Environmental Initial Study/
Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration

La Mesa Waite Park Project
City of La Mesa, County of San Diego, California

June 2023

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LA MESA WAITE PARK PROJECT
DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Project Title:	La Mesa Waite Park Project
Lead Agency Name and Address:	City of La Mesa Community Services Department 4975 Memorial Drive, La Mesa, CA 91942
Contact Person and Phone Number:	Susan Richardson Director of Community Services 619-667-1308
Project Location:	7410 Waite Drive, La Mesa, CA 91942
La Mesa General Plan Land Use Designation:	Urban Residential
Applicant Names and Addresses:	City of La Mesa Community Services Department 4975 Memorial Drive, La Mesa, CA 91942
Zoning:	Urban Residential (R1)
Assessor's Parcel Numbers:	474-500-15-00

Project Description:

The La Mesa Waite Park Project (Project) involves the redevelopment of a disturbed 2.84-acre site into a park for the surrounding community. The proposed neighborhood park would encompass the entirety of the 2.84-acre site and would include amenities such as a nature-themed playground, a tot lot playground area, a dog run with a decomposed granite surface, a large lawn area, a fitness zone, a shade structure with picnic tables, and a half-court basketball court. Additionally, an eight-foot-wide accessible concrete walking loop would traverse the Project site, connecting the various amenities. Seating nooks and benches would be placed throughout the walking loop. The park would also provide a restroom building with two family-style units, an accessible outdoor sink and water station, as well as a garage and storage for maintenance tools on the back side of the structure (see Figure 3, Site Plan; Appendix A). For more details regarding these amenities please refer to Appendix B, Waite Park Master Plan and Progress Report (City 2023).

The Project would provide thirteen parking spaces, including two ADA-accessible parking spaces, located within a designated parking lot in the southeastern portion of the site. An elevated wooden ramp would be located along the eastern edge of the site, providing an entrance to the park for visitors accessing the site from Murray Hill Road. Concrete stairs would also be provided as a more direct connection to the site from Murray Hill Road. The site would also include one full-access vehicle driveway and pedestrian-accessible walkways along Waite Drive. Bicycle racks would be provided adjacent to the proposed parking lot to promote a variety of transportation methods to and from the park. A monument sign would be located in the southeastern corner of the site.

Single-family residential properties are located along the western and northwestern boundaries of the Project site. The Project would replace the existing six-foot-tall irregular and dilapidated fence along the northwestern site boundary with a uniform eight-foot-tall wooden fence. The replacement fence would allow for the proposed changes in topography throughout the site, and the increase in fence height would provide adequate screening for the residential properties to the west and northwest of the site, retaining the desired privacy of the residents. The site would also include a 6-foot-tall wood fence along the remaining western property line, a 6-foot-tall black vinyl chain-link fence along the remaining northern property line, and 3.5-foot-tall lodge-pole fencing along the eastern and southern property lines. The proposed dog run would include five-foot-tall decorative black wrought iron fencing around the perimeter.

The site naturally drops in grade towards the western edge of the site which creates an opportunity for a bio-retention basin. A bio-retention basin would extend along the length of the western property line to provide stormwater storage for the entire site. The Project site would be designed to drain into the proposed bio-retention basin. The bio-retention basin would be planted with native plants and trees to provide shade for the park, give a natural creek bed look, and increase privacy screening for the surrounding residential properties.

The Project would require several utility improvements and upgrades. The electrical services for the Project would be provided by San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) and would have a maximum amperage of 200 Amps. An existing transformer along Waite Drive would be reused with the installation of a new 200 Amp meter pedestal. This amperage would provide sufficient power for the neighborhood park and the proposed amenities. Solar panels would be placed on top of the proposed restroom with an attached garage. Solar-powered lighting would be provided throughout the pedestrian walkways, the proposed parking lot, and the shaded structure. The Project would connect to existing City-owned water and sewer lines for the proposed restroom with an accessible outdoor sink and water station.

Project landscaping would include a variety of plantings and trees throughout the site. Plant qualities such as resiliency, low-water use, pollinator friendliness, and drought-tolerance would be prioritized. Three Canary Island Pine trees and one California Pepper tree exist on the property in good condition. These fully mature trees have low water usage and would be retained in their locations on-site as part of the proposed Project. The remainder of the site would be landscaped utilizing a mix of native and Mediterranean plant species. Invasive plant species would not be utilized.

Project construction is anticipated to begin in December 2024 and would be completed in approximately eight months. Project construction would be completed in a single phase. Construction activities would include demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. Based on the existing vegetation, cement, and other debris on-site, it is anticipated that approximately 32 cubic yards (CY) of vegetation would be removed off-site during site preparation, and approximately 50 tons of cement and other debris would be removed off-site during demolition. It is anticipated that grading cut/fill would be balanced on site.

Community Development Department Determination:

On the basis of the initial environmental study prepared for the proposal, it has been determined that the Project would not have an adverse impact on the environment.

Susan Richardson Type text here

Community Services Department, City of La Mesa

06/05/23

Date

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Project Title
La Mesa Waite Park Project (Project)

Lead Agency Name and Address
City of La Mesa Community Development Department
8130 Allison Ave
La Mesa, CA 91942

Contact Person and Phone Number
Susan Richardson
Director of Community Services
619-667-1308

1. Project Location

   The Project site is located at 7410 Waite Drive at the corner of Waite Drive and Murray Hill Road in the Vista La Mesa Neighborhood of the City of La Mesa. The Project is located on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 474-500-15-00 (see Figure 1, *Regional Location Map*, and Figure 2, *Aerial Map*).

2. Existing Setting

   The 2.84-acre Project site is currently fenced on all sides and is being used for construction material lay down by the City of La Mesa (City) and partner agencies. The western and central portions of the property include a mixed condition of fencing, retaining walls, and existing remnant building foundations. The remainder of the property is mostly disturbed with dispersed vegetation and scattered debris. Currently, the Project site is only accessible from a gated driveway along Waite Drive, approximately 115 feet west from the intersection of Waite Drive and Murray Hill Road.

   The topography of the site slopes downward to the west from Murray Hill Road on the eastern side of the property. The elevation drops approximately 25 feet down from Murray Hill Road on the northeast corner of the site before it begins to level out across the rest of the property. The remainder of the property gently slopes to the west. The elevations on the site range from approximately 450 feet to 485 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). The current topography of the western edge of the site is elevated three to four feet above the adjacent residential backyards, creating a drainage swale between the topography of the site and the neighbors' fencing.

   Prevailing winds in the area typically blow from the west. During Santa Ana conditions, the wind direction will reverse towards the west. Three Canary Island Pine trees and one California Pepper tree exist on the property in good condition. These fully mature trees have low water usage and are proposed to be incorporated in the future park design in accordance with sustainability efforts and the City of La Mesa Tree Policy Manual (City 2013a). Additionally, a pile of cut down Eucalyptus timber tree logs are being stored on-site for use in the future park design.

   The Project Site is located approximately 500 feet north of State Route (SR-) 94. Vista La Mesa Academy is 0.4 mile to the east, and Helix High School is 0.5 mile to the north. Surrounding uses include single-family residential properties, multi-family residential properties, and open space. The property directly to the north of the Project site is owned by

the homeowner's organization (HOA) of the building complex to the north. This land to the north is currently open space with no current plans to develop.

3. General Plan Designation/Zoning

   The Project site has a General Plan land use designation of Urban Residential and a zoning classification of Urban Residential (R1).

4. Project Background

   In the 1930s, the Lemon Grove Road Station was constructed on the Project site as a spot for County of San Diego road workers to service vehicles, as well as to stage trucks and equipment. Remnants of the structures from this use are still visible throughout the site. The last use of the road station buildings was estimated to be in the mid-1990s. Recently, the property has been used intermittently by City contractors and partner agencies for construction material lay down.

   The Project site underwent environmental cleanup in April 2000, and in December 2011 the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) signed off and closed the case. An Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was conducted on the property to confirm that there were no remaining hazardous materials on-site. In March of 2012, the County of San Diego notified the City of La Mesa of the availability of the former Lemon Grove Road Station site for development. In July 2012, the Project site was purchased by the City using park impact fees which are designed to mitigate the impact of new development on municipalities and support the purchase of new park land.

   The 2012 City of La Mesa Park Master Plan identified the site at Waite Drive and Murray Hill Road as a valuable parcel to add to the City's park land inventory to enhance recreation opportunities for the surrounding neighborhood (City 2012a). In December 2021, the City received funding through the California State Department of Recreation Local Assistance Specified Grant program to create a master plan for the proposed park. The Waite Park Master Plan and Progress Report was completed by the City in January 2023 (City 2023).

   The intent of the Project is to provide a neighborhood park for local residents. Guiding principles were formed from the engagement process with the local neighborhoods including community workshops, online surveys, an on-site pop-up event, and a Community Services Commission presentation. This input directed the vision for the park, and the site's main elements reflect the highest priority amenities desired by the community.

5. Description of Project

   The Project involves the redevelopment of a disturbed 2.84-acre site into a public neighborhood park for the surrounding residents. The proposed neighborhood park would encompass the entirety of the 2.84-acre site and would include amenities such as a nature-themed playground, a tot lot playground area, a dog run with a decomposed granite surface, a large lawn area, a fitness zone, a shade structure with picnic tables, and a half-court basketball court. Additionally, an eight-foot-wide accessible concrete walking loop would traverse the Project site, connecting the various amenities. Seating nooks and benches would be placed throughout the walking loop. The park would also provide a restroom building with two family-style units, an accessible outdoor sink and water station, as well as a garage and storage for maintenance tools on the back side of the structure (see Figure 3,

Site Plan; Appendix A). For more details regarding these amenities please refer to Appendix B, Waite Park Master Plan and Progress Report (City 2023).

The Project would provide thirteen parking spaces, including two ADA-accessible parking spaces, located within a designated parking lot in the southeastern portion of the site. An elevated wooden ramp would be located along the eastern edge of the site, providing an entrance to the park for visitors accessing the site from Murray Hill Road. Concrete stairs would also be provided as a more direct connection to the site from Murray Hill Road. The site would also include one full-access, vehicle driveway and pedestrian-accessible walkways along Waite Drive. Bicycle racks would be provided adjacent to the proposed parking lot to promote a variety of transportation methods to and from the park. A monument sign would be located in the southeastern corner of the site.

Single-family residential properties are located along the western and northwestern boundaries of the Project site. The Project would replace the existing six-foot-tall irregular and dilapidated fence along the northwestern site boundary with a uniform eight-foot-tall wooden fence. The replacement fence would allow for the proposed changes in topography throughout the site and the increase in fence height would provide adequate screening for the residential properties to the west and northwest of the site, retaining the desired privacy of the residents. The site would also include a 6-foot-tall wood fence along the remaining western property line, a 6-foot-tall black vinyl chain-link fence along the remaining northern property line, and 3.5-foot-tall lodge-pole fencing along the eastern and southern property lines. The proposed dog run would include five-foot-tall decorative black wrought iron fencing around the perimeter.

The site naturally drops in grade towards the western edge of the site which creates an opportunity for a bio-retention basin. A bio-retention basin would extend along the length of the western property line to provide stormwater storage for the entire site. The Project site would be designed to drain into the proposed bio-retention basin. The bio-retention basin would be planted with native plants and trees to provide shade for the park, give a natural creek bed look, and increase privacy screening for the surrounding residential properties.

The Project would require serval utility improvements and upgrades. The electrical services for the Project would be provided by San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) and would have a maximum amperage of 200 Amps. An existing transformer along Waite Drive would be reused with the installation of a new 200 Amp meter pedestal. This amperage would provide sufficient power for the neighborhood park and the proposed amenities. Solar panels would be placed on top of the proposed restroom with an attached garage. Solar-powered lighting would be provided throughout the pedestrian walkways, the proposed parking lot, and the shaded structures. The Project would connect to existing City-owned water and sewer lines for the proposed restroom with an accessible outdoor sink and water station.

Project landscaping would include a variety of plantings and trees throughout the site. Plant qualities such as resiliency, low-water use, pollinator friendliness, and drought-tolerance would be prioritized. As discussed above, three Canary Island Pine trees, as well as one California Pepper tree, exist on the property in good condition. These fully mature trees have low water usage and would be retained in their locations on-site as part of the proposed Project. The remainder of the site would be landscaped utilizing a mix of native and Mediterranean plant species. Invasive plant species would not be utilized.

Project construction is anticipated to begin in December 2024 and would be completed in approximately eight months. Project construction would be completed in a single phase. Construction activities would include demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. Based on the existing vegetation, cement, and other debris on-site, it is anticipated that approximately 32 cubic yards (CY) of vegetation would be removed off-site during site preparation and approximately 50 tons of cement and other debris would be removed off-site during demolition. It is anticipated that grading cut/fill would be balanced on-site.

Required Approvals

The project would require the approval of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit coverage. The following City of La Mesa approvals would also be required:

- Approval of Site Plan by the Design Review Board
- Adoption by the Planning Commission of a Site Development Plan and a Special Permit for park accessory structure to exceed the maximum height under the R1 zoning designation
- Adoption of this IS/MND and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- Grading Permit
- Building Permit

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

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

Determination

Based on this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions 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.

Susan Richardson
Signature

06/05/23
Date

Susan Richardson
Printed Name

Director of Community Services
Title

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 would not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4. “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 15063I(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

    a) Earlier Analyses 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 Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9. The explanation of each issue should identify:

    a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

    b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

Environmental Checklist

1. Aesthetics

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

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

No Impact. The Land Use and Urban Design Element of the La Mesa General Plan identifies specific vistas that contribute to the City's community image. Vistas are described in the La Mesa General Plan as views with a narrow angle characterized by long vertically defined spaces that open to allow sight of a few select elements. The General Plan designates four vistas within the City, none of which are on or adjacent to the Project site: the view of Lake Murray from Baltimore Drive; the view from Fletcher Parkway near Baltimore Drive; and two views along La Mesa Boulevard in the Downtown Village. Figure LD-10, *Community Image*, of the City's General Plan Land Use and Urban Design Element (City 2013b) identifies the nearest designated vista to the Project site as a grouping of downtown palm trees along La Mesa Boulevard, approximately 1.75 miles northeast of the Project site. Views from the Project site are largely obscured by one- and two-story single-family and multi-family residential properties, and steep upslope topography and vegetation to the east of the site. Therefore, the Project would not result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, and no impact would occur.

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

No Impact. No designated scenic resources or scenic highways are present within or adjacent to the Project site. The site is disturbed and does not contain any historic buildings. The nearest designated scenic highway is a two-mile portion of State Route (SR-) 125 as it transitions from SR-94 to Interstate (I-) 8, located approximately one mile east of the Project site (Caltrans 2023). Three Canary Island Pine trees and one California Pepper tree exist on the property in good condition. These fully mature trees are proposed to be retained and incorporated in the

future park design. The site does not contain rock outcroppings. Proposed improvements would occur in the existing disturbed site, which is comprised of a combination of fencing, retaining walls, existing remnant building foundations, dispersed vegetation, and scattered debris. Therefore, the Project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. No impact to scenic resources would occur.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The protection of scenic resources relevant to the Project is guided by the La Mesa General Plan. Projects subject to design review include new or substantially renovated commercial properties, multi-unit residential developments, projects within the City's mixed-use corridors, and sites within the Downtown Village Specific Plan (DVSP) area. As the Project is the construction of a neighborhood park on disturbed land outside of the DVSP, the proposed Waite Park does not fall under the purview of the Urban Design Program. It is noted, however, that General Plan Policy LU-4.2.1 focuses on "compatibility of the proposed development with surrounding uses and design objectives" and Policy LU-4.2.2 focuses on consistency of height limits for non-residential buildings with specified limits in each zone. The Project would require the approval of the Site Plan (Figure 3) by the Design Review Board.

The proposed neighborhood park would include amenities such as a nature-themed playground, a tot lot playground area, a dog run with a decomposed granite surface, a large lawn area, a fitness zone, a shade structure with picnic tables, and a half-court basketball court. Additionally, an 8-foot-wide accessible concrete walking loop would traverse the Project site, connecting the various amenities. The park would also provide a restroom building with two family-style units, an accessible outdoor sink and water station, as well as a garage and storage for maintenance tools on the back side of the structure. The nature-themed playground would include a 24-foot-tall wood tower to provide a distinctive climbing experience for visitors to the park. Other park amenities would include shorter playground structures and fitness equipment. The Project would replace the existing six-foot-tall irregular and dilapidated fence along the northwestern site boundary with a uniform eight-foot-tall wooden fence. The replacement fence would allow for the proposed changes in topography throughout the site and the increase in fence height would provide adequate screening for the residential properties to the west and northwest of the site, retaining the desired privacy of the residents. The site would also include a 6-foot-tall wood fence along the remaining western property line, a 6-foot-tall black vinyl chain-link fence along the remaining northern property line, and 3.5-foot-tall lodge-pole fencing along the eastern and southern property lines. The proposed dog run would include five-foot-tall decorative black wrought iron fencing around the perimeter. As required and discussed further below in item 1.d., Project lighting would be directed downward onto the property and would not result in spillover onto adjacent properties.

The Project site was designed with engagement from the community to provide a "natural feel" while allowing visitors the opportunity to connect with nature. As compared to the existing disturbed land, the proposed Project would visually enhance the quality of the site while reflecting the priorities of the surrounding community. See Figure 3 for an overview of all the

neighborhood park amenities and Figure 4 for a bird's eye perspective rendering of the proposed neighborhood park within the context of surrounding land uses.

