



## ***INITIAL STUDY***

### ***BACKGROUND INFORMATION***

<b>Project Title:</b>	Coastal Enterprises LLC (Vierra Canyon Self Storage)
<b>File No.:</b>	PLN210090
<b>Project Location:</b>	17645 Vierra Canyon Road, Salinas
<b>Name of Property Owner:</b>	Coastal Investment Enterprises LLC
<b>Name of Applicant:</b>	Will Tucker
<b>Assessor's Parcel Number(s):</b>	125-171-025-000
<b>Acreage of Property:</b>	3.0 acres (130,734 square feet)
<b>General Plan Designation:</b>	Commercial
<b>Zoning District:</b>	Light Commercial with a Design Control overlay (LC-D)
<b>Lead Agency:</b>	County of Monterey – Housing and Community Development
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Harris & Associates (Alec Barton, AICP, and David J. R. Mack, AICP, and Joseph Sidor) on behalf of HCD-Planning
<b>Date Prepared:</b>	April 18, 2023
<b>Contact Person:</b>	Phil Angelo, Associate Planner
<b>Phone Number:</b>	(831) 784-5731

## ***II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING***

**A. Description of Project:** The project would involve the construction of a 57,560 square foot mini storage facility on a vacant parcel located at 17645 Vierra Canyon Road in the Prunedale area of unincorporated Monterey County (see Vicinity Map at Figure 1 and Site Plan at Figure 2), in the North County Area Plan. (Assessor's Parcel Number: 125-171-025-000)

The mini storage facility would consist of eight (8) buildings (A – H) ranging in size from 4,160 square feet to 9,277 square feet with a total of 353 units. Thirteen (13) of these units would be ADA accessible. A single-story office building would be attached to building G, and a 28 foot tall 60,000 gallon water tank would be constructed west of Building B. Associated site improvements include site perimeter/retaining walls and fences; landscaping and tree plantings; frontage improvements along Vierra Canyon Road including widening the road and installing a curb, gutter, and sidewalk; and post-construction stormwater treatment facilities. The approximately 1,590 linear feet of retaining walls would range in height from 1 to 22 feet. Building coverage would constitute approximately 45 percent of the parcel. Landscaping would cover an additional 15,161 square feet, or 11.9 percent of the site area. Hardscape would cover approximately 54,723 square feet, or 43 percent of the project site. Associated grading would involve over 12,700 cubic yards of cut and fill. Nine (9) trees, including five (5) Coast Live oak trees ranging from 4 inches to 24 inches in diameter would be removed.

The required Combined Development Permit for the project would consist of the following entitlements:

- 1) Use Permit and Design Approval to allow construction of a 57,560 square foot mini storage facility;
- 2) Use Permit to allow removal of five (5) protected oak trees, one of which is a landmark tree;
- 3) Use Permit to allow development on slopes in excess of 25 percent, consisting of regrading 4,965 square feet of manmade slopes; and
- 4) Use permit to allow two on-site advertising signs totaling 35 square feet in aggregate.

(Source IX.1, 23)

**B. Surrounding Land Uses and Environmental Setting:** The site is in the community of Prunedale. To the west is the Prunetree shopping center followed by Highway 101. Low density residential uses are to the east, north, and south, including single-family homes and accessory structures. The project site and parcels to the north and west are zoned for light commercial uses. Parcels to the south and east are zoned for low density residential uses.

The property was formerly developed with a residence and several accessory structures. However, all onsite structures were demolished pursuant to demolition permit 22CP00531 issued in 2022, therefore the environmental baseline for the project is a vacant parcel.

The project area is located in a State Responsibility Area (SRA) and is designated as a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. To reduce wildfire risk to the project site, the proposed development would be constructed according to the latest California Building Code standards and would be required to maintain defensible space areas within 100 feet of all project structures. (Source IX.1, 4, 7, 8, 15, 25)

**C. Other public agencies whose approval is required:** Subsequent to approval of the required discretionary permits (entitlements) identified above, the applicant would be required to obtain ministerial permits (e.g., construction permit) from County of Monterey Housing and Community Development (HCD) – Building Services, and an encroachment permit from Public Works, Facilities, & Parks. (Source IX.1, 4, 26)

Figure 1 – Vicinity Map (Source IX.7)

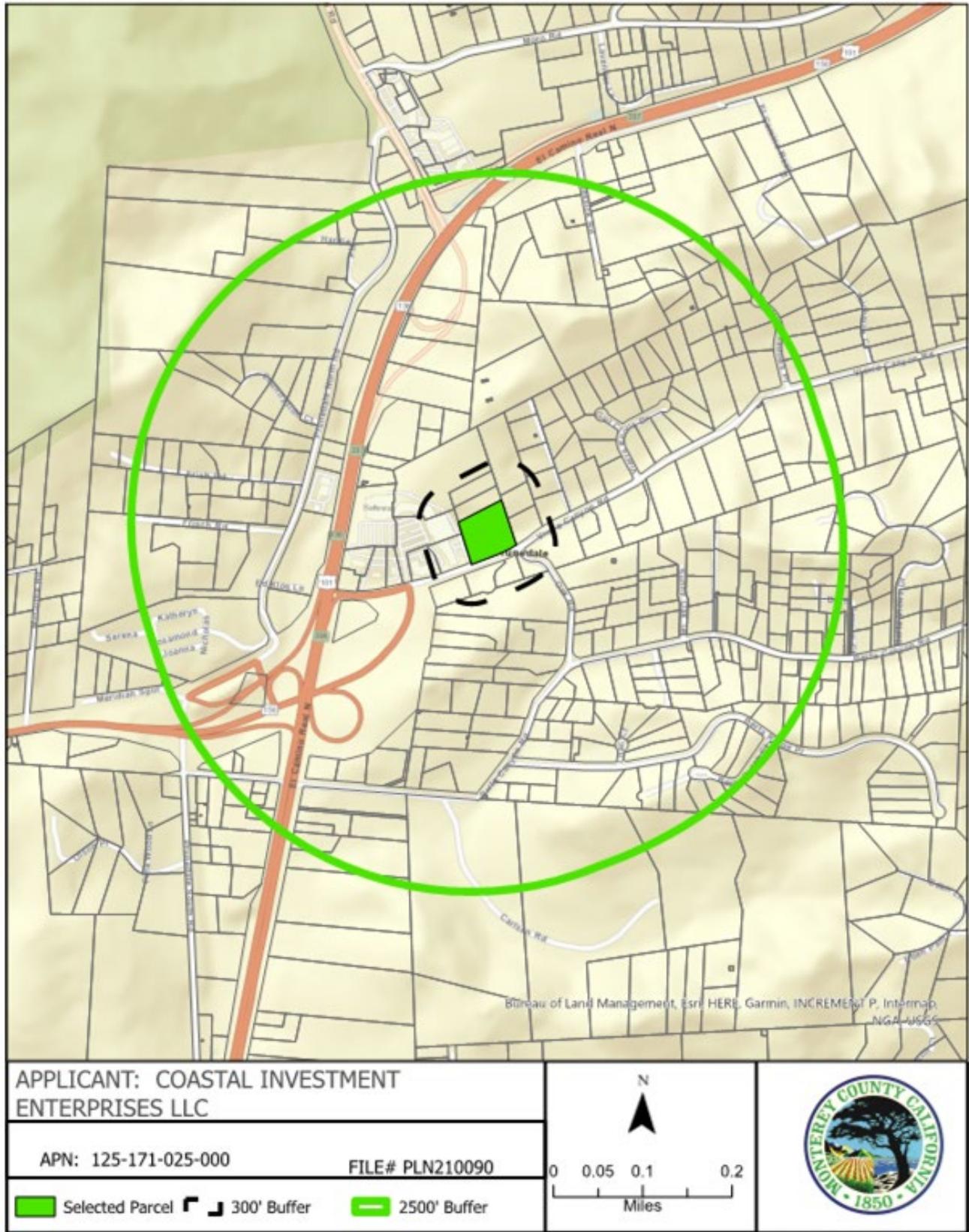
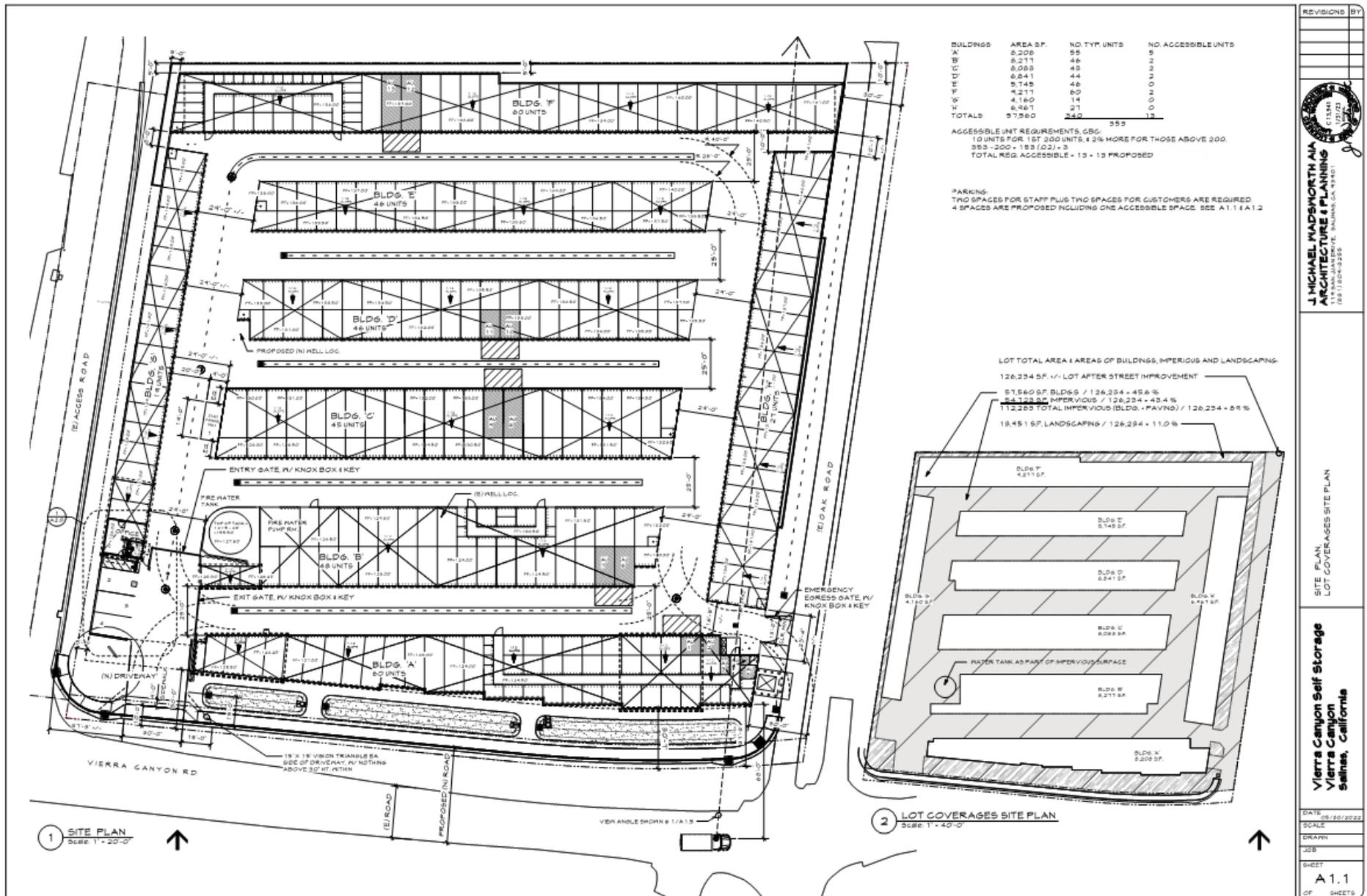


