feet below the current found surface must be monitored periodically for potential paleontological resources, with a full-time monitoring program implemented if potentially fossiliferous soils are encountered. The monitor should be prepared to quickly salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays and should collect samples of sediments that are likely to contain fossil remains of small vertebrates or invertebrates. However, the monitor must have the power to temporarily halt to divert grading equipment to allow for the removal of abundant or large specimens.
- Collected samples of sediment should be processed to recover small fossils, and all recovered specimens should be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage.
- A report of findings, including an itemized inventory of recovered specimens, should be prepared upon completion of the procedures outlined above. The report should include a discussion of the significance of the paleontological findings, if any. The report and the inventory, when submitted to the City of Indio, would signify completion of the program to mitigate potential impacts on paleontological resources.

Monitoring:

GEO-A Prior to the issuance of any permit to allow ground disturbance on the site, the Project Proponent shall submit a paleontological resource impact mitigation program

Responsible Parties: Project applicant, Project archeologist/paleontologist, Planning Department, City Engineer

VIII. 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?			✓	

Sources: City of Indio General Plan; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; City of Indio Climate Action Plan; CalEEMod version 2020.4.0.

Environmental Setting

Certain gases play an important role in determining the surface temperature of the earth. Known as greenhouse gases (GHGs), these gases trap heat on the earth’s surface similarly to how greenhouses function to trap heat. GHGs are produced through natural processes as well as through human activity. The human-caused (anthropogenic) emission of these gases increased since the industrial revolution, intensifying the greenhouse effect and, as a result, warming the earth’s climate. GHGs include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and fluorinated compounds. Laws such as Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32) and Senate Bill 32 (SB 32) require all cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, respectively.

The City of Indio’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) establishes a plan to meet the State emissions reduction targets for 2020 and 2030, as required by AB 32 and SB 32. According to the CAP, Indio’s 2010 communitywide emissions baseline is 607,946 metric tons of CO₂e (MTCO₂e), which is equivalent to 8 MTCO₂e per capita. In order to comply with SB 32, the City’s General Plan would need to achieve 5.9 MTCO₂e per capita by 2030. Accounting for reduction measures set forth in the CAP, future development consistent with the General Plan would result in communitywide emissions 387,122 MTCO₂e in 2030, which represents an emission level of 3.9 MTCO₂e per capita. Therefore, the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, and projects consistent with the General Plan Update, would achieve per capita thresholds for 2030 as established by SB 32.³⁶

GHG Thresholds

In December of 2008, SCAQMD formally adopted a greenhouse gas significance threshold of 10,000 MTCO₂e/yr that only applies to industrial uses’ stationary sources where SCAQMD is the lead agency (SCAQMD Resolution No. 08-35). This threshold was adopted based upon an October 2008 staff report and draft interim guidance document that also recommended a threshold for all Projects using a tiered approach.

It was recommended by SCAQMD staff that a Project’s greenhouse gas emissions would be considered significant if it could not comply with at least one of the following “tiered” tests:

³⁶ Climate Action Plan, City of Indio, May 2019.

- Tier 1: Is there an applicable exemption?
- Tier 2: Is the Project compliant with a greenhouse gas reduction plan that is, at a minimum, consistent with the goals of AB 32?
- Tier 3: Is the Project below an absolute threshold (10,000 MTCO₂e/year for industrial Projects; 3,000 MTCO₂e/year for residential and commercial Projects)?
- Tier 4: Is the Project below a (yet to be set) performance threshold?
- Tier 5: Would the Project achieve a screening level with off-site mitigation?

Discussion of Impacts

a, b) Less Than Significant Impact. The GHG emissions generated by the proposed Project during construction and operational phases were projected using California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2020.4.0 (Appendix A).

Construction

The GHG emissions associated with construction activities will be limited to the construction phase and thus will be temporary. These activities include the operation of construction equipment, employee commutes, material hauling, and other ground disturbing activities. As shown in Table 5, the project will generate 6205.2567 metric tons per year of CO₂e over the 5-year construction period. There are currently no construction related GHG emission thresholds for projects of this nature. To determine of construction emissions will result in a cumulative considerable impact, construction GHG emissions were amortized over a 30-year period and added to annual operational emissions to be compared with applicable GHG thresholds from SCAQMD.

Operation

There are five emissions source categories that will be contributing either directly or indirectly to operational GHG emissions at buildout. The sources include energy/electricity usage, water usage, solid waste disposal, area emissions (pavement and architectural coating off-gassing), and mobile sources. Table 5 summarizes the projected short-term construction and annual operational GHG generation associated with the proposed development, using the same buildout assumptions shown in Table 2.

Table 5 Projected GHG Emissions Summary (Metric Tons)	
Phase	CO₂e (MT/YR)
Construction	
2023	1,000.80
2024	1,443.78
2025	1,404.19
2026	1,373.41
2027	983.05
Construction Total	6205.23

Table 5 Projected GHG Emissions Summary (Metric Tons)	
Phase	CO ₂ e (MT/YR)
Operation	
Area	40.40
Energy	1,410.15
Mobile	5,583.41
Waste	277.60
Water	242.77
Construction: 30-year amortized ¹	206.84
Total Operational	7,761.17
SCAQMD Threshold (residential)	3,000.00
¹ Buildout construction GHG emissions were amortized over 30-years then added to buildout operational GHG emissions.	

As shown in Table 5, the Project does not comply with the Tier 3 threshold because emissions will exceed the 3,000 MT/yr threshold. However, the Project does comply with Tier 2 because it will be consistent with a greenhouse gas reduction plan.

The City of Indio prepared its Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2019. The CAP establishes strategies to help the City meet greenhouse gas emissions targets set forth in AB 32 and SB 32. The three main sources of GHG emissions in the City of Indio are the residential, commercial, and transportation sectors. The City’s CAP provides strategies to reduce these emissions by up to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030,³⁷ using reduction measures in the following categories: clean energy, low-carbon buildings, zero waste, water conservation, and sustainable land use and transportation.

Based on Indio’s average household size of 3.04 persons and 1,200 potential single-family residences, buildout of the Project could result in an increased population of 3,648 residents, resulting in a per-capita emission rate 2.12 MTCO₂e per person. The Project’s per capita GHG emissions is therefore consistent with the CAP’s per capita targets of 3.9 MTCO₂e by 2030. The Project will also be required to implement all applicable strategies of the CAP during the development of the site. Through compliance with the General Plan, and thus with the sustainable land use strategies established in the CAP, the proposed Project complies with SCAQMD’s Tier 2.

The Project site is within the IID’s service area. IID is committed to meeting or exceeding the California Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirement for utility providers to achieve 33% renewable energy by 2020 and 50 renewable energy by 2030. IID is working with the City of Indio to reach these targets. The proposed Project complies with the City’s CAP, and thus is not in conflict with efforts to meet the RPS.

Mitigation Measures or Monitoring: None required.

³⁷ City of Indio Climate Action Plan (2019).

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			✓	
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 one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				✓
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				✓
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?				✓
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?				✓

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; State Water resources Control Board GeoTracker; California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Finder.

Environmental Setting

Federal laws and regulations, such as the Environmental Protection Act of 1970, regulate the storage, use, generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials, and investigate and mitigate the potential impacts of these materials on the environment and on human health. The Riverside County Department of Environmental Health, Hazardous Materials Branch provides additional oversight in Indio.

Historically, the city was one of the larger farming communities in the Coachella Valley. Today, agricultural areas are mostly adjacent to residential developments north of I-10 and at the southern border of the city limits (south of Avenue 50) with some smaller acreages of active farmland scattered in the center.³⁸ Chemical overspray within areas of active agriculture adjacent to residential neighborhoods is a potential health hazard.

The City of Indio has several businesses that manufacture, transport, store, use, and dispose of hazardous materials; therefore, the city can be affected by a major hazardous material emergency or affected by hazardous materials and waste. The former sites of land uses associated with hazardous materials are sometimes abandoned without proper cleanup, resulting in the contamination of soil and groundwater. These former hazardous material sites are referred to as “brownfields”. The City of Indio does not have many brownfield sites, but, as of the writing of the 2040 General Plan Update, does have one active cleanup, one recently completed cleanup, and two sites waiting for investigation.³⁹

There are no active or completed cleanup sites located within a 0.5-mile radius of the Project site.⁴⁰ The site is designated as Locally Important Farmland⁴¹, and aerial photos indicate that it was used for agriculture in the past. Lands used for agriculture result in a potential for soil contamination from prior use of herbicides, fertilizers, and pesticides.

