

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT | JUNE 2024
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
SCH No. 2023060617



JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT

LEAD AGENCY:

City of Norco
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Norco, California 92860
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Contact: Julie Beeman
President
949.489.2700



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1.0:	Executive Summary	1-1
	1.1 Introduction	1-1
	1.2 Project Location	1-1
	1.3 Project Summary.....	1-1
	1.4 Project Objectives	1-3
	1.5 Environmental Issues/Mitigation Summary	1-4
	1.6 Summary of Project Alternatives	1-17
Section 2.0:	Introduction.....	2-1
	2.1 Overview, Purpose and Authority of the EIR.....	2-1
	2.2 Lead Agency, Project Applicant, and Environmental Consultant	2-2
	2.3 Notice of Preparation.....	2-2
	2.4 Scope of the EIR	2-4
	2.5 Organization of the EIR	2-4
	2.6 Areas of Controversy and Issues To Be Resolved in the EIR.....	2-5
	2.7 Technical Studies Prepared for the Proposed Project.....	2-5
	2.8 Review of the Draft EIR	2-6
	2.9 Final EIR Certification	2-6
	2.10 Mitigation Monitoring.....	2-7
Section 3.0:	Project Description	3-1
	3.1 Proposed Project.....	3-1
	3.2 Location	3-2
	3.3 Physical Setting	3-2
	3.4 Land Use Setting	3-7
	3.5 Project Characteristics	3-11
	3.6 Project Phasing and Construction	3-30
	3.7 Project Objectives	3-32
	3.8 Project Alternatives.....	3-32
	3.9 Required Project Permits and Approvals	3-32
	3.10 References	3-32
Section 4.0:	Environmental Analysis	4-1
	4.1 Aesthetics.....	4.1-1
	4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources	4.2-1
	4.3 Air Quality	4.3-1
	4.4 Biological Resources.....	4.4-1
	4.5 Cultural Resources	4.5-1
	4.6 Energy	4.6-1
	4.7 Geology and Soils	4.7-1
	4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions	4.8-1
	4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials.....	4.9-1
	4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality.....	4.10-1

4.11	Land Use and Planning	4.11-1
4.12	Mineral Resources	4.12-1
4.13	Noise	4.13-1
4.14	Population and Housing	4.14-1
4.15	Public Services	4.15-1
4.16	Recreation	4.16-1
4.17	Transportation	4.17-1
4.18	Tribal Cultural Resources	4.18-1
4.19	Utilities and Service Systems	4.19-1
4.20	Wildfire	4.20-1
Section 5.0:	Cumulative Impact Analysis	5-1
5.1	Basis for Cumulative Analysis	5-1
5.2	Cumulative Impact Analysis	5-3
Section 6.0:	Alternatives Analysis	6-1
6.1	Purpose	6-1
6.2	Feasibility of Alternatives	6-2
6.3	Project Objectives	6-2
6.4	Offsite Alternative Considered But Not Advanced During Planning Process	6-2
6.5	Proposed Project Alternatives	6-3
6.6	Alternative 1: No Project	6-3
6.7	Alternative 2: Existing Zoning With No Land Use Exchange	6-8
6.8	Summary of Alternative Impacts	6-13
6.9	Environmentally Superior/Preferred Alternative	6-14
Section 7.0:	Other CEQA Considerations	7-1
7.1	Long-Term Implications of Project Implementation	7-1
7.2	Growth-Inducing Impacts	7-1
7.3	Irreversible Environmental Changes That Would Occur With Project Implementation	7-3
7.4	Unavoidable Adverse Impacts	7-4
Section 8.0:	Inventory of Environmental Impacts	8-1
Section 9.0:	Organizations and Persons Consulted	9-1
9.1	Lead Agency	9-1
9.2	Applicant	9-1
9.3	Preparers of the Environmental Impact Report	9-1
9.4	Technical Consultants	9-1
9.5	Persons Consulted	9-2

Technical Appendices

Appendix A1	Notice of Preparation
Appendix A2	Notice of Preparation Comment Letters
Appendix B	Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis
Appendix C	Biological Technical Report
Appendix D1	Phase 1 Cultural Resources Assessment
Appendix D2	Historical Resource Analysis Report
Appendix E1	Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation
Appendix E2	Paleontological Records Search
Appendix F1	Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
Appendix F2	Phase II Environmental Site Assessment
Appendix G1	Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulic Study
Appendix G2	Preliminary Project Specific Water Quality Management Plan
Appendix H	Noise Impact Analysis
Appendix I	Public Service Correspondence
Appendix J	Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3-1	Parcel Configuration.....	3-3
Figure 3-2	Regional Location	3-4
Figure 3-3	Local Vicinity.....	3-5
Figure 3-4	USGS Topographic Map.....	3-6
Figure 3-5a	Site Photograph Locations.....	3-8
Figure 3-5b	Existing Site Photographs	3-9
Figure 3-5c	Existing Site Photographs	3-10
Figure 3-6	Proposed Site Plan.....	3-12
Figure 3-7	Existing and Proposed General Plan Land Uses.....	3-13
Figure 3-8	Existing and Proposed Zoning	3-14
Figure 3-9	Tentative Tract Map.....	3-17
Figure 3-10	Equestrian Trail Plan.....	3-19
Figure 3-11	Conceptual Landscape Plan.....	3-20
Figure 3-12a	Entry Landscape Treatment	3-21
Figure 3-12b	Entry Monument and Signage.....	3-22
Figure 3-13	Conceptual Street Sections	3-23
Figure 3-14	Conceptual Wall and Fence Plan	3-24
Figure 3-15	Proposed Storm Drain Plan	3-25
Figure 3-16	Proposed Water Plan	3-27
Figure 3-17	Proposed Sewer Plan.....	3-28
Figure 3-18	Preliminary Cut/Fill.....	3-31
Figure 4.4-1	Project Footprint	4.4-3
Figure 4.4-2	Vegetation/Land Cover	4.4-4
Figure 4.4-3	USFWS Critical Habitat	4.4-8
Figure 4.4-4	MSHCP Designation Map	4.4-24
Figure 4.10-1	Chino Basin.....	4.10-2
Figure 4.10-2	Pre-Developed Condition Hydrology Map.....	4.10-4
Figure 4.10-3	National Flood Hazard Map.....	4.10-5
Figure 4.11-1	Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.....	4.11-2

Figure 4.13-1 Field Noise Monitoring Locations 4.13-4

Figure 4.15-1 City of Norco Trails Map 4.16-6

Figure 4.20-1 Regional Fire Hazard Severity Zones 4.20-2

Figure 4.20-2 Fire Hazard Severity Zones, WUI, and CPUC Fire Hazard Threat Mapping 4.20-7

Figure 5-1 Cumulative Project Location Map 5-4

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-1	Parcel Configuration Acreage.....	1-2
Table 1-2	Project Alternative Impact Comparison	1-18
Table 2-1	Summary of NOP Comments.....	2-3
Table 3-1	Land Exchange Acreage.....	3-1
Table 3-2	Surrounding Land Uses.....	3-11
Table 3-3	Proposed Land Use and Zone Changes	3-11
Table 3-4	Utility Providers.....	3-26
Table 3-5	Project Area Fire Stations.....	3-26
Table 3-6	Project Area School Sites.....	3-29
Table 3-7	Construction Equipment Noise Emissions and Usage Factors.....	3-30
Table 4.3-1	Monthly Climate Data	4.3-2
Table 4.3-2	Local Area Air Quality Monitoring Summary	4.3-3
Table 4.3-3	Construction-Related Regional Criteria Pollutant Emissions	4.3-11
Table 4.3-4	Operational Regional Criteria Pollutant Emissions	4.3-12
Table 4.3-5	Operations Related to Local Criteria Pollutant Emissions	4.3-15
Table 4.3-6	SCAQMD Local Air Quality Thresholds of Significance.....	4.3-16
Table 4.3-7	Construction-Related Local Criteria Pollutant Emissions.....	4.3-17
Table 4.4-1	Vegetation Communities/Land Cover Observed	4.4-2
Table 4.4-2	Potential Impacts to Vegetation Communities within the Project Footprint	4.4-17
Table 4.5-1	Cultural Resources Studies Within the Project Site	4.5-10
Table 4.5-2	Cultural Resources Sites Within the Project Site	4.5-10
Table 4.6-1	Proposed Project Compliance with the City General Plan Energy Policies.....	4.6-10
Table 4.8-1	Global Warming Potentials, Atmospheric Lifetimes and Abundances of GHGs	4.8-4
Table 4.8-2	Project Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions	4.8-11
Table 4.8-3	Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan	4.8-13
Table 4.8-4	Consistency with Connect SoCal	4.8-17
Table 4.10-1	Beneficial Use Descriptions	4.10-6
Table 4.10-2	Study Area Water Body Beneficial Uses	4.10-7
Table 4.10-3	303D Listed Impaired Water Bodies.....	4.10-8

Table 4.11-1	Land Use Distribution	4.11-3
Table 4.11-2	SCAG 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS Consistency Analysis	4.11-5
Table 4.11-3	Proposed Zoning Designations	4.11-7
Table 4.13-1	Existing (Ambient) Noise Level Measurements	4.13-3
Table 4.13-2	FTA Project Effects on Cumulative Noise Exposure.....	4.13-5
Table 4.13-3	City of Norco Sound Level Standards	4.13-7
Table 4.13-4	Construction Equipment Noise Emissions and Usage Factors.....	4.13-12
Table 4.13-5	Proposed Construction Related Haul Truck Noise Contributions to Nearby Homes .	4.13-13
Table 4.13-6	Construction Noise Levels at the Nearest Sensitive Receptors	4.13-15
Table 4.13-7	FTA Project Effects on Cumulative Noise Exposure.....	4.13-16
Table 4.13-8	Project Traffic Noise Contributions to Nearby Homes	4.13-16
Table 4.13-9	Operational Noise Levels at the Nearby Residential Uses	4.13-17
Table 4.13-10	Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment.....	4.13-20
Table 4.14-1	SCAG Regional Forecasts	4.14-1
Table 4.14-2	SCAG Growth Projections for the City of Norco	4.14-2
Table 4.14-3	City of Norco’s Estimated Population Growth.....	4.14-2
Table 4.14-4	Household Characteristics.....	4.14-3
Table 4.15-1	City of Norco Fire Station Locations	4.15-1
Table 4.15-2	Existing Student Enrollment and Capacity.....	4.15-2
Table 4.15-3	Project Area School Sites.....	4.15-3
Table 4.15-4	Norco Park and Recreational Facilities	4.15-4
Table 4.15-5	CNUSD School Locations and Generation Factors for Single-Family Residences.....	4.15-11
Table 4.17-1	City of Norco VMT Baselines and Thresholds of Significance	4.17-8
Table 4.17-2	Project Threshold	4.17-9
Table 4.17-3	Cumulative Threshold	4.17-10
Table 4.19-1	Existing and Projected Water Supplies.....	4.19-1
Table 4.19-2	Land Use Water Demands.....	4.19-2
Table 4.19-3	Normal Year Demand Comparison	4.19-2
Table 4.19-4	Single Dry Year Demand Comparison.....	4.19-2
Table 4.19-5	Multiple Dry Years Demand Comparison	4.19-3

Table 4.19-6	Estimated Water Demand.....	4.19-17
Table 4.19-7	Estimated Wastewater Demand	4.19-18
Table 4.20-1	Project Area Fire Stations	4.20-1
Table 5-1	JD Ranch EIR Cumulative Project List	5-2
Table 6-1	Project Alternatives.....	6-3
Table 6-2	Project Alternative Impact Comparison	6-13
Table 6-3	Summary Alternative Compliance with Project Objectives	6-14
Table 7-1	Project Threshold for VMT	7-5
Table 7-2	Cumulative Threshold for VMT	7-5

SECTION 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) addresses the potential environmental effects associated with the implementation of the proposed JD Ranch Residential Project (project). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that local government agencies consider the potential environmental consequences before taking action on projects over which they have discretionary approval authority. An EIR analyzes potential environmental consequences to inform the public and support informed decisions by local and state governmental agency decision makers.

This Draft EIR has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of CEQA and the City of Norco CEQA procedures. The City of Norco, as the lead agency, has reviewed and revised all submitted drafts, technical studies, and reports as necessary to reflect its own independent judgment, including reliance on County technical personnel from other departments and review of all technical subconsultant reports.

Data for this Draft EIR was derived from onsite field observations, discussions with affected agencies, analysis of adopted plans and policies, review of available studies, reports, data and similar literature, and specialized environmental assessments (aesthetic, air quality, biological report, cultural resources reports, geological report, greenhouse gas emissions, phase one environmental site assessment, hydrology report, preliminary water quality management plan, noise modeling, and traffic impact assessment). These supporting documents and technical studies are found in [Appendices B through J](#).

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is located within the western portion of the City of Norco, Riverside County, along River Road between Bluff Street and Sundance Lane. Regionally, the project can be accessed by Interstate 15 (I-15) from the Second Street exit. Locally, the project can be accessed from River Road. The project site is surrounded by residential land uses. Bluff Street and the Santa Ana River area are northwest of the project site.

1.3 PROJECT SUMMARY

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The property consists of two parcels. The north parcel (APN 121-110-001), owned by the City of Norco, contains existing City water well facilities including several wells and related piping and utilities and two above ground water storage reservoirs. Additionally, portions of the site have been used by the City as a spoils/staging yard.

The balance of the site is the Dallape Dairy property (2877 River Road/APN 121-110-003), consisting of a single-family home, former milking barn, retail outlet, barns/sheds, and dairy related features (pastures, impoundment, pole barns, fencing). The site is improved with existing infrastructure. An existing 60 foot-wide Southern California Edison (SCE) easement with above ground power poles extends along the northeast portion of the parcel.

LAND USES

The project site currently consists of 37.84 acres and is comprised of two (2) parcels, identified as Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APNs) 121-110-003 and 121-110-001. APN 121-110-003 consists of 26.15 acres and is owned by TACRD Investment with a General Plan designation of Residential Agricultural (RA) and Zoning designation of A-1-20 (Agricultural Low Density). APN 121-110-001 is owned by the City of Norco and consists of 11.69 acres with a General Plan designation of Public Lands (PL) and a Zoning designation of Open Space (OS).

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Norco, TACRD proposes to deed 6.78 acres of their property to the City of Norco as open space. In exchange, the City of Norco would deed 8.20 acres of the City of Norco owned parcel to TACRD Investment to be incorporated into the proposed project; refer to [Table 1-1, Parcel Configuration Acreage](#). [Figure 3-1, Parcel Configuration](#), depicts the land swap between TARCD and the City of Norco. This land exchange allows for the construction of critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road. It also facilitates completion of the full width of the River Road frontage up to the Bluff Street intersection.

Table 1-1
Parcel Configuration Acreage

APN	Owner	Total Acreage	Land Swap Acreage	Difference	Total Acreage Remaining After Land Swap
APN 121-110-001	City of Norco	11.69 acres	8.20 acres to TARCD	3.49 acres	3.49 + 6.78 = 10.27 acres
APN 121-110-003	TARCD Investment	26.15 acres	6.78 acres to City	19.37 acres	19.37 + 8.20 = 27.57 acres

With the Memorandum of Understanding in place, the total gross acreage shown on Tentative Tract Map (TTM) No. 38330 is 37.84 acres. The remaining 3.49 acres of APN 121-110-001 (City-owned reservoir site) is part of the Tentative Tract Map No. 38330 Entitlement; however, there would be no improvements to this area and is depicted on [Figure 3-9, Tentative Tract Map](#), as “Not A Part”. The 6.78 acres deeded to the City would have very limited grading to be completed in the future for drainage mitigation. Therefore, the EIR will analyze impacts for development improvements to 27.57 acres which will be referred to as the proposed project.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project proposes approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and a Tentative Tract Map, to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum of 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City’s R-1 Zoning regulations. The proposed project would also retain the existing single-family detached home “in place” (Lot 69) and the City’s Water Quality Infiltration Basin and Storm Detention Basin (Lot A); refer to [Figure 3-9, Tentative Tract Map](#). The remaining 3.49 acres of APN 121-110-001 shown on [Figure 3-9](#) is depicted as “Not A Part” of the proposed project but is part of the Tentative Tract Map and would remain as a City of Norco public facility.

In addition, the proposed project would demolish the existing dairy facilities and remove three power poles along River Road, one pole within Lot 69 and two poles within APN 121-110-001. It has yet to be determined if five poles along Bluff Street would be undergrounded.

Primary Animal Keeping Area

All lots would include a recorded primary animal keeping area (PAKA) and a 15-foot-wide access to the PAKA. The keeping of large animals would be allowed on each residential lot in accordance with the provisions of the A-1 Zone of Agricultural Low Density and the minimum 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City's R-1 Zoning regulations. According to the Norco Municipal Code, Title 18 (Zoning), Chapter 18.16 (Animal-Keeping Overlay Zone), Section 18.16.50 (Animal-Keeping Standards): "At a minimum, parcels must have 500 square feet of flat usable area for each adult animal unit." The standard states a minimum of 500 square feet for one animal but the City is requesting 576 square feet which the project has complied with; refer to [Figure 3-9, Tentative Tract Map](#).

CIRCULATION

Regional access to the proposed project is provided by Interstate 15 (I-15) from the Second Street exit. The project site would have two points of local access, one from River Road and one from Bluff Street. River Road would be the primary access to the project site.

The project proposes a 12-foot equestrian trail on the north side of River Road and on the east side of Bluff Street. Both equestrian trails would connect to existing City equestrian trails. Additionally, within the project a 12-foot equestrian trail is proposed along the local street and would connect to Citywide equestrian trails.

REQUIRED APPROVALS AND PERMITS

The following are the required project permits and approvals for the project:

- General Plan Amendment
- Zone Change
- Tentative Tract Map
- Grading Permit
- Building Permit
- Landscape Planting Plan Approval
- Plumbing, Electrical, Structure Permits
- Fire Master Plan

1.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Pursuant to Section 15124(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR project description must include "[a] statement of objectives sought by the proposed project.... The statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project."

The project objectives are summarized as follows:

- Create a high-quality, single-family equestrian community with horse and pedestrian trails.
- Include Primary Animal Keeping Areas (PAKA) on each lot to promote the equestrian lifestyle.

- Exchange acreage with the City in order to build critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road.
- Widen River Road to its full width and complete the interchange improvements at River Road and Bluff Street and install landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages.

1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES/MITIGATION SUMMARY

The following summarizes the impacts, mitigation measures, and unavoidable significant impacts identified and analyzed in Section 4.0, *Environmental Analysis*, of this EIR. Refer to the appropriate EIR Section for detailed information.

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
4.1	Aesthetics		
	Impact AES-1: Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact AES-2: Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact AES-3: Would the project in non-urbanized areas substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact AES-4: Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.2	Agriculture and Forestry Resources		
	Impact AG-1: Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact
	Impact AG-2: Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact
	Impact AG-3: Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Impact AG-4: Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact
	Impact AG-5: Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact
4.3	Air Quality		
	Impact AQ-1: Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact AQ-2: Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact AQ-3: Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact AQ-4: Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.4	Biological Resources		
	Impact BIO-1: Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<p>BIO-1: Vegetation removal activities shall be conducted outside the nesting season (September 1 to February 14 for songbirds; September 1 to January 14 for raptors) to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds.</p> <p>Any construction activities that occur during the nesting season (February 15 to August 31 for songbirds; January 15 to August 31 for raptors) will require that all suitable habitats within 500 feet of the project site be thoroughly surveyed for the presence of nesting birds by a qualified biologist within three days before commencement of vegetation clearing/ground disturbance activities. If any active nests are detected, a buffer of 500 feet of an active listed species or raptor nest, 300 feet of other sensitive bird nests (non-listed), and 100 feet of most common songbird nests will be delineated, flagged, and avoided until the nesting cycle is complete. The buffer may be modified and/or other recommendations proposed as determined appropriate by the biological monitor to minimize impacts.</p> <p>BIO-2: A pre-construction/clearance burrowing owl survey shall be performed not more than 30 days prior to initial ground disturbance activity to formally determine presence/absence of the species. A qualified biologist will survey the project site and a buffer zone, 500-feet outside the</p>	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>project limits for burrows that could be used by burrowing owls. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow will be flagged, and a 160-foot diameter buffer will be established during non-breeding season or a 250-foot diameter buffer during the breeding season. If burrows onsite are unoccupied, construction may proceed.</p> <p>If the site survey determines the presence of burrowing owl, mitigation in accordance with the CDFW and the MSHCP shall be implemented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If burrowing owls are identified as being resident onsite outside the breeding season (September 1 to February 14) they may be relocated to other sites by a permitted biologist (permitted by CDFW), as allowed in the <i>CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation</i> (March 2012). ▪ If an active burrow is found during the breeding season, the burrow shall be treated as a nest site and temporary fencing shall be installed at a distance from the active burrow, to be determined by the biologist, to prevent disturbance during grading or construction. Installation and removal of the fencing shall be done with a biological monitor present. ▪ Active relocation and eviction/passive relocation require the preservation and maintenance of suitable burrowing owl habitat determined through coordination with the Wildlife Agencies. <p>BIO-3: Trees, large shrubs, and structures shall be surveyed for the presence of special status bat species by a qualified bat biologist no more than two weeks prior to the initiation of vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities if work will begin within the maternity season (March 1 to August 31). Surveys may entail direct inspection of the trees, large shrubs, and structures or nighttime surveys as determined by a qualified biologist. If active bat roosts are present, a qualified bat biologist shall determine the species of bats present and the type of roost (i.e., day roost, night roost, maternity roost). If special-status bat species are present, a qualified bat biologist shall determine appropriate avoidance measures, which may include</p>	

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation												
		implementation of a construction-free buffer around the active roost.													
	Impact BIO-2: Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant												
	Impact BIO-3: Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact												
	Impact BIO-4: 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?	Mitigation Measure BIO-1 is required.	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated												
	Impact BIO-5: Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact												
	Impact BIO-6: Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	BIO-4: MSHCP Mitigation Fee. The project proponent shall be required to pay the City of Norco local development mitigation fees prior to issuance of a building permit. The most current rates are as follows (future developments may be subject to updated fees): <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Current Fee as of 1 January 2022</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Commercial/Industrial</td> <td>\$16,358/acre</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Residential</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>0-8 Units per acre</td> <td>\$9,635/unit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8.1-14 Units per acre</td> <td>\$1,515/unit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14+ Units per acre</td> <td>\$670/unit</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Current Fee as of 1 January 2022	Commercial/Industrial	\$16,358/acre	Residential		0-8 Units per acre	\$9,635/unit	8.1-14 Units per acre	\$1,515/unit	14+ Units per acre	\$670/unit	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
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Commercial/Industrial	\$16,358/acre														
Residential															
0-8 Units per acre	\$9,635/unit														
8.1-14 Units per acre	\$1,515/unit														
14+ Units per acre	\$670/unit														
4.5	Cultural Resources														
	Impact CR-1: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant												
	Impact CR-2: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	CR-1: Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a qualified Archaeologist and Native American Tribal representative(s) to monitor grading and other ground disturbances related to site development. The Archaeologist, in consultation with the Tribe(s) and City, shall develop a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to address the details, timing, and protocols of all cultural resources activities that occur on the project site. At the project pre-grading meeting, the Archaeologist, the Tribal representative(s), the Applicant, and the excavation and grading contractor shall discuss appropriate grading and ground	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated												

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>disturbing methods within archaeologically and culturally sensitive areas on the project site pursuant to the CRMP. Should the Archaeologist, after consultation with the consulting Tribe(s), find the potential exists for impacts to archaeological resources, cultural resources and/or sacred sites, the archaeologist and the Native American tribal representative(s) shall actively monitor project-related grading and in the event that cultural resources are discovered, shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt grading activity to allow recovery of archaeological and/or cultural resources. All cultural material will be temporarily curated on the project site until final disposition is determined. The Applicant shall relinquish ownership of all cultural material, including sacred items, burial goods, and all archaeological artifacts and non-human remains discovered to the consulting Tribe(s) for final disposition. Leaving artifacts in place (in situ) or reburial of them on site are the preferred methods of mitigation. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloguing and basic recordation has been completed.</p> <p>CR-2: At the completion of grading, excavation, and ground-disturbing activities on the site, a Phase IV Monitoring Report shall be submitted to the City documenting all monitoring activities conducted by the project archaeologist and Native Tribal Monitor(s). All reports produced will be submitted to the City of Norco, the Eastern Information Center, University of California, Riverside, and the consulting Tribe(s).</p>	
	<p>Impact CR-3: Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?</p>	<p>CR-3: Section 7050.5 of the <i>California Health and Safety Code</i> provides for the disposition of accidentally discovered human remains. Section 7050.5 states that, if human remains are found, no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall occur until the county coroner has determined, within two working days, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains. If the coroner recognizes those remains to be Native American or has reason to suspect so, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours.</p>	<p>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</p>

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		Section 5097.98 of the PRC states that, when the NAHC receives notification of a discovery of Native American human remains from the county coroner pursuant to Section 7050.5 of the <i>California Health and Safety Code</i> , the NAHC shall immediately notify those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The Most Likely Descendants (MLD) shall complete their inspection within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated MLD would then recommend, in consultation with the property owner, the means for treatment or disposition, with appropriate dignity, of the human remains and any associated grave goods.	
4.6	<p>Energy</p> <p>Impact E-1: Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?</p> <p>Impact E-2: Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?</p>	<p>No mitigation measures are required.</p> <p>No mitigation measures are required.</p>	<p>Less Than Significant</p> <p>Less Than Significant</p>
4.7	<p>Geology and Soils</p> <p>Impact GEO-1: Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving a rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.</p> <p>Impact GEO-2: Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?</p>	<p>No mitigation measures are required.</p> <p>GEO-1: Prior to issuance of grading permits, the City of Norco shall confirm that grading and construction plans for the project to incorporate design recommendations provided in the Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation prepared by LGC Geotechnical, Inc. dated January 21, 2022. The design recommendations shall address site earthwork and site preparation; organic rich soils, preliminary foundation, soil bearing, and lateral resistance, retaining wall recommendations, pile construction, slope creep, lot stretching, fences, freestanding walls, corrosivity, asphalt and concrete, non-structural concrete, subsurface water infiltration, surface water control, geotechnical plan review and geotechnical observation and testing.</p>	<p>No Impact</p> <p>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</p>

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Impact GEO-3: Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required.	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
	Impact GEO-4: Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact
	Impact GEO-5: Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact GEO-6: 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 offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required.	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
	Impact GEO-7: 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?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact GEO-8: Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<p>PALEO-1: Prior to the issuance of any grading permit, the project Applicant shall provide written evidence to the City of Norco, that the Applicant has retained a qualified paleontologist to observe grading activities and salvage and catalogue fossils, as necessary. The paleontologist shall be present at the pre-grade conference, shall establish procedures for paleontological resource surveillance, and shall establish, in cooperation with the Applicant and City, procedures for temporarily halting or redirecting work to permit sampling, identification, and evaluation of the fossils. If deemed necessary, the paleontologist shall collect sediment samples to recover any micro fossils that may be present. If the paleontological resources are found to be significant, the paleontologist shall determine appropriate actions, in cooperation with the Applicant, which ensure proper exploration and/or salvage.</p> <p>PALEO-2: If paleontological resources are uncovered and after completion of the project, the Applicant shall submit the paleontologist's follow-up report for approval by the City of Norco. The report shall include the period of inspection, a catalogue and analysis of the fossils found, and the present repository of the fossils. The Applicant shall prepare excavated material to the point of identification. The Applicant shall offer excavated finds for curatorial purposes to the City of Norco or its designee, on a first refusal basis. These</p>	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		actions, as well as final mitigation and disposition of the resources, shall be subject to approval by the City of Norco. Applicant shall pay curatorial fees for the storage of these resources in perpetuity.	
4.8	Greenhouse Gas Emissions		
	Impact GHG-1: Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact GHG-2: Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.9	Hazards and Hazardous Materials		
	Impact HAZ-1: Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact HAZ-2: Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<p>HAZ-1: Additional sampling shall be conducted following demolition and prior to construction to evaluate the extent, depth, and distribution of dichlorodiphenyl-dichloroethylene (DDE). Following additional sampling, recommendations will be made regarding remediation and/or other mitigation and/or sampling options.</p> <p>HAZ-2: Undocumented fill is located on the northern parcel. One of the following options must be completed to mitigate this REC prior to construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The property owner can properly dispose of the undocumented fill. ▪ The property owner can properly evaluate the fill to document its suitability for use at the site and provide sampling rationale/standards with sampling location and laboratory data to Client for evaluation. ▪ Client can properly evaluate the fill using EPA SW-846 or other acceptable sampling guidance. 	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
	Impact HAZ-3: Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact HAZ-4: 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?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Impact HAZ-5: Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact HAZ-6: Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.10	Hydrology and Water Quality		
	Impact HWQ-1: Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact HWQ-2: Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact
	Impact HWQ-3: Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact HWQ-4: 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?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact HWQ-5: 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?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact HWQ-6: 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?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact HWQ-7: In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Impact HWQ-8: Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.11	Land Use and Planning		
	Impact LU-1: Physically divide an established community?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact LU-2: 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?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.12	Mineral Resources		
	Impact MR-1: Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact MR-2: 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 mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.13	Noise		
	Impact NOI-1: Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<p>Implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant temporary construction noise impacts or long-term operational noise impacts.</p> <p>Project Design Feature NOI-1 has been incorporated into the proposed project to meet requirements of Policy 2.2.2a that requires the submittal of a construction noise reduction plan. It also addresses Policy 2.2.2b by requiring all construction equipment to be equipped with mufflers and engine shrouds and addresses Policy 2.2.2c that requires limitation of when construction equipment and haul trucks may operate. As such, with implementation of Project Design Feature NOI-1, the proposed project would be following the construction noise standards provided in General Plan Noise Element Policies 2.2.2a, 2.2.2b, and 2.2.2c.</p> <p>PDF-NOI-1: Prior to the issuance of the grading permit, the project applicant shall submit a construction related noise mitigation plan to the City for review and approval. The plan shall depict the locations of where construction equipment will operate on the project site and how the noise from the construction equipment will be mitigated during construction of the project, through use of the following methods:</p>	Less Than Significant

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restriction of use of construction equipment and haul truck operations between 7:00 PM and 7:00 AM, Monday through Friday and between 7:00 PM and 8:00 AM on Saturday and Sunday, unless specified by permit for activities such as pouring of concrete that may need to occur outside of these hours; 2. Placement of temporary noise attenuation fences around stationary equipment (i.e., air compressors and generators) that are used in close proximity to sensitive receptors; 3. Placement of equipment storage and staging areas as far away as practical from sensitive receptors; 4. Limitation of construction equipment idling time to less than 5 minutes per occurrence; and, 5. Require the use of construction equipment noise attenuation features that include mufflers and engine shrouds that are at least as effective as the original manufacturer equipment. 	
	Impact NOI-2: Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact NOI-3: For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip of 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?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.14	Population and Housing		
	Impact PH-1: 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 mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact PH-2: Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact
4.15	Public Services		
	Impact PS-1: Would the project result in the need for additional fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Impact PS-2: Would the project result in the need for additional police protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact PS-3: Would the project result in impacts to the availability of school facilities?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact PS-4: Would the project result in impacts to the availability of parkland and recreational facilities?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact PS-5: Would the project result in impacts to libraries?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.16	Recreation		
	Impact REC-1: 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?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact REC-2: Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.17	Transportation		
	Impact TRA-1: Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact TRA-2: Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	No feasible mitigation measures would be available to reduce the impact; therefore, the impact would be significant and unavoidable.	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
	Impact TRA-3: Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	TRANS-1: A Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared for temporary construction within the road right-of-way to ensure pedestrian, equestrian and vehicular safety and shall be approved prior to issuance of an encroachment permit.	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
	Impact TRA-4: Result in inadequate emergency access?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
4.18	Tribal Cultural Resources		
	Impact TCR-1: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register	Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 are required.	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	<p>of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?</p> <p>Impact TCR-2: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 are required.</p>	<p>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</p>
<p>4.19</p>	<p>Utilities and Service Systems</p> <p>Impact USS-1: Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?</p> <p>Impact USS-2: Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?</p> <p>Impact USS-3: Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?</p> <p>Impact USS-4: 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?</p> <p>Impact USS-5: Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure TRANS-1 is required.</p> <p>No mitigation measures are required.</p> <p>No mitigation measures are required.</p> <p>No mitigation measures are required.</p> <p>No mitigation measures are required.</p>	<p>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</p> <p>Less Than Significant</p> <p>Less Than Significant</p> <p>Less Than Significant</p> <p>Less Than Significant</p>
<p>4.20</p>	<p>Wildfire</p> <p>Impact WF-1: Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?</p>	<p>No mitigation measures are required.</p>	<p>Less Than Significant</p>

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Impact WF-2: 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 mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact WF-3: Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
	Impact WF-4: Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant

1.6 SUMMARY OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

ALTERNATIVE 1 – NO PROJECT

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e) requires consideration of the “no project” alternative to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the Project with the impacts of not approving the Project. This No Project Alternative assumes that no development would occur on the project site, and that the project site would continue to exist under its current condition as an underutilized and closed agricultural site. Alternative 1 was found not to meet any of the project objectives and would not result in a significant unavoidable adverse impact.

ALTERNATIVE 2 – EXISTING ZONING WITH NO LAND USE EXCHANGE

Under Alternative 2, the site would be developed on 26.15 acres versus 27.57 acres with the proposed project under its current Zoning designations. Under the current zoning, a total of 32 units could be developed which would create an estimated population of 107 residents. There would be no exchange of parcels with the City of Norco and TACRD as shown on [Figure 3-1, Parcel Configuration](#). Grading would occur on 26.15 acres. The existing parcel, owned by the City of Norco, would continue to be used by the City as a spoils/staging yard designated as public lands/open space. There would be no opportunity for the City to meet regional housing needs, no ability to build critical missing equestrian trail connections on Bluff Street and River Road, no roadway improvements on River Road and landscaping on River Road and Bluff Street would not be installed. Alternative 2 met two of the four project objectives and would not result in a significant unavoidable adverse impact.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR/PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires that EIRs identify the Environmentally Superior Alternative and discuss the facts that support that selection. The Environmentally Superior Alternative is typically the Alternative that results in the least amount of significant unavoidable adverse impacts. For the proposed project, one significant unavoidable adverse impact was identified for transportation associated with vehicle miles

travelled (VMT). The proposed project would also result in impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, hazards/hazardous materials, tribal cultural resources and utilities/service systems which were determined to be less than significant with mitigation. The remaining environmental topics were determined to either have less than significant impacts or no impacts with implementation of standard regulations and requirements.

The Alternative 1 No Project was determined to result in no significant unavoidable impacts. In addition, Alternative 1 would result in less overall construction impacts and operational impacts compared to the proposed project.

Alternative 2 Existing Zoning With No Land Use Exchange was determined to result in no significant unavoidable impacts. While Alternative 2 would still result in increased VMT, impacts were determined to be less than significant because there would be a reduction from 68 units to 32 units which would be under the VMT screening threshold. Alternative 2 would also result in impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, hazards/hazardous materials, tribal cultural resources and utilities/service systems, which would also be less than significant with mitigation. The remaining environmental topics would also either have less than significant impacts or no impacts with implementation of standard regulations and requirements.

Under CEQA, if the environmentally superior alternative is the “no project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Additionally, under CEQA a Lead Agency is not obligated to select an Environmentally Superior Alternative for implementation if it would not accomplish the basic project objectives and/or is infeasible.

Alternative 2 would not result in a significant unavoidable adverse impact, and therefore, would be environmentally superior to the proposed project; however, Alternative 2 would only meet two of the four project objectives. Two critical objectives that would not be achieved include construction of critical equestrian trail linkages and the completion of River Road improvements and landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages. Because Alternative 2 would only partially meet the project objectives, it is not considered the Preferred Alternative.

Table 1-2, *Project Alternative Impact Comparison*, provides a comparison of Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 construction and operational impacts to the proposed project. The potential for impacts is identified as greater than, less than or similar in potential level to occur, compared to the proposed project.

Table 1-2
Project Alternative Impact Comparison

Issues	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Project	Alternative 2 Existing Zoning with No Land Use Exchange
Aesthetics	Less Than Significant	Greater	Greater
Agriculture/Forestry Resources	No Impact	Similar	Similar
Air Quality	Less Than Significant Impact	Less	Less
Biology	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Greater	Similar
Cultural Resources	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Similar
Energy	Less Than Significant	Less	Less

Issues	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Project	Alternative 2 Existing Zoning with No Land Use Exchange
Geology/Soils	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Similar
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less Than Significant	Less	Less
Hazards/Hazardous Materials	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Greater
Hydrology/Water Quality	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar
Land Use and Planning	Less Than Significant	Greater	Greater
Mineral Resources	Less Than Significant	Similar	Similar
Noise	Less Than Significant	Less	Less
Population/Housing	Less Than Significant	Greater	Greater
Public Services	Less Than Significant	Less	Less
Recreation	Less Than Significant	Greater	Greater
Transportation	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less	Less
Tribal Cultural Resources	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Similar
Utilities/Service Systems	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Less
Wildfire	Less Than Significant	Greater	Similar

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SECTION 2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 OVERVIEW, PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY OF THE EIR

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all state and local governmental agencies consider the potential environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects. This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared to satisfy CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. The Draft EIR is a public document designed to provide decision-makers and the public with an analysis of the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, to indicate possible ways to reduce or avoid potential environmental damage, and to identify alternatives to the project. The Draft EIR must also disclose significant potential environmental impacts that cannot be avoided; growth inducing impacts; effects not found to be significant; and significant cumulative potential environmental impacts of all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

The lead agency means “the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment” (Guidelines Section 21067). The City of Norco is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required for the JD Ranch Project (State Clearinghouse No. 2023060617). This EIR has been prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.); *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.); and the rules, regulations, and procedures for implementation of CEQA, as adopted by the City of Norco. The principal *CEQA Guidelines* sections governing content of this document include Article 9 (Contents of Environmental Impact Reports) (Sections 15120 through 15132), and Section 15161 (Project EIR).

The purpose of this Draft EIR is to review the existing conditions, analyze potential environmental impacts of the proposed project, and identify feasible mitigation measures to avoid or lessen the project’s potentially significant environmental effects. This Draft EIR addresses the project’s potential environmental effects, in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15161. As referenced in *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15121(a), the primary purposes of this EIR are to:

- Inform decision-makers and the public generally of the significant potential environmental effects of a project.
- Identify possible ways to minimize the significant potential environmental effects of a project.
- Describe reasonable alternatives to a project.

The mitigation measures that are specified shall be adopted as conditions of approval to minimize the significance of potential environmental impacts resulting from the project. In addition, this EIR is the primary reference document in the formulation and implementation of a mitigation monitoring program for the project.

The City of Norco (which has the principal responsibility of processing and approving the project) and other public agencies (i.e., responsible and trustee) that may use this Draft EIR in the decision-making or permit process will consider the information in this Draft EIR, along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process. Environmental impacts are not always mitigatable to a level considered less than significant. In those cases, impacts are considered significant unavoidable

impacts. In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093(b), if a public agency approves a project that has significant impacts that are not substantially mitigated (i.e., significant unavoidable impacts), the Lead Agency must state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the Final EIR and any other information in the public record for the project. *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093 requires a “statement of overriding considerations” where the Lead Agency specifies the findings and public benefits for the project that outweigh the impacts.

2.2 LEAD AGENCY, PROJECT APPLICANT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT

The Lead Agency for the project is:

City of Norco
Planning Department
2870 Clark Avenue
Norco, California 92860

The project Applicant for the project is:

TACRD Investments, L.P.
C/O Tom Dallape
The Hoffman Company
18881 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 150
Irvine, California 92612

The Environmental Consultant for the project is:

VCS Environmental
30900 Rancho Viejo Road, Suite 100
San Juan Capistrano, California 92675

2.3 NOTICE OF PREPARATION

In compliance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, the City of Norco has provided opportunities for various agencies and the public to participate in the environmental review process. During Draft EIR preparation, efforts were made to contact various federal, state, regional, and local government agencies, and other interested parties to solicit comments on the scope of the review in this document. This included the distribution of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to various responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and interested parties.

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15082, as amended, the City of Norco circulated a NOP directly to public agencies (including the State Clearinghouse Office of Planning and Research), special districts, and members of the public who had requested such notice. The NOP (State Clearinghouse No. 2023060617) was distributed on June 23, 2023, with the 30-day public review period concluding on July 23, 2023. The purpose of the NOP was to formally announce the preparation of a Draft EIR for the project, and that, as the Lead Agency, the City of Norco was soliciting input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR.

Table 2-1, *Summary of NOP Comments*, compiles the comment letters received from commenting agencies/persons during the NOP process and identifies the section(s) of the Draft EIR where the issues are addressed. The NOP and NOP comments are provided as *Appendix A, Notice of Preparation Comment Letters*, and have been addressed in each appropriate topical area of this EIR.

Table 2-1
Summary of NOP Comments

Letter	Summary of Comment	Impact/Section EIR Addresses Issue
Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District	Water Quality	Section 4.10.5 Impact HWQ-1
Riverside County Department of Water Resources	Solid Waste	Section 4.19.5 Impact USS-4
California Department Fish and Wildlife	Impacts to Sensitive Species Compliance with the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Stephens’ Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan Lake and Streambed Alteration Program	Section 4.4.5 Impact BIO-1 Section 4.4.5 Impact BIO-6 Section 4.4.5 Impact BIO-6 Section 4.4.5 Impact BIO-4
Stacia Lloyd	Traffic Hazards Noise	Section 4.17.5 Impact TRA-3 Section 4.13.5 Impact NOI-1
Desert Valleys Builders Association	No comments related to CEQA Request to remain on City’s Mailing List	Not Applicable
Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission	Project located outside an Airport Influence Area	Not Applicable
Stacia Lloyd	Traffic Noise	Section 4.17.5 Impact TRA-1 Section 4.13.5 Impact NOI-1
Scott Dixon	Traffic Noise Impacts Sensitive Species	Section 4.17.5 Impact TRA-1 Section 4.13.5 Impact NOI-1 Section 4.4.5 Impact BIO-1
Riverside County Transit Agency	Letter stated that they have no comments at this time	Not Applicable
Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority	Proximity of project to Inland Empire Brine Line – project is one mile from the Brine Line and does not pose a negative impact Notification of location of Brine Line to mitigate any potential construction conflicts	Not Applicable
Riverside County Fire Department	Letter stated that they have no comments at this time	Not applicable

Letter	Summary of Comment	Impact/Section EIR Addresses Issue
Virgina Paul	Traffic Land Use	Section 4.17.5 Impact TRA-3 Section 4.11.5 Impact LU-2
Native American Heritage Commission	AB 52 Compliance SB 18 Compliance	Section 4.18.5 Impact TRC-2 Section 4.18.3 Impact TRC-2

2.4 SCOPE OF THE EIR

The scope of the Draft EIR was determined based on comments received in response to the NOP. Pursuant to Sections 15126.2 and 15126.4 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Draft EIR should identify any potentially significant adverse impacts and recommend mitigation that would reduce or eliminate these impacts to levels of insignificance. The information in Section 3.0, *Project Description*, establishes the basis for analyzing future, project-related potential environmental impacts.

The Draft EIR evaluates all the environmental issue areas provided in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, provides cumulative impact analysis of the proposed project with related development projects in the area and provides an alternative analysis to the project that includes a No Project Alternative and two additional project alternatives. All potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the project were determined to be less than significant. The Draft EIR did not identify any unavoidable significant adverse impacts, as defined by CEQA, that would result from implementation of the proposed project.

2.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE EIR

The Draft EIR is organized into the following sections:

- **Section 1.0, Executive Summary**, provides a brief project description and summary of the environmental impacts and mitigation measures.
- **Section 2.0, Introduction**, provides CEQA compliance information.
- **Section 3.0, Project Description**, provides a detailed project description indicating project location, background, and history; project characteristics, phasing, and objectives; as well as associated discretionary actions required.
- **Section 4.0, Environmental Analysis**, contains a detailed environmental analysis of the existing conditions, existing regulatory setting, potential project impacts, potential cumulative impacts, applicable standard conditions of approval, recommended mitigation measures, and significant unavoidable impacts (if any) for the following environmental topic areas:
 - Aesthetics
 - Agriculture and Forestry Resources
 - Air Quality
 - Biological Resources
 - Cultural Resources
 - Energy
 - Geology and Soils
 - Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - Hazards and Hazardous Materials
 - Hydrology and Water Quality
 - Land Use and Planning
 - Mineral Resources
 - Noise
 - Population and Housing

- Public Services
 - Recreation
 - Transportation
 - Tribal Cultural Resources
 - Utilities and Service Systems
 - Wildfire
- **Section 5.0, Cumulative Impact Analysis**, describes the approach and methodology for the cumulative analysis.
 - **Section 6.0, Alternatives Analysis**, describes a reasonable range of alternatives to the project or its location that could avoid or substantially lessen the project’s significant impact and still feasibly attain the basic project objectives.
 - **Section 7.0, Other CEQA Considerations**, explains potential impacts that have been determined not to be significant and which were scoped out of detailed analysis in this EIR.
 - **Section 8.0, Inventory of Environmental Impacts**, is a compilation of the mitigation measures contained in the EIR.
 - **Section 9.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted**, identifies all federal, state, and local agencies, other organizations, and individuals consulted.
 - **Technical Appendices**, contains the project’s technical documentation.

2.6 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED IN THE EIR

Prior to the preparation of the Draft EIR, the City of Norco circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) on June 23, 2023 (refer to [Appendix A1](#)). Comments received during the NOP’s public review period from June 23, 2023 to July 23, 2023 are included in [Appendix A2](#). A summary of comments received on the NOP is provided in [Table 2-1](#). The table provides references to the sections of the Draft EIR in which these issues are evaluated. No other areas of controversy are known to the lead agency.

2.7 TECHNICAL STUDIES PREPARED FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The following technical studies were prepared for the project:

- Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis
- Biological Technical Report
- Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment
- Historical Resource Analysis Report
- Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation
- Paleontological Records Search
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Phase II Environmental Site Assessment
- Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulic Study Report
- Preliminary Project Specific Water Quality Management Plan
- Noise Impact Analysis
- Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis

2.8 REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIR

In accordance with Sections 15087 and 15105 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this Draft EIR will be circulated for a 45-day public review period, beginning on June 6, 2024. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to comment in writing on the information contained in this document. Persons and agencies commenting are encouraged to provide information that they believe is missing from the Draft EIR and to identify where the information can be obtained. All comment letters received before the close of the public review period will be responded to in writing, and the comment letters, together with the responses to those comments, will be included in the Final EIR.

Comment letters should be sent to:

City of Norco
Planning Department
2870 Clark Avenue
Norco, California 92860
Attn: Alma Robles, Community Development Director
Email: arobles@ci.norco.ca.us

2.9 FINAL EIR CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15132, contents of the Final EIR will consist of:

- a) The Draft EIR or a revision of the Draft EIR.
- b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR either verbatim or in summary.
- c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR.
- d) The Lead Agency's responses to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process; and any other information added by the Lead Agency.

This Draft EIR is being circulated for public review for 45 days. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to provide written comments on the Draft EIR to the City of Norco (address shown on the title page of this document). Upon completion of the 45-day review period, the City of Norco will review all written comments received and prepare written responses for each. A Final EIR will incorporate the received comments, responses to the comments, and any changes to the Draft EIR that result from comments. The Final EIR will be presented to the City of Norco for potential certification as the environmental document for the project. All persons who comment on the Draft EIR will be notified of the availability of the Final EIR and the date of the public hearing before the City of Norco.

2.10 MITIGATION MONITORING

Public Resources Code, Section 21081.6, requires that agencies adopt a monitoring or reporting program for any project for which it has made findings pursuant to Public Resources Code 21081(a)(1) or adopted a Negative Declaration pursuant to 21080(c). Such a program is intended to ensure the implementation of all mitigation measures adopted through the preparation of an EIR or Negative Declaration.

The Mitigation Monitoring Program for the proposed project will be approved as part of the Final EIR, prior to consideration of the project discretionary permits by the City of Norco.

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SECTION 3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 PROPOSED PROJECT

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The project site consists of 37.84 acres and is comprised of two (2) parcels, identified as Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APNs) 121-110-003 and 121-110-001. APN 121-110-003 consists of 26.15 acres and is owned by TACRD Investment with a General Plan designation of Residential Agricultural (RA) and Zoning designation of A-1-20 (Agricultural Low Density). APN 121-110-001 is owned by the City of Norco and consists of 11.69 acres with a General Plan designation of Public Lands (PL) and a Zoning designation of Open Space (OS).

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Norco, TACRD proposes to deed 6.78 acres of their property to the City of Norco as open space. In exchange, the City of Norco would deed 8.20 acres of the City of Norco owned parcel to TACRD Investment to be incorporated into the proposed project; refer to [Table 3-1, Land Exchange Acreage](#). [Figure 3-1, Parcel Configuration](#), depicts the land swap between TARCD and the City of Norco. This land exchange allows for the construction of critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road. It also facilitates completion of the full width of the River Road frontage up to the Bluff Street intersection.

Table 3-1
Land Exchange Acreage

APN	Owner	Total Acreage	Land Swap Acreage	Difference	Total Acreage After Land Swap
APN 121-110-001	City of Norco	11.69 acres	8.20 acres to TARCD	3.49 acres	3.49 + 6.78 = 10.27 acres
APN 121-110-003	TARCD Investment	26.15 acres	6.78 acres to City	19.37 acres	19.37 + 8.20 = 27.57 acres

With the Memorandum of Understanding in place, the total gross acreage shown on Tentative Tract Map (TTM) No. 38330 is 37.84 acres. The remaining 3.49 acres of APN 121-110-001 (City-owned reservoir site) is shown on Tentative Tract Map No. 38330; however, the only improvements across this parcel would be the extension of the Bluff Street equestrian trail. This parcel is depicted on [Figure 3-9, Tentative Tract Map](#), as “Not A Part”. The proposed project also includes the construction of the Bluff Street equestrian trail in the City right-of-way between APN 121-110-001 to the existing equestrian trail to the northeast. This EIR analyzes impacts for development improvements to 27.57 acres, which will be referred to as the proposed project.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project proposes approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and a Tentative Tract Map, to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum of 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City’s R-1 Zoning regulations. The proposed project would also retain the existing single-family detached home “in place” (Lot 69) and the City’s Water Quality Infiltration Basin and Storm Detention Basin (Lot A); refer to [Figure 3-9, Tentative Tract Map](#). The remaining 3.49 acres of APN 121-110-001 shown on [Figure 3-9](#) is depicted as “Not A Part” of the proposed project but is part of the Tentative Tract Map and would remain as a City of Norco public facility.

In addition, the proposed project would demolish the existing dairy facilities and remove three power poles along River Road, one pole within Lot 69 and two poles within APN 121-110-001. It has yet to be determined if five poles along Bluff Street would be undergrounded.

Primary Animal Keeping Area

All lots would include a recorded primary animal keeping area (PAKA) and a 15-foot-wide access to the PAKA. The keeping of large animals would be allowed on each residential lot in accordance with the provisions of the General Plan A-1 Zone of Agricultural Low Density and the minimum 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City's R-1 Zoning regulations. According to the Norco Municipal Code, Title 18 (Zoning), Chapter 18.16 (Animal-Keeping Overlay Zone), Section 18.16.50 (Animal-Keeping Standards): "At a minimum, parcels must have 500 square feet of flat usable area for each adult animal unit." The standard states a minimum of 500 square feet for one animal but the City is requesting 576 square feet which the project has complied with; refer to [Figure 3-9, Tentative Tract Map](#).

3.2 LOCATION

The project site is located within the western portion of the City of Norco, Riverside County, along River Road between Bluff Street and Sundance Lane; refer to [Figure 3-2, Regional Location](#). Regionally, the project can be accessed from Interstate 15 (I-15) from the Second Street exit. Locally, the project can be accessed from River Road. The project site is surrounded by residential land uses; refer to [Figure 3-3, Local Vicinity](#). Bluff Street and the Santa Ana River area are northwest of the project site.

3.3 PHYSICAL SETTING

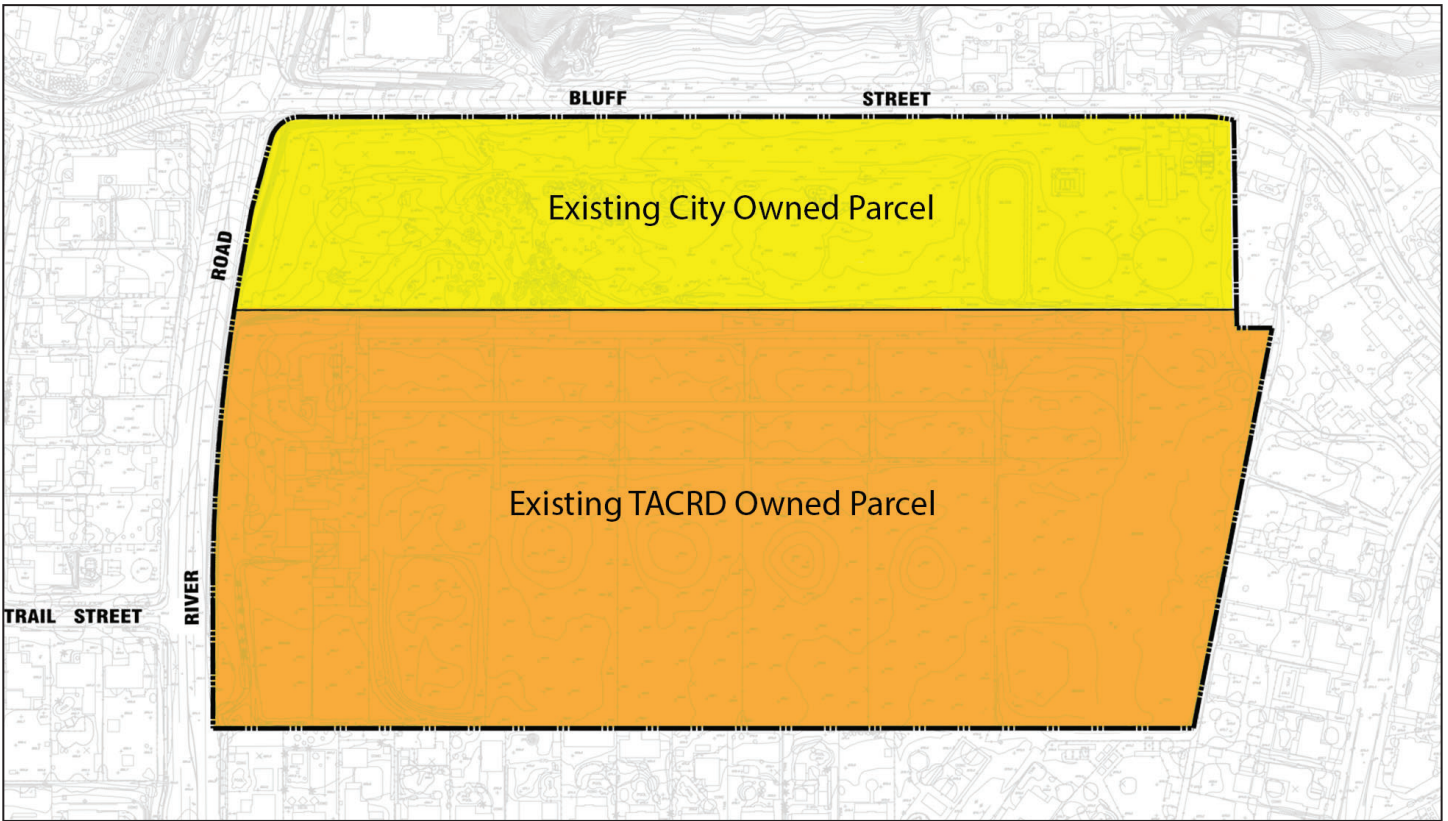
As shown in [Figure 3-4, USGS Topographic Map](#), the project site is situated within an urbanized environment and is located on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Corona, North, California, 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map (USGS, 2015).

The map indicates the elevation of the subject property ranges between approximately 563-579 feet above mean sea level (amsl), sloping north to south, with low topographic relief. Based on topography, surface runoff generated on the property appears to flow from the higher elevations along River Road. The Santa Ana River area is located northeast of the project site and Bluff Street.