Figure 2 – Proposed Site Plan (Source IX.1)



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DATE: 09/01/2022  
 SCALE:  
 DRAWN:  
 JOB:  
 SHEET:  
 A.1.1  
 OF SHEETS

Vierra Canyon Self Storage  
 Vierra Canyon  
 Salinas, California



Figure 4 – Proposed Colors (Source IX.1)



### **III. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER APPLICABLE LOCAL AND STATE PLANS AND MANDATED LAWS**

Use the list below to indicate plans applicable to the project and verify their consistency or non-consistency with project implementation.

General Plan/Area Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality Mgmt. Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specific Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Airport Land Use Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water Quality Control Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local Coastal Program-LUP	<input type="checkbox"/>

General Plan/Area Plan: The project is within the inland area of unincorporated Monterey County and follows the 2010 General Plan and North County Area Plan, which is an element of the 2010 General Plan. The North County Area Plan includes policies regarding land use, circulation, conservation/open space, safety, public services, and agriculture. The project would involve the construction of self-storage buildings and installation of landscaping around the parcel. As proposed the project is consistent with the 2010 General Plan’s policies regarding land use (LU-1.3, -1.4, -1.9, -1.13) and commercial development (LU-4.1a, -4.2, -4.3, -4.4), and the North County Area Plan’s policies involving light commercial development. (Source: IX.1, 2, 3, 23) **CONSISTENT.**

Air Quality Management Plan: The 2012–2015 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) for the Monterey Bay region addresses attainment and maintenance of state and federal ambient air quality standards within the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which includes unincorporated Prunedale. California Air Resources Board (CARB) uses ambient data from each air monitoring site in the NCCAB to calculate Expected Peak Day Concentration over a consecutive three-year period. Consistency with the AQMP is an indication that the project avoids contributing to a cumulative adverse impact on air quality; not an indication of project specific impacts which are evaluated according to the Monterey Bay Air Resources District’s (MBARD) adopted thresholds of significance. The project’s construction emissions that would temporarily emit precursors of ozone are accommodated in the emission inventories of state- and federally required air plans. The proposed project grading per day would not surpass the construction activity with potential significant impacts for PM<sub>10</sub> 2.2 acres per day screening threshold. The proposed construction would not result in significant construction related air quality impacts nor construction related pollutant concentrations. (Source: IX.1, 5, 28) **CONSISTENT.**

Water Quality Control Plan. The subject property lies within Region 3 of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (CCRWQCB) which regulates sources of water quality related issues resulting in actual or potential impairment or degradation of beneficial uses, or the overall degradation of water quality, within the Central Coast Basin. Operation of the project would not generate pollutant runoff in amounts that would cause degradation of water quality. In accordance with Chapters 16.12 and 16.14 of the Monterey County Code (MCC), the proposed project shall be required to submit a drainage and erosion control plan to HCD-Environmental Services prior to issuance of construction permits. The CCRWQCB has designated the Director of Health as the administrator of the individual sewage disposal regulations, conditional upon County authorities enforcing the Regional Water

Quality Control Plan, Central Coast Basin (Basin Plan). These regulations are codified in MCC Chapter 15.20. (Source: IX.1, 20, 21) **CONSISTENT.**

#### ***IV. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED AND DETERMINATION***

##### **A. FACTORS**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, as discussed within the checklist on the following pages.

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

Some proposed applications that are not exempt from CEQA review may have little or no potential for adverse environmental impact related to most of the topics in the Environmental Checklist; and/or potential impacts may involve only a few limited subject areas. These types of projects are generally minor in scope, located in a non-sensitive environment, and are easily identifiable and without public controversy. For the environmental issue areas where there is no potential for significant environmental impact (and not checked above), the following finding can be made using the project description, environmental setting, or other information as supporting evidence.

- Check here if this finding is not applicable

**FINDING:** For the above referenced topics that are not checked off, there is no potential for significant environmental impact to occur from either construction, operation or maintenance of the proposed project; and no further discussion in the Environmental Checklist is necessary.

##### **EVIDENCE:**

1. Aesthetics. See Section VI.1.
2. Agriculture and Forest Resources. The project site is located on a vacant parcel in an existing Light Commercial with Design Control overlay (LC-D) zoning district and is

designated as Urban and Built-Up Land under the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. No farmland would be converted to non-agricultural uses as a result of the project, and the project site is not under a Williamson Act contract nor located in or adjacent to agriculturally designated lands. The project involves the overall removal of nine (9) Coast Live oak trees ranging from 4 inches to 24 inches in diameter, along with bottlebrush and other shrubs; however, only five (5) trees are of a large enough diameter to be counted as removal under MCC. The property does not contain tree cover on more than 0.5 hectare (1.23 acres) nor has a tree canopy cover of more than 10% of the property; hence, the site does not meet the definition of forestlands. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts to agriculture or forest resources. *No Impact.* (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, 25)

3. Air Quality. See Section VI.3.
4. Biological Resources. See Section VI.4.
5. Cultural Resources. See Section VI.5.
6. Energy. See Section VI.6.
7. Geology and Soils. See Section VI.7
8. Greenhouse Gas Emissions. See Section VI.8.
9. Hazards/Hazardous Materials. See Section VI.9
10. Hydrology/Water Quality. See Section IV.10
11. Land Use and Planning. See Section IV.11
12. Mineral Resources. No mineral resources have been identified within the project site or would be affected by this project. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts to mineral resources. *No Impact.* (Source: IX. 1, 3, 8, 16)
13. Noise. See Section IV.13.
14. Population/Housing. The proposed project would involve the construction of a 57,560 square foot mini storage facility. The project site is zoned Light Commercial with a Design Control Overlay (LC-D) and does not include any existing or proposed residences. The project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial population growth in the area, as the facility is anticipated to have three employees and the project scope does not include provisioning of infrastructure beyond what would serve the self-storage use (such as additional roads, utility systems, etc.). The project would not displace, alter the location, distribution, or density of human population in the area in any way, or create a demand for additional or replacement housing. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts related to population and housing. *No Impact.* (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 8, 17, 23)
15. Public Services. The proposed project would involve the construction of a new 57,560 square foot mini storage facility. The project site is located in the unincorporated

community of Prunedale near the intersection of Highway 101 and California State Route 156 and is served by the North County Fire Protection District (structural) and Cal Fire (wildfire), Monterey County Sheriff's Department, and North Monterey County Unified School District. The project would not create substantial new demand for public services that would result in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services. The project would have no measurable effect on existing public services in that the project would not result in a significant increase in demand and would not require expansion of services to serve the project. County departments and service providers reviewed the project application and did not identify any impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts related to public services. *No Impact.* (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 17)

16. Recreation. As stated above, the project would involve the construction of a 57,560 square foot mini storage facility. The project would not result in an increase in the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks and other recreational facilities and would not cause substantial physical deterioration to these facilities. No parks, trail easements, or other recreational opportunities would be adversely impacted by the project, based on review of County records, and Figure LU8 (Land Use Plan) of the North County Area Plan. Therefore, the project would not create new or additional recreational demands and would not result in impacts to recreation resources. *No Impact.* (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3)
17. Transportation. See Section VI.17
18. Tribal Cultural Resources. See Section VI.18.
19. Utilities/Service Systems. The project would involve the construction of a new 57,560 square foot mini storage facility. The site currently contains two domestic wells, one of which will be decommissioned and the other would be replaced to provide potable water. The project site has an existing onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) which will be abandoned and replaced with a new OWTS system. The Monterey County Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) reviewed the project application and determined the project complies with applicable ordinances and regulations. Electricity would be provided by PG&E. Solid waste disposal would be provided by Waste Management, and the operational component of the project would not result in a substantial increase of solid waste production. Any excess construction materials from the proposed project would be hauled to landfill, and the amount of construction waste produced would not affect the permitted landfill capacity. Therefore, the project would not result in impacts related to utilities and service systems. *No Impact.* (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7)
20. Wildfire. See Section VI.20.