Discussion of Impacts

a, b) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project includes development of residential units which would involve use of limited quantities of chemicals such as cleaning and degreasing solvents, fertilizers, pesticides, pool chemicals, and similar materials. These chemicals will be transported and stored within the Project site. These will occur in limited quantities and will not require a hazardous material handling/storage permit. None of these chemicals will be used in sufficient quantities to pose a threat to humans or cause a foreseeable chemical release into the environment.

The construction phase would involve the use of heavy equipment, which uses small amounts of oil and fuels and other potential flammable substances. During construction, equipment would require refueling and minor maintenance on site that could lead to fuel and oil spills. The contractor will be required to identify a staging area for storing materials and will be subject to State law relating to the handling, storage and use of hazardous materials during construction.

³⁸ Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update.

³⁹ City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, 10-4.

⁴⁰ State Water resources Control Board GeoTracker, <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>. Accessed 07/20/2022.

⁴¹ California Important Farmland Finder, California Department of Conservation. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>

The proposed Project would not result in a significant risk of explosion or accidental release of hazardous substances, because the cleaners and household chemicals used are not explosive and will not be stored in large quantities. The use and handling of hazardous materials during construction activities and long-term operation of the proposed Project would occur in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local laws including California Occupational Health and Safety Administration (CalOSHA) requirements. Impacts would be less than significant.

- c) **No Impact.** The nearest school is Andrew Jackson Elementary School, located approximately 0.30 miles west of the Project site, on the southwest side of the Interstate-10. The proposed Project will result in the development of residential units, which are not expected to emit any hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste to jeopardize schools. No impact is expected.
- d) **No Impact.** The Project site is currently vacant. There are no hazardous materials or waste sites located on or near the site, and the site is not included on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.⁴² The proposed Project will not create a significant hazard to the public or environment. No impact is anticipated.
- e) **No Impact.** The Bermuda Dunes Airport (UDD) is located approximately 3.4 miles west of the subject property. The Project site is located well outside the airport planning boundary and operational and navigational hazard area. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working at the Project site. No impact is anticipated.
- f) **No Impact.** The proposed Project will take access from Calhoun Street and Avenue 43. Major roadways near the Project site would be used as regional emergency evacuation routes to and from the city. There are three project access points onto Avenue 43: one for PA-1 and two for PA-2. There are five project access points onto Calhoun: two for PA-1 and 3 for PA-2. The primary project ingress and egress is expected to occur along Avenue 43, with secondary access occurring on Calhoun Street. All access points can be used for emergency access. Major roadways near the project site (such as Avenue 42 and Jackson Street) would also be used as regional emergency evacuation routes to and from the city. The Project will neither significantly alter the existing circulation pattern in the project area nor physically interfere with major roadways during emergency evacuation.

The Fire and Police Departments will review the proposed parking and circulation plan for the Project to assure that driveways and roads are adequate for emergency vehicles. In addition, construction traffic management plans will be required to assure that the proposed Project will not interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No Project-related impact is expected.

⁴² State Water resources Control Board GeoTracker, <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>. Accessed 07/20/2022.

- g) No Impact.** The Project site is located in an urban area and is not located in a wildland fire hazard zone and is not susceptible to wildfires. Therefore, the proposed Project will not expose people or structures to significant risks associated with wildfires. No Project related impact is expected.

Mitigation Measure: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			✓	
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?				✓

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; 2020 Regional Urban Water Management Plan; Valley Sanitary District -Treatment Operations.

Environmental Setting

Domestic Water

The Project site is located within the Indio Water Authority (IWA) service area for domestic water. The Project will connect to the existing 18” water line in the Avenue 43 ROW, extending the line via a proposed 8” line in Calhoun Street as well as additional lines extending through the PA-1 and PA-2.

The City of Indio’s largest water supply source is groundwater from the Indio Subbasin (Whitewater River), one of four subbasins of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basins. Because the Whitewater River Basin is an un-adjudicated basin, IWA does not hold specific water rights, but rather pumps supplies from the aquifer as needed to meet demands within its service area. IWA currently has 20 operational groundwater wells. IWA’s total current urban water demand was 19,880 AFY in 2020.⁴³

Water Quality

The City of Indio is situated in the Whitewater River watershed, which extends from the San Geronio Pass to the Salton Sea.⁴⁴ All water providers in the watershed are required to comply with Regional Water Quality Control Board standards for the protection of water quality, including the preparation of site-specific Water Quality Management Plans for surface waters. The City, including the Project site, is located within the Coachella Valley where the water quality is generally good to excellent.⁴⁵ The extensive use of septic systems in Indio and elsewhere in the Coachella Valley historically has impacted water resources, but nitrate levels in Indio continue to meet or exceed current standards.⁴⁶

Wastewater Treatment Provider and City’s Sewer System

Sewer service for the Project site is provided by the Valley Sanitary District (VSD). The Project will connect to the existing 27” sanitary sewer line in the Avenue 43 ROW. Sewer lines will be extended into the planning areas.

VSD provides wastewater collection and treatment services for 98% of the City’s population. The collection system for VSD consists of approximately 246 miles of sanitary sewer pipes and 5 active pump stations, eight siphons, and a wastewater treatment plant.⁴⁷ VSD is partnering with the City and IWA to complement a recycled water program. VSD currently treats approximately 6.5 million gallons per day through an activated sludge process and has a capacity of 9.5 million gallons per day. An additional 0.5 million gallons per day is treated through oxidation ponds, which have a capacity of 2.5 million gallons per day.⁴⁸

⁴³ 2020 Regional Urban Water Management Plan.

⁴⁴ City of Indio EIR for the 2040 General Plan Update, 4.9.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 4.9-8.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, 9-6.

⁴⁸ Valley Sanitary District, Treatment Operations <https://www.valley-sanitary.org/treatment-operations> (Accessed 08/20/2022).

Floodplain Management

The Project site is located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Zone “X” designation. Zone X is defined as “Areas of 0.2% annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1-foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile.”

In the City of Indio, local drainage facilities generally convey runoff from local streets and lots to the regional facilities. Regional drainage is managed by the Coachella Valley Water District, which maintains the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, and the La Quinta Evacuation Channel. The local storm drain system consists of gutters, storm drains, and channels. There are a limited amount of storm drainage facilities in Downtown Indio.⁴⁹

Discussion of Impacts

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project will generate demand for domestic water and wastewater, which will be governed by both IWA and VSD standard requirements. Construction of on-site connections will be subject to all IWA and VSD requirements. The proposed Project will not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

The proposed Project will be required to comply with VSD and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations to minimize the pollutant load associated with urban activities. Meeting those standards requires the preparation and approval of a WQMP and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, both of which must be approved by the City prior to the initiation of construction activities. Both plans will include Best Management Practices that will protect surface waters from pollutants in storm flows during both construction and long term operation of the Project. The imposition of conditions of approval and adherence to local, state and federal requirements will assure that impacts associated with water quality standards are less than significant.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project will require water for domestic use and landscape irrigation. The American Water Works Association Research Foundation (AWWARF) has developed demand factors for land use categories including residential uses. Demand factors for outdoor irrigated area is based on the Maximum Applied Water Allowance (MAWA) equation, from the City of Indio’s Water efficient Landscape Development Standards (Ordinance 1684) which meets the water conservation goals of the California Department of Water Resources Model Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo).

The Project proposes to develop approximately 60 acres of land to include up to 1,200 single-family and multi-family dwelling units. The development will include recreation facilities such as pools, clubhouses, barbecues, and other facilities. Landscape plans, particularly for PA-2, are currently unknown. However, for analysis purposes, it is assumed that up to 30 percent of the total site area, or 18 acres, may be landscaped with a mix of drought tolerant landscaping and minimal turf for open space, retention basins, and paseos.

⁴⁹ City of Indio EIR for the 2040 General Plan Update, 4.9-2.