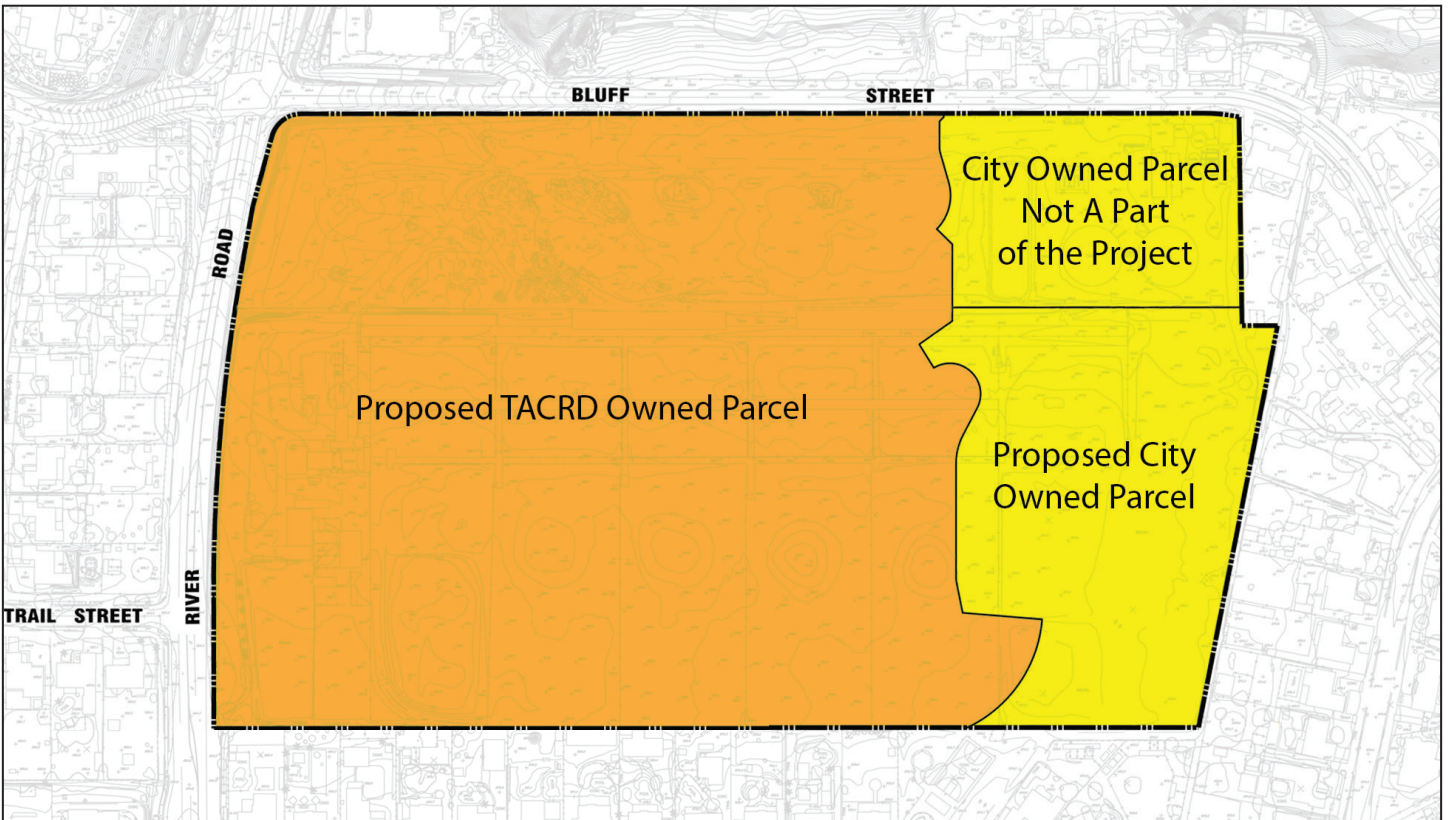
The subject site is located south of the San Gabriel Mountains within the broad alluvial plain of the Santa Ana River Basin, within the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province. The site is located within the northern portion of the Perris Block, a geologic zone consisting of granitic overlain by sedimentary deposits that are bounded by active faults including the northwest-trending Whittier-Elsinore Fault Zone at the southwest and the northwest-trending San Jacinto Fault Zone at the northeast (LGC 2022).

Based on regional mapping (USGS, 2002 & 2003), the subject site is underlain by Pleistocene-age, very old alluvial channel deposits (Qvoa). These materials are locally overlain by thin areas of undocumented artificial fill.

According to the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board – Region 8 (SARWQCB, 1995), the subject property is located within the Temescal Hydrologic Subarea (801.25), of the Middle Santa Ana River Hydrologic Area (801.20), of the Santa Ana River Hydrologic Unit (801.00).



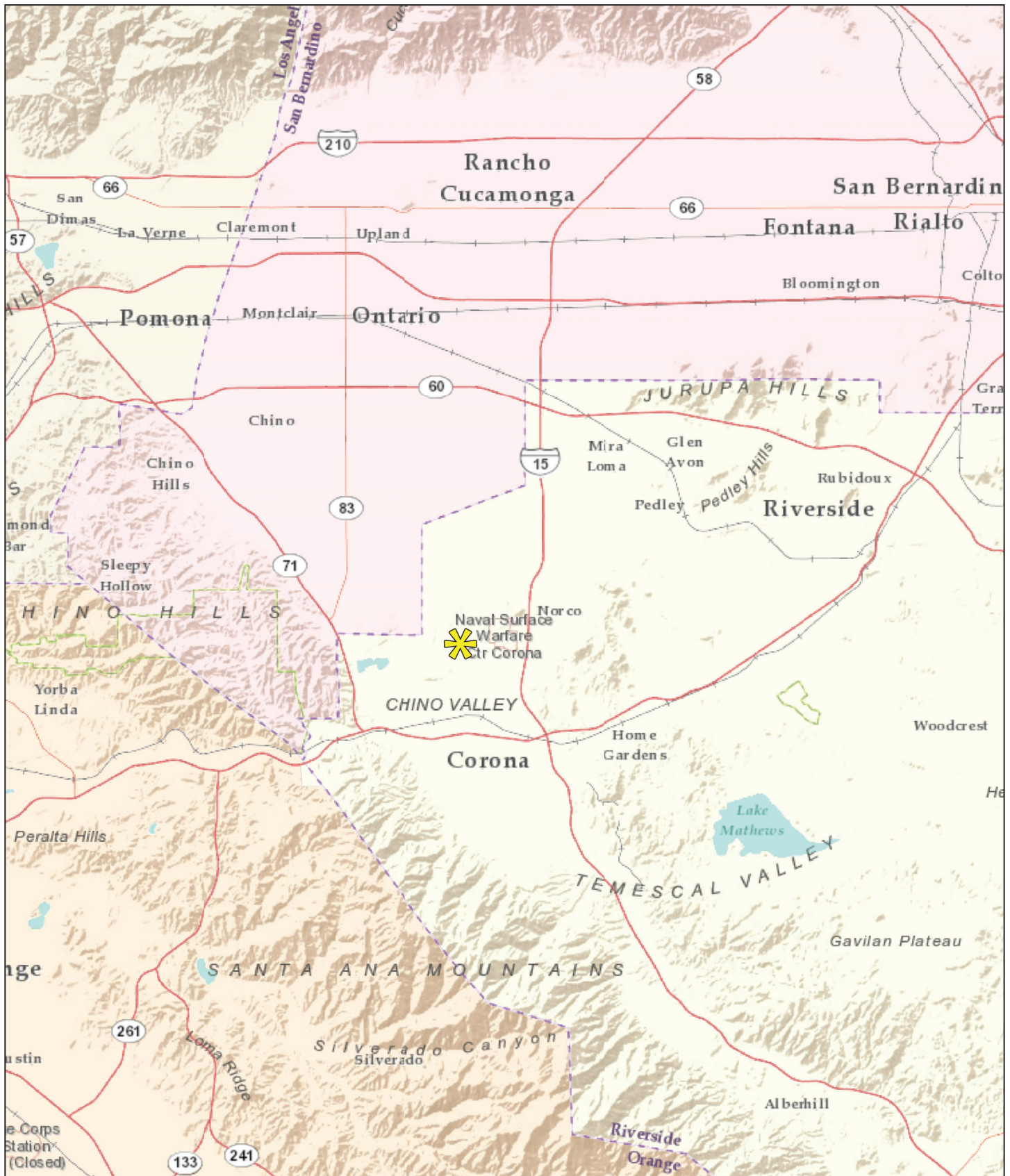
Existing Parcel Configuration




Proposed Parcel Configuration

Source: MDS Consulting and VCS Environmental; March 2024.





Source: ESRI and USGS; February 2022.

 - approximate Project Location

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
 Environmental Impact Report
 Regional Location

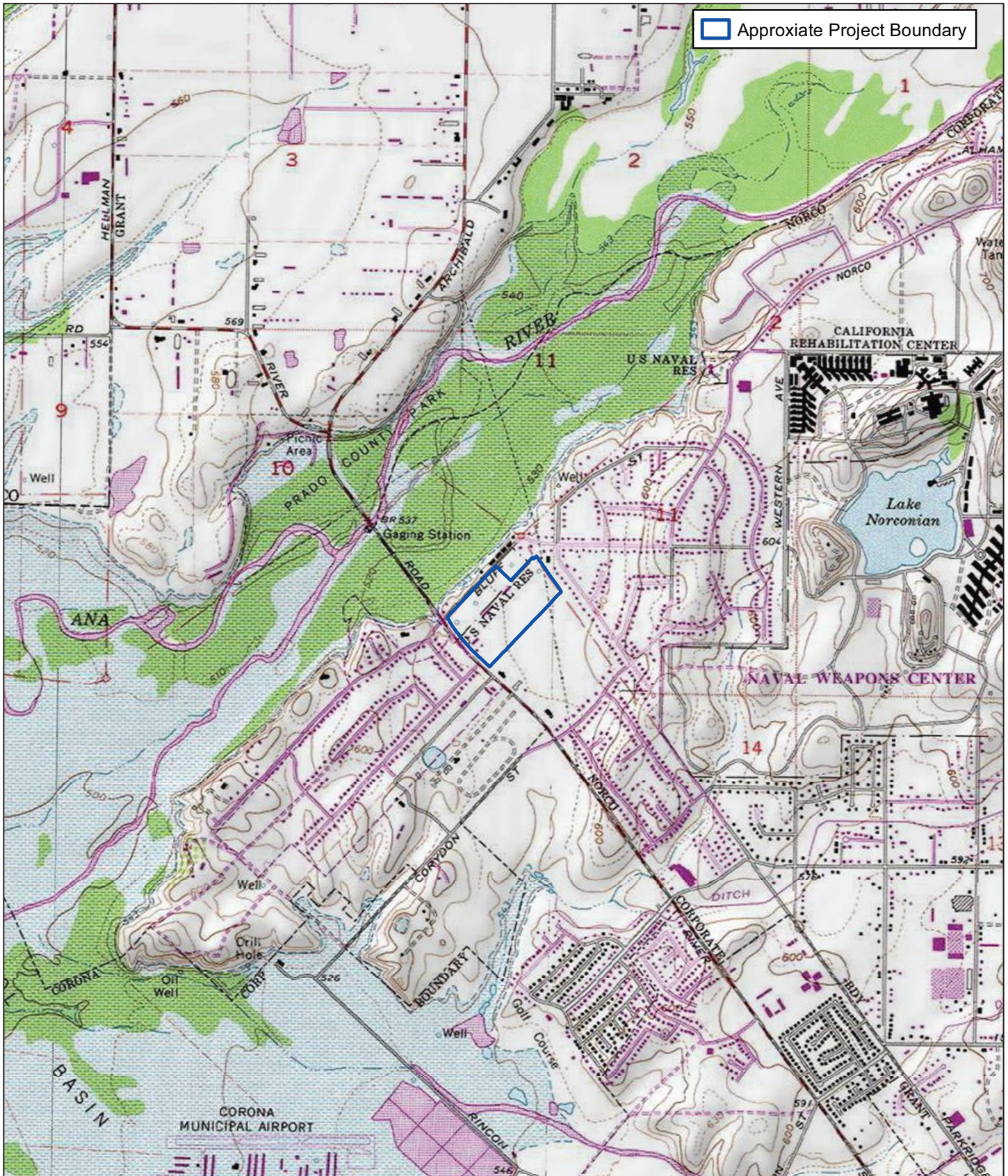




-  Proposed Project
-  TTM Boundary
-  Lot B: 6.78 ac
-  Not a Part

Source: Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors.





Source: USGS Quadrangle: Sections 11 & 10, Township & Range: T3S R7W County: Riverside, Meridian: San Bernardino State: California; February 2022.

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
 Environmental Impact Report
 USGS Topographic Map



Subsurface evaluation encountered groundwater levels at approximately 43 feet below existing grade, at an approximate elevation of 523 feet msl. Groundwater levels recorded by the California Department of Water Resources approximately 0.5 miles to the north adjacent the Santa Ana River, indicate historical groundwater elevations ranging from 536 to 539 feet msl (CDWR, 2022), or approximately 31 to 34 feet below existing site grades.

Based on the Flood Rate Insurance Map FIRM 06065C0687G dated August 20, 2008, the project site is within Zone X Flood Area. Per the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Flood Zone X is an area with low-to-moderate flood risk.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection identifies the project site is not within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

3.4 LAND USE SETTING

ONSITE LAND USES

The property consists of two parcels. The north parcel (APN 121-110-001), owned by the City of Norco, contains existing City water well facilities including several wells and related piping and utilities and two above ground water storage reservoirs. Additionally, portions of the site have been used by the City as a spoils/staging yard.

The balance of the site is the Dallape Dairy property (2877 River Road/APN 121-110-003), consisting of a single-family home, former milking barn, retail outlet, barns/sheds, and dairy related features (pastures, impoundment, pole barns, fencing). The site is improved with existing infrastructure. An existing 60 foot-wide Southern California Edison (SCE) easement with above ground power poles extends along the northeast portion of the parcel.

SURROUNDING LAND USES

The project site is situated within an urbanized area and is generally surrounded by developed land uses. Surrounding land uses to the project site are shown in [Figure 3-5a, *Site Photograph Locations*](#), and [Figures 3-5b and 3-5c, *Existing Site Photographs*](#).

To the north and northwest are Bluff Street, Stonebridge Christian Academy and the Santa Ana River area, open space, and existing single-family homes. The Santa Ana River Corridor is to the north of Bluff Street.

To the south is an existing single-family residential neighborhood. The homes consist of a combination of one-story and two-story structures. An existing park, Sundance Park, is in the residential neighborhood. An existing concrete block wall is located between the existing single-family land uses and the project site.

To the east are existing single-family residential neighborhoods. Most homes are single-story structures. An existing park, Ted Brooks Park, is in the neighborhood. Presently, chain link fencing is located between the neighborhood and the project site.

To the west is River Road and single-family homes. The homes are mostly one-story. An existing block wall is located between the existing homes and River Road.



Source: Google Earth Pro; June 2021.

 - approximate Project Site Boundary

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
Environmental Impact Report

Site Photograph Locations



1. View from River Road looking southeast along the project site.



4. View from TACRD owned parcel looking south of the project site.



2. View from River Road looking northeast towards TACRD owned parcel.



5. View from TACRD owned parcel looking southwest towards River Road.



3. View from TACRD owned parcel looking southeast of the project site.



6. View from TACRD owned parcel looking south of the project site.



7. View from TACRD owned parcel looking southeast of the project site.



10. View from TACRD owned parcel looking northeast of the project site.



8. View from City owned parcel looking northwest towards Bluff Street.



11. View from TACRD owned parcel looking northwest towards the above ground water storage reservoirs.



9. View from City owned parcel looking northeast towards the above ground water storage reservoirs.



12. View from TACRD owned parcel looking south of the project site.

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
Environmental Impact Report
Existing Site Photographs

PLANNING PROGRAMS

The City of Norco General Plan designates the project site Residential Agricultural and Public Lands. The current zoning on the property is A-1-20 Agriculture Low Density, minimum 21,780 square foot lot size and Open Space. [Table 3-2, *Surrounding Land Uses*](#), lists existing surrounding land uses and surrounding General Plan land use designations.

Table 3-2
Surrounding Land Uses

Direction	Existing Land Use	General Plan	Zoning
North	Single-Family Residential, Bluff Street, Stonebridge Christian Academy and Santa Ana River Corridor	Residential Agricultural, Water Related	A-1-20 Agriculture Low Density 21,780, Open Space
South	Single-Family Residential, Sundance Park	Residential Agricultural, Parks	A-1-20 Agriculture Low Density 21,780, Open Space
East	Single-Family Residential, Ted Brooks Park	Residential Agricultural, Parks	A-1-20 Agriculture Low Density 21,780, Open Space
West	Single-Family Residential	Residential Agricultural	A-1-20 Agriculture Low Density 21,780

3.5 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

As described above, TARCD and the City have entered into a MOU to exchange lands; refer to [Figure 3-6, *Proposed Site Plan*](#). This land exchange is critical for the following reasons:

- Facilitates the completion of critical equestrian trail links that would not otherwise be constructed along Bluff Street and River Road;
- Allows for the completion of the full-width improvements of River Road along the property to the Bluff Street intersection; and
- Allows for landscaping along River Road and Bluff Street with a combination of groundcover and trees.

Additionally, the project zoning will be modified to allow 10,000 square foot lots with PAKAs, which helps the City to achieve its regional housing needs while continuing to maintain its equestrian lifestyle; refer to [Figure 3-7, *Existing and Proposed General Plan Land Uses*](#), and [Figure 3-8, *Existing and Proposed Zoning*](#).

[Table 3-3, *Proposed Land Use and Zone Changes*](#), provides a summary of the General Plan Amendments and Zone Changes.

Table 3-3
Proposed Land Use and Zone Changes

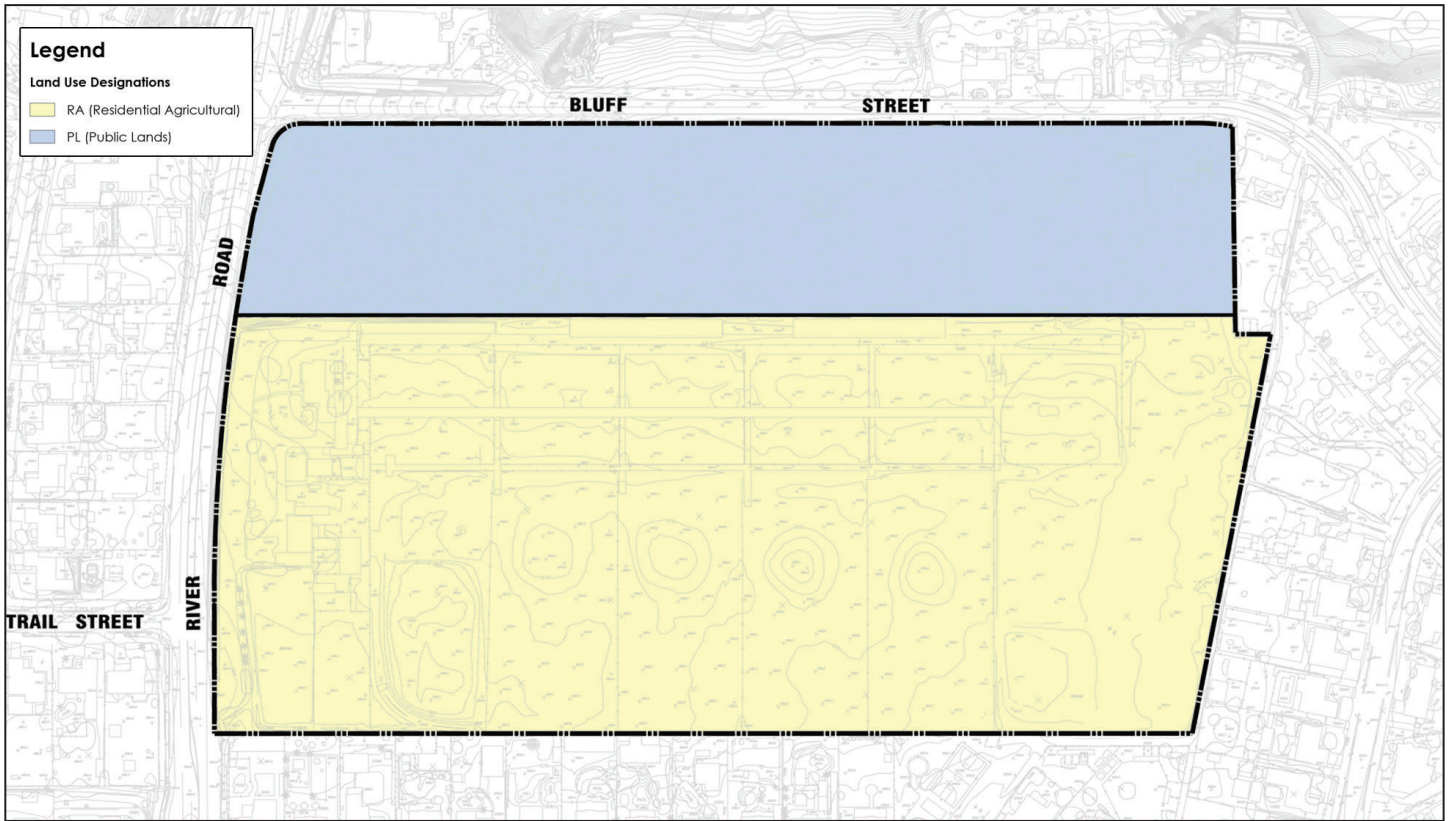
General Plan Amendment	Zone Change
8.20 acres of Public Lands to Residential Low	8.21 acres Open Space (OS) to Residential Single-Family (R-1-10), minimum 10,000 square foot lot size.
19.37 acres Residential Agricultural to Residential Low	19.44 acres Agriculture Low Density (A-1), minimum 21,780 square foot lot to Residential Single-Family (R-1-10), minimum 10,000 square foot lot size.
6.78 acres Residential Agricultural to Open Space	6.72 acres Agriculture Low Density (A-1), minimum 21,780 square foot lot to Open Space (OS).



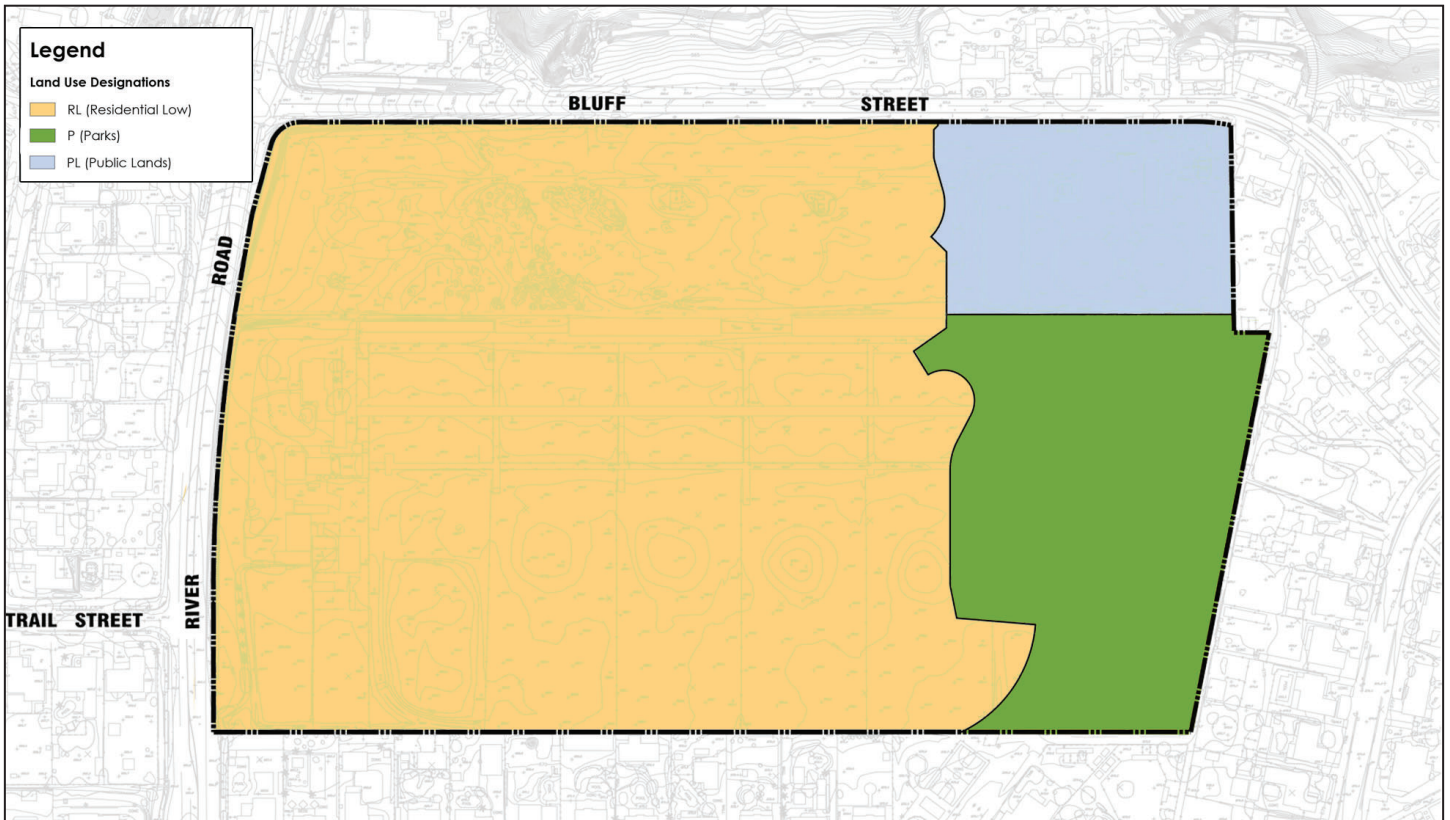
SCALE: 1" = 150'

- LEGEND**
- SEWER LIFT STATION (PROPOSED)
 - SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (EXISTING)
 - SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (PROPOSED)
 - OPEN SPACE
 - LANDSCAPE OPEN SPACE
 - PUBLIC STREETS (PROPOSED)
 - DETENTION/WATER QUALITY BASIN (PROPOSED)

Source: MDS Consulting, February 19, 2024.



Existing General Plan Land Uses



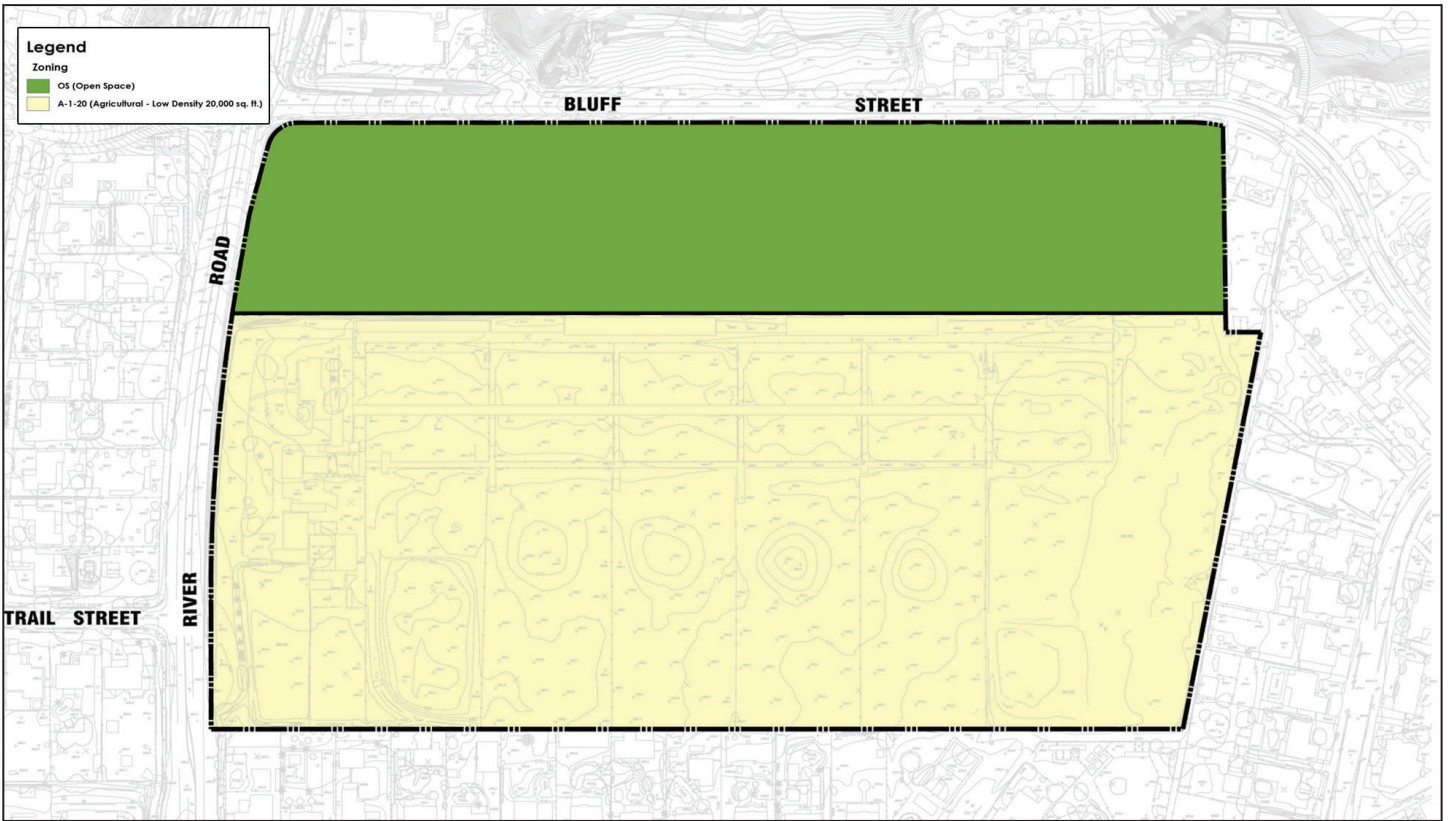
Proposed General Plan Land Uses

Source: MDS Consulting, VCS Environmental and City of Norco General Plan Land Use Map (May 25, 2012); March 2024.

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
Environmental Impact Report

Existing and Proposed General Plan Land Uses





Existing Zoning



Proposed Zoning

Source: MDS Consulting, VCS Environmental and City of Norco Zoning Map (May 21, 2012); March 2024.



TENTATIVE TRACT MAP

The project would require approval of a Tentative Tract Map (TTM) to allow for the development of 68 single-family homes and retain the existing single-family detached home “in place” (Lot 69); refer to [Figure 3-9, *Tentative Tract Map*](#). The TTM for the project proposes a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet, in accordance with R-1-10 Zoning. The minimum lot width would be 85 feet and the minimum lot depth would be 100 feet. The anticipated house sizes would be a combination of one- and two-story dwelling units (DUS) that would range from approximately 2,700 square feet to 3,500 square feet. All lots would include a recorded primary animal keeping area (PAKA) and a 15-foot-wide access to the PAKA. The keeping of large animals would be allowed on each and every lot in accordance with the provisions of the A-1 Zone of Agricultural Low Density. The minimum PAKA size is 578 square feet and would increase in size according to the individual lot square footage. Refer to [Figure 3-9, *Tentative Tract Map*](#), “Lot Area Summary Table” for the actual PAKA size per lot.

TACRD proposes to deed to the City of Norco, Lot B (6.78 acres) as Open Space. Lot A, a Water Quality Infiltration Basin and Storm Detention Basin (0.90 acres), Lot C (0.13 acres), Lot E (0.66 acres) and Lot F (0.04 acres) Landscape Open Space, and Lot G (0.04 acres) a 15-foot pedestrian access to Sundance Park. Lots A, B, C, E, F as well as the sewer lift station, Lot D (0.06 acres), would be maintained by a Community Maintenance District (CMD).

CIRCULATION PLAN

The project would have two points of access, one from River Road and one from Bluff Street. The project proposes to widen River Road to full half width street improvements, based on the City of Norco’s Standard Modified Plan of 110 feet. The roadway travel lanes would be widened an additional 21 feet with a proposed 6-foot parkway and 12-foot equestrian trail for a total half width of 61 feet. The project proposes to signalize the intersection of Trail Street and River Road.

The project also proposes the widening of Bluff Street to full half width street improvements, based on the City of Norco Standard Plans of 60 feet. The roadway travel lanes would be widened an additional 2 feet, with a proposed 6-foot parkway, a 12-foot equestrian trail, and curb and gutters for a total half width of 36 feet. The existing traffic signal at Bluff Street and River Road would be relocated as part of the roadway widening.

The project’s internal circulation system would be a looped roadway with two points of egress and ingress.

EQUESTRIAN TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

As shown in [Figure 3-10, *Equestrian Trail Plan*](#), the project proposes 12-foot equestrian trails on the easterly side of River Road and on the southerly side of Bluff Street. Both equestrian trails would allow critical missing connections to the existing City equestrian trail. Additionally, within the project site, a 12-foot equestrian trail is proposed along the residential streets that would connect to the proposed equestrian trails along River Road and Bluff Street.

LANDSCAPE PLAN

The overall intent of the project is to create an equestrian community that is unified by tree lined equestrian trails that circulate through the community connecting residents to the City's equestrian heritage. The landscape treatment for the project is influenced by the native environs of the Santa Ana River and the City of Norco equestrian heritage. The conceptual landscape plan for the project is shown on [Figure 3-11, *Conceptual Landscape Plan*](#). A total of 51 percent of the project site would consist of landscaping. Landscape treatments are proposed along the perimeter of the community as well as within the interior. Along River Road and Bluff Street, a combination of groundcover and trees would be provided including Coast Live oak, California Sycamore, Afghan Pine, and Golden Rain Tree. Within the interior of the community combination of groundcover and street trees would be provided including Saint Mary Magnolia, African Sumac, Western Redbud, Yew Pine, and Holly Cherry. Landscaping will include drought tolerant planting and trees lining the streets.

Expanded landscape areas would be provided at the project entrances at River Road and Bluff Street to create a project gateway accented with landscape shrubs and trees. Within the expanded landscape area there would be trees, groundcover, column plaster, themed fence, and entry monumentation. Typical entry landscape treatment is shown in [Figure 3-12a, *Entry Landscape Treatment*](#), and typical entry monument and signage treatment is shown in [Figure 3-12b, *Entry Monument and Signage*](#).

The project proposes to extend the equestrian trails along River Road and Bluff Street. The trails would be situated between the project perimeter landscaping and street parkway which would create an open space buffer for trail users. A typical cross section view of the community equestrian trails along River Road and Bluff Street and the equestrian project trail are shown in [Figure 3-13, *Conceptual Street Sections*](#).

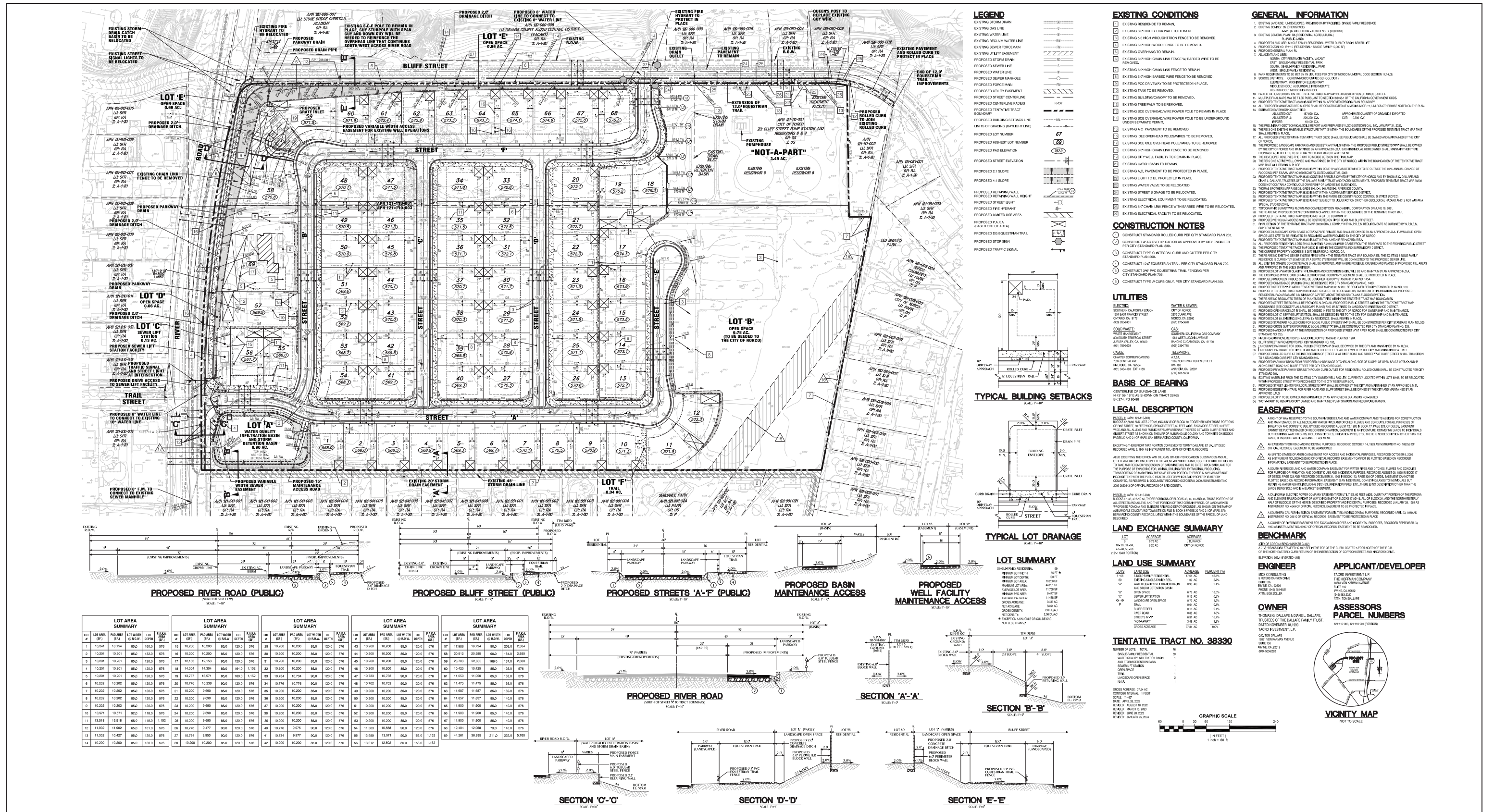
WALL AND FENCE PLAN

A community-wide wall and fence plan has been proposed for the residential community; refer to [Figure 3-14, *Conceptual Wall and Fence Plan*](#). A 42-inch split-rail fence is proposed along the equestrian trails on Bluff Street and River Road and along equestrian trails within the community. Residential lots within the proposed project community would be separated by a 6-foot-tall privacy fencing.

INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Drainage

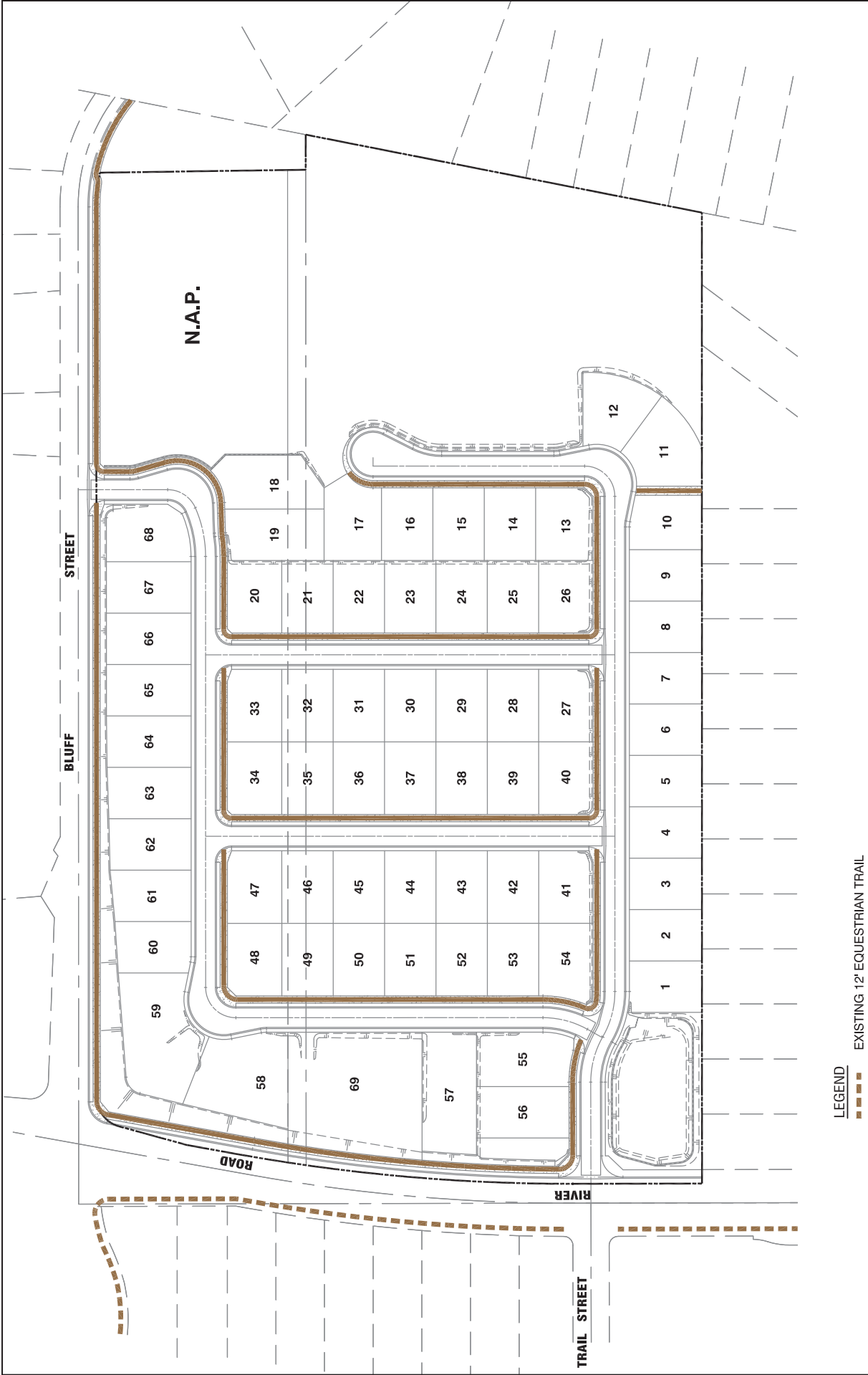
In accordance with the City of Norco Municipal Code, the project would implement a Water Quality Management Plan that would retain and infiltrate the stormwater project runoff. As shown in [Figure 3-15, *Proposed Storm Drain Plan*](#), surface flows would be directed to onsite catch basins that would convey stormwater flows to a 0.90-acre water quality detention basin, which would then discharge into an existing 54-inch storm drain line. The proposed project would be graded to allow the lots to drain to the public street with no cross-lot drainage. The existing storm drain catch basin at the intersection of Bluff Street and River Road would be relocated and replaced as part of the widening of River Road.



LOT AREA SUMMARY					LOT AREA SUMMARY					LOT AREA SUMMARY					LOT AREA SUMMARY					LOT AREA SUMMARY									
LOT #	LOT AREA (SQ FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT WIDTH (FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT #	LOT AREA (SQ FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT WIDTH (FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT #	LOT AREA (SQ FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT WIDTH (FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT #	LOT AREA (SQ FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT WIDTH (FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT #	LOT AREA (SQ FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT WIDTH (FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT #	LOT AREA (SQ FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)	LOT WIDTH (FT)	PFA AREA (SQ FT)
1	10,241	10,154	85.0	100.0	576	15	10,200	9,999	85.0	100.0	576	31	10,200	10,000	85.0	100.0	576	47	10,200	10,000	85.0	100.0	576	63	10,200	10,000	85.0	100.0	576
2	10,201	10,201	85.0	100.0	576	16	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	32	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	48	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	64	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
3	10,201	10,201	85.0	100.0	576	17	12,153	12,153	85.0	100.0	576	33	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	49	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	65	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
4	10,201	10,201	85.0	100.0	576	18	14,304	14,304	85.0	100.0	1,152	34	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	50	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	66	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
5	10,201	10,201	85.0	100.0	576	19	13,797	13,771	85.0	100.0	1,152	35	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	51	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	67	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
6	10,202	10,202	85.0	100.0	576	20	10,776	10,776	85.0	100.0	576	36	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	52	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	68	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
7	10,202	10,202	85.0	100.0	576	21	10,200	9,999	85.0	100.0	576	37	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	53	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	69	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
8	10,202	10,202	85.0	100.0	576	22	10,200	9,999	85.0	100.0	576	38	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	54	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	70	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
9	10,202	10,202	85.0	100.0	576	23	10,200	9,999	85.0	100.0	576	39	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	55	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	71	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
10	10,201	10,201	85.0	100.0	576	24	10,200	9,999	85.0	100.0	576	40	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	56	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	72	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
11	13,518	13,518	85.0	100.0	1,152	25	10,200	9,999	85.0	100.0	576	41	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	57	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	73	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
12	11,902	11,902	85.0	100.0	576	26	10,776	9,977	85.0	100.0	576	42	10,776	9,977	85.0	100.0	576	58	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	74	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
13	11,902	10,427	85.0	100.0	576	27	10,776	9,953	85.0	100.0	576	43	10,776	9,977	85.0	100.0	576	59	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	75	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576
14	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	28	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	44	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	60	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576	76	10,200	10,200	85.0	100.0	576

Source: MDS Consulting; May 29, 2024.

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Source: MDS Consulting, February 19, 2024.



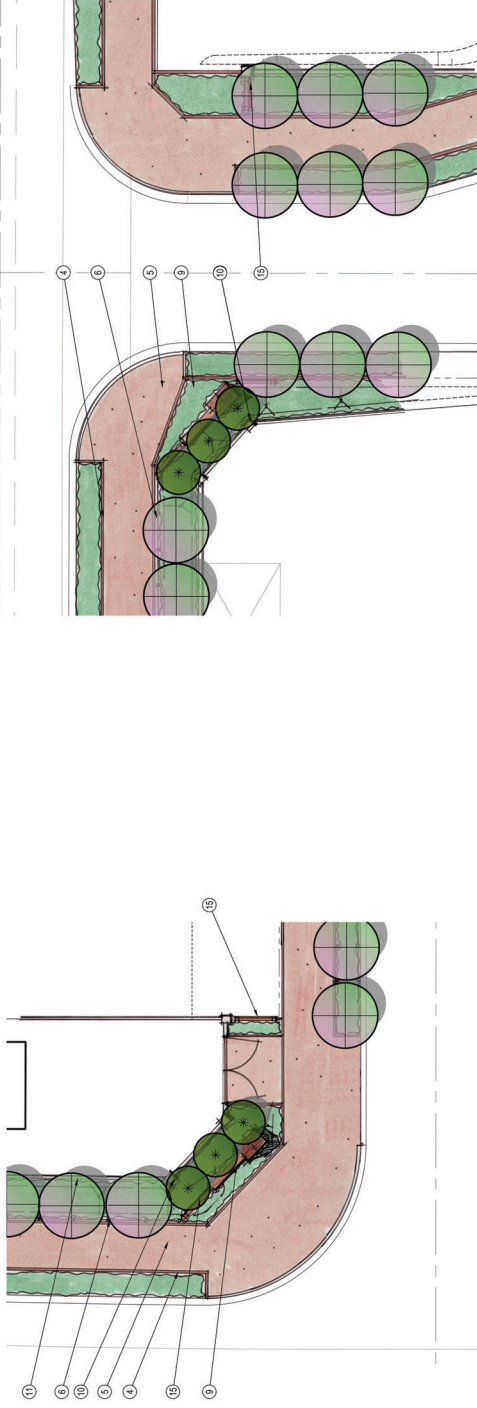
- FEATURE LEGEND:**
- 1 Vegetated Bio-Retention Basin with Underdrains.
 - 2 8" Tall Timber Slab View Fence. See Sheet L-3 For Details.
 - 3 18" Square CMU Precision Block Column Pilaster. See Sheet L-3 For Details.
 - 4 Double Slab Maintenance Vehicular Access Gates. See Sheet L-3 For Details.
 - 5 Project Entry Monument and Signage. See Sheet L-2 for Entrance Plan. Sheet L-3 for Conceptual Elevation.
 - 6 Proposed Sewer Lift Station. Per Civil Engineer's Plans.
 - 7 8" Tall CMU Precision Block Perimeter Wall. See Sheet L-3 For Details.
 - 8 42" Tall 2 Rail Trail Fence. See Sheet L-3 For Details.
 - 9 12" Wide Stabilized Decomposed Granite Trail with Reinforced Edging.
 - 10 Existing Private Residential Building to Remain.
 - 11 Existing City Water Main to Remain.
 - 12 8" Tall Vinyl Slat and Rear Privacy Fencing. See Sheet L-3 For Details.
 - 13 Existing Driveway to Remain.
 - 14 Existing Chainlink Fence to Remain.
 - 15 Driveway Approach. (Shown for Graphic Purposes Only)
 - 16 Existing Block Wall to Remain.
 - 17 Proposed 15' Wide Maintenance Access Road. Per Civil Engineer's Plans.
 - 18 Proposed 2' Drainage Ditch. Per Civil Engineer's Plans.
 - 19 Proposed Pathway Drain. Per Civil Engineer's Plans.
 - 20 Proposed Traffic Signal. Per Civil Engineer's Plans.
 - 21 Existing Light Pole Location.
 - 22 8" Wide Medium Broom Natural Color Concrete Pedestrian Paveo.



- PLANT PALETTE:**
- TREES**
- PRIMARY TREES AND BACKGROUND TREE
 - Pinus edulis
 - Quercus agrifolia
 - Acacia saligna
 - Platanus racemosa
 - MULTI-TRUNK SPECIMEN TREE
 - Alphina Pine
 - Coast Live Oak
 - PARKWAY TREE ALONG RIVER ROAD (To Match Adjacent)
 - Golden Rain Tree
 - PARKWAY TREE ALONG BLUFF STREET
 - California Sycamore
- INTERIOR STREET TREES**
- Magnolia grandiflora 'St. Mary'
 - Rhus typhina
 - Cercis canadensis
 - Prunus ilicifolia
- SMALL FLOWERING UPRIGHT TREE**
- St. Mary Magnolia
 - Albizia saligna
 - Western Redbud
 - Holly Cherry
- SHRUBS AND GROUND COVER**
- Abutilon umbrato 'Compacta'
 - Impatiens capensis
 - Eclipta alba
 - Heteromeles arbutifolia
 - Rhamnus californica
 - Romneya coulteri
 - Abutilon umbrato 'Compacta'
 - Impatiens capensis
 - Eclipta alba
 - Heteromeles arbutifolia
 - Rhamnus californica
 - Romneya coulteri
- BACKGROUND SHRUBS**
- Abutilon umbrato 'Compacta'
 - Impatiens capensis
 - Eclipta alba
 - Heteromeles arbutifolia
 - Rhamnus californica
 - Romneya coulteri
- MIDGROUND SHRUBS**
- Abutilon umbrato 'Compacta'
 - Impatiens capensis
 - Eclipta alba
 - Heteromeles arbutifolia
 - Rhamnus californica
 - Romneya coulteri
- FOREGROUND SHRUBS**
- Abutilon umbrato 'Compacta'
 - Impatiens capensis
 - Eclipta alba
 - Heteromeles arbutifolia
 - Rhamnus californica
 - Romneya coulteri
- GROUND COVER**
- Abutilon umbrato 'Compacta'
 - Impatiens capensis
 - Eclipta alba
 - Heteromeles arbutifolia
 - Rhamnus californica
 - Romneya coulteri
- TYPICAL FRONT YARD TREE (2 Trees Per Lot - See Sheet L-2 for Elongation)**
- California Sycamore

Source: Archterra Design Group; March 2024.





BLUFF STREET ENTRY

FEATURE LEGEND:

- ① 6' Tall Side and Rear Yard Vinyl Fencing, Typical.
- ② 3' Wide Vinyl Side Yard Access Gate.
- ③ 3' Wide Natural Concrete Finish Side Yard Access Path.
- ④ Redwood Edging.
- ⑤ Stabilized Decomposed Granite Multi-Purpose Trail.
- ⑥ 42" Tall 2-Ball Vinyl Trail Fence (4" Min. - 8" Max. From Driveway).
- ⑦ Driveway, Typical.
- ⑧ 3' Wide Natural Concrete Residential Entry Pathway.
- ⑨ Entry Monument and Signage.
- ⑩ Column Planter.
- ⑪ Perimeter Black Wall, See Sheet L-3 for Wall and Fence Plan.
- ⑫ Sewer Lift Station, Per Civil Engineer's Plans.
- ⑬ Tubular Steel Vehicle Maintenance Access Gates.
- ⑭ Recycled Plastic Edging.
- ⑮ Decorative 42" Tall "Theme" Fence.
- ⑯ 6" Tall Tubular Steel Fence.

RIVER ROAD ENTRY

TRAIL FENCE NOTE:
 Install Trail Fence at Back of Trail at Intersections, where fence is within Street Sight Distance

PLANT PALETTE:

TREES

TYPICAL STREET TREE (REFER TO SHEET L-1)

TYPICAL FRONT YARD ACCENT TREE (1.5 Gal.)

- Logestromia indica
- Cercis canadensis 'Forest Parry'

- Crape Myrtle
- Forest Parry Redbud

TYPICAL FRONT YARD EVERGREEN BACKGROUND TREE (2.4')

- Geijera parviflora
- Pinus edulis

- Australian Willow
- Alghon Pine

FLOWERING ACCENT TREE

- Cercis canadensis 'Forest Parry'
- Eastern Redbud

EVERGREEN SCREENING UPRIGHT TREE

- Pinus julifolia
- Pinus contorta
- Holly Cherry
- Canary Island Pine

SHRUBS AND GROUNDCOVER

BACKGROUND

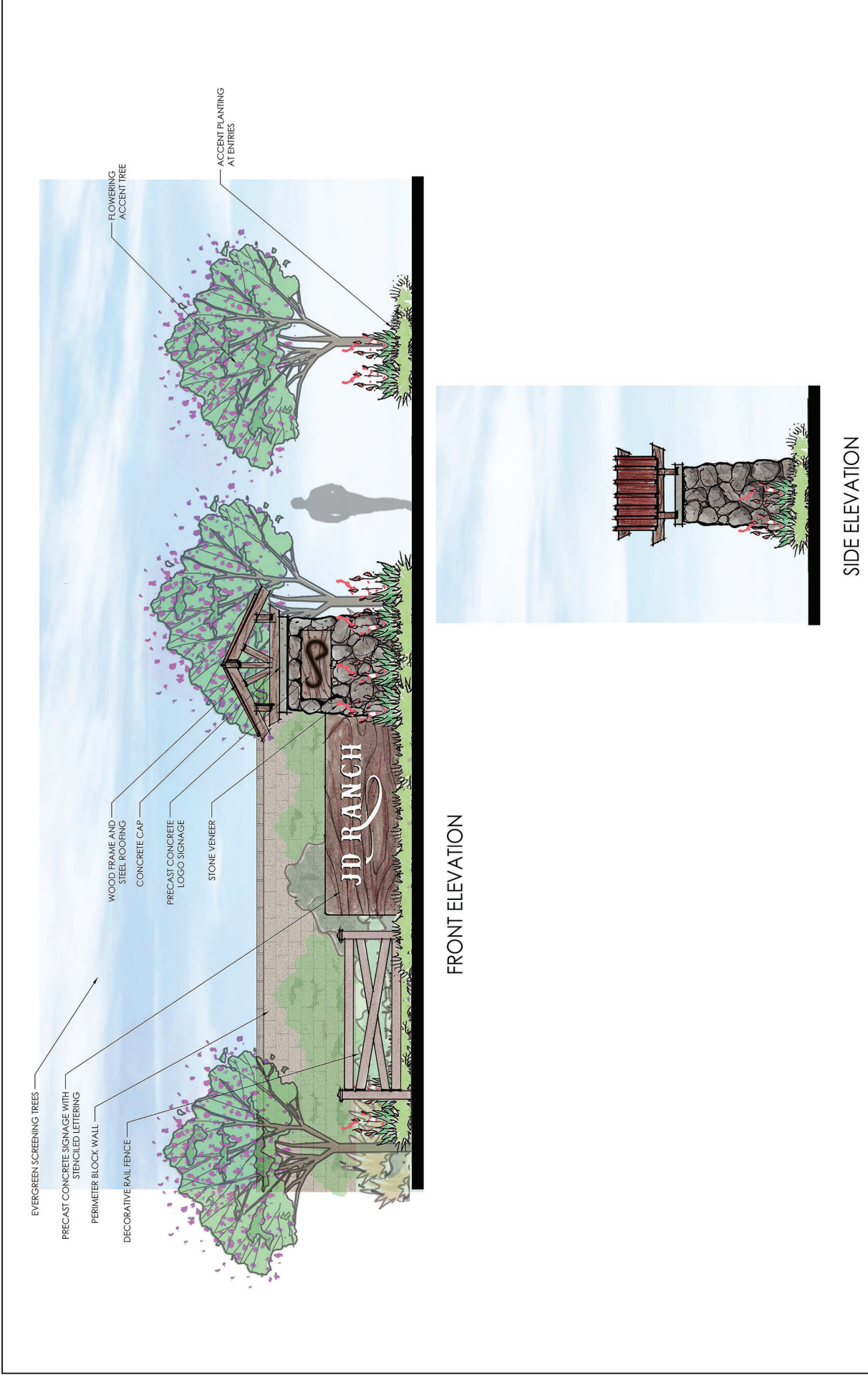
MIDGROUND

FOREGROUND

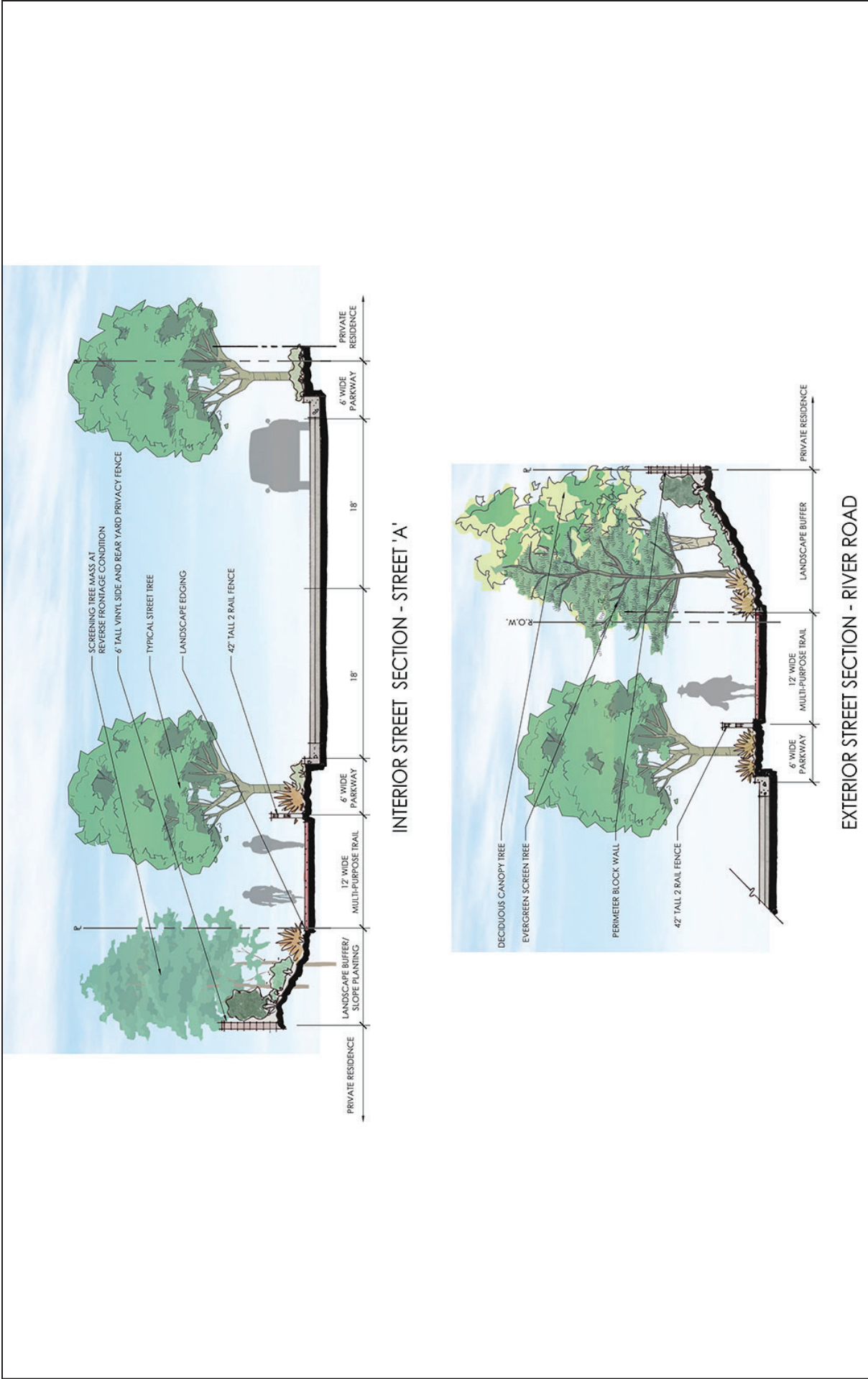
GROUNDCOVER

Source: Architerra Design Group; April 2022.