The Project site is currently zoned Urban Residential (R1) and has a General Plan land use designation of Urban Residential. As previously mentioned, General Plan Policy LU-4.2.2 addresses height limits for non-residential buildings and notes that approval of a Special Permit may allow a building to exceed the specified height limit on a site-by-site basis. The R1 zoning designation requires approval of a Site Development Plan for a neighborhood park per the City of La Mesa Municipal Code Section 24.05.020B.3.a.2. The R1 zoning designation allows for structures to be 20 feet in height. The proposed nature themed playground would include a 24-foot-tall wood tower accessory structure; however, the non-residential structure would be made of wood to reinforce the native and natural aesthetic desired by the community. Due to the exceedance of the maximum structure height, the Project would require approval of a Special Permit. With issuance of a Special Permit, the Project would not conflict with regulations under the R1 zoning designation.

In conclusion, the Project would enhance the visual quality of the site and would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Electrical service for Waite Park would be provided by SDG&E; however, the lighting on-site would be solar-powered. Solar panels would be placed on top of the proposed restroom and storage building. There are two primary sources of light: light from exterior and interior sources (e.g., pedestrian walkway lighting, trellis lighting parking lot lighting, sign lighting, and lighting within the restroom and an attached garage). The introduction of light can be a nuisance by affecting adjacent areas and diminishing the view of the clear sky depending on the location of the light sources and their proximity to nearby light-sensitive areas.

The Project site is in a developed, urban area with existing nighttime lighting from the single-family and multi-family residential land uses nearby. The existing light sources in the Project area include building lights from residential properties and downcast facing streetlights along Waite Drive, Murray Hill Road, and Harris Street.

The Project would contain multiple new sources of solar-powered exterior lighting, such as lighting along the pedestrian walking loop, lighting within the parking lot, lighting for the monument park sign, and trellis lighting for the proposed shade structure with picnic tables. The one new source of solar-powered interior lighting would be from lighting within the proposed restroom building with an attached garage. All lighting features would be made of diecast aluminum for a longer lifespan and to prevent corrosion. Proposed lighting would be at the lowest level possible, timed as appropriate, directed downward, and shielded to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties. Although Project lighting would produce light levels brighter than currently exists on the site, the net increase in nighttime lighting would not be considered substantial due to the urbanized nature of the site and surrounding area. Exterior and interior lighting would be subject to Section 24.05.020D16 of the City's Municipal Code, which requires lighting to be designed, installed, and maintained to prevent light spillover onto adjacent properties. Furthermore, the proposed neighborhood park amenities would not include large expanses of reflective material or surfaces such as glass or metal which could be new sources of glare. The playground structures would be made of wood to reinforce the native and natural

aesthetic desired by the community. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in a significant impact related to new sources of substantial lighting and glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. The impact would be less than significant.

2. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation (DOC) as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non- agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Conflict with existing zoning for or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)); timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526); or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. 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?

No Impact. A review of the California DOC online California Important Farmland Finder query program designates the Project site and surrounding area as Urban Built-Up Land (CDC 2023a). The Urban Built-Up Land designation applies to land that the DOC has identified as being used for a variety of urban uses and contains man-made structures or buildings under construction and the infrastructure required for development that are specifically designed to serve that land. No agricultural resources or operations are located within the vicinity of the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not convert farmland to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.

b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. The Williamson Act, also known as the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. The Williamson Act is only applicable to parcels within an established agricultural preserve consisting of at least 20 acres of Prime Farmland, or at least 40 acres of land not designated as Prime Farmland. The Williamson Act is designed to prevent the premature and unnecessary conversion of open space lands and agricultural areas to urban uses.

As stated in item 2.a., the Project site is classified by the DOC as Urban and Built-Up Land where neither farmland nor agricultural resources are present. The Project site is not currently zoned for agricultural use, and the existing Urban Residential zone similarly does not allow for agricultural uses. Additionally, it is not within an established agricultural preserve consisting of at least 20 acres of Prime Farmland or at least 40 acres of land not designated as Prime Farmland. Further, the City of La Mesa General Plan Land Use Map classifies the land as Urban Residential (City 2013b). Therefore, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur.

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))?

No Impact. Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 12220(g) defines “forest land” as land that can support 10 percent native cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. PRC Section 4526 defies “timberland” as other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the board as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. Based on these definitions, no forest land or timberland occurs within or adjacent to the Project site.

The existing Project site is disturbed and is currently being used for construction material lay down by the City and partner agencies. Moreover, there is no land zoned as forest land or timberland within the Project site or vicinity. The Project site contains multiple Canary Island Pine trees as well as one California Pepper tree that are proposed to be incorporated in the future park design in accordance with sustainability efforts and the City of La Mesa Tree Policy Manual (City 2013a). Additionally, a pile of cut down Eucalyptus timber tree logs are being stored on-site for future use in future park designs. However, there is no concentration of trees that would constitute a forest. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land or timberland, and no impact would occur.

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

No Impact. As stated in item 2.c. above, implementation of the Project would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land to non-forest use because no forest land exists on the Project site or in the surrounding area. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. As stated in items 2.a. and 2.c. above, implementation of the Project would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impact would occur.

3. Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project is located within the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB). Air quality in the SDAB is regulated by the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD). The SDAPCD is the government agency that regulates sources of air pollution within the County. Currently, the SDAB is in “non-attainment” status for criteria pollutants ozone (O_3), 10-micron or less particulate matter (PM_{10}), and 2.5-micron or less particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$). The federal Clean Air Act (CAA) required the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), which identify concentrations of pollutants in the ambient air below which no adverse effects on the public health and welfare are anticipated. The SDAPCD and SANDAG are responsible for developing and implementing the clean air plan for the attainment and maintenance of the ambient air quality standards in the SDAB. The current regional air quality plan for the NAAQS is SDAPCD’s 2020 Plan for Attaining the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone in San Diego County (Attainment Plan; SDAPCD 2020). The regional air quality plan for the CAAQS is SDAPCD’s 2022 Revision to the Regional Air Quality Strategy for San Diego County (RAQS; SDAPCD 2022). The Attainment Plan and RAQS rely on information from CARB and SANDAG, including projected growth in San Diego County, mobile, area, and all other source emissions in order to project future emissions and determine from that the strategies necessary for the reduction of stationary source emissions through regulatory controls. CARB mobile source emission projections and SANDAG growth projections are based on population, vehicle trends,

and land use plans developed by the cities and by the County. As such, projects that propose development that is consistent with the growth anticipated by the general plans would be consistent with the Attainment Plan and RAQS. In the event that a project proposes development, which is less dense than anticipated within the General Plan, the project would likewise be consistent with the Attainment Plan and RAQS. If a project proposes development that is greater than that anticipated in the City General Plan and SANDAG's growth projections upon which the Attainment Plan is based, the project may be in conflict with the Attainment Plan, RAQS, and SIP and may have a potentially significant impact on air quality. This situation would warrant further analysis to determine if the project and the surrounding projects exceed the growth projections used in the Attainment Plan for the specific subregional area.

A project would be inconsistent with the Attainment Plan, RAQS, and/or SIP if it results in population and/or employment growth that exceed growth estimates for the area. A neighborhood park would not increase population permanently, as users would visit the neighborhood park intermittently and for a short period of time. The neighborhood park would attract children and families that currently reside within the surrounding neighborhoods. Construction of the Project is expected to utilize employees from the local employment force and would not require employees to relocate to the Project area. The operation of the Project would require maintenance activities on an as-needed basis, which would be performed by City employees and would not require workers to relocate to the Project area. Employees are not anticipated to induce substantial unplanned growth in the area. Therefore, the Project would not result in population growth beyond the levels assumed for the region, and would, therefore, be consistent with the Attainment Plan and SIP.

In addition, as discussed in item 3.b. below, the Project would not result in a significant air quality impact with regards to emissions of ozone precursors or criteria air pollutants. Based on the Traffic Assessment prepared for the Project and included as Attachment H, the Project would generate 142 average daily trips (ADT) (LLG 2023). The City of La Mesa is in the process of preparing City-specific standards for conducting a vehicle mile traveled (VMT) analysis and guidelines have not yet been adopted at this time. A VMT analysis was conducted using the ITE Guidelines for Transportation Impact Studies in the San Diego Region, dated May 2019. Per the ITE guidelines, a VMT analysis for CEQA purposes would be required if a project equals to or exceeds 500 ADT or 1,000 ADT (depending on whether the project is consistent with the adopted City General Plan). The Project is calculated to generate 142 ADT. Therefore, it is presumed that the neighborhood park would have a less than significant VMT impact. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the Attainment Plan, RAQS, or the SIP, and the impact would be less than significant.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. The Projects' construction and operational criteria pollutant emissions were estimated using California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod). The complete CalEEMod output is provided in Appendix C to this IS/MND.

The Project would generate criteria pollutants and precursors in the short-term during construction and the long-term during operation. To determine whether a project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutants that would violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, a project's

emissions are evaluated based on the quantitative emission thresholds established by the SDAPCD, as shown in Table 1, *Screening-Level Thresholds for Air Quality Impact Analysis*.

Table 1
SCREENING-LEVEL THRESHOLDS FOR AIR QUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS

Pollutant		Total Emissions	
Construction Emissions (Pounds/Day)			
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})		100	
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)		67	
Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_X)		250	
Oxides of Sulfur (SO_X)		250	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)		550	
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)		137	
Operational Emissions			
	lbs. per Hour	**lbs. per Day**	**Tons per Year**
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	---	100	15
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	---	67	10
Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_X)	25	250	40
Oxides of Sulfur (SO_X)	25	250	40
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	100	550	100
Lead and Lead Compounds	---	3.2	0.6
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	---	137	15
Toxic Air Contaminant Emissions			
Excess Cancer Risk		1 in 1 million 10 in 1 million with T-BACT	
Non-Cancer Hazard		1.0	

Source: SDAPCD 2019.
T-BACT = Toxics-Best Available Control Technology.

Construction Emissions

The Project's temporary construction emissions were estimated using CalEEMod, Version 2022.1.1.7. CalEEMod is a computer model used to estimate air emissions resulting from land development projects throughout the state of California. CalEEMod was developed by CAPCOA in collaboration with the California air quality management and pollution control districts, primarily the SCAQMD. The calculation methodology, source of emission factors used, and default data are described in the CalEEMod User's Guide, and Appendices C, D, and G (CAPCOA 2022).

The Project would construct a neighborhood park on a 2.84-acre site. The land use size assumptions used for modeling purposes were approximately 2.7 acres of City Park and approximately 0.2 acre of parking lot and driveway. Neighborhood park amenities would total approximately 2.7 acres, which would include a 75,032-square-foot landscaped area and a 500-square foot restroom with an attached garage as well as a dog run, half basketball court, and other features. The Project would also include a 0.2-acre parking lot area. The modeled size of the landscaping area, restroom/garage building, and parking lot area were estimated based on the Site Plan (Figure 3; Appendix A). The construction emissions were estimated based on the timeline provided by the City, which assumed construction would commence with demolition in December 2024 and would be completed in July 2025 for a total construction period of eight months. Construction activities would include demolition, site preparation,

grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. For the purposes of the air quality analysis, it was assumed based on the existing vegetation, cement, and other debris on-site, that approximately 32 CY of vegetation would be removed off-site during site preparation and approximately 50 tons of cement and other debris would be removed off-site during demolition. The analysis also assumed grading cut/fill would be balanced on-site.

Construction would require the use of heavy off-road equipment. Construction equipment estimates were based on site conditions and default values in CalEEMod, with an additional off-highway truck (a water truck) that would be used to water exposed areas during demolition, site preparation, and grading. In compliance with SDAPCD Rule 55, fugitive dust emissions calculations assume application of water on exposed surface a minimum of two times per day (SDAPCD 2009). The modeling also assumed building interior and exterior paint would not exceed 50 g/L VOC content and parking lot marking would not exceed 100 g/L VOC content, in conformance with SDAPCD Rule 67.01. Worker commute trips were modeled based on the size of the Project and CalEEMod defaults. It was assumed that one truckload of material would be delivered per day during building construction. The emissions generated from construction activities would include:

- Dust (including PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) primarily from fugitive sources such as soil disturbance and vehicle travel over unpaved surfaces;

- Combustion emissions of air pollutants (including VOC, NO_X, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, CO, and SO_X), primarily from: operation of heavy off-road equipment; on-road worker commute vehicle traveling to and from the project site; and trucks hauling equipment, material, and debris to and from the Project site; and

- Emissions of VOCs from the application of asphalt.

The results of the modeling of the project's construction emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors are shown in Table 2, *Daily Construction Emissions*. The data are presented as the maximum anticipated daily emissions for comparison with the SDAPCD thresholds. The complete CalEEMod output is provided in Appendix C to this IS/MND.

Table 2
DAILY CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS

Construction Activity	Pollutant Emissions (pounds per day)					
	ROG	**NO_X**	**CO**	**SO_X**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
2024 Demolition	1.8	16.5	17.4	0.03	0.9	0.7
2024 Site Preparation	1.5	13.5	12.6	0.03	1.3	0.6
2025 Site Preparation	1.3	11.6	11.7	0.03	1.2	0.6
2025 Grading	1.7	14.7	15.8	0.03	3.5	2.0
2025 Building Construction	0.8	6.7	7.9	0.02	0.5	0.3
2025 Paving	0.8	6.2	8.9	0.01	0.4	0.3
2025 Architectural Coating	0.6	0.9	1.3	<0.01	<0.1	<0.1
Maximum Daily Emissions[1]	**1.8**	**16.5**	**17.4**	**0.03**	**3.5**	**2.0**
SDAPCD Screening Thresholds	*137*	*250*	*550*	*250*	*100*	*67*
Significant Impact?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Source: CalEEMod.
[1] Maximum daily emissions of SO_x would occur during concurrent 2024 Demolition, 2024 Site Preparation, 2025 Site Preparation, and 2025 Grading.
ROG = reactive organic gas; NO^X = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_X = sulfur oxides;
PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter.

As shown in Table 2, the Project's short-term construction-related criteria pollutant and precursor emissions would be below the SDAPCD's screening-level significance thresholds. Therefore, the Project's construction activities would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants that would violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, and the impact would be less than significant.

Operations Emissions

Operational impacts were estimated using CalEEMod. Operational sources of emissions include area, mobile, energy, water use, and solid waste. Emissions related to water use and solid waste from Project operations were negligible.

Area sources include emissions from landscaping equipment, the use of consumer products, and the reapplication of architectural coatings for maintenance. Emissions associated with area sources were estimated using the CalEEMod default values. In accordance with revisions to the SDAPCD Rule 67.0.1, which take effect on January 1, 2022, building interior and exterior paint would not exceed 50 g/L VOC content, and parking lot marking would not exceed 100 g/L VOC content. The Project building would not include wood burning stoves or fireplaces.

Operational emissions from mobile source emissions are associated with Project-related vehicle trip generation. Per the Transportation Assessment prepared for the Project, the Project would generate 142 ADT (LLG 2023). Trip distances, fleet mix, vehicle emission factors, and road dust were estimated using CalEEMod defaults.

Energy source criteria pollutant emissions are from the combustion of natural gas for water or space heating. The Project would not use natural gas.

The Project's long-term maximum daily and annual operational emissions were also estimated using CalEEMod. The results of the modeling of the Project's operational emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors are shown in Table 3, *Operational Emissions*. The data are presented as the maximum anticipated daily emissions and annual emissions for comparison with the SDAPCD thresholds. The complete CalEEMod output is provided in Appendix C to the IS/MND.

Table 3
OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS

Source	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_X	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Daily Emissions (pounds per day)						
Area	0.05	--	--	--	--	--
Mobile	0.56	0.36	3.74	0.01	0.30	0.06
Energy	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total Project Emissions[1]	**0.61**	**0.36**	**3.74**	**0.01**	**0.30**	**0.06**
SDAPCD Daily Thresholds	*137*	*250*	*550*	*250*	*100*	*67*
Exceed Daily Threshold?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***
Annual Emissions (tons per year)						
Area	0.01	--	--	--	--	--
Mobile	0.10	0.07	0.65	<0.01	0.06	0.01
Energy	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total Project Emissions[1]	**0.11**	**0.07**	**0.65**	**<0.01**	**0.06**	**0.01**
SDAPCD Annual Screening Thresholds	*15*	*40*	*100*	*40*	*15*	*10*
Exceed Annual Threshold?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Source: CalEEMod.
[1] Totals may not sum due to rounding.
VOC = volatile organic compound; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_X = sulfur oxides; PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter; SDAPCD = San Diego County Air Pollution Control District.

As shown in Table 3, the Project's long-term emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors would not exceed the SDAPCD daily or annual screening thresholds. Therefore, the Project's operational activities would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants that would violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, and the impact would be less than significant.

c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than Significant Impact. Land uses that are commonly considered sensitive receptors include residences, schools, hospitals, and daycare centers. The closest existing sensitive receptors to the Project site are single-family residences approximately 25 feet north and northwest of the Project site, along Harris Street; and multi-family residences approximately 50 feet south of the Project site, across Waite Drive. The closest school is the Vista La Mesa Academy, approximately 0.4 mile to the east. Helix High School is also located approximately 0.5 mile to the north. The closest daycare center is the Academy of Play Preschool, approximately 0.5 mile to the northwest. There are no hospitals located within 0.5 mile of the Project site. The primary localized pollutants of concern for sensitive receptors are toxic air contaminants (TACs) and CO hotspots.