Table 6 Water Demand at the Project Buildout						
Proposed Land Use	Estimated Dwelling Units (EDU)	Estimated Occupants per Home¹	Gallons per day (gpd) per Occupant²	Gpd/EDU	Water Demand (gpd)	Water Demand (AFY)
Multi-Family Residential	1,200	3.04	55	167.2	200,640	224.75
Proposed Land Use	Landscaped Area (ft²)	ETo (in/year)³	ETAF⁴	Conversion Factor (gal/ft²)⁵	Water Demand (gpd)	Water Demand (AFY)
Landscaping	784,080	93.9	0.45	0.62	56,277.83	63.04
TOTAL						287.79
¹ CA Department of Finance Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, 2022 for the City of Indio ² CA Indoor Water Use Performance Standard ³ Reference Evapotranspiration (ETo) for ETo Zone 5 from Indio’s Landscape Ordinance 1684. ⁴ Evapotranspiration Adjustment Factor (ETAF) from Indio’s Landscape Ordinance 1684. ⁵ Conversion Factor from Indio’s Landscape Ordinance 1684.						

As shown in Table 6, full buildout of the proposed Project will potentially generate a demand of up to 287.79 acre-feet per year. IWA’s long-term water management planning ensures that adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future needs within its service area. The Proposed Project is consistent with the land use designation assigned to it in the General Plan, on which, in part, the IWA based its future water demand analysis when preparing its planning documents, including its Urban Water Management Plan. According to a Water Supply Assessment prepared for the Project, the Project’s water demand of 287.79 AFY accounts for approximately 0.9 percent of the IWA’s total planned increases in demand of 30,997 by 2045. Therefore, Project impacts associated with domestic water demand are expected to be less than significant.

As discussed above, the Project will connect to the existing water line in the Avenue 43 ROW. The Project proposes the extension of the water line along Calhoun Street and into the planning areas. No new wells or additional water infrastructure are proposed.

The Project will be required to comply with the IWA’s water-efficiency requirements, including the use of drought-tolerant planting materials and limited landscaping irrigation. Implementation of these and other applicable requirements will assure that water-related impacts remain at less than significant levels.

c) Less Than Significant.

Existing Drainage

The subject property is currently undeveloped and barren. The site is very flat and contains no rivers or streams. The proposed development would increase the site’s impermeable surface area, and therefore increase on-site storm flows.

Proposed Drainage System

CVL consultants prepared a Preliminary Drainage Report for the Project. According to the drainage report, on-site retention basins and underground storage tanks for the 100-year, 24-hour storm event will be provided, as per the City of Indio requirements. Also in accordance with City requirements, any on-site basin that is proposed to be less than 72” deep at maximum capacity will drain within 72 hours.

Runoff from the site will be conveyed to the retention basins via private streets, overland flows, and storm drain systems. The ultimate outfall for PA-1 is along the southern property line at Commanche Street. Runoff from PA-2 will drain southeasterly and will overflow to Hopi Avenue. According to a review of local mapping, no offsite flows affect the Project site.

The proposed Project will implement standard Best Management Practices (BMP) through the preparation of a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP). These measures will reduce pollutants of concern and reduce any project-related impacts to water quality, as required by the City in order to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

Erosion and On- or Off-site Siltation

Adherence to City requirements, including the preparation of a WQMP and implementation the BMPs within, will ensure that the proposed Project will not result in on- or off-site erosion or siltation.

Summary

The Project will be required to comply with the City of Indio’s stormwater retention and water quality management requirements. Approval of the Project WQMP and other applicable plans will be required by the City prior to the issuance of building permits. Adherence to the City requirements, including on-site water retention for the 100-year, 24-hour storm event, will ensure that the Project will not substantially impact the existing drainage pattern of the area, nor will it result in substantial on- or off-site erosion, siltation, flooding, or polluted runoff. Impacts will be less than significant.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project site is not located in the vicinity of a water body. No hazard from dam failure, tsunami or seiche is possible. While the Whitewater/Coachella Storm Channel is approximately 1000 feet southwest of the Project site, the I-10 freeway runs in between. The channel’s capacity is designed to withstand a standard project flood, which is greater than a 100-year flood. The risk for over-topping is therefore very low. A less than significant impact is anticipated.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed Project will be required to comply with all applicable water quality standards and will implement a WQMP approved by the City of Indio and the Regional Water Quality Control Board for both construction activities and long-term operation of the site. Also, the Project’s expected water demand will be less than one percent of IWA’s planned increases in demand for groundwater supplies, meaning impacts to a groundwater management plan will be negligible.

Mitigation Measures and Monitoring: None required.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?			✓	

Sources: Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; City of Indio Zoning Update Map; City of Indio General Plan 2040 Land Use Map; City of Indio Draft Unified Development Code.

Environmental Setting

The Project site is governed by the policies and land use designations of the Indio General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Currently, the site is designated Connected Neighborhood (CN) in the 2040 General Plan Update Land Use Map. According to the City’s Zoning Update Map, eastern portion of the Project site (PA 1) is zoned Connected Neighbourhoods-14 (CN-14) and the western portion of the Project site (PA 2) is zoned CN-20.

The CN land use designation “provides a broad range of housing choices within a walkable neighborhood setting within a short distance of goods and services”.⁵⁰ The CN-14 zone permits single-family dwellings and small-sized multi-family buildings to promotes neighborhoods with densities up to 14 dwelling units per acre, while the CN-20 zone permits single-family dwellings and medium-sized multi-family buildings to encourage densities of up to 20 dwelling units per acre.⁵¹

The surrounding area is comprised of residential and commercial land uses. The Interstate-10 runs along the southwestern boundary of the Project site. The City of Indio participates in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), as discussed under the Biological Resources section. As discussed below, the Project would not impact Land Use and Planning.

- a) **No Impact.** The Project site is currently vacant and is in an area that is predominantly developed with residential and commercial uses. These developments operate independently of the subject property and will not be physically divided by the proposed Project. No impact is anticipated.
- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Indio General Plan, as required by the California Government Code, establishes direction for future growth and development within the City of Indio. The California Government Code (under Sections 65451.b and 65454) states that a

⁵⁰ City of Indio General Plan 2040, p.3-15

⁵¹ City of Indio Draft Unified Development Code, p. 2-30

“specific plan shall include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan, and further, that it may not be adopted or amended unless found to be consistent with the general plan.”

The subject site is designated as Connected Neighborhood and zoned as Connected Neighborhood-14 and -20 (CN-14 and CN -20) in the City’s General Plan Update Land Use and Zoning Update Maps, respectively. The designations allow for a mix of single-family as well as small to medium multi-family buildings at a density of 14 to 20 dwelling units per acre (DU/AC).

Under the proposed Specific Plan, the total Project area will have an average density of 20 DU/AC – 11.68 DU/AC in Planning Area (PA) 1, and 28.48 DU/AC in PA 2. The proposed density for Planning Area 1 is consistent with the City’s zoning code. While the proposed density for Planning Area 2 is higher than supported by its zone, the density of the total Project area is within the maximum density of 20 DU/AC and thus complies with the maximum DU/AC designated in the City’s General Plan.

The proposed Specific Plan includes comprehensive development standards for building height, building setbacks, development density, landscaping, and parking. These standards prevail over City of Indio Municipal Code standards, after adoption of the Specific Plan. The proposed Project will be subject to the Specific Plan’s development standard to ensure high quality site planning and architectural design for the site.

The proposed Project supports the General Plan’s policies regarding the provision of a broad range of housing choices within a short distance of goods and services. Therefore, the proposed Project will not conflict with adopted plans and programs, and impacts to land use are expected to be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES				
Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				✓
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?				✓

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update.

Environmental Setting

The City’s most important mineral resources are sand, gravel, and crushed rock (collectively known as aggregate). Aggregate is a primary component in the production of asphalt, concrete, road base, stucco and plaster, and is considered critical to local and national economic growth.⁵²

Mining near Indio generally occurs north of the City, in its Sphere of Influence. The majority of City lands, including the Project site, have been classified as Mineral Zone MRZ-1: “areas where available geologic information indicates that little likelihood exists for the presence of significant mineral resources.”⁵³

Discussion of Impacts

a, b) No Impact. The Project is on lands classified as MRZ-1, indicating a low likelihood for significant mineral resources to be present on site. The Project site is in an urbanized area, surrounded by residential and commercial development and designated for residential development. No impact is expected.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

⁵² City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, 4.11.