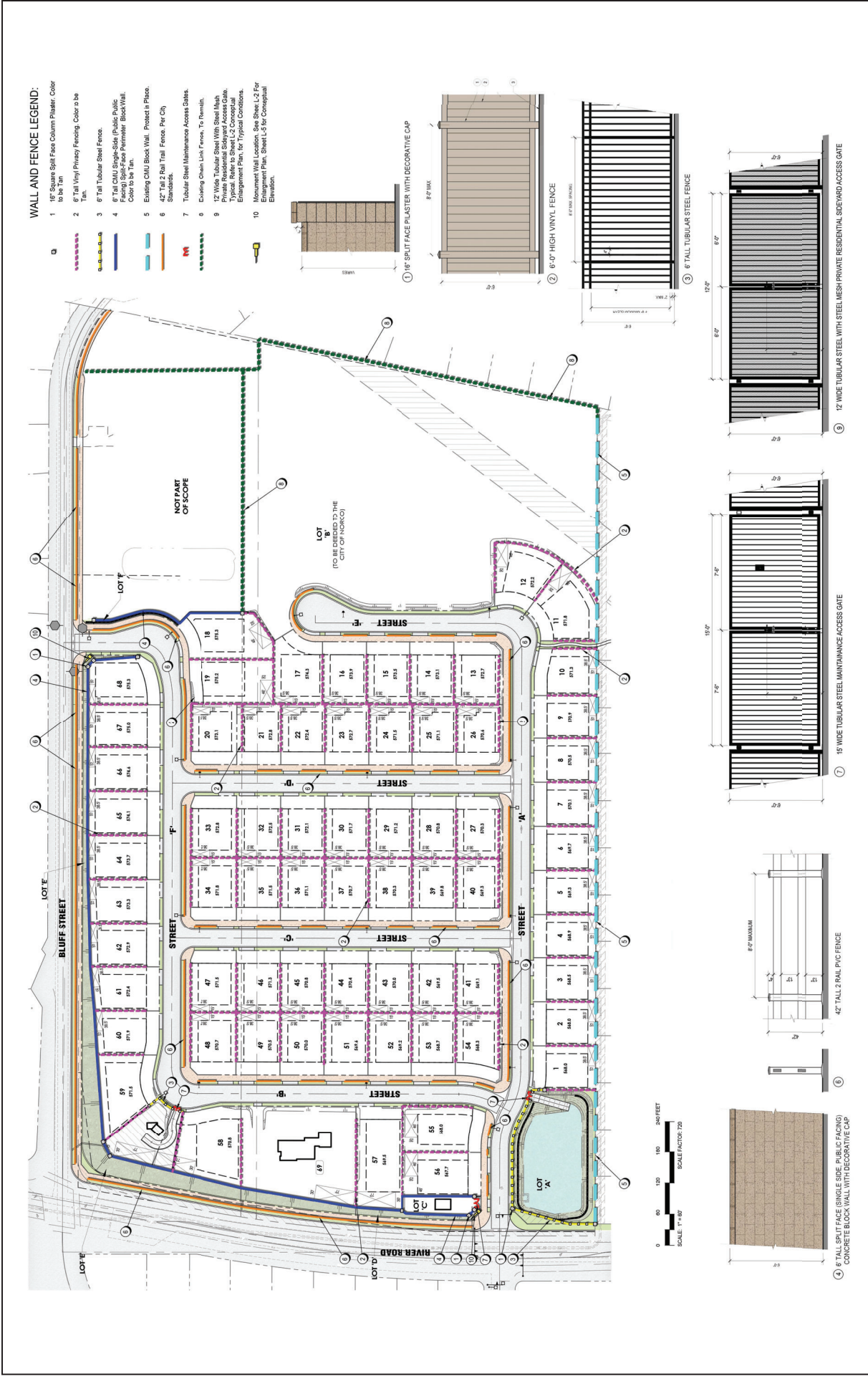




Source: Architerra Design Group; March 14, 2023.

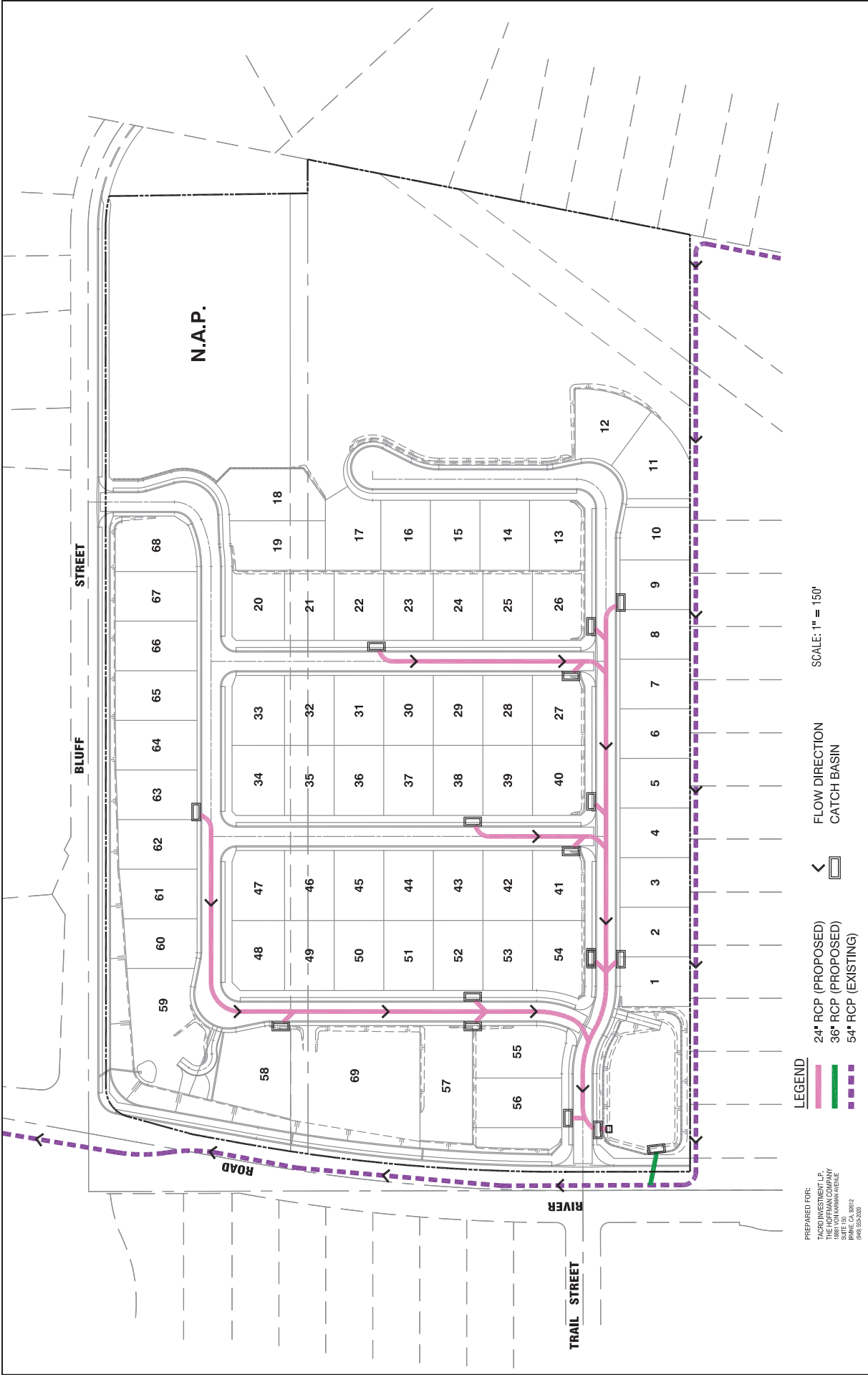


Source: Architerra Design Group; March 13, 2023.



Source: Architerra Design Group; March 2024.

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
Environmental Impact Report
Conceptual Wall and Fence Plan



Source: MDS Consulting, February 19, 2024.



Water Service

Water service for the project would be provided by the City of Norco. The project would construct an 8-inch water-line system that would connect to an existing 8-inch water transmission line along Bluff Street and River Road; refer to [Figure 3-16, Proposed Water Plan](#).

Sewer Service

Sewer service for the project would be provided by the City of Norco. The project proposes to connect an 8-inch sewer force main that would connect to an existing 30-inch sewer main within River Road; refer to [Figure 3-17, Proposed Sewer Plan](#). The force main would be constructed in-lieu of a gravity system, which would reduce the amount of import fill and eliminate the need for perimeter retaining walls along the eastern property line.

Dry Utilities

Dry Utility providers for the project are shown in [Table 3-4, Utility Providers](#).

**Table 3-4
Utility Providers**

Provider	Utility
Electrical Service	Southern California Edison
Gas Service	Southern California Gas Company
Trash Service	Waste Management
Telephone Service	AT&T

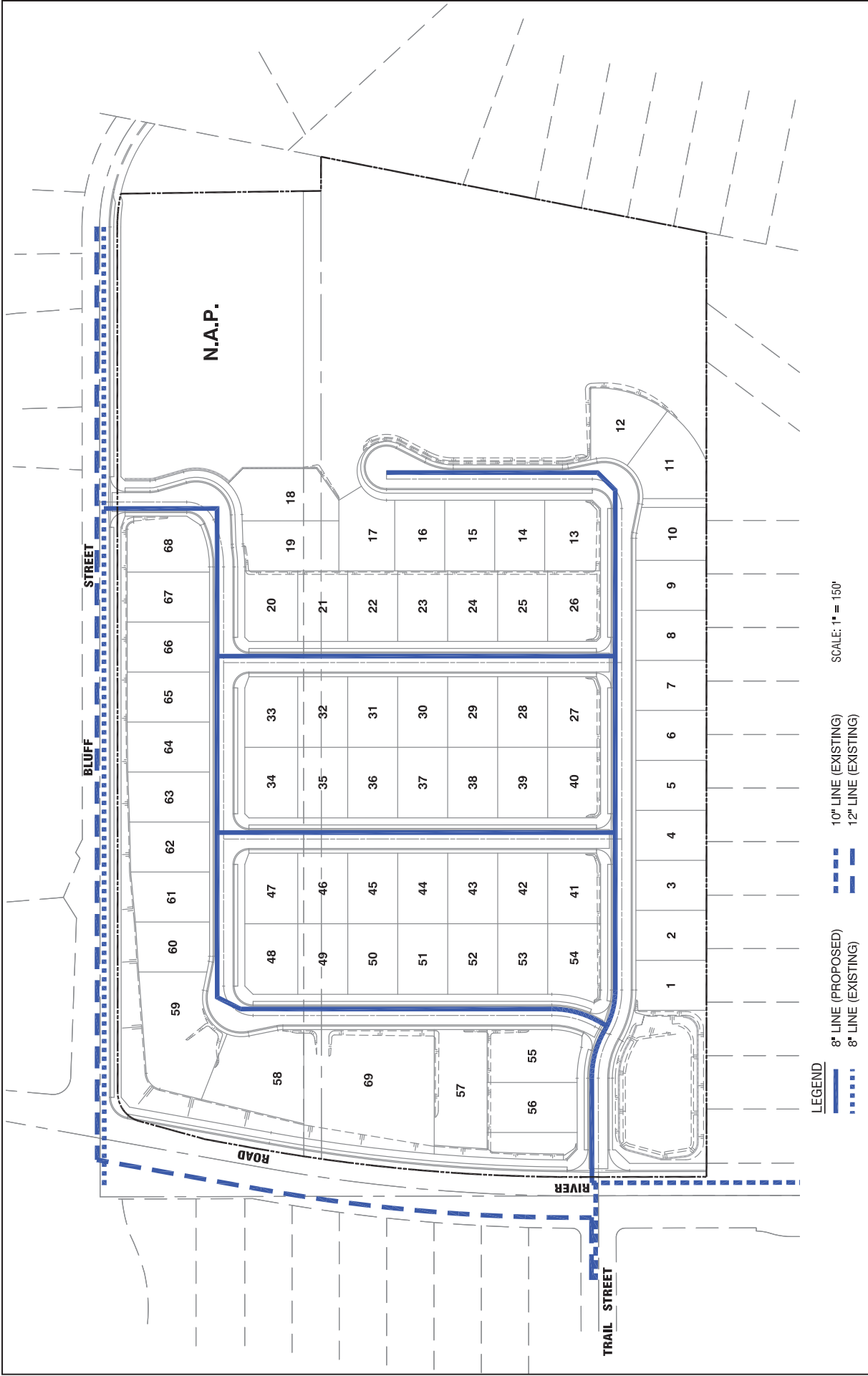
PUBLIC SERVICES

Fire Protection

The City of Norco contracts with the County of Riverside Fire Department for Fire Protection Services. As shown in [Table 3-5, Project Area Fire Stations](#), there are three fire stations in the City of Norco. The nearest fire station would be Station 57 located approximately 0.75 miles from the project site.

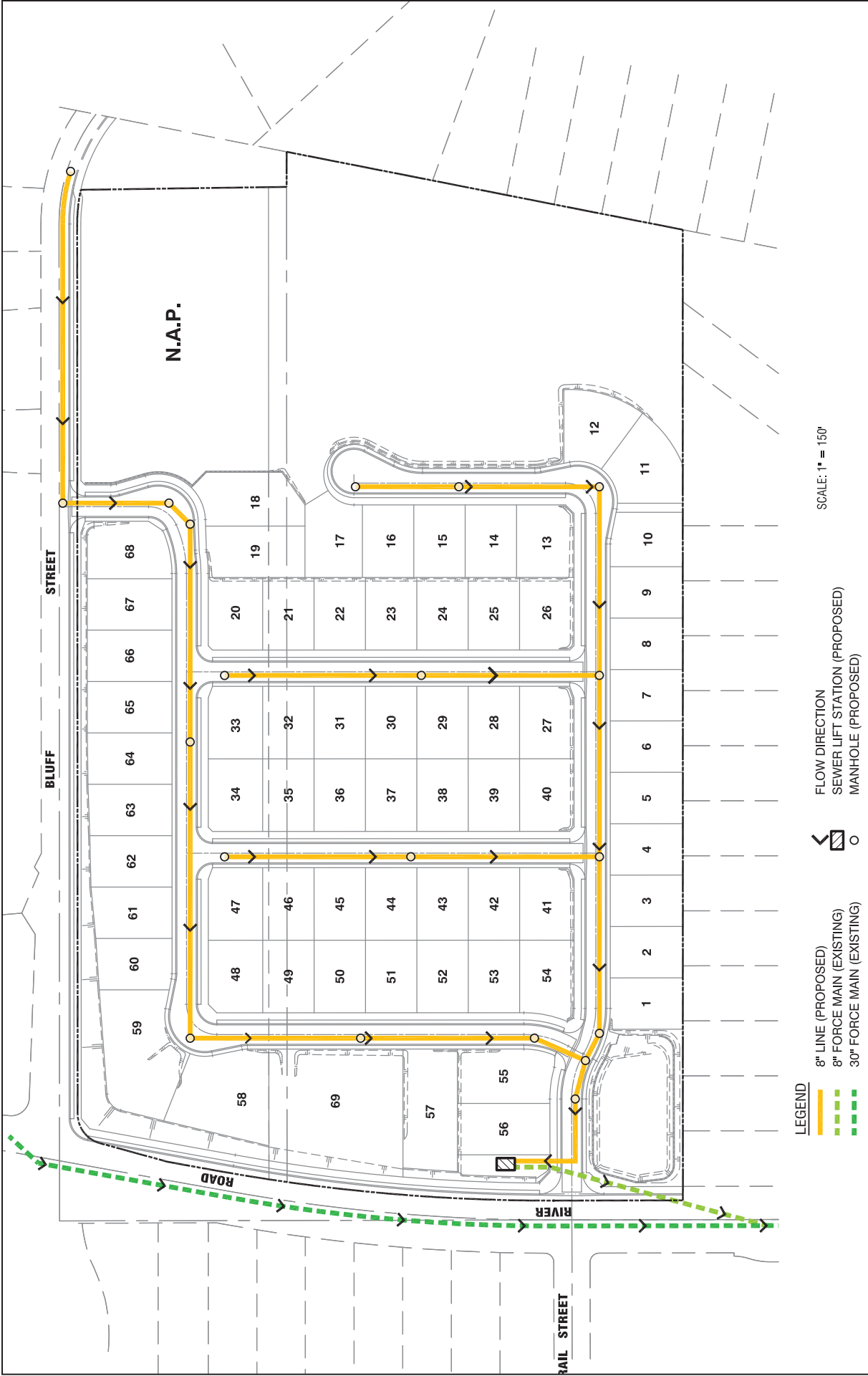
**Table 3-5
Project Area Fire Stations**

Station Number	Address	Distance
Station 14	1511 Hammer Avenue, Norco	1.95 miles
Station 47	3902 Hillside Avenue, Norco	3.13 miles
Station 57	3367 Corydon Avenue, Norco	0.75 miles



Source: MDS Consulting, March 11, 2024.





Source: MDS Consulting, February 19, 2024.

Police Services

The City of Norco contracts with the County of Riverside for Sheriff protection services. The Sheriff’s Department operates from the Norco Substation located at 2870 Clark Avenue, Norco, approximately three miles from the project site. The Sherriff’s Department responds to emergency situations and patrols neighborhoods and commercial areas within the City to promote a safe environment. The staff maintains official criminal records, investigates crime, and, in an emergency, assesses situations and quickly dispatches appropriate emergency responses. The Sheriff’s Department also directs proactive crime prevention programs, including educating the public about personal safety, business and neighborhood watch programs, and residential and business security.

School Services

The project site is served by the Corona-Norco Unified School District (CNUSD), which is the largest school district in Riverside County and the ninth largest school district in California. Based on the Corona-Norco School Finder, the schools assigned to the project site are Highland Elementary School, Norco Intermediate School and Norco High School; refer to [Table 3-6, Project Area School Sites](#).

Table 3-6
Project Area School Sites

School	Address	Distance to School Site	2021/2022 Enrollment	Available Seating Capacity
Elementary Schools				
Highland Elementary	2301 Alhambra Street	1.8 miles	539	675
Middle School				
Norco Intermediate	2711 Temescal Avenue	2.6 miles	720	900
High Schools				
Norco High School	2065 Temescal Avenue	2.4 miles	2,063	2,600
Specialty School				
Victress Bower School	1250 W. Parkridge Avenue	1.2 miles	66	70
Source: Corona-Norco Unified School District, Correspondence with Nicole Lavalley, Facilities Analyst. May 16, 2022.				

Solid Waste Disposal

The City of Norco contracts with Waste Management for solid waste collection and disposal. Waste Management collects both solid and green waste (grass clippings, tree, and shrub clippings), and items for recycling. Waste is taken to one of three regional landfills: Lamb Canyon, Badlands or El Sobrante. Norco residents are responsible for disposing of hazardous household materials. Multiple collection centers are periodically provided throughout the year.

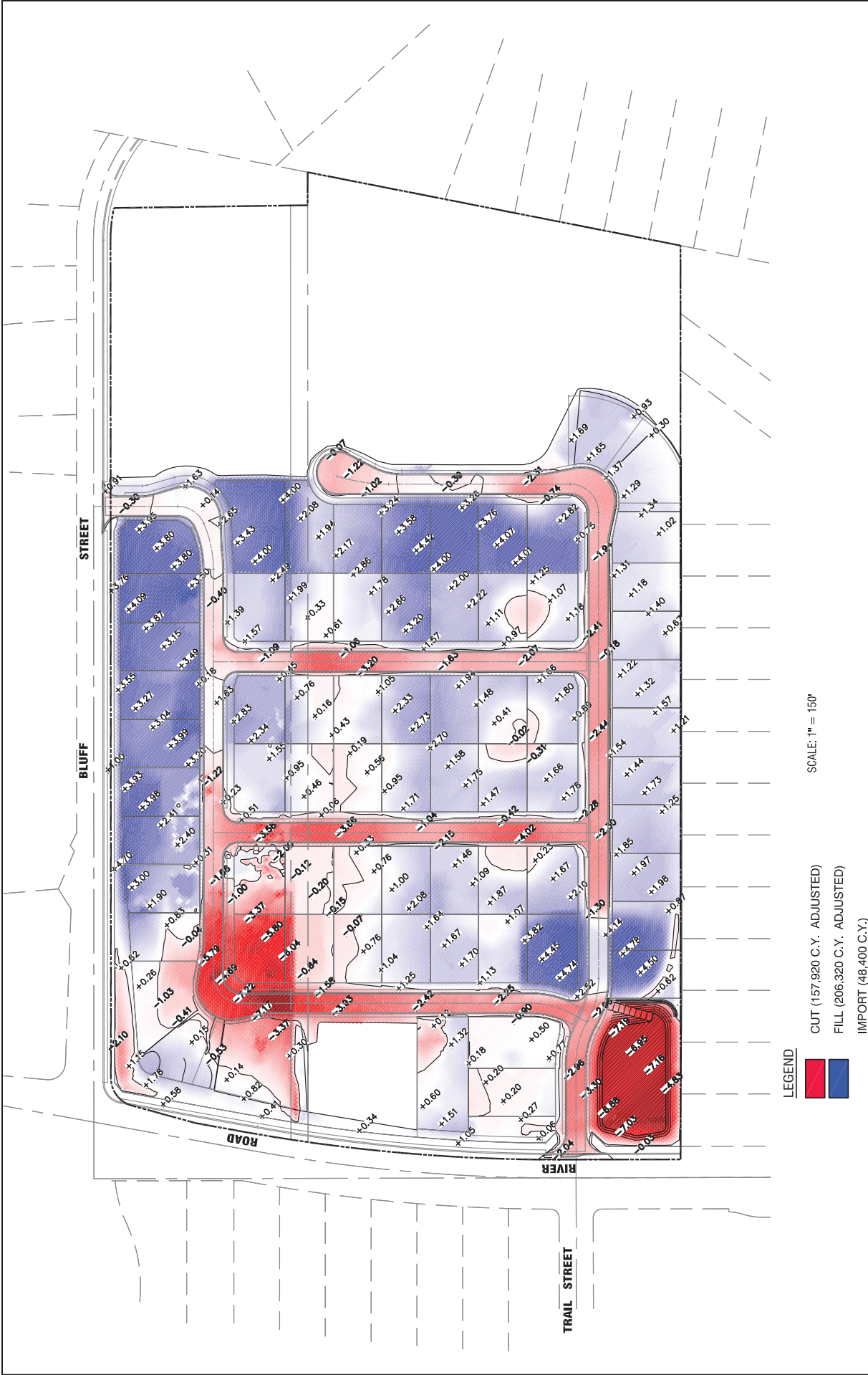
3.6 PROJECT PHASING AND CONSTRUCTION

The sequence of construction phases that would typically occur would be clearing, grading, horizontal building foundation, vertical construction, paving and concrete and landscape installation. As shown in Figure 3-18, *Preliminary Cut/Fill*, the entire project site would be graded except for the existing residence (Lot 69) and Open Space Lot B. The site would be graded in one phase. The project would import approximately 48,400 cubic yards of material and would require 3,457 truck trips. The anticipated mix of construction equipment and duration of construction activities is shown in Table 3-7, *Construction Equipment Noise Emissions and Usage Factors*.

Table 3-7
Construction Equipment Noise Emissions and Usage Factors

Equipment Description	Number of Equipment	Horsepower	Operating Hours Per Day	Total Operational Hours
Demolition				
Concrete/Industrial Saw	1	81	8	180
Excavators	3	158	8	480
Rubber Tired Dozers	2	247	8	240
Trucks Trips (Round Trip)	60			
Site Preparation				
Rubber Tired Dozers	3	247	8	360
Crawler Tractors	4	212	8	540
Truck Trips (Round Trip)	0			
Grading				
Excavator	2	158	8	560
Grader	1	187	8	320
Rubber Tired Dozer	1	247	8	320
Crawler Tractors	2	212	8	480
Truck Trips (Round Trip)	2,700			
Building Construction				
Crane	1	231	7	1,040
Forklift (Gradall)	3	89	8	3120
Generator	1	84	8	1,200
Tractor/Loaders/Backhoe	1	97	7	2,400
Welder	1	46	8	1250
Truck Trips (Round Trip)				
Paving				
Paver	2	130	8	480
Paving Equipment	2	132	8	480
Rollers	2	80	8	480
Truck Trips (Round Trip)				
Architectural Coating				
Air Compressor	1	78	6	240

Source: Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis*; July 5, 2023.



3.7 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Objectives are defined to aid decision-makers in their review of the proposed project and its associated environmental impacts. The project objectives are summarized as follows:

- Create a high-quality, single-family equestrian community with horse and pedestrian trails.
- Include Primary Animal Keeping Areas (PAKA) on each lot to promote the equestrian lifestyle.
- Exchange acreage with the City in order to build critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road.
- Widen River Road to its full width and complete the interchange improvements at River Road and Bluff Street and install landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages.

3.8 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6[a]) state that an EIR must address “a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” The following alternatives have been prepared and would aid decision-makers in their review of the project, and the associated environmental impacts.

- Alternative 1: No Project
- Alternative 2: Existing Zoning with No Land Use Exchange

3.9 REQUIRED PROJECT PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The following are the required project permits and approvals for the project:

- General Plan Amendment
- Zone Change
- Tentative Tract Map
- Grading Permit
- Building Permit
- Landscape Planting Plan Approval
- Plumbing, Electrical, Structure Permits
- Fire Master Plan

Additional discretionary and/or ministerial approvals may be identified by the City as necessary to implement development and construction of the project.

3.10 REFERENCES

California Water Boards, *Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana Basin Plan*. Updated June 2019.

Corona-Norco Unified School District, Correspondence with Nicole Lavalley, Facilities Analyst. May 16, 2022.

City of Norco Municipal Code, Title 18 – Zoning. Updated November 17, 2021.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette. September 28, 2021.

LGC Geotechnical, Inc. (LGS), *Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation for the Proposed Residential Development*. January 21, 2022.

MDS Consulting, *Tentative Tract Map 38330*. May 29, 2024.

Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Residential*. April 4, 2024.

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SECTION 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Section 4.0 analyzes the environmental impacts of the proposed project for each of the environmental issues listed below. The analysis will jointly consider the environmental setting, thresholds of significance, and characteristics of the project. This analysis will determine the level of environmental impact according to the definitions provided below for each threshold of significance. The residual impacts following the implementation of any mitigation measure are also discussed along with any beneficial impacts that may result from project implementation. Environmental issues and their corresponding sections are:

- Aesthetics (4.1)
- Agriculture and Forestry Resource (4.2)
- Air Quality (4.3)
- Biological Resources (4.4)
- Cultural Resources (4.5)
- Energy (4.6)
- Geology and Soils (4.7)
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions (4.8)
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (4.9)
- Hydrology and Water Quality (4.10)
- Land Use and Planning (4.11)
- Mineral Resources (4.12)
- Noise (4.13)
- Population and Housing (4.14)
- Public Services (4.15)
- Recreation (4.16)
- Transportation (4.17)
- Tribal Cultural Resources (4.18)
- Utilities and Service Systems (4.19)
- Wildfire (4.20)

ORGANIZATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

To assist the reader with comparing information between environmental issues, each environmental issue area section is organized under the following major headings:

- Introduction
- Environmental Setting
- Regulatory Setting
- Thresholds of Significance
- Environmental Impact Analysis
- References

LEVEL OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT DETERMINATIONS USED IN EIR

The level of impact is identified for each impact in this Draft EIR. Although the criteria for determining the level of impact significance is different for each environmental issue area, the environmental analysis applies a uniform classification of the impacts based on definitions consistent with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines:

- **No Impact.** The project would not result in any physical changes to the environment.
- **Less Than Significant.** The project would not cause any substantial, adverse change in the environment and impacts are less than significant and do not require mitigation measures.
- **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** The EIR incorporates mitigation measures into the project that lessen or avoid substantial adverse impacts on the environment.
- **Significant and Unavoidable.** The project would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment, and no feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

The State CEQA Guidelines Section 15125 provides the following guidance for establishing the project's environmental baseline against which the project's potential environmental impacts are measured.

- An EIR must include a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis was commenced, from both a local and regional perspective. This environmental setting will normally constitute the baseline physical conditions by which a lead agency determines whether an impact is significant.

The Notice of Preparation for the project was published June 23, 2023. The baseline conditions for the project were the existing conditions on the project site and vicinity at that time. The following describes the existing conditions on the project site and vicinity at the time the Notice of Preparation was published.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Pertinent documents relating to this EIR have been cited in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15150, which encourages incorporation by reference as a means of reducing redundancy and the length of environmental reports. The following documents are hereby incorporated by reference into this EIR. Information contained within these documents has been utilized for different sections of this Draft EIR. These documents are available for review at the City of Norco, Planning Department. The City of Norco Planning Department is located at 2870 Clark Avenue, Norco, California 92860.

- **City of Norco General Plan.** The City of Norco General Plan contains goals, policies, and plans to guide land use and development decisions in the future. The General Plan consists of the following elements: Circulation Element, Conservation Element, Land Use Element, Noise Element, Open Space Element, Safety Element and the 2021-2029 Housing Element.
- **Norco Municipal Code.** The *Norco Municipal Code* (a Codification of the General Ordinances of the City of Norco, California), is current through Ordinance 1076, passed November 17, 2021, and consists of codes and ordinances adopted by the City. These include standards intended to regulate Revenues and Finance, Development Agreements, Business Licenses, Health, Animals, Peace and Safety, Vehicles and traffic, Streets and Sidewalks, Public Utilities, Water and Sewer, Building Construction, Subdivisions, Zoning and Cultural Resources. The City Zoning Code is utilized to implement the General Plan and provide a guide for the growth and development of the within the City.

These documents, incorporated by reference, were utilized throughout this analysis as the fundamental planning documents that may apply to the project site. Background information and policy information from these documents, as well as specific adopted rules and regulations pertaining to the City of Norco contained therein were also relied upon throughout this Draft EIR.

4.1 AESTHETICS

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

This section assesses the potential for aesthetic impacts associated with implementation of the project, including impacts to scenic vistas, changes to visual quality, and identifying the type and degree of change the project would likely have on the character of the landscape. The analysis incorporates information provided in the City of Norco General Plan and Zoning Code.

4.1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project site is situated within an urbanized environment. The western side of the project site contains vacant land and the City of Norco Water Quality Infiltration Basin and Storm Detention Basin (Lot A) and a Sewer Lift Station (Lot D), including several wells and associated piping and utilities. The remainder of the project site contains a former milking barn, a retail outlet, barns/sheds, and dairy-related features. Additionally, there is an existing residence with an attached shed/garage (Lot 69).

The project site is surrounded by vacant land and two above-ground reservoirs to the north (which are owned by the City of Norco and part of the Tentative Tract Map but “Not A Part” of the development of the proposed project), single-family residential land uses to the east, southeast, and north, River Road and single-family land uses to the southwest, and Bluff Street and the Santa Ana River area to the west and northwest.

The project site and surrounding areas are currently developed and have onsite lighting that contributes to nighttime lighting and glare impacts within the project area. The project site is adjacent to River Road and Bluff Street which contribute to both street lighting and traffic lighting in the project area.

The primary visual resource for the project area is the Santa Ana River area, located west of Bluff Street. The river itself has a high flow season in early spring and a low flow season in late fall. In a natural state, the river could at times be dry toward the end of summer during times of drought. The river now has a flow in it year-round from the Western Riverside County Regional Wastewater Authority (WRCRWA), an effluent treatment plant that continuously discharges 14 million gallons of treated water daily into the river channel. Along both banks of the river is dense riparian habitat. As a riparian habitat, the river supports numerous species of plants, animals, fish, and fowl both for habitat and foraging.

The City of Norco General Plan does not designate any scenic resources or scenic vistas on the project site. The City of Norco Trail Master Plan identifies equestrian trails within the vicinity of the project site that provide public views of the Santa Ana River open space area. West of the project site along River Road Bridge, are equestrian trails that provide sweeping views of the Santa Ana River open space area. North of the project site along Bluff Street at south Vine Avenue, is a trailhead that leads into the Santa Ana River open space area, which provides public views of the river environment.

There are two public park sites in the vicinity of the project site: Sundance Park and Ted Brooks Park. The City of Norco General Plan does not identify any scenic resources on the park sites and both park sites do not provide public views of the Santa Ana River or other scenic vistas.

4.1.3 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

State Scenic Highway Program

The State Scenic Highway Program established by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is intended to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to state highways. State highways may be designated as scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

LAND USE ELEMENT

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to provide appropriate land uses for a variety of activities including residential, commercial, public, etc., and to guide the manner in which each land use is developed and used. In so doing, the element intends to create and regulate a compatible and functional interrelationship between the various land uses in the City of Norco. The Land Use Element identifies that the City of Norco promotes a design theme that is characterized as western and/or equestrian in nature. However, some areas in the City of Norco have been developed with more contemporary styles. Neighborhood and area identification play an important role in community identity, and it is not necessary that every neighborhood or area have exactly the same design styles. By establishing areas and neighborhoods as unique entities within the design framework of the community, the City helps establish and maintain the vitality and distinctiveness of a neighborhood.

The following are goals and policies from the Land Use Element that are relevant to the project:

- GOAL 2.4: Community Design. To achieve an overall design statement for the community that establishes it as a visually distinct and unique community.
- Policy 2.4.1: Community Design Policy. Development shall include elements of design that relate a particular project to its immediate neighborhood, district, street corridor, and community.
 - Policy 2.4.1a: New development in the City should incorporate western-themed architectural features and building style, the level of which will be determined based on the location of a building, the type of construction, and the use of a building.
 - Policy 2.4.1b: Freestanding signage shall be kept at a minimum and shall be designed to match building architecture with the incorporation of western design features. Signage that does occur (exclusive of pylon and pole signs) shall be low in profile to preclude unnecessary clutter along the City's visual corridors.

- Policy 2.4.1c: Street and onsite landscaping shall be provided in such a way so as to create pleasing site-related aesthetics, but also to maintain visual corridors and vista points on a neighborhood and community scale as much as possible.
- Policy 2.4.1d: The City shall identify prominent vista points and visual corridors for the purpose of preserving these vital elements of the community's character.
- Policy 2.4.1i: The City shall develop, maintain, and update as needed, architectural guidelines for the different areas of the City based on the overall western theme and taking into consideration surrounding development and land use.
- Policy 2.4.1k: The City shall implement new landscaping requirements increasing where necessary the amount of landscaping required for commercial development, especially for areas with significant public exposure.

City of Norco Zoning Code

The purpose of the Zoning Code is to (1) Preserve and enhance the distinctive rural and equestrian-oriented environment of Norco and the City's potential for equestrian and other outdoor types of recreational activities, (2) Provide the economic and social advantages resulting from an orderly planned use of the City's resources, (3) Conserve and promote the public health, safety and general welfare, (4) Encourage the most appropriate use of land consistent with the General Plan and (5) Provide a basis for planning the provisions of public facilities necessary to fulfill the requirements of existing and future development.

The proposed project requests approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and Tentative Parcel Map (on 34.38 acres), to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City's R-1 Zoning regulations.

City of Norco Municipal Code

SECTION 18.30.48 RESIDENTIAL LIGHTING STANDARDS

Section 18.30.48 limits outdoor light pollution and light trespass onto adjacent properties in order to preserve the nighttime environment for residents, animals and wildlife in rural residential zones. The Section provides regulations, permits required, shielding, height of outdoor lighting, setbacks, nuisances and violations.

SECTION 18.38.20 DESIGN AND IMPROVEMENT OF PARKING AREAS

Section 18.38.20 requires any lighting used to illuminate off-street parking or loading facilities shall be so arranged as to reflect the light away from adjacent streets or properties; and shall be of such intensity and design as approved by the City Engineer. Such lighting shall be maintained in good working condition at all times.

SECTION 18.41 ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Section 18.41 establishes architectural review requirements. The Architectural Review requirements identify that building architecture shall reflect a desired western theme and identity, including rural, informal, traditional, rustic, low profile and equestrian oriented. The following elements shall be considered during the Architectural Review process; building forms and massing, permitted materials, style elements, entries and doors, windows, roofs, parapets and site use and permitted colors. In addition, Section 18.41.11 requires lighting accentuating or intending to accentuate advertising or not shielded and not arranged to reflect away from adjoining properties.

4.1.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **AES-1:** Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- **AES-2:** Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
- **AES-3:** Would the project in non-urbanized areas substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?
- **AES-4:** Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

4.1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT AES-1: Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. A scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides an expansive view of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public and is generally designated by public agencies to provide for their preservation. The City's General Plan states, "Mountains are generally viewed from most points in the City; and for most people this occurs from the car as they travel the City's streets." In addition, the proposed project site does not contain any onsite scenic resources. The project site contains existing water wells, two above ground water storage reservoirs, a ranch house, a former milking barn, retail outlet, and barns/sheds. While development would occur on the site (and change conditions from mostly undeveloped to developed), views of scenic resources, such as the Santa Ana River and mountain ranges would still be visible from the public right-of-way. As a result, the project would not obstruct or modify any existing public views and no adverse scenic vistas would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

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

The project would not substantially damage scenic resources including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. The State Scenic Highway Program established by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is intended to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to state highways. State highways may be designated as scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view. According to Caltrans, the closest eligible state scenic highway would be State Route 91, located approximately 2.5 miles south from the project site. From this segment of State Route 91, the proposed project would not be within the viewshed of motorists and no impact to scenic resources along a state scenic highway would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT AES-3: 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?

The project site is situated within an urbanized setting. The relevant City of Norco regulations governing the scenic quality of the proposed project would be the City of Norco General Plan Community Design Policies and City of Norco Zoning Code.

The proposed project would be subject to the City's design review through the City of Norco Site Plan Review and Architectural Review process. The project must be consistent with the following relevant goals and policies from the Land Use Element pertaining to aesthetic conditions of the project:

- Policy 2.4.1: Community Design Policy. Development shall include elements of design that relate a particular project to its immediate neighborhood, district, street corridor, and community.
 - Policy 2.4.1a: New development in the City should incorporate western-themed architectural features and building style, the level of which will be determined based on the location of a building, the type of construction, and the use of a building.
 - Policy 2.4.1c: Street and onsite landscaping shall be provided in such a way so as to create pleasing site-related aesthetics, but also to maintain visual corridors and vista points on a neighborhood and community scale as much as possible.

Additionally, the City's design review process would ensure compliance with these policies and confirm that the project complies with applicable requirements of the Zoning Code and that the overall design and architectural quality of the project is compatible with the general aesthetic nature

of the project area and that the design of the project is in conformity and harmony of external design, colors, materials, and architectural features with neighboring structures. As part of the design review, the following elements would be considered, building forms and massing, permitted materials, permitted colors, style elements, façade detailing, entries and doors, windows, roofs, parapets, and site use. The City’s design review would ensure that the proposed project has been designed to meet the City’s design vision and aesthetic standards for R-1 Zoning (Municipal Code Section 18.15.06 Permitted Uses).

Therefore, the project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality and potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

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

The project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. This analysis addresses potential light and glare impacts that could result from the operation and construction of the proposed project.

LIGHTING IMPACTS

The analysis of light impacts assesses the effects of the project’s nighttime light from both point sources (i.e., illuminated signage, streetlight poles, vehicle headlights) and indirect sources (i.e., reflected light) on light-sensitive land uses, such as residences. These land uses are recognized as light sensitive because they are typically occupied by persons who have expectations for privacy during evening hours and who are subject to disturbance by bright light sources.

The project site is currently developed with onsite lighting from the existing residential home which is typical residential lighting uses. The area surrounding the project site is also developed with residential land uses, nearby commercial land uses and roadways that provide various levels of nighttime light; such as vehicle lights, streetlights, and exterior building lights. The operation of the proposed project would increase the amount of onsite lighting on the project site. The onsite project lighting would be directed to the project site and would not spill onto adjacent properties and exterior lighting would be designed for low contrast glare. Potential lighting from the project would not substantially increase nighttime ambient lighting levels as the project area is already characterized by existing ambient nighttime lighting from the surrounding land uses and roadways and parking areas. Additionally, the City’s Municipal Code Sections 18.38.20 and 18.30.48 provides residential lighting standards, and Municipal Code Section 18.41.11 requires exterior lights be shielded and arranged to reflect away from adjoining properties. Thus, new lighting would be required to be shielded, diffused, or indirect to avoid glare to both on and offsite residents, pedestrians, and motorists. With compliance with the Municipal Code Sections 18.38.20, 18.30.48 and 18.41.11, potential lighting impacts would be less than significant. Overall, the proposed project’s lighting sources would not significantly increase nighttime lighting levels in the area. The increase in ambient light would not substantially alter the character of the area and would not interfere with nearby sensitive uses. Additionally, the construction activities for the project would occur during the day. Therefore, there would be no construction-related

nighttime lighting impacts. Potential long-term operation lighting impacts would be less than significant.

GLARE IMPACTS

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light from highly polished surfaces, such as window glass or reflective materials, and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with mid- to high-rise buildings with exterior façades largely or entirely comprised of highly reflective glass or mirror-like materials from which the sun can reflect, particularly following sunrise and prior to sunset. Glare generation is typically related to sun angles, although glare resulting from reflected sunlight can occur regularly at certain times of the year. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by artificial light directed toward a light sensitive land use. The analysis of glare assesses potential impacts on glare-sensitive uses, such as residences.

Daytime glare is generally associated with reflected sunlight from buildings with highly reflective surfaces. The proposed project would integrate a mix of high-quality and durable building materials and the use of highly reflective materials would be prohibited. The proposed residential units would not generate substantial daytime glare since these structures do not feature reflective glass, shiny surfaces, or metal or other reflective materials in the building façades. Some daytime glare emanates from sunlight reflecting off vehicles parked in surface parking areas. These glare sources would not be considered a substantial contribution to glare impacts in the project area. Daytime glare could potentially occur during construction activities if reflective construction materials or construction were positioned in highly visible locations where the reflection of sunlight could occur. However, any glare would be highly transitory and short-term as construction equipment and materials on the site move to various locations on the project site and would not be considered a substantial contribution to glare impacts within the project area. Therefore, potential temporary construction related glare impacts would be less than significant. The project would not create a new source of substantial glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Potential long-term operation impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.1.6 REFERENCES

California Department of Transportation, California State Scenic Highways [https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca]. Accessed March 2022.

City of Norco General Plan, *Land Use Element*. Update Adoption Date: October 7, 2009.

City of Norco Municipal Code, Title 18 – Zoning. Updated November 17, 2021.

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4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential impacts to agriculture and forestry resources and analyzes the potential impacts associated with the development of the project which proposes to remove the existing dairy facilities to allow for the development of 68 single-family residential homes. The analysis is based, in part, on the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program and the City of Norco General Plan.

4.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Riverside County was once a rural county that was supported primarily by an agricultural economy. The County's agricultural communities have experienced tremendous decline over the years. These communities continue experiencing rapid suburbanization, further reducing the County's agricultural land. Urban areas are encroaching on agricultural lands throughout the County, creating pressure to convert farmland to urban uses. The rising costs of irrigation water, agricultural land tax rates, labor costs, and damage from vandalism have increased production costs making it more difficult to have a successful agricultural operation.

According to the 2020 Riverside County Agricultural Production Report, the total gross value of agricultural crops and commodities produces was \$1,418,220,000. Vegetable production continues to be the leading commodity at \$334,440,000. There was a 5.6 percent production value drop compared to 2019. As development continues to spread throughout the County, land for growing agricultural commodities is lost. Presently, there are no existing agriculture resources on the project site, or within the surrounding area.

According to the California Department of Conservation (CDC), Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the project site is entirely characterized as Urban and Built-Up Land. Additionally, the property is not under a Williamson Act contract. The project site is not designated as forest land or timberland according to Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 12220(g) or 4526, or Government Code Section 51104(g).

4.2.3 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Department of Conservation (CDC) established the Farming Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) in 1982. The FMMP is a non-regulatory program that provides a consistent and impartial analysis of agricultural land use and land use changes throughout California. The FMMP produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. The maps are updated every two years with the use of aerial photographs, a computer mapping system, public review, and field reconnaissance. The program rates agricultural lands according to physical characteristics and other factors such as irrigation status. The best quality land is classified as Prime Farmland. Additional classifications include Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance. The FMMP also inventories and maps a variety of other land use categories. For purposes of determining a project's significance under CEQA, only Prime

Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance are used to determine impacts. Conversion to non-agricultural uses of lands falling under any of these classifications is considered a significant impact under CEQA.

California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

The Williamson Act was enacted in 1965 with the principal purpose of preserving agricultural and open space lands by discouraging “premature and unnecessary” conversion to urban uses. The principal component of the Williamson Act is a process that allows private landowners to voluntarily contract with cities and counties to restrict land to agricultural and open space uses. Landowners entering into such an arrangement agree to a 10-year contract that is automatically renewed unless either the contracting jurisdiction or the landowner chooses to opt out at the end of the term. In return for restricting uses on their property, landowners are assessed at a significantly lower property tax rate than might be the case if their property were assessed at potential market value. In these cases, properties under a Williamson Act contract can be taxed at rates ranging from 20 to 75 percent below potential market value assessments. Contracting jurisdictions receive partial reimbursement for reduced property tax revenue from the State via the Open Space Subvention Act program, which is financed from California’s General Fund. A Williamson Act contract on a property obligates the property owner to a variety of restrictions. The minimum contract is 10 years and remains enforceable even if the property changes ownership.

Landowners may opt out of their contract without penalty only at the end of the term. If the contract is not renewed at the end of the term, the property’s assessment value reverts to its potential market value. Should the landowner desire to cancel the contract prior to the end of the term, the contracting jurisdiction must make specific findings that are supported by substantial evidence. The opportunity to alter the use of the subject property is not adequate evidence to support cancellation, nor are assertions of unsatisfactory economic return should the property retain its agricultural designation. Should the cancellation be approved, the landowner must pay a cancellation fee.

4.2.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **AG-1:** Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- **AG-2:** Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?
- **AG-3:** Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?
- **AG-4:** Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- **AG-5:** Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

4.2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT AG-1: Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

The proposed project would not 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. The California Department of Conservation (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Important Farmland Finder identifies the project site as Urban and Built-Up Land with no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance on the project site. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT AG-2: Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

The City's General Plan land use designation for the project site is Residential Agricultural and with the General Plan Amendment, the designation would be Residential Low. The Zoning for the project is Agriculture Low Density (A-1-10) and with the Zone Change, it would be Residential Single-Family (R-1-10). The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. According to the property title, the project is not under a Williamson Act contract. No portion of the project site is used for agricultural production, implementation of the proposed project would have no impact regarding potential conflicts with existing agriculture zoning or Williamson Act contracts.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT AG-3: Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?

The City's General Plan land use designation for the project site is Residential Agricultural and with the General Plan Amendment, the designation would be Residential Low. The Zoning for the project is Agriculture Low Density (A-1-10) and with the Zone Change, it would be Residential Single-Family (R-1-10). The proposed project would not 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)). The project site is not zoned for forest lands or timber lands. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not conflict or cause an existing land zoned for forest land to be rezoned for other land uses. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT AG-4: Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. There are no existing forest lands or timberland resources on the property and the project site is not zoned for timberland production. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT AG-5: Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The proposed project would not involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. The project site does not contain farmland or timberland resources. Long-term operation of the proposed project would be confined to the project site and would not cause any onsite conversion of farmland or forest land to non-agriculture uses or non-forest uses. The project site and surrounding properties do not contain farmland or timberland resources. The proposed project would be confined to the project site and would not cause any onsite conversion of farmland or forest land to non-agriculture uses or non-forest uses. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No impact.

4.2.6 REFERENCES

California Department of Conservation. California Important Farmland Finder web application [<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>]. Accessed on January 15, 2024.

California Department of Conservation, *Williamson Act Program* [<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa>]. Accessed on January 15, 2024.

City of Norco General Plan, *Land Use Element*. Update Adoption Date: October 7, 2009.

County of Riverside, *Riverside County Annual Crop Report, 2022*.

State of California, *Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2023*.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential for the proposed project to impact air quality in a local and regional context. This evaluation is based on the methodology recommended by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The analysis focuses on air pollution from regional emissions and localized pollutant concentrations. Criteria air pollutant emissions modeling outputs for the proposed project is included in [Appendix B](#). Analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical report:

- *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis*, Vista Environmental, April 4, 2024 ([Appendix B](#)).

4.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project site is located within Riverside County, which is part of the South Coast Air Basin (Air Basin) that includes the non-desert portions of Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles Counties and all of Orange County. The Air Basin is located on a coastal plain connecting broad valleys and low hills to the east. Regionally, the Air Basin is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the southwest and high mountains to the east forming the inland perimeter.

LOCAL CLIMATE

The climate of western Riverside County, technically called an interior valley sub climate of the Southern California's Mediterranean-type climate, is characterized by hot dry summers, mild moist winters with infrequent rainfall, moderate afternoon breezes, and generally fair weather. Occasional periods of strong Santa Ana winds and winter storms interrupt the otherwise mild weather pattern. The clouds and fog that form along the area's coastline rarely extend as far inland as western Riverside County. When morning clouds and fog form, they typically burn off quickly after sunrise. The most important weather pattern from an air quality perspective is associated with the warm season airflow across the densely populated areas located west of the project site. This airflow brings polluted air into western Riverside County late in the afternoon. This transport pattern creates unhealthy air quality that may extend to the project site particularly during the summer months.

Winds are an important parameter in characterizing the air quality environment of a project site because winds determine the regional pattern of air pollution transport as well as control the rate of dispersion near a source. Daytime winds in western Riverside County are usually light breezes from off the coast as air moves regionally onshore from the cool Pacific Ocean to the warm Mojave Desert interior of southern California. These winds allow for good local mixing, but as discussed above, these coastal winds carry significant amounts of industrial and automobile air pollutants from the densely urbanized western portion of the Air Basin into the interior valleys which become trapped by the mountains that border the eastern and northern edges of the Air Basin.

In the summer, strong temperature inversions may occur that limit the vertical depth through which air pollution can be dispersed. Air pollutants concentrate because they cannot rise through the inversion layer and disperse. These inversions are more common and persistent during the summer months. Over time, sunlight produces photochemical reactions within this inversion layer that creates ozone, a particularly harmful air pollutant. Occasionally, strong thermal convections occur which

allows the air pollutants to rise high enough to pass over the mountains and ultimately dilute the smog cloud.

In the winter, light nocturnal winds result mainly from the drainage of cool air off the mountains toward the valley floor while the air aloft over the valley remains warm. This forms a type of inversion known as a radiation inversion. Such winds are characterized by stagnation and poor local mixing and trap pollutants such as automobile exhaust near their source. While these inversions may lead to air pollution “hot spots” in heavily developed coastal areas of the Air Basin, there is not enough traffic in inland valleys to cause any winter air pollution problems. Despite light wind conditions, especially at night and in the early morning, winter is generally a period of good air quality in the project vicinity.

The temperature and precipitation levels for the Corona Cooperative Observer Program (COOP) Monitoring Station, which is the nearest weather station to the project site with historical data are shown below in Table 4.3-1, Monthly Climate Data. Table 4.3-1 shows that July is typically the warmest month and January is typically the coolest month. Rainfall in the project area varies considerably in both time and space. Almost all the annual rainfall comes from the fringes of mid-latitude storms from late November to early April, with summers being almost completely dry.

Table 4.3-1
Monthly Climate Data

Month	Average Maximum Temperature (°F)	Average Minimum Temperature (°F)	Average Total Precipitation (inches)
January	65.3	39.7	2.61
February	67.7	41.2	2.62
March	70.5	42.8	2.00
April	74.9	45.7	0.98
May	79.3	49.9	0.26
June	85.5	53.7	0.04
July	92.3	57.7	0.02
August	92.2	58.3	0.09
September	89.1	55.6	0.25
October	81.6	50.2	0.55
November	73.5	44.3	1.14
December	66.8	30.4	2.15
Annual	78.2	48.3	12.71
Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Residential Project Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.			

MONITORED LOCAL AIR QUALITY

The air quality at any site is dependent on the regional air quality and local pollutant sources. Regional air quality is determined by the release of pollutants throughout the Air Basin. Estimates of the existing emissions in the Air Basin provided in the 2012 AQMP, indicate that collectively, mobile sources account for 59 percent of the volatile organic compounds (VOC), 88 percent of the nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions and 40 percent of directly emitted particulate matter (PM)_{2.5} (particles less than 2.5 micrometers), with another 10 percent of PM_{2.5} from road dust. The 2016 AQMP found that since 2012

AQMP projections were made stationary source VOC emissions have decreased by approximately 12 percent, but mobile VOC emissions have increased by 5 percent. The percentage of NO_x emissions remains unchanged between the 2012 and 2016 projections.

SCAQMD has divided the Air Basin into 38 air-monitoring areas. The project site is in Air Monitoring Area 22, which is in the northwestern portion of Riverside County and covers the Norco and Corona areas to the San Bernardino County and Orange County Lines. The nearest air monitoring station to the project site is the Mira Loma Van Buren Monitoring Station (Mira Loma Station), which is located approximately 7.5 miles northeast of the project site at 5130 Poinsettia Place, Jurupa Valley. However, it should be noted that due to the air monitoring station’s distance from the project site, recorded air pollution levels at the Mira Loma Van Buren Station reflect, with varying degrees of accuracy, local air quality conditions at the project site. Table 4.3-2, Local Area Air Quality Monitoring Summary, shows that ozone and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) are the air pollutants of primary concern in the project area, which are detailed below.

**Table 4.3-2
Local Area Air Quality Monitoring Summary**

Pollutant (Standard)	Year ¹		
	2020	2021	2022
Ozone:			
Maximum 1-Hour Concentration (ppm)	0.140	0.116	0.120
Days > CAAQS (0.09 ppm)	51	20	19
Maximum 8-Hour Concentration (ppm)	0.117	0.094	0.094
Days > NAAQS (0.070 ppm)	89	53	57
Days > CAAQs (0.070 ppm)	96	59	58
Nitrogen Dioxide:			
Maximum 1-Hour Concentration (ppb)	58.1	53.3	47.4
Days > NAAQS (100 ppb)	0	0	0
Days > CAAQS (180 ppb)	0	0	0
Inhalable Particulates (PM₁₀):			
Maximum 24-Hour National Measurement (µg/m ³)	162.5	98.7	81.6
Days > NAAQS (150 µg/m ³)	1	0	0
Days > CAAQS (50 µg/m ³)	16	15	11
Annual Arithmetic Mean (AAM) (µg/m ³)	52.2	40.8	37.3
Annual > NAAQS (50 µg/m ³)	Yes	No	No
Annual > CAAQS (20 µg/m ³)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ultra-Fine Particulates (PM_{2.5}):			
Maximum 24-Hour National Measurement (µg/m ³)	60.9	85.1	32.1
Days > NAAQS (35 µg/m ³)	13	14	0
Annual Arithmetic Mean (AAM) (µg/m ³)	15.7	15.8	12.4
Annual > NAAQS and CAAQS (12 µg/m ³)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Exceedances are listed in bold .			
Abbreviations: CAAQS = California Ambient Air Quality Standard; NAAQS = National Ambient Air Quality Standard; ppm = parts per million; ppb = parts per billion; ND = no data available.			
Notes:			
¹ Data obtained from the Mira Loma Station.			
Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Residential Project Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.			

AIR POLLUTANTS

Air pollutants are generally classified as either criteria pollutants or non-criteria pollutants. Federal ambient air quality standards have been established for criteria pollutants, whereas no ambient standards have been established for non-criteria pollutants. For some criteria pollutants, separate standards have been set for different periods. Most standards have been set to protect public health. For some pollutants, standards have been based on other values (such as protection of crops, protection of materials, or avoidance of nuisance conditions).

Ozone

The State 1-hour concentration standard for ozone has been exceeded between 19 and 51 days each year over the past three years at the Mira Loma Station. The State 8-hour ozone standard has been exceeded between 58 and 96 days each year over the past three years at the Mira Loma Station. The Federal 8-hour ozone standard has been exceeded between 53 and 89 days each year over the past three years at the Mira Loma Station. Ozone is a secondary pollutant as it is not directly emitted. Ozone is the result of chemical reactions between other pollutants, most importantly hydrocarbons and NO₂, which occur only in the presence of bright sunlight. Pollutants emitted from upwind cities react during transport downwind to produce the oxidant concentrations experienced in the area. Many areas of southern California contribute to the ozone levels experienced at this monitoring station, with the more significant areas being those directly upwind.

Nitrogen Dioxide

The Mira Loma Station did not record an exceedance of either the Federal or State 1-hour NO₂ standards for the last three years.

Particulate Matter

The State 24-hour concentration standard for PM₁₀ has been exceeded between 14 and 16 days each year over the past three years at the Mira Loma Station. Over the past three years, the Federal 24-hour standard for PM₁₀ has only been exceeded one day in 2020 at the Mira Loma Station. The annual PM₁₀ concentration at the Mira Loma Station has exceeded the State standard for the past three years and has exceeded the Federal standard for one of the past three years.