**B. DETERMINATION**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made 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.



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Signature  
*Phil Angelo, Associate Planner  
Monterey County HCD*

April 17, 2023

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Date

## ***V. 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 project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take into account the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, 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.
- 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) 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 impact to less than significance.

**VI. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST**

<b>1. AESTHETICS</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>					
a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 23)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 23)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 23, 24)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 23)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

The project would involve the construction of a 57,560 square foot mini storage facility on a vacant parcel located at 17645 Vierra Canyon Road in the Prunedale area of unincorporated Monterey County (see Vicinity Map at Figure 1a), in the North County Area Plan. The mini storage facility would consist of eight (8) buildings ranging in size from 4,160 square feet to 9,277 square feet with a total of 353 units. Thirteen (13) of these units would be accessible. In addition, the project would include a single-story office building and site perimeter walls and fences, and two on-site advertising signs totaling 35 square feet. The approximately 1,590 linear feet of retaining walls would range in height from 1 to 22 feet. Building coverage will constitute approximately 45 percent of the parcel. Landscaping will cover an additional 15,161 square feet, or 11.9 percent of the site area. Hardscape will cover approximately 54,723 square feet, or 43 percent of the project site. Associated grading would involve over 12,700 cubic yards of cut and fill. Nine (9) Coast Live oak trees ranging from 4 inches to 24 inches in diameter would be removed. (Source IX.1)

**Aesthetics 1(a and b) – No Impact**

The project site is an existing parcel zoned for light commercial (LC) that had been developed with residential buildings. The residential buildings have since been demolished and the property is now vacant/undeveloped. Per the North County Area Plan, Figure 15 – Scenic Highway Corridors & Visual Sensitivity Map, the project site is not located adjacent to an existing or proposed scenic highway/road and is not located in an area determined to be “sensitive” or “highly sensitive” for visual sensitivity. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts to a scenic vista; damage scenic resources including trees, rock outcroppings, and/or historic buildings (see also Section VI.5 below regarding historic resources) within a state scenic highway.

### **Aesthetics 1(c) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The existing visual character of the site is that of undeveloped/vacant land, with the Prunetree commercial shopping center and Highway 101 to the west, and low density residential development to the north and east. The property south of Vierra Canyon Road is more densely forested and also contains low density residential development.

The parcel is zoned light commercial (LC) with a Design Control Overlay (D) and the proposed project is consistent with the development provisions of the LC and D districts. The purpose of the “D” district is to regulate the design, size, location, and configuration, and colors/materials of structures. Projects within the “D” district shall provide drawings of the front, side and rear elevations as well as the proposed colors and materials (See Figures 3 and 4) to ensure consistency with surrounding development. The project has complied with the requirements of the “D” district. Colors and materials proposed include “Desert Sand” (grey) roofing materials, “Rustic Red” (red) doors, and “Light Stone” (brown/tan) paint. These colors and materials are consistent with the rural nature of surrounding residential development and the development style of the adjacent Prunetree shopping center. The project would also include two onsite advertising signs, totally 35 square feet. Their size complies with the maximum for D zoning districts pursuant to Title 21 section 21.60.11..B, which will assure they don’t intrude on the visual character of the area.

The project would involve the removal of nine (9) Coast live oak trees ranging from 4 inches to 24 inches in diameter, along with non-native weedy grasses. Of the nine trees, only five oaks (5) are sized big enough [greater than six inches in diameter at breast height (dbh)] to require a permit. The project includes a request for a Use Permit to allow the removal of the five (5) oak trees. However, the removal of trees would not substantially impair the visual character of the surrounding area, due to replacement tree plantings and landscaping. To offset the proposed tree and vegetation removal, the applicant proposes to replant (18) oak trees around the north, eastern, and southern boundaries, along with a mix of perennials and shrubs (See Sheet L1.1 – Landscape Plan – Source IX.1), which would screen the site from the roadway and surrounding properties.

Additionally, the project was referred to the North County Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) on September 7, 2022. One of the LUAC’s focuses is on site design, and the LUAC recommended approval of the project as proposed.

Therefore, the project would not substantially degrade the visual character of the immediate or surrounding area; and would result in a **less than significant** impact to scenic resources and the surrounding visual character of the area.

### **Aesthetics 1(d) – Less Than Significant Impact**

Existing night-time lighting on the site and in the vicinity is limited to exterior lighting associated with the existing adjacent light commercial shopping center (Prunetree) and other residences in the area, which are dispersed over a wide area. Although exterior lighting would be incorporated into the proposed development, the project would be required to comply with Design Guidelines for Exterior Lighting pursuant to 2010 General Plan Policy LU-1.13 and Monterey County Code section 21.18.070.E., which requires lighting to be unobtrusive, reduce off-site glare, and light only an intended area. Additionally, the project would be required to comply with County standard condition PD014(A), Lighting – Exterior Lighting Plan, which directs installation of exterior lighting that does not result in excessive illumination or off-site glare. Pursuant to compliance with

these requirements, the project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area, and potential impacts would be **less than significant**.

**2. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES**

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California 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.

<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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? 1. (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, 25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? 1. (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, 25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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))? 1. (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, 25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? 1. (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, 25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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? 1. (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, 25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:** See Sections II and IV.

### 3. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

<b>Would the project:</b>	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? (Source: IX. 1, 5, 28)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 5, 29)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in significant construction-related air quality impacts? (Source: IX. 1, 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? (Source: IX. 1, 5, 7, 13, 27)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? (Source: IX. 1, 6, 7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### **Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

Monterey County is located in the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which is comprised of Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties, covering an area of 5,159 square miles along the central coast of California. The Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) consists of all three counties within the NCCAB; therefore, the county is within the jurisdiction of the MBARD. MBARD is responsible for air monitoring, permitting, enforcement, long-range air quality planning, regulatory development, education and public information activities related to air pollution, as required by the California Clean Air Act (CCAA) and Amendments, and the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and Amendments.

#### **Air Quality 3(a) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The MBARD Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) is the applicable air quality plan for the project area. MBARD was required under the CCAA to develop an attainment plan to address ozone violations by July 1991. The CCAA requires MBARD to periodically prepare and submit a report to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) that assesses its progress toward attainment of the state ambient air quality standards (AAQS) (MBUAPCD 2008). The most recent update (2012–2015) is the seventh update to the 1991 AQMP. It shows that the region continues to make progress toward meeting the state ozone standard.

As described in the MBARD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, construction projects using typical construction equipment such as dump trucks, scrapers, bulldozers, compactors and front-end loaders that temporarily emit precursors of ozone [i.e., volatile organic compounds (VOC) or oxides of nitrogen (NOx)], are accommodated in the emission inventories of the AQMP. Projects that propose use of typical construction equipment and practices would not have a significant

impact on the attainment and maintenance of ozone AAQS and would therefore not conflict with the AQMP. As described in the Description of Project and Environmental Setting above, implementation of the project would not require any non-typical construction equipment or practices. Additionally, the project would not create a new source of long-term emissions. Operation of the facility is expected to employ up to 3–5 full-time employees and would not create a significant increase in population or workforce. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct any long-range air quality plans, and the impacts to the applicable air quality plan would be **less than significant**.

**Air Quality 3(b) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The state of California, under the CCAA, has established standards for criteria pollutants that are generally stricter than federal standards. The CARB establishes air quality standards in the state and measures progress in reducing pollutant emissions. As shown in **Table AQ-1**, North Central Coast Air Basin Attainment Status, the NCCAB is currently in nonattainment status for respirable particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). An area is designated transitional nonattainment if, during a single calendar year, the state standard is not exceeded more than three times at any monitoring location within the applicable district.

The project involves construction of eight single story self-storage buildings, with approximately 353 units total, including 13 ADA accessible units, 50,000-gallon water tank, and managers office. Construction activities would disturb the entire site (approximately 3.0 acres) and would include site preparation, grading, construction, paving, and architectural coating work.

<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>Averaging Time</b>	<b>California Standards</b>	<b>Federal Standards</b>
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	1 Hour	Attainment	No Federal Standard
	8 Hour		Attainment
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	Annual Arithmetic Mean	Nonattainment	No Federal Standard
	24 Hour		Unclassified <sup>(1)</sup>
Fine Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	Annual Arithmetic Mean	Attainment	Attainment
	24 Hour	No State Standard	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8 Hour	Unclassified	Unclassified/Attainment
	1 Hour		
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	Annual Arithmetic Mean	No State Standard	Attainment
	1 Hour	Attainment	No Federal Standard
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	Annual Arithmetic Mean	No State Standard	Attainment
	24 Hour	Attainment	Attainment
	1 Hour	Attainment	No Federal Standard

<sup>(1)</sup> Unclassified; indicates data are not sufficient for determining attainment or nonattainment.  
Source: CARB 2022 (IX.29)

Construction activities would result in temporary increases in air pollutant emissions. The MBARD CEQA Guidelines state that the 82 lbs/day threshold for construction emissions of PM<sub>10</sub> is the threshold for both individual and cumulative impacts on local air quality, since the background concentration reflects the collective contribution of PM<sub>10</sub> from nearby sources. Further, the MBARD CEQA Guidelines set a screening threshold of 2.2 acres of construction earthmoving per day, meaning that if a project results in less than 2.2 acres of earthmoving, the

project is assumed to be below the 82 lbs/day threshold of significance. As indicated on Note G.10 on sheet C2 of the projects plans, grading shall not exceed 2 acres a day. (Source IX.1) The MBARD does not identify quantitative thresholds for other criteria pollutants during construction. Construction projects using typical construction equipment, such as dump trucks, scrapers, bulldozers, compactors and front-end loaders that temporarily emit precursors of ozone [i.e., volatile organic compounds (VOC) or oxides of nitrogen (NOx)], are accommodated in the emission inventories of State- and federally required air plans and would not have a significant impact on the attainment and maintenance of ozone AAQS. However, a project that would use non-typical equipment would have the potential to result in a significant impact related to emissions of VOCs or NOx.