⁵³ City of Indio General Plan 2040 – Conservation, p. 8-6

XIII. NOISE Would the Project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		✓		
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?			✓	

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; “Ave 43 / Calhoun St Noise Impact Analysis”, prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc., October 18, 2022.

Environmental Setting

The main producers of noise in Indio include transportation sources, such as aircraft activity, road and railroad traffic, as well as stationary sources, such as industrial, commercial, and agricultural operations, mechanical and landscaping equipment.⁵⁴ The Project site is located in an area with a well-connected road network and is adjacent to the I-10 freeway.

The Noise Element of the City of Indio General Plan establishes policies and programs to minimize adverse noise impacts on sensitive land uses such as residential dwellings, hospitals, educational facilities, and open spaces. Per the City of Indio General Plan, noise levels of up to 60 dBA CNEL are “acceptable for single-family residential uses, 65 dBA CNEL are “acceptable” for multi-family residential uses, and levels up to 75 dBA CNEL are “conditionally acceptable” for both single- and multi-family residential uses. Chapter 95C Noise Control in the City’s Municipal Code regulates sources of temporary noise, such as landscape maintenance, car horns, radios and televisions, and animals.

Urban Crossroads prepared a noise impact analysis for the Project (Appendix E). Its findings are summarized in the analysis below.

⁵⁴ City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update EIR, 4.12-2.

Discussion of Impacts

- a) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The subject property is currently vacant and undeveloped. The main noise source in the area is vehicular traffic on the I-10 freeway and Avenue 43. The surrounding area mainly consists of residential development with the nearest sensitive receptors being single family residences located east and southeast of the Project site.

A noise study prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc. analyzed the potentially noise from the proposed Project on-site and off-site, as well as from operational, construction, and construction vibration sources (Appendix E).

Construction Noise: Buildout of the Proposed Project will result in a 1,200 single- and multi-family residential development. Construction activities on the site will comply with the City’s Municipal Code Section § 95C.08 which limits construction times and days as follows:

Pacific Standard Time.

- (a) Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m.
- (b) Saturday, 8:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m.
- (c) Sunday, 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.
- (d) Government Holidays, 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.

Pacific Daylight Time.

- (a) Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m.
- (b) Saturday, 7:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m.
- (c) Sunday, 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.
- (d) Government Holidays, 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.

Construction activities could generate temporary and periodic elevated noise levels associated with heavy equipment. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the maximum noise level generated by typical construction equipment can reach up to 98 dB(A) at 50 feet.⁵⁵ These noise levels would diminish rapidly with distance from the construction site. It is also important to note that these noise sources are mobile, and that sustained noise levels will not occur at any one location during the construction process, but rather be moving across the site as the equipment moves.

Noise generating construction activities would include site preparation, excavation, grading, and the construction and finishing of the proposed homes. Noise levels surrounding the Project site could be elevated for short periods of time, as equipment moves through the site. Analysis found that noise levels at nearby receiver locations are expected to be up to 67.9 dBA Leq. This indicates that construction noise levels associated with the Project will be within the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) daytime exterior construction noise level threshold of 80 dBA Leq for noise-sensitive residential land uses. In addition, these noise levels would be limited to the less sensitive daytime hours and would cease once building construction

⁵⁵ US Environmental Protection Agency, Noise from Construction Equipment and Operations, Building Equipment and Home Appliances, EPA-68-04-0047 (1971).

concludes. Compliance with the City’s noise ordinance exempts construction activities from noise infractions, because of their temporary nature. Therefore, impacts associated with construction noise on the Project site would be less than significant.

Operational Noise

At buildout, principal Project-related noise sources will include vehicular traffic accessing the site, grounds maintenance equipment, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units. The Project is consistent with the General Plan designation for the site, and traffic levels are not expected to substantially increase beyond that forecast in the General Plan at build out. Per the City of Indio General Plan, exterior noise levels of up to 60 dBA CNEL are “acceptable for single-family residential uses, 65 dBA CNEL are “acceptable” for multi-family residential uses, and levels up to 75 dBA CNEL are “conditionally acceptable” for both single- and multi-family residential uses.

According to the noise study, PA 1 will experience exterior noise levels ranging from 61.0 to 67.4 dBA CNEL, and PA 2 will experience exterior noise levels ranging from 61.0 to 67.7 dBA CNEL. Both PA-1 and PA-2 will require a Noise Reduction (NR) of up to 27 dBA and a windows-closed condition requiring a means of mechanical ventilation, such as air conditioning. To meet the City’s 45 dBA CNEL interior noise standards, Mitigation Measures N-1 requires that a final acoustical report be prepared for buildings located within 325 feet of I-10.

The site plan for PA 2 is not as developed as PA 1 at this time. The main source of on-site noise will Interstate-10 (I-10) traffic, which will primarily impact PA-2 due to its proximity to the freeway. Due to the lack of plans for PA 2 and the higher noise levels from the I-10, Mitigation Measures N-2 will require the preparation of an acoustical report for buildings located within 100 feet of I-10 prior to the approval and the issuance of a building permit and/or certificate of occupancy.

The proposed Project is anticipated to increase the noise levels in the areas surrounding the site. At Project buildout, noise levels at the noise-sensitive receiver locations analyzed in the noise study will range from 34.3 to 49.1 dBA during the day, and 26.7 to 44.3 at night. These levels are below the exterior noise level standards for residential land uses (55 and 45 dBA for day and night, respectively), and therefore impacts are considered less than significant.

Summary

Overall, noise levels associated with Project operation would be consistent with the existing residential land uses. Development of the Project is consistent with both the General Plan designation for the site and surrounding land uses and will not result in unacceptably high noise levels. After mitigation, project-related impacts will be less than significant.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** In terms of ground-borne vibration resulting from construction activities, it is expected that Project construction will result in only intermittent, localized intrusion. Vibration levels are not expected to exceed Caltrans vibration threshold of

0.04 in/sec PPV.⁵⁶ Project related construction vibration levels are expected to go up to 0.027 in/sec PPV, and thus impact would be less than significant.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or airport land use plan. The Bermuda Dunes Airport is located approximately 2.7 miles northwest of the Project site, and thus the Project would not be exposed to excessive noise from airport operations. Less than significant impacts are expected.

Mitigation Measures:

- N-1 Prior to project approval and the issuance of a building permit and/or certificate of occupancy, the Project Applicant/Developer shall submit a draft and/or final acoustical report to the City of Indio Planning Department, or designee. This analysis would finalize the STC ratings for windows and doors described in the Project specific Noise Study using the precise grading plans and actual building design specifications, and may include additional mitigation, if necessary, to meet the City of Indio 45 dBA CNEL interior noise level standard.
- N-2 Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant, or its designee, will prepare an acoustical study(s) of proposed commercial land use site plans, which will identify all noise generating areas and associated equipment, predict noise levels at property lines from all identified areas, and recommended mitigation to be implemented (e.g., enclosures, barriers, site orientation, reduction of parking stalls), as necessary, to comply with the Riverside County Code, Section 9.52.040.

Monitoring:

- N-A Prior to the issuance of building permits, the City shall review building plans and acoustical reports to ensure proper building materials are proposed to reduce interior noise levels.
Responsible Parties: Project applicant, Architect, Planning Department

⁵⁶ The City of Indio does not identify specific vibration level limits. Instead, for analysis purposes, the vibration threshold is based on the Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, April 2020, Table 19, p.38.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			✓	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; City of Indio Housing Element Update; U.S. Department of Finance, Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State; 2020-2045 RTPSCS Demographics and Growth Forecast by Southern California Association of Governments.

Environmental Setting

The City of Indio is situated in Riverside County, which has experienced rapid population growth over the last two decades.⁵⁷ The City of Indio has a population of approximately 89,137 persons in 2022.⁵⁸ Its population is expected to increase to 123,300 persons by 2045.⁵⁹ Currently, the City is composed of a mix of single-family, multi-family, and mobile homes development, but the predominant housing unit type is single-family homes (72.4%).⁶⁰

Discussion of Impacts

a) Less Than Significant Impact. Based on an average household size of 3.04,⁶¹ implementation of the proposed Project (1,200 units) could result in an increased population of up to 3,648 people. This represents 2.96% of the city’s anticipated 2045 population of 123,300, which would have a less than significant impact on the overall population of the area.