Over the past three years, the Federal 24-hour concentration standard for PM_{2.5} has been exceeded between 10 and 13 days each year over the past three years at the Mira Loma Station. The annual PM_{2.5} concentrations concentration exceeded both the State and Federal standard for two of the past three years at the Mora Loma Station. Particulate levels in the area are due to natural sources, grading operations, and motor vehicles.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), some people are much more sensitive than others to breathing fine particles (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). People with influenza, chronic respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and the elderly may suffer worsening illness and premature death due to breathing these fine particles. People with bronchitis can expect aggravated symptoms from breathing in fine particles. Children may experience a decline in lung function due to breathing in PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Other groups considered sensitive are smokers and people who cannot breathe well through their noses. Exercising athletes are also considered sensitive because many breathe through their mouths during exercise.

Toxic Air Contaminant Levels in the Air Basin

In order to determine the Air Basin-wide risks associated with major airborne carcinogens, the SCAQMD conducted the Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study (MATES). According to the MATES V study (SCAQMD, 2021), the project site has an estimated cancer risk of 381 per million persons chance of cancer in the vicinity of the project site. In comparison, the average cancer risk for the Air Basin is 455 per million persons. The MATES V study that monitored air toxins between May 1, 2018, to April 30, 2019, found that cancer risk from air toxins has declined significantly in the Air Basin with a 40 percent decrease in cancer risk since the monitoring for the MATES IV study that occurred between July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013 and an 84 percent decrease in cancer risk since the monitoring for the MATES II study that occurred between April 1, 1998 and March 31, 1999.

In order to provide a perspective of risk, it is often estimated that the incidence in cancer over a lifetime for the U.S. population ranges around 1 in 3, or a risk of about 300,000 per million persons. The MATES III study referenced a Harvard Report on Cancer Prevention, which estimated that of cancers associated with known risk factors, about 30 percent were related to tobacco, about 30 percent were related to diet and obesity, and about 2 percent were associated with environmental pollution related exposures that includes hazardous air pollutants.

4.2.3 REGULATORY SETTING

The project area is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB). The SoCAB includes Riverside County in its entirety and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles and San Bernardino. Air pollutants are regulated at the National, State and air basin level. Each agency has a different level of regulatory responsibility. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates at the National level. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulates at the State level and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) regulates at the air basin level.

FEDERAL

The EPA handles global, international, National and interstate air pollution issues and policies. The EPA sets national vehicle and stationary source emission standards, oversees approval of all State Implementation Plans, conducts research, and provides guidance in air pollution programs and sets National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), also known as federal standards. There are six common air pollutants, called criteria air pollutants, which were identified resulting from provisions of the Clean Air Act of 1970. The six National criteria pollutants are ozone, particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, lead, and sulfur dioxide. The NAAQS were established to protect public health, including that of sensitive individuals.

STATE

The CARB also administers California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), for the ten air pollutants designated in the California Clean Air Act (CCAA). The ten State air pollutants include the six national criteria pollutants and visibility reducing particulates, hydrogen sulfide, sulfates, and vinyl chloride. As part of its enforcement responsibilities, the EPA requires each state with federal nonattainment areas to prepare and submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that demonstrates the means to attain the national standards. The SIP must integrate federal, state, and local components and regulations to identify specific measures to reduce pollution, using a combination of performance standards and market-based programs within the timeframe identified in the SIP. The CARB defines attainment as

the category given to an area with no violations in the past three years. The SoCAB has been designated by the EPA for the national standards as a non-attainment area for ozone and PM_{2.5} and partial non-attainment for lead. Currently, the SoCAB is in attainment with the national ambient air quality standards for CO, PM₁₀, SO₂, and NO₂.

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)

The project site is located within the South Coast Air Basin (under the jurisdiction of the SCAQMD). SCAQMD develops rules and regulations, establishes permitting requirements for stationary sources, inspects emission sources, and enforces such measures through educational programs or fines, when necessary. SCAQMD is directly responsible for reducing emissions from stationary, mobile, and indirect sources. It has responded to this requirement by preparing a sequence of AQMPs. The *Final 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (2022 AQMP)* and has been submitted to the CARB for adoption before submittal to the EPA for final approval, which are anticipated to occur sometime this year. After the 2022 AQMP has been adopted by CARB and EPA, the 2022 AQMP will be incorporated into the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The 2022 AQMP establishes actions and strategies to reduce ozone levels to the EPA 2015 ozone standard of 70 ppb by 2037. The 2022 AQMP promotes extensive use of zero-emission technologies across all stationary and mobile sources coupled with rules and regulations, investment strategies, and incentives.

The following SCAQMD rules are applicable but not limited to residential development projects in the South Coast Air Basin:

- **Rule 402 Nuisance:** Rule 402 prohibits a person from discharging from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which causes injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property. Compliance with Rule 402 will reduce local air quality and odor impacts to nearby sensitive receptors.
- **Rule 403 Fugitive Dust:** Rule 403 governs emissions of fugitive dust during construction activities and requires that no person shall cause or allow the emissions of fugitive dust such that dust remains visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line or the dust emission exceeds 20 percent opacity if the dust is from the operation of a motorized vehicle. Compliance with this rule is achieved through the application of standard, Best Available Control Measures, which includes but is not limited to the measures below. Compliance with the following rules would reduce local air quality impacts to nearby sensitive receptors:
 - Utilize either a pad of washed gravel 50 feet long, 100 feet of paved surface, a wheel shaker, or a wheel washing device to remove material from vehicle tires and undercarriages before leaving the project site.
 - Prohibit track-out of material to extend more than 25 feet onto a public roadway and remove all track out at the end of each workday.
 - Water all exposed areas on active sites at least three times per day and pre-water all areas prior to clearing and soil moving activities.
 - Apply nontoxic chemical stabilizers according to manufacturer specifications to all construction areas that will remain inactive for 10 days or longer.

- Pre-water all material to be exported prior to loading, and either cover all loads or maintain at least two feet of freeboard in accordance with the requirements of California Vehicle Code Section 23114.
 - Replant all disturbed areas as soon as practical.
 - Suspend all grading activities when wind speeds (including wind gusts) exceed 25 miles per hour.
 - Restrict traffic speeds on all unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour or less.
- **Rule 445- Fireplaces:** Rule 445 governs emissions from fireplaces. This rule restricts the installation of wood-burning fireplaces into any new development and only allows the installation of dedicated gaseous-fueled fireplaces.
 - **Rules 1108 and 1108.1 Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt:** Rules 1108 and 1108.1 govern the sale, use, and manufacturing of asphalt and limits the VOC content in asphalt. This rule regulates the VOC contents of asphalt used during construction as well as any on-going maintenance during operations. All asphalt used during construction and operation of the proposed project must comply with SCAQMD Rules 1108 and 1108.1.
 - **Rule 1113 Architectural Coatings:** Rule 1113 governs the sale, use, and manufacturing of architectural coatings and limits the VOC content in sealers, coatings, paints and solvents. This rule regulates the VOC contents of paints available during construction. All paints and solvents used during construction and operation of the proposed project must comply with SCAQMD Rule 1113.
 - **Rule 1143 Paint Thinners:** Rule 1143 governs the sale, use, and manufacturing of paint thinners and multi-purpose solvents that are used in thinning of coating materials, cleaning of coating application equipment, and other solvent cleaning operations. This rule regulates the VOC content of solvents used during construction. Solvents used during construction and operation of the proposed project must comply with SCAQMD Rule 1143.

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the regional planning agency for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial Counties and addresses regional issues relating to transportation, the economy, community development and the environment. SCAG is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the majority of the southern California region and is the largest MPO in the nation. With respect to air quality planning, SCAG has prepared the *2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (Connect SoCal), adopted September 3, 2020, and the *2019 Federal Transportation Improvement Program* (2019 FTIP), adopted September 2018, which addresses regional development and growth forecasts. Although the Connect SoCal and 2019 FTIP are primarily planning documents for future transportation projects, a key component of these plans is to integrate land use planning with transportation planning that promotes higher density infill development in close proximity to existing transit service. These plans form the basis for the land use and transportation components of the AQMP, which are utilized in the preparation of air quality forecasts and in the consistency, analysis included in the AQMP. The Connect SoCal, 2019 FTIP, and AQMP are based on projections originating within the City and County General Plans.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

Local jurisdictions, such as the City of Norco, have the authority and responsibility to reduce air pollution through its police power and decision-making authority. Specifically, the City of Norco is responsible for the assessment and mitigation of air emissions resulting from its land use decisions. The City of Norco is also responsible for the implementation of transportation control measures as outlined in the AQMPs. Examples of such measures include bus turnouts, energy-efficient streetlights, and synchronized traffic signals. In accordance with CEQA requirements and the CEQA review process, the City assesses the air quality impacts of new development projects, requires mitigation of potentially significant air quality impacts by conditioning discretionary permits, and monitors and enforces implementation of such mitigation. In accordance with the CEQA requirements, the City of Norco does not, however, have the expertise to develop plans, programs, procedures, and methodologies to ensure that air quality within the City and region meets federal and state standards. Instead, the City of Norco relies on the expertise of the SCAQMD and utilizes the SCAQMD CEQA Handbook as the guidance document for the environmental review of plans and development proposals within its jurisdiction.

4.3.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **AQ-1:** Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?
- **AQ-2:** Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?
- **AQ-3:** Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
- **AQ-4:** Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people)?

4.3.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT AQ-1: Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires a discussion of any inconsistencies between a proposed project and applicable General Plans and regional plans (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125). The regional air quality plan that applies to the proposed project is the SCAQMD AQMP. Therefore, this section discusses any potential inconsistencies of the proposed project with the AQMP.

The purpose of this discussion is to set forth the issues regarding consistency with the assumptions and objectives of the AQMP and discuss whether the proposed project would interfere with the region's ability to comply with Federal and State air quality standards. If the decision-makers

determine that the proposed project is inconsistent, the lead agency may consider project modifications or inclusion of mitigation to eliminate the inconsistency.

The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook states that “New or amended General Plan Elements (including land use zoning and density amendments), Specific Plans, and significant projects must be analyzed for consistency with the AQMP.” Strict consistency with all aspects of the plan is usually not required. A proposed project should be considered consistent with the AQMP if it furthers one or more policies and does not obstruct other policies. The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook identifies two key indicators of consistency:

- 1) Whether the project will result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations or delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the AQMP.
- 2) Whether the project will exceed the assumptions in the AQMP, or increments based on the year of project buildout and phase.

Both these criteria are evaluated in the following sections:

Criterion 1 – Increase in the Frequency or Severity of Violations

Based on the air quality modeling analysis contained in this report, short-term regional construction air emissions would not result in significant impacts based on SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance or local thresholds of significance. The proposed General Plan Amendment would increase the population on the project site above what is currently projected for the project site, which would increase long-term operational air emissions above what was estimated in the City’s General Plan. The ongoing operation of the proposed project would generate air pollutant emissions that are inconsequential on a regional basis and would not result in significant impacts based on SCAQMD thresholds of significance. The analysis for long-term local air quality impacts showed that local pollutant concentrations would not be projected to exceed the air quality standards and a less than significant long-term impact would occur. No mitigation would be required. Therefore, based on the information provided above, the proposed project would be consistent with the first criterion.

Criterion 2 – Exceed Assumptions in the AQMP

Consistency with the AQMP assumptions is determined by performing an analysis of the proposed project with the assumptions in the AQMP. The emphasis of this criterion is to ensure that the analyses conducted for the proposed project are based on the same forecasts as AQMP. The AQMP is developed through use of the planning forecasts provided in the RTP/SCS (Connect SoCal) and FTIP (2019 FTIP). The RTP/SCS is a major planning document for the regional transportation and land use network within Southern California. The RTP/SCS is a long-range plan that is required by federal and state requirements placed on SCAG and is updated every four years. The FTIP provides long-range planning for future transportation improvement projects that are constructed with State and/or federal funds within Southern California. Local governments are required to use these plans as the basis of their plans for the purpose of consistency with applicable regional plans under CEQA. For this project, the City of Norco General Plan’s Land Use Plan defines the assumptions that are represented in AQMP.

The northwest portion of the project site is currently designated as Public Lands (PL) and the southeastern portion of the project site is currently designated as Residential Agriculture (RA) in the General Plan. The current zoning on the property is A-1-20-Agriculture Low Density, minimum 20,000

square-foot lot size and Open Space. The proposed project would require a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change with 8.2 acres that is currently designated Public Lands to Residential Low, 18.97 acres that is currently designated Agriculture Low Density to Residential Low, and 7.19 acres that is currently designated Agriculture Low Density to Open Space.

Although the proposed project is currently inconsistent with the General Plan land use designation and zoning for the project site, the proposed single-family residential development would be a compatible use to the existing single-family residential uses on all sides of the project site. In addition, the proposed project would provide housing in close proximity to the preschool that is as near as 80 feet to the northwest and commercial uses on River Road that are as near as 150 feet to the project site, which will promote a walkable community. As such the proposed project would be in substantial compliance with the City's Land Use Element's goals and policies. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an inconsistency with the current land use designations with respect to the regional forecasts utilized by AQMPs. As such, the proposed project is not anticipated to exceed the AQMP assumptions for the project site and is found to be consistent with the AQMP for the second criterion.

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

As shown in Table 4.3-3, Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant Emissions, in Impact AQ-2, based on the air quality modeling analysis, the project's short-term regional construction air emissions would not result in significant impacts based on SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance or local thresholds of significance. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the AQMP.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT AQ-2: Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

The proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard.

The SCAQMD has published a report on how to address cumulative impacts from air pollution: White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution (<http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/Agendas/Environmental-Justice/cumulative-impacts-working-group/cumulative-impacts-white-paper.pdf>). In this report the AQMD clearly states (Page D-3):

"...the AQMD uses the same significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts for all environmental topics analyzed in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The only case where the significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts differ is the Hazard Index (HI) significance threshold for TAC emissions. The project specific (project increment) significance threshold is HI > 1.0 while the cumulative (facility-wide) is HI > 3.0. It should be noted that the HI is only one of three TAC emission significance thresholds considered (when applicable) in a CEQA analysis. The other two are the maximum individual cancer risk (MICR) and the cancer burden, both of which use the same significance

thresholds (MICR of 10 in 1 million and cancer burden of 0.5) for project specific and cumulative impacts. Projects that exceed the project-specific significance thresholds are considered by the SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. This is the reason project-specific and cumulative significance thresholds are the same. Conversely, projects that do not exceed the project-specific thresholds are generally not considered to be cumulatively significant.”

Therefore, this analysis assumes that individual projects that do not generate operational or construction emissions that exceed the SCAQMD’s recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would also not cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Basin is in nonattainment, and, therefore, would not be considered to have a significant, adverse air quality impact. Alternatively, individual project-related construction and operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD thresholds for project-specific impacts would be considered cumulatively considerable. The following section calculates the potential air emissions associated with the construction and operations of the proposed project and compares the emissions to the SCAQMD standards.

CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS

The construction activities for the proposed project are anticipated to include demolition of the milking barn, retail outlet, barns/sheds, and dairy-related features on the project site, site preparation and grading of up to 27.57 acres of the 34.37-acre project site, building construction of 68 single-family homes, paving of the onsite roads, sidewalks and hardscapes, and application of architectural coatings. The CalEEMod model has been utilized to calculate the construction-related emissions from the proposed project.

The daily construction-related regional criteria pollutant emissions from the proposed project by season and year of construction activities are shown in Table 4.3-3, Construction-Related Regional Criteria Pollutant Emissions.

Table 4.3-3
Construction-Related Regional Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Season and Year of Construction	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer 2025	4.13	43.0	33.8	0.12	8.48	4.58
Winter 2025	3.79	43.4	33.2	0.12	7.74	3.37
Summer 2026	1.18	10.2	14.8	0.03	0.76	0.44
Winter 2026	1.17	10.2	14.4	0.03	0.76	0.44
Summer 2027	40.3	7.00	10.9	0.01	0.49	0.32
Winter 2027	1.33	9.72	14.2	0.03	0.72	0.41
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	40.3	43.4	33.8	0.12	8.48	4.58
SCQAMD Regional Thresholds	75	100	550	150	150	55
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	No	No	No	No
Notes:						
¹ Demolition, Site Preparation and Grading based on adherence to fugitive dust suppression requirements from SCAQMD Rule 403.						
² Onsite emissions from equipment not operated on public roads.						
³ Offsite emissions from vehicles operating on public roads.						
Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Ranch Residential Project Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.						

Table 4.3-3 shows that none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the regional emissions thresholds during either demolition, site preparation, grading, or the combined building construction, paving and architectural coatings phases. Therefore, a less than significant regional air quality impact would occur from construction of the proposed project.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

The on-going operation of the proposed project would result in a long-term increase in air quality emissions. This increase would be due to emissions from the project-generated vehicle trips, emissions from energy usage, and onsite area source emissions created from the on-going use of the proposed project. The following section provides an analysis of potential long-term air quality impacts due to regional air quality and local air quality impacts with the on-going operations of the proposed project.

Regional Air Quality Impacts

The worst-case summer or winter VOC, NO_x, CO, SO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} daily emissions created from the proposed project’s long-term operations have been calculated and are summarized below in Table 4.3-4, *Operational Regional Criteria Pollutant Emissions*. The data provided in Table 4.3-4 shows that none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the regional emissions thresholds. Therefore, a less than significant regional air quality impact would occur from the operation of the proposed project.

Table 4.3-4
Operational Regional Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Activity	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Area Sources ¹	5.33	1.16	4.34	0.01	0.09	0.09
Energy Usage ²	0.04	0.61	0.26	<0.01	0.05	0.05
Mobile Sources ³	2.52	2.41	21.1	0.05	4.86	1.26
Total Emissions	7.89	4.18	25.7	0.06	5.00	1.40
SCQAMD Operational Thresholds	55	55	550	150	150	55
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	No	No	No	No
Notes:						
¹ Area sources consist of emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, hearths, and landscaping equipment.						
² Energy usage consists of emissions from natural gas usage (non-hearth).						
³ Mobile sources consist of emissions from vehicles and road dust.						
Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Ranch Residential Project Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.						

Friant Ranch Case: In *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno* (2018) 6 Cal.5th 502 (also referred to as “*Friant Ranch*”), the California Supreme Court held that when an EIR concluded that when a project would have significant impacts to air quality impacts, an EIR should “make a reasonable effort to substantively connect a project’s air quality impacts to likely health consequences.” In order to determine compliance with this Case, the Court developed a multi-part test that includes the following:

- 1) The air quality discussion shall describe the specific health risks created from each criteria pollutant, including diesel particulate matter.

This analysis details the specific health risks created from each criteria pollutant and health risks created from diesel particulate matter. As such, this analysis meets the Part 1 requirements of the Friant Ranch Case.

- 2) The analysis shall identify the magnitude of the health risks created from the project. The Ruling details how to identify the magnitude of the health risks. Specifically, on page 24 of the ruling it states “The Court of Appeal identified several ways in which the EIR could have framed the analysis so as to adequately inform the public and decision makers of possible adverse health effects. The County could have, for example, identified the project’s impact on the days of nonattainment per year.”

The Friant Ranch Case found that an EIR’s air quality analysis must meaningfully connect the identified air quality impacts to the human health consequences of those impacts, or meaningfully explain why that analysis cannot be provided. As noted in the Brief of Amicus Curiae by the SCAQMD in the Friant Ranch case (<https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/9-s219783-ac-south-coast-air-quality-mgt-dist-041315.pdf>) (Brief), SCAQMD has among the most sophisticated air quality modeling and health impact evaluation capability of any of the air districts in the State, and thus it is uniquely situated to express an opinion on how lead agencies should correlate air quality impacts with specific health outcomes. The SCAQMD discusses that it may be infeasible to quantify health risks caused by projects similar to the proposed project, due to many factors. It is necessary to have data regarding the sources and types of air toxic contaminants, location of emission points, velocity of emissions, the meteorology and topography of the area, and the location of receptors (worker and residence). The Brief states that it may not be feasible to perform a health risk assessment for airborne toxics that will be emitted by a generic industrial building that was built on “speculation” (i.e., without knowing the future tenant(s)). Even where a health risk assessment can be prepared, however, the resulting maximum health risk value is only a calculation of risk, it does not necessarily mean anyone will contract cancer as a result of the project. The Brief also cites the author of the CARB methodology, which reported that a PM_{2.5} methodology is not suited for small projects and may yield unreliable results. Similarly, SCAQMD staff does not currently know of a way to accurately quantify ozone-related health impacts caused by NO_x or VOC emissions from relatively small projects, due to photochemistry and regional model limitations. The Brief concludes, with respect to the Friant Ranch EIR, that although it may have been technically possible to plug the data into a methodology, the results would not have been reliable or meaningful.

On the other hand, for extremely large regional projects (unlike the proposed project), the SCAQMD states that it has been able to correlate potential health outcomes for very large emissions sources – as part of their rulemaking activity, specifically 6,620 pounds per day of NO_x and 89,180 pounds per day of VOC were expected to result in approximately 20 premature deaths per year and 89,947 school absences due to ozone. As shown, project-related construction activities would generate a maximum of 40.3 pounds per day of VOC and 43.4 pounds per day of NO_x. Additionally, the operation of the proposed project would generate 7.89 pounds per day of VOC and 4.1 pounds per day NO_x. The proposed project would not generate anywhere near these levels of 6,620 pounds per day of NO_x or 89,190 pounds per day of VOC emissions. Therefore, the proposed project’s emissions are not sufficiently high enough to use a regional modeling program to correlate health effects on a basin-wide level.

Notwithstanding, this analysis does evaluate the proposed project's localized impact to air quality for emissions of CO, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} by comparing the proposed project's onsite emissions to the SCAQMD's applicable LST thresholds. As evaluated in this analysis, the proposed project would not result in emissions that exceeded the SCAQMD's LSTs. Therefore, the proposed project would not be expected to exceed the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standards for emissions of CO, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}.

Operations-Related Local Air Quality Impacts

Project-related air emissions may have the potential to exceed the State and Federal air quality standards in the project vicinity, even though these pollutant emissions may not be significant enough to create a regional impact to the Air Basin. The proposed project has been analyzed for the potential local CO emission impacts from the project-generated vehicular trips and from the potential local air quality impacts from onsite operations. The following analyzes the vehicular CO emissions and local impacts from onsite operations.

Local CO Hotspot Impacts

CO is the pollutant of major concern along roadways because the most notable source of CO is motor vehicles. For this reason, CO concentrations are usually indicative of the local air quality generated by a roadway network and are used as an indicator of potential local air quality impacts. Local air quality impacts can be assessed by comparing future without and with project CO levels to the State and Federal CO standards of 20 ppm over one hour or 9 ppm over eight hours.

At the time of the 1993 Handbook, the Air Basin was designated nonattainment under the CAAQS and NAAQS for CO. With the turnover of older vehicles, introduction of cleaner fuels, and implementation of control technology on industrial facilities, CO concentrations in the Air Basin and in the state have steadily declined. In 2007, the Air Basin was designated in attainment for CO under both the CAAQS and NAAQS. SCAQMD conducted a CO hot spot analysis for attainment at the busiest intersections in Los Angeles during the peak morning and afternoon periods and did not predict a violation of CO standards.¹ Since the nearby intersections to the proposed project are much smaller with less traffic than what was analyzed by the SCAQMD, no local CO Hotspot are anticipated to be created from the proposed project and no CO Hotspot modeling was performed. Therefore, a less than significant long-term air quality impact is anticipated to local air quality with the on-going use of the proposed project.

Local Criteria Pollutant Impacts from Onsite Operations

Project-related air emissions from onsite sources such as architectural coatings, landscaping equipment, and onsite usage of natural gas appliances may have the potential to create emissions areas that exceed the State and Federal air quality standards in the project vicinity, even though these pollutant emissions may not be significant enough to create a regional impact to the Air Basin.

The local air quality emissions from onsite operations were analyzed using the SCAQMD's Mass Rate LST Look-up Tables and the methodology described in LST Methodology. The Look-up Tables were developed by the SCAQMD in order to readily determine if the daily emissions of NO_x, CO, PM₁₀ and

¹ The four intersections analyzed by the SCAQMD were: Long Beach Boulevard and Imperial Highway; Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue; Sunset Boulevard and Highland Avenue; and La Cienega Boulevard and Century Boulevard. The busiest intersection evaluated (Wilshire and Veteran) had a daily traffic volume of approximately 100,000 vehicles per day with LOS E in the morning and LOS F in the evening peak hour.

PM_{2.5} from the proposed project could result in a significant impact to the local air quality. The data provided in [Table 4.3-5, *Operations Related to Local Criteria Pollutant Emissions*](#), shows that the on-going operations of the proposed project would not exceed the local NO_x, CO, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} thresholds of significance.

Table 4.3-5
Operations Related to Local Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Onsite Emission Source	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)			
	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Area Sources	1.16	4.34	0.09	0.09
Energy Usage	0.61	0.26	0.05	0.05
Mobile Sources	0.30	2.64	0.61	0.16
Total Emissions	2.07	7.24	0.75	0.30
SCAQMD Local Operational Thresholds¹	237	1,469	3	2
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	No	No
Notes: ¹ The nearest offsite sensitive receptors to the project site are single-family homes located as near as 70 feet (21 meters) northwest of the project site. According to SCAQMD methodology, all receptors closer than 25 meters are based on the 25-meter threshold. Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Ranch Residential Project Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.				

The on-going operations of the proposed project would create a less than significant operations-related impact to local air quality due to onsite emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT AQ-3: Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

The proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The local concentrations of criteria pollutant emissions produced in the nearby vicinity of the proposed project, which may expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations. The discussion below also includes an analysis of the potential impacts from toxic air contaminant emissions generated from the construction and operation of the proposed project. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are residents at the single-family homes located as near as 70 feet northwest of the project site. There are also homes that are adjacent to the southeast side of the project site, where the nearest homes are as near as 100 feet from the project site. In addition, Stonebridge Christian Academy is located as near as 80 feet northwest of the project site. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are the single-family homes located as near as 70 feet (21 meters) northwest of the project site. According to LST Methodology, any receptor located closer than 25 meters (82 feet) shall be based on the 25-meter thresholds. [Table 4.3-6, *SCAQMD Local Air Quality Thresholds of Significance*](#), shows the LSTs for NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} for both construction and operational activities.

Table 4.3-6
SCAQMD Local Air Quality Thresholds of Significance

Activity	Allowable Emissions (pounds/day) ¹			
	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Construction	237	1,469	10	7
Operation	237	1,469	3	2

Notes:
¹ The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are single-family homes located as near as 70 feet (21 meters) northwest of the project site. According to SCAQMD methodology, all receptors closer than 25 meters are based on the 25-meter threshold.
Source: Vista Environmental, *JD Ranch Residential Project Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis*; April 4, 2024.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

CO Hotspot on Sensitive Receptors

CO is the pollutant of major concern along roadways because the most notable source of CO is motor vehicles. For this reason, CO concentrations are usually indicative of the local air quality generated by a roadway network and are used as an indicator of potential impacts to sensitive receptors. The analysis provided shows that no local CO Hotspots are anticipated to be created at any nearby intersections from the vehicle traffic generated by the proposed project. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant exposure of offsite sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Local Criteria Pollutant Impacts from Onsite Operations

The local air quality impacts from the operation of the proposed project would occur from onsite sources such as architectural coatings, landscaping equipment, and onsite usage of natural gas appliances. The analysis found that the operation of the proposed project would not exceed the local NO_x, CO, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} thresholds of significance. Therefore, the on-going operations of the proposed project would create a less than significant operations-related impact to local air quality due to onsite emissions and no mitigation is required.

Operations-Related Toxic Air Contaminant Impacts

Particulate matter (PM) from diesel exhaust is the predominant TAC in most areas and according to *The California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality 2013 Edition*, prepared by CARB, about 80 percent of the outdoor TAC cancer risk is from diesel exhaust. Some chemicals in diesel exhaust, such as benzene and formaldehyde have been listed as carcinogens by State Proposition 65 and the Federal Hazardous Air Pollutants Program. Due to the nominal number of diesel truck trips that are anticipated to be generated by the on-going operation of the proposed single-family homes, a less than significant TAC impact would be created from the on-going operations of the proposed project and no mitigation would be required.

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The construction activities for the proposed project are anticipated to include demolition of the milking barn, retail outlet, barns/sheds, and dairy-related features on the project site, site preparation and

grading of up to 27.57 acres of the 37.84-acre project site, building construction of 68 single-family homes, paving of the onsite roads, sidewalks and hardscapes, and application of architectural coatings. Construction activities may expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations of localized criteria pollutant concentrations and toxic air contaminant emissions created from onsite construction equipment, which are described below.

Local Criteria Pollutant Impacts from Construction

Construction-related air emissions may have the potential to exceed the State and Federal air quality standards in the project vicinity, even though these pollutant emissions may not be significant enough to create a regional impact to the Air Basin.

The local air quality emissions from construction were analyzed through utilizing the methodology described in Localized Significance Threshold Methodology (LST Methodology), prepared by SCAQMD, revised October 2009. The LST Methodology found the primary criteria pollutant emissions of concern are NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. In order to determine if any of these pollutants require a detailed analysis of the local air quality impacts, each phase of construction was screened using the SCAQMD’s Mass Rate LST Look-up Tables. The Look-up Tables were developed by the SCAQMD in order to readily determine if the daily onsite emissions of CO, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} from the proposed project could result in a significant impact to the local air quality. The daily construction-related local criteria pollutant emissions from the proposed project by season and year of construction activities are shown in Table 4.3-7, Construction-Related Local Criteria Pollutant Emissions. It should be noted that the CalEEMod model no longer segments impacts by onsite and offsite so Table 4.3-7 shows both the onsite and offsite emissions created by the proposed project as one, and thereby represents a worst-case analysis for the potential local impacts created from the proposed project and shows that the project is still under the impact thresholds.

Table 4.3-7
Construction-Related Local Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Season and Year of Construction	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)			
	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer 2025	43.0	33.8	8.48	4.58
Winter 2025	43.4	33.2	7.74	3.37
Summer 2026	10.2	14.8	0.76	0.44
Winter 2026	10.2	14.4	0.76	0.44
Summer 2027	7.00	10.9	0.49	0.32
Winter 2027	9.72	14.2	0.72	0.41
Onsite Daily Construction Emissions	43.4	33.8	8.48	4.58
SCAQMD Local Thresholds	237	1,469	10	7
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	No	No
Notes:				
¹ Demolition, Site Preparation and Grading based on adherence to fugitive dust suppression requirements from SCAQMD Rule 403. ² Onsite emissions from equipment not operated on public roads. ³ Offsite emissions from vehicles operating on public roads. Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Ranch Residential Project Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.				

Table 4.3-7 shows that none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the local emissions thresholds during construction of the proposed project. Therefore, a less than significant local air quality impact would occur from construction of the proposed project.

Toxic Air Contaminants Impacts from Construction

The greatest potential for toxic air contaminant emissions would be related to diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions associated with heavy equipment operations during construction of the proposed project. According to SCAQMD methodology, health effects from carcinogenic air toxics are usually described in terms of “individual cancer risk”. “Individual Cancer Risk” is the likelihood that a person exposed to concentrations of toxic air contaminants over a 70-year lifetime will contract cancer, based on the use of standard risk-assessment methodology. It should be noted that the most current cancer risk assessment methodology recommends analyzing a 30-year exposure period for the nearby sensitive receptors (OEHHA, 2015).

The air quality analysis for the proposed project evaluated toxic air quality contaminants from construction related to diesel particulate matter emissions associated with heavy equipment operations and was based on 30-year exposure for the nearby sensitive receptors (OEHHA, 2015). Up to 10 pieces of heavy-duty construction equipment could operate concurrently. The construction equipment would operate at varying distances to the nearby sensitive receptors, and the short-term construction schedule, the proposed project would not result in a long-term (i.e., 30 or 70 years) substantial source of toxic air contaminant emissions and corresponding individual cancer risk. In addition, California Code of Regulations Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9, Section 2449 regulates emissions from off-road diesel equipment in California. This regulation limits the idling of equipment to no more than five minutes, requires equipment operators to label each piece of equipment and provide annual reports to CARB of their fleet’s usage and emissions. This regulation also requires systematic upgrading of the emission Tier level of each fleet, and currently no commercial operator is allowed to purchase Tier 0, Tier 1 or Tier 2 equipment. In addition to the purchase restrictions, equipment operators need to meet fleet average emissions targets that become more stringent each year between years 2014 and 2023. Therefore, due to the limitations in off-road construction equipment DPM emissions from implementation of Section 2448, a less than significant short-term TAC impacts would occur during construction of the proposed project from DPM emissions.

Asbestos Emissions

It is possible that the existing onsite structures to be demolished contain asbestos. According to SCAQMD Rule 1403 requirements, prior to the start of demolition activities, the existing structures located onsite shall be thoroughly surveyed for the presence of asbestos by a person that is certified by Cal/OSHA for asbestos surveys. Rule 1403 requires that the SCAQMD be notified a minimum of 10 days before any demolition activities begin with specific details of all asbestos to be removed, start and completion dates of demolition, work practices and engineering controls to be used to contain the asbestos emissions, estimates on the amount of asbestos to be removed, the name of the waste disposal site where the asbestos will be taken, and names and addresses of all contractors and transporters that will be involved in the asbestos removal process. Therefore, through adherence to the asbestos removal requirements, detailed in SCAQMD Rule 1403, a less than significant asbestos impact would occur during construction of the proposed project.

As such, construction of the proposed project would result in a less than significant exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT AQ-4: Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?)

The proposed project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Individual responses to odors are highly variable and can result in a variety of effects. Generally, the impact of an odor results from a variety of factors such as frequency, duration, offensiveness, location, and sensory perception. The frequency is a measure of how often an individual is exposed to an odor in the ambient environment. The intensity refers to an individual's or group's perception of the odor strength or concentration. The duration of an odor refers to the elapsed time over which an odor is experienced. The offensiveness of the odor is the subjective rating of the pleasantness or unpleasantness of an odor. The location accounts for the type of area in which a potentially affected person lives, works, or visits; the type of activity in which he or she is engaged; and the sensitivity of the impacted receptor.

Sensory perception has four major components: detectability, intensity, character, and hedonic tone. The detection (or threshold) of an odor is based on a panel of responses to the odor. There are two types of thresholds: the odor detection threshold and the recognition threshold. The detection threshold is the lowest concentration of an odor that will elicit a response in a percentage of the people that live and work in the immediate vicinity of the project site and is typically presented as the mean (or 50 percent of the population). The recognition threshold is the minimum concentration that is recognized as having a characteristic odor quality, this is typically represented by recognition by 50 percent of the population. The intensity refers to the perceived strength of the odor. The odor character is what the substance smells like. The hedonic tone is a judgment of the pleasantness or unpleasantness of the odor. The hedonic tone varies in subjective experience, frequency, odor character, odor intensity, and duration. Potential odor impacts have been analyzed separately for construction and operations below.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

The proposed project would consist of the development of a single-family residential development. Potential sources that may emit odors during the on-going operations of the proposed project would primarily occur from the trash storage areas and from horse manure on the equestrian trails as well as from potential storage of horses in the backyards of the proposed homes. There is also a proposed sewer lift station, however the sewer lift station would be fully enclosed and would not include any sewage exposure or venting, and as such no odor impacts would be created from the sewer lift station.

The project site was previously utilized as a dairy and is located within an equestrian community and several of the adjacent residences currently maintain livestock on their properties. SCAQMD's Rule 402 provides an exemption for the raising of animals from the odor emission rules. The proposed equestrian trails would be similar to other equestrian trails in the vicinity of the proposed project. Horse storage and manure management in the City is regulated by Chapter 6.45 of the City Municipal Code. Therefore, through adherence to the City's manure management regulations, a less than significant odor impact would occur from horse manure and no mitigation measures would be required.

Pursuant to City regulations, permanent trash enclosures that protect trash bins from rain as well as limit air circulation would be required for the trash storage areas. Due to the distance of the nearest receptors from the project site and through compliance with SCAQMD's Rule 402 and City trash storage regulations, no significant impact related to odors would occur during the on-going operations of the proposed project. Therefore, a less than significant odor impact would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Potential sources that may emit odors during construction activities include the application of coatings such as asphalt pavement, paints and solvents and from emissions from diesel equipment. Standard construction requirements that limit the time of day when construction may occur as well as SCAQMD Rule 1108 that limits VOC content in asphalt and Rule 1113 that limits the VOC content in paints and solvents would minimize odor impacts from construction. As such, the objectionable odors that may be produced during the construction process would be temporary and would not likely be noticeable for extended periods of time beyond the project site's boundaries. Through compliance with the applicable regulations that reduce odors and due to the transitory nature of construction odors, a less than significant odor impact would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.3.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *General Plan Conservation Element*, Update Adoption Date: December 17, 2014.

Vista Environmental, *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis – JD Ranch Residential Project*, April 4, 2024.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential for the proposed project to impact biological resources. The analysis in this section follows the criteria, rules, and regulations defined by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and is based in part on the following technical report:

- *Biological Technical Report for the JD Ranch Residential Project*, VCS Environmental, March 2024 ([Appendix C](#)).

4.4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The property consists of two parcels. APN 121-110-001 is owned by the City of Norco and contains existing City water well facilities, including existing ground water wells and related piping and utilities and two above-ground water storage reservoirs. Additionally, portions of the site have been used by the City as a spoils/staging yard. APN 121-110-003, owned by TACRD Investment, is the site of the Dallape Dairy Property located at 2877 River Road. The site has been used as agricultural land up until the last few years. Currently located on the site are a ranch house, a former milking barn, barns/sheds, and dairy-related features including pastures, impoundment, pole barns, and fencing. The Santa Ana River is located approximately 500 feet northwest of the site. To the north, east, and south of the project site are existing single-family residential neighborhoods.

The following terms will be used throughout this Section and are defined as follows:

- **Project Site:** The project site is approximately 37.84 acres and is comprised of Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 121-110-003 and 121-110-001. This includes the JD Ranch project area as well as the City's tank farm parcel, although the only improvement on the tank farm is the continuation of the Bluff Street equestrian/pedestrian trail. The trail construction continues from there within a developed road right-of-way to the corner.
- **Project Footprint:** The JD Ranch Project Footprint is 27.57 acres and is shown in [Figure 4.4-1, Project Footprint](#).

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

Vegetation/land cover mapping and acreages for each vegetation community and land type within the Project Footprint are shown in [Table 4.4-1, Vegetation Communities/Land Cover Observed](#), and are depicted on [Figure 4.4-2, Vegetation/Land Cover](#). A vegetation community/land cover is 0.10 acres or larger in size. The majority of the vegetation within the Project Footprint is characterized by open fields comprised of herbaceous non-native forbs and grasses vegetated with a variety of non-native and early successional weedy plant species. Common non-native plant species observed during the surveys included barley (*Hordeum* sp.), short-pod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*). Common native species observed included common fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*). Other scattered shrubs observed within the Project Footprint include mule fat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), and Menzies' goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*). However, these scattered shrubs are not considered vegetation communities large enough to call out separately.

Table 4.4-1
Vegetation Communities/Land Cover Observed

Vegetation Community/Land Cover Type	Project Footprint (acres)
Herbaceous Non-Native Forbs and Grasses	17.8
Ornamental	0.5
Disturbed/Developed	9.3
Total	27.6

Herbaceous Non-Native Forbs and Grasses

Approximately 17.8 acres of herbaceous non-native forbs and grasses were mapped within a majority of the Project Footprint. Vegetation onsite appeared to have been mowed or disked. Common non-native plant species observed include short-pod mustard, stinknet (*Oncosiphon piluliferum*), milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*), Russian thistle, and Australian saltbush (*Atriplex semibaccata*).

Ornamental

Approximately 0.5 acres of ornamental palms were mapped within the southwestern corner of the Project Footprint. This community includes approximately 20 Mexican fan palms (*Washingtonia robusta*) and ornamental shrubs in the southern portion of the site.

Disturbed/Developed

Approximately 9.3 acres of disturbed/developed area were mapped within the southwestern and northwestern portions of the Project Footprint. This land cover includes residential development, paved driveways, old agricultural shade structures, and highly disturbed areas with little to no vegetation other than non-native grasses. Native species observed in low cover in this area include mule fat, Menzies' goldenbush.

SENSITIVE VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

The Project Footprint does not support any sensitive vegetation communities. Southern Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forest habitat was reported in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) approximately one mile north-northwest of the project within the Santa Ana River area but is not present within the Project Footprint.

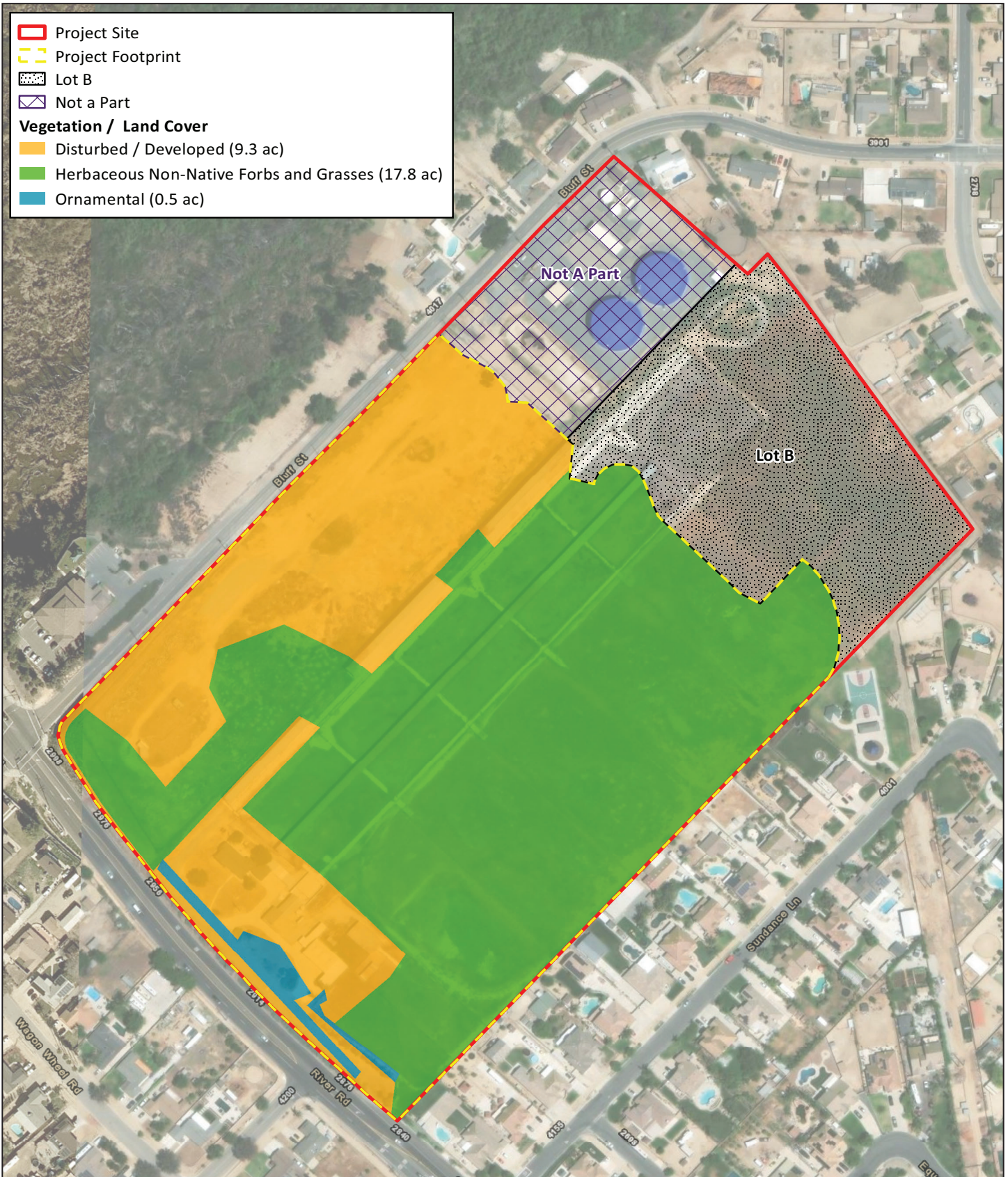
SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES

Sensitive plant species include federally, or state listed threatened or endangered species and those species listed on California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) rare and endangered plant inventory. Species with the potential to occur onsite were analyzed based on distribution, habitat requirements, and existing site conditions. No sensitive plant species were observed within the Project Footprint during the 2022 surveys including the rare plant survey conducted on April 27, 2022. Based on the lack of suitable habitat onsite and the negative findings during the April 27, 2022, rare plant survey, sensitive plant species are not expected to occur.



Source: ESRI and MDS Consulting; February 2024.





Source: ESRI and MDS Consulting; February 2024.

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
 Environmental Impact Report
 Vegetation/Land Cover



SENSITIVE WILDLIFE SPECIES

Sensitive wildlife species with low to moderate or moderate potential to occur, but not observed during the biological surveys include:

- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a CDFW Species of Special Concern and USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern.
- Grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*), a CDFW Species of Special Concern.
- Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), a State Threatened species, BLM sensitive species and USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern.
- Western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*), a CDFW Species of Special Concern and Western Bat Working Group (WBWG) High Priority species.
- Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus woottoni*), a federally endangered species and MSHCP Group 3 species.
- Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), a federally threatened species and MSHCP Group 3 species.

Burrowing Owl

The burrowing owl is a small, tan, ground-dwelling owl that occupies and nests in underground burrows. The species is associated with grasslands and other arid open terrain throughout much of the western United States. Burrowing owls are opportunistic in their selection of burrows, typically utilizing the burrows of small mammals, drainpipes, culverts, and other suitable cavities at or below ground level. In California, the species often occurs in association with colonies of the California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), where it makes use of the squirrel's burrows. A burrow can be up to 10 feet in length with an enlarged terminal nesting chamber. The entrance of the burrow is often adorned with animal dung, feathers, debris, and other small objects. The species is active both at day and at night and may be seen perching conspicuously on fence posts or standing at the entrance of their burrows.

Due to the characteristic fossorial habits of burrowing owls, burrows are a critical component of their habitat. In southern California, burrowing owls are not only found in undisturbed natural areas, but also follow agricultural fields, margins of active agricultural areas, berms to flood control and creek channels, livestock farms, airports, and vacant lots. Declines in burrowing owl populations are attributed to loss and degradation of habitat, to ongoing residential and commercial development, and to rodent control programs.

No burrowing owls or signs of burrowing owl were observed during the focused surveys. There have been no previous burrowing owl observations recorded onsite. The site provides suitable habitat for the species, including suitably sized burrows (>4 inches in diameter) and grassland habitat for foraging, although the site generally lacks suitable perches for owls. Overall, suitable habitat for burrowing owl is present onsite and multiple recorded observations of the species occur within two miles of the Project Footprint.

Swainson's Hawk

Swainson's hawks are open-country birds that are commonly found in open habitats for foraging such as grassland, prairie lands, grazing and agricultural land. Their breeding habitat includes scattered stands of trees near agricultural fields and grasslands for nesting. Swainson's hawks are only present in the west during the summer breeding season and migrate to South America in autumn. They mainly eat insects and mammals such as ground squirrels, gophers, mice, and rabbits. This species was not observed during the 2022 biological surveys. This species has a moderate potential to occur within the Project Footprint for foraging during the breeding season, however, the site lacks suitable nesting habitat for the species.

Grasshopper Sparrow

The grasshopper sparrow is a stubby-tailed and bull-necked songbird found in grasslands, prairies, hayfields, and open pastures with little to no scrub cover and often with some bare ground. When not singing its quiet, insect like song from atop a stalk in a weedy pasture, it disappears into the grasses where it usually runs along the ground rather than flies. This species was not observed during the 2022 biological surveys. The grasshopper sparrow has a moderate potential to occur within the Project Footprint for foraging, however, the site lacks suitable nesting habitat for the species.

Western Yellow Bat

The western yellow bat is a year-round resident of southern California, found below 2,000 feet in or near foothill or desert riparian habitats. The species roosts in trees, including palm trees, in and near palm oases and riparian habitats. Bat roosts were not incidentally observed during the 2022 biological surveys. The Project Footprint contains palm trees that could be potential roosting and foraging habitat and the species has a low to moderate potential to occur.

Riverside Fairy Shrimp

The Riverside fairy shrimp is listed as federally endangered. This species lives in warm-water, long-lived pools generally with depth greater than 12 inches. Riverside fairy shrimp may be found in seasonal vernal pools, vernal pool like ephemeral ponds, stock ponds, and other human modified depressions. The Project Footprint contains a rainwater catch basin and a few shallow depressions throughout the site all of which show evidence of ponding water. These areas have low to moderate potential to provide habitat for this species. However, this species was not observed during the January 18, 2022 biological surveys or during focus dry season and wet season fairy shrimp surveys conducted from August of 2022 to May of 2023, so the species is assumed to be absent.

Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp

The vernal pool fairy shrimp is listed as a federally threatened species. This species lives in short-lived cool-water pools that may exist for only three weeks in the spring. Generally, they are associated with vernal pools (79%) but can also be found in association with other ephemeral habitats including alkali pools, seasonal drainages, and stock ponds. The rainwater catches basin and a few shallow depressions within the Project Footprint have low to moderate potential to provide habitat for this species. However, this species was not observed during the January 18, 2022 biological surveys or during focus dry season and wet season fairy shrimp surveys conducted from August of 2022 to May of 2023, so the species is assumed to be absent.

CRITICAL HABITAT

The USFWS's online service for information regarding Threatened and Endangered Species Final Critical Habitat designation within California was reviewed to determine if any species designated Critical Habitat occurs within the Project Footprint. Critical Habitat for Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pullisus*), Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*), and Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) occurs within 500 feet north/northwest of the Project Footprint; refer to [Figure 4.4-3, USFWS Critical Habitat](#). No critical habitat occurs within the Project Footprint.

WILDLIFE MOVEMENT

Wildlife corridors link together areas of suitable habitat that are otherwise separated by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. The fragmentation of open space areas by urbanization creates isolated "islands" of wildlife habitat. Corridors effectively act as links between different populations of a species. An increase in a population's genetic variability is generally associated with an increase in a population's health.

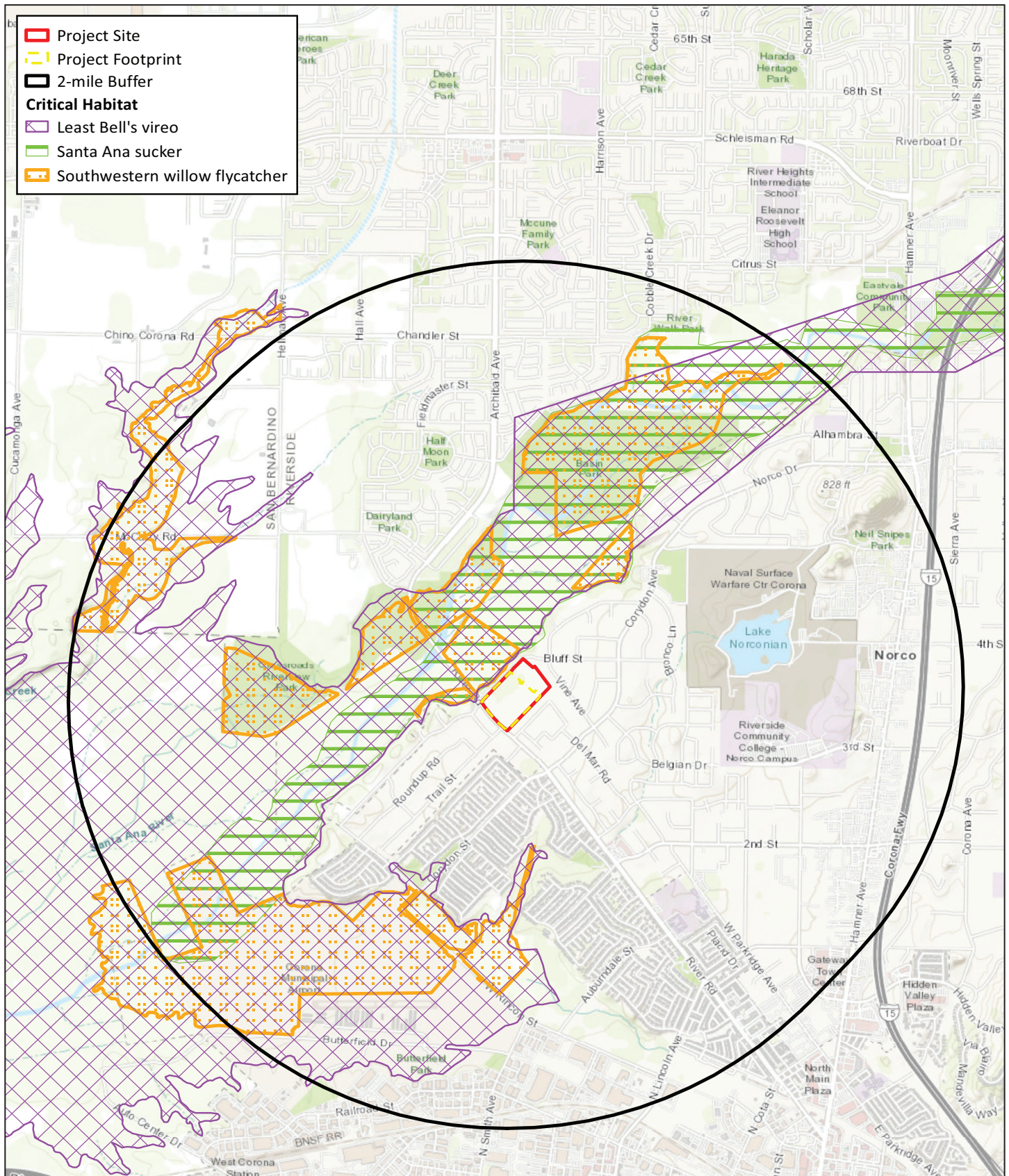
Corridors mitigate the effects of habitat fragmentation by:

- Allowing wildlife to move between remaining habitats, which allows depleted populations to be replenished and promotes genetic diversity;
- Providing escape routes from fire, predators, and human disturbances, thus reducing the risk that catastrophic events (such as fires or disease) will result in population or local species extinction; and
- Serving as travel routes for individual wildlife species as they move within their home ranges in search of food, water, mates, and other needs (Fahrig and Merriam 1985, Simberloff and Cox 1987, Harris and Gallagher 1989).

Wildlife movement activities usually fall into one of three movement categories:

- Dispersal (e.g., juvenile animals from natal areas, individuals extending range distributions);
- Seasonal migration; and
- Movements related to home range activities (foraging for food or water, defending territories, searching for mates, breeding areas, or cover).

The project site is surrounded by residential development and the Santa Ana River is within 500 feet of the project site. The Project Footprint itself is comprised of fields dominated by non-native grasses and forbs. Because the site has open fields, the Project Footprint plays a minor role in local wildlife dispersal and foraging. Common wildlife species including coyotes, skunks, opossums, and raccoons may travel through the site and neighboring developed or open areas, but the site does not provide connectivity between large areas of open space on a local or regional scale. The site is not within a significant regional wildlife movement corridor and is not considered to play a significant role in regional wildlife movement.



Source: ESRI, USFWS and Bing; February 2024.

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
 Environmental Impact Report
 USFWS Critical Habitat



Avian Nesting and Bat Roosts

There is potential for avian nesting within the Project Footprint. The open fields provide suitable habitat for ground-nesting avian species. The few trees onsite provide suitable habitat for tree nesting avian species. The palm trees are potentially suitable bat roosting habitat within the Project Footprint. There are a few solitary trees adjacent to the residential section of the site that can also be used for tree nesting species. The biologists did not observe signs of nests, nesting activity or bat roosting within the Project Footprint during the January 18, 2022, biological survey.

JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

The project lies within the Santa Ana Watershed within Temescal Hydrologic Subarea (801.25), of the Middle Santa Ana River Hydrologic Area (801.20), of the Santa Ana River Hydrologic Subarea (801.00). The closest significant aquatic feature to the site is the Santa Ana River, located approximately 500 feet to the north-northwest.

There are no streambed or drainage features containing waters of the United States or waters of the State within the Project Footprint. A rainwater catch basin was constructed by the owner as requested by the City about 20 years ago. This basin does not connect to any drainages or waterways offsite, it is only meant to collect rainwater onsite. There is no historic drainage course that connects to this basin, and the only source of water is rainfall.

Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)

The project is located within the San Jacinto Valley Area Plan of the MSHCP within the San Jacinto Habitat Management Unit. The project site is not located within an MSHCP Criteria Cell or Cell Group. As such, the project is not subject to the Joint Project Review (JPR) or Habitat Acquisition and Negotiation (HANS) processes.

The project is not located on Public Quasi-Public (PQP) lands. The nearest PQP lands are within the Santa Ana River corridor approximately 200 feet north of the project site. The project will not directly impact PQP lands, however potential indirect impacts to these lands exist. To ensure the project does not cause adverse effects to PQP lands, such as noise, dust, and runoff, appropriate BMP's will be implemented during project construction. River Road, which is directly southwest of the project site, and Bluff Street, which is directly northwest of the project site, are identified as Covered Roads on the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority's MSHCP Information Map. Covered roads have allowable widths assigned to them as provided in the MSHCP Covered Roads data layer. All project components including but not limited to landscaping, safety requirements, curb and gutter, manufactured slopes, fuel modification zones, etc., should be within the allowable width. Project components outside of the allowable width could require land replacement at equivalent or superior biological value. River Road is considered a major covered road while Bluff Street is considered a secondary covered road.

The proposed project is not located within an MSHCP Conservation Area; however, the project site is located within 1,000 feet of the Santa Ana River which is a Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) Conserved Land which is considered a part of the MSHCP Conservation Area. Due to the proximity of the site to the PQP Lands, the project must comply with the guidelines pertaining to the urban/wildlands interface.