Construction Activities

Implementation of the Project would result in the use of heavy-duty construction equipment, haul trucks, and construction worker vehicles. These vehicles and equipment could generate TAC diesel particulate matter (DPM). Generation of DPM from construction Projects typically occurs in a localized area (e.g., at the Project site) for a short period of time. Because construction activities and subsequent emissions vary depending on the phase of construction (e.g., grading, building construction), the construction-related emissions to which nearby receptors are exposed to would also vary throughout the construction period. During some

equipment-intensive phases such as grading, construction-related emissions would be higher than other less equipment-intensive phases such as building construction.

The dose (of TAC) to which receptors are exposed is the primary factor used to determine health risk. Dose is a function of the concentration of a substance in the environment and the extent of exposure a person has to the substance; a longer exposure period to a fixed amount of emissions would result in higher health risks. Current models and methodologies for conducting cancer health risk assessments are associated with longer-term exposure periods (typically 30 years for individual residents based on guidance from the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment [OEHHA]) and are best suited for evaluation of long-duration TAC emissions with predictable schedules and locations. These assessment models and methodologies do not correlate well with the temporary and highly variable nature of construction activities. Cancer potency factors are based on animal lifetime studies or worker studies, where there is long-term exposure to the carcinogenic agent. There is considerable uncertainty in trying to evaluate the cancer risk from projects that will only last a small fraction of a lifetime (OEHHA 2015). Considering this information, the highly dispersive nature of DPM, and the fact that construction activities would occur at various locations throughout the Project site, construction of the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial DPM concentrations. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Operational Activities

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

Localized elevated CO concentrations, or CO hotspots, are primarily a result of congested motor vehicle activity at intersections. Under specific meteorological conditions (e.g., stable conditions that result in poor dispersion), CO concentrations may reach unhealthy levels for local sensitive land uses. Neither the City nor the SDAPCD have developed a screening methodology for determining when Intersection CO concentrations could be potentially significant, requiring further analysis. CO hotpots are typically associated with very high-volume intersections. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has adopted a CO hotspot screening threshold based on intersection volume: project CO hotspot impacts would be less than significant and no further analysis would be required if project traffic would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersections to more than 44,000 vehicles per hour, or more than 24,000 vehicles per hour per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited (e.g., tunnel, parking garage, bridge underpass, natural or urban street canyon, below-grade roadway; BAAQMD 2017).

According to the Transportation Assessment prepared for the project, the highest volume Project affected street would be Murray Hill Road which would have 10,231 ADT in the existing plus Project condition, or an average of approximately 426 vehicles per hour (LLG 2023). This volume would be far below the BAAQMD screening level of 44,000 vehicles per hour, or 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited. Therefore, the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial localized concentrations of CO, and the impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The State of California Health and Safety Code Sections 41700 and 41705, and SDAPCD Rule 51, prohibit emissions from any source whatsoever in such

quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to the public health or damage to property. SDAPCD Rule 51 (Nuisance) prohibits emissions from any source whatsoever in such quantities of air contaminants or other material, which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to the public health or damage to property (SDAPCD 1976). It is generally accepted that the considerable number of persons requirement in Rule 51 is normally satisfied when 10 different individuals/households have made separate complaints within 90 days. Odor complaints from a "considerable" number of persons or businesses in the area would be considered to be a significant, adverse odor impact.

According to the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting activities, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding operations (SCAQMD 1993). The Project, consisting of a neighborhood park, would not include any of these uses nor are there any of these types of land uses in the Project vicinity.

Emissions from construction equipment, such as diesel exhaust, and VOCs from architectural coatings and paving activities may generate odors; however, these odors would be temporary, intermittent, and not expected to affect a substantial number of people. Additionally, such odors would be confined to the immediate vicinity of construction equipment. By the time such emissions reach any sensitive receptor sites, they would be diluted to well below any level of air quality concern. Furthermore, short-term construction-related odors are expected to cease upon the drying or hardening of the odor-producing materials. Long-term operation of the proposed neighborhood park would not be a substantial source of objectionable odors. Therefore, the Project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. The impact would be less than significant.

4. Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	☒

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
e.	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f.	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

A Biological Resources Letter Report was prepared for the Project, which is included as Appendix C to this IS/MND (HELIX 2023a). The results and conclusions of this analysis are summarized in this section.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. A general biological survey, including vegetation mapping, was conducted on the Project site on March 16, 2023. Additionally, a review of relevant maps, federal and state databases, and literature pertaining to biological resources known to occur within the vicinity of the Project site was conducted prior to the general biological survey. Recent and historical aerial imagery, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps, soils maps (USDA 2023), and other relevant maps of the Project site and vicinity were acquired and reviewed to obtain updated information on the natural environmental setting. A query of special status species and habitats databases was also conducted, including the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; CDFW 2023), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) species records, SanBIOS (SANDAG 2023), California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (CNPS 2023). Any recorded locations of species, habitat types, wetlands, and other resources were mapped and overlaid onto aerial imagery using Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Sensitive Plants

Based on a review of available literature, biological resources online database queries for species recorded within two miles of the Project site, and the City's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Narrow Endemic list, 16 special-status plant species were analyzed for their potential to occur within the Project site (Attachment C in the Biological Resources Letter Report, *Sensitive Plant Species Potential to Occur*). No special-status plant species were determined to have a high potential to occur on-site due to the prior site development, recent disturbance and site vegetation maintenance, and lack of suitable habitat conditions. The Project site does not support the vegetation associations, soils, or hydrology required by many of the special-status plants known to the region.

No special-status plant species were found to occur within the Project site, and none have the potential to occur within the Project site. Therefore, no impact to sensitive plant species would occur.

Sensitive Animals

Based on a review of available literature, queries through biological resources online database for special-status species recorded within two miles of the Project site, and species included on the MSCP Narrow Endemic list, 25 animal species were evaluated for the potential to occur on the Project site (Attachment D in the Biological Resources Letter Report, *Sensitive Animal Species Potential to Occur*). Two special-status animal species were determined to have a high potential to occur on-site: Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii;* CDFW Watch List and MSCP Covered Species) and western bluebird (*Sialia mexicanus*; MSCP Covered Species). The remaining 23 species analyzed were determined to have either a low potential to occur or are not expected to occur due to existing site disturbances, site vegetation maintenance, and lack of suitable habitat conditions.

No special-status animals are known to occur within the Project site; however, two were found to have high potential to occur due to the presence of several trees and potential foraging habitat: Cooper's hawk and western bluebird. Three Canary Island pine tree and one pepper tree will be preserved as part of the development of the park, which would continue to provide potential nesting habitat for these species.

Pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game (CFG) Code, the development of the proposed Project could disturb or destroy active migratory bird nests if vegetation clearing occurs during the general bird nesting season (February 15 through August 31) and/or raptor nesting season (January 15 through July 15). Disturbance to or destruction of migratory bird nests are in violation of the MBTA and CFG Code and are, therefore, considered to be a potentially significant impact. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1 would ensure that potential impacts to birds protected under the MBTA and CFG Code are avoided during construction. With implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1, the impact would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Nesting Bird and Raptor Avoidance

In order to avoid violation of the federal MBTA and CFG Code, site-preparation activities (removal of trees and vegetation) shall be avoided during the general avian breeding/nesting season (January 15 to July 15 for raptors; February 15 to August 31 for other avian species), if practicable.

If grubbing, clearing, or grading would occur during the general avian breeding season within 300 feet of general nesting bird habitat or 500 feet of nesting raptor habitat, a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey no more than three days (72 hours) prior to the commencement of activities to determine if active bird nests are present in the affected areas. If there are no nesting birds (includes nest building or other breeding/nesting behavior) within this area, clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed. Furthermore, if construction activities are to resume in an area where they have not occurred for a period of seven or more days during the breeding season, an updated survey for avian nesting will be conducted. If active nests or nesting birds are observed within the area, the biologist shall flag the active nests and construction activities shall avoid active nests with appropriate avoidance buffers and/or impact avoidance measures as determined by the biologist until the qualified biologist has determined that nesting behavior has ceased, nests have failed, or young have fledged.

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

No Impact. Sensitive vegetation communities and habitats are those considered rare within the local region or sensitive by CDFW; are listed as sensitive under a regional planning program (e.g., MSCP); or support sensitive plants or animals as defined by Section 15380 of the State CEQA Guidelines. They are considered sensitive because they have been depleted, are naturally uncommon, or support sensitive species. As noted in item 4.a., a general biological survey, including vegetation mapping, was conducted on the Project site on March 16, 2023. The project site supports five different vegetation communities and land cover types. Existing vegetation communities and land cover types identified and mapped within the project site include developed land (1.57 acres), non-native grassland (0.69 acre), disturbed habitat (0.6 acre), non-native vegetation (0.20 acre), and non-native vegetation-giant reed (0.02 acre). None of these are considered sensitive vegetation communities. Non-native grassland is considered sensitive in some jurisdictions but is not listed as a sensitive vegetation community in the La Mesa MSCP Subarea Plan. No impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community would occur as a result of the Project. Impacts to non-sensitive vegetation communities are not considered significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. No potentially jurisdictional aquatic resources were identified within the Project site during biological survey. No impacts to any wetland communities, including freshwater marshes and vernal pools, would occur as a result of the Project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. Wildlife corridors connect otherwise isolated pieces of habitat and allow movement or dispersal of plants and animals. Wildlife corridors can be local or regional in scale. Their functions may vary temporally and spatially based on conditions and species presence. Corridors represent areas where wildlife movement is concentrated due to natural or anthropogenic constraints. Local corridors provide access to resources such as food, water, and shelter. Animals use these corridors in their daily routine to move between different habitats. Regional corridors also provide these functions and link two or more large habitat areas providing avenues for wildlife dispersal, migration, and contact between otherwise distinct populations.

While the Project site and immediately adjacent native habitats support localized use by wildlife, particularly birds, the Project site does not function as a wildlife corridor or habitat linkage for non-avian terrestrial wildlife due to its relatively small size and constrained connectivity to larger habitat areas. The Project site and surrounding area are highly urbanized and lack the characteristics that would contribute to the function and assembly of any local or regional wildlife corridor or linkage. The Project would not interfere with wildlife movement or impede the use of nursery sites. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The local policies that protect biological resources are contained in the Conservation and Sustainability Element of the La Mesa General Plan and the City of La Mesa MSCP Plan area.

City of La Mesa General Plan. The Conservation and Sustainability Element of the La Mesa General Plan includes the following conservation policies and objectives related to biological and sensitive land resources.

Conservation Policies. The City will establish policies that encourage the preservation of the City's few remaining areas of sensitive lands and natural habitat, where such features will make a significant contribution to regional or local preservation efforts.

> Policy CS-1.1.3: Preserve existing trees where appropriate and require planting of new trees in conjunction with public and private developments.

Conservation Objectives. The Community Development Department will initiate the creation of an Open Space Overlay Zone, which can effectively protect those areas of natural vegetation determined to be of significant value individually or as part of a regional habitat conservation program.

The Project site contains three Canary Island Pine trees as well as one California Pepper tree that are proposed to be incorporated in the future park design in accordance with Policy CS-1.1.3 of the General Plan and the City of La Mesa Tree Policy Manual, which both encourage the preservation of existing trees (City 2013a).

City of La Mesa Subarea Habitat Conservation Plan

The California Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act of 1991 (Section 2835) allows CDFW to authorize take of species covered by plans, in agreement with NCCP guidelines. A Natural Communities Conservation Program, initiated by the State of California, focuses on conserving coastal sage scrub, and in concert with the USFWS and the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), is intended to avoid the need for future federal and state listing of coastal sage scrub-dependent species.

The County of San Diego MSCP, which was approved in August 1998, covers 85 species, and includes a 900-square mile area in southwestern San Diego County (County of San Diego 1998). The City of La Mesa Subarea, portions of the unincorporated County, and 10 additional city jurisdictions make up the MSCP Plan area. It is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation plan that addresses the needs of multiple species by identifying key areas for preservation as open space in order to link core biological areas into a regional wildlife preserve. The MSCP is one of several large multiple jurisdictional habitat planning efforts in San Diego County, each of which constitutes a subregional plan under the NCCP Act of 1991. The MSCP includes incorporated cities in southwestern San Diego County that will implement their respective portions of the MSCP through citywide "subarea" plans, which describe the specific implementing mechanisms each city will institute for the MSCP. The City of La Mesa adopted its Subarea Plan on February 1998.

The Project site is located within the boundaries of the County of San Diego MSCP (County of San Diego 1998). Within the MSCP, the Project is in the City of La Mesa Subarea and subject to the adopted La Mesa Subarea Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (Subarea Plan; City of La Mesa 1998). The Project is not within an area targeted for MSCP conservation. Also, the Project site does not incorporate areas designated or proposed by the USFWS as critical habitat.

The Project does not conflict with any local policies or ordinances, including the Conservation and Sustainability Element of the La Mesa General Plan or La Mesa MSCP Subarea Plan. The La Mesa General Plan shows the project site as Urban Residential, not Open Space. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. The Project site is located in a heavily urbanized area and has been heavily disturbed since the early 1900s. The Project site does not contain any riparian or wetland habitats, coastal sage scrub, or other sensitive habitat identified by the Subarea Plan. As discussed above in Item 4.e, while the Project site falls within the boundaries of the Subarea Plan, it is not within an area targeted for MSCP conservation. Marginally suitable nesting habitat occurs in the project site for two MSCP covered species, but this habitat, consisting of several non-native trees, is expected to be preserved as part of the project implementation. The Project site is not located on or near areas designated as Multiple Habitat Planning Areas or other preserve lands and does not function as a local or regional wildlife corridor, linkage, or nursery site. Therefore, the Project does not conflict with any provisions of the Subarea Plan. Compliance with existing regulations and implementation of measures BIO-1 would ensure consistency with the general conservation goals and objectives of the County MSCP. No impact would occur.

5. Cultural Resources

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

A Cultural Resources Survey Report was prepared for the Project, which is included as Appendix D to this IS/MND (HELIX 2023b). The results and conclusions of this analysis are summarized in this section.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project involves the redevelopment of a disturbed 2.84-acre site into a neighborhood park for the surrounding community. A records search for the project area and a one half-mile radius was obtained from the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) as a part of the cultural resources study. According to the record search results, a total of three cultural resources have been previously recorded within one half-mile of the project area but none within the Project site. These include the historic Waite House, which was located approximately 0.4 mile west of the Project site; the Lemon Grove Congregational Church of Christ; and the Lemon Grove Monument. None of these resources are within the project area nor would they be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed project.

HELIX contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on February 22, 2023, for a Sacred Lands File search and a list of Native American contacts. The response, received on March 16, 2023, indicated negative results.

On March 23, 2023, a HELIX archaeologist and a Kumeyaay Native American cultural monitor conducted a reconnaissance survey of the project site. Although the project area has a history of use by the Waite family, the structure foundations recorded on-site are likely the remnants of the County of San Diego Lemon Grove Road Station. This resource does not meet any of the eligibility criteria for listing in the CRHR per CEQA. In addition to lacking significance, the project site has been thoroughly disturbed by demolition and use as a laydown yard and, therefore, also lacks integrity as defined by CEQA. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on built-environment historical resources.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As noted above in item 5.a., a total of three cultural resources have been previously recorded within one half-mile of the project area but none within the Project site, and no significant cultural resources were identified within the site as part of the cultural resources survey. Due to the highly disturbed nature of the Project site and the previous ground disturbance (including the subterranean level), it is unlikely that project construction activities would extend into previously undisturbed materials. Thus, the likelihood to encounter intact subsurface archaeological resources is low.

However, there is still a possibility for buried, unknown archaeological resources to occur. As a condition of approval, a note shall be placed on the building plans stating that should any archeological (cultural) resources or human remains be discovered during construction-phase ground-disturbing activities, all work in the immediate vicinity must stop and the project applicant shall notify the City immediately. A qualified professional shall be retained to evaluate the finds and recommend appropriate action. For human remains, the applicant shall notify the County Coroner. For human remains determined to be of Native American origin, the procedures outlined in CEQA Section 15064.5 (d) and (e) shall be followed. The applicant shall ensure, to the satisfaction of the City and the Native American Heritage Foundation, if applicable, that appropriate measures are undertaken prior to resuming any project activities that may affect such resources. With the inclusion of this condition of approval and the required regulatory compliance, impacts to archaeological resources would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Disturbance to human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries, is not anticipated given the generally disturbed nature of the Project site and the lack of historical resources. If human remains are discovered, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbance and activities shall cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98, if the Coroner recognizes the remains to be Native American, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission, who will then notify the Most Likely Descendent. If Native American remains are discovered, the remains shall be kept *in situ*, or in a secure location in close proximity to where they were found, and the analysis of the remains shall only occur on-site in the presence of a Native American monitor (see response to item 5.a.). Further provisions of PRC Section 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable. Based on compliance with existing codes, the proposed Project would not be expected to disturb any human remains. The impact is less than significant.