The site is currently vacant and undeveloped. The proposed Project occurs on the City’s existing street grid, and will tie into existing utility systems. Since existing streets, utilities and public facilities are located adjacent to the Project site along Avenue 43 and Calhoun Street, the Project will not result in considerable construction or expansion of infrastructure. It will, however, require the extension of Calhoun Street, as well as the addition of internal traffic routes within the Project site. Overall, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

⁵⁷ City of Indio Housing Element Update, 2022.

⁵⁸ U.S. Department of Finance, Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2022, Table E-5

⁵⁹ 2020-2045 RTPSCS Demographics and Growth Forecast by Southern California Association of Governments.

⁶⁰ Single-family detached and attached homes, according to the City of Indio Housing Element Update, 2022.

⁶¹ State of California, Department of Finance, *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State — January 1, 2021-2022*. Sacramento, California, May 2022.

- b) **No Impact.** The proposed Project would not displace any existing housing or require replacement housing elsewhere, as the property is currently vacant. No impact will occur.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES				
Would the Project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?			✓	
b) Police protection?			✓	
c) Schools?			✓	
d) Parks?			✓	
e) Other public facilities?			✓	

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Desert Sands Unified School District - Fee Justification Report For New Residential And Commercial/Industrial Development.

Environmental Setting

Fire Protection

The proposed Project would receive fire protection and emergency medical services from the Indio Fire Department, which serves the City of Indio. The nearest fire station is Fire Station #5, located at 42-900 Golf Center Parkway, approximately 0.5 miles east of the subject site. The station is staffed by 7 firefighters, who operate one paramedic fire engine.

Police Protection

Police protection services in the City of Indio are provided by the Indio Police Department. The Indio Police Station is located at 46-800 Jackson Street, approximately 3 miles southwest of the Project site. The police department has various crime programs including a Citizens Online Police reporting system, a police K-9 program, police dispatch, community outreach, and neighborhood watch programs. The department has a staff of approximately 80 employees and response times of approximately 5 minutes within the 5-beat system.

Schools

Indio receives educational services from two K-12 school districts, Desert Sands Unified School District (DSUSD) and Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD), as well as one community

college district. The proposed Project is located within the DSUSD boundaries.⁶² DSUSD consists of 19 elementary schools, 1 charter elementary school, 6 middle schools, 1 charter middle school, 4 comprehensive high schools, 2 continuation high schools, 1 alternative education school, preschool, and centralized administration.

Parks

The City of Indio has 63 acres of existing parks (excluding golf courses). The nearest municipal parks to the Project site are George S Patton Park, located at 83700 Avenue 43, located directly to the north of the Project site, and Cahuilla Park, located at 83787 Hopi Avenue, located immediately to the southeast of the Project site.

The proposed Project will have limited impact on Public Services, as discussed below.

Discussion of Impacts

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Demand for fire services in the City will increase as a result of the proposed Project due to the small increase in population. Development of the proposed Project will require payment of the City’s development impact fees. This fee is designed to share the costs of the added demand on services and facilities generate by new development.

In accordance with standard City practices, the Fire Department would inspect the project plans before permits are issued to ensure compliance with all applicable fire and building code standards and to ensure that adequate fire and life safety measures are incorporated into the Project in compliance with all applicable state and city fire safety regulations. Emergency access will be provided to the site via the existing public roadway network, and a continuous driveway through the site will provide access to all structures.

The proposed Project would comply with the City’s standards and fees, will not general substantial demand for fire protection, and will not warrant new or expanded facilities. As such, the Project is anticipated to have a less significant impact on fire protection services.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The ultimate development of the site will result in a marginal increase in demand for police services. Police personnel will be able to access the site using Avenue 43 and Calhoun Street. The Project will be required to comply with all Police Department regulations and procedures. No construction of new or expanded police services or facilities are required for the proposed Project. Impacts will be less than significant.
- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project will result in the development of 1,200 single- and multi-family residential units. Based on DSUSD student generation rates, shown below, the Project has the potential to generate approximately 79 kindergarten through twelfth grade students.

⁶² Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, Figure 4.14-2.

Table 7 Project Student Generation		
School Type	Generation Rate (per residential unit)	Project's Student Generation
Elementary School	0.1486	178
Middle School	0.0793	95
High School	0.1221	147
Total:		420
Source: Desert Sands Unified School District - Fee Justification Report For New Residential And Commercial/Industrial Development (May 2022), Table VI Student Generation Rate.		

The proposed Project will be subject to the DSUSD developer fees in place at the time development occurs, which currently stand at \$4.08 per square foot of residential development.⁶³ Payment of the developer fee would mitigate potential significant impacts to school resources to less than significant levels.

- d, e) Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project's increase in permanent population has the potential to increase demand for the use of existing local or regional park/other public facilities. The development proposes onsite recreational amenities and open spaces that would help offset the impact to the city's existing park/other public facilities. In addition, the Project will be required to pay the development impact fee for parks imposed on all new development in the City.

Overall, Project build out is expected to marginally impact local and/or regional parks/other public facilities. No additional public facilities are required for the proposed Project. Increase in demand for the city's existing facilities will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

⁶³ Desert Sands Unified School District - Fee Justification Report For New Residential And Commercial/Industrial Development (May 2022).

XVI. RECREATION Would the Project:	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?			✓	
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?			✓	

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Desert Recreation District – About Us.

Environmental Setting

The City owns and maintains 107 acres of park space distributed across 16 parks, as well as community centers and a municipal golf course. Excluding golf courses and other resort open spaces, the City provides 1.2 acres of municipal parkland per 1,000 residents.⁶⁴

The City is located in the Desert Recreation District (DRD), which covers over 1,800 square miles from Rancho Mirage east to the Salton Sea, making it the largest park and recreation district in California.⁶⁵ DRD is responsible for more than 30 recreational facilities, including community and fitness centers, sports fields, swimming pools, a golf course and driving range, and various parks and open spaces.

Discussion of Impacts

a, b) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed Project will result in the addition of an estimated population of 3,648 residents at buildout. The proposed Project will include onsite recreational amenities, as required in Section 156 of the City of Indio Zoning Ordinance for residential projects. Plans for PA-1 include amenities such as: lawns with shade structures, swimming pools, pickleball courts, putting greens, a half basketball court, a barbeque and picnic area, tot lot, dog parks, and community gardens. Residents can be expected to utilize onsite recreational amenities as well as local and regional recreational facilities. The proposed development will not induce substantial population growth that will result in significant

⁶⁴ City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, 7.2.

⁶⁵ Desert Recreation District – About Us, <https://www.myrecreationdistrict.com/about-us>

impacts to existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. Project-related impacts are expected to be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION				
Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?		✓		
b) Would the Project 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 uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				✓
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?				✓

Sources: City of Indio General Plan; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; County of Riverside Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service, Vehicle Miles Traveled; VMT Screen Analysis and Focused Study prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc. (2022); CVAG Active Transportation Plan 2016.

Environmental Setting

The City of Indio’s circulation system consists of roadways, freeways, public transit routes, sidewalks, and bike lanes. It accommodates modes of transportation including vehicular travel, public transit, walking, bicycling, and golf carts.

Roadways in the City are classified based on number of lanes, types of permitted users (e.g. pedestrians) and the presences of other facilities such as bicycle lanes, sidewalks and parkways. The City of Indio uses Level of Service as a metric to measure the performance of road segments and intersections. According to the City’s EIR for the 2040 General Plan Update, the acceptable Level of Service (LOS) for both roadway segments and intersection operations is LOS D or better. All area roadways and intersections in Indio currently operate at LOS D or better.⁶⁶

The Project site is vacant and undeveloped. Existing roadways in the vicinity of the Project site include Avenue 43, Calhoun Street, Jackson Street, and Interstate-10.

Urban Crossroads, Inc. prepared a focused traffic assessment and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) screening for the proposed Project in June 2022 (Appendix F). The Project trip generation rates are based on Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition (2021).

⁶⁶ City of Indio EIR for the 2040 General Plan Update, Table 4.15-1.

Land Use Code No. 220 (Multifamily Housing: Low-Rise) was used for the Project trip generation analysis to describe the proposed Project.