The proposed project would require typical construction practices and would not result in a significant impact related to precursors of ozone [i.e., volatile organic compounds (VOC) or oxides of nitrogen (NOx)]. Following construction, the project would have a less than significant impact on existing ambient air quality, as trips associated with self-storage facilities are infrequent (see also Section VI.17 for transportation analysis). Future operation and maintenance would be similar to existing conditions. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutants. The impact on ambient air quality would be **less than significant**.

#### **Air Quality 3(c) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The project is not expected to result in significant air quality related impacts. Construction would not move more than 2.2 acres per day during the construction phase, which is under the MBARD particulate matter guidelines. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

#### **Air Quality 3(d) – Less Than Significant Impact**

MBARD defines sensitive receptors for CEQA purposes as any residence including private homes, condominiums, apartments, and living quarters; education resources such as preschools and kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) schools; daycare centers; and health care facilities such as hospitals or retirement and nursing homes. Sensitive receptors also include long-term care hospitals, hospices, prisons, and dormitories or similar live-in housing.

The proposed project would re-grade the site and install a new self-storage facility. The nearest sensitive receptors are residences north of the site along Oak Road, which are approximately 40.5 feet at the closest point. Notes G.9 and G.10 on Sheet C.2 of the project plans require the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure that grading activities would not result in significant fugitive dust, and that project construction would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Following construction, the land use of self-storage would not result in any net increase in long-term criteria pollutant emissions. The use does not directly emit substantial concentrations of air pollutants, as it consists of storing materials in storage units, therefore the largest emitter would be exhaust associated with vehicles traveling to and from the facility. However, as discussed in section VI.17 Transportation of this Initial- Study, the project would generate 84 vehicular trips per day, while the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's (OPR) technical guidance on evaluating Vehicle Miles Traveled suggests that land development projects generating fewer than 110 vehicular trips per day may be assumed to have a less than significant transportation impact.

As fugitive dust would be controlled through construction with the use of Best Management Practices, and the long-term operational use would not generate substantial concentrations of emissions that would impact sensitive receptors, impacts to sensitive receptors would be **less than significant**.

**Air Quality 3(e) – Less Than Significant Impact**

Construction of the proposed project would potentially generate odors from diesel construction equipment exhaust. The main source of odors from construction equipment would be extremely limited (MBARD, 2008- Source: IX.5). Additionally, nearby sensitive receptors include the private residences including those immediately north and east of the project. Construction emissions would be temporary in nature and disperse relatively quickly. Following construction, the project would not be a source of odor. The odors generated by the project would be intermittent and localized in nature and would disperse. Therefore, the project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. This impact would be **less than significant**.

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 8, 10, 21)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
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? (Source: IX. 1, 10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

The following discussion and analysis are based on the results of a biological assessment prepared by Denise Duffy & Associates, Inc. (DD&A) in September 2021 (Source IX.10) and an arborist assessment prepared by Pete Bachman, certified arborist, in August 2021 (Source IX.9). Additionally, DD&A completed a special status plant survey in May 2022 and a wetland delineation in June 2022, which are attached to Source IX.10.

The project site consists of one habitat type, ruderal/disturbed, comprised primarily of weedy non-native forbs and annual grasses, ornamental species, and oak trees. In addition, a portion of the project site was previously developed with structures and driveways. No sensitive habitats were observed within the project site; however, the biological assessment identified an unnamed drainage feature located adjacent to Vierra Canyon Road that may be waters of the state under the jurisdiction of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). No evidence of wetlands associated with the drainage feature were observed during the initial assessment; however, DD&A conducted additional analysis in June 2022 to determine presence/absence of wetlands. (Source IX.9, 10)

**Biological Resources 4(a) – Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**

No special-status plant species were observed during the biologists assessment; however, two species have the potential to occur based on the presence of suitable habitat: Monterey spineflower and marsh microseris. In addition, suitable habitat is present for two special-status wildlife species: pallid bat and Monterey dusky-footed woodrat as well as nesting raptors and other avian species protected under Fish and Game Code. All other species evaluated have a low potential to occur, are assumed unlikely to occur, or were determined not present within the survey area for specific reasons presented in the biological assessment. Per the special status plant survey conducted in May 2022, no sensitive plant species were identified and no mitigation is required. The structures which were formerly onsite and were potential habitat for pallid bats have all also been demolished, so there would no longer be the potential for pallid bats to be present onsite. As described below,

the potential to impact nesting birds is addressed by our standard regulations, and the potential to impact Monterey Dusky Footed Woodrat is addressed by Mitigation Measure BIO-1.

#### *Nesting Birds*

No raptor or bird nests were observed in the survey area during the biological assessment; however, a focused nesting bird survey was not conducted. The trees in and surrounding the survey area have the potential to provide suitable nesting habitat for raptors and birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code, Section 3504. If construction is conducted during the general bird breeding season (February 1 and August 31), temporary direct impacts from disturbance and displacement of nesting birds during project construction could result in significant direct impacts to bird species protected under the MBTA. Also, indirect impacts from construction noise and vibration during vegetation clearing and grading activities, if conducted during the bird breeding season, could result in significant indirect impacts to bird species protected under the MBTA. Therefore, pursuant to Monterey County General Plan Policy OS-5.25 and a County standard condition of approval, a qualified biologist would be required to conduct a bird nesting survey prior to commencement of construction, if construction activities are scheduled to occur during the bird nesting season. If nesting activity is identified, the biologist would establish an appropriate buffer between the nesting birds and construction activity. With the application of this policy and implementation of the condition of approval, potential impacts to nesting birds would be less than significant.

#### *Monterey Dusky Footed Woodrat*

The Biologists report indicated there was suitable habitat that Monterey Dusky Footed Woodrat (MDFW), a species of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) concern, which may be impacted by vegetation and tree removal. This is addressed by Mitigation Measure BIO-1 (described below), which would mitigate potential direct and indirect impacts to sensitive wildlife species to a less than significant level.

#### **Mitigation Measure BIO-1 – Pre-Construction Survey for Monterey Dusky-Footed Woodrat**

Suitable habitat for Monterey dusky-footed woodrat is present within the project site. Vegetation removal at the project site could result in direct mortality of individuals and impacts to nests, if present at the time of construction. Not more than thirty (30) days prior to the start of construction (including and vegetation removal), a qualified biologist shall conduct a survey of the project site to locate existing Monterey dusky-footed woodrat nests. All Monterey dusky-footed woodrat nests shall be flagged for avoidance. Any Monterey dusky-footed woodrat nests that cannot be avoided shall be dismantled by hand, by a qualified biologist. If a litter of young is found or suspected, nest material shall be replaced and the nest left alone for 2–3 weeks, after this time the nest will be rechecked to verify that young are capable of independent survival before proceeding with nest dismantling.

#### **Compliance Action for Mitigation Measure BIO-1**

- a. Prior to the issuance of grading or construction permits by HCD-Building Services, the owner/applicant, or the construction contractor on the applicant's behalf, shall submit a current construction schedule detailing when land clearing and vegetation removal are planned to occur.
- b. Prior to issuance of a grading or construction permits by HCD-Building Services, and not more than thirty (30) days prior to the start of vegetation removal as indicated in

- the construction schedule the applicant, or the construction contractor on the applicant's behalf, shall submit a completed pre-construction survey report from a qualified biologist to HCD-Planning detailing whether there are any woodrat nests on the project site, and documenting flagging / dismantling as required by the mitigation measure. If a litter of young is found or suspected by the qualified biologist, that shall be documented in the survey report.
- c. No more than thirty days (30) prior to the start of vegetation removal, if a litter of young is identified by the qualified biologist in the pre-construction survey report required by compliance action b., commencement of vegetation removal and nest dismantling shall be delayed until the qualified biologist verifies the young are capable of independent survival. Nest material shall be replaced and the nest left alone for 2–3 weeks, and the nest will be rechecked to verify that young are capable of independent survival before proceeding with nest dismantling. Once the qualified biologist verifies the young are capable of independent survival, the qualified biologist shall submit a follow up survey report to HCD-Planning documenting the dismantling.

#### **Biological Resources 4(b) – No Impact**

As summarized above, the project site consists of one habitat type, ruderal/disturbed, comprised primarily of weedy non-native forbs and annual grasses, horticultural species, and planted Monterey cypress trees. In addition, a portion of the project site was previously developed with structures and driveways. Per the biological assessment, no riparian or sensitive habitats were observed within the project site. Therefore, potential impacts to riparian or sensitive vegetation communities would not occur and no mitigation is required.

#### **Biological Resources 4(c) – No Impact**

The initial biological assessment prepared by Denise Duffy & Associates, Inc. (DD&A) in September 2021 indicated that the un-named drainage which runs along the south of the project site parallel to Vierra Canyon Road could potentially contain wetlands. A follow up wetland delineation was conducted by DD&A in June 2022, which determined that no potentially jurisdictional wetlands or waters of the state were present within the project site, acquisition of regulatory permits from the RWQCB or CDFW is not necessary and no avoidance or minimization measures would be required.