6. Energy

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

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

Less than Significant Impact. Energy consumed for Project construction would primarily consist of fuels in the form of diesel and gasoline. Fuel consumption would result from: the use of on-road and off-highway trucks for the transportation of construction materials and water; construction worker vehicles traveling to and from the Project site; and from the use of off-road construction equipment. While construction activities would consume petroleum-based fuels, consumption of such resources would be temporary and would cease upon the completion of construction. The petroleum consumed during Project construction would be typical of similar recreational land uses and would not require the use of new petroleum resources beyond those typically consumed in California annually for construction activities.

The Project would be designed to meet the current California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 CALGreen mandatory green building standards. As such, the neighborhood park includes a suite of design features that assist in meeting the required energy reduction standards including rooftop solar located on the proposed restroom with an attached garage, water-efficient plumbing fixtures, drip and low flow irrigation, drought-tolerant landscaping, recycling bins, two electric vehicle charging stations, and electric landscaping equipment.

Therefore, the Project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during Project construction or operation, and the impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Several levels of government have implemented regulatory programs in response to reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) emissions, which consequently serve to increase energy efficiency. Several state agencies, including CARB, California Energy Commission, California Public Utilities Commission, California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery (CalRecycle), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the Department of Water Resources have developed regulatory and incentive programs that promote energy efficiency. Many of the measures are generally beyond the ability of any future development to implement and are implemented at the utility provider or the manufacturer level.

As noted in item 6.a., the Project would be consistent with the requirements of Title 24 through implementation of energy-reduction measures, such as energy efficient lighting, water-efficient plumbing fixtures, water-efficient landscaping and irrigation, and the on-site generation of renewable solar energy.

Locally, the City of La Mesa adopted its Climate Action Plan (CAP) in March 2018, which provides the framework for reducing the City's GHG emissions and consequently improving energy efficiency. Often local energy conservation plans and goals, such as those in the City's CAP are devised based upon the anticipated land uses within a planning area as outlined in planning documents including a City's General Plan or Zoning Ordinance. The Project does not conflict with the General Plan or Zoning Ordinance land uses. The Project is designed to increase walkability and would include bicycle parking spaces to promote a variety of transportation methods to and from the park. Additionally, the neighborhood park would attract children and families that currently reside locally, within the surrounding neighborhoods. Therefore, the Project would provide opportunities for visitors to utilize other alternative transportation options, which would result in energy conservation.

The Project does not conflict with any State or local plans for renewable energy efficiency. The Project would employ standard methods of construction and does not propose to create a Project condition post-construction whereby increased energy demand would be created. The 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
Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv. Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

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

No Impact. Seismically induced surface or ground rupture occurs when movement on a fault deep within the earth breaks through to the surface as a result of seismic activity. Fault rupture almost always follows pre-existing faults, which are zones of weakness. Sudden displacements are more damaging to structures because they are accompanied by shaking. Under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, the California State Geologist identifies areas in the State that are at risk from surface fault rupture. The main purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Act is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active faults that requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones, known as Alquist-Priolo

Earthquake Fault Zones, around the surface traces of active faults and to issue appropriate maps that identify these zones. The Project is not located within the designated Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (CDC 2023b). Thus, no impact would occur.

a.ii. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than Significant Impact. The closest fault to the Project site is the Rose Canyon Fault, which is approximately eight miles west of the site. Like most of southern California, the Project site is susceptible to strong seismic shaking during an earthquake and can therefore be subject to strong seismic ground motion. The Project would comply with the seismic design parameters outlined in the California Building Code (CBC), which provide requirements for earthquake safety based on factors such as occupancy type, the types of soils on-site, and the probable strength of ground motion. Compliance with the CBC would include the incorporation of: (1) seismic safety features to minimize the potential for significant effects as a result of earthquakes; (2) proper building footings and foundations; and (3) construction of the building structure so that it would withstand the effects of strong ground shaking. In addition, an inspection of the Project during construction would ensure that all required CBC seismic safety measures are incorporated into the Project. Compliance with the CBC (as encoded as Chapter 14.04.010, of the La Mesa Municipal Code), the Building Department's review process, permit application, and inspection would result in a less than significant impact.

a.iii. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than Significant Impact. Liquefaction is a soil phenomenon in which water-saturated soil loses strength when subject to the forces of intense and prolonged ground shaking. Liquefaction is more likely to occur in loose to moderately saturated soils with poor drainage, such as silty sands or sands and gravel containing impermeable sediments. The presence of a shallow groundwater table can also increase the susceptibility of liquefaction during seismic events. The Project site is disturbed with a combination of fencing, retaining walls, existing remnant building foundations, dispersed vegetation, and scattered debris. The Project site includes two soil types: Friant rocky fine sandy loam, 9 to 30 percent slopes (FxE) and Redding-Urban land complex, 2 to 9 percent slopes (RhC; USDA 2023). The two soil types include a depth of more than 80 inches to the water table. Given the depth to groundwater, the Project site has a low susceptibility to liquefaction. The impact would be less than significant.

a.iv. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: Landslides?

Less than Significant Impact. The topography of the site slopes downward by approximately 25 feet to the west of Murray Hill Road before it begins to level out across the rest of the property. The remainder of the property gently slopes to the west. The elevations on the site range from approximately 450 feet AMSL to approximately 485 feet AMSL. The current topography of the site is elevated three to four feet above the adjacent residential backyards, creating a drainage swale between the topography of the site and the neighbors' fencing.

The Project site would be graded; however, the natural slope would be highlighted in the overall Project design. Re-grading would be done to create two distinct levels of accessible activity zones. The slope in the eastern portion of the site would be retained and standard engineering design parameters would be employed to provide slope stability. Additionally, the Project site is

not located within a Landslide Zone (CDC 2023b). Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Construction of the proposed Project would involve a variety of heavy equipment associated with intensive earthwork, structure building, and paving. Soil exposed by construction activities, such as excavation, could be subject to erosion if exposed to heavy rain, winds, or other storm events. The Project would be required to obtain an NPDES Construction General Permit and be required to submit a Notice of Intent with the RWQCB for the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP). Generally, a SWPPP demonstrates how water quality during and post-construction would be maintained in accordance with mandated objectives. Often this is achieved by employing best management practices (BMPs) (see Section 10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*). Many BMPs designed to protect water quality also serve to reduce soil erosion and loss of topsoil.

Specific BMPs may include:

- Preservation of existing vegetation where feasible.
- Covering stockpiled, excavated, and/or fill materials to reduce potential off-site sediment transport.
- Use of erosion control devices, such as straw wattles, mulch, mats, and/or geotextiles.
- Use of sediment controls to protect the site perimeter and prevent off-site sediment transport, including measures, such as silt fencing, fiber rolls, gravel bags, temporary sediment basins, street sweeping, stabilized construction access points and sediment stockpiles, and use of properly fitted covers for sediment transport vehicles.
- Compliance with local dust control measures.
- Daily backfill, compaction, and/or covering of excavated pipeline trenches to minimize erosion potential.
- Regular inspection and maintenance of all erosion control and sediment catchment facilities to ensure proper function and effectiveness.

With the implementation of required standard erosion control measures and storm water construction BMPs, construction-related erosion and sedimentation impacts would be less than significant. Additionally, once constructed, the Project site would no longer include a large area of exposed soil that would contribute to erosion and sedimentation. Therefore, impacts related to substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil would be less than significant.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in items 7.a.iii. and 7.a.iv. above, potential impacts associated with liquefaction and landslides would be less than significant. With regard to other potential geologic instability hazards, placement of associated neighborhood park

amenities would not be expected to substantially affect subsurface soils such that soils would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. The Project would be designed in accordance with the CBC, which includes measures to reduce geologic impacts. Thus, the impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site includes two soil types: Friant rocky fine sandy loam, 9 to 30 percent slopes (FxE) and Redding-Urban land complex, 2 to 9 percent slopes (RhC). Adherence to the CBC and the City's Grading Ordinance would reduce hazards related to expansive soils. Specifically, the Grading Ordinance States, "The City Engineer shall not issue a grading permit in any case where the City Engineer finds that the work, as proposed by the applicant, will damage any private or public property, or interfere with any existing drainage course in a manner which may cause damage to any adjacent property, or create an unreasonable hazard to person or property." Thus, with the required adherence to the CBC and the Grading Ordinance, the impact would be less than significant.

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 waste water?

No Impact. The Project does not involve the installation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater systems. The Project site would include two family-style restroom stalls with outdoor sinks and a water station and would connect to existing City-owned water and sewer lines. Therefore, no impact would occur.

f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The disturbance area for the Project is entirely within the previously disturbed site. The Project site was the previous Lemon Grove Road Station, constructed to serve as a spot for County road workers to service vehicles, as well as to stage trucks and equipment. Remnants of the structures from the previous use exist on the site, including remaining cement foundations. Due to the highly disturbed nature of the Project site and the previous ground disturbance, it is unlikely that Project construction activities would extend into previously undisturbed materials. Thus, the likelihood of encountering intact paleontological resources is low. However, based on the paleontological resource sensitivity of underlying formational materials, there is a possibility to encounter paleontological resources. The Project site is almost entirely underlain by very old paralic deposits of the middle to early Pleistocene age, which are assigned a medium sensitivity rating (City of San Diego 2020). A very small portion if the site (in the northeastern corner is underlain by the volcanic and sedimentary rocks, which typically exhibit very low to zero potential for fossils. In the event that paleontological resources are encountered during construction, such resources could potentially be damaged or destroyed. Therefore, the implementation of the proposed Project could potentially result in significant impacts to unknown paleontological resources. Implementation of mitigation measure GEO-1 would reduce this impact to below a level of significance.

Mitigation Measure GEO-1: Paleontological Monitoring

Prior to construction, the City or construction contractor shall retain a qualified paleontological monitor. The paleontological monitor shall attend a pre-construction meeting(s) with the construction manager and shall be present during all initial cutting, grading, or excavation of previously undisturbed substratum. If a fossil is encountered, all operations in the area where the fossil was found shall be suspended immediately, the City shall be notified, and a qualified paleontologist shall be retained to evaluate the significance of the find; to salvage, record, clean, and curate significant fossil(s); and to document the find in accordance with current professional paleontological standards. Within 30 days of completion of ground-disturbing activities, either a letter signed by the paleontological monitor stating that no fossils were found or, if fossils were found, a report prepared by the qualified paleontologist documenting the mitigation program shall be submitted to the City.

8. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

The Projects' construction and operational GHG emissions were estimated using CalEEMod. The complete CalEEMod output is provided in Appendix C to this IS/MND.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Global climate change refers to changes in average climatic conditions on Earth including temperature, wind patterns, precipitation, and storms. Global temperatures are moderated by atmospheric gases. These gases are commonly referred to as greenhouse gases (GHGs) because they function like a greenhouse by letting sunlight in but preventing heat from escaping, thus warming the Earth's atmosphere.

GHGs are emitted by natural processes and human (anthropogenic) activities. Anthropogenic GHG emissions are primarily associated with burning of fossil fuels during motorized transport; electricity generation; natural gas consumption; industrial activity; manufacturing; and other activities such as deforestation, agricultural activity, and solid waste decomposition.

The GHGs defined under California's Assembly Bill (AB) 32, described below, include carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6). Each GHG differs in its ability to absorb heat in the atmosphere based on the lifetime, or persistence, of the gas molecule in the atmosphere. Estimates of GHG emissions are commonly presented in carbon dioxide

equivalents (CO_2e), which weigh each gas by its global warming potential (GWP). Expressing GHG emissions in CO_2e takes the contribution of all GHG emissions to the greenhouse effect and converts them to a single unit equivalent to the effect that would occur if only CO_2 were being emitted. GHG emissions quantities in this analysis are presented in metric tons (MT) of CO_2e.

The determination of significance is governed by CEQA Guidelines 15064.4, entitled "Determining the Significance of Impacts from Greenhouse Gas Emissions." CEQA Guidelines 15064.4(a) states, "[t]he determination of the significance of GHG emissions calls for a careful judgment by the lead agency consistent with the provisions in Section 15064. A lead agency should make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate the amount of GHG emissions resulting from a project. A lead agency shall have discretion to determine, in the context of a particular project, whether to … [use a quantitative model or qualitative model]." In turn, CEQA Guidelines 15064.4(b) clarifies that a lead agency should consider "Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project." Therefore, consistent with CEQA Guidelines 15064.4, the GHG analysis for the Project appropriately relies upon a threshold based on the exercise of careful judgement and believed to be appropriate in the context of this particular Project.

On December 5, 2008, the SCAQMD Governing Board adopted their *Interim CEQA Greenhouse Gas Significance Threshold*. The policy objective of the SCAQMD's recommended threshold is to achieve an emission capture rate of 90 percent of all new or modified stationary source projects. A GHG significance threshold based on a 90 percent emission capture rate may be more appropriate to address the long-term adverse impacts associated with global climate change because most projects will be required to implement GHG reduction measures. Further, a 90 percent emission capture rate sets the emission threshold low enough to capture a substantial fraction of future stationary source projects that will be constructed to accommodate future statewide population and economic growth, while setting the emission threshold high enough to exclude small projects that will in aggregate contribute a relatively small fraction of the cumulative statewide GHG emissions. This assertion is based on the fact that SCAQMD staff estimates that these GHG emissions would account for slightly less than one percent of the future 2050 statewide GHG emissions target (SCAQMD 2008).

Because neither the City nor the SDAPCD have adopted quantitative thresholds related to GHG emissions from recreational projects, the quantitative analysis provided herein relies upon the SCAQMD adopted screening threshold for land use development projects of 3,000 MT CO_2e (SCAQMD 2008). The SCAQMD's jurisdiction has similar climate and land use patterns as San Diego County (i.e., dense population centers to the west and along the coast, and rural, low population density areas to the east) and the relative mix of GHG sources in the two regions are similar.

The project would generate GHG emissions during construction and operation of the project, as discussed below.

Construction Emissions

The Project's temporary construction GHG emissions were estimated using CalEEMod, Version 2022.1.1.7. CalEEMod is a computer model used to estimate air emissions resulting from land development projects throughout the state of California. CalEEMod was developed by CAPCOA in collaboration with the California air quality management and pollution control districts,

primarily the SCAQMD. The calculation methodology, source of emission factors used, and default data are described in the CalEEMod User's Guide, and Appendices C, D, and G (CAPCOA 2022).

The Project would construct a neighborhood park on a 2.84-acre site. The land use size assumptions used for modeling purposes were approximately 2.7 acres of City Park and approximately 0.2 acre of parking lot and driveway. Neighborhood park amenities would total approximately 2.7 acres, which would include a 75,032-square-foot landscaped area and a 500-square-foot restroom with an attached garage as well as a dog run, half basketball court, and other features. The Project would also include a 0.2-acre parking lot area. The modeled size of the landscaping area, restroom/garage building, and parking lot area were estimated based on the Site Plan (Figure 3; Appendix A). The construction emissions were estimated based on the timeline provided by the Project applicant, which assumed construction would commence with demolition in December 2024 and would be complete in July 2025 for a total construction period of eight months. Construction activities would include demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. It was assumed based on the existing vegetation, cement, and other debris on-site, that approximately 32 CY of vegetation would be removed off-site during site preparation and approximately 50 tons of cement and other debris would be removed off-site during demolition. It was assumed grading cut/fill would be balanced on-site.

Construction would require the use of heavy off-road equipment. Construction equipment estimates were based on site conditions and default values in CalEEMod, with an additional off-highway truck (a water truck) that would be used to water exposed areas during demolition, site preparation, and grading. Worker commute trips were modeled based on the size of the Project and CalEEMod defaults. It was assumed that one truckload of material would be delivered per day during building construction.

Emissions of GHGs related to the construction of the project would be temporary. As shown in Table 4, *Construction GHG Emissions*, total GHG emissions associated with construction of the Project in the years 2024 and 2025 are estimated at 164.5 MT CO_2e. To be conservative in accounting for all the Project's GHG emissions, construction emissions are amortized (i.e., averaged) over the 30-year estimated life span of the project buildings and added to operational emissions. Averaged over 30 years, the proposed construction activities would contribute approximately 5.5 MT CO_2e emissions per year.

Table 4
CONSTRUCTION GHG EMISSIONS

Year/Activity	Emissions (MT CO_2e)
2024/Demolition and Site Preparation	30.5
2025/ Site Preparation, Grading, Building Construction, Paving and Architectural Coating	134.0
TOTAL[1]	**164.5**
Amortized Construction Emissions[2]	*5.5*

Source: CalEEMod.
[1] Totals may not sum due to rounding.
[2] Construction emissions are amortized over 30 years.
GHG = greenhouse gas; MT = metric tons; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalent

Operational Emissions

Operational GHG emissions were estimated using CalEEMod. Operational sources of emissions include area, mobile, energy, water use, and solid waste.

Operational GHG emissions from mobile sources are associated with project-related VMT. The Transportation Assessment analyzed the Project's VMT and concluded VMT impacts would be less than significant (LLG 2023). Fleet mix and vehicle emission factors relied on CalEEMod defaults.

Energy source emissions were estimated using CalEEMod defaults which assume implementation compliance with the 2019 Title 24 Part 6 building energy efficiency standards, and 2019 CALGreen.

Solid waste source emissions were estimated using CalEEMod defaults. The disposal of solid waste produces GHG emissions from anaerobic decomposition in landfills, incineration, and transportation of waste. CalEEMod determines the GHG emissions associated with disposal of solid waste into landfills. Portions of these emissions are biogenic. CalEEMod methods for quantifying GHG emissions from solid waste are based on the IPCC method using the degradable organic content of waste.