4.4.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Federal Endangered Species Act

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) designates threatened and endangered animals and plants and provides measures for their protection and recovery. The Take of listed animal and plant species in areas under the federal jurisdiction is prohibited without obtaining a federal permit. A Take is defined as to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect or attempt to engage in any such conduct. Harm includes any act which kills or injures fish or wildlife, including significant habitat modification or degradation that significantly impairs essential behavioral patterns of fish or wildlife. Activities that damage the habitat of listed species require approval from USFWS for terrestrial species or from National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for marine species. FESA also requires determination of critical habitat for listed species and impacts to the critical habitat is prohibited. ESA contains two pathways for obtaining permission to take listed species. Under Section 7 of FESA, a federal agency that authorizes, funds or carries out a project that may affect a listed species or its critical habitat must consult with USFWS or NMFS to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or modification of the critical habitat of these species. A Biological Opinion (BO) would be prepared by USFWS and NMFS to determine if the activity would jeopardize the continued existence of the listed species. If the BO determines that the activity would not threaten the existence of the listed species and a no jeopardy opinion is provided, then the project may proceed. If the BO finds that the project would result in jeopardy to the listed species (jeopardy opinion), then reasonable and prudent measures would need to be incorporated into the project to reduce potential effects to a level that would not be likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the species. Under Section 10 of FESA, private parties with no federal nexus may obtain an Incidental Take Permit to harm listed wildlife species incidental to the lawful operation of a project. To obtain an Incidental Take Permit, the applicant must develop a habitat management plan that specifies impacts to listed species and provides conservation measures and alternatives to minimize impacts. If USFWS finds that the habitat conservation measures would not appreciably reduce the likelihood of the survival and recovery of the species, USFWS would issue an incidental take permit.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act implements international treaties between the United States and other nations that protect migratory birds, including their nests and eggs, from killing, hunting, pursuing, capturing, selling and shipping unless expressly authorized or permitted.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates the discharge (temporary or permanent) of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. including wetlands. A discharge of fill material includes, but is not limited to, grading, placing riprap for erosion control, pouring concrete, and stockpiling excavated material into waters of the U.S. Activities that generally do not involve a regulated discharge (if performed specifically in a manner to avoid discharges) include driving pilings, performing certain drainage channel maintenance activities, constructing temporary mining and farm/forest roads, and excavating without stockpiling.

A *Final Clean Water Rule: Definition of “Waters of the United States”* was published in the Federal Register on June 29, 2015. The rule became effective on August 28, 2015; however, after numerous lawsuits were filed challenging the regulation and on October 9, 2015, a federal appeals court (6th Circuit) issued a nationwide stay of the 2015 Final CWA rule, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and USACE issued a joint memorandum on November 16, 2015 that “agencies will implement the prior regulatory definition of Waters of the United States,” as clarified by the 2008 Rapanos Guidance and that the agencies should follow the 2007 USACE EPA joint memorandum on coordination, as modified by the January 2008 USACE memorandum. A new ruling was made on January 23, 2020 that supersedes this ruling. On March 20, 2023, the United States Environmental Protection Agency and USACE’s new rule concerning identification of waters of the United States took effect. On May 25, 2023, the United States Supreme Court issued its decision in *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency*, significantly narrowing the scope of federal jurisdiction over wetlands under the Clean Water Act:

To assert jurisdiction over an adjacent wetland under the CWA, a party must establish “first, that the adjacent [body of water constitutes] . . . ‘water[s] of the United States’ (i.e., a relatively permanent body of water connected to traditional interstate navigable waters); and second, that the wetland has a continuous surface connection with that water, making it difficult to determine where the ‘water’ ends and the ‘wetland’ begins.”

Jurisdictional non-wetland waters of the United States are typically determined through the observation of an Ordinary High Water Mark, which is defined as the “line on the shore established by the fluctuation of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as a clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas” (33 CFR 328.3(e)). As identified in the *Sackett* ruling, waters of the United States must also be a relatively permanent body of water. Therefore, ephemeral drainages are no longer considered jurisdictional by the USACE.

STATE

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was enacted in 1970 to provide for full disclosure of environmental impacts before issuance of a permit by a state or local public agency. In addition to state and federally listed species, sensitive plants and animals receive consideration under CEQA. Sensitive species include wildlife Species of Special Concern listed by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and plant species on the California Native Plant Society list 1A, 1B or 2.

California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) provides protection and prohibits the take of plant, fish and wildlife species listed by the State of California. Unlike FESA, state-listed plants have the same degree of protection as wildlife. A Take is defined similarly to FESA and it is prohibited for both listed and candidate species. A Take authorization may be obtained from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) under Section 2091 and 2081 of CESA. Section 2091 of CESA, like Section 7 of FESA provides for consultation between a state lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act and CDFW, with issuance of take authorization if the project does not jeopardize the listed species.

Section 2081 of CESA allows the take of a listed species for educational, scientific or management purposes.

California Fish and Game Code Section 1600

The State of California regulates water resources under Section 1600-1616 of the California Fish and Game Code through the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW). Section 1602 states:

“An entity may not substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of, or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of, any river, stream, or lake, or deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake.”

CDFW jurisdiction includes ephemeral, intermittent and perennial watercourses and extends to the top of the bank of a stream or lake if unvegetated, or to the limit of the adjacent riparian habitat located contiguous to the watercourse if the stream or lake is vegetated. In accordance with Section 1600 of the Fish and Game Code, CDFW must be notified prior to beginning any activity that would obstruct or divert the natural flow of, use material from or deposit or dispose of material into a river, stream, or lake, whether permanent, intermittent or ephemeral water bodies. The notification occurs through the issuance of a Streambed Alteration Agreement. CDFW has 60 days to review the proposed actions and propose measures to protect affected fish and wildlife resources. The final proposal that is mutually agreed upon by CDFW and the Applicant is the Streambed Alteration Agreement.

California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3513, 3800, 3801

These California Fish and Game Code Sections protect all birds, birds of prey and all non-game birds, as well as their eggs and nests, for species that are not already listed as fully protected and that occur naturally within the State. Specifically, it is unlawful to take any raptors or their nests and eggs.

REGIONAL

Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

The project is located within the MSHCP and will therefore need to comply with provisions and regulations set forth by the MSHCP. Section 6 of the MSHCP states that all projects must be reviewed for compliance with plan policies pertaining to Riparian/Riverine resources, Criteria resources, Narrow Endemic Plant Species, urban/wildlands interface, and additional survey needs as applicable.

Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board

The Regional Water Quality Control Board regulates activities pursuant to Section 401(a)(1) of the Federal CWA. Section 401 of the CWA specifies that certification from the State is required for any applicant requesting a federal license or permit to conduct any activity including, but not limited to, the construction or operation of facilities that may result in any discharge into navigable waters.

RWQCB also regulates discharge of waste to waters of the State pursuant to California’s Porter Cologne Act, enacted in 1969, which provides the legal basis for water quality regulation within California. Under this Act, “Waters of the State” is defined by the act as “any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state.” Should the RWQCB determine that discharge of pollutants (including fill) is proposed to waters that meet the definition of ‘Waters of the State’ but not ‘Waters of the U.S.’, a Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) would be required.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and policies from the City of Norco General Plan Conservation Element:

- GOAL 2.8: Wildlife Resources. Conserve and protect natural plant and animal communities, as well as critical habitats for endangered species.
- Policy 2.8.1: Localized Wildlife Protection. For project sites with isolated wildlife features not subject to protection by the MSHCP including ponds, tree groves, vegetated groves, vegetated drainage swales, etc., conserve and protect such areas as much as feasibly possible in open space areas as part of an overall landscaping plan.
- Policy 2.8.2: Biological Assessment. As part of the development review process for all development proposals, the City should require habitat and biological assessments in areas expected to contain significant or important plant and wildlife communities identifying species types and locations.
- Policy 2.8.3: Wildlife Impact Mitigation. The City should require development that has been found to have a potential adverse impact on sensitive species habitat to mitigate the potential impacts of proposed habitat changes.
- Policy 2.8.4: Regional Habitat Protection. Maintain membership and active participation in the Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) of the Riverside Conservation Authority.
 - Policy 2.8.4a: Implement the requirements of the MSHCP for public and private development projects including the collection of mitigation fees.
 - Policy 2.8.4b: Comply with the “Other Plan Requirements” of the MSHCP including requirements for: Riparian/Riverine and Fairy Shrimp Habitat; Narrow Endemic Plants; Criteria Area Survey Species; and Urban/Wildlife Interface Guidelines.
 - Policy 2.8.4c: Employ Best Management Practices of the MS HCP in project siting and design for both public and private development projects.
 - Policy 2.8.4d: For projects within a Criteria Cell, transmit project information to the Riverside Conservation Authority for a Joint Project Review.
- Policy 2.8.6: Natural Vegetation. Review all new development so as to remove only the minimal amount of natural vegetation as possible and require revegetation of graded areas with native plant species consistent with public safety requirements.
- Policy 2.8.7: Wildlife Migratory Corridor. Protect and enhance known wildlife migratory corridors and help create new corridors whenever possible.

Policy 2.8.8: Santa Ana River Corridor. Continue to cooperate in the removal and eradication of the Arundo plant community in the Santa Ana River area, along with efforts to reestablish native vegetation again.

4.4.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **BIO-1:** Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- **BIO-2:** Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- **BIO-3:** Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- **BIO-4:** 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?
- **BIO-5:** Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- **BIO-6:** Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

4.4.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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

The project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES

Development of the Project Footprint would result in the direct removal of non-native trees, herbaceous forbs, and common ruderal plant species. Common plant species present within the Project Footprint occur in large numbers throughout the region and their removal does not meet the

significance threshold. Based on the high levels of disturbance, low habitat quality and the lack of detection of any special-status plants during the biological and focus plant surveys, the project is not expected to impact any special-status plant species. Based on the habitat found onsite and no sensitive species observed during biological surveys, no direct impacts are expected to occur as a result of the project.

SENSITIVE WILDLIFE SPECIES

Development of the Project Footprint would result in the disruption and removal of non-native habitat. Due to the lack of native habitat and the level of existing disturbance from previous agricultural activity onsite, these impacts would not be expected to reduce the general wildlife populations below self-sustaining levels within the region and impacts to non-sensitive wildlife species do not meet the significance thresholds. Due to the disturbed nature of the site, surrounding development, and through compliance with the MSHCP, impacts from the project are anticipated to have a less than significant effect on these wildlife species.

Although no sensitive wildlife species were observed within the Project Footprint during the field survey, four wildlife species have moderate potential to occur including Swainson's hawk, grasshopper sparrow, burrowing owl, and the western yellow bat.

Swainson's Hawk

Swainson's hawks are open-country birds that are commonly found in open habitats for foraging such as grassland, prairie lands, grazing and agricultural land. This species has a moderate potential to occur within the Project Footprint for foraging during the breeding season, however, the site lacks suitable nesting habitat for the species. Since removal of vegetation could result in impacts to foraging for this species, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 shall be implemented.

Grasshopper Sparrow

The Project Footprint supports marginally suitable habitat for the species. The site is highly disturbed as a result of the agricultural activities in the past, however, the potential for the species to occur on the Project Footprint is moderate due to suitable foraging habitat. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, impacts to foraging for the grasshopper sparrow from the proposed project are considered less than significant.

Burrowing Owl

Burrowing owls have moderate potential to occur within the Project Footprint. Although no owls or sign of owls were observed within the Project Footprint during the 2022 surveys, suitable sized burrows do occur within the Project Footprint, therefore, a 30-day pre-construction survey to determine presence/absence of the species is recommended.

Burrowing owls are covered by special survey requirements of the MSHCP. In order to avoid potential impacts to this species, mitigation measures are proposed which include conducting a burrowing owl survey and implementation of avoidance measures, if present. It should be noted that the burrowing owl, although a "covered" species under the MSHCP, also receives protection under FGC and MBTA, therefore, surveys and mitigation would be required regardless of the species location within the Plan Area. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would ensure that potential impacts to burrowing owls would be less than significant.

Western Yellow Bat

There is a moderate potential for the western yellow bat to occur within the Project Footprint. The Western yellow bat may roost in untrimmed palm trees; therefore, bat surveys should be conducted prior to vegetation removal/site disturbance to confirm presence/absence of bat species within the Project Footprint. To reduce any potential indirect and direct impacts to bats to less than significant, Mitigation Measure BIO-3 shall be implemented.

Fairy Shrimp

The Project Footprint includes a catch basin for rainfall that was constructed by the property owner about 20 years ago. This basin and other small depressions throughout the site have low-moderate potential to contain sensitive fairy shrimp species. Since there is potential suitable habitat onsite for sensitive fairy shrimp species, the MSHCP requires fairy shrimp surveys to be conducted to confirm presence/absence of sensitive species. A survey conducted on January 18, 2023 as well as dry and wet season focus surveys in 2022 and 2023 found no fairy shrimp were present within the Project Footprint. Therefore, no future mitigation for the species is required.

Mitigation Measures:

BIO-1: Vegetation removal activities shall be conducted outside the nesting season (September 1 to February 14 for songbirds; September 1 to January 14 for raptors) to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds.

Any construction activities that occur during the nesting season (February 15 to August 31 for songbirds; January 15 to August 31 for raptors) will require that all suitable habitats within 500 feet of the project site be thoroughly surveyed for the presence of nesting birds by a qualified biologist within three days before commencement of vegetation clearing/ground disturbance activities. If any active nests are detected, a buffer of 500 feet of an active listed species or raptor nest, 300 feet of other sensitive bird nests (non-listed), and 100 feet of most common songbird nests will be delineated, flagged, and avoided until the nesting cycle is complete. The buffer may be modified and/or other recommendations proposed as determined appropriate by the biological monitor to minimize impacts.

BIO-2: A pre-construction/clearance burrowing owl survey shall be performed not more than 30 days prior to initial ground disturbance activity to formally determine presence/absence of the species. A qualified biologist will survey the project site and a buffer zone, 500-foot outside the project limits for burrows that could be used by burrowing owls. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow will be flagged, and a 160-foot diameter buffer will be established during non-breeding season or a 250-foot diameter buffer during the breeding season. If burrows onsite are unoccupied, construction may proceed.

If the site survey determines the presence of burrowing owl, mitigation in accordance with the CDFW and the MSHCP shall be implemented as follows:

- If burrowing owls are identified as being resident onsite outside the breeding season (September 1 to February 14) they may be relocated to other sites by a permitted biologist (permitted by CDFW), as allowed in the CDFW *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (March 2012).

- If an active burrow is found during the breeding season, the burrow shall be treated as a nest site and temporary fencing shall be installed at a distance from the active burrow, to be determined by the biologist, to prevent disturbance during grading or construction. Installation and removal of the fencing shall be done with a biological monitor present.
- Active relocation and eviction/passive relocation require the preservation and maintenance of suitable burrowing owl habitat determined through coordination with the Wildlife Agencies.

BIO-3: Trees, large shrubs, and structures shall be surveyed for the presence of special status bat species by a qualified bat biologist no more than two weeks prior to the initiation of vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities if work will begin within the maternity season (March 1 to August 31). Surveys may entail direct inspection of the trees, large shrubs, and structures or nighttime surveys as determined by a qualified biologist. If active bat roosts are present, a qualified bat biologist shall determine the species of bats present and the type of roost (i.e., day roost, night roost, maternity roost). If special-status bat species are present, a qualified bat biologist shall determine appropriate avoidance measures, which may include implementation of a construction-free buffer around the active roost.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT BIO-2: Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As shown in Table 4.4-2, *Potential Impacts to Vegetation Communities within the Project Footprint*, the land cover within the Project Footprint consists of herbaceous Non-native Forbs and Grasses, Ornamental, and Disturbed/Developed area, which are not considered sensitive vegetation communities. Additionally, the Project Footprint does not contain riparian habitats identified or otherwise regulated under any local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 4.4-2
Potential Impacts to Vegetation Communities within the Project Footprint

Vegetation Community/Land Cover Type	Project Footprint (acres)
Herbaceous Non-Native Forbs and Grasses	17.8
Ornamental	0.5
Disturbed/Developed	9.3
Total	27.6

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT BIO-3: Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. The Project Footprint does not contain any jurisdictional waters or wetlands regulated under the CWA that occur within the Project Footprint. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT BIO-4: Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The project would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. The Project Footprint could serve a function in local wildlife dispersal and foraging; however, due to the disturbed nature of the site and the degraded habitats, the loss of foraging habitat and/or effect on local wildlife movement would be less than significant. No long-term or significant effects to wildlife movement are anticipated due to project implementation. Because the Project Footprint does not lie within a MSHCP-designated wildlife corridor and is adjacent to residential development, the proposed project is not anticipated to have significant impacts related to habitat fragmentation and regional wildlife movement.

No direct impacts are expected to occur to migratory wildlife species, however, there are nearby occurrences and critical habitat within the Santa Ana River which is within 500 feet of the Project Footprint that could result in indirect construction noise impacts that could disrupt the breeding patterns of the following species: least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow warbler, and western yellow-billed cuckoo. To avoid potential indirect impacts to these species, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 shall be implemented to reduce indirect construction noise impacts to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Mitigation Measure BIO-1 is required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT BIO-5: Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. The City has no local policies or ordinances that would pertain to the protection of biological resources other than the implementation of the MSHCP. Additionally, the City has no ordinances regarding the preservation of trees on private property; however, City Ordinance No. 1024 states removal or trimming of any trees within a public right-of-way requires a written permit from the Public Works Department. The proposed project would not require the removal of trees within the public right-of-way. Therefore, no conflicts with City Ordinance No. 1024 would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

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

The project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. The project is located within the MSHCP and will therefore need to comply with provisions and regulations set forth by the MSHCP. Section 6 of the MSHCP states that all projects must be reviewed for compliance with plan policies pertaining to Riparian/Riverine resources, Criteria resources, Narrow Endemic Plant Species, urban/wildlands interface, and additional survey needs as applicable.

The proposed Project Footprint was assessed for MSHCP Section 6.1.2 resources, including riparian/riverine resources, vernal pools, fairy shrimp, and riparian birds.

RIPARIAN/RIVERINE

The Project Footprint does not contain any MSHCP riverine/riparian resources. A rainwater catch basin was constructed by the owner as requested by the City about 20 years ago. This basin does not connect to any drainages or waterways offsite, it is only meant to collect rainwater. There is no historic drainage course that connects to this basin, and the only source of water is rainfall. No future mitigation is required.

VERNAL POOLS AND FAIRY SHRIMP

The entire Project Footprint was assessed for potential vernal pool habitat during the January 18, 2022, biological survey. In addition, the following sources were reviewed to aid in the site assessment for vernal pool habitat: National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), current and historic aerial imagery, and NRCS Soil Survey. No fairy shrimp were observed during the January 18, 2023, biological survey or the 2022 and 2023 dry and wet season focus surveys. No future mitigation for this species is required.

RIPARIAN BIRDS

The MSHCP lists five bird species for protection based off association with riparian/riverine and vernal pool habitats. These species include bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), least Bell's vireo peregrine

falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), southwestern willow flycatcher and western, yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*). No riparian, riverine, or vernal pool resources occur onsite; therefore, an assessment of riparian bird habitat is not required, and no impacts to these species are anticipated to occur, and no future mitigation is required.

PROTECTION OF NARROW ENDEMIC PLANT SPECIES

A portion of the project site occurs within a Narrow Endemic Plant Survey Area for the following species:

- Brand's phacelia (*Phacelia stellaris*)
- San Diego ambrosia (*Ambrosia pumila*)
- San Miguel savory (*Clinopodium chandleri*)

No Narrow Endemic Plant Species were observed within the Project Footprint during the 2022 botanical surveys. Based on the lack of suitable habitat, Narrow Endemic Plant species are not expected to occur within the project. Therefore, no mitigation is proposed.

CRITERIA AREA PLANT SPECIES

The project does not fall within the mapped survey area for Criteria Area Plant Species.

AMPHIBIANS

The project does not fall within the mapped survey area for amphibian species.

BURROWING OWL

No burrowing owl, nor signs thereof were observed within the burrowing owl survey area; therefore, impacts to burrowing owl are not anticipated. However, focused surveys were conducted in 2022 during the breeding season to confirm absence.

Although burrowing owls were not observed within the Project Footprint during the 2022 surveys, the Project Footprint contains habitat suitable for burrowing owl. A pre-construction survey will be conducted within 30 days prior to ground disturbance of the property including vegetation clearing, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, or site watering. If burrowing owl have colonized the Project Footprint prior to initiation of construction, the project proponent will immediately inform the City and Wildlife Agencies and will need to prepare a Burrowing Owl Protection and Relocation Plan as well as a Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) for approval by the City and the Wildlife Agencies prior to initiating ground disturbance. Additionally, if ground-disturbing activities occur, but the site is left undisturbed for more than 30 days, a pre-construction survey will again be necessary to ensure burrowing owl have not colonized the site since it was last disturbed. If burrowing owl are found, the same coordination described above will be necessary.

MAMMALS

The proposed project does not fall within a mapped survey area for mammals.

DELHI SANDS FLOWER LOVING FLY

Delhi soil types are not mapped within the proposed Project Footprint, and therefore, no surveys are required for the Delhi sands flower-loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*).

GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO THE URBAN/WILDLANDS INTERFACE

Guidelines for the Urban/Wildlands Interface (MSHCP Section 6.1.4) are discussed in this section to address indirect effects associated with project activities in proximity to MSHCP Conservation Areas. PQP lands, which are considered MSHCP Conservation Areas, exist north of the Project Footprint. The guidelines present detailed recommendations for the following issues: drainage, toxics, barriers, lighting, noise, manufactured slopes, and invasives. Each of these issues is addressed below.

Drainage

During construction, the implementation of standard BMPs such as the use of sandbags/straw wattles/gravel bags, silt fencing, and staging outside of drainages will minimize discharge of sediment, debris, and hazardous materials to onsite and downstream aquatic resources. Further information regarding these BMPs can be found in Section 11.0 of the Biological Technical Report ([Appendix C](#)).

In accordance with the City of Norco Municipal Code, the project would implement a Water Quality Management Plan that would retain and infiltrate stormwater runoff. A series of storm drain lines and curbs and gutters would convey stormwater flows to a 0.52-acre water quality detention basin. The proposed project would be graded to allow all lots to drain to the public street. No cross-lot drainage would be provided. The proposed storm management improvements would connect to existing storm management facilities within the Project Footprint. The existing storm drain catch basin at the intersection of Bluff Street and River Road would be relocated and would be replaced as part of the widening of River Road.

Through the implementation/installation of BMPs, the project will not contribute significantly to deposition, siltation, or erosion of downstream features.

Toxins

Measures addressed in the previous section (*Drainage*) will be employed to prevent toxins from entering into the nearby unnamed drainages and the downstream MSHCP Conservation Area.

The project will be converting from agricultural operations to residential use and would be expected to improve water quality. Any chemicals used on site would be those commonly used in residential areas, such as fertilizers and herbicides used on project landscaping, all of which would be used in accordance with applicable laws and regulations to prevent discharge to the MSHCP Conservation Area. Water quality basin will be constructed as part of the project, which will filter contaminants and debris from all stormwater runoff, such as trash, sediment, metals, and nutrients.

Lighting

Night lighting used during construction, and any lighting installed for post-construction purposes, shall be shielded, and directed away from the MSHCP Conservation Area.

Noise

The project proposes to develop a residential development. These uses are not expected to exceed typical residential noise standards. The project will not expose wildlife in the Santa Ana River to noise that would exceed residential noise standards because the project proposes residential use and must comply with the City's noise standards for residential use.

Invasives

As stated in BMP #12 in Section 11.0 of the Biological Technical Report ([Appendix C](#)), exotic species that displace target species of concern shall be permanently removed from the site to the extent feasible. In addition, the project will not incorporate into the landscaping any species listed in Table 6-2 *Plants that should be avoided adjacent to the MSHCP Conservation Area* of the MSHCP.

Grading

Manufactured slopes are not proposed within existing or planned MSHCP Conservation Areas.

Barriers

Barriers shall be used to minimize unauthorized access, domestic animal travel, trespass, and dumping within the adjacent unnamed drainages. Such barriers may include native landscaping, rocks/boulders, fencing, walls, signage, and/or other appropriate mechanisms.

MSHCP Consistency Determination

The project would be consistent with the MSHCP based on the analysis and determinations made above. The Project Footprint is not located within or near an MSHCP Criteria Cell, Cell Group, or PQP land. The Project Footprint also lacks MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riparian/riverine resources, vernal pools, and presence of sensitive vegetation communities. None of the three Narrow Endemic Plant species are expected to occur within the project based on the lack of suitable habitat. The project is not located within an MSHCP Amphibian, Mammal, or Criteria Area Plant Species Survey Area; therefore, no surveys were required. The majority of the project is within the MSHCP Burrowing Owl Survey Area, therefore, a Habitat Assessment and focused surveys for burrowing owl was conducted in 2022. No burrowing owl or active signs thereof were detected within or near the Project Footprint. A 30-day preconstruction survey for burrowing owl will be conducted prior to the initiation of construction to ensure protection for this species and compliance with the conservation goals as outlined in the MSHCP. Potential suitable habitat for sensitive fairy shrimp species was observed onsite. However, no fairy shrimp were found during a January 18, 2023 survey or during the 2022 and 2023 dry and wet season fairy shrimp focus surveys. Therefore, no mitigation measures will be required for this species.

The project falls within the MSHCP Planning Area. The MSHCP designates 21 conservation areas within its Planning Area which have increased protections for covered species; refer to [Figure 4.4-4, MSHCP Designation Map](#). The project does not fall within any areas designated as conservation areas in the MSHCP. Additionally, the Project Footprint consists of disturbed land which is unlikely to support suitable habitat for species protected under the MSHCP. Because the proposed project falls within the MSHCP Planning Area, it will be required to pay a mitigation fee which will be used to ensure that future funds are available to meet the conservation goals of the MSHCP. Payment of mitigation fees as shown in Mitigation Measure BIO-4 would ensure compliance with the MSHCP, and therefore impacts to covered species would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

BIO-4: MSHCP Mitigation Fee. The project proponent shall be required to pay the City of Norco local development mitigation fees prior to issuance of a building permit. The most current rates are as follows (future developments may be subject to updated fees):

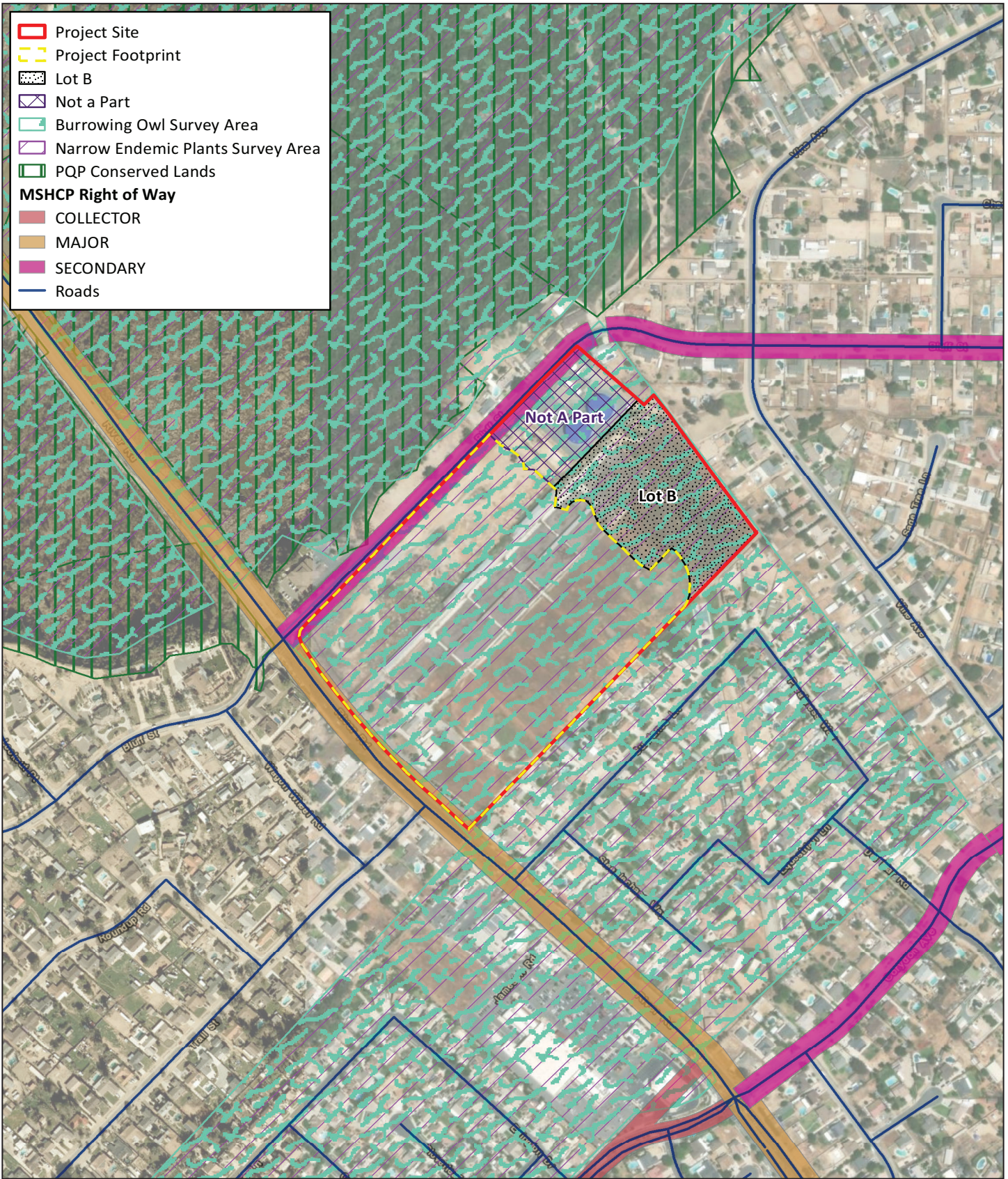
Category	Current Fee as of 1 January 2022
Commercial/Industrial	\$16,358/acre
Residential	
0-8 Units per acre	\$3,635/unit
8.1-14 Units per acre	\$1,515/unit
14+ Units per acre	\$670/unit

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

4.4.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco General Plan, *Conservation Element*. Update Adoption Date: December 17, 2014.

VCS Environmental, *Biological Technical Report for the JD Ranch Residential Project*. March 2024.



Source: ESRI, MDS Consulting and RCA Information Map; February 2024.



4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.5.1 INTRODUCTION

Cultural resources comprise paleontological, archaeological, and historical resources. Paleontological resources are the fossilized remains of plants and animals. Archaeology is the branch of paleontology that studies human artifacts, such as places, objects, and settlements that reflect group or individual religious, cultural, or everyday activities. Historical resources include sites, structures, objects, or places that are at least 50 years old and are significant for their engineering, architecture, cultural use, or association, etc. In California, historic resources cover human activities over the past 12,000 years. Cultural resources provide information on scientific progress, environmental adaptations, group ideology, or other human advancements.

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following information:

- *Phase 1 Cultural Resources Assessment*, VCS Environmental, February 2024 ([Appendix D1](#)).
- *Historical Resource Analysis Report*, Urbana Preservation & Planning, LLC, October 2022, revised February 2024 ([Appendix D2](#)).

4.5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Cultural resources include prehistoric archaeological sites, historic archaeological sites, historic structures, and artifacts made by people in the past. Prehistoric archaeological sites are places that contain the material remains of activities carried out by the native population of the area (Native Americans) prior to the arrival of Europeans in southern California. Artifacts found in prehistoric sites include flaked stone tools such as projectile points, knives, scrapers, and drills; ground stone tools such as manos, metates, mortars, and pestles for grinding seeds and nuts; and bone tools. Historic archaeological sites are places that contain the material remains of activities carried out by people during the period when written records were produced after the arrival of Europeans. Historic archaeological material usually consists of refuse, such as bottles, cans, and food waste deposited near structure foundations.

PRE-HISTORIC CONTEXT

A long-standing tenet of New World archaeology has been that humans did not arrive in the western hemisphere until about 12,000 to 13,000 Years Before Present (YBP). Increasingly, researchers are arguing for earlier dates of entry, but the evidence has not been universally accepted by archaeologists. With more recent evidence, that is changing (Dillehay & Collins 1988, Dixon 1993; Adovasio and Page 2002; Johnson et al. 2002; Dillehay et al. 2015, Holen et al. 2017); the most recent being the discovery of 21,000- to 23,000-year-old human footprints preserved in an ancient lakeshore in White Sands National Park in New Mexico (Bennett et al. 2021).

Most of the generally accepted early remains indicate a very small, mobile population apparently dependent on hunting large game animals as the primary subsistence strategy. While early populations certainly used other resources, the bulk of the few traces remaining today are related to large game hunting. This situation results from the fact that hunting equipment involved many lithic tools that do not decay, while the remainder of the population's material culture was of wood or leather, which are more subject to attrition through taphonomic (post depositional processes)

factors. Therefore, lithic artifacts are the only surviving material from the Paleo-Indian Period. These consist primarily of large and extremely well-made projectile points and large but cruder tools such as scrapers and choppers. Encampments were not permanent but were probably sited near a major kill. Occupation would have lasted only until the resources of that kill were exhausted. Such an economy, using only a small fraction of the available resources would not have supported a large population. It is probable that the Paleo-Indians lived in groups no larger than extended families and that contact with other such groups was infrequent. However, recent evidence suggests that some very early people may have had a more sedentary lifestyle and probably relied upon a variety of resources (see Adovasio and Page 2002 for a discussion of the Monte Verde, Chile site).

Several chronologies are generally used to describe the sequence of the later prehistoric periods of coastal southern California. William Wallace (1955) developed the first comprehensive California chronologies and defines four periods for the southern coastal region. Wallace's synthesis is largely "descriptive and classificatory, emphasizing the content of archaeological cultures and the relationships among them" (Moratto 1984:159). Wallace relies upon the concept of cultural horizons, which are generally defined by the temporal and spatial distribution of a set of normative cultural traits, such as the distribution of a group of commonly associated artifact types. As a result, his model does not allow for much cultural variation within the same time period, nor does it provide precise chronological dates for each temporal division. Nevertheless, although now over 65 years old, the general schema of the Wallace chronology has provided a general framework for southern California prehistory that is summarized below.

By the late 1960s, radiocarbon dates and assemblage data were more widely available for many southern California archaeological sites. Based on these new data, Warren (1968) synthesized southern California prehistory into five traditions which, unlike Wallace's horizons, account for more regional variation within each time period. Defined as "a generic unit comprising historically related phases", traditions were not strictly sequential temporal units (Warren 1968). That is, different traditions could co-exist in the same region or in neighboring regions at the same time. Others have used the terms Early, Middle, and Late Holocene to characterize southern California prehistory (Byrd & Raab 2007).

Horizon I: Early Man or Paleo Indian Period (11,000 BCE to 7,500 BCE¹). While initially termed Early Man Horizon (I) by Wallace (1955), this early stage of human occupation is more commonly referred to as the Paleo Indian Period (Chartkoff and Chartkoff 1984:24). As discussed above, the precise start of this period is still a topic of considerable debate. At inland archaeological sites, the surviving material culture of this period is primarily lithic, consisting of large, extremely well made stone projectile points and tools such as scrapers and choppers. Encampments were probably temporary, located near major kills or important resource areas. The San Dieguito Tradition, defined by Warren at the stratified C.W. Harris site in San Diego County, is encompassed by this period of time (Moratto 1984:97).

Horizon II: Milling Stone Assemblages (7,500 BCE to 1,000 BCE). Encompassing a broad expanse of time, the Milling Stone Period was named for the abundant milling stone tools associated with sites of this period. These tools, the mano and metate, were used to process small, hard seeds from plants associated with shrub-scrub vegetation communities. An annual round of seasonal migrations was

¹ BCE stands for "Before Common Era" and CE stands for "Common Era". These alternative forms of "BC" and "AD", respectively, are used throughout this document.

likely practiced with movements coinciding with ripening vegetal resources and the periods of maximal availability of various animal resources. Along the coast, shell midden sites are common site types. Some formal burials, occasionally with associated grave goods, are also evident. This period of time is roughly equivalent to Warren's (1968) Encinitas Tradition. Warren (1968) suggests that, as milling stones are common and projectile points are comparatively rare during this time period, hunting was less important than the gathering of vegetable resources.

Later studies (Koerper 1981; Koerper and Drover 1983) suggested that a diversity of subsistence activities, including hunting of various game animals, were practiced during this time period. At present, little is known about cultural change during this period of time in southern California. While this lack of noticeable change gives the appearance of cultural stasis, almost certainly many regional and temporal cultural shifts did occur over the course of this time period. Future research that is focused on temporal change in the Milling Stone Period would greatly benefit the current understanding of southern California prehistory. One avenue of research that could help accomplish this goal would be a synthesis of the growing amount of archaeological "gray" literature involving cultural resource mitigation of Milling Stone Period sites in the Los Angeles County area.

Warren (1968) defined Wallace's Milling Stone Horizon in southern California as the Encinitas Tradition, further subdivided into regional expressions that exhibited common technological development. The Topanga Complex, used to express the general association between groups of artifacts, defines this culture for the entirety of the Los Angeles Basin including Orange County.

Most recently, Sutton & Gardner (2010) have reimagined the Encinitas Tradition based on more recent archaeological work in southern California that has revealed more regional differences within the Tradition. The term Topanga Complex (for the Los Angeles Basin) of the Encinitas Tradition is, to Sutton and Gardner, still valid; however, they suggest renaming it the Topanga Pattern to indicate similarities in cultural traits such as technology, settlement patterns, and mortuary practices. While they retained the terms proposed by Warren for the Los Angeles Basin, they proposed a distinction between coastal and inland groups based on those differences (Sutton & Gardner 2010:7).

Horizon III: Intermediate Cultures (1,000 BCE to 750 CE). The Intermediate Period is identified by a mixed strategy of plant exploitation, terrestrial hunting, and maritime subsistence strategies. Chipped stone tools (e.g., projectile points) generally decrease in size, but increase in number. Abundant bone and shell remains have been recovered from sites dating to these time periods. In coastal areas, the introduction of the circular shell fishhook and the growing abundance of fish remains in sites over the course of the period suggest a substantial increase in fishing activity during the Intermediate Period. It is also during this time period that mortar and pestle use intensified dramatically. The mano and metate continued to be in use on a reduced scale, but the greatly intensified use of the mortar and pestle signaled a shift away from a subsistence strategy based on seed resources to that of the acorn. It is probably during this time period that the acorn became the food staple of the majority of the indigenous tribes in southern California. This subsistence strategy continued until European contact. Material culture generally became more diverse and elaborate during this time period and included steatite containers, perforated stones, bone tools, ornamental items, and asphalt adhesive.

While Warren recognizes the start of the Campbell Tradition in the Santa Barbara region at roughly the beginning of the Intermediate Period, he did not see clear evidence of cultural change farther south. As a result, the Encinitas Tradition in southern California encompasses both the Milling Stone

and Intermediate Periods in Warren's chronology (1968:2, 4). However, the later chronological schema by Koerper and Drover (1983) clearly recognizes an Intermediate Period in southern California. They suggest that Warren's inability to recognize an intermediate cultural stage was likely due to "the lack of conclusive data in 1968" (1983:26).

Sutton (2010) reconceptualized the prehistory of the Los Angeles Basin, that encompasses Wallace's Intermediate and Late Periods and renaming it the Del Rey Tradition. It will be discussed below.

Horizon IV: Late Prehistoric Cultures (750 CE to 1769 CE). During the Late Prehistoric Period, exploitation of many food resources, particularly marine resources among coastal groups, continued to intensify. The material culture in the Late Prehistoric Horizon increased in complexity in terms of the abundance and diversity of artifacts being produced. The recovery and identification of a number of small projectile points during this time period likely suggests a greater utilization of the bow and arrow, which was likely introduced near the end of the Intermediate Period. Shell beads, ornaments, and other elements of material culture continue to be ornate, varied and widely distributed, the latter evidence suggestive of elaborate trade networks. Warren's (1968) scheme divides the late prehistoric period into several regional traditions. Western Riverside County, Orange County, and the Los Angeles Basin area are considered part of the "Shoshonean" tradition, which may be related to a possible incursion of Takic speakers into these areas during this period. The Late Prehistoric Period includes the first few centuries of early European contact (1542 CE to 1769 CE); this period is also known as the Protohistoric Period, as there was a low level of interaction between native Californians and Europeans prior to Portolá's overland expedition in 1769.

In the few centuries prior to European contact, the archaeological record reveals substantial increases in the indigenous population (Wallace 1955:223). Some village sites may have contained as many as 1,500 individuals. Apparently, many of these village sites were occupied throughout the year rather than seasonally. This shift in settlement strategy was likely influenced by improved food procurement and storage technology, which enabled population growth and may have helped stimulate changes in sociopolitical organization.

Evidence is growing that prehistoric cultural change has been much more variable through time and across culture areas than previously thought. Cultural traits such as maritime economies, seafaring, complex trade networks, and year-round occupation of villages appear to have developed much earlier than previously thought. Culture change during the Late Prehistoric Period, in particular, may have been driven more by environmental and resource pressures than optimal adaptation to the environment (Byrd and Raab 2007).

Based on some of the most recent archaeological work in the Los Angeles Basin and southern Channel Islands, Sutton (2010) proposes to replace the traditional Intermediate and Late Periods/Horizons with the Del Rey Tradition. Around 3,500 years BP, this Tradition replaced the Encinitas/Milling Stone with a modified material culture, a shift in settlement patterns, and new subsistence practices owing to the arrival of Takic populations from the east (Sutton 2010:3). The so-called "Shoshonean Wedge." These were the forerunners of the Gabrielino.

HISTORY

In California, the historic era is generally divided into three periods: the Spanish or Mission Period (1769 to 1821), the Mexican or Rancho Period (1821 to 1848), and the American Period (1848 to present). The Spanish Period is represented by exploration of the region; establishment of the San

Diego Presidio and missions at San Juan Capistrano, San Gabriel, and San Luis Rey; and the introduction of livestock, agricultural goods, and European architecture and construction techniques. The Old Spanish Trail, used by explorers, missionaries, and traders extended through the area.

The Mexican Period (1821-1848) began with Mexican independence from Spain and continued until the end of the Mexican-American War. The Secularization Act resulted in the transfer, through land grants (called ranchos) of large mission tracts to politically prominent individuals.

The American Period (1848-present) began with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and in 1850, California was accepted into the Union of the United States primarily due to the population increase created by the Gold Rush of 1849. The cattle industry reached its greatest prosperity during the first years of the American Period. Mexican Period land grants had created large pastoral estates in California, and demand for beef during the Gold Rush led to a cattle boom that lasted from 1849–1855. However, beginning about 1855, the demand for beef began to decline due to imports of sheep from New Mexico and cattle from the Mississippi and Missouri Valleys. When the beef market collapsed, many California ranchers lost their ranchos through foreclosure.

City of Norco

This history is adapted from the City of Norco’s website (Norco n.d.).

Norco was developer Rex Clark’s vision of a utopian settlement of independent farmers on small farms and ranches. Clark saw Norco as a refuge for city dwellers. However, Norco did not start with Rex Clark. At the turn of the twentieth century, the area that would become Norco consisted of the open range of Rancho La Sierra (Sepulveda). Unlike other rancho properties in southern California, this one remained undivided well past the boom years of the late nineteenth century. Its owner, the Stearns Rancho Company, held onto the land in hopes of selling it whole to a potential developer.

In 1908, Willits J. Hole and George Pillsbury paid \$500,000 to buy the land. Hole retained the portion of the rancho east of the Norco Hills and subdivided it into farm and town lot parcels, but also farmed a large portion of these lands for nearly 30 years. In the Norco Hills of Riverside, he built a beautiful stone mansion where he lived until his death in 1936.

Hole and Pillsbury sold most of the land west of the Norco Hills to what became the Citrus Belt Land Company. Citrus Belt platted Orchard Heights, a subdivision of farm lots consuming most of the land south of today’s Fifth Street. This tract became an area of successful farms yielding peaches, pears, apricots, alfalfa, peanuts, sweet potatoes, lettuce, and other vegetables. By 1922, with most of the lots sold, Citrus Belt Land Company sold its unsold lots and several thousand acres of un-subdivided land north of these tracts to Rex Clark. He promoted his development to the “average Joe” looking for a chance to make a living from the sweat of his brow. Clark named his new town “Norco” a contraction of the first two parts of his company’s name, the North Corona Land Company.

The town consisted of five Norco Farms subdivisions surrounding a village center containing a general store, gasoline station and the Norco Garage. North of the Norco Store, Clark created a manufacturing district with a warehouse, plumbing shop, pipe-making facility, concrete block-manufacturing operation, machine shop, lumber yard, and construction department. There, a Norco resident could arrange to have a home built, buy a prefabricated chicken coop, purchase irrigation pipes, buy a tractor or have one serviced. The Norco Store offered groceries, clothing, hardware, dry goods, auto parts, and other essentials. Early Norconians dined at the Norco Grill, gathered at a

meeting hall and checked out books at a library staffed by volunteers from the Women’s Progressive Club.

Upham’s Drug Store was built next door to the offices of North Corona Land Company and the Orange Heights Water Company later in the 1920s and is now occupied by the Friends of the Library and the Norco Historical Society. The Land Company building was given a new façade shortly after the City incorporated in 1964 and now is the main part of the Norco Branch Library. To the south of these buildings, Clark built a pavilion where town-folk and farmers could meet, dance, pray, and exchange ideas. The American Legion now sits on that site and to its west, Clark built the Norco School. Serving Norco’s children from 1924 to 1947, that school survives as the Norco Community Center.

Clark sought to draw attention to his remote community. Atop a hill near the town center, he built a 38-foot tall lighthouse with a powerful revolving light that pulsed like the North Star in the night and became the symbol of Norco. Today, the foundation of the lighthouse remains intact, and the Historical Society displays the revolving light in its museum.

Norco’s grand opening took place on Sunday, May 13, 1923. The Los Angeles Times reported that “Despite threatening weather approximately 5,000 visitors motored to this district....and enjoyed a program which included band concerts, contests of various kinds, speeches and fireworks.”

Many people bought into Clark’s vision, building modest homes, planting gardens, and raising chickens or rabbits. Clark provided markets for their farm products, helping them distribute to area communities. To help neophyte farmers polish their skills, he established demonstration farms where people were taught about raising chickens, growing foodstuffs, and bringing their products to market. Property owners held shares in the Orange Heights Water Company and helped set its rates. Not surprisingly, horses were a significant part of early Norco’s everyday life, used for transportation, recreation, and farming. Many streets were lined with trees, creating picturesque de facto equestrian trails—a precursor to the 140 miles of horse trails enjoyed today.

In 1924, while drilling for water, Clark discovered a hot mineral spring. He saw this as an opportunity to develop a resort. When completed, his Norconian Resort was over 700 acres in size and included a 250,000-square foot hotel, 60-acre lake, two Olympic-sized swimming pools, pavilion, tea house, chauffeur’s quarters, massive auto garage, 18-hole golf course, and many other amenities. Unfortunately, the resort was completed just months before “Black Tuesday,” an event that marked the beginning of the Great Depression. As a result, it never had a chance and lost money heavily. In 1941, the U.S. Navy bought the hotel and expanded it into a premier World War II-era hospital. Today, its grounds are divided between a weapons research facility and a state prison. Most of the resort remains intact, though, and its history and architecture have earned it a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Today, local leaders and organizations like the Lake Norconian Club Foundation work to ensure its recognition and preservation.

Property History

APN 121-110-001

When the U.S. Navy acquired the Norconian resort it designated the land as a Naval Reservation. The Navy also reserved three other parcels in the vicinity. One of these parcels is APN 121-110-001; the other two are outside the proposed project area and survey boundaries. One naval reserve was at

the end of 5th Street at the Santa Ana River for a sewage treatment plant, one was on a hill north and east of the hospital for a water storage tank and the third was a rectangular parcel along Bluff Street where three water wells were constructed in 1945-46.

The wells were installed by the U.S. Navy beginning in late 1945 and early 1946 to serve the Naval Hospital Corona. The wells replaced/supported the original hot springs well that fed the Norconian spas. Vice Admiral Ross T. McIntire wrote to Congressman Carl Vinson on June 25, 1945, stating that the need for a new water supply had been under study for two years. The situation had deteriorated to the point that “the existing water supply is thoroughly unreliable due to obsolete pumping equipment and old water mains which cause frequent interruptions in the service.” Vice Admiral McIntire suggested the speediest solution was to acquire a 15-acre parcel where three wells could be drilled at a cost of \$108,500. Representative Vinson of Georgia, chair of the House Committee of Naval Affairs, reacted positively and asked Vice Admiral McIntire to send up his request for action immediately.

The Navy acquired land adjacent to the Norconian pump house west building. By February 1946, the project was nearly completed, with three wells drilled pipe laid to the hospital. The Navy wells were in operation to serve the navy hospital until its final closure in 1957. In 1985, the Norco Citywide Water Master Plan called for rehabilitation of the Navy wells as part of ongoing efforts to treat iron and manganese within the City’s potable water system. At that time, the wells remained in use for irrigation purposes for both the Naval Weapons Station and California Rehabilitation Center. The use continued through at least 1997, when the City executed a land lease with the State of California for a two-acre portion of APN No. 121-110-001 with the intent to install a municipal water facility at the site. This two-acre site is the current location of the City’s Bluff Street facility.

It is speculated that the three Navy wells were removed from service after the 1997 land lease. Up until a short time ago, the three Navy well sites/locations appear to have been essentially intact as constructed. This assessment is based on the lack of documented ground disturbing activity at the site. Aerial imagery indicates that between ca. 2015 to the present, modification to at least the surface aspects of the Navy well locations occurred. In these views surface activity and ground disturbance is easily discerned. One of the wells appears to have been destroyed in 2019-2020 as part of the Bluff Street project.

Based on aerial photos, sometime after 1994 and before 2002 the City of Norco installed its own wells and pumping plant on the eastern portion of the Navy parcel. This most likely occurred shortly after the 1997 lease was executed. This became known as the Bluff Street pump station and reservoir. The City acquired this parcel from the Navy in 2009.

The wells were discussed in the 2015 study of the Naval Hospital that covered the hospital era from 1941 to 1957 and the Guided Missile and RDT&E era from 1951 to the present. The 2015 study was used as the basis for a draft 2016 amendment to the Lake Norconian Club historic district that was approved by the California State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) on February 2, 2018. The 2015 report noted: “amazingly, after 87 years, the wells are still in place, although not all are in working order and none are producing potable water. At least one well is being used to supply reclaimed water for landscape irrigation.” The 2015 report noted that the Navy apparently retained control over the operation of the wells “until the spring of 2015 when they were turned over to the City of Norco.”

In 2019 the City began a project to construct two 1,000,000-gallon reservoirs at the Bluff Street pumping station. The project, completed in 2020, included a new pump station and the abandonment of an existing well at the site. In August 2022, as part of communications on the history of the site with City representatives, demolition of the wells was affirmed. It is unclear as to if and when the three 1945-1946 Navy wells were demolished and whether that process was documented or memorialized via a permit or report.

APN 121-110-003

The 2877 River Road property is located on Riverside County Assessor's Parcel No. 121-110-003. The property is situated on the Auburndale Tract directly south of the Santa Ana River, towards the west end of the Norco city boundaries. In 1968, the property was improved with the construction of Tommy Dallape & Son, Inc. Dairy. Prior to the construction of the dairy, the property was once part of the former Mexican rancho known as Rancho La Sierra Yorba. The subject property was located towards the far northeast end of the former rancho towards the border of Rancho La Sierra Yorba and Rancho La Sierra Sepulveda. The Rancho was granted to Bernardo Yorba by Mexican Governor Pio Pico in 1846. While Yorba never settled on the Rancho, the area was utilized for cattle grazing operations.

In 1887, the area was acquired by W. H. Jameson and his associates to create the Auburndale Colony and Townsite. Following the transaction, the area was subdivided on paper into rectangular parcels backed into central alleyways. Streets were laid out in a north-south and east-west orientation and named after the businessmen and the agricultural crops they promoted. The subject parcel encompassed Blocks 43-50 of the Auburndale Colony and was located between River Street (now River Road), Main Street (no longer extant), Bluff Street, and Vine Street. Several roads shown on the original plat including Sycamore Street, Spruce Street, Pine Street, Hudson Street, and Gilbert Street do not appear to have been constructed. Towards the far north end of the subject property, the proposed right-of-way of the former Pomona, South Riverside & Elsinore Railway (P., S. R. & E.) intersected the parcel in a northwest-southeast orientation. Based on the original map of the town of Auburndale, a depot was planned to be located on the parcel in proximity to the railway. By 1888, the roadbed ROW had been graded east of the Santa Ana River. To facilitate trade through the area, a wagon bridge was constructed across the Santa Ana River, linking Auburndale and Riverside at an unidentified location. For the first two years, the townsite was promoted in newspaper publications as a promising agricultural community, however, it failed to materialize into a thriving new community with a local economy based on agriculture. As a result, track laying for the P., S.R. & E Railroad never came to fruition and the land that was sold was retained by buyers for investment purposes and later resold into smaller parcels or assembled into larger parcels. Between the 1890s into the early 20th century, the area was reported to have been used to cultivate dry-farming crops such as alfalfa, barley, wheat, and grain. In 1904, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that an order was passed by the Board of County Supervisors to vacate most of the streets in the Auburndale townsite and to return much of the land back into acreage. There were several attempts to cultivate citrus, however, these efforts failed due to poor growing conditions in the local area.

By the 1920s, the area was acquired by Rex B. Clark, the founder of Norco. Clark transformed the struggling region into a thriving agricultural center with a local economy largely based on poultry operations. Much of the development that occurred around this time was located north of the subject property. In 1931, the property first appeared in historic aerials and appears to be undeveloped and void of any structures. By this time the roads that once intersected the property

(Sycamore Street, Spruce Street, Pine Street, Hudson Street, and Gilbert Street) are no longer visible. Although the tracks for the P., S.R. & E. Railway had never been laid, the outline of the roadbed was still visible. Much of the area remained undeveloped with some farming operations located west of the Santa Ana River.

Between 1939 and 1948, row crops were planted on over 75 percent of the parcel. The crops were likely alfalfa, barley, or wheat, which were common dry-farming crops that continued to have a presence in the area. Between 1953 and 1960, the row crops were removed.

In 1968, the parcel was acquired by Thomas “Tommy” J. Dallape of Los Angeles, California. Dallape commissioned the construction of a single-family residence with attached garage, milk parlor, warehouse/barn, and several ancillary structures, built by the Schaafsma Brothers, general contractors. In November of 1968, Dallape applied for two City of Norco building permits to construct a 2,213 square-foot single-family residence with an attached 528 square-foot garage, a 770 square foot milk parlor, and a 1,032 square foot barn (Permit No. 1090 and 1093). The project was valued at \$43,529.30. The dwelling was constructed in the Ranch architectural style. The building permits indicate that the home was constructed as a standard one-story residence, with an irregular floorplan atop a concrete foundation. The dwelling featured a stucco façade with wood-siding and a stone veneer, and a cross-gabled roof topped with wood shake shingles. The fenestration likely consisted of aluminum sliding sash windows which was common in post 1950 dairy properties. The attached garage was connected to the main residence by a breezeway. The milk parlor was constructed in the “herringbone style” with a reinforced concrete exterior, a front and rear section separated by a breezeway, a roof topped with wood shake shingles, and a concrete foundation. The barn/warehouse featured a rectangular floorplan and was clad in corrugated sheet metal. Several ancillary structures/features were constructed directly behind the main residence and milk parlor and include pole structures, silos, corrals, a utility shed, wells, an enclosed concrete wash/holding area, and a concrete cattle-loading chute.

Between 1968 and 1969, Mr. Dallape applied for several electrical and plumbing permits (Permit No. 0919, 0718, 0920, 0720, 1029, 0868). In March of 1969, a permit was submitted to construct a concrete masonry unit garden wall (Permit No. 1272). The building permit does not identify where the wall was constructed but it was likely built behind the main residence. In 1970, Mr. Dallape applied for a second permit to construct a concrete masonry unit garden wall (Permit No. 1668). Between 1977 and 1980, an addition was added to the south elevation of the warehouse/barn. A manufactured trailer was also added to the property along the north elevation of the warehouse/barn that first appears in a 1977 aerial. A permit was not identified for both additions. In 2004, a permit was submitted by Theresa Dallape, the wife of Mr. Dallape, to reroof the main residence (Permit No. 2004BD0108). The wood shake shingles were replaced with composite shingles. This was the last permit submitted for the subject property.

Over the years, the original fenestration on the main residence was removed and replaced with vinyl sliding sash units at an unidentified date. No other alterations or additions were identified on Riverside County Assessor’s Parcel No. 121-110-003.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDS SEARCH

A literature review of documents on file at the Eastern Information Center (EIC) was completed by EIC staff on September 2, 2021. The EIC is the designated branch of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) and houses records concerning archaeological and historic

resources in Riverside, Inyo, and Mono Counties. The records search provided data on known archaeological and built environment resources as well as previous studies within one-half mile of the project site. Data sources consulted at the EIC included archaeological records, Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility (DOE), and the Historic Property Data File (HPDF) maintained by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). The HPDF contains listings for the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and/or National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Historical Landmarks (CHL), and California Points of Historical Interest (CPHI).

The review consisted of an examination of the U.S. Geological Survey’s (USGS’s) *Corona North, CA* 7.5-minute quadrangles to evaluate the project area for any cultural resources sites recorded, or cultural resources studies conducted on the parcel and within a one-half mile radius.

The EIC lists fifteen cultural resources studies conducted within a one-half mile radius of the project site. Five include a part of the project site; refer to [Table 4.5-1, *Cultural Resources Studies Within the Project Site*](#).

Table 4.5-1
Cultural Resources Studies Within the Project Site

Report Number	Author(s) (Year)	Type/Size/Resources
RI-03629	Seymour & Doak (1992)	Survey; 368 acres; 1 resource
RI-04331	Lerch (1999)	Survey; 5 acres; 0 resources
RI-08763	Hoffman et a. (2012)	Survey; 582 acres; 0 resources
RI-10309	Brunzell (2017)	Survey; 11,000 square feet; 0 resources
RI-10481	Brunzell & Orozco (2018)	Survey/Evaluation; 1 resource (CA-RIV-1436)

The EIC lists just one cultural resource within a half-mile of the project site; refer to [Table 4.5-2, *Cultural Resources Sites Within the Project Site*](#).

Table 4.5-2
Cultural Resources Sites Within the Project Site

Resource Number (P-33-)	Recorder(s) (most recent) (Year)	Type
001436/CA-RIV-1436*	Orozco (2018)	Lithic scatter
*On the project site.		