In the focused traffic assessment prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc., it is proposed that the Project will be served by Calhoun Street and Avenue 43. This will include the extension of Calhoun Street south from its current terminus at Avenue 43, through the Project site south to Hopi Avenue. With the approval of a scoping agreement with the City, the focused analysis study area considered one area intersection – the intersection at Calhoun Street and Avenue 42 in the City of Indio – and the potential impacts the Project could have on it.

Discussion of Impacts

a) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

Existing Traffic Conditions in the Project Vicinity

The Project site is currently vacant and generates no traffic. The surrounding main roads include Calhoun Street and Avenue 42, which are operating at acceptable LOS as shown in the Table 8 below.

Table 8					
Existing (2022) Intersection Delay and Levels of Service					
Study Intersection	Traffic Control ¹	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
		Delay ²	LOS ³	Delay	LOS
1. Calhoun St. / Avenue 42	CSS	16.0	C	14.5	B

¹ CSS = Cross Street Stop
² Delay is shown in seconds/vehicle. For intersections with cross street stop control, Level of Service is based on average delay of the worst individual lane (or movements sharing a lane).
³ LOS = Level of Service

Project Trip Generation

The proposed Project will result in the development of up to 1,200 housing units. As shown in Table 9, the Project is forecast to generate approximately 8,088 daily trips, including 480 trips during the AM peak hour and 612 trips during the PM peak hour.

Table 9									
Project Trip Generation Summary									
Trip Generation Rates									
Land Use	ITE Code	Unit	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Daily
			% In	% Out	Rate	% In	% Out	Rate	
Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise)	220	1200 DU	10	30	40	32	19	51	6.74

Trips Generated									
Land Use	ITE Code	Unit	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Daily
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
PA-1 Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise)	220	340 DU	34	102	136	109	65	174	2,292
PA-2 Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise)	220	860 DU	86	258	344	275	163	438	5,796
TOTAL			120	360	480	384	228	612	8,088

Trip Generation Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition (2021).
DU = Dwelling Units; TSF = Thousand Square Feet

Traffic Analysis

Per City requirements, the following four scenarios at the Calhoun Street / Avenue 42 intersection were analyzed during the weekday AM and PM peak hours:

- Existing (2022) Conditions
- Existing Plus Project Conditions
- Long Range Future Conditions

The City’s standards provide that a traffic impact is significant if LOS degraded below LOS D because of the proposed Project, or if it caused an intersection already at LOS E to degrade to LOS F. At intersections, an increase in delay of 2 seconds or more at existing LOS E intersections, or 1 second or more at LOS F intersections caused by the Project would also be considered a significant impact.

	Traffic Control ¹	AM		PM	
		Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
Existing (2022) Conditions	CSS	16.0	C	14.5	B
Existing Plus Project Conditions	CSS	26.7	C	19.5	B
Long Range Future – without improvements	CSS	52.6	F	26.3	D
Long Range Future – with improvements	TS	21.7	C	21.2	C

¹ CSS = Cross Street Stop; TS = Traffic Signal
Source: 2022 Focused Study prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc.

The analysis found that the Calhoun Street and Avenue 42 intersection would operate at an acceptable level of service (LOS D or better) for existing conditions and existing plus Project conditions, as shown in Table 10. However, under existing plus Project conditions, the peak hour turn movement volumes would warrant a traffic signal at this location. In addition, the intersection would operate below an acceptable LOS (LOS F) under long range future conditions without traffic signal improvements. To address these operational deficiencies for existing plus Project and long range future conditions, a traffic signal at the intersection of Calhoun Street and Avenue 42 must be installed. The Project’s “fair share” financial

contribution was calculated in the traffic study and is included in Mitigation Measure TRA-1. With implementation of this mitigation measure, impacts associated with the City's General Plan policies for intersection turning volumes and LOS will be reduced to less than significant levels.

Additional roadway improvements are also necessary to provide site access and on-site circulation, and should be constructed in conjunction with site development, prior to occupancy of each PA. These improvements are also outlined in MM TRA-1 and include: the extension of Calhoun Street as a 2-lane Collector from Avenue 43 to Hopi Avenue; the improvement of Avenue 43 to a full-section width as a 2-lane Collector; improvements to the intersection of Calhoun Street and Avenue 43; and site access driveways.

Alternative Transportation Planning

Based on the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) Active Transportation Plan, there are currently bicycle facilities located along Avenue 42, Jackson Street and Golf Center Parkway.⁶⁷ According to the City of Indio General Plan, bike lanes are planned for Avenue 43 east of Calhoun Street.⁶⁸ Project residents will have direct access to these facilities at buildout.

SunLine Transit Agency provides bus transit services to the Coachella Valley, including the City of Indio. The proposed Project site is currently served by SunLine. The nearest existing bus stop, serviced by Route 8, is on Jackson Street, less than 1 mile from the Project site.

The proposed Project will not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. No Project related impact is anticipated.

Summary

Based on the traffic analysis, the Project site would generate up to 8,088 daily vehicle trips. To keep the Calhoun/Avenue 42 intersection at an acceptable level of service during peak hours, off-site improvements identified through the focused study are required to improve future traffic conditions at Project buildout. With implementation of MM TRA-1, impacts associated with traffic will be reduced to less than significant levels.

- b) No Impact.** As of 2018, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines require the use of Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) as a measure for identifying transportation impacts, as a replacement to LOS. The City of Indio has not adopted regulations or thresholds pertaining to VMT, but uses guidelines from the County of Riverside Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service, Vehicle Miles Traveled.⁶⁹ These guidelines are based on the Governor's Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts on CEQA.

⁶⁷ CVAG Active Transportation Plan 2016, Table 4-17 and 4-18.

⁶⁸ City of Indio General Plan Update 2040, figure 4-1.

⁶⁹ County of Riverside, 2020, Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service Vehicle Miles Traveled.

The Riverside County guidelines establish criteria which, if met, a Project is not required to submit detailed VMT analysis. These criteria include the following:⁷⁰

- Small Projects (194 multi-family dwelling units);
- Projects near high quality transit;
- Affordable housing;
- Residential and office Projects in an area under VMT thresholds as shown on screening maps (Low VMT Area).

The proposed Project does not meet the screening thresholds for small Projects, high quality transit, or affordable housing, however, it does meet the map-based screening threshold. Urban Crossroads reviewed Riverside County's low VMT area screening map for Daily Residential Home Based VMT per Capita and found that the proposed Project is in a zone with VMT less than the Riverside County average. It can thus be concluded that no further VMT analysis is needed.⁷¹

As discussed above, the proposed Project is expected to have less than significant impacts on traffic flows and Level of Service standards with the implementation of mitigation measures. These off-site improvements will improve the traffic flow in the area, and therefore, at this time, the Project will not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b).

- c, d) No Impact.** Access to the proposed Project will be provided on Avenue 43 and Calhoun Street. Regional access to the site will be provided via Interstate-10, Highway 111, and major arterials, including Jackson Street and Golf Center Parkway.

Prior to construction, both the Fire Department and Police Department will review the site plan to ensure safety measures are addressed, including emergency access and geometric design. Therefore, the proposed Project will not result in increased hazards due to geometric design features or inadequate emergency access.

Mitigation Measures:

TRA-1 Traffic Study Recommendations and Mitigation Measures

- 1. Traffic Signal Installation, Fair Share Payment:** The Project will be partially responsible and contribute on a fair share basis for installation of the new intersection at Calhoun Street and Avenue 42, which are needed for existing plus Project conditions and long range conditions. The traffic analysis calculated the Project's fair share to be 56.5% for the AM peak hour, and 58.5% of the PM peak hour. Fair share shall be imposed at the discretion of the City.

⁷⁰ County of Riverside, 2020, Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service Vehicle Miles Traveled, Figure 3.

⁷¹ Ave 43 / Calhoun St Residential Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Analysis prepared by Urban Crossroads, Inc. for Terra Nova Planning and Research, Inc.

2. Calhoun Street Extension

Construct Calhoun Street to its ultimate full-section width as a 2-lane Collector from the Project's northerly boundary at Avenue 43 to Hopi Avenue in compliance with the applicable City of Indio standards. Consistent with the existing Calhoun Street configuration north of Avenue 43, provide 44' curb-to-curb pavement width including two 11' vehicle lanes (1 northbound / 1 southbound), two 5' bicycle lanes (1 northbound / 1 southbound), and a 12' two-way-left-turn-lane (TWLTL). In addition, 20' parkways with sidewalks should be accommodated.