Water and wastewater source emissions were estimated using CalEEMod defaults. Water-related GHG emissions are from the conveyance and treatment of water and wastewater. CalEEMod uses the CEC's 2006 Refining Estimates of Water-Related Energy Use in California to establish default water-related emission factors.

As shown in Table 5, *Operational GHG Emissions*, the Project would result in approximately 154 MT CO_2e per year, which includes the total construction emissions and the amortized construction emissions. This would not exceed the SCAQMD land use development threshold of 3,000 MT CO2e. Therefore, the Project would not generate GHG emissions during construction or operations that may have a significant impact on the environment, and the impact would be less than significant.

Table 5
OPERATIONAL GHG EMISSIONS

Emission Source	2024/2025 Emissions (MT CO_2e)
Mobile	144.0
Energy	1.5
Solid Waste	<0.1
Water/Wastewater	3.5
Subtotal[1]	149.0
Construction (Annualized over 30 years)	5.0
TOTAL[1]	154.0
SCAQMD Tier 3 Threshold	3,000.0
Exceed Threshold?	No

Source: CalEEMod.
[1] Totals may not sum due to rounding.
GHG = greenhouse gas; MT = metric tons; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalent.

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

Less than Significant Impact. There are numerous State plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The principal overall State plan and policy is Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. The quantitative goal of AB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. SB 32 would require further reductions of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The quantitative goal of AB 1279, The California Climate Crisis Act, is to achieve net zero GHG emissions as soon as possible, but no later than 2045. Because the project's operational year is post-2020, the project aims to reach the quantitative goals set by SB 32 and AB 1279, as implemented by the CARB Scoping Plan. Statewide plans and regulations such as GHG emissions standards for vehicles (AB 1493), the LCFS, and regulations requiring an increasing fraction of electricity to be generated from renewable sources are being implemented at the statewide level; as such, compliance at the project level is not addressed. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with those plans and regulations.

City of La Mesa Climate Action Plan

The City of La Mesa Climate Action Plan (CAP) was adopted in March 2018. The CAP describes the 2010 GHG emissions baseline and forecasted emissions for 2020 and 2035, and identifies achievable, measurable strategies and actions for the City to reduce emissions to 15 percent below 2010 levels by 2020 and 53 percent below 2010 levels by 2035 (City of La Mesa 2018). These CAP reduction goals were designed to enable the City to meet the 2020 GHG reduction mandates of AB 32, the 2030 GHG reduction mandates SB 32, and to be on-track to meet the 2050 of EO-S-3-05 goal of GHG emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The CAP contains reduction measures within the City's direct influence to achieve the City's 2020 and 2035 GHG reduction targets in five strategy areas: energy; transportation and land use; water; solid waste; and green infrastructure (City of La Mesa 2018).

As a neighborhood park, most City CAP measures would not be applicable to the Project. The Project would support CAP Measure E-2, Shade Tree Program by providing new trees as well as incorporating existing trees on-site. The Project would also comply with the City landscape standards which include requirements for water-efficient landscaping and irrigation, supporting City CAP Measure W-2, Water Sensitive Landscape Design, and Irrigation.

As discussed in item 8.a., the Project's GHG emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD Tier 3 Threshold for GHG emissions. The transportation (mobile) sector is the largest source of GHG emissions in the state and in the San Diego region. A project's GHG emissions from cars and light trucks are directly correlated to the project's VMT. The Transportation Assessment analyzed the Project's VMT and concluded VMT impacts would be less than significant (LLG 2023). The Project's conformance to Title 24 Part 6 building energy efficiency code and Part 11 CALGreen code would ensure the Project is consistent with the CAP building energy, water use, and solid waste diversion strategies and measures. The Project would not conflict with any of the City's CAP GHG reduction measures.

The Project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs, including the City' CAP and the CARB Scoping Plan, and the impact would be less than significant.

9. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
a.	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b.	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c.	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d.	Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e.	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f.	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g.	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

A Phase I Environmental Assessment (ESA) was prepared by The Bodhi Group, Inc., which is included as Appendix F to this IS/MND (The Bodhi Group 2023). The results of this analysis are summarized in this section.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Materials and waste are generally considered hazardous if they are poisonous (toxicity), can be ignited by open flame (ignitability), corrode other materials (corrosivity), or react violently, explode, or generate vapors when mixed with water (reactivity). The term “hazardous material” is defined in the State Health and Safety Code (Chapter 6.95, Section 25501[o]) as any material that, because of quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment. Hazardous waste is defined as any hazardous material that is abandoned, discarded, or recycled, as defined in the State Health and Safety Code

(Chapter 6.95, Section 25125). The transportation, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, as well as the potential releases of hazardous materials to the environment, are closely regulated through many State and federal laws.

During the Project construction period, hazardous substances used to maintain and operate construction equipment (such as fuel, lubricants, adhesives, and solvents) would be present. The use of these materials could potentially result in significant impacts through accidental discharge associated with the use and storage of hazardous materials. The transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials and/or wastes would be conducted in accordance with applicable federal and State laws. In addition, implementation of the proposed Project would require conformance with the NPDES Construction General Permit. Specifically, this would entail the implementation of a SWPPP to address the use of hazardous materials and the potential discharge of contaminants including construction-related hazardous wastes through the installation of appropriate BMPs. While specific BMPs would be determined during the SWPPP process, the suite of BMPs would include standard industry measures and guidelines contained in the NPDES Construction Permit text and Stormwater Best Management Practices Construction Handbook (California Stormwater Quality Association [CASQA] 2003). Based on the implementation of appropriate BMPs, hazardous material impacts related to construction activities would be less than significant.

The operation of the proposed Project would include the storage and use of landscaping and park maintenance materials. No special permits would be required for such limited use or disposal of common agents and products. Therefore, operation of the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The impact would be less than significant.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in response to item 9.a. above, any transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be limited to typical equipment used during construction or routine maintenance, and the operation of which is subject to regulations. Post-construction, the Project does not include land uses or improvements that would involve any transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, nor would they emit hazardous emissions, other than common materials, chemicals, and products used for routine landscaping and park maintenance. Therefore, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. There are no schools located within one-quarter mile of the Project site. The nearest schools are Vista La Mesa Academy, approximately 0.4 mile west of the Project site, and Helix High School, approximately 0.5 mile north of the Project site. The Project would introduce recreational land use to the site. This land use does not generate hazardous emissions or involve the handling of acutely hazardous materials, substances, or wastes. As noted in the response to item 9.a., the neighborhood park would involve materials used for landscaping and park maintenance; however, these types of materials are typical and

do not represent hazardous materials or waste impact. Thus, the impact would be less than significant.

d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. A Phase I ESA was completed by The Bodhi Group, Inc. to evaluate any potentially hazardous conditions at the Project site that could impact the Project, public, or environment (Appendix F). As stated by the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) Standard Practice for ESAs, the purpose of the Phase I ESA is to identify recognized environmental conditions (RECs), which are defined as "the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products in, on, or at a property: (1) due to any release to the environment; (2) under conditions indicative of a release to the environment; or (3) under conditions that pose a material threat of a future release to the environment. De minimis conditions are not recognized environmental conditions." There are three categories of RECs: existing RECs (as defined above), Historical RECs (HRECs), or Controlled RECs (CRECs). An HREC is defined as a past release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products that has occurred in connection with the property and has been addressed to the satisfaction of the applicable regulatory authority or meeting unrestricted use criteria established by a regulatory authority, without subjecting the property to any required controls. An HREC is an environmental condition that was recognized in the past but may or may not still be recognized as a current environmental condition. A CREC is defined as a recognized environmental condition resulting from a past release of hazardous substances or petroleum products that has been addressed to the satisfaction of the applicable regulatory authority, with hazardous substances or petroleum products allowed to remain in place subject to the implementation of required controls. A CREC is an active environmental concern because while the hazardous substances have been corrected to meet certain regulatory levels, the contaminants still remain and have the potential to be above regulatory levels for some types of development.

The Phase I ESA prepared for this Project included a review of the Phase I ESA previously prepared in 2012, review of the physical setting and background information of the site, a site reconnaissance to document potential hazards on-site, review of federal, State, tribal and local regulatory agency databases, review of historical information, and a search for engineering or institutional controls associated with the Project site.

The Project site was historically used as the San Diego County Lemon Grove Road Station from the early 1990s until 1974. The existing site is currently disturbed with a combination of fencing, retaining walls, existing remnant building foundations, dispersed vegetation, and scattered debris. In 1994, two underground storage tanks (USTs) and one fuel dispenser island were removed from the site. Soils impacted with petroleum hydrocarbons were discovered during the UST removal. The San Diego County DEH opened an unauthorized release case (Case #H04820-001). Soil and groundwater investigations and remediation were completed at the site between June 2000 and January 2011. In a No Further Action (NFA) letter dated December 1, 2011, the DEH stated that case oversight had been completed based on the commercial use designation of the property, and that corrective action should be reviewed if the land use changes. As the Project would change the land use from commercial use to recreational use, review of the previous case would be required.

Based on review of previous investigations and research conducted for the Phase I ESA, several RECs were identified on the site. Construction work may encounter contamination from the former USTs and/or from historical use of the site as a road station (i.e., vehicle maintenance, storage of materials contaminated with waste oil, and releases of chemicals from the hydraulic lift and former transformers) and potentially expose construction workers and the public. Excavated soil and extracted groundwater from construction dewatering, impacted by releases from the former USTs, may be considered a waste and would require proper handling and disposal. To avoid potential exposure, health and safety plans would be implemented as required under mitigation measure HAZ-1 and a Soil and Groundwater Management Plan would be implemented as required under mitigation measure HAZ-2. Additionally, to ensure regulatory closure of the RECs, the Project site would enroll in the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health and Quality (DEHQ) Voluntary Assistance Program, as required under mitigation measure HAZ-3.

Government Code 65962.5 stipulates that the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the Department of Health Services (DHS), the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and any local enforcement agency, as designated by Section 18051, Title 14 of the CCR, identify, and update annually a list of sites that have been reported to have certain types of contamination. The Bodhi Group, Inc. reviewed federal and State regulatory agency database information, provided by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR), that may be of environmental concern at and in the vicinity of the Project site. The database search was conducted using publicly available regulatory records. The EDR report contains a table that summarizes the findings of the database report, a copy of which is included in Appendix F of this IS/MND.

The Project site was listed in 16 of the databases a total of 24 times in the search reported in the EDR. None of the adjacent properties were reported in the EDR. The 16 databases are included in Table 3 in Appendix F of the IS/MND. The earliest listing of the site (HAZNET, HWTS) in the database search is for the 1984, 1985 and 1986 disposal of 1.04 tons, 1.6 tons and 0.8 tons, respectively, of “waste oil and mixed oil”. The next database listings (HAZNET, HWTS) are for the 1991 disposal of waste that was categorized as “household waste” (The Bodhi Group 2023).

The remaining database listings for the site pertain to the existence and removal of two USTs. Both USTs and one dispenser island were removed from the site on February 2, 1994. Previous reports available on the SWRCB Geotracker website noted that the removed tanks appeared corroded, and that petroleum hydrocarbon odors and staining were observed in the excavation for the gasoline tank. Based on the observed contamination, the DEH opened a Local Oversight Program (LOP) unauthorized release case for oversight of the assessment and remediation of the UST releases.

Between April 2000 and October 2007, site assessment activities were completed, including the installation of seven groundwater monitoring wells and two additional soil borings. To address the soil contamination, approximately 371 CY of petroleum hydrocarbon impacted soil was excavated and removed from the site in June 2007 for disposal at the Otay Landfill. Based on the results of the confirmation samples collected from the excavation bottom and sidewalls, the soil contamination was determined to be limited to the site. The case summary in the EDR Database search noted that approximately 30 CY of petroleum impacted soil remained at the site in the area of the former dispensers.

A review of the DTSC Envirostor website did not identify Federal Superfund, State Response, Voluntary Cleanup, Evaluation, Corrective Action, Tiered Permit, or other types of sites regulated by DTSC at or near the site. A review of the CalRecycle Solid Waste Information System did not show any disposal sites mapped at or near the Site. As mentioned above, SWRCB's Geotracker website indicated that the site has a closed case with the DEH LOP (Case #H04820-001). However, as the Project would change the land use from commercial use to recreational use, the previous case was reviewed as part of the Phase I ESA prepared for this Project. Mitigation measures HAZ-01, HAZ-02, and HAZ-03 would be implemented to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant with mitigation.

Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Prepare and Implement Health and Safety Plans

The DEHQ shall oversee the preparation and implementation of and the approval of the plans prior to construction. Additionally, prior to construction, the City or construction contractor shall prepare Worker and Community Health and Safety Plans that shall identify procedures to protect workers and members of the public from the release of hazardous materials during construction of the proposed Project. The plans will provide procedures for monitoring the potential for exposure of workers and the public to chemicals-of-concern from RECs at the site during construction. The monitoring may include construction fence-line air sampling and monitoring of air in construction trenches.

Mitigation Measure HAZ-2: Prepare and Implement Soil and Groundwater Management Plan

The DEHQ shall oversee the preparation and implementation of, and approve the plans prior to construction. Additionally, prior to construction, the City or construction contractor shall prepare a Soil and Groundwater Management Plan that describes procedures for the identification and handling of contaminated soil and groundwater during construction, proper on-site management of excavated soil and extracted groundwater, and disposal of waste at permitted facilities in compliance with state and federal regulations. The Soil and Groundwater Management Plan may include representative sampling of surface and shallow soil for metals, Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH), Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH), and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) in advance of construction to evaluate if chemicals-of-concern are present in the surface at concentrations that may present a risk to the future use of the site as a public park and if contamination may be encountered during construction that requires special handling and disposal.

Mitigation Measure HAZ-3: Enroll in DEHQ Voluntary Assistance Program

Prior to construction, the applicant shall enroll the Project site in the DEHQ Voluntary Assistance Program (VAP) for regulatory oversight of the preparation and implementation of the health and safety plans and the Soil and Groundwater Management Plan in order to achieve regulatory closure of the RECs identified in the Phase I ESA and reduce liability to the City of La Mesa.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. Airports nearest the Project site include Gillespie Field approximately six miles to the northeast, Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport approximately seven miles to the northwest, and the San Diego International Airport approximately eight miles to the west. The Project site is not located within any hazard zone or notification area of the three nearby airports (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority 2023). The Project site is within Airport Influence Review Area 2 for the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport but is outside of the noise contours for all airports in the region (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority 2023). Therefore, while the Project may be exposed to distant aircraft noise at times, noise levels from airports in the project region would not expose users of the park to excessive noise levels. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The County of San Diego's Emergency Operations Plan is the emergency response plan used by key partner agencies within the county to response to major emergencies and disasters. Annex B of the plan discusses Fire Rescue Mutual Aid Operations. The City of La Mesa has also adopted an Emergency Operations Plan, which provides a comprehensive system for response to natural and man-made disasters. The Project may require that traffic would at times be re-directed during construction. Heavy construction vehicles could potentially affect emergency response in the area or emergency evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency (e.g., vehicles traveling behind the slow-moving truck). However, such delays would be brief and infrequent. A traffic control plan would be required to be prepared as a condition of approval and approved by the City Engineer. This plan would include the appropriate measures to ensure that emergency access and response procedures would not be hindered by the Project. Once operational, the Project is required to adhere to the CBC, as encoded in the City's Municipal Code and the California Fire Code, both of which provide design standards to prevent interference with emergency response plans. Thus, impacts related to emergency evacuation and the implementation of an emergency response plan would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) classifies lands in accordance with whether a very high fire hazard is present so that public officials are able to identify measures that will retard the rate of fire spread and reduce the intensity of uncontrolled fire through vegetation management and building standards. The designation of being within a very high or high fire severity hazard zone is based upon a combination of fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. According to the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map Viewer, the Project site is not located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (CALFIRE 2023). The Project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA; CALFIRE 2023). An LRA is an area designated by a local agency pursuant to Government Code Sections 51177 (c), 51178 and 5118, and where a local agency, city, county, or district is responsible for fire protection (County 2023). Thus, no impact would occur.

10. Hydrology and Water Quality

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

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The Project includes the construction of a neighborhood park on a 2.84-acre site. The proposed Project would change the site through grading and by increasing impervious surfaces that would alter the hydrological patterns of the site and could introduce new sources of water pollutants in site runoff. There is the potential for water pollutants to be generated in the short-term during construction activities and in the long term due to the permanent changes to the site. Construction-related pollutants might include loose soils, liquid and solid construction materials and wastes, and accidental spills of concrete, fuels, and other materials. As discussed above in Item 9.d., excavated soil and extracted groundwater from construction dewatering that was impacted by releases from the former USTs may be considered a waste and would require proper handling and disposal.

To avoid potential exposure to workers and the public during construction of the neighborhood park, Mitigation Measures HAZ-1, -2, and -3 would be implemented to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

As an urban development, the proposed Project would add typical, non-point-source pollutants to stormwater runoff, primarily due to runoff from impervious surfaces where a variety of pollutants can collect over time, such as roofs, parking lots, and other paved surfaces. Landscaped areas can also generate water pollutants such as fertilizers and weed control agents, as well as green waste from landscape maintenance cuttings. Several measures to protect water quality and limit discharges are directed and implemented, through adherence to established programs. As discussed below, the Project would be required to demonstrate compliance with such plans and programs.