#### **Biological Resources 4(d) – No Impact**

Based on the results of the biological assessment prepared for the project, the project site is not located in an established migratory wildlife corridor and would not impede the use of native wildlife nurseries. Therefore, implementation of the project would not result in impacts to wildlife movement corridors or native wildlife nurseries and no mitigation is required.

#### **Biological Resources 4(e) – Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**

When the arborist report (LIB220127) was prepared in August of 2021, there were twenty-three trees on the site, consisting of thirteen (13) Coast Live oak trees ranging from 1 inch to 24 inches in diameter, along with five (5) Monterey cypress, and bottlebrush and other shrubs. However only five (5) oaks greater than 6 inches in diameter require a permit for removal under the Monterey County Code (MCC). Since then, fourteen (14) trees were removed in conjunction with demolition of the structures on the site. This is the environmental baseline for the project, meaning implementation of the project would result in removal of nine (9) trees, five (5) of which are protected Coast Live oaks, and one (1) is a landmark oak tree.

Per MCC section 16.60.040.C, the removal of these 5 trees could be allowed subject to approval of a Use Permit and conditioned requiring replacement on a 1 to 1 basis. The required finding for this Use Permit are that the tree removal is the minimum required under the circumstances of the case, and the removal will not involve a risk of adverse environmental impacts.

In this case, the development project encompasses the entire site, so there is no alternative siting opportunities to avoid removing the trees. Additionally, as recommended by the arborist report and identified in the proposed landscape plan, all 18 “native” trees (13 oaks and 5 cypress) removed would be replaced on site, addressing impact from tree removal. The removal of trees and vegetation could impact Monterey Dusky Footed Woodrat, however, this is addressed by Mitigation Measure BIO-1 discussed in section VI.4(a) of this Initial Study. Additionally, if the removal occurred within the bird nesting season (between February 1 and August 31), it could impact nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). However, this is addressed through standard County Condition of Approval No. PD050, which requires a bird nesting survey by a qualified biologist if removal occurs during the bird nesting season, and adherence to a buffer plan if any nesting birds are identified that could be impacted.

The project would also not conflict with any biological resource policies in the 2010 General Plan or North County Area Plan. Therefore, the proposed tree removal would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, and potential impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

**Biological Resources 4(f) – No Impact**

The previously developed project site is located in an existing commercial and residential area and is not included in any local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, the project would not conflict with habitat conservation plans and no mitigation is required.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 8, 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 8, 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

**Cultural Resources 5(a) – No Impact**

Per the Phase I Historic Assessment prepared for the project (Archives and Archaeology, January 22, 2022; Monterey County Document No. LIB220130), the project site does not contain any structures or features that may be considered historical resources eligible for listing. The existing Epps House at the project site was constructed in 1942, with construction dates for the other buildings onsite were between 1959 to the early 1990s. The buildings on site are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historic Resources, or the Monterey County Register of Historic Resources. All onsite structures were demolished pursuant to demolition permit 22CP00531 issued in 2022, therefore the environmental baseline for the project is a vacant parcel. Implementation of the project would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and there would be no impact.

**Cultural Resources 5(b & c) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The project site is in an area of low archaeological sensitivity and there is no specific evidence indicating the potential presence of archaeological resources, therefore an archaeological assessment was not requested by the County or prepared for the project in accordance with 2010 General Plan Policy OS-6.4. No archaeological resources are anticipated to be on site and the potential for inadvertent impacts to archaeological resources is limited and will be controlled by application of the County’s standard Condition No. 3 which requires the contractor to stop work if previously unidentified resources are discovered during construction.

No Native American human remains, or significant cultural resources are known to exist within the project site. If unanticipated human remains are unearthed, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires no further disturbance to occur until the county coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin and disposition pursuant to the Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission which will determine and notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the site and make recommendations to the landowner within 48 hours of being granted access. Potential for impacts is **less than significant** and no mitigation is required.

6. ENERGY	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? (Source: IX. 1, 6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? (Source: IX. 1, 5, 6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

**Energy 6(a) – Less Than Significant Impact**

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would require the use of heavy-duty, off-road equipment and construction-related vehicle trips that would combust fuel, primarily diesel and gasoline. Heavy-duty construction equipment would be required to comply with CARB’s airborne toxic control measures, which restrict heavy-duty diesel vehicle idling to five minutes. Since petroleum use during construction would be temporary and needed to conduct development activities, it would not be wasteful or inefficient. Although more electricity would be consumed on an annual basis compared to the existing vacant lot, the structures would use the energy in an efficient manner per current building code requirements. As such, the proposed project’s energy consumption would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary. This impact would be **less than significant**.

**Energy 6(b) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The proposed project would not conflict with nor obstruct a state or local plan adopted for the purposes of increasing the amount of renewable energy or energy efficiency. The County of Monterey adopted a Municipal Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2013 and is currently preparing a 2030 Community Climate Action Plan. The 2013 CAP included GHG reduction strategies to increase energy efficiency at County facilities (County of Monterey 2013), which would not apply to the project. This impact would be **less than significant**.

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
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? (Source: IX.1, 7, 11) Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? (Source: 1, 7, 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Chapter 18A of the 2007 California Building Code, creating substantial risks to life or property? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? (Source: IX.1, 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? (Source: IX.1, 7, 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

The parcel is situated on a south facing slope with gentle to moderate natural slope gradient ranging from about 10 to 25 percent. The site was previously developed by several residential buildings on pads of unknown cut and fill. All prior development has been demolished pursuant to an issued demolition permit from the County of Monterey. The current development proposal will include the construction of eight (8) one-story self-storage buildings totaling approximately 58,000 square feet, new vehicle drive and pavements, retaining walls ranging from 3 to 22 feet in height, water tank, underground utilities, drainage improvements, and associated landscaping improvements.

**Geology and Soils 7 (ai, aii, aiii, aiv) – Less Than Significant Impact**

A “Soil Engineering Investigation and Percolation Testing” report (Monterey County Document No. LIB220129) was prepared for the project by Landset Engineers, Inc, which determined that the site is not located within an Earthquake Fault Zone as established in accordance with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972 and the entire parcel is located in a zone of low potential for landsliding and the potential for surface rupture to occur on the site is low. Therefore, the site is not susceptible to strong seismic ground shaking, and seismic related ground failure including liquefaction or landslides would be **less than significant**.

**Geology and Soils 7 (b) – Less Than Significant Impact**

A “Soil Engineering Investigation and Percolation Testing” report (Monterey County Document No. LIB220129) was prepared for the project by Landset Engineers, Inc, which determined that the parcel is located in a moderate to high erosion hazard area. Based on site reconnaissance and field exploration it is possible that the site soils and earth materials could be erodible when disturbed. Monterey County Code requires a drainage and erosion control plan to be developed and implemented for the project. The use of required erosion control measures and low impact development (LID) drainage improvements would result in a **less than significant** impact.

**Geology and Soils 7 (c and d) – No Impact**

A “Soil Engineering Investigation and Percolation Testing” report (Monterey County Document No. LIB220129) was prepared for the project by Landset Engineers, Inc determined that the near surface site soils are classified as silty sand and clayey sand and are considered to be “non-plastic”. These soils not considered to be a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become

unstable as a result of the project implementation. No special measures are required to control or mitigate the effect of soil expansion on foundations, and interior or exterior concrete slabs-on-grade. **No Impact.**

**Geology and Soils 7 (e) – Less Than Significant Impact**

A “Soil Engineering Investigation and Percolation Testing” report (Monterey County Document No. LIB220129) was prepared for the project by Landset Engineers, Inc, which concluded that the site soils will yield percolation rates satisfactory for conventional onsite wastewater treatment (OWTS) leech fields. The Monterey County Environmental Health Bureau reviewed the project and determined that the site was suitable to support the OWTS including the installation of a tertiary disposal system. Therefore, the site does not contain soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems, and any potential impact would be **less than significant**.

**Geology and Soils 7 (f) – No Impact**

There are no known paleontological resources or unique geologic features on the site. Therefore the project will not directly or indirectly impact any paleontological resources.

<b>8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</b>		Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact			
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? (Source: IX. 1, 5, 6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 6, 13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions 8(a) – Less Than Significant Impact**

As required by CEQA, a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) screening assessment was conducted for the proposed project. The County of Monterey has not yet adopted VMT guidelines or thresholds for CEQA transportation impact studies; therefore, the VMT screening was conducted in accordance with the Governors’ Office of Planning and Research (OPR) *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*. The only VMT screening threshold that would be applicable to the proposed project is the Screening Threshold for Small Projects. OPR suggests that land development projects generating fewer than 110 vehicular trips per day may be assumed to have a less than significant transportation impact. The proposed project is estimated to generate 84<sup>1</sup> total daily trips per day, below the 110 trip threshold; therefore the project is assumed to have a less than significant impact.

<sup>1</sup> The property was formerly developed with a residence and several accessory structures. However, all onsite structures were demolished pursuant to demolition permit 22CP00531 issued in 2022, therefore the environmental baseline for the project is a vacant parcel.

Additionally, in accordance with Section 15183.5(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, a plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) may be used to analyze whether a project would result in significant GHG emissions provided that the plan includes specific elements. Plans that meet the listed requirements are referred to as Qualified GHG Reduction Plans. Plans are required to include an emissions inventory, establish baselines below which GHG emissions would not be cumulatively considerable, estimate future GHG emissions in the covered geographic area, specify measures to meet emissions reduction targets, establish a mechanism to monitor plan progress, and be adopted following environmental review. However, the project’s contribution of GHG emissions would be limited to an incremental increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by usage of fossil fuels during construction. Additionally, as outlined in the Bay Area Air Quality Management District’s (BAAQMD) recently adopted GHG thresholds, construction emissions typically represent a very small portion of a project’s lifetime GHG emissions. Therefore, the significance of GHG emissions and emissions reduction planning focuses on on-going annual GHG contributions. The project would increase demand for electricity but would be constructed to CalGreen standards which would require the construction of the storage facilities to be energy efficient and minimize operational emissions.