P-33-001436: This site was originally recorded in 1977 as a sparse lithic scatter of groundstone tools and flakes. It included one bifacial metate fragment, one bifacial mano fragment, one complete unifacial mano, and one basalt flake. The site was revisited and rerecorded on February 1, 2018. Only the mano fragment was found during the 2018 survey and rerecording. Because of an accumulation of sediment that may have buried artifacts at the site, two backhoe trenches were excavated at the site to search for additional resources (Orozco 2018). No artifacts were recovered from the trenches. It appears that this represents a sparse lithic scatter; however, the presence of additional buried archaeological material cannot be ruled out.

HISTORIC AERIAL REVIEW

An examination of the historic aerial photographs at HistoricAerials.com (NETRONLINE n.d.) was completed on February 10, 2022. The examination revealed that in 1938, the first available photo, shows the project site undeveloped. Bluff Road, however, already exists extending along the project site's northwest side. By 1948, it appears that the entire project site, except for the northwest corner, has been plowed for agriculture. By 1966, the site has again been cleared, and in 1980, the dairy farm has been constructed. The site appears to have changed little if any since then to the present day.

FIELD SURVEY

An archaeological survey of the project site was conducted by VCS Archaeologist Patrick Maxon, RPA on September 28, 2021. The project site was inspected visually by walking and driving through the old dairy property with the property owner, Don Dallape, who requested to accompany the author. Transects were not walked across the project site, owing to the completely developed nature of the site.

Site CA-RIV-1436 was visited, but no surface artifacts were present. The locations of the trenches excavated in 2018 could not be determined.

4.5.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) authorized the National Register of Historic Places and coordinates public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect the nation's historical and archaeological resources. The National Register includes districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. Section 106 (Protection of Historic Properties) of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Section 106 Review refers to the federal review process designed to ensure that historical properties are considered during federal project planning and implementation. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency, administers the review process, with assistance from state historic preservation offices.

STATE

California Register of Historical Resources

CEQA requires a lead agency to determine whether a project would have a significant effect on one or more historical resources. A "historical resource" is defined as a resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (*California Public Resources Code* [PRC], Section 21084.1); a resource included in a local register of historical CEQA requires a lead agency to determine whether a project would have a significant effect on one or more historical resources. A "historical resource" is defined as a resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (*California Public Resources Code* [PRC], Section 21084.1); a resource included in a local register of historical resources

(14 *California Code of Regulations* [CCR], Section 15064.5[a][2]); or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant (14 CCR 15064.5[a][3]). Section 5024.1 of PRC, Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR), and Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1 of the CEQA Statutes were used as the basic guidelines for the cultural resources study. PRC 5024.1 requires the evaluation of historical resources to determine their eligibility for listing on the CRHR. The purposes of the CRHR are to maintain listings of the State's historical resources and to indicate which properties are to be protected from substantial adverse change. The criteria for listing resources in the CRHR were expressly developed to be in accordance with criteria developed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (per the criteria listed in the *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR], Title 36, Section 60.4) and include those listed below.

- The quality of significance in American History, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possesses integrity of location, design setting, material, workmanship feeling and association.
- They are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- They are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- They embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of installation, or that represent the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

CEQA requires a lead agency to determine whether a project would have a significant impact on one or more historical resources. According to Section 15064.5(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines, a "historical resource" is defined as a resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (PRC §21084.1); a resource included in a local register of historical resources (14 CCR §15064.5[a][2]); or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant (14 CCR §15064.5[a][3]).

Section 5024.1 of the PRC, Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR), and Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1 of the CEQA Statutes were used as the basic guidelines for the cultural resources study. PRC 5024.1 requires evaluation of historical resources to determine their eligibility for listing in the CRHR. The purposes of the CRHR are to maintain listings of the State's historical resources and to indicate which properties are to be protected from substantial adverse change. The criteria for listing resources in the CRHR, which were expressly developed to be in accordance with previously established criteria developed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (per the criteria listed at 36 CFR §60.4), are stated below (PRC §5024.1):

Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be considered a historical resource provided the lead agency's determination

is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource shall be considered by a lead agency to be “historically significant” if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources including the following:

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

Impacts that would materially impair the significance of a resource listed in or eligible for listing in the CRHR are considered to have a significant effect on the environment. Impacts to historical resources from the proposed project are considered significant if the project (A) demolishes or materially impairs in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, the California Register; (B) demolishes or materially impairs in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register; or (C) demolishes or materially impairs in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register as determined by a lead agency (§15064.5[b][2]).

The purpose of a Phase I cultural resources investigation is to evaluate whether any cultural resources remain exposed on the surface of a project site or whether any cultural resources can reasonably be expected to exist in the subsurface. If resources are discovered, additional investigations would be required to evaluate the resources for CRHR eligibility and appropriate management of these resources would be required prior to project implementation.

Broad mitigation guidelines for treating historical resources are codified in Section 15126.4(b) of the CEQA Guidelines. Public agencies should seek to avoid significant impacts to historical resources, with preservation-in-place being the preferred alternative. If not feasible, a data recovery plan shall be prepared to guide subsequent excavation. Mitigation for historical resources such as buildings, bridges, and other structures that are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Weeks and Grimmer 1995) will generally be considered mitigated below a level of significance.

ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 52

This project is subject to the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 52. AB 52 is applicable to projects that have filed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or notice of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or Negative Declaration (ND) on or after July 1, 2015. The law requires lead agencies to initiate consultation with California Native American Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project and have requested such consultation, prior to determining the type of CEQA documentation that is applicable to the project (i.e., EIR, MND, ND). Significant impacts to “tribal cultural resources” are considered significant impacts to the environment.

For “tribal cultural resources,” PRC §21074, enacted and codified as part of a 2014 amendment to CEQA through Assembly Bill 52, provides the statutory definition as follows:

“Tribal cultural resources” are either of the following:

1. Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - A. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.
 - B. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.
2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

To determine if such resources exist, under AB 52 (PRC §21080.3.1) lead agencies must consult with tribes that request consultation and must make a reasonable and good faith effort to mitigate the impacts of a development on such resources to a less than significant level. AB 52 allows tribes 30 days after receiving notification to request consultation and the lead agency must then initiate consultation within 30 days of the request by tribes.

The City of Norco is undertaking AB 52 consultation with interested tribes.

SENATE BILL (SB) 18

Senate Bill 18 (SB 18) (California Government Code Section 65352.3) sets forth requirements for local governments to consult with Native American tribes to aid in the protection of traditional tribal cultural places through local land use planning. The intent of SB 18 is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early stage of planning for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts on, cultural places. The Tribal Consultation Guidelines: Supplement to General Plan Guidelines (OPR 2005), identifies the following contact and notification responsibilities of local governments:

- Prior to the adoption or any amendment of a general plan or specific plan, a local government must notify the appropriate tribes (on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission [NAHC]) of the opportunity to conduct consultations for the purpose of preserving, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places located on land within the local government’s jurisdiction that is affected by the proposed plan adoption or amendment. Tribes have 90 days from the date on which they receive notification to request consultation unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed to by the tribe (Government Code Section 65352.3).
- Prior to the adoption or substantial amendment of a general plan or specific plan, a local government must refer the proposed action to those tribes that are on the NAHC contact list and have traditional lands located within the city or county’s jurisdiction. The referral must allow a 45-day comment period (Government Code Section 65352). Notice must be sent

regardless of whether prior consultation has taken place. Such notice does not initiate a new consultation process.

- Local government must send a notice of a public hearing, at least 10 days prior to the hearing, to tribes who have filed a written request for such notice (Government Code Section 65092).

The City of Norco is undertaking SB 18 consultation with interested tribes.

HUMAN REMAINS

Section 7050.5 of the *California Health and Safety Code* provides for the disposition of accidentally discovered human remains. Section 7050.5 states that, if human remains are found, no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall occur until the County Coroner has determined the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains.

Section 5097.98 of the PRC states that, if remains are determined by the Coroner to be of Native American origin, the Coroner must notify the NAHC within 24 hours which, in turn, must identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The descendants shall complete their inspection within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated Native American representative would then determine, in consultation with the property owner, the disposition of the human remains.

LOCAL

City of Norco Municipal Code

The City of Norco's Municipal Code has a Cultural Resources ordinance (Chapter 20), that develops criteria for designating Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest in the City.

Criteria for Landmark designation (Chapter 20.15.010) are: An improvement, object, or natural feature may be designated a landmark by the City Council upon recommendation of the Historic Preservation Commission if it is determined eligible, retains integrity (i.e., the ability of a resource to convey its significance) and meets one or more of the following criteria:

- A. Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural or natural history; or
- B. Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history; or
- C. Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
- D. Represents the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect; or
- E. Has a unique location or singular physical characteristic or is a view of a vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood community or of the City; or
- F. Reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning; or

G. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

A landmark shall include all improvements, objects, or natural features named in the landmark designation resolution. To qualify for landmark status, an improvement, object, or natural feature must be at least 50 years old or older. (Ord. 910 Sec. 1, 2009)

Criteria for Point of Historical Interest designation (Chapter 20.20.010) states: An improvement, object, or natural feature may be designated by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Historic Preservation Commission as a point of historical interest pursuant to this title if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- A. The resource qualifies for designation as a landmark; however, the property owner prefers designation as a point of historical interest.
- B. The resource is less than 50 years old, but otherwise qualifies for designation as a landmark.
- C. The resource otherwise qualifies for designation as a landmark but does not retain sufficient integrity. (Ord. 910 Sec. 1, 2009)

City of Norco General Plan

LAND USE ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and polices from the Land Use Element providing for the protection of cultural resources:

GOAL 2.7: Historical Resources. This goal preserves from development to the extent possible, the City's historical and archaeological resources.

Policy 2.7.1: Historical Building Preservation. The City will identify and preserve the unique historical buildings that significantly identify and establish the community's history and character.

Policy 2.7.1a: Sites of significant historical, archaeological, and cultural value shall be preserved and/or incorporated into proposed new development with mitigation measures established through the environmental review process.

Policy 2.7.1b: Vegetation including street trees and public landscaping that help contribute to the City's historical fabric and identity, should be preserved and incorporated into the landscaping plans for any new development that incorporate the particular site or is adjacent to it for public improvement purposes.

Policy 2.7.2: Archaeological Resources. The City will identify and catalogue any archaeological resources and will take measures to preserve those resources that are considered unique and significant to the area's history.

Policy 2.7.2a: The City should collect, record, and/or mitigate archaeological resources to the level consistent with the related value of each item in terms of historical significance and importance.

Policy 2.7.2b: New development requiring discretionary approval from the Planning Commission shall be approved with a condition that requires any construction activity to stop upon discovery of archaeological resources until such time as a qualified archaeologist, retained by the property owner or developer, has investigated the site and made recommendations regarding the disposition of any items. Human remains shall not be moved until the Riverside County Coroner's Office has been notified.

Policy 2.7.2c: New development shall be coordinated with Native American tribes that have a historical presence and interest in the Norco region, or any other groups with historical interest.

4.5.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **CR-1:** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?
- **CR-2:** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?
- **CR-3:** Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

4.5.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT CR-1: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Implementation of the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5. The proposed project requests approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and Tentative Parcel Map (on 34.38 acres), to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City's R-1 Zoning regulations. The project is comprised of two (2) parcels, identified by Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 121-110-003 and 121-110-001. APN 121-110-003 consists of 26.17 acres and is owned by TACRD Investment. APN 121-110-001 is owned by the City of Norco and consists of 12.75 acres. The 2877-4400 River Road property located on Riverside County Assessor's Parcel No. 121-110-001 and 121-110-003, were analyzed for historical and architectural significance under the eligibility criteria of the Local Register and the CRHR. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the Lead Agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (Public Resources Code Section 5024.1) including the following:

- **CRHR Criterion 1:** Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.
- **CRHR Criterion 2:** Is associated with the lives of persons important in California's past.

- **CRHR Criterion 3:** Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- **CRHR Criterion 4:** Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Urbana did not find the Dallape property eligible under Local Register Criterion A. However, under CRHR Criterion 1/Local Register Criterion A, the former U.S. Naval property listed as 4400 River Road (Riverside County Assessor's Parcel No. 121-110-001), appears to be significant for its association with Naval Hospital Corona. For its association with the Naval Hospital Corona reflecting the importance of this facility to the City, it appears the Navy wells property is historically significant under CEQA Criterion 1 and Local Register Criterion A.

Under CRHR Criterion 2/Local Register Criterion B, the 2877-4400 River Road property is not associated with persons, a business use, or events significant in local, state, or national history. Therefore, the property is not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2/Local Register Criterion B.

The Dallape subject property is a typical example of a late post 1950 dairy farm, the structures and features visible on the property are considered common. The buildings are not considered architecturally significant under the evaluated criterion. For this reason, the subject property has been found not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3/Local Register Criterion C. However, for its embodiment of a distinctive characteristics of a period and method of construction, it appears the Navy wells property is historically significant under CEQA Criterion 3 and Local Register Criterion C.

The U.S. Navy wells and the dairy farm buildings were not identified as the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect. Therefore, the 2877-4400 River Road property is not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3/Local Register Criterion D.

Although the Navy wells parcel (121-110-001) may contain subsurface remains of the wells and pipes, it is unlikely that subsurface investigations will yield important information. The property is not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4/Local Criterion G.

The subject parcels do not have a unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual features of the neighborhood, community, or the City. Additionally, the property is not located within the boundaries of a registered historic district. For this reason, Urbana determined the subject property is not eligible under Local Register Criterion E.

The subject parcels do not reflect significant geographical patterns, or a distinctive example of a park or community planning. Therefore, the property is not eligible under Local Register Criterion F.

The 2877 River Road property (Riverside County Assessor's Parcel No. 121-110-003) has not been found to be individually eligible for designation under any of the established criteria. Further analysis of these structures is not merited. Because the 2877 River Road property has been found ineligible for listing to the Local Register and the CRHR and does not meet the definition of historical resources pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, no built environment historical resources would be impacted.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT CR-2: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Implementation of the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5. As identified previously, one precontact (prehistoric) cultural resource (P-33-001436/CA-RIV-1436) and one historic-era cultural resource (Navy Wells) were recorded in the northeast portion of the project site, adjacent to Bluff Street. Based on the testing completed in 2018, it appears that P-33-001436/CA-RIV-1436 does not represent a significant resource under any of the four criteria considerations. It is not associated with significant events (Criterion A/1) nor important persons (Criterion B/2); it does not embody distinctive characteristics or the work of an important individual (Criterion C/3); and it is unlikely to yield important information (Criterion D/4). The resource has lost its integrity and thus any ability to convey significance. Site P-33-001436/CA-RIV-1436 is therefore not a historical resource or historic property and is recommended not eligible for listing in the CRHR or NRHP. The Navy Wells were similarly determined not eligible for listing in the CRHR or NRHP under all four criteria considerations.

The grading activities associated with construction of the proposed project would encounter native soils and could have the potential to encounter known and/or unknown historical resources. Because historical resources are known to occur and have been recorded on the project site. This includes P-33-001436/CA-RIV-1436 and the Navy Wells discussed above. Therefore, there is the potential that historical resources could be encountered during excavation activities. To avoid adverse impacts to historical resources that could be encountered during construction, it is recommended a qualified archaeologist be retained to monitor grading of the site. Should the archaeologist find the potential exists for impacts to historical resources, the archaeologist should have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt grading activity to allow recovery of archaeological and/or cultural resources.

With implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2, potential impacts to unknown archaeological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

CR-1: Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a qualified Archaeologist and Native American Tribal representative(s) to monitor grading and other ground disturbances related to site development. The Archaeologist, in consultation with the Tribe(s) and City, shall develop a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to address the details, timing, and protocols of all cultural resources activities that occur on the project site. At the project pre-grading meeting, the Archaeologist, the Tribal representative(s), the Applicant, and the excavation and grading contractor shall discuss appropriate grading and ground disturbing methods within archaeologically and culturally sensitive areas on the project site pursuant to the CRMP. Should the Archaeologist, after consultation with the consulting Tribe(s), find the potential exists for impacts to archaeological resources, cultural resources and/or sacred sites, the archaeologist and the Native American tribal representative(s) shall actively monitor project-related grading and in the event that cultural resources are discovered, shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt grading activity to allow recovery of archaeological and/or cultural resources. All cultural material will be temporarily curated on the project site until final disposition is determined. The Applicant shall relinquish ownership of all

cultural material, including sacred items, burial goods, and all archaeological artifacts and non-human remains discovered to the consulting Tribe(s) for final disposition. Leaving artifacts in place (in situ) or reburial of them on site are the preferred methods of mitigation. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloguing and basic recordation has been completed.

CR-2: At the completion of grading, excavation, and ground-disturbing activities on the site, a Phase IV Monitoring Report shall be submitted to the City documenting all monitoring activities conducted by the project archaeologist and Native Tribal Monitor(s). All reports produced will be submitted to the City of Norco, the Eastern Information Center, University of California, Riverside, and the consulting Tribe(s).

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT CR-3: Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

Implementation of the project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries. No human remains or cemeteries are known to exist within or near the project site. However, there would always be the potential that subsurface construction activities associated with the proposed project could encounter and potentially damage or destroy previously undiscovered human remains. Accordingly, this is a potentially significant impact. In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5; Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5; Public Resources Code Section 5097.94 and Section 5097.98 must be followed. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-3, potential impacts to human remains would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

CR-3: Section 7050.5 of the *California Health and Safety Code* provides for the disposition of accidentally discovered human remains. Section 7050.5 states that, if human remains are found, no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall occur until the county coroner has determined, within two working days, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains. If the coroner recognizes those remains to be Native American or has reason to suspect so, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours.

Section 5097.98 of the PRC states that, when the NAHC receives notification of a discovery of Native American human remains from the county coroner pursuant to Section 7050.5 of the *California Health and Safety Code*, the NAHC shall immediately notify those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The Most Likely Descendants (MLD) shall complete their inspection within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated MLD would then recommend, in consultation with the property owner, the means for treatment or disposition, with appropriate dignity, of the human remains and any associated grave goods.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

4.5.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco General Plan, *Land Use Element*. Update Adoption Date: October 7, 2009.

City of Norco Municipal Code, Title 18 – Zoning. Updated November 17, 2021.

Urbana Preservation & Planning, LLC, *Historical Resource Analysis Report 2877-4400 River Road, Norco, CA*. October 2022, revised February 2024.

VCS Environmental, *JD Ranch Residential Project Phase 1 Cultural Resources Assessment*, February 2024.

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4.6 ENERGY

4.6.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential for energy-related impacts associated with the project and ways in which the project would reduce unnecessary energy consumption, consistent with the suggestions contained in Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines. Energy service providers to the site include Southern California Edison (SCE) for electrical service and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) for natural gas. Analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical report:

- *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis*, Vista Environmental, April 4, 2024 ([Appendix B](#)).

4.6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The *2022 CEQA California Environmental Quality Act Statutes & Guidelines* (2022 CEQA Guidelines) include an Energy Section that analyzes the proposed project's energy consumption in order to avoid or reduce inefficient, wasteful or unnecessary consumption of energy. Appendix F of the 2022 CEQA Statute and Guidelines, states the following:

The goal of conserving energy implies the wise and efficient use of energy. The means of achieving this goal include:

- (1) Decreasing overall per capita energy consumption,
- (2) Decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas and oil, and
- (3) Increasing reliance on renewable energy sources.

Since the Energy Section was recently added, no state or local agencies have adopted specific criteria or thresholds to be utilized in an energy impact analysis. However, Appendix F, Subsection II.C of the 2022 CEQA Guidelines provides the following criteria for determining significance.

1. The project's energy requirements and its energy use efficiencies by amount and fuel type for each stage of the project life cycle including construction, operation, maintenance and/or removal. If appropriate, the energy intensiveness of materials may be discussed.
2. The effects of the project on local and regional energy supplies and on requirement for additional capacity.
3. The effects of the project on peak and base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy.
4. The degree to which the project complies with existing energy standards.
5. The effects of the project on energy resources.
6. The project's projected transportation energy use requirements and its overall use of efficient transportation alternatives.

If the proposed project creates inefficient, wasteful or unnecessary consumption of energy during construction or operation activities or conflicts with a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, then the proposed project would create a significant energy impact.

4.6.3 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

Warren-Alquist State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Act of 1974

Energy conservation management in the State was initiated by the 1974 Warren-Alquist State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Act that created the California Energy Resource Conservation and Development Commission (currently named California Energy Commission [CEC]), which was originally tasked with certifying new electric generating plants based on the need for the plant and the suitability of the site of the plant. In 1976, the Warren-Alquist Act was expanded to include new restrictions on nuclear generating plants, which effectively resulted in a moratorium of any new nuclear generating plants in the State. The following details specific regulations adopted by the State to reduce the consumption of energy.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 20

On November 3, 1976, the CEC adopted the *Regulations for Appliance Efficiency Standards Relating to Refrigerators, Refrigerator-Freezers and Freezers and Air Conditioners*, which were the first energy-efficiency standards for appliances. The appliance efficiency regulations have been updated several times by the Commission and the most current version is the *2016 Appliance Efficiency Regulations*, adopted January 2017, and now includes almost all types of appliances and lamps that use electricity, natural gas as well as plumbing fixtures. The authority for the CEC to control the energy-efficiency of appliances is detailed in California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 20, Division 2, Chapter 4, Article 4, Sections 1601-1609.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 6

The CEC is also responsible for implementing the CCR Title 24, Part 6: *California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings* (Title 24 Part 6) that were first established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. In 2008 the State set an energy-use reduction goal of zero-net-energy use of all new homes by 2020 and the CEC was mandated to meet this goal through revisions to the Title 24, Part 6 regulations.

The Title 24 standards are updated on a three-year schedule and since 2008 the standards have been incrementally moving to the 2020 goal of the zero-net-energy use. The 2022 Title 24 standards are the current standards that went into effect on January 1, 2023.

According to the Title 24 Part 6 Fact Sheet, the CEC estimates that over 30 years the 2022 Title 24 standards will reduce 10 MMTCO₂e of GHG emissions, which is equivalent to taking nearly 2.2 million cars off the road for a year. For single-family homes, the CEC estimates that the 2022 Title 24 changes from using natural gas furnaces to electric heat pumps to heat new homes and would reduce net CO₂ emissions by 16,230 MTCO₂e per year, when compared to the 2019 Title 24 standards, which is equivalent of taking 3,641 gas cars off the road each year. The 2022 Title 24 standards will: (1) Increase onsite renewable energy generation; (2) Increases electric load flexibility to support grid reliability; (3)

Reduces emissions from newly constructed buildings; (4) Reduces air pollution for improved public health; and (5) Encourages adoption of environmentally beneficial efficient electric technologies.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 11

CCR Title 24, Part 11: *California Green Building Standards* (CALGreen) was developed in response to continued efforts to reduce GHG emissions associated with energy consumption. The CALGreen Building Standards are updated every three years, and the current version is the 2022 CALGreen Building Standard Code that became effective on January 1, 2023.

The CALGreen Code contains requirements for construction site selection; storm water control during construction; construction waste reduction; indoor water use reduction; material selection; natural resource conservation; site irrigation conservation; and more. The code provides for design options allowing the designer to determine how best to achieve compliance for a given site or building condition. The code also requires building commissioning, which is a process for verifying that all building systems (e.g., heating and cooling equipment and lighting systems) are functioning at their maximum efficiency.

The CALGreen Code provides standards for bicycle parking, carpool/vanpool/electric vehicle spaces, light and glare reduction, grading and paving, energy efficient appliances, renewable energy, graywater systems, water efficient plumbing fixtures, recycling and recycled materials, pollutant controls (including moisture control and indoor air quality), acoustical controls, storm water management, building design, insulation, flooring, and framing, among others. Implementation of the CALGreen Code measures reduces energy consumption and vehicle trips and encourages the use of alternative-fuel vehicles, which reduces pollutant emissions.

Some of the notable changes in the 2022 CALGreen Code over the prior 2019 CALGreen Code for nonresidential development mandatory requirements include repeal of the designated parking spaces for clean air vehicles, an increase in the number of electric vehicle (EV) ready parking spaces and a new requirement for installed Level 2 or DCFC EV charging stations for autos and added EV charging readiness requirements to loading docks, enhanced thermal insulation requirements, and acoustical ceilings are now required.

Executive Order N-79-20

The California Governor issued Executive Order N-79-20 on September 23, 2020 that requires all new passenger cars and trucks and commercial drayage trucks sold in California to be zero-emissions by the year 2035 and all medium- heavy-duty vehicles (commercial trucks) sold in the state to be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible. Executive Order N-79-20 also requires all off-road vehicles and equipment to transition to 100 percent zero-emission equipment, where feasible by 2035.

Senate Bill 100

Senate Bill 100 (SB 100) was adopted in September 2018 and requires that by December 1, 2045 that 100 percent of retail sales of electricity to be generated from renewable or zero-carbon emission sources of electricity. SB 100 supersedes the renewable energy requirements set by SB 350, SB 1078, SB 107, and SB X1-2. However, the interim renewable energy thresholds from the prior Bills of 44 percent by December 31, 2024, 52 percent by December 31, 2027, and 60 percent by December 31, 2030, will remain in effect.

Senate Bill 1020

Senate Bill 1020 (SB 1020) was adopted September 16, 2022 and would speed up the timeline retail electricity is supplied by renewable energy sources over the prior adoption timelines provided in SB 100, SB 350, SB 1078, SB 107, and SB X1-2. SB 1020 requires that retail sales of electricity are from renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 90 percent by December 31, 2035, 95 percent by December 31, 2040, and 100 percent by December 31, 2045.

Executive Order B-48-18 and Assembly Bill 2127

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-48-18 on January 26, 2018 that orders all State entities to work with the private sector to put at least five million zero-emission vehicles on California roads by 2030 and to install 200 hydrogen fueling stations and 250,000 electric vehicle chargers by 2025. Currently there are approximately 350,000 electric vehicles operating in California, which represents approximately 1.5 percent of the 24 million vehicles total currently operating in California. Implementation of Executive Order B-48-18 would result in approximately 20 percent of all vehicles in California to be zero emission electric vehicles. Assembly Bill 2127 (AB 2127) was codified into statute on September 13, 2018 and requires that the CEC working with CARB prepare biannual assessments of the statewide electric vehicle charging infrastructure needed to support the levels of zero emission vehicle adoption required for the State to meet its goals of putting at least 5 million zero-emission vehicles on California roads by 2030.

Executive Order B-48-18 and Assembly Bill 2127

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-48-18 on January 26, 2018 that orders all State entities to work with the private sector to put at least five million zero-emission vehicles on California roads by 2030 and to install 200 hydrogen fueling stations and 250,000 electric vehicle chargers by 2025. Currently there are approximately 350,000 electric vehicles operating in California, which represents approximately 1.5 percent of the 24 million vehicles total currently operating in California. Implementation of Executive Order B-48-18 would result in approximately 20 percent of all vehicles in California to be zero emission electric vehicles. Assembly Bill 2127 (AB 2127) was codified into statute on September 13, 2018 and requires that the CEC working with CARB prepare biannual assessments of the statewide electric vehicle charging infrastructure needed to support the levels of zero emission vehicle adoption required for the State to meet its goals of putting at least 5 million zero-emission vehicles on California roads by 2030.

Assembly Bill 1109

California Assembly Bill 1109 (AB 1109) was adopted October 2007, also known as the Lighting Efficiency and Toxics Reduction Act, prohibits the manufacturing of lights after January 1, 2010 that contain levels of hazardous substances prohibited by the European Union pursuant to the RoHS Directive. AB 1109 also requires reductions in energy usage for lighting and is structured to reduce lighting electrical consumption by: (1) At least 50 percent reduction from 2007 levels for indoor residential lighting; and (2) At least 25 percent reduction from 2007 levels for indoor commercial and all outdoor lighting by 2018. AB 1109 would reduce GHG emissions through reducing the amount of electricity required to be generated by fossil fuels in California.

Assembly Bill 1493

California Assembly Bill 1493 (also known as the Pavley Bill, in reference to its author Fran Pavley) was enacted on July 22, 2002 and required CARB to develop and adopt regulations that reduce GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light duty trucks. In 2004, CARB approved the “Pavley I” regulations limiting the amount of GHGs that may be released from new passenger automobiles that are being phased in between model years 2009 through 2016. These regulations will reduce GHG emissions by 30 percent from 2002 levels by 2016. In June 2009, the EPA granted California the authority to implement GHG emission reduction standards for light duty vehicles, in September 2009, amendments to the Pavley I regulations were adopted by CARB and implementation of the “Pavley I” regulations started in 2009.

The second set of regulations “Pavley II” was developed in 2010 and is being phased in between model years 2017 through 2025 with the goal of reducing GHG emissions by 45 percent by the year 2020 as compared to the 2002 fleet. The Pavley II standards were developed by linking the GHG emissions and formerly separate toxic tailpipe emissions standards previously known as the “LEV III” (third stage of the Low Emission Vehicle standards) into a single regulatory framework. The new rules reduce emissions from gasoline-powered cars as well as promote zero-emissions auto technologies such as electricity and hydrogen, and through increasing the infrastructure for fueling hydrogen vehicles. In 2009, the U.S. EPA granted California the authority to implement the GHG standards for passenger cars, pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles and these GHG emissions standards are currently being implemented nationwide.

The EPA has performed a midterm evaluation of the longer-term standards for model years 2022-2025, and based on the findings of this midterm evaluation, the EPA proposed The Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Proposed Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 that amends the corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) and GHG emissions standards for light vehicles for model years 2021 through 2026. The SAFE Vehicles Rule was published on April 30, 2020 and made effective on June 29, 2020.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and policies from the City of Norco General Plan Conservation Element:

- GOAL 2.8: Encourage the efficient use of energy resources.
- Policy 2.5.1a: Encourage new construction and project design that uses, or takes advantage of renewable energy resources, including but not limited to solar energy design.
- Policy 2.5.1b: Provide updated energy information documents for builders as needed to reflect the most recent Title 24 energy efficiency requirements and standards and other applicable new laws, requirements, and feasible building standards as may be available.
- Policy 2.5.1c: Update requirements and policies as necessary to reflect the most cost effective advances in energy production and conservation.

Policy 2.5.2f: Support alternative modes of transportation as feasible including the equestrian trail system, public transportation, bicycles, etc. to reduce the demand on non-renewable energy resources.

GOAL 2.6: Development of Energy Resources. Seek opportunities to develop and promote renewable energy resources.

Policy 2.6.1a: Now that the feasibility of a manure-to-energy processing facility has been demonstrated for this area, seek funding opportunities for the development of such a facility.

Policy 2.6.1b: Research and promote where feasible the production of energy with other alternative renewable resources.

Policy 2.6.1c: Monitor opportunities for government grants to participate in innovative renewable energy resource programs that can benefit residences and businesses.

4.6.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- E-1: Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?
- E-2: Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

4.6.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT E-1: Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

The proposed project would impact energy resources during operation and construction. Energy resources that would be potentially impacted include electricity, natural gas, and petroleum-based fuel supplies and distribution systems. This analysis includes a discussion of the potential energy impacts of the proposed project, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy. The proposed project requests approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and Tentative Parcel Map (on 34.38 acres), to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City's R-1 Zoning regulations. The proposed General Plan Amendment would increase the population on the project site above the level identified in the existing General Plan which would increase long-term energy consumption for electricity and natural gas above what is currently estimated for in the existing General Plan.

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The construction activities for the proposed project are anticipated to include demolition and grading of the project site, building construction and application of architectural coatings, and paving of the onsite roads. The proposed project would consume energy resources during construction in three (3) general forms:

- 1) Electricity associated with the conveyance of water that would be used during project construction for dust control (supply and conveyance) and electricity to power any necessary lighting during construction, electronic equipment, or other construction activities necessitating electrical power.
- 2) Petroleum-based fuels used to power off-road construction vehicles and equipment on the project site, construction worker travel to and from the project site, as well as delivery and haul truck trips (e.g., hauling of demolition material to offsite reuse and disposal facilities); and,
- 3) Energy used in the production of construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass.

Electricity Consumption

During construction, the proposed project would consume electricity to construct the new structures and infrastructure. Electricity would be supplied to the project site by Southern California Edison (SCE) and would be obtained from the existing electrical lines in the vicinity of the project site. The use of electricity from existing power lines rather than temporary diesel or gasoline powered generators would minimize impacts on energy use. Electricity consumed during project construction would vary throughout the construction period based on the construction activities being performed. Various construction activities include electricity associated with the conveyance of water that would be used during project construction for dust control (supply and conveyance) and electricity to power any necessary lighting during construction, electronic equipment, or other construction activities necessitating electrical power. Such electricity demand would be temporary, nominal, and would cease upon the completion of construction. Overall, construction activities associated with the proposed project would require limited electricity consumption that would not be expected to have an adverse impact on available electricity supplies and infrastructure. Therefore, the use of electricity during project construction would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary. The operational electrical loads would increase with the proposed project, which could require the upsizing of wires at the project site. In the event upsizing the wiring is required, the upsized wire would be pulled through and connected to the existing underground conduit that extends into the project site. Where feasible, the new service installations and connections would be scheduled and implemented in a manner that would not result in electrical service interruptions to other properties. Compliance with the City's guidelines and requirements would ensure that the proposed project fulfills its responsibilities relative to infrastructure installation, coordinates any electrical infrastructure removals or relocations, and limits any impacts associated with construction of the project. Construction of the project's electrical infrastructure would not adversely affect the electrical infrastructure serving the surrounding community or utility system capacity.

Natural Gas Consumption

Construction of the proposed project typically would not involve the consumption of natural gas. Natural gas would not be supplied to support construction activities, thus there would be no demand generated by construction. Since the project site is currently developed and has natural gas service to the project site, construction of the proposed project would be limited to installation of new natural gas connections within the project site. Development of the proposed project would not require extensive infrastructure improvements to serve the project site. Construction-related energy usage impacts associated with the installation of natural gas connections are expected to be confined to trenching to place the lines below the surface. In addition, prior to ground disturbance, the proposed

project would notify and coordinate with Southern California Gas to identify the locations and depth of all existing gas lines and avoid disruption of gas service. Therefore, construction-related impacts to natural gas supply and infrastructure would be less than significant.

Petroleum Fuel Use

Petroleum-based fuel usage represents the highest amount of transportation energy potentially consumed during construction, which would be utilized by both off-road equipment operating on the project site and on-road automobiles transporting workers to and from the project site and on-road trucks transporting equipment and supplies to the project site.

The off-road construction equipment fuel usage was calculated through use of the off-road equipment assumptions and fuel use assumptions shown above in Section 8.2, which found that construction of the proposed project would consume 7,470 gallons of gasoline and 85,041 gallons of diesel fuel. This equates to 0.0007 percent of the gasoline and 0.057 percent of the diesel consumed annually in Riverside County. As such, the construction-related petroleum use would be nominal, when compared to current county-wide petroleum usage rates.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would be required to adhere to all State and SCAQMD regulations for off-road equipment and on-road trucks, which provide minimum fuel efficiency standards. As such, construction activities for the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Impacts regarding transportation energy would be less than significant. Development of the project would not result in the need to manufacture construction materials or create new building material facilities specifically to supply the proposed project. It is difficult to measure the energy used in the production of construction materials such as asphalt, steel, and concrete, it is reasonable to assume that the production of building materials such as concrete, steel, etc., would employ all reasonable energy conservation practices in the interest of minimizing the cost of doing business.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

Electricity Consumption

Operation of the proposed project would result in consumption of electricity at the project site. The proposed project would consume 188,309 kilowatt-hours per year of electricity. This equates to 0.0011 percent of the electricity consumed annually in the County of Riverside. As such, the operations-related electricity use would be nominal, when compared to current electricity usage rates in the County.

It should be noted that the proposed project will be required to meet the 2022 Title 24, Part 6 building energy efficiency standards that have been developed to meet the State's goal of zero-net-energy use for new homes. The zero net energy use will be achieved through a variety of measures to make new homes more energy efficient and by also requiring installation of photovoltaic systems of adequate size to generate enough electricity to meet the zero-net energy use standard. The size of the PV system required for the project pursuant to the 2022 Title 24 standards was calculated which found that the proposed project would need to install at least 211 Kilowatts of photovoltaic panels within the proposed project. Although, the CalEEMod model found that with implementation of the 2022 Title 24 Part 6 standards, that the proposed project would continue to utilize a nominal amount of power, it should be noted that the electricity usage and emission rates utilized by the CalEEMod model are

based on regional average usage rates for existing homes, which were not all built to the most current Title 24 Part 6, standards, so the CalEEMod model provides a conservative or worst-case analysis of electricity use from the proposed project. Therefore, it is anticipated the proposed project will be designed and built to minimize electricity use and that existing and planned electricity capacity and electricity supplies would be sufficient to support the proposed project's electricity demand. Thus, impacts with regard to electrical supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.

Natural Gas Consumption

Operation of the proposed project would result in increased consumption of natural gas at the project site. The proposed project would consume 2,4181 MBTU per year of natural gas. This equates to 0.0056 percent of the natural gas consumed annually in Riverside County. As such, the operations-related natural gas use would be nominal, when compared to current natural gas usage rates in the County.

It should be noted that, the proposed project would comply with all Federal, State, and City requirements related to the consumption of natural gas, that includes CCR Title 24, Part 6 *Building Energy Efficiency Standards* and CCR Title 24, Part 11: *California Green Building Standards*. The CCR Title 24, Part 6 and Part 11 standards require numerous energy efficiency measures to be incorporated into the proposed structures, including enhanced insulation as well as use of efficient natural gas appliances and HVAC units. Therefore, the proposed project would be designed and built to minimize natural gas use and that existing and planned natural gas capacity and natural gas supplies would be sufficient to support the proposed project's natural gas demand. Thus, impacts to natural gas supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.

Vehicular Petroleum Fuel Usage

Operation of the proposed project would result in increased consumption of petroleum-based fuels related to vehicular travel to and from the project site. The proposed project would consume 90,612 gallons of gasoline fuel per year from vehicle travel. This equates to 0.0086 percent of the gasoline consumed in Riverside County annually. As such, the operations-related petroleum use would be nominal, when compared to current petroleum usage rates.

It should be noted that, the proposed project would comply with all Federal, State, and City requirements related to the consumption of transportation energy that includes California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 10 California Green Building Standards that require all new garages for the proposed homes to install electrical panels of adequate size to support the installation of electric vehicle charging systems. Therefore, it is anticipated the proposed project will be designed and built to minimize transportation energy through the promotion of the use of electric-powered vehicles and it is anticipated that existing and planned capacity and supplies of transportation fuels would be sufficient to support the proposed project's demand. Thus, impacts with regard to transportation energy supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.

In conclusion, the proposed project would comply with regulatory compliance measures outlined by the State and City related to Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG), Transportation/Circulation, and Water Supply. Additionally, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with all

applicable City Building and Fire Codes. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT E-2: Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

The applicable energy plan for the proposed project is the City of Norco, Conservation Element, December 17, 2014, that provides an Energy Resources Component. The proposed project’s consistency with the applicable energy-related policies in the General Plan are shown in Table 4.6-1, Proposed Project Compliance with the City General Plan Energy Policies.

Table 4.6-1
Proposed Project Compliance with the City General Plan Energy Policies

General Plan Energy Policy	Proposed Project Consistency with General Plan Policies
GOAL 2.5: Use of Energy Resources Goal. Encourage the efficient use of energy resources.	
Policy 2.5.1a: Encourage new construction and project design that uses, or takes advantage of renewable energy resources, including but not limited to solar energy design.	Consistent. The proposed project will be required to provide a minimum of 211 kilowatts of photovoltaic solar panels in order to meet the Title 24 Part 6 rooftop solar PV requirements.
Policy 2.5.1b: Provide updated energy information documents for builders as needed to reflect the most recent Title 24 energy efficiency requirements and standards and other applicable new laws, requirements, feasible building standards as may be available.	Not Applicable. This policy is only applicable for the City as information that the City provides.
Policy 2.5.1c: Update requirements and policies as necessary to reflect the most cost-effective advances in energy production and conservation.	Not Applicable. This policy is only applicable for the City as information that the City provides.
Policy 2.5.2f: Support alternative modes of transportation as feasible including the equestrian trail system, public transportation, bicycles, etc. to reduce the demand on non-renewable energy resources.	Consistent. The proposed project includes an onsite equestrian trail system and proposes to extend existing offsite equestrian trails.
GOAL 2.6: Development of Energy Resources Goal. Seek opportunities to develop and promote renewable energy resources.	
Policy 2.6.1a: Now that the feasibility of a manure-to-energy processing facility has been demonstrated for this area, seek funding opportunities for the development of such a facility.	Not Applicable. The policy is only applicable for the City to seek funding for this type of energy processing facility.
Policy 2.6.1b: Research and promote where feasible the production of energy with other alternative renewable resources.	Consistent. The proposed project will be required to provide a minimum of 211 kilowatts of photovoltaic solar panels in order to meet the Title 24 Part 6 rooftop solar PV requirements.

General Plan Energy Policy	Proposed Project Consistency with General Plan Policies
Policy 2.6.c: Monitor opportunities for government grants to participate in innovative renewable energy resource programs that can benefit residences and businesses.	Not Applicable. This policy is only applicable for the City as a service that the city provides.
Source: City of Norco, <i>General Plan Conservation Element</i> ; December 17, 2014.	

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.6.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *General Plan Conservation Element*, Update Adoption Date: December 17, 2014.

Vista Environmental, *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis – JD Ranch Residential Project*, April 4, 2024.

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4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

4.7.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential for implementation of the proposed project to impact geological and soil resources, paleontological resources, or unique geologic features. The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical reports:

- *Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation*, LGC Geotechnical, Inc., January 21, 2022 ([Appendix E1](#)).
- *Paleontological Record Search for the Norco Residential Project*, Western Science Center, June 16, 2021 ([Appendix E2](#)).

4.7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

REGIONAL GEOLOGY

The project site is located south of the San Gabriel Mountains within the broad alluvial plain of the Santa Ana River Basin, within the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province. Specifically, the site is located within the northern portion of the Perris Block, a geologic zone consisting of granitics overlain by sedimentary deposits that are bounded by active faults including the northwest-trending Whittier-Elsinore Fault Zone at the southwest and the northwest-trending San Jacinto Fault Zone at the northeast. The roughly rectangular Perris Block is transected by the southwest-trending Santa Ana River that passes approximately 1,700 feet north of the project site.

SITE SPECIFIC GEOLOGY

Based on the *Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation*, the project site is underlain by Pleistocene-age very old alluvial channel deposits (Qvoa). These materials are locally overlain by thin areas of undocumented artificial fill. Silts generally consisted of medium dense to dense sands and silty sands with thinner layers of stiff to very stiff fine-grained soils (i.e., silts and clays) to the maximum explored depth of approximately 50 feet below existing grade.

GROUNDWATER

During the investigation, groundwater was encountered at approximately 43 feet below existing grade, at an approximate elevation of 523 feet msl. Groundwater levels recorded by the California Department of Water Resources approximately 0.5 miles to the north adjacent to the Santa Ana River, indicate historical groundwater elevations ranging from 536 to 539 feet msl (CDWR, 2022), or approximately 31 to 34 feet below existing site grades.

SEISMICITY AND FAULT RUPTURE

The project site is not located within the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone and no faults were identified on the site during LGC Geotechnical's site evaluation. The possibility of damage due to ground rupture is considered low since no active faults are known to cross the site.

The City of Norco's General Plan Safety Element states moderately strong shaking can still be expected in the City as a result from faults in the Chino/Elsinore zone. The *Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation* states the site is located within the northern portion of the Perris Block, a geologic zone consisting of granitics overlain by sedimentary deposits that are bounded by active faults including

the northwest-trending Whittier-Elsinore Fault Zone (approximately 5 miles from the site) at the southwest and the northwest-trending San Jacinto Fault Zone (approximately 23 miles from the site) at the northeast.

Secondary effects of seismic shaking resulting from large earthquakes on the major faults in the southern California region, which may affect the site, include ground lurching, shallow ground rupture, soil liquefaction and dynamic settlement. These secondary effects of seismic shaking are a possibility throughout the southern California region and are dependent on the distance between the site and causative fault and the onsite geology. Some of the major active nearby faults that could produce these secondary effects include the Chino Fault, Elsinore Fault, Central Avenue Fault, and the Whittier Fault. A discussion of these secondary effects is provided in the following sections.

Liquefaction and Dynamic Settlement

Liquefaction is a seismic phenomenon in which loose, saturated, granular soils behave similarly to a fluid when subject to high-intensity ground shaking. Liquefaction occurs when three general conditions coexist: 1) shallow groundwater; 2) low density noncohesive (granular) soils; and 3) high-intensity ground motion. Studies indicate that loose, saturated, near-surface, cohesionless soils exhibit the highest liquefaction potential, while dry, dense, cohesionless soils, and cohesive soils exhibit low to negligible liquefaction potential.

The City of Norco Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies that the project site is in an area of potential liquefaction within which groundwater is shallower than 30 feet. Data obtained from the field evaluation indicates that the site contains isolated silty/sandy layers susceptible to liquefaction in the upper 50 feet. Liquefaction analysis was performed on the 50-foot boring based on the seismic criteria (PGA_M) of the 2019 California Building Code (CBC) and the estimated high groundwater depth of 20 feet below existing grade. Results indicate total seismic settlement, as a result of liquefaction of sand layers below 20 feet from the ground surface, on the order of 1.5-inches or less.

Lateral Spreading

Lateral spreading is a type of liquefaction-induced ground failure associated with the lateral displacement of surficial blocks of sediment resulting from liquefaction in a subsurface layer. Once liquefaction transforms the subsurface layer into a fluid mass, gravity plus the earthquake inertial forces may cause the mass to move downslope towards a free face (such as a river channel or an embankment). Lateral spreading may cause large horizontal displacements and such movement typically damages pipelines, utilities, bridges, and structures. Based on the subsurface data, depth of proposed earthwork removals, presence of dense sandy soils below the recommended earthwork removals, and the limited nature of potentially liquefiable soils, the potential for lateral spreading is considered low.

Expansive Soil Characteristics

Expansive soils are defined as fine grained silts and clays which are subject to swelling and contracting. The amount of swelling and contracting would be subject to the amount of fine-grained clay materials present in the soils and the amount of moisture either introduced or extracted from the soils. Based on the results of preliminary laboratory testing, site soils are anticipated to have low expansion potential.

ORGANIC RICH SOILS

During the field survey, a total of 32 bag soil samples were collected to determine their organic content. The organic content of the samples ranged from approximately 0.5 to 60.9 percent. In general, the organic content is higher near existing grade and decreases with depth. On average, the upper approximately 6 inches (0.5-foot) of “soil” across the southern portion was previously used as a dairy site and recommended for export and disposal offsite due to high organic content (greater than 5.0 percent). It is expected that the next approximately 1 foot (at maximum) of soil below the recommended high organic export depth, within the transition zone, has an organic content between approximately 2% and 5% and can remain onsite. Below this, the materials are generally “clean” low organic soils.

4.7.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program

The National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) was established by the U.S. Congress when it passed the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977, Public Law 95–124. In establishing the NEHRP, Congress recognized that earthquake-related losses could be reduced through improved design and construction methods and practices, land use controls and redevelopment, prediction techniques and early warning systems, coordinated emergency preparedness plans, and public education and involvement programs. The four basic goals remain unchanged:

- Develop effective practices and policies for earthquake loss reduction and accelerate their implementation.
- Improve techniques for reducing earthquake vulnerabilities of facilities and systems.
- Improve earthquake hazards identification and risk assessment methods, and their use.
- Improve the understanding of earthquakes and their effects.

Several key federal agencies contribute to earthquake mitigation efforts. There are four primary NEHRP agencies:

- National Institute of Standards and Technology of the Department of Commerce
- National Science Foundation
- United States Geological Survey (USGS) of the Department of the Interior
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the Department of Homeland Security

Implementation of NEHRP priorities is accomplished primarily through original research, publications, and recommendations to assist and guide state, regional, and local agencies in the development of plans and policies to promote safety and emergency planning.

STATE

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

In response to the severe structural damages caused by the 1971 San Fernando Earthquake, the State of California enacted the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. This act regulates development near active faults to mitigate the hazards of surface fault-rupture. Under the act, the State Geologist is required to delineate special study zones along known active faults. The act also

requires that prior to approval of a project, a geologic study is required to be prepared to define and delineate any hazards from surface rupture.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, enacted in 1977, was developed to protect the public from the effects of strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, or other ground failure and from hazards caused by earthquakes. The act requires the State Geologist to delineate various seismic hazard zones and requires cities, counties, and other local permitting agencies to regulate certain development projects within these zones.

California Building Standard Code

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, also known as the California Building Standards Code, sets forth minimum requirements for building design and construction. The California Building Standards Code is a compilation of three types of building standards from three different origins:

- Building standards that have been adopted by state agencies without change from building standards contained in national model codes.
- Building standards have been adopted and adapted from the national model code standards to meet California conditions.
- Building standards authorized by the California legislature constitute extensive additions not covered by the model codes have been adopted to address particular California concerns. In the context of earthquake hazards, the California Building Standards Code design standards have a primary objective of assuring public safety and a secondary goal of minimizing property damage and maintaining function during and following a seismic event.

Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA), in 2012, the State Water Resources Control Board issued a statewide general NPDES Permit for stormwater discharges from construction sites (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System No. CAS000002). Under this Statewide General Construction Activity permit, discharges of stormwater from construction sites with a disturbed area of one or more acres are required to either obtain individual NPDES permits for stormwater discharges or be covered by the General Permit. Coverage by the General Permit is accomplished by completing and filing a Notice of Intent with the State Water Resources Control Board and developing and implementing a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Each applicant under the General Construction Activity Permit must ensure that a SWPPP is prepared prior to grading and is implemented during construction. The SWPPP must list best management practices (BMPs) implemented on the construction site to protect stormwater runoff and must contain a visual monitoring program; a chemical monitoring program for “non-visible” pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs; and a monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a water body listed on the state’s 303(d) list of impaired waters.

California Public Resources Code

The State of California Public Resources Code, Chapter 1.7, Sections 5097.5 and 30244, includes additional state level requirements for the assessment and management of paleontological resources. These statutes require reasonable mitigation of adverse impacts to paleontological

resources resulting from development on state lands, define the removal of paleontological “sites” or “features” from state lands as a misdemeanor, and prohibit the removal of any paleontological “site” or “feature” from State land without permission of the jurisdictional agency. These protections apply only to State of California land.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

SAFETY ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and polices from the Safety Element pertaining to geology and soils:

- GOAL 2.2: Seismic Safety. To create a secure public environment which minimizes social, economic, environmental and property losses due to seismic hazards.
- Policy 2.2.1: Seismic Safety. Preparedness for primary seismic hazards (earthquakes, ground shaking) and secondary seismic hazards (liquefaction, landslides) shall continue to be promoted through the enforcement of the latest building and safety codes in both old and new structures.
 - Policy 2.2.1a: Continue to require all new development to conform to the currently adopted Uniform Building Code and seismic safety regulations.
 - Policy 2.2.1d: Require site-specific geologic engineering studies in accordance with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act as part of the development review process, especially in areas of high potential for liquefaction as presented in Exhibit 1 (Seismic Hazards Map).

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and polices from the Conservation Element pertaining to geology and soils:

- GOAL 2.7: Soil Resources. Encourage owners and developers to implement policies and improvements to reduce soil erosion.
- Policy 2.7.2: Development Property.
 - Policy 2.7.2a: Require all new development to be in compliance with its respective National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and corresponding Water Quality Management Plan as applicable, and to not create a situation that would cause a violation of the City of Norco NPDES Permit.
 - Policy 2.7.2c: Require approved development plans prior to the issuance of grading permits on commercial, industrial, and multi-unit residential sites. Require the submittal of a first draft of plan check plans for a building permit application prior to the issuance of a grading permit for a single-family home or an accessory building to a single-family home.

4.7.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **GEO-1:** Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving a rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.
- **GEO-2:** Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?
- **GEO-3:** Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
- **GEO-4:** Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?
- **GEO-5:** Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?
- **GEO-6:** 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 offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?
- **GEO-7:** 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?
- **GEO-8:** Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

4.7.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT GEO-1: Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving a rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Act) regulates development near active faults to mitigate the hazards of surface fault-rupture. An active fault is one that has experienced earthquake activity in the past 11,000 years. Under the Act, the State Geologist is required to delineate special study zones along known active faults, known as Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones. The Act also requires that prior to approval of a project, a geologic study be prepared to define and delineate any hazards from surface rupture and that a building setback be established from any known trace hazard. According to the California Geologic Survey, there are no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones on the project site or in the nearby area. The proposed project would not directly or indirectly be exposed to long-term ground rupture impacts. Therefore, no ground rupture impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT GEO-2: Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?

The project site is situated within a seismically active region that could be subject to ground shaking impacts from active faults in the region. Moderately strong shaking could occur in the City as a result from faults in the Chino/Elsinore zone. These faults would have the potential to produce an earthquake above 7.0 on the Richter Scale. In the event an earthquake of this magnitude occurs, the project site could experience periodic shaking, possibly of considerable intensity. The potential seismic shaking risks at the project site would be like other areas in southern California. The proposed structures on the project site would be required to be designed to meet the City's construction development standards and the seismic design parameters of the California Uniform Building Code to withstand potential seismic shaking impacts caused by an earthquake within an acceptable level of risk. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with seismic design recommendations provided in the project geotechnical report. Compliance with the City construction development standards, California Uniform Building Code Seismic Safety Standards and seismic design recommendations provided in the project geotechnical report would minimize risks related to seismic shaking impacts. With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, potential seismic impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

GEO-1: Prior to issuance of grading permits, the City of Norco shall confirm that grading and construction plans for the project to incorporate design recommendations provided in the Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation prepared by LGC Geotechnical, Inc. dated January 21, 2022. The design recommendations shall address site earthwork and site preparation; organic rich soils, preliminary foundation, soil bearing, and lateral resistance, retaining wall recommendations, pile construction, slope creep, lot stretching, fences, freestanding walls, corrosivity, asphalt and concrete, non-structural concrete, subsurface water infiltration, surface water control, geotechnical plan review and geotechnical observation and testing.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT GEO-3: Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Liquefaction is the phenomenon in which loosely deposited soils located below the water table undergo rapid loss of shear strength due to excess pore pressure generation when subject to strong earthquake induced ground shaking. Liquefaction is known generally to occur in saturated or near-saturated cohesion-less soils at depths shallower than 50 feet below the ground surface. The City of Norco Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies that the project site is in an area of potential liquefaction within which groundwater is shallower than 30 feet.

The proposed structures on the project site would be required to be designed to meet the City's construction development standards and the seismic design parameters of the California Uniform Building Code to withstand potential seismic shaking impacts and liquefaction impacts caused by an earthquake within an acceptable level of risk. The *Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation* prepared for the project identifies that the proposed project and associated improvements would be feasible from a geotechnical standpoint, provided that the recommendations contained in the geotechnical evaluation (site earthwork, foundation systems, soil bearing/lateral resistance, retaining walls, pile construction, slope creep, lot stretching, fences/freestanding walls, nonstructural concrete flatwork, subsurface water infiltration, surface water/drainage control, geotechnical plan review) are incorporated during site grading and development. The project would be required to comply with the City construction development standards, California Uniform Building Code Seismic Safety Standards. Additionally, as identified in Mitigation Measure GEO-1, the project would be required to comply with seismic design recommendations provided in the project geotechnical report. With compliance with City construction development standards, California Uniform Building Code Seismic Safety Standards and Mitigation Measure GEO-1, potential liquefaction risks related to seismic shaking impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT GEO-4: Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

According to the California Geologic Survey Landslide Hazard Map for the Corona, North Quadrangle, the project site is not located within a zone susceptible to earthquake-induced landslides. Additionally, the proposed project would not create slopes or features that would increase the landslide potential beyond existing conditions. No impacts regarding potential landslide impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT GEO-5: Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

The construction of the proposed project would require grading on the entire project site. The land clearing and grading activities associated with the proposed project would uncover soil, which could be subject to erosion impacts caused by water and wind. Additionally, the project construction equipment and vehicles could indirectly transport sediment to offsite locations. The project would disturb more than one acre of land and would be required to obtain coverage under a general construction permit issued from the State Water Resources Control Board. The General Construction Permit would require the filing of a Notice of Intent with the State Water Resources Control Board and the preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP would provide a list of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize potential adverse erosion impacts. Such BMPs would include use of sandbags or waddles near drainages, and use of rumble racks or wheel washers or other measures to avoid sediment transport. Compliance with applicable NPDES erosion

control requirements would reduce impacts related to substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT GEO-6: 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 offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

The project is not within a landslide hazard area and the potential for lateral spreading is considered low. The City of Norco Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies that the project site is in an area of potential liquefaction. The geotechnical evaluation prepared for the project identifies that the proposed project and associated improvements would be feasible from a geotechnical standpoint, provided that the recommendations contained in the geotechnical evaluation (site earthwork, foundation systems, soil bearing/lateral resistance, retaining walls, pile construction, slope creep, lot stretching, fences/freestanding walls, nonstructural concrete flatwork, subsurface water infiltration, surface water/drainage control, geotechnical plan review) are incorporated during site grading and development. The project would be required to comply with the City Construction Development Standards as well as the California Uniform Building Code Seismic Safety Standards. Additionally, as identified in Mitigation Measure GEO-1, the project would be required to comply with geotechnical design recommendations provided in the project geotechnical evaluation. With compliance with City Construction Development Standards, California Uniform Building Code Seismic Safety Standards and Mitigation Measure GEO-1, geotechnical risks associated with the project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT GEO-7: Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Expansive soils are defined as fine grained silts and clays which are subject to swelling and contracting. The amount of swelling and contracting would be subject to the amount of fine-grained clay materials present in the soils and the amount of moisture either introduced or extracted from the soils. The potential for expansive soils was tested and the results indicate the project site has low expansion potential. Therefore, potential impacts associated with expansive soils would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT GEO-8: Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

A Vertebrate Paleontology records search was conducted by the Western Science Center, on June 16, 2021. According to the Western Science Center, the geologic unit underlying the project area is mapped entirely as very old alluvial channel deposits dating to the early Pleistocene epoch. Pleistocene alluvial units are considered to be of high paleontological sensitivity. The Western Science Center does not have localities within the project area or within a 1.0-mile radius but does have numerous localities throughout the region in similarly mapped sediments as well as Pleistocene localities within 3.0 miles associated with the SR-91 Corridor Improvement Project in Corona. Southern California Pleistocene units are well known to produce fossil localities and specimens including those associated with mammoth (*Mammuthus columbi*), mastodon (*Mammut pacificus*) sabertooth cats (*Smilodon fatalis*) and many other Pleistocene megafauna and microfauna, and the SR-91 Corridor Improvement Project produced specimens associated with ancient bison (*Bison* sp.) and ancient horse (*Equus* sp.) locally.