La Mesa is within the jurisdiction of the San Diego RWQCB, which is tasked with protecting the region's water quality objectives that meet the standards set forth in Section 303 of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) as well as the state's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act. The San Diego RWQCB designates beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater, sets qualitative and quantitative water quality objectives that must be met to protect designated beneficial uses, and develops implementation programs to protect the regional water resources through its Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (the Basin Plan).

Additionally, the Project would be subject to the NPDES program, which regulates point source and non-point source pollutant discharges to surface waters. Municipalities are required to obtain permits for the water pollution generated by stormwater in their jurisdictions. These permits are known as municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permits. Because the proposed Project's storm water runoff would be discharged into the local municipal storm drain system, the Project is required to demonstrate that it would be consistent with the standards established in the MS4 permit as encoded in Chapter 7.18 of the City of La Mesa Municipal Code, Storm Water Management and Discharge Control Program.

The Project would adhere to the NPDES Construction General Permit during construction, which includes BMPs that serve to protect groundwater quality. A SWPPP would also be prepared in compliance with the Construction General Permit, which would identify erosion control and sediment control BMPs that would be implemented to minimize the occurrence of soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Project specific BMPs would be outlined in the SWPPP. A grading permit for the Project would not be issued until the SWPPP has been submitted to and approved by the City.

Once operational, a series of Project design features would collectively capture and treat runoff. The park site naturally drops in grade towards the western edge of the site which creates an opportunity for a bio-retention basin. The bio-retention basin would extend along the length of the western property line and would provide stormwater storage for the entire site. On-site drainage systems would convey flow from the site to the proposed basin. Underdrains would be provided for the playground and fitness areas and would also convey runoff to the basins. Since there is no existing storm drain along the Project frontage on Waite Drive, a new storm drain is proposed to convey discharge from the basin to the existing storm drain system approximately 150 feet west of the Project site on Harris Street.

Additionally, the Project is subject to City stormwater quality requirements for Priority Development Project (PDP) and, therefore, a Water Quality Technical Report (WQTR) would be prepared. The WQTR would include BMPs such as low impact development (LID) site design,

source control, pollutant control, and flow control (hydromodification management). Implementation of these BMPs under the WQTR would preclude any potential violations of applicable standards and discharge violations.

Based on the analysis above, the Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality. The impact would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-1, -2, and -3.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project does not include any groundwater extraction wells and all water demand would be met through piped connections to the municipal water system that is serviced by the Helix Water District (District). According to the District's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan Update (UWMP), less than one percent of the District's water supply comes from groundwater. Of that one percent, that supply comes from a single well that extracts from the San Diego River Valley Basin (Basin). There is no sustainable groundwater management act for the Basin; however, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 requires the Department of Water Resources to classify all basins in relation to the threat of overdraft (high, medium, and low priority). The Basin has been designated as a low priority with no restrictions on pumping (District 2020).

The Project would result in an increase of impervious surfaces at the site through neighborhood park amenities, which would decrease the availability of water to permeate below ground and recharge. However, as noted above, the District does not rely on groundwater recharge to meet its demand for water. Further, given that the Basin is designated as low priority, the decrease in any water recharge related to the increase in impervious surfaces would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the Basin. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. There are currently no on-site drainage courses and no nearby off-site drainage courses that would be altered by the Project. The nearest drainage course is Chollas Creek that drains into Chollas Reservoir, approximately 1.4 miles southwest of the Project site, and Lake Murray, approximately 2.3 miles northwest of the Project site.

The Project would alter the drainage patterns during both construction through earth moving activities and operation through the introduction of park amenities and impervious surfaces. However, as discussed in item 7.b., the Project would be required to adhere to the NPDES Construction General Permit, which would require the preparation of a SWPPP that would outline construction related BMPs that would reduce the amount of siltation and erosion during Project construction.

Once developed, the Project would alter the on-site drainage patterns through the introduction of new neighborhood park amenities that would include a combination of both impervious surfaces, pervious landscaped areas, and semi-permeable surfaces. The grading strategy is to work with the existing topography as much as possible, and the natural slope would be included in the overall Project design. Re-grading would be done to create two naturally distinct levels of accessible activity zones. The proposed dog run would be in the “upper level” in the north, and the playground, lawn area, and parking lot would form the “bottom level” to the south. The “upper level” and “lower level” are defined by the topography of the area and the levels would be connected by proposed walkways. The Project site would include a proposed bio-retention basin along the western edge of the site and would be designed to capture runoff. Flow on-site would be conveyed to the proposed bio-retention basin. Since there is no existing storm drain along the Project frontage on Waite Drive, a new storm drain is proposed to convey discharge from the bio-retention basin to the existing storm drain system approximately 150 feet west of the Project site on Harris Street. Thus, the proposed bio-retention basin would accommodate on-site runoff and would not result in the potential for erosion or sedimentation to occur.

In addition, the Project would be required to adhere to the City’s Storm Water Ordinance that is codified in the City’s Municipal Code Chapter 7.18. In part, this Ordinance would require that the Project comply with the City’s Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP), that provides operational storm water discharge and conveyance regulations. The SUSMP contains BMPs that serve two overarching goals: (1) to provide effective means to prohibit non storm water discharges; and (2) reduce the discharge of pollutants from storm water conveyance systems to the maximum extent practicable during construction and throughout the use of a developed site. Like the BMPs contained within the Construction General Permit, these BMPs are designed with the intent of preserving water quality and they serve a dual purpose of also reducing the amount of erosion and siltation that occurs.

Therefore, given that the site would include the installation of a proposed storm drain and bio-retention basin to capture and convey on-site runoff to the municipal system, the Project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Implementation of the Project would change the condition of the currently disturbed site. The proposed neighborhood park would include a combination of impervious surfaces and landscaped conditions, which could increase the rate and amount of site runoff during a 10-year, 50-year, or 100-year storm event. As discussed above in item 10 c.i., the Project site would include a proposed bio-retention basin along the western edge of the site which would be designed to capture on-site runoff. Flow from the site would be conveyed to the proposed bio-retention basin. Since there is no existing storm drain along the Project frontage on Waite Drive, a new storm drain is proposed to convey discharge from the bio-retention basin to the existing storm drain system approximately 150 feet west of the Project site on Harris Street. This proposed bio-retention basin and storm drain in combination with the existing storm drain system in the roadway would adequately collect, convey, and discharge on-site runoff and would not result in flooding of the site or surrounding properties during storm events. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

c.iii. 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: 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?

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in item 10 c.ii., Project development could increase the rate and amount of on-site runoff. The Project would include a bio-retention basin designed to capture, store, and release runoff at rates that are either equal to or less than the current site conditions. The bio-retention basin would naturally filter runoff before discharging runoff into the municipal storm drain system. Additionally, since there is no existing storm drain along the Project frontage on Waite Drive, a new storm drain is proposed approximately 150 feet west of the Project site on Harris Street to convey discharge from the basin to the existing municipal storm drain system. Further, the Project is required to adhere to the NPDES Construction General Permit during construction, which includes BMPs to reduce polluted runoff. Therefore, through a combination of BMPs and Project design features, the impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) online Flood Insurance Rate Maps designate the Project site as in an area of Flood Zone X, minimal flood hazard, and is not in a mapped floodplain or flood hazard zone (FEMA 2023). Thus, while the Project would alter the drainage patterns on the Project site, it would not impede or redirect flood flows. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in item 10.c.iv., the Project site is in an area of minimal flood hazard and is not in a mapped floodplain or flood hazard zone (FEMA 2023). An event associated with a tsunami would occur as a result of an oceanic disturbance, while a seiche event would occur if there was a disturbance to an inland body of water. The Project site is located approximately 11 miles east of the Pacific Ocean and two miles southeast of Lake Murray. Therefore, given the distance from these bodies of water, it is unlikely that the Project site would experience inundation from either a tsunami or seiche. Thus, a less than significant impact would occur.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site is located within the regulatory boundaries of the San Diego RWQCB. The San Diego RWQCB is responsible for the adoption and implementation of water quality control plans, the issuance of discharge permits, and performs other functions in relation to regulating the region's water quality. Project-related activities would be required to comply with the RWQCB Basin Plan. Adherence would be achieved through the implementation of a SWPPP prior to construction. The Project would be subject to the newly approved State requirements in the NPDES Construction General Permit. BMPs would be

documented in a WQTR prepared during final design. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct the RWQCB Basin Plan.

In relation to sustainable groundwater management, please see item 10.b. The Project site is located within the larger Basin that is comprised of four contiguous sub-basins. The Basin has multiple users, is not adjudicated, and currently does not have an overall groundwater basin management plan. In 2015, several local jurisdictions and water agencies formed a cooperative to monitor groundwater in order to comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Program. Currently, the Basin is not exhibiting signs of overdraft or being at risk of overdraft. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

11. Land Use and Planning

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

a. Physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The physical division of an established community typically refers to the construction of a linear feature, such as an interstate highway or railroad tracks, or the removal of a means of access, such as a local road or bridge that would impact mobility within an existing community or between a community and outlying area.

The Project would construct a neighborhood park on a currently disturbed lot with a combination of fencing, retaining walls, existing remnant building foundations, dispersed vegetation, and scattered debris. Therefore, the proposed Project would not physically divide an established community. No impact would occur.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project has a General Plan land use designation Urban Residential and is zoned Urban Residential (R1). As discussed in this IS/MND, General Plan Policy LU-4.2.2 addresses height limits for non-residential buildings and notes that approval of a Special Permit may allow a building to exceed the specified height limit on a site-by-site basis. The R1 zoning designation allows for structures to be 20 feet in height. The proposed nature themed playground would include a 24-foot-tall wood tower accessory structure which would be made of wood to reinforce the native and natural aesthetic desired by the community. Due to the exceedance of the maximum structure height in the R1 zone, the Project would require approval of a Special Permit. With the issuance of the Special Permit for this accessory structure, the Project would comply with the requirements of the zoning code and General Plan.

The R1 zoning designation requires approval of a Site Development Plan for a neighborhood park per the City of La Mesa Municipal Code Section 24.05.020B.3.a.2.

The 2.84-acre site does not contain any open space or conservation resources that may be subject to the goals and policies of the City's General Plan Conservation and Sustainability Element. The Project is not within an area targeted for MSCP conservation. Also, the Project site does not incorporate areas designated or proposed by the USFWS as critical habitat. Further, the Project site does not contain any historic or known archaeological resources, and there are no goals or policies in the City's General Plan Historic Preservation Element that are pertinent to the Project. The proposed Project would be adequately served by existing public services and would require compliance with the City's building and fire codes, and with the seismic regulations within the CBC. Consequently, no inconsistencies with the City's Public Services and Facilities, Safety, or Health and Wellness Elements are anticipated because of Project implementation. As discussed in item 17.a., the Project is consistent with the City's General Plan Circulation Element.

The goal of the Noise Element of the La Mesa General Plan (City 2013b) is to minimize the impact of noise on the community by identifying existing and potential noise sources and providing the policies and standards needed to keep noise from reducing the quality of life in La Mesa. The General Plan Noise Element establishes guidelines to evaluate the compatibility of land use and noise exposure levels. Table 6, *Exterior Land Use/Noise Compatibility Guidelines*, summarizes the City's exterior land use-noise compatibility guidelines. The shading in this table represents the maximum noise exposure level considered compatible for each land use category. The goal for maximum outdoor noise levels in neighborhood parks is 70 CNEL. This level is intended to guide the design and location of future development and serve as a target for the reduction of noise in existing development.

Table 6
EXTERIOR LAND USE/NOISE COMPATIBILITY GUIDELINES

Land Use Category	55*	60*	65*	70*	75*
Residential – Low Density Single Family, Duplex, and Mobile homes					
Residential – Multiple Family					
Transient Lodging – Motels, Hotels					
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, and Nursing Homes					
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters					
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports					
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks					
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries					
Offices Buildings, Business, Commercial, and Professional					
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture					

Source: City 2013b.
Notes: Shading represents the maximum noise exposure level considered normally acceptable for each land use category.
*Annual CNEL (dBA).

Similarly, the La Mesa Municipal Code Chapter 10.80, Noise Regulation, prohibits unnecessary, excessive, and annoying noises in the City. Section 10.80.040 establishes standards for exterior noise levels for each zone, which are summarized in Table 7, *Applicable Exterior Property Line Noise Limits*. Where the ambient noise level is less than designated in Table 7, the applicable

noise level in Table 7 is the exterior noise standard. The noise level to be observed is the level specified for the zone applicable to the property adjoining the property on which the noise is generated and closest to the noise source.

Table 7
LA MESA MUNICIPAL CODE NOISE LIMITS

Zone or Land Use Designation	Noise Level (dBA L_{EQ}) Daytime (7 AM to 10 PM)	Noise Level (dBA L_{EQ}) Nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM)
R1 (Urban Residential) and R2 (Medium Low Density Residential)	55	50
R3 (Multiple Unit Residential) and RB (Residential Business)	60	55
C (General Commercial), CN (Neighborhood Commercial), CD (Downtown Commercial), and CM (Light Industrial and Commercial Service)	65	60
M (Industrial Service and Manufacturing)	70	70

Source: La Mesa Municipal Code Section 10.80.040.
dBA = A-weighted decibel; L_{EQ} = one-hour average sound level.

Section 10.80.100 regulates construction noise, and states that it is unlawful for any person within a residential zone or CN (neighborhood commercial) zone, or within 500 feet of these zones, to operate equipment or perform any outside construction, or repair work between the hours of 10:00 p.m. of one day and 7:00 a.m. of the next day. Construction work is also prohibited on Sundays unless a special permit authorizing the activity has been duly obtained from the chief building official. The City's exterior noise limits identified in Table 7 do not apply to construction activities. As discussed in Item 13.a., construction noise, on-site operational noise, or off-site traffic generation noise resulting from the implementation of the Project would not generate a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the General Plan or noise ordinance. As such, the construction and operation of the proposed Project would not conflict with land use policies relative to land use – noise compatibility.

In consideration of the above discussion in item 11.b., the proposed neighborhood park would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The impact would be less than significant.

12. Mineral Resources

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

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

No Impact. Mineral resources are commonly defined as a concentration or occurrence of natural, solid, inorganic, or fossilized organic material in or on the earth's crust in such form and quantity and of such a grade or quality that it has reasonable prospects for economic extraction. Mineral resources can be categorized into three classes: fuel, metallic, and non-metallic. Fuel resources comprise coal, oil, and natural gas. Metals include such resources as gold, silver, iron, and copper. Lastly, non-metal resources include industrial minerals and construction aggregate. Industrial minerals include boron compounds, rare-earth elements, clays, limestone, gypsum, salt, and dimension stone. Construction aggregate includes sand and gravel, and crushed stone.

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) is the primary regulator of surface mining in the state. The act requires the state geologist (California Geological Survey) to identify all mineral deposits in the state and to classify them based on their significance. SMARA defines a mineral deposit as a naturally occurring concentration of minerals in amounts or arrangement that under certain conditions may constitute a mineral resource. The concentration may be of value for its chemical or physical characteristics. The classification of these mineral resources is a joint effort of the state and local governments. It is based on geologic factors and requires that the State Geologist classify the mineral resources area as one of the four Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs), Scientific Resource Zones (SZs), or Identified Resource Areas (IRAs), described below:

- MRZ-1: A Mineral Resource Zone where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present or likely to be present.
- MRZ-2: A Mineral Resource Zone where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or a likelihood of their presence and development should be controlled.
- MRZ-3: A Mineral Resource Zone where mineral resource significance is undetermined.
- MRZ-4: A Mineral Resource Zone where there is insufficient data to assign any other MRZ designation.

- SZ Areas: Containing unique or rare occurrences of rocks, minerals, or fossils that are of outstanding scientific significance shall be classified in this zone.

- IRA Areas: County or State Division of Mines and Geology Identified Areas where adequate production and information indicate that significant minerals are present (California Division of Mines 1996).

The California Geological Survey has designated the Project site and surrounding area as MRZ-3 (CDC 2017). However, the La Mesa General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element states that the City does not have any mineral resources (City 2013b). The entire Project footprint is within an area that is disturbed and is currently being used for construction material lay down by the City. Additionally, the Project site is not being used for mineral resource extraction, and mineral resource extraction would be an incompatible use with the site's current and proposed zoning and adjacent residential land uses. Thus, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. Please refer to response to item 12.a. above. No impact would occur.

13. Noise

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

A Noise Analysis was prepared for the Project, which is included as Appendix G to this IS/MND (HELIX 2023c). The results and conclusions of this analysis are summarized in this section.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. All noise level or sound level values presented herein are expressed in terms of decibels (dB), with A-weighting (dBA) to approximate the hearing

sensitivity of humans. Time-averaged noise levels are expressed by the symbol L_{EQ}, with a specified duration.

The amplitude of pressure waves generated by a sound source determines the loudness of that source. A logarithmic scale is used to describe sound pressure level (SPL) in terms of dBA units. The threshold of hearing for the human ear is approximately 0 dBA, which corresponds to 20 micro-Pascals (mPa). Because decibels are logarithmic units, SPL cannot be added or subtracted through ordinary arithmetic. Under the decibel scale, a doubling of sound energy corresponds to a 3 dBA increase. In other words, when two identical sources are each producing sound of the same loudness, the resulting sound level at a given distance would be 3 dBA higher than one source under the same conditions.