Based on the VMT screening utilized and the de minimus GHG emissions from construction activities, the project would result in a **less than significant** impact.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions(b) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The County of Monterey adopted a Municipal Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2013 and is currently preparing a 2030 Community Climate Action Plan. As previously described, operation of the proposed self-storage facility would be more intense than existing uses, but the upgraded facilities would likely be more energy efficient than the previously existing structures. The proposed project would result in a net increase in ongoing GHG emissions and would not include any components that would conflict with CAP implementation. The impacts would be **less than significant**.

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	Less Than Significant			
<b>Would the project:</b>	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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 16, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 16, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 16, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 16, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 16, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 16, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 15, 16, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials (a, b, d) – Less Than Significant**

Project implementation would require the use of construction equipment typical of light commercial construction projects, the operation of which could result in a spill or accidental release of hazardous materials, including fuel, engine oil, and lubricant. However, the use and transport of any hazardous materials would be subject to federal, state, and local regulations, which would minimize risk associated with the transport of hazardous materials. Operationally, the project would not involve the use or storage of hazardous materials beyond those typically associated with light commercial uses. **These impacts would be less than significant.**

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials (c, e, f) – No Impact.**

The project site is not located on or within 1,000 feet of a known hazardous materials site or within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school, nor is it located near an airport or airstrip. Given that the project would involve no modification to the site’s permitted use (light commercial), it would not impair or interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. **No Impact.**

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials (g) – Less Than Significant.**

The project site is located in a CAL FIRE-designated Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The proposed buildings will include the implementation of fire protection sprinkles and alarms, therefore the project would not expose people or structures, directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. See Section VI.20 for analysis of information regarding wildfires. Therefore, the proposed project would result in **less than significant** impacts.

**10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

<b>Would the project:</b>	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 groundwater quality? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 14, 20)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 14, 20)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 14, 20, 21)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 14, 20, 21)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 14, 20, 21)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 14, 20)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 14, 20)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

**Hydrology and Water Quality 10(a) – Less Than Significant.**

The proposed project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, as it involves the construction of storage buildings and associated site improvements on a site that is zoned for such uses.

**Hydrology and Water Quality 10(b, c, e) – Less Than Significant.**

The proposed project includes surface drainage improvements. Groundwater was encountered in the borings at a depth of 21.5 to 27 feet during geotechnical evaluation; however, it is not anticipated that groundwater would be encountered based on the depth of excavation for the proposed project. The project would be required to comply with relevant sections of the Monterey

County Code (MCC) that pertain to grading, erosion control, and urban stormwater management (MCC Chapters 16.08, 16.12, and 16.14). Site development would be subject to current regulations regarding control of drainage and would be required to address post-construction requirements and runoff reduction. A Stormwater control plan for the project has been prepared (Sheets C6 & C7) and will be implemented. The proposed project involves the development of a light-commercial storage facility in an established light-commercial zoning district. The site is currently contains two domestic wells, one of which will be decommissioned and the other is being replaced to provide potable water. The project site has an existing onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) which will be abandoned and replaced with a new OWTS system. The Monterey County Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) reviewed the project application and determined the project complies with applicable ordinances and regulations. The project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk involving flooding. The proposed structural development at the site would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, nor impede or redirect flood flows. The proposed structural development would not create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, and it would not introduce new sources of polluted runoff or degrade water quality.

**Hydrology and Water Quality 10(d) – No Impact.**

The project site is not located in a tsunami or seiche flood zone, and therefore would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation. *No Impact.*

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Physically divide an established community? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 17, 23)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 17, 23)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

**Land Use and Planning 11(a) – No Impact.**

The project would not physically divide an existing community. The site is a vacant lot fronting on Vierra Canyon Road to the south. To the west is the Prunetree shopping center and US Highway 101, with additional commercially designated properties along the 101 corridor. To the north and east are rural residential development. The project would not divide any of these existing developments, and the inclusion of the sidewalk and frontage improvements would allow pedestrian circulation between the adjacent developments. *No Impact.*

**Land Use and Planning 11 (b) – Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.**

As proposed, the project is consistent with and would have no impact on the land use zoning of Light Commercial Zoning or “LC” according to applicable allowed uses and/or development standards in MCC. The project would be subject to regulations and policies outlined in Title 21

Zoning Ordinance for Inland Areas and be consistent with the 2010 Monterey County General Plan. The project is consistent with the allowed uses for the “LC” district. The project includes the development of eight (8) one-story self-storage buildings totaling approximately 58,000 square-foot of building area. Development standards for the “LC” district are identified in MCC Section 21.18.070. The maximum allowed height for main structures in the LC zoning district is 35 feet. The tallest proposed building would be 22 feet in height. The site (i.e., building or structural) coverage maximum in the LC district is 50 percent. The property is 2.92 acres (127,227 square feet) which would allow site coverage of 63,613 square feet. As proposed, the development would result in site coverage of 57,560 square feet (45.2 percent). Properties in the “LC” district are required to have landscaping covering a minimum of ten (10) percent of the developed site area. The proposed project would include 15,161 square feet of landscaping, equivalent to 11.9 percent of the developed site area.

The project would not conflict with any local land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. North County Area Plan Policy NC-3.3 gives a high priority to the preservation of North County’s native vegetation, As indicated in the biological report prepared for the project, the project site principally consists of ruderal areas dominated with non-native weedy species. North County Area Plan Policy NC-3.4 discourages the removal of health native oak trees, and requires establishment of permitting and replacement requirements to allow their removal. The project does include removal of five (5) protected Coast live oak trees. However, the appropriate discretionary entitlements have been incorporated in the project description and protected trees would be required to be replaced at a minimum of a 1:1 basis. Title 21 section 21.66.020 requires the preparation of a biological assessment for projects within known or suspected environmentally sensitive habitat areas. Such an assessment was prepared by Denise Duffy & Associates (DD&A) (Source IX.10). As discussed in section VI.1 Aesthetics the project is consistent with regulations adopted for the protection of scenic resources, and as discussed in section VI.4 Biological Resources, the project is consistent with the County tree removal regulations with the incorporation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, which requires a Monterey Dusky Footed Woodrat Survey prior to tree or vegetation removal. As proposed, conditioned, and mitigation impacts would be less than significant.

<b>12. MINERAL RESOURCES</b>	Less Than Significant			
<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 8, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 8, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:** See Sections II and IV.

13. NOISE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project result in:</b>				
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 13, 22)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 13, 22)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 13, 22)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

**Noise 13(a) – Less Than Significant.**

Construction of the proposed project would generate a temporary noise increase in the vicinity of the project due to the use of heavy equipment and machinery typically used during residential construction projects. Construction activities would be required to comply with the Monterey County Noise Ordinance, as described in Chapter 10.60 of the County’s Code of Ordinances. The ordinance applies to “any machine, mechanism, device, or contrivance” within 2,500 feet of any occupied dwelling unit and limits the noise generated to 85 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from the noise source. Noise-generating construction activities are limited to the hours between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday; no construction noise is allowed on Sundays or national holidays. Operationally, the project would result in a permanent increase in ambient noise given that the use (self-storage facility) is consistent with existing surrounding uses in the area, and the nearest residence would be over 85 feet to the north. The site entrance is located near an existing shopping center, away from existing residences, and approximately 105 feet away from the nearest residence. The loading, unloading, use of the internal road, and operational noise including HVAC units may result in a short-term increase in ambient noise levels when in use; however, property owners are required to comply with Chapter 10.60.040 of the County’s Code of Ordinances, which limits “loud and unreasonable” sound during the hours of 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. ***Less Than Significant.***

**Noise 13(b) – Less Than Significant.**

Project construction could also generate a temporary increase in ground borne vibration levels during the excavation and grading phases of project construction. As indicated in the soil engineering investigation report prepared for the project, the foundation system is recommended to be conventional spread footings. This foundation method would not be expected to cause excessive ground borne vibration or noise levels. However, per the project scope and design, pile driving would not be required, and construction activities would not generate excessive vibration levels. ***Less Than Significant.***

**Noise 13(c) – No Impact.**

The project is not located in the vicinity of a public airport or private airstrip and is not located within an airport land use plan. *No Impact.*

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<b>14. POPULATION AND HOUSING</b>		Less Than Significant	Less Than Significant	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	With Mitigation Incorporated	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)? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 8, 17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 8, 17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:** See Sections II and IV.

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<b>15. PUBLIC SERVICES</b>		Less Than Significant	Less Than Significant	No Impact
<b>Would the project result in:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	With Mitigation Incorporated	Impact	
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 (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 17)				
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:** See Sections II and IV.

16. RECREATION	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) 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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:** See Sections II and IV.

17. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access? (Source: IX. 1, 7, 13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

The project would involve the construction of a 57,560 square foot mini storage facility on a vacant parcel located at 17645 Vierra Canyon Road in the Prunedale area of unincorporated Monterey County. The project would use a primary access driveway from Vierra Canyon Road. Nearby driveways and road provide access to trucking loading docks and employee parking lots for the adjacent Prune Tree Shopping Center, as well as access to private residences to the north of the project site. In addition, an emergency access driveway to the site would be constructed off Oak Road.

Vierra Canyon Road is classified as a 2-Lane Local Roadway in the 2010 Monterey County General Plan. The roadway currently provides one travel lane in each direction and the posted speed limit is 35 MPH. Bike lanes are not provided, and street parking is prohibited. Sidewalks

are currently provided on the north side of the roadway, west of the project site in front of the adjacent Prunetree shopping center.

**Transportation/Traffic 17(a, d) – No Impact**

As designed, the project would 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.