3. Avenue 43 Improvements

Improve Avenue 43 to its ultimate full-section width as a 2-lane Collector with a minimum 44' curb-to-curb pavement width including two 11' vehicle lanes (1 eastbound / 1 westbound), two 5' bicycle lanes (1 eastbound / 1 westbound), and a 12' two-way-left-turn-lane (TWLTL) from the Project's westerly boundary to the easterly Project boundary. In addition, 20' parkways with sidewalks should be accommodated

4. Calhoun Street / Avenue 43 Intersection Improvements

The intersection of Calhoun Street and Avenue 43 shall provide 1 northbound left turn lane (100' turn bay), 1 northbound through-right lane, 1 southbound left turn lane, 1 southbound through-right lane, 1 eastbound left turn lane (100' turn bay with 90' transition), 1 eastbound through-right lane, 1 westbound left turn lane (100' turn bay with 90' transition), 1 westbound through-right lane. All way stop control is anticipated to provide acceptable operations. Crosswalks on all legs of the intersection should also be constructed.

5. Site Access. For PA 1 access, construct one driveway onto Avenue 43 and two driveways onto Calhoun Street (extended). For PA 2 access, construct 2 driveways onto Avenue 43 and three driveways onto Calhoun Street (extended).

Monitoring:

TRA-A The City Engineer shall approve project improvement plans prior to the issuance of grading permits, including an agreement to pay fair share contributions for off-site improvements. On-site traffic signs and striping should be implemented in conjunction with detailed construction plans for the Project site.

Responsible Parties: Project applicant, project engineer, City Engineer.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES a) Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or		✓		
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.		✓		

Sources: Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report, prepared by CRM TECH. August 24, 2022.

Environmental Setting

As discussed in Section V, Cultural Resources, the City of Indio is located on the traditional territory of the Desert Cahuilla, who historically has settlements throughout the Coachella Valley.

The Cahuilla were Takic-speaking people. Anthropologists generally divide them into three groups based on their geographic setting: the Pass Cahuilla of the San Gorgonio Pass-Palm Springs area, the Mountain Cahuilla of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains and the Cahuilla Valley, and the Desert Cahuilla of the eastern Coachella Valley. The Cahuilla subsisted primarily on the hunting and gathering of wild and cultivated foods, using a mobility system adapted to the availability of seasonal resources. When Holocene Lake Cahuilla was full, the Cahuilla would use resources provided by the fresh water, and when it was desiccated, they would instead rely on terrestrial resources as well as the resources made available in the cooler temperatures at higher elevations.

Today, Native Americans of Pass or Desert Cahuilla heritage are mostly affiliated with on or more of the Indian reservations in and near the Coachella Valley, including Cabazon, Augustine, Torres Martinez, Twenty-nine Palms, Agua Caliente, and Morongo.

Discussion of Impacts

a - i, ii) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.

Native American Consultation

The State Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted on April 18, 2022 by CRM Tech to request a record search in the Commission's sacred lands file. In a letter dated May 25, 2022, NAHC identified no Native American cultural resources on the site but recommended contacting local tribes regarding potential Native American Cultural resources on-site.

Shortly after contacting the NAHC CRM TECH contacted the nearby Cabazon Band of Mission Indians and the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians for information they may have about tribal cultural resources in the project vicinity and to invite tribal participation in the upcoming archaeological fieldwork. On May 19, 2022, CRM TECH attended a meeting of the Torres Martinez Cultural Committee at the Tribe's request to discuss the proposed Project in relation to the cultural resources study and previous archaeological findings in the vicinity. A representative of the Torres Martinez Tribe also participated in the field survey conducted by CRM TECH on May 26, 2022, however the Tribe has not provided CRM TECH with any further input. To date, no response has been received from the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians.

The City is conducting Tribal consultation, as required by SB 18 and AB 52. The results of consultation will be included either as mitigation prior to the adoption of the Initial Study, or as conditions of approval. However, the mitigation measure included in Section V, Cultural Resources, requires that an archaeologist be consulted should any resources be identified during grading, to assure that impacts are reduced to less than significant levels. Should a consulting tribe request additional mitigation, it will be added to this Initial Study or to conditions of approval for the Project.

Mitigation Measures: See Section V.

Monitoring: See Section V.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?			✓	
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?			✓	

Sources: City of Indio General Plan; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; CVWD 2020 Regional Urban Water Management Plan; Valley Sanitation, Treatment Operations.

Environmental Setting

Domestic Water

The Project site is located within the Indio Water Authority (IWA) service area for domestic water. The City of Indio's largest water supply source is groundwater from the Indio Subbasin (Whitewater River), one of four subbasins of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basins. Because the Whitewater River Basin is an un-adjudicated basin, IWA does not hold specific water rights, but rather pumps

supplies from the aquifer as needed to meet demands within its service area. IWA currently has 20 operational groundwater wells. IWA's total current urban water demand was 19,880 AFY in 2020.⁷²

Wastewater Treatment Provider and City's Sewer System

Sewer service for the Project site is provided by the Valley Sanitary District (VSD). VSD provides wastewater collection and treatment services for 98% of the City's population. The collection system for VSD consists of approximately 246 miles of sanitary sewer pipes and 5 active pump stations, eight siphons, and a wastewater treatment plant.⁷³ VSD is partnering with the City and IWA to complement a recycled water program. VSD currently treats approximately 6.5 million gallons per day through an activated sludge process and has a capacity of 9.5 million gallons per day. An additional 0.5 million gallons per day is treated through oxidation ponds, which have a capacity of 2.5 million gallons per day.⁷⁴

Floodplain Management

In the City of Indio, local drainage facilities generally convey runoff from local streets and lots to the regional facilities. Regional drainage is managed by the Coachella Valley Water District, which maintains the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, and the La Quinta Evacuation Channel. The local storm drain system consists of gutters, storm drains, and channels.

Solid Waste Management

Solid waste services in the City of Indio are provided by Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services. Burrtec collects residential garbage and recyclables on a weekly basis. Trash is taken to the Indio/Coachella Valley Waste Transfer Station in Coachella, which has a permitted maximum tonnage of 1,100 tons per day (tpd) of solid waste and a maximum capacity of 12,685 cubic yards per day.⁷⁵ The facility can receive agricultural, construction and demolition, green material, industrial, inert, metal, mixed municipal, and tire wastes. Once waste enters the Indio/Coachella Valley Waste Transfer Station, it enters the Riverside County waste stream, is sorted, and sent to one of the Riverside County landfills (Badlands, Blythe, Desert Center, El Sobrante, Lamb Canyon, Mecca Landfill II, and Oasis), which have a remaining combined capacity of 181,783,284 cubic yards.⁷⁶

Discussion of Impacts

a-c) Less Than Significant Impact.

Water

The proposed Project will be connected to the existing domestic water pipelines in the Avenue 43 right of way, and thus will not require the relocation of facilities. As shown in Table 6 in Section X, Hydrology and Water Quality, the total projected water demand for the Project is 287.79 acre-feet per year (AFY). This accounts for 0.9% of the IWA's total planned increases in demand of 30,997 AFY by 2045.

⁷² 2020 Regional Urban Water Management Plan.

⁷³ City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update, 9-6.

⁷⁴ Valley Sanitary District, Treatment Operations <https://www.valley-sanitary.org/treatment-operations> (Accessed 08/20/2022).

⁷⁵ City of Indio EIR for the 2040 General Plan Update, 4.16-9.

⁷⁶ City of Indio EIR for the 2040 General Plan Update, 4.16-10.

In developing projections for future water demand, the IWA partially bases its analysis on the City's General Plan. The Project is consistent with the Connected Neighborhood designation in the General Plan, and thus its impacts to water demand can be expected to be accounted for in the IWA's projections. Additionally, the Project will be required to implement all water conservation measures imposed by the IWA for normal and drought conditions.

In conclusion, the Project's impacts related to domestic water demand are anticipated to be less than significant.