No known studies have directly correlated the ability of a healthy human ear to discern specific levels of change in traffic noise over a 24-hour period. Many ordinances, however, specify a change of 3 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) as the significant impact threshold. This is based on the concept of a doubling in noise energy resulting in a 3 dBA change in noise, which is the amount of change in noise necessary for the increase to be perceptible to the average healthy human ear.

Noise Modeling Software

Project construction noise was analyzed using the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM), which utilizes estimates of sound levels from standard construction equipment (USDOT 2008).

Project operation noise generation and exposure was analyzed using a computer noise model: Computer Aided Noise Abatement (CadnaA) version 2022. CadnaA is a model-based computer program developed by DataKustik for predicting noise impacts in a wide variety of conditions. CadnaA allows for the input of project related information, such as noise source data, barriers, structures, and topography to create a detailed CadnaA model, and predict outdoor noise impacts. Precise grading plans for the proposed project were not available at the time of this report; therefore, the model used the existing topography. CadnaA traffic noise prediction is based on the data and methodology used in the USDOT Traffic Noise Model.

Construction Assumptions

Construction of the project is anticipated to require the use of equipment for site preparation, grading, physical construction, and paving, which would occur over an approximately eight-month period beginning in December 2024. Equipment assumed to be required for these activities was based on information provided by the City and typical construction equipment required for similar projects.

Hauling of material during demolition and site preparation is anticipated to require four truck loads. This would result in no more than one hauling trip per day added to nearby roadways. Grading of the Project site would be balanced on-site and no soil hauling is anticipated to be required.

Construction Noise

The La Mesa Municipal Code does not provide a specific noise limit for construction activities. Rather, to minimize the impact of construction noise on surrounding land uses, Municipal Code Section 10.80.100 limits the days and hours of construction work for construction occurring within 500 feet of a residential or CN (neighborhood commercial) zone to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays. Construction of the proposed project would occur during the allowable hours and would not conflict with the City Municipal Code.

While it would not conflict with the Municipal Code, construction of the Project would result in elevated noise levels at residential NSLUs surrounding the project site. For informational purposes, Table 8, *Construction Equipment Noise Levels*, provides the 50-foot noise levels for equipment anticipated to be used during construction. See Attachment A, Construction Noise Model Output, in the Noise Analysis for the RCNM output. These noise levels are conservative estimates, as they do not consider topography, existing structures such as buildings or fences, or the movement of construction equipment. The magnitude of construction noise would depend on the phase of construction, distance between the equipment and receiver, and any intervening structures.

Table 8
CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT NOISE LEVELS

Unit	Percent Operating Time	dBA L_{EQ} at 50 feet
Backhoe	40	73.6
Compressor (Air)	40	73.7
Concrete Mixer Truck	40	74.8
Concrete Pump Truck	20	74.4
Concrete Saw	20	82.6
Crane	16	72.6
Dozer	40	77.7
Excavator	40	75.1
Front End Loader	50	77.6
Grader	40	81.0
Paver	50	74.2
Roller	20	73.0
Scraper	40	79.6
Tractor	40	80.0

Source: USDOT 2008; Attachment A.
L_{MAX} = maximum noise level; dBA = A-weighted decibel; L_{EQ} = equivalent sound level.

The Project would comply with Municipal Code regulations related to the timing of construction activities, with construction occurring between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays. The construction equipment presented above would not all operate at the same time or in the same location and would not be in constant use during the operating day. With construction activities limited to daytime hours, construction would not result in substantial conflicts with noise levels in nearby residential or neighborhood commercial zones. The impact would be less than significant.

Operation Assumptions

The proposed Project's operational noise sources are anticipated to include vehicular traffic, outdoor play area activities, and dog run activities. It is not anticipated that the restroom facility would require the installation of stationary equipment generating substantial noise beyond the structure. During operation, the Project would also be exposed to vehicular traffic noise from Murray Hill Road and Waite Drive.

Vehicular Traffic

Based on the transportation assessment prepared by Linscott, Law, & Green Engineers (LLG 2023) for the project, 142 new ADT would be generated by the Project. Half of these trips would exit the Project site and travel west along Waite Drive while the other half would travel east and onto Murray Hill Road. Based on the site visit, traffic on Murray Hill Road and Waite Drive was assumed to consist of 98 percent automobiles, 1 percent medium trucks, and 1 percent heavy trucks.

According to data from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), SR 94 carries approximately 138,000 ADT, consisting of approximately 3 percent of medium trucks and 1 percent heavy trucks (Caltrans 2020a).

Human Voices

Noise from human voices associated with outdoor recreation was modeled with a standard assumption of an average sound power level of 82.6 dBA. Modeling for the Project assumed that up to 40 people would be located throughout the park, including the lawn, playground, and basketball court areas. Modeling was conducted for a given hour and that assumed people would be speaking for 40 minutes of the hour.

Dog Park

The primary noise source within the dog park would be generated by dogs barking. While barks may vary widely, a dog bark is anticipated to have a typical maximum noise level of less than 85 dBA L_{EQ} at about 5 feet and have a duration of less than 0.2 second. For the purposes of modeling, it was assumed that up to 10 dogs would use the dog park within a given hour and would each bark up to 30 times within that hour, totaling 1 minute of barking events at 0.2 second each.

Operational On-site Noise

The Project site is bordered by properties zoned as R1 to the west and R1S-MH (Suburban Residential/Hillside Overlay) to the north. Across roadways east and south of the site, properties are zoned R1S-H to the east and R3 to the south. The park would not be open for use during the nighttime hours; therefore, compliance with the noise level requirements for the hours between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. are not analyzed further. Pursuant to La Mesa Municipal Code Section 10.80.040, the applicable hourly noise level limits at R1 (including all overlays) property lines are up to 60 dBA L_{EQ} during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and up to 55 dBA L_{EQ} during the hours of 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. At the R3 zone property lines, noise levels of up to 60 dBA L_{EQ} during the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. are allowed.

As described above, modeling included human and dog noise sources anticipated to be associated with the Project. In CadnaA, noise receivers were placed along the adjacent residential property lines at the locations shown on Figure 2 of Appendix G Noise Analysis. The resulting noise level at each receiver for comparison with the applicable noise level limit is presented in Table 9, *Modeled Noise Levels at Property Line*.

Table 9
MODELED NOISE LEVELS AT PROPERTY LINE

Receiver	Adjacent Property Zoning	Hourly Noise Limit[1] (dBA L_{EQ})	Project Noise Level (dBA L_{EQ})	Exceed Allowable Noise Level?
R1	R1	55	45.3	No
R2	R1	55	50.5	No
R3	R1	55	52.5	No
R4	R1	55	52.4	No
R5	R3	60	51.5	No
R6	R3	60	51.4	No
R7	R1	55	52.2	No
R8	R1	55	48.6	No

[1] La Mesa Municipal Code Section 10.80.040 limits noise levels at R1 property lines to 55 dBA L_{EQ} between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and at R3 property lines to 60 dBA L_{EQ} between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.

dBA = A-weighted decibel; L_{EQ} = hourly sound level.

As shown in Table 10, the Project's operational noise sources would not exceed the residential (R1 or R3) noise limits provided by La Mesa Municipal Code Section 10.80.040. Therefore, operation of the Project would not result in permanent on-site noise sources exceeding applicable standards and the impact would be less than significant.

Vehicular Traffic Noise

As described above, the Project would generate 142 new daily trips, split between Murray Hill Road and Waite Drive (LLG 2023). In general, to generate a significant increase in noise levels a noise source would need to double, thereby increasing noise levels by approximately 3 dBA. The Project would add 71 ADT to segments of Murray Hill Road and Waite Drive that currently carry 10,160 and 4,920 ADT, respectively (see Table 9). As the Project would not result in a doubling of vehicle trips on adjacent roadway segments, it would not lead to a perceptible (3 dBA) change in traffic noise levels and impacts related to project-generated traffic noise would be less than significant.

b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less than Significant Impact. Vibration effects can be described by their peak and root mean square (RMS) amplitudes. Building damage is often discussed in terms of peak velocity, or peak particle velocity (PPV). The PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration signal. PPV is related to the stresses that are experienced by buildings; it is often used in monitoring of blasting vibration and to discuss construction vibration.

A possible source of vibration during Project construction activities would be a vibratory roller, which may be used for ground compaction prior to paving. At its closest, a vibratory roller is anticipated to be used approximately 50 feet from the nearest off-site residential structure to the

west. According to data from Caltrans, a vibratory roller generates approximately 0.210 inch per second PPV at a distance of 25 feet (Caltrans 2020b). Therefore, at the nearest residence 50 feet away, Project construction would be anticipated to result in vibration levels of up to 0.098 inch per second PPV. This level of vibration would be lower than the structural damage threshold for impacts to older residential structures of 0.3 inch per second PPV and would not exceed the severe annoyance threshold of 0.4 inch per second PPV for humans. Vibration of 0.1 inch per second PPV is considered “strongly perceptible” to human receptors; therefore, at time residents may be able to perceive vibration from project construction activities. However, off-site exposure to such groundborne vibration would be temporary as the roller would move throughout the site and its use would be limited to the short-term construction period. Temporary impacts associated with the roller (and other potential equipment) would be less than significant.

The Project does not propose equipment or land uses that would generate excessive groundborne vibration. No impacts related to vibration would occur during project operation.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. Airports nearest the Project site include Gillespie Field approximately six miles to the northeast, Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport approximately seven miles to the northwest, and the San Diego International Airport approximately eight miles to the west. The Project site is within Airport Influence Review Area 2 for the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport but is outside of the noise contours for all airports in the region (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority 2023). Therefore, while the Project may be exposed to distant aircraft noise at times, noise levels from nearby airports would not expose users of the park to excessive noise levels. The impact would be less than significant.

14. Population and Housing

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

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)?

No Impact. The Project does not propose construction of new homes, rather it would construct a new neighborhood park on a disturbed site that is currently being used for construction material lay down by the City. A neighborhood park would not increase population permanently, as users would visit the neighborhood park intermittently and for a short period of time. The neighborhood park would serve residents that currently live within the surrounding neighborhoods.

Construction of the Project is expected to utilize workers from the local employment force and would not require workers to relocate to the Project area. The operation of the Project would require maintenance activities on an as-needed basis, which would be performed by City employees and would not require workers to relocate to the Project area. Employees are not anticipated to induce substantial unplanned growth in the area. The Project would not be extending roads or other major infrastructure that could affect area growth patterns. No impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The Project site is currently disturbed and is being used for construction material lay down by the City. No structures, homes, or businesses are present and no displacement of people or housing would occur. Therefore, the Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact would occur.

15. Public Services

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

a.i. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services: Fire protection?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project is in a developed urban area of La Mesa, which is not considered at high risk for wildland fires and is not adjacent to any undeveloped areas that are highly susceptible to wildland fires. The Project site and surrounding area are already served by Heartland Fire & Rescue and the nearest fire station is approximately one mile southeast of the Project site at 7853 Central Avenue (Station 10). The Project would construct a neighborhood park on a previously disturbed 2.84-acre site. A neighborhood park would not increase population permanently, as users would visit the neighborhood park intermittently and for a short period of time. The Project site is surrounded by single- and multi-family residential properties that are already served by Heartland Fire & Rescue. Although the Project could potentially incrementally result in increases in calls for fire protection and/or emergency service to attend to visitors on the Project site, no new facilities or improvements to existing facilities would be required as a result of the Project. As such, the Project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire facilities and impacts would be less than significant.

a.ii. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services: Police protection?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed neighborhood park would not increase population permanently, as users would visit the neighborhood park intermittently and for a short period of time. The Project site and surrounding area are currently provided with police protection services by the La Mesa Police Department. The nearest police facility (approximately two miles northeast) is the Police Department Headquarters building located at 8085 University Avenue. Additionally, the San Diego County Sherriff Lemon Grove Substation is located approximately one mile southeast of the site at 3240 Main Street. The visitors of the neighborhood park or the residents living within the vicinity of the park could incrementally increase the demand for La Mesa Police Department protection services in the service area; however, these services would result in a very small percentage of City-wide need. The increase would not be expected to result in the need for new or altered governmental facilities which would, in turn, result in significant environmental impacts. The impact would be less than significant.

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

No Impact. The Project is proposed to provide a neighborhood park to the local residents surrounding the site. The neighborhood park would serve residents that currently live within the surrounding neighborhoods. No school-aged children would be added to local school loads due to Project implementation. As such, no impact would occur.

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

Less than Significant Impact. In July 2012, the Project site was purchased by the City using park impact fees which are designed to mitigate the impact of new development on municipalities and support the purchase of new park land. The 2012 Waite Park Master Plan and Progress Report (Appendix B) identified the site as a valuable parcel to add to the City's park land inventory which would contribute toward enhancing recreation opportunities for the surrounding neighborhood (City 2012a). In December 2021, the City received funding through the California State Department of Recreation Local Assistance Specified Grant program to create a master plan for the proposed park.

The proposed Project would construct a neighborhood park on a previously disturbed 2.84-acre site. As the proposed Project is a park itself, there would be no expected result in the need for new or additional governmental facilities within the Project vicinity. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As previously discussed in items 15.a.i. and 15.a.ii., a neighborhood park would not increase population permanently, as users would visit the neighborhood park intermittently and for a short period of time. The Project is proposed to provide a neighborhood park for residents that currently live within the surrounding neighborhoods. Future visitors to the neighborhood park may occasionally visit other public facilities such as senior centers, community centers, public pools, and libraries. However, all of these facilities are intended to serve the general public. The proposed Project would not individually result in a need to construct new types of other public facilities. The impact would be less than significant.

16. Recreation

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project would construct a new neighborhood park on a previously disturbed 2.84-acre site. The neighborhood park would serve residents that live locally who would visit the park intermittently and for a short period of time. Therefore, the Project would not result in the increase of use of other existing parks and/or recreational facilities in the area. The impact would be less than significant.

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?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. As discussed above in item 16.a., the Project would involve the construction of a new neighborhood park with amenities desired by the surrounding community. The environmental effects associated with development of the Project site, which includes recreational facilities, are discussed throughout this IS/MND. Therefore, the proposed neighborhood park facilities would have a less than significant impact with the proposed mitigation measures outlined in the IS/MND.

17. Transportation

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

LLG prepared a Transportation Assessment in May 2023 that includes a local mobility analysis and VMT analysis for the Project (LLG 2023). The Transportation Assessment is included as Appendix H of this IS/MND and is summarized below.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project would be consistent with applicable transportation plans, including San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan, the Circulation Element of the General Plan, The Smart Growth – Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Plan, and the City of La Mesa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan, as discussed below.

San Diego Forward Regional Plan

The proposed Project would be consistent with the overarching principles of the Regional Plan of developing a safe, equitable, and accessible system that improves everyone's access to basic needs, including parks (SANDAG 2021). In addition, the Project would be consistent with other Regional Plan goals and strategies of increasing transportation mode choices and reducing reliance on the single-occupancy automobile. The Project site is 0.5 mile from the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) bus stops, along Broadway. Routes 856 and 936 are served by these bus stops. The Project site would include one full-access vehicle accessible driveway and pedestrian-accessible walkways along Waite Drive. An elevated wooden ramp would be located along the eastern edge of the site, providing a connection to the park for visitors accessing the site from Murray Hill Road. Concrete stairs would also be provided as a more direct connection to the site from Murray Hill Road. Bicycle racks would be provided adjacent to the proposed parking lot to promote a variety of transportation methods to and from the park.

La Mesa General Plan Circulation Element

The General Plan contains several Circulation Element alternative transportation policies that are primarily programmatic rather than implemented at the Project level. However, at the Project-level, the Project would support Goal CE-5 to provide opportunities that encourage safe pedestrian travel and Objective CE-3.1 to maximize the utility of La Mesa's transit services. As noted throughout this IS/MND, the intent of the Project is to provide a neighborhood park for the local residents surrounding the site. The Project site would include one full-access vehicle driveway and pedestrian-accessible walkways along Waite Drive. Bicycle racks would be provided adjacent to the proposed parking lot to promote a variety of transportation methods to and from the park.

The Project would likely incrementally increase the use of nearby alternative transportation facilities. However, a neighborhood park would not increase population permanently, as users would visit the neighborhood park intermittently and for a short period of time. The neighborhood park would serve residents that currently live within the surrounding neighborhoods. As previously mentioned, the Project site is 0.5 mile from the San Diego MTS bus stops along Broadway. Routes 856 and 936 are served by these bus stops and are described in more detail below. The Project would not affect these existing bus stops or routes.

> Route 856: Bus Route 856 provides bus services along College Avenue, Broadway, Sweetwater Road, and Jamacha Boulevard with 30-minute headways during the weekdays and 1- hour headways during the weekends.
>
> Route 936: Bus Route 936 provides bus services along College Avenue, Broadway, Skyline Drive, Jamacha Road, and Sweetwater Road with 30-minute headways during both weekdays and weekends.

Thus, the Project's accessibility to the bus lines is consistent with the Circulation Element's strategy to encourage alternative transportation.

Smart Growth – Pedestrian and Bicycles Improvement Plan

The Smart Growth – Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Plan was prepared to assist pedestrians and bicyclists to feel more comfortable navigating downtown La Mesa (Kimley Horn 2015). In general, the Smart Growth- Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Plan includes a variety of strategies that improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Project would encourage the use of alternative transportation through the installation of bicycle racks and pedestrian walkways. The Project does not include any features that would obstruct implementation of the Smart Growth – Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Plan.