The project would require excavations as deep as 10 feet to remove buried debris and un-engineered fill to make the site geologically stable to construct the project. Deeper excavations that extend down into older sedimentary deposits could uncover significant fossil vertebrate remains. Any substantial excavations in the proposed project area, therefore, should be monitored closely to recover any fossil remains discovered quickly and professionally while not impeding development. Also, sediment samples should be collected and processed to determine the small fossil potential in the proposed project area. Any fossils recovered during mitigation should be deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution for the benefit of current and future generations. With implementation of Mitigation Measures PALEO-1 and PALEO-2, potential impacts to paleontological resources or site or unique geologic features would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

PALEO-1: Prior to the issuance of any grading permit, the project Applicant shall provide written evidence to the City of Norco, that the Applicant has retained a qualified paleontologist to observe grading activities and salvage and catalogue fossils, as necessary. The paleontologist shall be present at the pre-grade conference, shall establish procedures for paleontological resource surveillance, and shall establish, in cooperation with the Applicant and City, procedures for temporarily halting or redirecting work to permit sampling, identification, and evaluation of the fossils. If deemed necessary, the paleontologist shall collect sediment samples to recover any micro fossils that may be present. If the paleontological resources are found to be significant, the paleontologist shall determine appropriate actions, in cooperation with the Applicant, which ensure proper exploration and/or salvage.

PALEO-2: If paleontological resources are uncovered and after completion of the project, the Applicant shall submit the paleontologist's follow-up report for approval by the City of Norco. The report shall include the period of inspection, a catalogue and analysis of the fossils found, and the present repository of the fossils. The Applicant shall prepare excavated material to the point of identification. The Applicant shall offer excavated finds for curatorial purposes to the City of Norco or its designee, on a first refusal basis. These

actions, as well as final mitigation and disposition of the resources, shall be subject to approval by the City of Norco. Applicant shall pay curatorial fees for the storage of these resources in perpetuity.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

4.7.6 REFERENCES

California Department of Conservation, Fault Activity Map of California, <<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/fam/>>. Accessed on February 13, 2024.

City of Norco General Plan, *Conservation Element*. Update Adoption Date: December 17, 2014.

City of Norco General Plan, *Safety Element*. Update Adoption Date: January 16, 2013.

LGC Geotechnical, Inc., *Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation for the Proposed Residential Development*. January 21, 2022.

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4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

4.8.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential for implementation of the proposed project to cumulatively contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impacts. Because no single project is large enough to result in a measurable increase in global concentrations of GHG, climate change impacts of a project are considered on a cumulative basis.

This evaluation is based on the methodology recommended by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Modeling of GHG emissions was conducted using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2022.1, the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) EMFAC2021 and CARB's OFFROAD2011. Model outputs are in [Appendix B](#) of this Draft EIR. Analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical report:

- *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis*, Vista Environmental, April 4, 2024 ([Appendix B](#)).

4.8.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Constituent gases of the Earth's atmosphere, called atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in the Earth's radiation amount by trapping infrared radiation from the Earth's surface, which otherwise would have escaped to space. Prominent greenhouse gases contributing to this process include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), ozone (O₃), water vapor, nitrous oxide (N₂O), and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). This phenomenon, known as the Greenhouse Effect, is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate. Anthropogenic (caused or produced by humans) emissions of these greenhouse gases in excess of natural ambient concentrations are responsible for the enhancement of the Greenhouse Effect and have led to a trend of unnatural warming of the Earth's natural climate, known as global warming or climate change. Emissions of gases that induce global warming are attributable to human activities associated with industrial/manufacturing, agriculture, utilities, transportation, and residential land uses. Emissions of CO₂ and N₂O are byproducts of fossil fuel combustion. Methane, a potent greenhouse gas, results from off-gassing associated with agricultural practices and landfills. Sinks of CO₂, where CO₂ is stored outside of the atmosphere, include uptake by vegetation and dissolution into the ocean. The following provides a description of each of the greenhouse gases and their global warming potential.

- **Water Vapor.** Water vapor is the most abundant, important, and variable GHG in the atmosphere. Water vapor is not considered a pollutant; in the atmosphere it maintains a climate necessary for life. Changes in its concentration are primarily considered a result of climate feedbacks related to the warming of the atmosphere rather than a direct result of industrialization. The feedback loop in which water is involved is critically important to projecting future climate change. As the temperature of the atmosphere rises, more water is evaporated from ground storage (rivers, oceans, reservoirs, soil). Because the air is warmer, the relative humidity can be higher (in essence, the air is able to "hold" more water when it is warmer), leading to more water vapor in the atmosphere. As a GHG, the higher concentration of water vapor is then able to absorb more thermal indirect energy radiated from the Earth, thus further warming the atmosphere. The warmer atmosphere can then hold more water vapor and so on and so on. This is referred to as a "positive feedback loop." The extent to which

this positive feedback loop will continue is unknown as there are also dynamics that put the positive feedback loop in check. As an example, when water vapor increases in the atmosphere, more of it will eventually also condense into clouds, which are more able to reflect incoming solar radiation (thus allowing less energy to reach the Earth's surface and heat it up).

- **Carbon Dioxide.** The natural production and absorption of CO₂ is achieved through the terrestrial biosphere and the ocean. However, humankind has altered the natural carbon cycle by burning coal, oil, natural gas, and wood. Since the industrial revolution began in the mid-1700s, each of these activities has increased in scale and distribution. CO₂ was the first GHG demonstrated to be increasing in atmospheric concentration with the first conclusive measurements being made in the last half of the 20th century. Prior to the industrial revolution, concentrations were fairly stable at 280 parts per million (ppm). The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicates that concentrations were 379 ppm in 2005. Left unchecked, the IPCC projects that the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is projected to increase to a minimum of 540 ppm by 2100 as a direct result of anthropogenic sources. This could result in an average global temperature rise of at least two degrees Celsius or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Methane.** CH₄ is an extremely effective absorber of radiation, although its atmospheric concentration is less than that of CO₂. Its lifetime in the atmosphere is brief (10 to 12 years), compared to some other GHGs (such as CO₂, N₂O, and Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)). CH₄ has both natural and anthropogenic sources. It is released as part of the biological processes in low oxygen environments, such as in swamplands or in rice production (at the roots of the plants). Over the last 50 years, human activities such as growing rice, raising cattle, using natural gas, and mining coal have added to the atmospheric concentration of methane. Other anthropocentric sources include fossil-fuel combustion and biomass burning.
- **Chlorofluorocarbons.** CFCs are gases formed synthetically by replacing all hydrogen atoms in methane or ethane (C₂H₆) with chlorine and/or fluorine atoms. CFCs are nontoxic, nonflammable, insoluble, and chemically unreactive in the troposphere (the level of air at the Earth's surface). CFCs have no natural source but were first synthesized in 1928. They were used for refrigerants, aerosol propellants, and cleaning solvents. Due to the discovery that they can destroy stratospheric ozone, a global effort to halt their production was undertaken. In 1989, the European Community agreed to ban CFCs by 2000 and subsequent treaties banned CFCs worldwide by 2010. This effort was extremely successful, and the levels of the major CFCs are now remaining level or declining. However, their long atmospheric lifetimes mean that some of the CFCs will remain in the atmosphere for over 100 years.
- **Hydrofluorocarbons.** HFCs are synthetic man-made chemicals that are used as a substitute for CFCs. Out of all the GHGs, they are one of three groups with the highest global warming potential. The HFCs with the largest measured atmospheric abundances are (in order), HFC-23 (CHF₃), HFC-134a (CF₃CH₂F), and HFC-152a (CH₃CHF₂). Prior to 1990, the only significant emissions were HFC-23. HFC-134a is increasing due to its use as a refrigerant. Concentrations of HFC-23 and HFC-134a in the atmosphere are now about 10 parts per trillion (ppt) each. Concentrations of HFC-152a are about 1 ppt. HFCs are manmade for applications such as automobile air conditioners and refrigerants.

- **Perfluorocarbons.** Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) have stable molecular structures and do not break down through the chemical processes in the lower atmosphere. High-energy ultraviolet rays about 60 kilometers above Earth's surface can destroy the compounds. Because of this, PFCs have very long lifetimes, between 10,000 and 50,000 years. Two common PFCs are tetrafluoromethane (CF₄) and hexafluoroethane (C₂F₆). Concentrations of CF₄ in the atmosphere are over 70 ppt. The two main sources of PFCs are primary aluminum production and semiconductor manufacturing.
- **Sulfur Hexafluoride.** Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF₆) is an inorganic, odorless, colorless, nontoxic, nonflammable gas. SF₆ has the highest global warming potential of any gas evaluated; 23,900 times that of CO₂. Concentrations in the 1990s were about 4 ppt. Sulfur hexafluoride is used for insulation in electric power transmission and distribution equipment, in the magnesium industry, in semiconductor manufacturing, and as a tracer gas for leak detection.
- **Aerosols.** Aerosols are particles emitted into the air through burning biomass (plant material) and fossil fuels. Aerosols can warm the atmosphere by absorbing and emitting heat and can cool the atmosphere by reflecting light. Cloud formation can also be affected by aerosols. Sulfate aerosols are emitted when fuel containing sulfur is burned. Black carbon (or soot) is emitted during biomass burning due to the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels. Particulate matter regulation has been lowering aerosol concentrations in the United States; however, global concentrations are likely increasing.

GLOBAL WARMING POTENTIAL

GHGs have varying global warming potential (GWP). The GWP is the potential of a gas or aerosol to trap heat in the atmosphere; it is the cumulative radiative forcing effects of a gas over a specified time horizon resulting from the emission of a unit mass of gas relative to the reference gas, CO₂. The GHGs listed by the IPCC and the CEQA Guidelines are discussed in this section in order of abundance in the atmosphere. Water vapor, the most abundant GHG, is not included in this list because its natural concentrations and fluctuations far outweigh its anthropogenic (human-made) sources. To simplify reporting and analysis, GHGs are commonly defined in terms of their GWP. The IPCC defines the GWP of various GHG emissions on a normalized scale that recasts all GHG emissions in terms of CO₂e equivalent (CO₂e). As such, the GWP of CO₂ is equal to 1. The GWP values used in this analysis are based on the 2007 IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, which are used in CARB's 2014 Scoping Plan Update and the CalEEMod Model Version 2022.1 and are detailed in [Table 4.8-1, *Global Warming Potentials, Atmospheric Lifetimes and Abundances of GHGs*](#). The IPCC has updated the Global Warming Potentials of some gases in their Fifth Assessment Report; however, the new values have not yet been incorporated into the CalEEMod model that has been utilized in this analysis.

Table 4.8-1
Global Warming Potentials, Atmospheric Lifetimes and Abundances of GHGs

Gas	Atmospheric Lifetime (years) ¹	Global Warming Potential (100 Year Horizon) ²	Atmospheric Abundance
Carbon Dioxide (CO ₂)	50-200	1	379 ppm
Methane (CH ₄)	9-15	25	1,774 ppb
Nitrous Oxide (N ₂ O)	114	298	319 ppb
HFC-23	270	14,800	18 ppt
HFC-134a	14	1,430	35 ppt
HFC-152a	1.4	124	3.9 ppt
PFC: Tetrafluoromethane (CF ₄)	50,000	7,390	74 ppt
PFC: Hexafluoroethane (C ₂ F ₆)	10,000	12,200	2.9 ppt
Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF ₆)	3,200	22,800	5.6 ppt
Definitions: ppm = parts per million; ppb = parts per billion; ppt = parts per trillion			
Notes:			
¹ Defined as the half-life of the gas.			
² Compared to the same quantity of CO ₂ emissions and is based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2007 standard, which is utilized in CalEEMod (Version 2022.1), that is used in this report (CalEEMod user guide).			
Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Ranch Residential Project Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.			

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY

According to the Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center¹, 9,855 million metric tons (MMT) of CO₂e emissions were created globally in the year 2014. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the breakdown of global GHG emissions by sector consists of 25% from electricity and heat production; 21% from industry; 24% from agriculture, forestry and other land use activities; 14% from transportation; 6% from building energy use; and 10% from all other sources of energy use².

Total U.S. GHG emissions were 5,981.4 million metric tons (MMT) of CO₂e emissions. Total U.S. emissions have decreased by 7.3% between 1990 and 2020, which is down from a high of 15.7% above 1990 levels in 2007. Emissions decreased from 2019 to 2020 by 9.0%. The sharp decline in emissions from 2019 to 2020 is largely due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on travel and economic activity.

According to *California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2020 Trends of Emissions and Other Indicators*, prepared by the CARB, October 26, 2022, the State of California created 369.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMT_{CO₂e}) in 2020. The 2020 emissions were 35.3 MMT_{CO₂e} lower than 2019 levels and almost 61.8 MMT_{CO₂e} below the State adopted year 2020 GHG limit of 431 MMT_{CO₂e}. The 2019 to 2020 decrease in emissions is likely an anomaly as it was due in large part to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The transportation sector showed the largest decline in emissions of 27 MMT_{CO₂e} (16%) compared to 2019. Between 2019 and 2020, California's

¹ Obtained from: https://cdiac.ess-dive.lbl.gov/trends/emis/tre_glob_2014.html.

² Obtained from: <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-data>.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracted 2.8%, while GHG intensity of California's economy decreased 6.2%.

4.8.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for implementing federal policy to address global climate change. The Federal government administers a wide array of public-private partnerships to reduce U.S. GHG intensity. These programs focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy, methane, and other non-CO₂ gases, agricultural practices, and implementation of technologies to achieve GHG reductions. EPA implements several voluntary programs that substantially contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions. Additionally, over the last several years EPA has adopted a number of rulings providing for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, including requiring CO₂ and other greenhouse gases as pollutants be regulated as pollutants under the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA), requiring suppliers of fossil fuels or industrial GHGs, manufacturers of vehicles and engines, and facilities that emit 25,000 metric tons or more per year of GHG emissions to submit annual reports to the EPA, limit emissions from new sources to 1,100 pounds of CO₂ per MWh for fossil fuel-fired utility boilers and 1,000 pounds of CO₂ per mega-watt hour (MWh) for large natural gas-fired combustion units and lower power sector GHG emissions by 11 million tons by the year 2030.

On April 30, 2020, the EPA and the National Highway Safety Administration published the Final Rule for the *Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks* (SAFE Vehicles Rule). Part One of the Rule revokes California's authority to set its own GHG emissions standards and zero-emission vehicle mandates in California, which results in one emission standard to be used nationally for all passenger cars and light trucks that is set by the EPA.

STATE

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has the primary responsibility for implementing State policy to address global climate change; however, there are State regulations related to global climate change that affect a variety of State agencies. CARB, which is a part of the California Environmental Protection Agency, is responsible for the coordination and administration of both the federal and state air pollution control programs within California. In this capacity, the CARB conducts research, sets California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), compiles emission inventories, develops suggested control measures, provides oversight of local programs, and prepares the State Implementation Plan (SIP). In addition, the CARB establishes emission standards for motor vehicles sold in California, consumer products (e.g., hairspray, aerosol paints, and barbeque lighter fluid), and various types of commercial equipment. It also sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions.

In 2008, CARB approved a Climate Change Scoping Plan that proposes a "comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall carbon GHG emissions in California, improve our environment, reduce our dependence on oil, diversify our energy sources, save energy, create new jobs, and enhance public health" (CARB 2008). The Climate Change Scoping Plan has a range of GHG reduction actions which include direct regulations, alternative compliance mechanisms, monetary and non-monetary incentives, voluntary actions, and market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade system. In 2014, CARB approved the First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan (CARB, 2014) that identifies additional strategies moving beyond the 2020 targets to the year 2050. On December 14, 2017, CARB adopted the California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, November 2017 (CARB, 2017) that

provides specific statewide policies and measures to achieve the 2030 GHG reduction target of 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and the aspirational 2050 GHG reduction target of 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. In addition, the State has passed the following laws directing CARB to develop actions to reduce GHG emissions, which are listed below in chronological order, with the most current first.

Executive Order B-55-18 and Assembly Bill 1279

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-55-18 in September 2018 that establishes a new statewide goal to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, but no later than 2045. This executive order directs the CARB to work with relevant State agencies to develop a framework for implementation and accounting that tracks progress toward this goal as well as ensuring future scoping plans identify and recommend measures to achieve this carbon neutrality goal. Assembly Bill 1279 was passed by the legislature in September 2022 that codifies the carbon neutrality targets provided in Executive Order B-55-18. The *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality*, adopted by CARB on December 16, 2022, was prepared in order to meet the carbon neutrality goal targets developed in Executive Order B-55-18 and codified in Assembly Bill 1279.

Executive Order N-79-20

Executive Order N-79-20 establishes targets for when all new vehicles and equipment are zero-emission and is described in more detail above in Section 5.1 under Energy Conservation Management.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 6

The Title 24 Part 6 standards have been developed by the CEC primarily for energy conservation and is described in more detail above in Section 5.1 under Energy Conservation Management. It should be noted that implementation of the Title 24 Part 6 building standards would also reduce GHG emissions, since as detailed above in Section 3.3 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, energy use for residential and commercial buildings creates 9.7% of the GHG emissions in the State.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 11

The CalGreen Building standards have been developed by the CEC primarily for energy conservation and is described in more detail above in Section 5.1 under Energy Conservation Management. It should be noted that implementation of the CalGreen Building standards would also reduce GHG emissions, since as detailed above under Title 23, Part 6, energy usage from buildings creates 9.7% of GHG emissions in the State.

Senate Bill 100

SB 100 requires that by December 1, 2045 that 100% of retail sales of electricity to be generated from renewable or zero-carbon emission sources of electricity and is described in more detail above in Section 5.1 under Energy Conservation Management.

Executive Order B-48-18 and Assembly Bill 2127

Executive Order B-48-18 and AB 2127 provides measures to put at least five million zero-emission vehicles on California roads by 2030 and to install 200 hydrogen fueling stations and 250,000 electric vehicle chargers by 2025 and is described in more detail above in Section 5.1 under Energy Conservation Management.

Executive Order B-30-15, Senate Bill 32, and Assembly Bill 197

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-30-15 on April 29, 2015 that aims to reduce California's GHG emissions 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. This executive order aligns California's GHG reduction targets with those of other international governments, such as the European Union that set the same target for 2030 in October 2014. This target will make it possible to reach the ultimate goal of reducing GHG emissions 80% under 1990 levels by 2050 that is based on scientifically established levels needed in the U.S.A. to limit global warming below 2 degrees Celsius – the warming threshold at which scientists say there will likely be major climate disruptions such as super droughts and rising sea levels. Assembly Bill 197 (AB 197) (September 8, 2016) and Senate Bill 32 (SB 32) (September 8, 2016) codified into statute the GHG emissions reduction targets of at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 as detailed in Executive Order B-30-15. AB 197 also requires additional GHG emissions reporting that is broken down to sub-county levels and requires CARB to consider the social costs of emissions impacting disadvantaged communities.

Executive Order B-29-15

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-29-15 on April 1, 2015 and directed the State Water Resources Control Board to impose restrictions to achieve a statewide 25% reduction in urban water usage and directed the Department of Water Resources to replace 50 million square feet of lawn with drought tolerant landscaping through an update to the State's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. The Ordinance also requires installation of more efficient irrigation systems, promotion of greywater usage and onsite stormwater capture, and limits the turf planted in new residential landscapes to 25% of the total area and restricts turf from being planted in median strips or in parkways unless the parkway is next to a parking strip and a flat surface is required to enter and exit vehicles. Executive Order B-29-15 would reduce GHG emissions associated with the energy used to transport and filter water.

Assembly Bill 341 and Senate Bill 939 and 1374

Senate Bill 939 (SB 939) requires that each jurisdiction in California to divert at least 50% of its waste away from landfills, whether through waste reduction, recycling or other means. Senate Bill 1374 (SB 1374) requires the California Integrated Waste Management Board to adopt a model ordinance by March 1, 2004 suitable for adoption by any local agency to require 50 to 75% diversion of construction and demolition of waste materials from landfills. Assembly Bill 341 (AB 341) was adopted in 2011 and builds upon the waste reduction measures of SB 939 and SB 1374 and sets a new target of a 75% reduction in solid waste generated by the year 2020.

Senate Bill 375

Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) was adopted September 2008 in order to support the State's climate action goals to reduce GHG emissions through coordinated regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG emission reduction targets, and land use and housing allocation. SB 375 requires CARB to set regional targets for GHG emissions reductions from passenger vehicle use. In 2010, CARB established targets for 2020 and 2035 for each Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) within the State. It was up to each MPO to adopt a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) that will prescribe land use allocation in that MPOs Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to meet CARB's 2020 and 2035 GHG emission reduction targets. These reduction targets are required to be updated every eight years and the most current targets are detailed at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/sustainable->

communities-program/regional-plan-targets, which provides GHG emissions reduction targets for SCAG of 8% by 2020 and 19% by 2035.

The Connect SoCal (SCAG, 2020) provides a 2035 GHG emission reduction target of 19% reduction over the 2005 per capita emissions levels. Connect SoCal includes new initiatives of land use, transportation and technology to meet the 2035 new 19% GHG emission reduction target for 2035. CARB is also charged with reviewing SCAG's RTP/SCS for consistency with its assigned targets.

City and County land use policies, including General Plans, are not required to be consistent with the RTP and associated SCS. However, new provisions of CEQA incentivize, through streamlining and other provisions, qualified projects that are consistent with an approved SCS and categorized as "transit priority projects."

Assembly Bill 1109

AB 1109 requires reductions in energy usage for lighting and is described in more detail above in Section 5.1 under Energy Conservation Management.

Executive Order S-1-07

Executive Order S-1-07 was issued in 2007 and proclaims that the transportation sector is the main source of GHG emissions in the State, since it generates more than 40% of the State's GHG emissions. It establishes a goal to reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels sold in the State by at least 10% by 2020. This Executive Order also directs CARB to determine whether this Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) could be adopted as a discrete early-action measure as part of the effort to meet the mandates in AB 32.

In 2009 CARB approved the proposed regulation to implement the LCFS. The standard was challenged in the courts but has been in effect since 2011 and was re-approved by the CARB in 2015. The LCFS is anticipated to reduce GHG emissions by about 16 MMT per year by 2020. The LCFS is designed to provide a framework that uses market mechanisms to spur the steady introduction of lower carbon fuels. The framework establishes performance standards that fuel producers and importers must meet annually. Reformulated gasoline mixed with corn-derived ethanol and low-sulfur diesel fuel represent the baseline fuels. Lower carbon fuels may be ethanol, biodiesel, renewable diesel, or blends of these fuels with gasoline or diesel. Compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas also may be low-carbon fuels. Hydrogen and electricity, when used in fuel cells or electric vehicles, are also considered as low-carbon fuels.

Assembly Bill 32

CARB's Scoping Plan that was adopted in 2009, proposes a variety of measures including: strengthening energy efficiency and building standards; targeted fees on water and energy use; a market-based cap-and-trade system; achieving a 33% renewable energy mix; and a fee regulation to fund the program. The 2014 update to the Scoping Plan identifies strategies moving beyond the 2020 targets to the year 2050.

The Cap and Trade Program established under the Scoping Plan sets a statewide limit on sources responsible for 85% of California's GHG emissions and has established a market for long-term investment in energy efficiency and cleaner fuels since 2012.

Executive Order S-3-05

In 2005 the California Governor issued Executive Order S 3-05, GHG Emission, which established the following reduction targets:

- 2010: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 2000 levels;
- 2020: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels;
- 2050: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 80% below 1990 levels.

The Executive Order directed the secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to coordinate a multi-agency effort to reduce GHG emissions to the target levels. To comply with the Executive Order, the secretary of CalEPA created the California Climate Action Team (CAT), made up of members from various state agencies and commissions. The team released its first report in March 2006. The report proposed to achieve the targets by building on the voluntary actions of businesses, local governments, and communities and through State incentive and regulatory programs. The State achieved its first goal of reducing GHG emissions to 2000 levels by 2010.

Assembly Bill 1493

AB 1493 or the Pavley Bill sets tailpipe GHG emissions limits for passenger vehicles in California as well as fuel economy standards and is described in more detail above in Section 5.1 under Energy Conservation Management.

REGIONAL – SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The SCAQMD is the agency principally responsible for comprehensive air pollution control in the South Coast Air Basin. To that end, as a regional agency, the SCAQMD works directly with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), county transportation commissions, and local governments and cooperates actively with all federal and state agencies.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

SCAQMD develops rules and regulations, establishes permitting requirements for stationary sources, inspects emission sources, and enforces such measures through educational programs or fines, when necessary. SCAQMD is directly responsible for reducing emissions from stationary, mobile, and indirect sources. The SCAQMD is also responsible for GHG emissions for projects where it is the lead agency. However, for other projects in the Air Basin where it is not the lead agency, it is limited to providing resources to other lead agencies in order to assist them in determining GHG emission thresholds and GHG reduction measures. In order to assist local agencies with direction on GHG emissions, the SCAQMD organized a working group, which is described below.

Since neither CARB nor the OPR has developed GHG emissions threshold, the SCAQMD formed a Working Group to develop significance thresholds related to GHG emissions. At the September 28, 2010 Working Group meeting, the SCAQMD released its most current version of the draft GHG emissions thresholds, which recommends a tiered approach that either provides a quantitative annual threshold of 3,500 MTCO₂e for residential uses, 1,400 MTCO₂e for commercial uses, and 3,000 MTCO₂e for mixed uses. An alternative annual threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e for all land use types is also proposed.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

SCAG is the regional planning agency for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial Counties and addresses regional issues relating to transportation, the economy, community development and the environment. SCAG is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the majority of the southern California region and is the largest MPO in the nation. With respect to air quality planning, SCAG has prepared the *2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (Connect SoCal)*, adopted September 3, 2020, and the *2019 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (2019 FTIP)*, adopted September 2018, which addresses regional development and growth forecasts. Although the Connect SoCal and 2019 FTIP are primarily planning documents for future transportation projects, a key component of these plans are to integrate land use planning with transportation planning that promotes higher density infill development in close proximity to existing transit service. These plans form the basis for the land use and transportation components of the AQMP, which are utilized in the preparation of air quality forecasts and in the consistency, analysis included in the AQMP. The Connect SoCal, 2019 FTIP, and AQMP are based on projections originating within the City and County General Plans.

LOCAL

City of Norco

Local jurisdictions, such as the City of Norco, have the authority and responsibility to reduce GHG emissions through their police power and decision-making authority. Specifically, the City is responsible for the assessment and mitigation of GHG emissions resulting from its land use decisions. In accordance with CEQA requirements and the CEQA review process, the City assesses the global climate change potential of new development projects, requires mitigation of potentially significant global climate change impacts by conditioning discretionary permits, and monitors and enforces implementation of such mitigation.

4.8.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **GHG-1:** Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- **GHG-2:** Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

4.8.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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

The proposed project would not generate significant gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. The proposed project requests approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and Tentative Parcel Map (on 34.38 acres), to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum 10,000 square foot

lots in accordance with the City’s R-1 Zoning regulations. The proposed General Plan Amendment would increase the population on the project site above what is currently projected for the project, which would increase greenhouse gas emissions above what was evaluated in the General Plan.

At the September 28, 2010, Working Group meeting, the SCAQMD released its most current version of the draft GHG emissions thresholds, which recommends a tiered approach that provides a quantitative annual threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e for all land use projects. As such, this analysis has relied on the SCAQMD Working Group’s recommended thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project would be considered to create a significant cumulative GHG impact if the proposed project would exceed the annual threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

The proposed project would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. The proposed project would consist of the development of a single-family residential development. The proposed project is anticipated to generate GHG emissions from area sources, energy usage, mobile sources, waste disposal, water usage, and construction equipment.

The project’s GHG emissions have been calculated based on the project construction and operational parameters. A summary of the results is shown Table 4.8-2, Project Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions. The data provided in Table 4.8-2 shows that the proposed project would create 966.92 MTCO₂e per year. According to the SCAQMD draft threshold of significance, a cumulative global climate change impact would occur if the GHG emissions created from the on-going operations would exceed 3,000 MTCO₂e per year. Therefore, a less than significant generation of greenhouse gas emissions would occur from development of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.

Table 4.8-2
Project Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions

Category	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Metric Tons per Year)			
	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	CO ₂ e
Mobile Sources ¹	911	0.04	0.04	927
Area Sources ²	17.4	<0.01	<0.01	17.4
Energy Usage ³	158	0.01	<0.01	159
Solid Waste ⁴	5.63	0.56	<0.01	19.7
Water and Wastewater ⁵	6.64	0.09	<0.01	9.56
Refridgerationion ⁶	--	--	--	0.25
Construction ⁷	32.53	<0.01	<0.01	33.07
Total GHG Emissions	1,131	0.70	0.05	1,166
SCAQMD Draft Threshold of Significance				3,000
Exceed Thresholds?				No
Notes:				
¹ Mobile sources consist of GHG emissions from vehicles.				
² Area sources consist of GHG emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, hearths, and landscaping equipment.				
³ Energy usage consists of GHG emissions from electricity and natural gas usage (non-hearths).				
⁴ Waste includes the CO ₂ and CH ₄ emissions created from the solid waste placed in landfills.				
⁵ Water includes GHG emissions from electricity used for transport of water and processing of wastewater.				
⁶ Refrigeration includes GHG emissions from refrigerants used in air conditioning units.				
⁷ Construction emissions amortized over 30 years as recommended in the SCAQMD GHG Working Group on November 19, 2009.				
Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Ranch Residential Project, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.				

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The GHG emissions analysis and associated threshold are based on the amount of operational annual GHG emissions generated by a land use. There is no threshold for short-term construction emissions. Therefore, no significant construction-related greenhouse gas impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

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

The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. The applicable plans for the proposed project include the City's Climate Action Plan, the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan, and the Connect SoCal.

The City of Norco is included within the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) Subregional Climate Action Plan (CAP) planning area. The CAP is a blueprint that serves as a beginning point to establish, implement, and continuously refine a subregional sustainability plan for jurisdictions within WRCOG. The framework consists of six core components: Economic Development, Education, Health, Transportation, Water and Wastewater, and Energy and the Environment. Measures included as part of the CAP strategy includes implementing bicycle infrastructure where feasible into residential and mixed-use development, implementing California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6), and encouraging mixed use development.

The current Title 24 Part 6 building standards require all new homes to be designed to use net zero energy, through a combination of energy efficiency measures as well as requiring all new homes to install rooftop photovoltaic systems that are of adequate size to generate enough electricity to meet the net-zero energy requirements. Also, the California Green Building Code requires that all new developments institute additional energy efficiency and water conservation measures. Through adherence to the Title 24 Part 6 building standards and the California Green Building Code, the proposed project would meet the reduction goals detailed in the City's Climate Action Plan/Sustainable Community Plan and associated Subregional CAP.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE 2022 CARB SCOPING PLAN

The 2022 Scoping Plan identifies additional GHG reduction actions and strategies necessary to achieve the AB 1279 target of 85% below 1990 levels by 2045. These actions and strategies build upon those identified in the first update to the Scoping Plan (2013) and in the second update to the Scoping Plan (2017). Although a number of these measures are currently established as statewide regulations, some measures have not yet been formally proposed or adopted. It is expected that these measures or similar actions to reduce GHG emissions will be adopted as required to achieve statewide GHG emissions targets. Provided in [Table 4.8-3, *Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan*](#), is an evaluation of applicable reduction actions/strategies by emissions source category to determine how the proposed project would be consistent with or exceed reduction actions/strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan.

Table 4.8-3
Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan

AB 32 GHG Inventory Sector (shown in Bold) and Scoping Plan Action	Proposed Project Consistency with Scoping Plan Actions
GHG Emissions Reductions Relative to the SB 32 Target	
40% below 1990 levels by 2030.	No Conflict. Senate Bill 32 and Assembly Bill 197 have codified this emission target into a statute that requires emissions reductions for sources covered by the AB 32 inventory, which includes new residential building construction. In order to achieve these emissions reduction targets the CEC has increased the energy-efficiency standards in the most current 2022 Title 24, Part 6 building energy requirements that increases the onsite renewable energy generation requirements and installation of battery storage systems as well as requires the use of greater insulation and more efficient appliances that will reduce GHG emissions.
Smart Growth / Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	
VMT per capita reduced 12% below 2019 levels by 2030, and 22% below 2019 levels by 2045.	No Conflict. Senate Bill 375 directs each regional MPO (SCAG is MPO for project area) to adopt a SCS/RTP that meet this reduction target. Connect SoCal was prepared to meet these reduction targets. <u>Table 4.8-4, Consistency with the Connect SoCal</u> , below details how the proposed project would not conflict with the Connect SoCal. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with this Strategy.
Light-Duty Vehicle (LDV) Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs)	
100% of LDV sales are ZEV by 2035.	No Conflict. Executive Order N-79-20 requires all new LDVs sold in California to be zero-emission by the year 2035. The proposed project will be designed to meet the 2022 Title 24, Part 6 and Part 11 requirements that require the new homes garages to include electrical hookups for Type II ZEV charging stations. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with this Strategy.
Truck ZEVs	
100% of medium-duty (MDV)/HDC sales are ZEV by 2040 (AB 74 University of California Institute of Transportation Studies [ITS] report).	No Conflict. Executive Order N-79-20 requires all new LDVs sold in California to be zero-emission by the year 2045. The freight trucks associated with the proposed project would be primarily limited to trucks making deliveries to the project site during construction and operation of the project. No trucks would be maintained by the proposed project or potentially charged on the project site. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with this Strategy.

AB 32 GHG Inventory Sector (shown in Bold) and Scoping Plan Action	Proposed Project Consistency with Scoping Plan Actions
Aviation	
<p>10% of aviation fuel demand is met by electricity (batteries) or hydrogen (fuel cells) in 2045.</p> <p>Sustainable aviation fuel meets most or the rest of the aviation fuel demand that has not already transitioned to hydrogen or batteries.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not utilize any aviation fuel.</p>
Ocean-going Vessels (OGV)	
<p>2020 OGV At-Berth regulation fully implemented, with most OGVs utilizing shore power by 2027.</p> <p>25% of OGVs utilize hydrogen fuel cell electric technology by 2045.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not utilize any OGVs.</p>
Port Operations	
<p>100% of cargo handling equipment is zero-emission by 2037.</p> <p>100% of drayage trucks are zero emission by 2035.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not impact any operations at any ports.</p>
Freight and Passenger Rail	
<p>100% of passenger and other locomotive sales are ZEV by 2030.</p> <p>100% of line haul locomotive sales are ZEV by 2035.</p> <p>Line haul and passenger rail rely primarily on hydrogen fuel cell technology, and others primarily utilize electricity.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not impact any freight or passenger rail operations.</p>
Oil and Gas Extraction	
<p>Phase out oil and gas extraction operations by 2045.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not impact any oil and gas extraction activities.</p>
Petroleum Refining	
<p>CCS on majority of petroleum refining operations by 2030.</p> <p>Production reduced in line with petroleum demand.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not impact any petroleum refining activities.</p>
Electricity Generation	
<p>Electric sector GHG target of 38 MMTCO₂e in 2030 and 31 MMTCO₂e in 2045.</p> <p>Retail sales load coverage.</p> <p>Includes Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS)-eligible and zero-carbon generation resources.</p>	<p>No Conflict. Senate Bill 1020 requires that 100% of retail sales of electricity be generated by renewable or zero-carbon source of electricity by December 1, 2045. The proposed project would be designed to meet the most current 2022 Title 24, Part 6 building energy requirements that increases the onsite renewable energy generation requirements as well as requires the use of greater insulation and more efficient appliances that will reduce the proposed structures electrical usage.</p>
New Residential and Commercial Buildings	
<p>All electric appliances beginning 2026 (residential) and 2029 (commercial).</p>	<p>No Conflict. The new 2022 Title 24, Part 6 building energy requirements detail that all new structures with built-in appliances to be wired for electric appliances, regardless if natural gas appliances are initially installed. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with this Strategy.</p>

AB 32 GHG Inventory Sector (shown in Bold) and Scoping Plan Action	Proposed Project Consistency with Scoping Plan Actions
Existing Residential Buildings	
80% of appliance sales are electric by 2030 and 100% of appliance sales are electric by 2035. Appliances are replaced at end of life.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any existing residential buildings.
Existing Commercial Buildings	
80% of appliance sales are electric by 2030, and 100% of appliance sales are electric by 2045. Appliances are replaced at end of life.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any existing commercial buildings.
Food Products	
7.5% of energy demand electrified directly and/or indirectly by 2030; 75% by 2045.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any commercial food production activities.
Construction Equipment	
25% of energy demand electrified by 2030 and 75% electrified by 2045.	No Conflict. Executive Order N-79-20 requires all off-road vehicles and equipment to transition to 100% zero-emission equipment, where feasible, by 2035. All construction equipment fleets utilized during construction of the proposed project are required to be registered with CARB and meet CARB's current emission reductions regulations, which are anticipated to be updated to meet Executive Order N-79-20 requirements. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with this Strategy.
Chemicals and Allied Products; Pulp and Paper	
Electrify 0% of boilers by 2030 and 100% of boilers by 2045. Hydrogen for 25% of process heat by 2035 and 100% by 2045. Electrify 100% of other energy demand by 2045.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any pulp and paper production activities.
Stone, Clay, Glass, and Cement	
CCS on 40% of operations by 2035 and on all facilities by 2045. Process emissions reduced through alternative materials and CCS.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any stone, clay, glass and cement production activities.
Other Industrial Manufacturing	
0% energy demand electrified by 2030 and 50% by 2045.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any other industrial manufacturing activities.
Combined Heat and Power	
Facilities retire by 2040.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any existing combined heat and power facilities.
Agriculture Energy Use	
25% energy demand electrified by 2030 and 75% by 2045.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any commercial agriculture activities.
Low Carbon Fuels for Transportation	
Biomass supply is used to produce conventional and advanced biofuels, as well as hydrogen.	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any production of fuels for transportation.

AB 32 GHG Inventory Sector (shown in Bold) and Scoping Plan Action	Proposed Project Consistency with Scoping Plan Actions
Low Carbon Fuels for Buildings and Industry	
<p>In 2030s, renewable natural gas (RNG) blended in pipeline.</p> <p>Renewable hydrogen blended in natural gas pipeline at 7% energy (~20% by volume), ramping up between 2030 and 2040.</p> <p>In 2030s, dedicated hydrogen pipelines constructed to serve certain industrial clusters.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any production of fuels for buildings and industry.</p>
Non-combustion Methane Emissions	
<p>Increase landfill and dairy digester methane capture.</p> <p>Some alternative manure management deployed for smaller dairies.</p> <p>Moderate adoption of enteric strategies by 2030.</p> <p>Divert 75% of organic waste from landfills by 2025.</p> <p>Oil and gas fugitive methane emissions reduced 50% by 2030 and further reductions as infrastructure components retire in line with reduced fossil gas demand.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include the operation of any landfill or dairy; however, there is a potential for horses to reside at the proposed homes that will be required to adhere to the Horse Storage and Manure Management Regulations provided in Chapter 6.45 of the Norco Municipal Code.</p>
High GWP Potential Emissions	
<p>Low GWP refrigerants introduced as building electrification increases, mitigating HFC emissions.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include the manufacturing of appliances that use low GWP refrigerants.</p>
Compensate for Remaining Emissions	
<p>Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) demonstration projects deployed by 2030.</p> <p>CDR scaled to compensate for remaining GHG emissions in 2045.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. The proposed project would not include any CDR demonstration projects.</p>
<p>Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Ranch Residential Project, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i>; April 4, 2024.</p>	

As shown above in [Table 4.8-3](#), the proposed project would not conflict with any proposed action or strategy in the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan and potential impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONNECT SOCAL

SB 375 requires CARB to set regional targets for GHG emissions reductions from passenger vehicle use. It is up to each MPO in the State (SCAG is the MPO for Southern California) to adopt a SCS to meet the reduction target set by CARB for the Southern California region. The Connect SoCal is the most current SCS adopted by SCAG that was prepared to meet a 2035 GHG emission reduction target of 19% reduction over the 2005 per capita emissions levels through new initiatives of land use, transportation and technology. Provided in [Table 4.8-4, *Consistency with Connect SoCal*](#), is an evaluation of applicable goals and strategies to determine how the proposed project would be consistent with or exceed reduction strategies outlined in the Connect SoCal.

Table 4.8-4
Consistency with Connect SoCal

Goals and Strategies	Consistency Assessment
Connect SoCal Goals	
Goal 1: Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness.	Not Applicable. This Goal is directed at SCAG and the City and does not apply to the proposed project. This strategy calls on encouraging regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness. The proposed project would not interfere with such policymaking.
Goal 2: Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods.	Consistent. The project proposes to construct a new residential development in an infill development area that is in close proximity to existing commercial retail, school and church uses and the proposed project will include an internal trail and sidewalk system that will allow the residents of the proposed homes with improved accessibility to services and is therefore consistent with this Goal.
Goal 3: Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system.	Consistent. The proposed project would include an internal trail system that connects to existing pathways. The proposed project would improve public safety infrastructure in the vicinity of the project site by providing new lighting within the project site and around the perimeter.
Goal 4: Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system.	Not Applicable. This strategy calls on SCAG to increase person and goods movement and travel choices across the transportation system. The proposed project would not interfere with this goal.
Goal 5: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.	Consistent. The proposed project would result in criteria air pollutant and GHG emissions during construction and operation. However, emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD significance thresholds.
Goal 6: Support healthy and equitable communities.	Consistent. The proposed project would be consistent with this Goal by facilitating the use of alternative modes of transportation, which would aid in reducing car trips and positively impact air quality. The proposed project would encourage pedestrian travel by providing an internal trail system on the project site.
Goal 7: Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network.	Not Applicable. This goal is directed towards SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects.
Goal 8: Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel.	Not Applicable. This Goal is directed towards SCAG and does not apply to the proposed project. This strategy calls on SCAG to use new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions to increase efficiency. The proposed project would not interfere with this goal.
Goal 9: Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.	Consistent. The proposed project would consist of a residential use development on an infill lot in close proximity to existing commercial retail, school and church uses. The proposed project would provide an internal trail and sidewalk system on the project site that will connect to existing pathways to encourage use of alternative transportation.
Goal 10: Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats.	Consistent. The project site is not currently used for any agricultural uses. As such, the project would not interfere with this goal.

Goals and Strategies	Consistency Assessment
Connect SoCal Strategies	
Strategy 1: Focus growth near destinations and mobility options.	Consistent. The proposed project would consist of an infill residential development. The project would provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to encourage use of alternative transportation.
Strategy 2: Promote diverse housing choices.	Consistent. The proposed project would consist of development of ranch homes in close proximity to a variety of other housing types.
Strategy 3: Leverage technology innovations.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed to SCAG and jurisdictions and does not apply to the proposed project. This strategy aims to promote low emission technologies, improve access to services through technology, and identify ways to incorporate micro power grids into communities. The proposed project would not interfere with this strategy.
Strategy 4: Support implementation of sustainability policies.	Consistent. The proposed project would incorporate Green Building Measures, including water efficient landscaping, efficient lighting, low-flush toilets, and energy efficient appliances.
Strategy 5: Promote a Green Region.	Consistent. The proposed project would include open space areas, trails and walkways throughout the project site. Additionally, the development would emphasize sustainability features that promote more resource efficient development.
Source: Vista Environmental, <i>JD Ranch Residential Project, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis</i> ; April 4, 2024.	

As shown above in [Table 4.8-4](#), the proposed project would not conflict with any proposed goal or strategy in the Connect SoCal Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the Connect SoCal Plan and potential impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

The proposed project would consist of a single-family residential development. The proposed project is anticipated to create 966.962 MTCO₂e per year, which is well below the SCAQMD draft threshold of significance of 3,000 MTCO₂e per year. The SCAQMD developed this threshold through a Working Group, which also developed a detailed methodology for evaluating significance under CEQA. At the September 28, 2010, Working Group meeting, the SCAQMD released its most current version of the draft GHG emissions thresholds, which recommends a tiered approach that provides a quantitative annual threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e for all land use type projects, which was based on substantial evidence supporting the use of the recommended thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases resulting in less than significant impacts.

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The GHG emissions analysis and associated threshold is based on the amount of operational annual GHG emissions generated by a land use. There is no threshold for short-term construction emissions. Therefore, the project would not conflict with a policy, or a regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gas.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.8.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *General Plan Conservation Element*, Update Adoption Date: December 17, 2014.

Linscott Law & Greenspan, *Traffic Circulation Assessment for the Proposed JD Ranch Residential Project*, February 11, 2022.

Vista Environmental, *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis – JD Ranch Residential Project*, April 4, 2024.

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4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

4.9.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project on human health and the environment due to exposure to hazardous materials or conditions associated with the project site, project construction, and project operations. Potential project impacts and appropriate project design features, standard conditions of approval and/or mitigation measures are included, as necessary. The analysis in this section is based, in part, upon the following sources:

- *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment*, TA-Group DD, LLC, October 7, 2021 ([Appendix F1](#)).
- *Phase II Environmental Site Assessment*, TA-Group DD, LLC, April 1, 2022 ([Appendix F2](#)).

4.9.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Division 4.5, Chapter 11, Article 3, classifies hazardous materials into the following four categories based on their properties:

- Toxic (causes human health effects),
- Ignitable (has the ability to burn),
- Corrosive (causes severe burns or damage to materials), and
- Reactive (causes explosions or generates toxic gases).

Hazardous materials have been and are commonly used in commercial, agricultural, and industrial applications as well as in residential areas to a limited extent. Hazardous wastes are hazardous materials that no longer have practical use, such as substances that have been discarded, discharged, spilled, contaminated, or are being stored prior to proper disposal. The health impacts of hazardous materials exposure are based on the frequency of exposure, the exposure pathway, and individual susceptibility. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was prepared for the proposed project to identify known or suspected environmental concerns or recognized environmental conditions that could be associated with the project site and of adjoining properties, and nearby locations are suspected sites of environmental contamination.

PROJECT SITE

Historical Land Use

The property is comprised of two (2) parcels, Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 121-110-001 and 121-110-003 (address of 2877 River Road). Historical aerial photographs and topographic maps were reviewed to identify historical land development and any surface conditions which may have impacted the subject property with photographs and historical topographic maps dating between 1931 and 2020. Based on historical records such as aerial photographs and topographic maps, the subject site was undeveloped prior to at least 1931. Part of the property was labeled as part of a "U.S. Naval Reserve" from 1967 through 1981. In 1948, row crops were being cultivated, and (apparent) residences were constructed on the adjacent parcel to the north (Bluff Street). By 1952, the site was no longer under row crop cultivation, and the northern Bluff Street portion was developed with two small sheds and a dirt access road. By 1974, buildings were present near River Road at the current dairy location, and long barns appeared on the north end of the southern parcel. By 1980, the southern portion of the site was divided with fencing and an impoundment appeared near the southwest corner.

In general, the site has remained in its current configuration from roughly 1974. By 2002, features of the City's groundwater well site on the northwest were apparent.

Existing Land Uses

As part of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, a site survey of the project site was conducted. The property consists of two parcels. The City of Norco owns APN 121-003-001 which contains a City water well facility, including several wells and related piping and utilities. The balance of the site is APN 121-110-003 consisting of the Dallape Dairy property at 2877 River Road, consisting of a former milking barn, retail outlet, barns/sheds, and dairy-related features including pastures impoundment, pole barns, and fencing. Electrical utilities observed at or adjacent to the overall site include a power pole with transformer on the River Road access drive; large power poles transecting the eastern end of the site; and onsite power enclosures on the northern, City-owned parcel. Power poles are also located on both River Road and Bluff Drive. A large gas service is present adjacent to the dairy building, and an electrical room is present in the same building. Water wells are present on the Dallape Dairy property as well as on the City property. A well is present immediately adjacent to the dairy building, which includes storage and maintenance barns and sheds.

An Underground Storage Tank (UST) was formerly located at the southwest corner of the barns/sheds. A concrete slab is currently present at the former UST location. All shed structures have concrete floors. Buildings are generally wood framed with galvanized roofs and exterior walls. A trailer used for storage and office is also present. Hazardous materials (typical maintenance materials, oil, fuels) are stored in the buildings. No floor drains are present, and in the larger buildings no staining was noted. In the easternmost shed, several 55-gallon drums are present and substantial staining and leakage is present. Oil has seeped through the entrance and wall into exposed soil.

The former dairy building, which is a concrete structure, contains an electrical room, a former milk tank room, and a storage/sales room. The building is connected to a milking barn and an exterior concrete staging/washing area. No wastes, spillage, or environmental concerns were noted.

The southern half of the site is occupied primarily by pasture and a retainage pond (dry). The northern half is developed with a concrete access road and steel fencing. No trash was noted and in general, housekeeping appears excellent. Mr. Dallape indicated that manure formerly generated by dairy operations had always been trucked offsite. We saw no stockpiles of such materials onsite, and no evidence of manure storage in corrals or otherwise onsite. At the eastern end of the site is an undeveloped area housing a large wellhead and several steel electrical towers.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATORY DATABASE REVIEW

The purpose of the regulatory database report review was to evaluate to the extent possible whether prior activities, processes, operations, or actions on the project site, adjoining properties, and nearby locations have the potential to adversely impact the environmental integrity of the site, are suspected sources of recognized environmental conditions (REC) or if RECs are present on the site. The regulatory database report provides information regarding current operations and prior regulatory listing. The regulatory database review includes a list of government databases searched, a statistical profile listing the number of properties within the vicinity of the site, selected detailed information from environmental regulatory agency databases, and a map illustrating the identified properties, sites, or facilities of interests for the site and previous owners and/or operators on the site.

City of Norco

According to the City Clerk Services Specialist, the City does not maintain any building or fire department records, or any records related to hazardous materials for the subject property.

State Water Resources Control Board

The online database GeoTracker was reviewed, which provides records on Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUSTs) and Spills, Leaks, Investigation and Cleanup (SLIC) sites, which is maintained by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB, 2020). A former LUST case was noted for the subject property, Case T0606500396; Dallape Dairy. The case file documented the removal of a 1,000-gallon gasoline UST and a 4,000-gallon diesel fuel UST at the site in 1994. Soil was excavated and left onsite to attenuate over a 10-month period. Stockpile sampling resulted in low levels of gas (1.7 mg/kg TPHg) and diesel (210 mg/kg TPHd). The case file indicated that groundwater was not impacted. The RWQCB closed the case in 1995. Due to the nature of the release, the manner of remediation and closure status is not considered a REC.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

On September 29, 2021, TA-Group DD contacted the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) regarding any records (request 1408390) for the subject property. SCAQMD indicated that no records were found for the subject site address.

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

DTSC indicated that no records were found for the subject site. Additionally, EnviroStor database was reviewed, which provides records on: Federal Superfund sites (National Priority List); State Response, including Military Facilities and State Superfund; Voluntary Cleanup; and School sites, which are maintained by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC, 2020). The subject property and adjacent properties were not listed on the database.

California Department of Conservation Geologic Energy Management Division

Oil and gas wells were not observed at the subject property during our site reconnaissance. A review of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division website for oil and gas fields in California and Alaska (CDCGEMD, 2020) did not indicate the presence of oil and gas wells on or adjacent to the subject property. The closest well, Corona Oil & Gas No. 1, is an idle well located roughly one mile south of the subject site.

National Pipeline Mapping System

The National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS, 2020) was reviewed for gas transmission pipelines and hazardous liquid trunk lines on or adjacent to the subject property. According to the National Pipeline Mapping System, pipelines are located on or adjacent to the subject property. However, a gas transmission pipeline is present roughly 0.20 miles south of the property on River Road. Based on distance and absence of release reporting, the pipeline is not considered a REC.

Vapor Encroachment Screen

As part of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, a Vapor Encroachment Screening (VES) was conducted on the property. The purpose of the screening is to determine whether a Vapor

Encroachment Condition (VEC) exists from chemicals of concern (COC) that may migrate as vapors onto a property because of contaminated soil and groundwater on or near the subject property. The screening involves a two-tiered approach to assessing VEC risk.

Tier 1 Screening – Search Distance Test/Chemicals of Concern

A Tier 1 Screening includes the search distance test that involves a review of the regulatory database report and available historical records obtained during the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment process to decide if any known or suspect potentially contaminated properties exist within the Area of Concern (AOC). High risk sites are typically current and former gas stations, former and current dry cleaners, manufactured gas plants, and industrial sites (Brownfields). The AOC is defined as any up-gradient sites within the ASTM E1527-13 standard search distances and any cross or down gradient sites within 1/3 mile (1745-feet) for solvents and petroleum products. If the contamination at the known or potentially contaminated sites within the AOC consists of Chemicals of Concern (COCs), then a potential Vapor Encroachment Condition (pVEC) exists, and a Tier 2 Screening evaluation is recommended. If no known or potentially contaminated sites with COCs exist within the AOC, no further inquiry is necessary.

Tier 1 Screening evaluation included information regarding the historical diesel release at the site was reviewed to see if it met pVEC conditions with regard to the subject property. Based on review, a number of factors eliminated the release as a pVEC. Those conditions include excavation remediation, clean nature of final excavation limits, remediation method of natural attenuation, including a 10-month period of open excavation and closure status determining no health risk from RWQCB. Based on these factors, the presence of a vapor plume capable of posing a health threat related to the former release is considered highly unlikely. Further screening was not considered necessary and VEC can be ruled out.

Asbestos Containing Building Materials

Asbestos, a natural fiber used in the manufacturing of several different building materials, has been identified as a human carcinogen. Most friable (i.e., easily broken or crushed) Asbestos-Containing Material (ACM) was banned in building materials by 1978. By 1989, most major manufacturers had voluntarily removed non-friable ACM (i.e., flooring, roofing, and mastics/sealants) from the market. These materials, however, were not banned completely. In October 1995, the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) redefined how building materials are classified in regard to asbestos and also the way these materials are to be handled. Under this ruling, “thermal system insulation and sprayed-on or troweled on or otherwise applied surfacing materials” applied before 1980 are considered presumed Asbestos-Containing Materials (PACM). Other building materials such as “floor or ceiling tiles, siding, roofing, transite panels” (i.e., non-friable) are also considered PACM unless tested. Buildings on the subject property are wood framed with galvanized steel roofs and exterior walls (the former residence is Not A Part). No potential PACM was noted in the buildings. However, both the Dallape Dairy site and the City owned property have large wells which convey water underground. There is a potential for Transite (PACM containing concrete) pipes on both sides of the overall property.

Lead Paint

Lead-Based Paint (LBP) is identified by OSHA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as being a potential health risk to humans,

particularly children, based upon its effects to the central nervous system, kidneys, and bloodstream. The risk of Lead-Based Paint has been classified by HUD based upon the age and condition of the painted surface. This classification includes the following:

- Maximum risk is from paint applied before 1950.
- A severe risk is present from paint applied before 1960.
- A moderate risk is present from paint applied before 1970.
- A slight risk is present from paint applied before 1977.
- Paint applied after 1977 is not expected to contain lead.

No potential lead-based paint was noted; however, based on the construction period it is possible such materials may be present.

Radon

Radon is a radioactive gas which has been identified as a human carcinogen. Radon gas is typically associated with fine-grained rock and soil, and results from the radioactive decay of radium. The EPA recommends that homeowners in areas with radon screening levels greater than 4 Picocuries per liter (pCi/L) conduct mitigation of radon gas to reduce exposure. Sections 307 and 309 of the Indoor Radon Abatement Act of 1988 (IRAA) directed the EPA to list and identify areas within the U.S. with the potential for elevated indoor radon levels. EPA's Map of Radon Zones (EPA-402-R-93-071) assigns each of the 3,141 counties in the U.S. to one of three zones based on radon potential:

- Zone 1 counties have a predicted average indoor radon screening level greater than 4 pCi/L.
- Zone 2 counties have a predicted average indoor radon screening level between 2 and 4 pCi/L.
- Zone 3 counties have a predicted average indoor radon screening level less than 2 pCi/L.

Based on such factors as indoor radon measurements; geology; aerial radioactivity; and soil permeability, the EPA has identified the County of Riverside as Zone 2 (i.e., a predicted average indoor radon screening level between 2 and 4 pCi/L). TA-Group DD does not consider radon as a significant environmental concern at this time.

PHASE II ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT

The Phase I ESA identified the presence of Recognized Environmental Conditions (REC) at the property. These included the potential presence of hydrocarbon/solvent spillage at a maintenance barn, and the potential for transite in irrigation water conveyance piping. Based on these issues, the Phase I ESA recommended soil gas, soil sampling, and hand excavation.

Phase II Field Investigation

Concrete coring was conducted at two locations immediately adjacent to free-oil contamination noted at the referenced maintenance building. An operated backhoe was utilized to investigate and expose underground water conveyance piping. The backhoe initially investigated the reported location of water pipes located south of the large well located at the central, southern end of the subject property. Piping was located and a chip sample was collected (CH1). Additional trenches were installed along the southern end of the property, around the well location, near the southeastern border of the project subject site.

There is an operating municipal well located at the northern end of the City owned parcel which connects to water storage facilities offsite to the south. A large diameter poly pipe conveys water from that well through the entire parcel. There are also at least two (2) unused wells of similar or of the same age as the large well located on the Dallape Dairy parcel. These wells have iron surface pipes that extend east-west into the ground, and then westward to connect (presumably) to a north-south connecting main conveyance line.

Due to the unknown route of the currently active municipal well conveyance pipe, trenches were made at the southerly historical well location. The conveyance piping was similar or identical to the 12-inch lines found at the Dallape Dairy parcel. At roughly 5 feet below grade, the concrete piping was level and aligned east-west. A chip sample was collected at a thickened joint location prior to backfilling our trench.