Wastewater Treatment

The Project site is served by VSD for wastewater collection and treatment services. The Project will connect to the existing sewer line in Avenue 43 and will extend the existing infrastructure into the site. Sewage will be conveyed to the VSD wastewater treatment plant located at 45500 Van Buren Street. Wastewater discharges from the Project can be expected to be typical of residential uses and would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the VSD or Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Drainage System

According to a Preliminary Drainage Report prepared for this Project, retention basins and underground storage tanks for the 100-year, 24-hour storm event will be provided on-site. Runoff from the site will be conveyed to the retention basins via private streets, overland flows, and storm drain systems. The ultimate outfall for PA-1 is along the southern property line at Commanche Street. Runoff from PA-2 will drain southeasterly and will overflow to Hopi Avenue. In accordance with City requirements, any on-site basin that is proposed to be less than 72" deep at maximum capacity will drain within 72 hours.

The Project will implement standard Best Management Practices (BMP) through the preparation of a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to reduce pollutants of concern and reduce any project-related impacts to water quality, as required by the City in order to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Project-related impacts to stormwater drainage will be less than significant.

Electricity

The Project connect to the existing IID infrastructure in the Project area. The project will not require the addition or expansion of electric power facilities.

Natural Gas

Natural gas will be provided to the Project by Southern California Gas (SoCalGas). The Project will connect to existing SoCalGas infrastructure in the Project area. The Project will not require the addition or expansion of natural gas facilities.

Telecommunications

The Project will provide local connections to the existing Frontier Communications infrastructure in the project area. The Project will not require to the addition or expansion of telecommunication facilities.

- d, e) Less than Significant Impact.** Solid Waste services will be provided to the project site by Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services (Burrtec). Solid waste generated by the city is either recycled, reused, transformed at a waste-to-energy facility, or disposed of at one of the Riverside County landfills. The county landfills have a maximum permitted capacity of 266,159,998 cubic yards and a remaining capacity of 181,783,284 cubic yards.⁷⁷

Table 11				
Estimated Solid Waste Disposal at the Project Buildout				
Land Use	CIWMB Disposal Rates	Proposed	Solid Waste Disposal (pounds per day)	Solid Waste Disposal (tons per year)
Multi-Family Residential	5.31 pounds/dwelling unit/day	1200 DU	6,372	1,163
TOTAL				1,163
TOTAL (with 50% diversion)				581.5
*Estimated Solid Waste Generation Rates by CalRecycle, based on 1996 Draft Program EIR for Rye Canyon Business Park, Santa Clarita. https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/WasteCharacterization/General/Rates , Accessed July 2022.				

As shown in Table 11, the Project is estimated to generate 581.5 tons of solid waste per year, which is less than 0.007 % of the County’s remaining capacity.⁷⁸ Burrtec is responsible for maintaining standards that assure that all waste is handled in a manner that meets local, state, and federal standards. These requirements will assure that impacts associated with solid waste disposal remain less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

⁷⁷ City of Indio EIR for the 2040 General Plan Update, Table 4.16-5.

⁷⁸ Assumes that 1 CY of residential solid waste is equivalent to 95 lbs. “Volume to Weight Conversion Factors,” US EPA Office of Resource Conversion and Recovery (2016).

XX. WILDFIRE If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?				✓

Sources: City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update; California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services – My Hazards.

Environmental Setting

Large areas of California are at risk of fires due to the weather, topography, and native vegetation. It continues to experience longer and more severe wildfire seasons, in part as a result of climate change and fire suppression techniques.

Wildfires occur in undeveloped areas and can spread to urban areas where the landscape and structures are not designed and maintained to be ignition resistant. A wildland-urban interface is the transition area between urban development and open space or “wildland” areas. The potential for wildland fires represents a hazard where development is adjacent to open space or within proximity to wildland fuels or designated fire severity zones.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) has mapped areas of significant fire hazards in the state in the MyHazards tool, through its Fire and Resources Assessment Program (FRAP). The City of Indio is not identified as an area of moderate, high, or very high hazard according to FRAP.⁷⁹ The City’s 2040 General Plan Update found that the direct impacts of wildfire are not a major concern for Indio.

Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** The primary emergency evacuation routes in the City include Interstate 10, State Route 86, Highway 111, Jefferson Street, Monroe Street, and Jackson Street. The project site is located in proximity to Interstate 10 and Jackson Street, which provides access in an emergency. Development on the subject property would not substantially impair the City’s adopted emergency evacuation and response plans⁸⁰ as the Project is not proposing to amend these routes to impede emergency evacuation. No impact is anticipated.
- b) **No Impact.** The Project area is not located within a wildfire hazard severity zone nor a wildland-urban interface (WUI). The Project site is in an urban area, surrounded by residential and commercial developments, and is miles from an area of wildland fire potential. Project occupants may experience decreases in air quality as a result of wildfires in the region, however, due to the Project site’s distance from state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. No impact is anticipated.
- c) **No Impact.** The Project will not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that could exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. No impact is anticipated.
- d) **No Impact.** The Project site is located on a relatively flat area on the floor of the Coachella Valley where there is no potential for landslide, or post-fire slope instability. According to FEMA’s National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) Viewer, the Project site is in an area with a minimal flood hazard,⁸¹ that is acceptable for development provided the finished floor elevations are 1-foot above the adjacent 100-year storm water elevations. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks such as downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. No impact is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

Monitoring: None required.

⁷⁹ California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services – My Hazards

⁸⁰ Final EIR for the City of Indio 2040 General Plan Update.

⁸¹ The Project is located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Zone “X” designation, which is defined as “areas of 0.2% annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1-foot or with drainages area less than 1 square mile”.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

<p>NOTE: If there are significant environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated and no feasible Project alternatives are available, then complete the mandatory findings of significance and attach to this initial study as an appendix. This is the first step for starting the environmental impact report (EIR) process.</p> <p>Does the Project:</p>	<p>Potentially Significant Impact</p>	<p>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>a) Does the Project have the potential to 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, 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?</p>		<p>✓</p>		
<p>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)?</p>			<p>✓</p>	
<p>c) Does the Project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?</p>			<p>✓</p>	

a) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

Biological Resources: The Project site is not located within a CVMSHCP-designated conservation area and does not contain any wildlife corridors or biological linkage areas.

On-site vegetation could provide habitat for nesting birds; therefore, a pre-construction survey will be required to avoid impacts to burrowing owl and nesting thrashers. In addition, the site is subject to payment of the Development Mitigation Fee to mitigate potential impacts to covered species under the CVMSHCP.

The construction of the Project has the potential to impact burrowing owls and nesting birds, but the mitigation measures included in this document will reduce those impacts to less than significant levels. The proposed Project will not significantly reduce fish or wildlife habitat or otherwise adversely impact a fish or wildlife species.

Cultural Resources: No cultural resources, including tribal cultural, archaeological, or historical resources of significance, are known to exist within the Project site. Since the Project will involve grading and excavation, the potential remains for unknown resources to be uncovered. The Mitigation measures provided in Section V, Cultural Resources, of this document will ensure that impacts to cultural and/or tribal resources are less than significant in the unlikely event that they are discovered during construction of the Project. Impacts to important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory will be less than significant.

In conclusion, there will be no significant environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated. Project-related impacts, including cumulative impacts, are considered less than significant.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** A significant impact could occur if the Project, in conjunction with related projects, were to result in impacts that would be less than significant in isolation but would be significant when viewed together. The impacts of the proposed Project are individually limited and not cumulatively considerable. The Project is consistent with the site's designations in the City of Indio General Plan and Zoning Code, and thus would not significantly intensify land use in the area beyond what is envisioned by the City. All environmental impacts that could occur as a result of the Project would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation measures included in this document, and even when viewed with other closely related past, present, or foreseeable future projects, would not be significant.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project will be subject to all applicable requirements in the City's Municipal Code, as well as other applicable standards, laws, and mitigation measures discussed in this document. Implementation of these requirements ensures that the Project will not have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Impacts will be less than significant.

Appendix A
Air Quality and GHG Modeling: CalEEMod Outputs

Appendix B
Biological Resources Assessment and CVMSHCP Compliance Report

Appendix C
Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report

Appendix D
Paleontological Resources Assessment Report

Appendix E
Noise Impact Analysis

Appendix F
Focused Traffic Assessment and VMT Screening Analysis