La Mesa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan

The La Mesa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan is a conceptual plan that addresses opportunities to connect and integrate existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities (City 2012b). Currently, the City of La Mesa provides Class II Bike Lanes on Murray Hill Road and Class III Bike Routes on Waite Drive. Contiguous sidewalks are provided on both sides of Murray Hill Road and Waite Drive. The Project does not include any plans to add or alter bicycle facilities and sidewalks.

Therefore, since the Project does not conflict with the San Diego Regional Forward Plan, the City's General Plan, the Smart Growth– Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Plan, or the La Mesa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan, the impact would be less than significant.

b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less than Significant Impact. In September 2013, the Governor's Office signed Senate Bill (SB) 743 into law, starting a process that fundamentally changes the way transportation impact analyses are conducted under CEQA. In response to the passage of SB 743, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) was required to amend the CEQA Guidelines to provide a new approach to evaluating traffic impacts. These changes include the elimination of auto delays, level of service, and similar measurements of vehicular roadway capacity and traffic congestion as the basis for determining significant impacts. The mandate of SB 743 was to devise an alternative traffic impact evaluation criterion that would promote the reduction of GHG emissions as well as foster the development of multi-modal transportation networks and a diversity of land uses. SB 743 further suggested that a measurement such as VMT would be an appropriate method to evaluate traffic impacts. VMT is defined as a measurement of miles traveled by vehicles within a specified region and for a specified time period. VMTs are calculated based on individual vehicle trips generated and their associated trip lengths.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) San Diego Section prepared the Guidelines For Transportation Impact Studies in May 2019 for use in the San Diego Region. The recommended methodology for conducting a VMT analysis is based on guidance prepared by OPR as provided in the published Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (OPR 2018).

The basic process to determine impacts is to compare a project's estimated VMT/capita or VMT/employee to average values on a regional, citywide, or community basis. The target is to achieve a project VMT/capita or VMT/employee that is 85 percent or less of the appropriate average based on suggestions in the OPR VMT guidelines. The methodology for determining VMT/capita or VMT/employee is related to the project's expected daily trip generation.

In addition, OPR's technical advisory contains the following guidance regarding projects located near transit stations. Proposed CEQA Guideline Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1), states that lead agencies generally should presume that certain projects (including residential, retail, and office projects, as well as projects that are a mix of these uses) proposed within a half mile of an existing major transit stop or an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor will have a less-than-significant impact on VMT.[1] This presumption would not apply, however, if project-specific or location-specific information indicates that the project will still generate significant levels of VMT.

The Transportation Assessment determined that the Project would generate a total of 142 ADT. Trip generation rates for the neighborhood park was taken from the *SANDAG (Not So) Brief Guide for Vehicular Traffic Generation Rates for the San Diego Region, April 2022*, to determine the traffic generated by the proposed Project. The Project traffic was distributed and assigned along Murray Hill Road and Waite Drive based on the site location and anticipated traffic patterns to and from the site. Based on the above, 50 percent of the Project trips were assumed to utilize each of the roadways.

The City of La Mesa is in the process of preparing City-specific standards for conducting VMT analysis and guidelines have not yet been adopted at this time. An analysis was conducted using the *ITE Guidelines for Transportation Impact Studies in the San Diego Region, dated May 2019*.

Per the ITE guidelines, a VMT analysis for CEQA purposes would be required if a project equals to or exceeds 500 ADT or 1,000 ADT (depending on whether the project is consistent with the adopted City General Plan). As the proposed Project is calculated to generate 142 ADT, a VMT analysis is not required. Therefore, the Project is presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. There would be no hazardous design features or incompatible uses introduced because of the Project. Access to the Project would be via one full-access driveway and pedestrian-accessible walkways on Waite Drive. The driveway and walkways would be designed in accordance with City standards and would be ADA compliant. An elevated wooden ramp would be located along the eastern edge of the site, providing a connection to the park for visitors accessing the site from Murray Hill Road. Concrete stairs would also be provided as a more direct connection to the site from Murray Hill Road. The Project does not propose any new roadways or alterations to existing roadways. No unique roadway features, traffic patterns, or incompatible vehicles would be introduced as part of the development. As a result, the Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a design feature. Development of the proposed Project would not increase traffic hazards due to incompatible uses that could affect existing traffic or circulation in the Project area. No impact would occur.

[1] An existing major transit stop is defined as a site containing an existing rail transit station, a ferry terminal served by either a bus or rail transit service, or the intersection of two or more major bus routes with a frequency of service interval of 15 minutes or less during the morning and afternoon peak commute periods. For the purposes of these guidelines, the distance between the project site and the transit station is typically based on direct walking distance without missing sidewalks or physical barriers.

d. Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than Significant Impact. During construction of the Project, heavy construction-related vehicles could interfere with emergency response to the site or emergency evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency (e.g., vehicles traveling behind the slow-moving truck). However, such trips would be brief and infrequent. Furthermore, it was calculated that 142 vehicular trips would utilize the driveway on a typical weekday. Given the low traffic volume traversing along Waite Drive, no traffic issues are anticipated at the Project driveway. As mentioned in item 9.f., the City requires traffic control plans for any construction activity that will disrupt traffic flow on city streets and Project conditions of approval would require that emergency access be maintained during construction. Upon construction, emergency vehicle access would be provided via Waite Drive. The impact would be less than significant.

18. Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 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	☐	☐	☒	☐
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 I of Public Resources Code §5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision(c) of Public Resource Code §5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☒	☐

a.i-ii Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or 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 I of Public Resources Code §5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code §5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Less than Significant Impact. In accordance with the requirements of AB 52, the City has initiated correspondence and sent out notification letters regarding the project to three Native American Tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area on April 27, 2023. The

three Native American Tribes include the Barona Band of Mission Indians, Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians, and Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians. No responses or requests for consultation were received.

Due to the highly disturbed nature of the project site and the previous ground disturbance, it is unlikely that project construction activities would extend into previously undisturbed materials. Thus, the likelihood of encountering intact subsurface tribal cultural resources is low. However, there is still a possibility for buried, unknown tribal cultural resources to occur. As noted in item 5.b., as a condition of approval, a note shall be placed on the building plans stating that should any archeological (cultural) resources or human remains be discovered during construction-phase ground-disturbing activities, all work in the immediate vicinity must stop and the project applicant shall notify the City immediately. A qualified professional shall be retained to evaluate the findings and recommend appropriate action. For human remains, the applicant shall notify the County Coroner. For human remains determined to be of Native American origin, the procedures outlined in CEQA Section 15064.5 (d) and (e) shall be followed. The applicant shall ensure, to the satisfaction of the City and the Native American Heritage Foundation, if applicable, that appropriate measures are undertaken prior to resuming any project activities that may affect such resources. With the inclusion of this condition of approval and the required regulatory compliance, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

19. Utilities and Service Systems

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

a. 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?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would be built on disturbed land, which is comprised of a combination of fencing, retaining walls, existing building foundations, dispersed vegetation, and scattered debris.

The proposed neighborhood park site naturally drops in grade towards the western edge of the site which creates an opportunity for a bio-retention basin. The bio-retention basin would extend along the length of the western property line and would provide stormwater storage for the entire site. The Project site would be designed to drain into the proposed bio-retention buffer. The bio-retention basin would be planted with native plants and trees to provide shade for the park, give a natural creek bed look, and increase privacy screening for the surrounding residential homes. On-site runoff would be discharged from the bio-retention basin to an existing municipal storm drain system and would not require new or expanded facilities.

The Project would require serval utility improvements and upgrades. Electrical services for the Project would be provided by SDG&E and would have a maximum amperage of 200 Amps. An existing transformer along Waite Drive would be reused with installation of a new 200 Amp meter pedestal. This amperage would provide sufficient power for the neighborhood park and the proposed amenities. Solar panels would be placed on top of the proposed restroom with an attached garage. Solar-powered lighting would be provided throughout the pedestrian walkways, the proposed parking lot, and the shaded structures. The Project would connect to existing City-owned water and sewer lines for the proposed restroom with an accessible outdoor sink and water station. These on-site improvements would connect to existing utility infrastructure already in place and would not require new or expanded facilities.

The Project would not result in the need for new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities that would cause significant environmental effects. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Helix Water District (District) supplies water to the City. The District prepared a UWMP that provides forecasts for water demand and supply. As part of the planning process, current and projected population data within the District's service area is provided by SANDAG and the growth parameters established by local community general plans.

The UWMP (in Table 7-4, Multiple Dry Years Supply and Demand Comparison) identifies the District's water supply and projects the reliability through the 25-year planning horizon, for a single year and five consecutive dry years beginning in year 2025. The District forecasts indicate that even for a six-year dry period, the District would continue to have adequate supply to meet the service area demands. Through the exercise of preparing the UWMP, the District concluded that if supplies continue to be developed as planned and conservation measures continue to be employed, no shortages are anticipated for the District during future normal, single-dry years, or a consecutive five-year drought through the 25-year planning horizon to 2045 (UWMP 2020). Since the Project's water demands have been accounted for in the UWMP

and the District has not forecasted any shortages under any scenarios, the impact would be less than significant.

c. Result in a determination by the waste water 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?

Less than Significant Impact. The City is a member of the Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority (MWJPA), a coalition of agencies that utilize the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP) operated by the City of San Diego. Wastewater generated within the City is collected by the City's sewer service and then conveyed to the Point Loma WTP located at the south end of the Point Loma peninsula. The Point Loma WTP treats approximately 175 million gallons per day (mgd) of wastewater generated in a 450-square-mile area by more than 2.2 million residents. The WTP has a treatment capacity of 240 mgd (City of San Diego 2023). The Point Loma WTP is owned and operated by the City of San Diego and allows 15 other municipalities, including the City of La Mesa, to purchase allocations of wastewater treatment capacity at the plant.

The Project would increase wastewater generation at the site due to the construction and operation of a neighborhood park on a currently developed lot. The City's Sewer System Management Plan does not identify a wastewater generation rate for recreational facilities (City 2019). However, given WTP's existing remaining treatment capacity of 65 mgd, the Project's increase would not exceed WTP's remaining capacity. Therefore, the Point Loma WTP has adequate capacity to serve the Project's projected demand in addition to its existing commitments. The impact would be less than significant.

d. Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would generate solid waste during construction activities. Title 14 of the La Mesa Building Code (Chapter 14.27, Construction and Demolition Debris Diversion Deposit Program) requires that a Project applicant recycle or reuse 75 percent of designated recyclables (including asphalt, concrete, and dirt reuse) from a project.

Once operational, the Project would result in a minor increase in municipal solid waste generation from use of the neighborhood park. In accordance with AB 341, the Project would divert at least 75 percent of operational waste from landfills through reuse and recycling in and provide areas for storage and collection of recyclables and yard waste in accordance with 2019 Title 24 Part 11 CALGreen Standards. Following such standards would ensure that the Project would also comply with Title 7.22, Mandatory Recycling, of the La Mesa Municipal Code and AB 939, which mandates that 50 percent of solid waste generated be diverted from landfill disposal through source reduction, recycling, or composting.

The Project site would be serviced by EDCO, which maintains a current contract with the City, and all waste would be disposed of at either the Sycamore Landfill or the Otay Landfill. Based on the 2022 Five-Year Review Report of the Countywide Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan prepared for San Diego County pursuant to AB 939, the County has sufficient landfill capacity to accommodate disposal for at least the next 15 years, which meets the state requirements that the County maintains a minimum of 15 years of future disposal capacity (County of San Diego 2017). Therefore, the Project would not generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair

the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. It would also comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Thus, the impact would be less than significant.

e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less than Significant Impact. Please see response to item 19.d. Additionally, the proposed Project would be required to comply with all regulations related to solid waste such as the California Integrated Waste Management Act and City recycling programs; therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

20. Wildfire

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

a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. The County of San Diego's Emergency Operations Plan is the emergency response plan used by key partner agencies within the county to respond to major emergencies and disasters. Annex B of the plan discusses Fire Rescue Mutual Aid Operations. The City of La Mesa has also adopted an Emergency Operations Plan, which provides a comprehensive system for response to natural and man-made disasters. The Project site would be located within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) as mapped by CALFIRE and would not be located near a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VFHSZ) and would not conflict with any adopted emergency response plan (CALFIRE 2023). Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. The topography of the site slopes 25 feet downward to the west of Murray Hill Road before it begins to level out across the rest of the property. The remainder of the property gently slopes to the west. The elevations on the site range from approximately 450 AMSL to approximately 485 feet AMSL. The Project site would be graded; however, the natural slope would be highlighted in the overall Project design. The grading strategy is to work with the existing topography as much as possible, and the natural slope would be included in the overall Project design. Re-grading would be done to create two distinct levels of accessible activity zones. The proposed dog run would be in the “upper level” in the north, and the playground, lawn area, and parking lot would form the “bottom level” to the south. The “upper level” and “lower level” are defined by the topography of the area and the levels would be connected by proposed walkways. The surrounding area is highly developed and does not support the common characteristics identified as a wildfire risk, such as difficult terrain, inadequate access, and unmaintained vegetation. As discussed in item 20.a., the Project is within an LRA and not within a VFHSZ. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. The proposed Project is located in an urban developed area. The Project does not involve the installation of fuel breaks, emergency water sources, or power lines. The Project would involve the extension or upgrades of existing utilities, such as sewer, water, and electric facilities. Such utility improvements would not exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. As mentioned in item 20.a., the Project site is located within an LRA and is not located within a VFHSZ. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. The Project is in an urban and developed area. The Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and would not expose project occupants to significant levels of pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. The Project would not result in people and structures experiencing significant risks such as downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes, as discussed in item 9.a.iv. As mentioned in item 20.a., the Project site is within an LRA and is not located within a VFHSZ. Therefore, no impact would occur.

21. Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Does the project:				
a. Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

a. 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?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The 2.84-acre Project site is currently fenced on all sides and is being used for construction material lay down by the City. The western and central portions of the property include a mixed condition of fencing, retaining walls, and existing remnant building foundations. The remainder of the property is mostly disturbed with dispersed vegetation and scattered debris. The site does not contain or support any special-status plant species. No special-status animals are known to occur within the Project site; however, two were found to have high potential to occur due to the presence of several trees and potential foraging habitat: Cooper's hawk and western bluebird. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1 would ensure that potential impacts to birds protected under the MBTA and CFG Code are avoided during construction.

The Project would not affect any known archaeological, tribal cultural, or paleontological resources. Yet, while the Project site is highly disturbed, there is still the potential for unknown paleontological resources to be disturbed or uncovered during project construction. With required compliance with regulatory codes for discovery of archaeological or tribal cultural resources and implementation of mitigation measure GEO-1 for discovery of paleontological resources, the Project would not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. A total of ten cumulative projects within a two-mile radius of the Project site have been identified in consultation with the City for inclusion in the cumulative analysis, which include the following:

- 7801 El Cajon Boulevard project: installation of a gas station and car wash.
- 4440 Palm Avenue: development of 40 residential apartments.
- 4207 Spring Gardens Road: development of a school and community center at an existing church.
- 7664 El Cajon Boulevard: a mixed-use development, which would include development of 252 condominiums.
- 5042 Keeney Street: multi-family residential development consisting of 10 condominiums.
- 8232 High Street: multi-family residential development consisting of 32 condominiums.
- 7735 University Avenue: conversion of existing commercial development to 7 residential condominiums.
- 7735 El Cajon Boulevard: multi-family residential development of 10 condominiums.
- 4210 Spring Street: multi-family residential development consisting of 48 apartments.
- 7643 University Avenue: multi-family residential development consisting of 60 condominiums.

There may be short-term cumulative impacts in relation to the diversion of traffic or access to the greater Project site area. However, as with the project, other cumulative projects would be required to prepare traffic control plans that would require approval of the City Engineer prior to the issuance of the appropriate permits. Further, the Transportation Assessment (see Appendix H) prepared for the Project evaluated the potential for cumulative impacts to occur in relation to the projects listed above and the proposed project. It was determined that no significant transportation impacts would occur.

Likewise, cumulative impacts to paleontological resources could be significant if not mitigated. With the implementation of mitigation measure GEO-1, the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable.

As discussed under item 3.b., the Project's long-term emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors would not exceed the SDAPCD daily or annual screening thresholds. Therefore, the Project's operational activities would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of

criteria pollutants that would violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. Similarly, the Project would have a less than significant impact in relation to GHG, which is inherently discussed in terms of cumulative impacts.

All resource topics associated with the Project have been analyzed in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines and found to pose no impact, less-than-significant impact, or less than significant with mitigation. Potential cumulative projects that could be constructed in the vicinity of the Project would be required to comply with existing applicable federal, State, and local regulations.

c. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The Project would not consist of any uses or activities that would negatively affect people in the vicinity. In addition, all resource topics associated with the Project have been analyzed in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines and found to pose no impact, less-than-significant impact, or less than significant impact with mitigation. As discussed in Section 9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this IS/MND, the Project would implement mitigation measures HAZ-1, HAZ-2, and HAZ-3 to protect workers and the public from encountering contamination from the former USTs and/or from historical use of the site as a road station during construction. Further, there is no potential for land use consistency conflicts in relation to noise impacts. Construction noise, on-site operational noise, or off-site traffic generation noise resulting from implementation of the Project would not generate a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the General Plan or noise ordinance. Consequently, the Project would not result in any environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings directly or indirectly.

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