The proposed project would not impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The local roadway (i.e., Vierra Canyon Road) that serves as primary access to the site is not an identified evacuation route. The closest evacuation route to the proposed project site is Highway 101 and Highway 156, and the proposed project is not expected to impair evacuation procedures along this road due to the low traffic volumes associated with the proposed use. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts related to circulation system plans or programs, design features, or emergency access.

**Transportation/Traffic 17(b) – Less Than Significant Impact**

Per the Traffic Assessment prepared for the project prepared by Rick Engineering Company, November 11, 2021 (Source IX.14), the proposed project is anticipated to generate a net increase of 84 Average Daily Trips (ADT), with a net increase of 5 trips during the AM peak (3 inbound/2 outbound) and a net increase of 9 trips during the PM peak (4 inbound/5 outbound) during a typical weekday.

As required by CEQA, a Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT) screening assessment was conducted for the proposed project. The County of Monterey has not yet adopted VMT guidelines or thresholds for CEQA transportation impact studies; therefore, the VMT screening assessment was conducted in accordance with the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (December 28, 2018).

The OPR guidelines provide screening threshold recommendations that are intended to identify when a project should be expected to cause a less-than-significant impact without conducting a detailed VMT evaluation. The OPR screening threshold recommendations are based on project size, maps, transit availability, and provision of affordable housing. The OPR recommendations include the screening threshold criteria listed below:

- OPR recommends that office or residential projects not exceeding a level of 15 percent below existing VMT per capita and employee may indicate a less-than-significant impact on VMT.
- OPR recommends that projects (including office, residential, retail, and mixed-use developments) proposed within ½ mile of an existing major transit stop or within ¼ mile of an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor may be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact on VMT.
- OPR recommends that 100 percent affordable residential development in infill locations be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact on VMT.
- **OPR recommends that projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant impact on VMT.**

- OPR recommends that local-serving retail developments (considered to be less than 50,000 s.f. in size) may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant impact on VMT.

Based on the analysis in the Traffic Assessment, the project average trip generation estimate is approximately 84. Therefore, based on OPR criteria noted above, a project with less than 110 daily trips would have a **less than significant** transportation impact.

**Transportation/Traffic 17(c) – Less Than Significant with Mitigation.**

There are no incompatible uses (e.g., the site is vacant and zoned to allow commercial uses.), and with the incorporation of the mitigation measure described below, the project would not substantially increase transportation hazards due to a geometric design feature.

Based on the results of the traffic analysis, Public Works can allow the spacing between the existing shopping center back access road and the proposed driveway to be 50 feet, provided the recommendations/mitigations of the traffic engineering assessment are implemented. The intersection level of service analysis (Vierra Canyon Road/Shopping Center Back Access Road and Vierra Canyon Road/Project driveway intersection) show that both intersections are anticipated to operate at an acceptable level of service (LOS) (A) during peak hours.

The minimum intersection corner sight distance requirements were determined based on the prevailing (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) speed on Vierra Canyon Road in each direction of travel, which was obtained from speed measurements that were collected on Vierra Canyon Road in front of the project driveway over a 24-hour period on Thursday, June 2, 2022. Based on the speed data that was collected, the average prevailing (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) speed traveling along eastbound Vierra Canyon Road is 43 miles per hour (mph), and the average prevailing (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) speed traveling along westbound Vierra Canyon Road is 46 mph.

*Stopping Sight Distance*

The available stopping sight distance was measured looking in both directions of travel on Vierra Canyon Road towards the project driveway in accordance with the requirements stated in Table 201.1 of the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition Caltrans HDM, which specifies that stopping sight distance be measured at an eye height of 3.5 feet, to an object 0.5 feet in height from the surface of the road. The available stopping sight distances exceed the minimum required stopping distances looking in both directions of travel towards the project driveway. The results of the stopping sight distance assessment based on the measured sight distances and minimum required sight distances are shown below in the table below.

Location	Measured Available Stopping Sight Distance	Prevailing Speed (85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Minimum Required Stopping Sight Distance	Meets Minimum Required Stopping Sight Distance?
<b>Looking West (Eastbound Direction)</b>				
Vierra Canyon Road/Project Driveway	900'	43 mph	336'	Yes
<b>Looking East (Westbound Direction)</b>				
Vierra Canyon Road/Project Driveway	425'	46 mph	374'	Yes

Source: Table 5, Vierra Canyon Self-Storage Facility Study, by Rick Engineering dated June 23, 2022. (IX.13)

### *Corner Sight Distance*

The available intersection corner sight distance was measured looking in both directions of travel on Vierra Canyon Road from the project driveway in accordance with the requirements stated in Index 405.1(a) of the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition Caltrans HDM, which specifies that intersection corner sight distance is measured at least 15 feet back from the edge of the travel lane at an eye height of 3.5 feet, to an object 3.5 feet in height from the surface of the road. The results of the intersection corner sight distance assessment based on the measured sight distances and minimum required sight distances are shown below in the table below.

Location	Measured Available Corner Sight Distance	Prevailing Speed (85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Minimum Required Corner Sight Distance	Meets Minimum Required Corner Sight Distance?
<b>Looking West (Eastbound Direction)</b>				
Vierra Canyon Road/Project Driveway	820'	43 mph	474'	Yes
<b>Looking East (Westbound Direction)</b>				
Vierra Canyon Road/Project Driveway	370'	46 mph	507'	<b>No</b>

Source: Table 4, Vierra Canyon Self-Storage Facility Study, by Rick Engineering dated June 23, 2022. (IX.13)

As shown in the table above, the available intersection corner sight distance looking west on Vierra Canyon Road from the project driveway is approximately 820 feet, which exceeds the minimum required intersection corner sight distance. The available intersection corner sight distance looking east on Vierra Canyon Road from the project driveway is approximately 370 feet, which does not meet the minimum required intersection corner sight distance. Sight distance looking east from the project driveway is restricted by a grove of trees in the northeast corner of the Vierra Canyon Road / Oak Road intersection.

To address the limited corner sight distance looking east, the traffic engineer recommends that in conjunction with the project frontage improvements on Verra Canyon Road, the project stripe a two-way left-turn lane on Vierra Canyon Road along the project frontage. The recommended two-way left-tun lane would provide a refuge area for eastbound vehicles to make a left-turn maneuver into the project driveway. In addition, the recommended two-way left-turn lane would

function as a refuge/acceleration lane for left-turning vehicles exiting the project driveway and heading east on Vierra Canyon Road.

Therefore, in conjunction with the project frontage already proposed on Vierra Canyon Road, the following mitigation measure would be implemented:

**TRANS-1: Two-Way Left-Turn Stripping**

The applicant shall construct frontage improvements including striping a center two-way left-turn lane on Vierra Canyon Road, which would extend east from the Shopping Center Back Access Road and taper back to the existing striping at Oak Road. The design to be in general conformance to Exhibit 10 of the Vierra Canyon Self-Storage Facility Traffic Study by Rick Engineering dated June 23, 2022. Design is subject to approval by Public Works, Facilities, and Parks.

**Compliance Action for Mitigation Measure TRANS-1**

- a. Prior to issuance of building permits by HCD-Building Services, the applicant shall submit improvement plans to HCD-Engineering services for review and approval. Improvements to be completed prior to issuance of occupancy permit.
- b. Prior to building permit final inspection or occupancy, the applicant shall install the improvements in accordance with the approved improvement plans.

Implementation of the Mitigation Measure TRANS-1 would result in the development of a refuge and acceleration areas for vehicles making moving movements into and out of the proposed project site, which would result in *Less Than Significant Impacts with Mitigation* incorporated.

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
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:				
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 (Source: IX. 1, 8, 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. (Source: IX. 1, 8, 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

California Assembly Bill (AB) 52, in effect since July 2015, provides CEQA protections for tribal cultural resources. All lead agencies approving projects under CEQA are required, if formally requested by a culturally affiliated California Native American Tribe, to consult with such tribe regarding the potential impact of a project on tribal cultural resources before releasing an environmental document. Under California Public Resources Code §21074, tribal cultural resources include site features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, or objects that are of cultural value to a tribe and that are eligible for or listed on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or a local historic register, or that the lead agency has determined to be of significant tribal cultural value.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1, Monterey County HCD – Planning initiated AB 52 consultation with local tribal representatives. On February 16, 2023, HCD-Planning distributed formal notifications of the proposed project to representatives of the Ohlone/Coastanoan-Esselen Nation, the Esselen Tribe of Monterey County, and the KaKoon Ta Ruk Band of Ohlone-Costanoan. None of the tribes requested a consultation or indicated that there were any potentially sensitive tribal cultural resources on the site.

**Tribal Cultural Resources 18(ai) – No Impact**

Per the Phase I Historic Assessment prepared for the project (Archives and Archaeology, January 22, 2022; Monterey County Document No. LIB220130), the project site does not contain any structures or features that may be considered historical resources eligible for listing. The existing Epps House at the project site was constructed in 1942, with construction dates for the other buildings onsite were constructed between 1959 to the early 1990s. The buildings on site are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historic Resources, or the Monterey County Register of Historic Resources. All onsite structures were demolished pursuant to demolition permit 22CP00531 issued in 2022, therefore the environmental baseline for the project is a vacant parcel. Therefore, implementation of the project would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and there would be no impact.

**Tribal Cultural Resources 18(aii) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The project site mapped as being in an area of low archaeological sensitivity, and none of the locally affiliated tribes notified of the project indicated there were potentially sensitive tribal cultural resources on the site. Therefore, the potential for inadvertent impacts to tribal cultural resources is limited and will be controlled by application of the County’s standard Condition No. 3

which requires the contractor to stop work if previously unidentified archaeological resources are discovered during construction. No Native American human remains, or significant cultural resources are known to exist within the project site. If unanticipated human remains are unearthed, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires no further disturbance to occur until the county coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin and disposition pursuant to the Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission which will determine and notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the site and make recommendations to the landowner within 48 hours of being granted access. With the incorporation of these standard requirements, impacts would be **less than Significant**.

<b>19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 2, 3, 17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:** See Sections II and IV.

<b>20. WILDFIRE</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:</b>				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (Source: IX. 1, 3, 9)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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? (Source: IX. 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 15)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>20. WILDFIRE</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:</b>					
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? (Source: IX. 1, 9)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
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? (Source: IX. 1, 8, 9, 12, 13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

The project area is located in a State Responsibility Area (SRA) and is designated as a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (HFHSZ). While nearly all of California is subject to some degree of wildfire hazard, there are specific features that make certain areas more hazardous. CAL FIRE is required by law to map areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather and other relevant factors. The primary factors that increase an area’s susceptibility to fire hazards include topography and slope, vegetation type and vegetation condition, and weather and atmospheric conditions. CAL FIRE maps fire hazards based on zones, referred to as Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Each of the zones influence how people construct buildings and protect property to reduce risk associated with wildland fires. Under state regulations, areas within HFHSZ must comply with specific building and vegetation management requirements intended to reduce property damage and loss of life within these areas.

In California, responsibility for wildfire prevention and suppression is shared by federal, state and local agencies. Federal agencies have legal responsibility to prevent and suppress wildfires in Federal Responsibility Areas (FRAs). CAL FIRE prevents and suppresses wildfires in SRA lands, which are non-federal lands in unincorporated areas with watershed value, are of statewide interest, defined by land ownership, population density, and land use. Wildfire prevention and suppression in Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) are typically provided by city fire departments, fire protection districts, counties, and by CAL FIRE under contract to local government.

**Wildfire 20(a & c) – No Impact**

The proposed project would not impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The local roadway (i.e., Vierra Canyon Road) that serves as primary access to the site is not an identified evacuation route. The closest evacuation route to the proposed project site is Highway 101 and Highway 156, and the proposed project is not expected to impair evacuation procedures along this road due to the low traffic volumes associated with the proposed use. The closest fire station is the North County Fire Protection District Station 2 at the intersection of Pesante Road and Ave Los Altos, approximately 1 mile south of the project site. Based on this information, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan and would not result in impacts.

Defensible space would be required within 100 feet of the project's structures up to the property line to reduce fire hazard on-site, consistent with state and county requirements. Defensible space zones are passive measures and would not impede site access or otherwise hinder evacuation or emergency response efforts. Presence of defensible space areas would reduce fuel volumes and moderate fire behavior near structures and would reduce potential wildfire impacts. Maintenance of defensible space areas may require heat-or spark-generating equipment; however, maintenance activities associated with the proposed project would be conducted using firesafe practices, as required by California Public Resources Code Sections 4427, 4428, 4429, 4431, and 4442, to minimize the potential for wildfire ignitions resulting from equipment use. With implementation of existing local and state regulations, the proposed project would not result in impacts. **No impact.**

#### **Wildfire 20 (b & d) – Less Than Significant Impact**

The project area is located in an SRA and is designated as an HFHSZ. As a result, there is the potential for increased wildfire risk whenever placing light commercial uses in a wildland area. Construction and operation of the proposed project would involve the use of flammable materials, tools, and equipment capable of generating a spark and igniting a wildfire. Additionally, vehicle traffic and human presence in the project area could increase the potential for wildfire ignitions. The proposed project incorporates measures that would minimize occupant exposure to wildfire risk, including:

- Construction according to the latest California Building Code standards, and any additional restrictions or requirements adopted locally by the North County Fire Protection District and CAL FIRE (Fire Protection District);
- Implementation and installation of fire suppression sprinklers in each building and a water tank for fire suppression on site; and
- Installation and maintenance of defensible space areas within 100 feet of all project structures, consistent with Public Resources Code 4291.

Further, in accordance with California Public Resources Code Sections 4427, 4428, 4431, and 4442, maintenance activities associated with the proposed project, including defensible space areas, would be conducted using firesafe practices to minimize the potential for wildfire ignitions resulting from equipment use. Implementation of existing local and state regulations as well as incorporation of the fire protection design measures listed above, would reduce impacts due to risk of exposure to project occupants and surrounding residences to a **less than significant** level.

## VII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

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.

Does the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? (Source: IX.1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)? (Source: IX. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? (Source IX. 1-24)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

#### **Mandatory Findings of Significance (a) – Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**

As discussed in this Initial Study, the project would have no impact, a less than significant impact, or a less than significant impact after mitigation with respect to all environmental issues. Regarding biological resources and land use planning regulations adopted for the purpose of protecting environmental resources, potential impacts to sensitive plant and/or wildlife species could occur as a result of this proposed project yet would be reduced to a less than significant level by implementing the mitigation measure as described in Section VI.4, *Biological Resources* and referenced in Section VI.11, *Land Use and Planning*.

#### **Mandatory Findings of Significance (b) – Less Than Significant Impact**

As discussed in this Initial Study, the project would have no impact, a less than significant impact, or a less than significant impact after mitigation with respect to all environmental issues. While the proposed development could result in minor impacts which inherently contribute to cumulative impacts in some instances, the project would not result in substantial long-term environmental impacts and, therefore, would not contribute to cumulative environmental changes that may occur

due to planned and pending development. Potential impacts of the project would be less than significant and would not be cumulatively considerable.

**Mandatory Findings of Significance (c) – Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**

Effects on human beings are generally associated with impacts related to issue areas such as aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, noise, hazards and hazardous materials, traffic, and wildfire. As discussed in Section VI., *Environmental Checklist*, of this Initial Study, the project would have less than significant impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, noise, hazards and hazardous materials, and wildfire. Potential impacts to transportation/traffic would be reduced to a less than significant level by implementing the mitigation measure as described in Section VI.17, *Transportation/Traffic*. Therefore, as proposed, analyzed, and mitigated in this Initial Study, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

## ***VIII. CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FEES***

### **Assessment of Fee:**

The State Legislature, through the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 1535, revoked the authority of lead agencies to determine that a project subject to CEQA review had a “de minimis” (minimal) effect on fish and wildlife resources under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Projects that were determined to have a “de minimis” effect were exempt from payment of the filing fees.

SB 1535 has eliminated the provision for a determination of “de minimis” effect by the lead agency; consequently, all land development projects that are subject to environmental review are now subject to the filing fees, unless the California Department of Fish and Wildlife determines that the project will have no effect on fish and wildlife resources.

To be considered for determination of “no effect” on fish and wildlife resources, development applicants must submit a form requesting such determination to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. A No Effect Determination form may be obtained by contacting the Department by telephone at (916) 653-4875 or through the Department’s website at [www.wildlife.ca.gov](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov).

**Conclusion:** The project will be required to pay the fee unless the applicant can obtain a “no effect” determination from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Evidence:** Based on the record as a whole as embodied in the HCD-Planning files pertaining to PLN210090 and the attached Initial Study / Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration.

## ***IX. SOURCES***

1. Project Application Materials and Plans (HCD-Planning File No. PLN210090).
2. Monterey County General Plan (2010).
3. North County Inland Area Plan.
4. California Building Code, Title 24.
5. 2012 – 2015 Air Quality Management Plan, Monterey Bay Air Resources District.
6. Monterey County Sustainability Program (accessed at <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/administrative-office/intergovernmental-and-legislative-affairs/sustainability> on January 2023).
7. Monterey County GIS Information Database.
8. Site visits conducted by the project planner on June 7, 2022 and August 3, 2022.
9. Arborist Report dated August 2, 2021 (Monterey County Document No. LIB220127), prepared by Pete Bachman, Carmel, California.
10. Biological Resource Report for Vierra Canyon Self Storage Project Prunedale, California, dated September 2021 (Monterey County Document No. LIB220128), prepared by Denise Duffy & Associates, Monterey, California.
11. Soil Engineering Investigation and Percolation Testing for Vierra Canyon Self Storage, dated December 2021 (Monterey County Document No. LIB220129), prepared by Landset Engineers LLC, Salinas, California.
12. Phase One Historic Assessment of Building 1, Phase One Historic Assessment of Building 2, Phase One Historic Assessment of Building 3, and Phase One Historic Assessment of Building 4 – 17645 Vierra Canyon Road, dated January 2022 (Monterey County Document No. LIB220130), prepared by Archives & Archaeology, Salinas, California.
13. Vierra Canyon Self-Storage Facility – Community of Prunedale, California Traffic Assessment Letter, dated November 2021 (Monterey County Document No. LIB 220133), prepared by RICK Engineering Company, San Diego, California.
14. Well Test Report, 17645 Vierra Canyon Road, dated August 2021, prepared by Maggiora Bros. Drilling, Inc., Hollister, California.
15. Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA: Monterey County, CalFire.
16. Mineral Lands Classification Data Portal, California Department of Conservation.
17. Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, California Department of Finance.
18. Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, California Department of Conservation.
19. California Department of Toxic Substances Control – Cortese List (accessed at <https://dtsc.ca.gov/dtscs-cortese-list/> in January 2023).
20. The Central Coast Basin Plan, Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.
21. Monterey County Code, Title 16 – Environment.
22. Monterey County Code, Chapter 10.60 (The Monterey County Noise Ordinance).
23. Monterey County Code, Title 21 – Zoning.
24. North County Land Use Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes dated September 7, 2022.
25. California Public Resources Code

26. Monterey County Code
27. Governors Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA
28. Monterey Bay Area Resources District (MBARD) CEQA Guidelines
29. California Air Resources Board State Area Designations (accessed at <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/maps-state-and-federal-area-designations> on March 2023).