Pesticide samples were collected at eight (8) locations spread over the eastern two-thirds of the site. Surficial samples were collected at a depth of approximately 1-foot below grade by excavating to sample depth and forcing an 8-ounce sampling jar into the native soil to prevent any cross contamination.

At the maintenance location, a precleaned 1.5-inch stainless steel hand auger was advanced to sample depths of 1 foot and 5 feet below grade. Samples were exhumed in the hand auger; a poly bag fitted to the auger, and soil extruded into the sample bag, and from there into 4-ounce sampling jars and transported to TAGDD's certified laboratory for analysis.

Phase II Sampling Results

TAGDD performed limited surficial sampling for organochlorine pesticides on the overall property, as well as hand auger sampling at hydrocarbon-stained soil located near a maintenance building. Concrete piping was also exposed, examined, and sampled.

Soil samples collected in the maintenance shed did not contain chlorinated or fuel-related VOC. Only low levels of diesel range hydrocarbons were reported in one shallow sample.

Five (5) samples found at the subject site contained dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene (DDE) exceeding California's conservative screening guidance for future residential uses. The average of the 5 DDE values reported (6.5, 11, 11, 15, 38) was 16 mg/kg. Three locations did not report DDE.

The total lead found in all pesticide samples were substantially below the 50 mg/kg that typically triggers additional analysis for leachable components.

The total arsenic found in 5 of the 8 pesticide samples were below 6 mg/kg. The general screening value utilized in California is derived from the Kearny Study, which found that 12 mg/kg is an average background level in the State.

4.9.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 (42 USC. § 6901 et seq.) is the principal federal law that regulates the generation, management, and transportation of waste. Hazardous waste management includes the treatment, storage, or disposal of hazardous waste. The RCRA gave the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to control hazardous waste from “cradle to grave,” that is, from generation to transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal, at active and future facilities. It does not address abandoned or historical sites. The RCRA also set forth a framework for managing nonhazardous wastes. Later amendments required phasing out land disposal of hazardous waste and added underground tanks storing petroleum and other hazardous substances.

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act

Title III of Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) authorized the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA; 42 USC § 11001 et seq.) to inform communities and citizens of chemical hazards in their areas by requiring businesses to report the locations and quantities of chemicals stored onsite to state and local agencies; releases to the environment of more than 600 designated toxic chemicals; offsite transfers of waste; and pollution prevention measures and activities and to participate in chemical recycling. The EPA maintains and publishes an online, publicly available, national database of toxic chemical releases and other waste management activities by certain industry groups and federal facilities. To implement EPCRA, each state appointed a state emergency response commission to coordinate planning and implementation of activities associated with hazardous materials. The commissions divided their states into emergency planning districts and named a local emergency planning committee for each district. The federal EPCRA program is implemented and administered in the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), a state commission, six local committees, and 81 Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs). Cal OES coordinates and provides staff support for the commission and local committees.

Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 provides EPA with authority to require reporting, recordkeeping and testing requirements, and restrictions relating to chemical substances and/or mixtures. TSCA addresses the production, importation, use, and disposal of specific chemicals including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), asbestos, radon and lead-based paint. Title IV of the TSCA directs EPA to regulate lead-based paint hazards. TSCA’s sections 402/404 requires that those engaged in lead abatements, risk assessments and inspections in homes or child-occupied facilities (such as day care centers and kindergartens) built prior to 1978 be trained and certified in specific practices to ensure accuracy and safety. TSCA Section 403, *Residential Hazard Standards for Lead in Paint, Dust and Soil*, sets standards for dangerous levels of lead in paint, household dust, and soil.

Occupational Safety and Health Act

The Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) of 1970 (29 USC § 651 et seq.) authorizes each state (including California) to establish their own safety and health programs with the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) approval. The California Department

of Industrial Relations regulates implementation of worker health and safety in California. California OSHA enforcement units conduct onsite evaluations and issue notices of violation to enforce necessary improvements to health and safety practices. California standards for workers dealing with hazardous materials are contained in Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) and include practices for all industries (General Industrial Safety Orders), and specific practices for construction and other industries. Workers at hazardous waste sites (or working with hazardous wastes as might be encountered during excavation of contaminated soil) must receive specialized training and medical supervision, according to the Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) regulations. OSHA Regulation 29 Code of Federal Regulations Standard 1926.62 regulates the demolition, renovation, or construction of buildings involving lead materials. Federal, state, and local requirements also govern the removal of asbestos or suspected asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), including the demolition of structures where asbestos is present. All friable (crushable by hand) ACMs, or non-friable ACMs subject to damage, must be abated prior to demolition following all applicable regulations.

STATE

California Environmental Protection Agency

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) was created in 1991, unifying California's environmental authority in a single cabinet-level agency and bringing the California Air Resources Board (ARB), State Water Resources Control Board, RWQCBs, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (known as CalRecycle and formerly the Integrated Waste Management Board), Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and Department of Pesticide Regulation under one agency. These agencies were placed within the CalEPA "umbrella" for the protection of human health and the environment and to ensure the coordinated deployment of state resources. Its mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality, and economic vitality.

DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCE CONTROL

The Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) is a department of CalEPA and is the primary agency in California that regulates hazardous waste, cleans-up existing contamination, and looks for ways to reduce the hazardous waste produced in California. The DTSC regulates hazardous waste in California primarily under the authority of the federal RCRA and the California Health and Safety Code (primarily Division 20, Chapters 6.5 through 10.6, and Title 22, Division 4.5). Other laws that affect hazardous waste are specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning. Government Code Section 65962.5 (commonly referred to as the Cortese List) includes DTSC-listed hazardous waste facilities and sites, Department of Health Services (DHS) lists of contaminated drinking water wells, sites listed by the State Water Resources Control Board as having underground storage tank (UST) leaks and which have had a discharge of hazardous wastes or materials into the water or groundwater, and lists from local regulatory agencies of sites that have had a known migration of hazardous waste/material.

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) is a department of CalEPA that oversees investigation and cleanup of sites including underground storage tanks where wastes have been discharged to protect the water quality of the state. The RWQCB regulates wastewater discharges to

surface waters and to groundwater. They also regulate storm water discharges from construction, industrial, and municipal activities.

CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

CalEPA has established rules governing the use of hazardous materials and the management of hazardous wastes. California Health and Safety Code Sections 25531, et seq. incorporate the requirements of Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act and the Clean Air Act as they pertain to hazardous materials. Health and Safety Code Section 25534 directs owners or operators storing, handling, or using regulated substances exceeding threshold planning quantities to develop and implement a Risk Management Plan. The Risk Management Plans are submitted to the administering agency and possibly the EPA, depending upon the chemical and the amount, for review.

Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Law

The Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Law (Health and Safety Code Section 25500 et seq.) aims to minimize the potential for accidents involving hazardous materials and to facilitate an appropriate response to possible hazardous materials emergencies. The law requires businesses that use hazardous materials to provide inventories of those materials to designated emergency response agencies, to illustrate on a diagram where the materials are stored onsite, to prepare an emergency response plan, and to train employees to use the materials safely. Any business that handles hazardous materials in quantities equal to or greater than 55 gallons, 500 pounds, or 200 cubic feet of gas must submit a business plan.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

SAFETY ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and polices from the Safety Element pertaining to hazards and hazardous materials:

- GOAL 2.8: Hazardous Material Management. Protect life and property from adverse risk from the transporting, storing, treating, and disposing of hazardous materials and waste materials within the City.
- Policy 2.8.1: Hazardous Material Management. Through the annual business license renewal program ensure that businesses involved in the use of hazardous materials are in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.
 - Policy 2.8.1a: For businesses or individuals involved in the use of hazardous materials require proof of compliance with all jurisdictional agencies (federal, state, and local) prior to issuance or renewal of a business license.
 - Policy 2.8.1b: When determined feasible and/or necessary by the Fire Department require established routes of transport or disposal of hazardous materials to avoid potential impact to sensitive land uses from materials being routinely transported.

Policy 2.8.1c: Make available to the public information on the proper use and storage of hazardous materials.

Policy 2.8.1d: The Fire Department, through project and business license reviews, should maintain a list of locations with known storages of hazardous materials along with appropriate evacuation, response, and clean-up that may have to occur during emergency events that can cause spillage.

Policy 2.8.1e: The Fire Department should maintain a list of known locations with hazardous materials for the protection of citizens and businesses in the event of spillage due to an emergency situation.

4.9.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **HAZ-1:** Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- **HAZ-2:** Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?
- **HAZ-3:** Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?
- **HAZ-4:** 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?
- **HAZ-5:** Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- **HAZ-6:** Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

4.9.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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

The long-term operation of the proposed project would not involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials in quantities or conditions that would pose a hazard to public health and safety or the environment. The operation of the proposed project could involve the use of cleaning products and occasional use of pesticide activities and herbicides for landscape maintenance. The materials would be common for general maintenance and would not be stored in large quantities that pose a health hazard to the public. The proposed project would be required to comply with local, state,

and federal laws and regulations regarding the handling and storage of hazardous materials. With compliance with local, state, and federal hazardous material laws and regulations, the potential risk of releasing hazardous materials into the environment would be less than significant.

The construction activities associated with the proposed project would involve the handling of incidental amounts of hazardous substances, such as solvents, fuels, and oil. The level of risk associated with the accidental release of hazardous substances would not be considered significant due to the small volume and low concentrations of hazardous materials that would be utilized during construction. The construction contractor would be required to use standard construction controls and safety procedures that would avoid or minimize the potential for accidental release of hazardous substances into the environment. The most relevant measures would pertain to material delivery and storage; material use; and spill prevention and control. These measures would outline the required improvements and procedures for preventing impacts of hazardous materials to workers and the environment during construction. Additionally, the construction activities for the project would involve the offsite transportation of incidental amounts of hazard materials, into the project site. To avoid public exposure to hazardous materials, the proposed project would be required to comply with local, state, and federal laws and regulations regarding the transportation, handling and storage of hazardous materials. With compliance with local, state, and federal hazardous material laws and regulations and implementation of BMPs, potential hazardous impacts to the public would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HAZ-2: Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment of the project site was conducted to determine if any significant surface or subsurface property contamination caused by hazardous and toxic substances should be considered during the construction and operation of the proposed project. The site assessment included a review of available federal and state data reported by Environmental Data Resources (EDR), available regulatory agency environmental records, and available site history and records. The Site Assessment identified the following evidence of recognized environmental conditions for the project site. Known or suspected RECs identified for the project site include:

- Aerial photographs have documented the presence of row crops on the dairy property which indicate the potential historical use of agricultural pesticides.
- Leaking drums within a maintenance shed have impacted exposed ground with hydrocarbons and/or other hazardous substances.
- Based on age, well water conveyance piping may potentially include transite (PACM).
- Undocumented fill is located on the northern, Bluff Street property.

Controlled RECs (CRECs). The site assessment did not identify any evidence of CRECs in connection with the subject property.

Historical RECs (HRECs). This site assessment has revealed the following *HREC* at the subject property:

- A former diesel and gasoline UST release was remediated in 1995 and the case was closed. Based on the remedial method, the fact that the UST excavation was left open for a lengthy period, and closure status, we do not consider the release to be an environmental concern.

De Minimis Conditions. No de minimis conditions were revealed in connection with the subject property.

Vapor Screening Analysis concluded that a Vapor Encroachment Condition was ruled out based on the history and attributes of the former diesel release at the site.

Buildings on the subject property are wood framed with galvanized steel roofs and exterior walls. No potential asbestos containing materials were identified in the buildings. However, the Dallape Dairy site and the City owned property have large wells which conveyed water underground. There is a potential for Transite (asbestos containing materials containing concrete) pipes on both sides of the overall property. No potential lead-based paint was noted; however, based on the construction period, it is possible such materials may be present.

The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment identified recognized environmental conditions on the property and has identified further investigation is warranted.

- Soil sampling be conducted to assess the hydrocarbon release at the eastern maintenance shed.
- Sampling be conducted on the dairy property for pesticides based on the presence of historical row crops.
- Underground groundwater well conveyance piping be exposed and sampled to assess the possible presence of Transite/PACM.

PHASE II SITE ANALYSIS RESULTS

Only low levels of diesel range hydrocarbons were reported in one shallow sample.

Five (5) samples found at the subject site contained DDE exceeding California's conservative screening guidance for future residential uses. The average of the 5 DDE values reported (6.5, 11, 11, 15, 38) was 16 mg/kg. Three locations did not report DDE.

The total lead found in all pesticide samples were substantially below the 50 mg/kg that typically triggers additional analysis for leachable components.

The total arsenic found in 5 of the 8 pesticide samples were below 6 mg/kg. The general screening value utilized in California is derived from the Kearny Study, which found that 12 mg/kg is an average background level in the State.

Based on soil sampling results, it does not appear that further investigation or mitigation of hydrocarbons is warranted near the maintenance shop.

The pesticide DDE, which is pervasive in southern California due to legal application prior to its ban in the 1970's, was found in 5 of the 8 shallow samples at concentrations above the referenced screening criteria. Because DDE was not found in all samples, DDE does not appear to be completely pervasive

in the sample area. The Phase II Site Assessment requires that substantial additional sampling be conducted following demolition to provide a more reliable dataset to evaluate the extent, depth, and distribution of DDE. Following additional sampling, recommendations can be made regarding remediation and/or other mitigation and/or sampling options.

Mitigation Measures:

HAZ-1: Additional sampling shall be conducted following demolition and prior to construction to evaluate the extent, depth, and distribution of dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene (DDE). Following additional sampling, recommendations will be made regarding remediation and/or other mitigation and/or sampling options.

HAZ-2: Undocumented fill is located on the northern parcel. One of the following options must be completed to mitigate this REC prior to construction:

- The property owner can properly dispose of the undocumented fill.
- The property owner can properly evaluate the fill to document its suitability for use at the site and provide sampling rationale/standards with sampling location and laboratory data to Client for evaluation.
- Client can properly evaluate the fill using EPA SW-846 or other acceptable sampling guidance.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT HAZ-3: Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Review of databases from the State Water Resources Control Board, South Coast Air Quality Management District, California Department of Toxic Substances Control and California Department of Conservation Geologic Energy Management Division did not identify any hazardous waste sites on the project site. Review of the State Water Resources Control Board online database GeoTracker did identify a former LUST case on the project site. The case filed documented the removal of a 1,000-gallon gasoline UST and a 4,000-gallon diesel fuel UST at the site in 1994. Soil was excavated and left onsite to attenuate over a 10-month period. Stockpile sampling resulted in low levels of gas (1.7 mg/kg TPHg) and diesel (210 mg/kg TPHd). The case file indicated that groundwater was not impacted. The RWQCB closed the case in 1995. Because the project site and immediate area are not included on any list of hazardous waste sites, no long-term adverse impact would occur from the operation of the proposed project.

Mitigation Measures: No Mitigation Measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HAZ-4: 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?

The nearest airport would be Corona Airport, located approximately 1.4 miles from the project site. According to the Corona Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, the project site is not located within the airport influence area and would not be subject to safety hazards or excessive noise impacts. The nearest airport would be Corona Airport, located approximately 1.4 miles from the project site. According to the Corona Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, the project site is not located within the airport influence area and would not be subject to safety hazards or excessive noise impacts.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT HAZ-5: Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Implementation of the proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The City of Norco maintains a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan which identifies City's hazards, review and assess past disaster occurrences, estimate the probability of future occurrences and set goals to mitigate potential risks to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural and man-made hazards. The plan identifies vulnerabilities, provides recommendations for prioritized mitigation actions, evaluates resources, identifies mitigation shortcomings, provides future mitigation planning and maintenance of an existing plan.

The City's primary tool in preparing for emergencies is its adopted Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP is designed to guide the City's response to various emergencies, by establishing procedures and responsibilities for City personnel. The Emergency Services Division is responsible for emergency preparedness in the City. The Division is responsible for both planning and implementation of emergency response efforts, and coordinates with other local jurisdictions and the County of Riverside in emergency response planning, training, and disaster exercises. Close coordination with both the Sheriff and Fire Departments are included in all disaster planning efforts. In addition, the City participates in the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) program, and Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Incident Management System (NIMS), to assure coordinated response at the state and federal levels.

In the event evacuation is required, the Riverside County Sheriff's Department would identify and direct traffic to designated emergency evacuation routes to ensure that residents can leave their neighborhoods safely, which would avoid any potential conflicts with emergency response plans. Should they be needed, evacuation routes should be established based on the location and magnitude of an event. The City's main evacuation routes are the 1-15 Freeway and Hamner Avenue. Secondary routes include Second Street and River Road/Archibald Avenue, California Avenue/North Drive, and Mountain Avenue and Hidden Valley Parkway/McKinley Avenue. The proposed project is estimated to have 227 residents. In the event evacuation is needed, a worst case of 227 vehicle trips would occur

assuming each resident would drive their own vehicle. The vehicle trips would be distributed between the two different access points (from River Road adjacent to Lot 56 and Bluff Street adjacent to Lot 68) from the site, which would reduce congestion. The City's main evacuation routes are the 1-15 Freeway and Hamner Avenue (2.1 miles from project site). Secondary routes include Second Street and River Road (0.86 miles from project site)/Archibald Avenue (0.79 miles from the project site), California Avenue/North Drive (4.15 miles from project site), and Mountain Avenue and Hidden Valley Parkway (2.13 miles from project site)/McKinley Avenue (3.77 miles from project site). The City of Norco's Fire Department would review site plans for the proposed project to ensure adequate ingress/egress. Potential long-term operational impacts would be less than significant.

Temporary activities associated with construction of the project could result in temporary partial lane closures. However, the temporary lane closures would be implemented in accordance with recommendations provided in the California Temporary Traffic Control Handbook to ensure emergency access would be maintained at all times. Additionally, the construction activities for the project would be coordinated with the City of Norco, which would identify if traffic controls are needed to maintain emergency response plans. With compliance with the City of Norco Traffic Control requirements, potential impacts regarding conflicts with emergency response plans would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HAZ-6: Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

The project would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFIRE) identifies the project site as not located in a Very High Fire Severity Zone; refer to [Figure 4.20-1, *Regional Fire Hazard Severity Zones*](#). The nearest Very High Fire Severity Zone is located approximately 1.5 miles southwesterly of the project, as shown in [Figure 4.20-1](#). According to the City of Norco 2050 General Plan Existing Conditions Analysis Report: Safety Analysis (Figure 1 – Fire Hazard Severity Zones, WUI, and CPUC Fire Hazard Threat Mapping), the northwestern portion of the project site, near the Santa Ana River Corridor, is identified as a fire hazard threat zone by the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC). The proposed project would replace existing structures and construct new structures. The project would be required to design, construct, and maintain structures and access ways in compliance with local, city, county, and state requirements. The proposed project would be required to be reviewed by the Riverside County Fire Department and the City of Norco Building Department to ensure that building construction meets the minimum standards for fire safety as defined in the City Building Codes and County Fire Codes. The City and County reviews would ensure that the project would provide proper installation and maintenance of fire access roadways, the proper placement of hydrants, adequate water supply, and access to structures. Project coordination review with the City of Norco Building Department and Riverside County Fire Department as well as compliance with city, county and state regulations and standards would reduce potential fire hazard impacts to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.9.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *2050 General Plan Existing Conditions: Safety Analysis*, pages 5 and 6. November 13, 2023.

City of Norco General Plan, *Safety Element*. Update Adoption Date: January 16, 2013.

TA-Group DD, LLC, *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment*. October 7, 2021.

TA-Group DD, LLC, *Phase II Environmental Site Assessment*. April 1, 2022.

4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

4.10.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential hydrology and water quality impacts associated with implementation of the project. The following analysis is based, in part, on information obtained from:

- *Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulic Study*, MDS Consulting, April 2022, revised February 2024 ([Appendix G1](#)).
- *Preliminary Project Specific Water Quality Management Plan*, MDS Consulting, April 2022, revised February 2024 ([Appendix G2](#)).

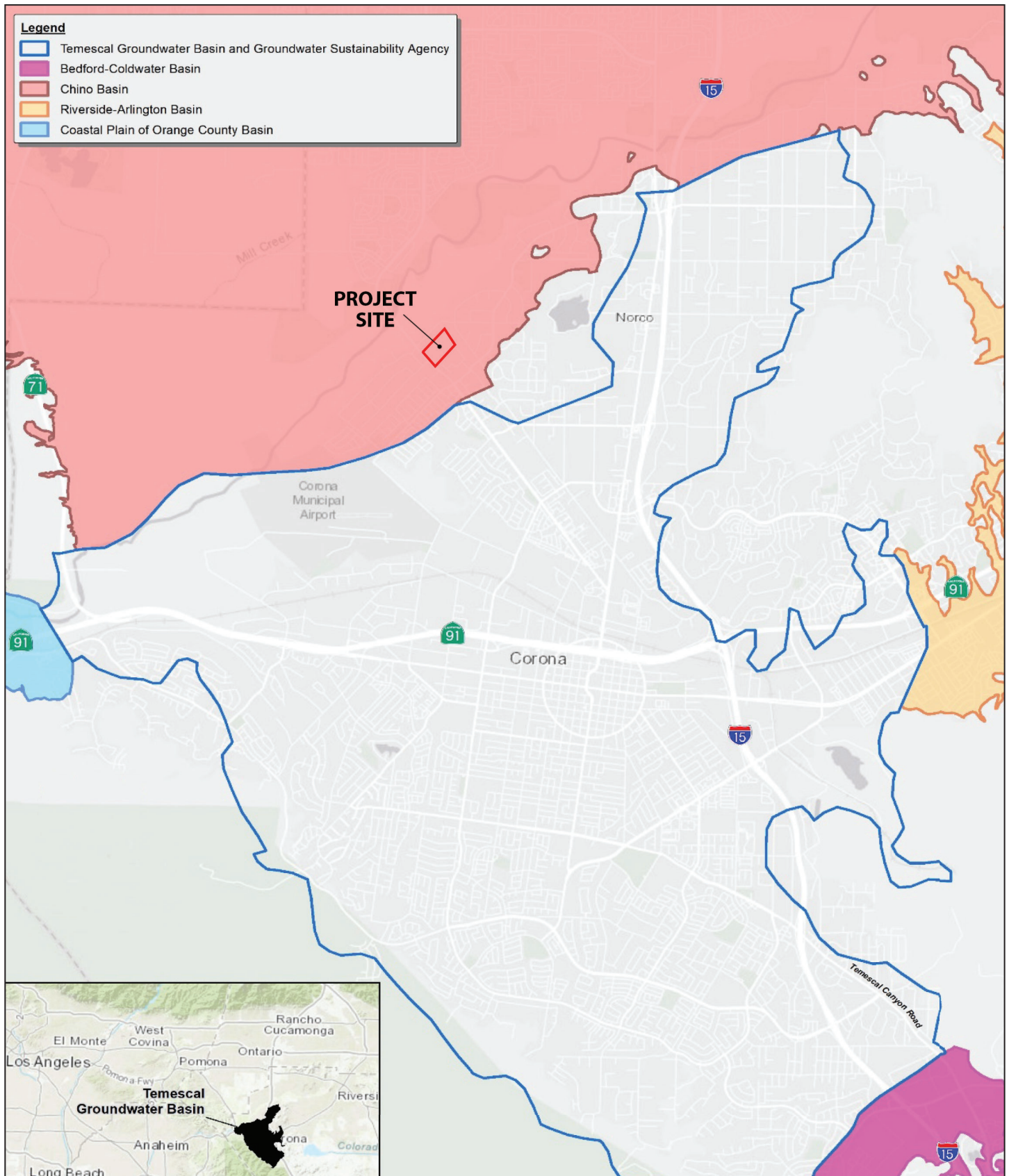
4.10.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project site is located within the Santa Ana Watershed. The Santa Ana Watershed is the largest watershed in coastal southern California consisting of over 28,000 miles encompassing parts of Riverside, San Bernardino, and Orange County. The watershed consists mainly of high mountain ranges that surround and divide large, dry alluvial valleys. The San Gabriel, San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains encircle the arid Inland Empire lowland on the north and east. The Santa Ana Mountains and Chino Hills divide the Inland Empire from the Orange County coastal plain. The Santa Ana Canyon is the only natural break in the range between the two lowlands.

The Santa Ana River (SAR) is the most prominent hydrologic feature within the Santa Ana River Watershed. The SAR is over 100 miles in length and has over 50 contributing tributaries. The headwaters of the SAR are in the San Bernardino Mountains, at the confluence of two tiny streams, Heart Bar Creek and Coon Creek, at an elevation of 6,991 feet. The river flows west through a wide, deep, and heavily forested mountain valley. About 18 miles from its headwaters, it receives its first major tributary, Bear Creek, which enters from the north. Bear Creek receives its water from Big Bear Lake. The river turns south, passing through the Seven Oaks Dam, and reaches the arid Inland Empire lowland covering large parts of San Bernardino County and Riverside County. It receives Mill Creek from the south and passes to the south of San Bernardino, then receives City Creek from the north and San Timoteo Creek from the south. Due to water diversions for groundwater recharge, the river bed is usually dry in this stretch between Mill Creek and the outlet of the Veolia water treatment plant north of Riverside, which restores a year-round flow. From there to Prado Dam, the river supports a riparian zone with considerable greenery. Below Prado Dam, the SAR crosses into Orange County, and cuts between the Santa Ana Mountains and Chino Hills via the narrow Santa Ana Canyon, ultimately draining into the Pacific Ocean.

CHINO SUBBASIN

The project site overlies the Chino Subbasin (DWR Basin 8-2.01) (Basin) of the Upper Santa Ana River Groundwater Basin; refer to [Figure 4.10-1, Chino Basin](#). The Chino Basin, as defined by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), is bounded on the east by the Rialto-Colton fault; on the southeast by the contact with impermeable rocks forming the Jurupa Mountains and low divides connecting the exposures. On the south the subbasin is bounded by contact with impermeable rocks of the Puente Hills and by the Chino fault; on the northwest by the San Jose fault; and on the north by impermeable rocks of the San Gabriel Mountains and by the Cucamonga fault. San Antonio Creek and Cucamonga Creek drain the surface of the subbasin southward to join Santa Ana River. Annual mean precipitation ranges from 13 to 29 inches across the surface of the subbasin and averages about 17 inches.



Source: Temescal Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan; January 2022.



ONSITE CONDITIONS

The Pre-Developed Hydrology Condition on the project site is shown in [Figure 4.10-2, *Pre-Developed Condition Hydrology Map*](#). In the existing condition, the site is open space and operates as a former dairy farm. Approximately 1.80 acres of the 37.84 acres site consists of impervious surfaces. The site is relatively flat. The land drains from north-east to south-west to a sump. There is an existing 54-inch storm drain along River Road. This storm drain will be the outfall for the project runoff.

FLOOD MANAGEMENT

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to provide subsidized flood insurance to communities that comply with FEMA regulations limiting development in floodplains. FEMA also issues Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identify which land areas are subject to flooding. These maps provide flood information and identify flood hazard zones in the community. The design standard for flood protection is established by FEMA. FEMA's minimum level of flood protection for new development is the 100-year flood event, also described as a flood that has a 1-in-100 chance of occurring in any given year. As shown in [Figure 4.10-3, *National Flood Hazard Map*](#), Map No.06065CO687G, effective December 3, 2009, the project site is in Zone X, an area subject to minimal flooding. West of Bluff Street a small strip of area is subject to a 0.2% Annual Flood Hazard and the Santa Ana River is designated as a Special Flood Hazard Area.

Tsunami

Tsunami, also called seismic sea wave or tidal wave, is usually caused by a submarine earthquake, an underwater or coastal landslide, or a volcanic eruption. They are a major threat to coastal communities and cause the most severe damage and casualties very near their source. The project site is approximately 31 miles from the coastline and would not be considered high risk for flood hazards caused by a tsunami.

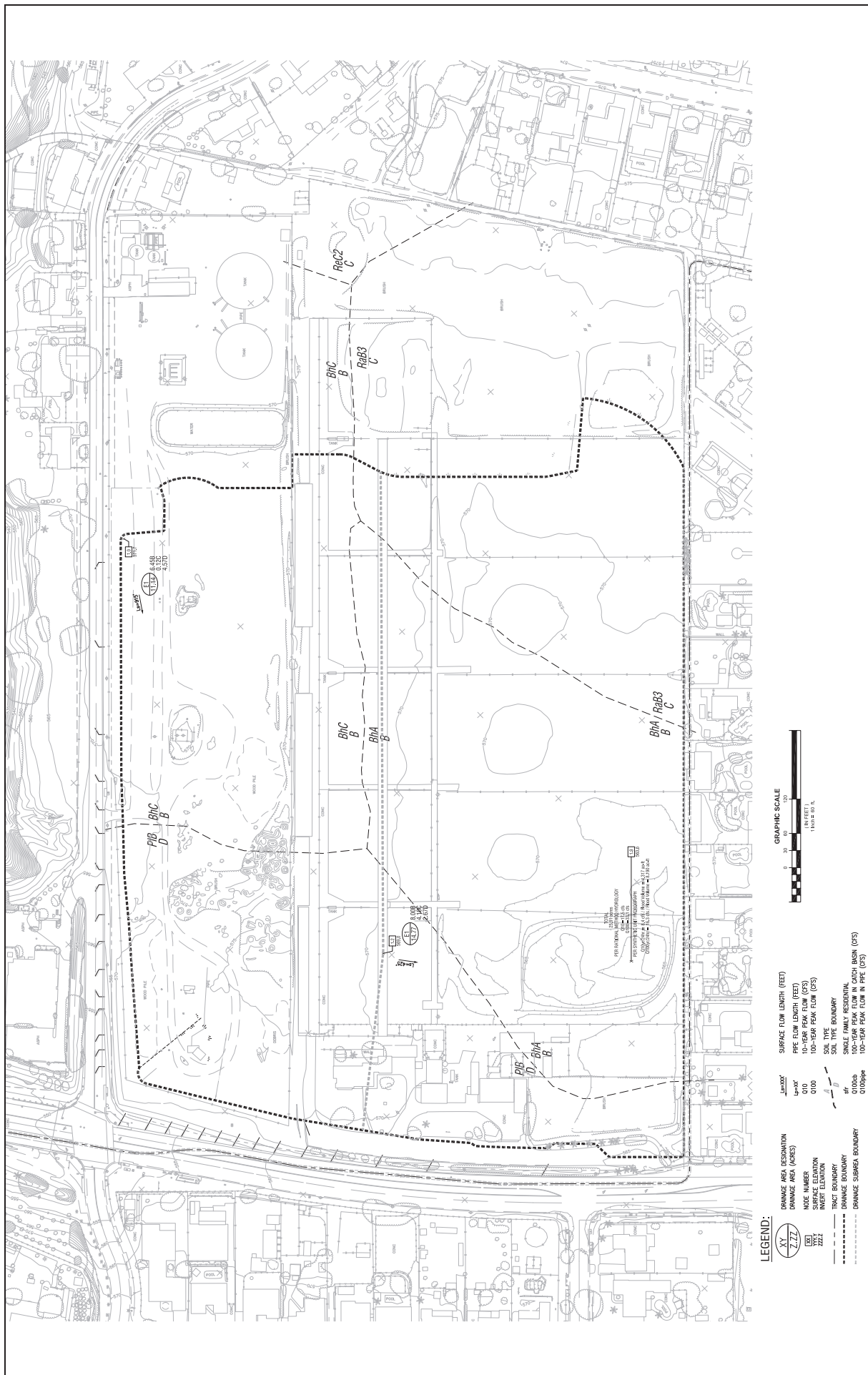
Seiche Zones

A seiche may occur in any semi- or fully-enclosed body of water. Seiches are typically caused when strong winds and rapid changes in atmospheric pressure push water from one end of a body of water to the other. When the wind stops, the water rebounds to the other side of the enclosed area. The water then continues to oscillate back and forth for hours or even days. The project site is not near an enclosed body of water that would be subject to seiches.

Dam Inundation

Dam inundation hazards are those associated with the downstream inundation that would occur given a major structural failure in a nearby water impoundment. The project site is located approximately 0.46 miles southeast of the Santa Ana River. The City of Norco General Plan Safety Element states:

The City is not subject to inundation from failure of nearby dams and/or reservoirs. Even though the upper reaches of the Prado Basin would extend up the Santa Ana River channel adjacent to Norco during capacity flood conditions, the water would stay within the established river channel. The City does not lie in the inundation pathway of any major dams or reservoirs. Failure of the Seven Oaks Dam located approximately six miles upstream from Redlands in the San Bernardino Mountains should not cause significant inundation as far south as Norco.



Source: MDS Consulting, February 2024.



National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



117°35'45"W 33°55'28"N



0 250 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Feet 1:6,000

Legend

SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

- SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS**
 - Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) *Zone AE, AH, VE, AR*
 - With BFE or Depth *Zone AE, AO, AH, VE, AR*
 - Regulatory Floodway
- OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD**
 - 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile *Zone X*
 - Future Flood Hazard *Zone X*
 - Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee, See Notes. *Zone X*
 - Area with Flood Risk due to Levee *Zone D*
- OTHER AREAS**
 - NO SCREEN Area of Minimal Flood Hazard *Zone X*
 - Effective LOMRs
 - Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard *Zone D*
- GENERAL STRUCTURES**
 - Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
 - Levee, Dike, or Floodwall
- OTHER FEATURES**
 - Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance
 - Water Surface Elevation
 - Coastal Transect
 - Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
 - Limit of Study
 - Jurisdiction Boundary
 - Coastal Transect Baseline
 - Profile Baseline
 - Hydrographic Feature
- MAP PANELS**
 - Digital Data Available
 - No Digital Data Available
 - Unmapped

The pin displayed on the map is an approximate point selected by the user and does not represent an authoritative property location.

This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards.

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on 9/28/2021 at 5:11 PM and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); September 28, 2021.
 - approximate Tentative Tract Map Boundary



4.10.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Clean Water Act

The objectives of the Clean Water Act are to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of Waters of the United States (WOUS). The Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes basic guidelines for regulating discharges of pollutants into the WOUS and requires states to adopt water quality standards to protect health, enhance the quality of water resources, and to develop plans and programs to implement the Clean Water Act. Below is a discussion of sections of the CWA that are relevant to the proposed project.

SECTION 402

Section 402 of the Clean Water Act established the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) to control water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into WOUS. In California, the EPA has authorized the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) as the permitting authority to implement the NPDES program. The SWRCB requires stormwater discharges from construction sites with a disturbed area of one or more acres to either obtain individual NPDES permits for stormwater discharges or be covered by the Construction General Permit. Coverage under the Construction General Permit is accomplished by completing and filing a NOI with the SWRCB and preparing and implementing a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to grading and during construction. The primary objective of the SWPPP is to identify, construct, implement, and maintain BMPs to reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater discharges and authorize non-stormwater discharges from the construction site during construction.

STATE

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act became law on September 16, 2014. This new law provides specific authority to establish groundwater sustainability agencies and sets forth procedures and requirements to prepare and adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plans. The project site overlies the Chino Subbasin (Basin) of the Upper Santa Ana River Groundwater Basin. The Groundwater Basin is managed by the Chino Basin Watermaster. The Chino Groundwater Subbasin (Basin) has been designated by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) as a very low priority. The Act requires groundwater sustainability agencies to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans and submit the plans to the Department of Water Resources for review upon adoption. The law requires the preparation of an alternative plan that includes an analysis of basin conditions, demonstrating that the basin has operated within its sustainable yield over a period of at least 10 years. Required elements include a description of the physical setting and characteristics of the aquifer system, measurable objectives, a planning and implementation horizon, components related to management of the basin, summary of monitoring programs, monitoring protocols, and a description of how the plan may affect other plans related to water resources.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

Under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Water Code Sections 13000 et seq.), which was passed in California in 1969 and amended in 2013, the SWRCB has authority over California state water

rights and water quality policy. This Act divided the state into nine regional basins, each under the jurisdiction of a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) to oversee water quality on a day-to-day basis at the local and regional level. RWQCBs engage in a number of water quality functions in their respective regions. RWQCBs regulate all pollutant or nuisance discharges that may affect either surface water or groundwater. The project site is within the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan

The downstream water bodies for the proposed project are located within the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. The segments of the Santa Ana River that are downstream of the project site include Reach 3 from the project to Prado Dam, Reach 2 from Prado Basin to 17th Street in Santa Ana and Reach 1 which extends from 17th Street to the tidal prism at the ocean. The Santa Ana Region Basin Plan designates beneficial uses for surface waters, coast streams and coastal waters in the region that are required to be protected. Additionally, the Basin Plan identifies impaired water bodies and environmentally sensitive areas within the region that afford additional protection. The downstream water receiving water bodies to the project site include Santa Ana River Reach 1, Santa Ana River Reach 2 and Santa Ana River Reach 3 and the Pacific Ocean.

BENEFICIAL USES

The Santa Ana Region Basin Plan (Basin Plan) designates beneficial uses for Santa Ana River, Pacific Ocean and Chino Groundwater Basin. The beneficial uses include quantitative and narrative criteria for a range of water quality constituents that are applicable to certain receiving water bodies to protect the beneficial uses. The beneficial uses in the Basin Plan are described in Table 4.10-1, *Beneficial Use Descriptions*.

**Table 4.10-1
Beneficial Use Descriptions**

Abbreviation	Beneficial Use
GWR	Groundwater Recharge waters are used for natural or artificial recharge of groundwater for purposes that may include, but are not limited to, future extraction, maintaining water quality or halting saltwater intrusion into freshwater aquifers.
REC 1	Water Contact Recreation waters are used for recreational activities involving body contact with water where ingestion of water is reasonably possible. These uses may include, but are not limited to, swimming, wading, water skiing, skin and scuba diving, surfing, whitewater activities, fishing and use of natural hot springs.
REC 2	Non-Contact Water Recreation waters are used for recreational activities involving proximity to water, but not normally body contact with water where ingestion of water would be reasonably possible. These uses may include, but are not limited to, picnicking, sunbathing, hiking, beachcombing, camping, boating, tide pool and marine life study, hunting, sightseeing and aesthetic enjoyment in-conjunction with the above activities.
WARM	Warm waters support warm water ecosystems that may include, but are not limited to, preservation and enhancement of aquatic habitats, vegetation, fish, and wildlife, including invertebrates.
LWARM	Limited Warm Freshwater Habitat waters support warm water ecosystems which are severely limited in diversity and abundance.
COLD	Cold Freshwater habitat waters support cold water ecosystems.

Abbreviation	Beneficial Use
BIOL	Preservation of Biological Habitats of Special Significance waters support designated areas of habitats.
WILD	Wildlife Habitat waters support wildlife habitats that may include, but are not limited to, the preservation and enhancement of vegetation and prey species used by waterfowl and other wildlife.
RARE	Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species (RARE) waters support habitats necessary for the survival and successful maintenance of plant or animal species designated under state or federal law as rare, threatened or endangered.
MUN	Municipal and Domestic Supply waters are used for community, military, municipal or individual water supply systems. These uses may include, but are not limited to, drinking water supply.
AGR	Agricultural Supply waters are used for farming, horticulture or ranching. These uses may include, but are not limited to, irrigation, stock watering, and support of vegetation for range grazing.
IND	Industrial Service Supply waters are used for industrial activities that do not depend primarily on water quality. These uses may include, but are not limited to, mining, cooling water supply, hydraulic conveyance, gravel washing, fire protection and oil well depressurization.
PROC	Industrial Process Supply waters are used for industrial activities that depend primarily on water quality. These uses may include, but are not limited to, process water supply and all uses of water related to product manufacture or food preparation.
NAV	Navigation waters are used for shipping, travel, or other transportation by private, commercial or military vessels.
POW	Hydropower Generation waters are used for hydroelectric power generation.
COMM	Commercial and sport fishing waters are used for commercial or recreational collection of fish or other organisms.

Source: California Water Boards, *Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana Basin Plan*, updated June 2019.

Table 4.10-2, *Study Area Water Body Beneficial Uses*, shows the beneficial uses identified in the Basin Plan: Santa Ana River Reach 3, Santa Ana River Reach 2, Santa Ana Reach 1 and the Chino Groundwater Basin.

Table 4.10-2
Study Area Water Body Beneficial Uses

Beneficial Use	Santa Ana River Reach 3	Santa Ana River Reach 2	Santa Ana River Reach 1	Pacific Ocean Tidal Prism	Chino Groundwater Basin
Municipal	NL	NL	NL	NL	E
Groundwater	E	E	NL	NL	NL
Industrial	NL	NL	NL	NL	E
Processing	NL	NL	NL	NL	E
Agriculture	E	E	NL	NL	E
Recreation 1	E	E	E	E	NL
Recreation 2	E	E	E	E	NL
Warm Waters	E	E	I	NL	NL
Wild Waters	E	E	I	E	NL
Rare	E	E	NL	E	NL
Spwn	E	E	NL	NL	NL

Beneficial Use	Santa Ana River Reach 3	Santa Ana River Reach 2	Santa Ana River Reach 1	Pacific Ocean Tidal Prism	Chino Groundwater Basin
Commercial	NL	NL	NL	E	NL
Martine	NL	NL	NL	E	NL
Abbreviations: E = Existing, I-Intermittent, NL = Not Listed Source: California Water Boards, <i>Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana Basin Plan</i> , updated June 2019.					

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

The Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board defines Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) as those areas that include, but are not limited to:

- All Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) impaired waters (see below).
- Areas designated as Areas of Special Biological Significance by the SWRCB in the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Ana Region Basin Plan.
- State Water Quality Protected Areas.
- Water bodies designated with the RARE Beneficial Use category by the SWRCB in the Basin Plan (RARE).
- Areas designated as preserves or their equivalent under the Natural Communities Conservation Planning Program (NCCP).
- Any other ESAs.

The Santa River Reach 3 and Santa Ana River Reach 2 are Section 303(d) Impaired Water Bodies. The closed water body with RARE Beneficial Category would be Santa Ana River Reach 3.

SECTION 303(d) WATER BODIES

Under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, the SWRCB is required to develop a list of impaired water bodies. Each of the individual RWQCBs are responsible for establishing priority rankings and developing action plans, referred to as total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to improve water quality of water bodies included in the 303(d) list; refer to [Table 4.10-3, 303D Listed Impaired Water Bodies](#).

Table 4.10-3
303D Listed Impaired Water Bodies

Receiving Water Body	Water Body Impairment
Santa Ana River Reach 3	Copper, Indicator Bacteria, Lead
Santa Ana River Reach 2	Indicator Bacteria
Santa Ana River Reach 1	None
Pacific Ocean	None

LOCAL

City of Norco Municipal Code

CHAPTER 15.70 STORMWATER/URBAN RUNOFF MANAGEMENT AND DISCHARGE CONTROLS

The City of Norco is listed as a co-permittee for the Riverside County NPDES Permit issued by the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board and is bound to comply with all the aspects of the permit requirements. The City has adopted ordinances that address non-storm water discharges that are not allowed into the City's storm water system in Section 15.70 of Norco's Municipal Code. The State permit regulations and the City ordinance affect residential, industrial, commercial, and construction sites and/or projects. The project is considered a redevelopment project that requires Best Management Practices to maintain stormwater water quality. Such measures would (a) Increase Permeable Areas, by leaving highly porous soil and low lying areas undisturbed; by incorporating landscaping and open space into the project design; by using porous materials for or near driveways and walkways; and by incorporating detention ponds and infiltration pits into the project design; (b) Direct Runoff of Permeable Areas, by orienting it away from impermeable areas to swales, berms and gravel beds; by installing rain-gutters oriented towards permeable areas; by modifying the grade of the property to divert flow to permeable areas and minimize the amount of stormwater runoff leaving the property; and by designing curbs, berms or other structures such that they do not isolate permeable or landscaped areas; or (c) Maximize Stormwater Storage for Reuse, by using retention structures, subsurface areas, cisterns or other structures to store stormwater runoff for reuse or slow release.

City of Norco General Plan

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and policies from the City of Norco General Plan Conservation Element pertaining to hydrology and water quality:

- GOAL 2.2: Water Resources Quality. Continuously maintain an adequate water supply that exceeds minimum state and federal water quality requirements.
- Policy 2.2.3: Regional Water Quality. Continue regional cooperative agreements and actions for the protection of regional water resources.
 - Policy 2.2.3a: Protect water resources from pollutants through enforcement of the Clean Water Act with the issuance of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for new development, as applicable, including Storm Water Pollution Protection Plans (SWPPP) during construction, and Water Quality Management Plans (WQMP) post construction.
 - Policy 2.2.3d: Continue partnering with the Regional Water Quality Control Board and neighboring water agencies for regional solutions to long range water quality issues.
 - Policy 2.2.3e: Continue monitoring water quality and implement measures as needed to maintain the aesthetic quality of the water as well as the potability.

GOAL 2.4: Water Resources, Public Awareness. Maintain public awareness of water quality issues and individual responsibilities as residents.

Policy 2.4.1: Water Contamination.

Policy 2.4.1a: Continue public awareness programs of water quality management requirements and best management practices pertaining to animal-keeping to reduce run-off contaminants to the Santa Ana River.

SAFETY ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and policies from the City of Norco General Plan Safety Element pertaining to hydrology and water quality:

GOAL 2.4: Flood Safety. To reduce potential flood hazards for residents and businesses in the City of Norco.

Policy 2.4.1: Flood Safety Policy. Property damage and loss of life in the event of flooding shall be minimized through the construction of flood control facilities, and ensuring that structures built on the floodplain can withstand a 1% annual chance flood (100-year flood).

Policy 2.4.1a: Exhibit 3 (Flood Hazards Map) identifies the location of potential areas subject to inundation due to dam failure or a 1% annual chance flood as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Evaluate all developments proposed in these areas to minimize the risks of life or property.

Policy 2.4.1b: Maintain compliance with FEMA's rules for development in regulatory floodplains and floodways. Establish and maintain guidelines for development of additional areas subject to periodic inundation.

Policy 2.4.1i: During project review require drainage studies (as needed) by a qualified engineer to certify that new development will be adequately protected and that project development will not create new downstream flood hazards.

Policy 2.4.1k: Require erosion and flood control improvements to be consistent with Regional Water Quality Control Board Best Management Practices (BMP's) and encourage the incorporation of natural landscaping and pervious surfaces in site design review.

4.10.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

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

- **HWQ-2:** Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?
- **HWQ-3:** Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite?
- **HWQ-4:** 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?
- **HWQ-5:** 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?
- **HWQ-6:** 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?
- **HWQ-7:** In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?
- **HWQ-8:** Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

4.10.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT HWQ-1: Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

The following analysis evaluates if the proposed project would conflict with beneficial uses or further impair any listed 303(d) Impaired Water Bodies established in the Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL WATER QUALITY IMPACTS

The long-term operation of the proposed project would generate surface water runoff that could contain pollutants that could conflict with project area surface water beneficial uses. Anticipated potential pollutants generated by the project would include nutrients, bacteria, pesticides, sediments oil/grease and trash/debris.

The proposed project would be regulated under NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permits issued by the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. The proposed project would be required to comply with City of Norco Municipal Code Chapter 15.70 Stormwater/Urban Runoff Management and Discharge Controls requirements, which ensures the “future health, safety and personal welfare of

City residents” by reducing stormwater pollutants, eliminating illegal stormwater connections and discharges, and regulating discharged non-stormwater into the drainage system.

The Preliminary WQMP prepared for the proposed project would treat onsite low flows. Surface water flows would be directed to an onsite infiltration basin in the southeast corner of the site that would be used for the infiltration of onsite runoff waters; refer to [Figure 3-15, Proposed Storm Drain Plan](#). The final design of the basin will be based on infiltration rates to determine basin sizing to ensure that the basin would effectively infiltrate onsite surface water runoff. Additionally, non-structural BMPs would be implemented to maintain water quality, which would include the education of residents, common area landscape management, litter control, catch basin inspection, and street sweeping. Structural BMPs identified in the project WQMP could include storm drain system stenciling, design outdoor hazardous material storage areas to reduce pollutant introduction, and design trash enclosures to reduce pollutant introduction. With implementation of the Water Quality Management Plan non-structural and structural and treatment control measures, potential long-term operational impacts to water quality would be a less than significant level.

Santa Ana River Reach 2 is listed as impaired for indicator bacteria and Santa Ana River Reach 3 is listed as impaired for copper, indicator bacteria, and lead. It would be unlikely that the proposed project would generate elevated levels of copper, indicator bacteria, and lead that would be discharged into Santa Ana River Reach 2 or Reach 3. The potential for elevated levels of copper, indicator bacteria, and lead bacteria to be discharged, would be further minimized with implementation of the project long-term Water Quality Management Plan. Implementation of the project WQMP would avoid further impairment to downstream impaired water bodies resulting in a less than significant impact by capturing low flows onsite in the proposed infiltration basin and implementing required NPDES non-structural BMPs.

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION WATER QUALITY IMPACTS

During construction, there would be the potential that degraded surface water runoff generated from the construction site could be conveyed into local drainage facilities. Depending on the constituents in the surface water, the water quality of the project area surface water bodies could be reduced, which could conflict with beneficial uses established for the project area surface water bodies. The proposed project would disturb more than one acre of area and would therefore be required to obtain a NPDES State General Construction Permit from the State Water Resources Control Board. In accordance with the State General Construction Permit, the project Applicant would be required to file a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the Storm Water Report Tracking System and obtain a waste discharger identification number from the State Water Resources Control Board. Additionally, the General Construction Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP would identify BMPs to minimize degraded surface water runoff impacts. Such measures would include a site map that shows the construction site perimeter, existing and proposed buildings, parking areas, roadways, storm drain collection and discharge points before and after construction. Additionally, structural BMPs such as placement of sandbags or waddles near drainage inlets, use of rumble racks or wheel washers or other measures would be implemented to avoid sediment transport. The SWPPP would be reviewed and approved by the City of Norco for water quality construction activities onsite. With compliance with the NPDES General Construction Permit requirements, potential short-term construction related impacts to water quality would be less than significant.

It would be unlikely that the construction of the proposed project would generate elevated levels of copper, indicator bacteria, and lead that would be discharged into Santa Ana River Reach 2 or Reach 3. The potential for elevated levels of copper, indicator bacteria, and lead to be discharged into Santa Ana River Reach 2 or Reach 3 would be further minimized by obtaining a General Construction Permit and the implementation of a SWPPP. Compliance with the Construction General Permit would avoid further impairment to downstream water bodies resulting in a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HWQ-2: Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

According to the Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulic Study, groundwater was not encountered onsite.

The project site overlies the Chino Subbasin (DWR Basin 8-2.01) (Basin) of the Upper Santa Ana River Groundwater Basin. The City of Norco also owns wells in the Chino Basin which is an adjudicated groundwater basin (UWMP 2020).

The City of Norco obtains its water supplies through various sources. The City purchases treated groundwater from Western Municipal Water District's (WMWD) Arlington Desalter and Chino Desalter Authority, imported water from The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, and operates its own groundwater wells. The City also purchases treated groundwater produced by the Arlington Desalter Facility and Chino Desalter Authority. In addition, the City purchases a small amount of water from the City of Corona. During 2017, drinking water was approximately 84.1% purchased treated groundwater and 15.9% groundwater from Norco's Temescal groundwater basin wells.

The proposed project would have no activities that would extract groundwater or interfere with groundwater recharge activities. No impacts to existing groundwater supplies would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

IMPACT HWQ-3: Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite?

During earthwork activities, there would be the potential that uncovered soils on the project site could be exposed to water erosion and/or wind erosion impacts. There would also be the potential that construction vehicles and construction equipment could transport sediment onto local streets and into local drainage systems. The proposed project would disturb more than one acre of area and would be required to obtain a General Construction Permit from the State Water Resources Control Board. The General Construction Permit would require preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to avoid erosion and sediment transfer impacts. With implementation of the General Construction Permit, including preparation and implementation of a

construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, construction activities for the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern to increase erosion and sedimentation and potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HWQ-4: 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?

Approximately 1.80 acres of the 37.84 acres project site consists of impervious surfaces. The construction of the proposed project would result in an increase in the impervious area on the project to approximately 13.34 acres, which would increase the rate of surface water generated from the project site. The project would include a 0.90-acre basin that would serve both as a water quality infiltration basin and storm detention basin. Of the 37.84 gross acres, 25.91 acres are tributary to the proposed Basin. The basin has been designed for storm water runoff for the 10-year and 100-year storm event, with a required treatment volume of 38,590 cubic feet. The project is designed to manage 38,600 cubic feet. The 10-year storm is below top of curb elevation and the 100-year storm is within the property line; refer to [Figure 4.10-2, National Flood Hazard Map](#). The Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulic Study verifies stormwater management capacity. The Rational Method Hydrology was used to determine the peak flow rate. All the data input was per the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Hydrology Manual. Based on the hydrologic and hydraulic calculations, the Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulic Study determined that the proposed project can be protected from a 10-year and 100-year storm event from the proposed onsite flood management detention basin.

A Final Hydrology and Hydraulic Study would be approved by the City and would demonstrate that onsite drainage facilities are designed and adequately sized to convey and reduce runoff such that onsite and offsite drainage capacities would not be exceeded in a design storm and cause onsite or offsite flooding. With approval of the Final Hydrology Study and implementation of the Storm Drain Plan, the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HWQ-5: 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?

The proposed project would be required to comply with the City of Norco Municipal Code Section 15.70 Stormwater/Urban Runoff and Discharge Controls Ordinance which gives to the City the authority to reduce pollutants in stormwater and regulate illicit discharges and non-stormwater discharges into the storm drain system. All projects must manage stormwater runoff to prevent any deterioration of water quality that would impair subsequent or competing uses of the water. A Preliminary Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) has been prepared in accordance with the City's Municipal Code and is presented in [Appendix G2](#). The Preliminary Drainage Plan for the project is shown in [Figure 3-15, Proposed Storm Drain Plan](#). Surface runoff would be conveyed as sheet flow to a series of onsite curbs/gutters and directed to the onsite detention basin to satisfy the project's LID BMPs and detention requirements. In addition, non-structural BMPs such as homeowner education and storm drain stenciling would contribute to substantially reducing the pollutant load being conveyed to downstream water bodies. Additionally, during construction, there would be the potential that degraded surface water runoff could be generated from the project site. To minimize short-term construction water quality impacts, the proposed project would be required to obtain a General Construction Permit and prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. With implementation of the Preliminary Drainage Plan ([Figure 3-15](#)) and Water Quality Management Plan and compliance with the General Construction Permit conditions, the proposed project would not exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HWQ-6: 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?

As shown in [Figure 4.10-2, National Flood Hazard Map](#), Map No.06065CO687G, effective December 3, 2009, the project site is in Zone X, an area subject to minimal flooding. West of Bluff Street, a small strip of area is subject to 0.2% Annual Flood Hazard and the Santa Ana River is designated as a Special Flood Hazard Area. The proposed project would include a basin that would serve as both a stormwater detention basin as well as a water quality infiltration basin that would retain surface water runoff generated from the site from a 100-year storm event. The project would not redirect flows from the site onto other properties and would not impede flows in the Santa Ana River Special Flood Hazard Area where they would create a flood hazard. The potential impact for the project to impede or redirect flood flows would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HWQ-7 In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

The project would not be at risk for a tsunami that could potentially release pollutants. The coastline is approximately 31 miles from the site. According to the City's General Plan Safety Element, the City is not subject to inundation from failure of nearby dams even though the upper reaches of the Prado Basin could extend up the Santa Ana River channel; the water surface elevation is contained within its banks. Additionally, the Seven Oaks Dam is located approximately 6.0 miles upstream from Redlands in the San Bernardino Mountains and should not cause significant inundation as far south as the City of Norco. Located north of the project site are two above ground reservoirs. The probability of the above ground reservoirs incurring structure damage failure and releasing water would be very low and would be considered less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT HWQ-8 Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with beneficial uses established for receiving water bodies for the project, would not conflict with water quality objectives or further impair existing impaired water bodies. The proposed project would implement SWPPP and WQMP BMPs such as a water quality basin, homeowner education and storm drain stenciling, that would treat onsite low flows to protect beneficial uses for surface waters identified in the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan.

The City of Corona (Corona), City of Norco (Norco), and the Home Gardens County Water District (HGCWD) executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in March 2017 establishing the Temescal Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Temescal GSA). In 2022, the Temescal Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) was submitted to the Department of Water Resources. GSPs provide a roadmap for how groundwater basins will reach long-term sustainability.

The sustainable management goal of the Temescal Basin is to sustain groundwater resources for the current and future beneficial uses of the Basin in a manner that is adaptive and responsive to the following objectives:

- Provide a long-term, reliable, and efficient groundwater supply for municipal, industrial, and other use.
- Provide reliable storage for water supply resilience during droughts and shortages.
- Protect groundwater quality.
- Support beneficial uses of interconnected surface waters.
- Support integrated and cooperative water resource management.

The Temescal Subbasin (Basin) is considered to be sustainably managed. The City of Norco Urban Water Management Plan shows the City of Norco would have 100% water reliability normal year, single

dry year, and multiple dry years for years 2025 to 2045, because of a diversified supply and conservation measures. The water demands of the proposed project would not adversely impact water reliably and would not conflict with the City of Norco Urban Water Management Plan. The Urban Water Management Plan incorporates ground water supplies and demands identified in the Temescal Subbasin. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the Temescal Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.10.6 REFERENCES

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4.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

4.11.1 INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Section evaluates the potential land use impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project. This section evaluates potential direct physical impacts to existing land uses and project consistency with the City of Norco General Plan. The analysis in this section is based on the proposed project description provided in Section 3.0, *Project Description*.

4.11.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

ONSITE LAND USES

The project site currently consists of 37.84 acres and is comprised of two (2) parcels, identified by Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 121-110-003 and 121-110-001. APN 121-110-003 consists of 26.15 acres and is owned by TACRD Investment with a General Plan designation of Residential Agricultural (RA) and Zoning designation of A-1-20 (Agricultural Low Density). APN 121-110-001 is owned by the City of Norco and consists of 11.69 acres with a General Plan designation of Public Lands (PL) and a Zoning designation of Open Space (OS).

The north parcel (APN 121-110-001), owned by the City of Norco, contains existing City water well facilities including several wells and related piping and utilities and two above ground water storage reservoirs. Additionally, portions of the site have been used by the City as a spoils/staging yard.

The balance of the site is the Dallape Dairy property (2877 River Road/APN 121-110-003), consisting of a former milking barn, barns/sheds, and dairy-related features (pastures, impoundment, pole barns, fencing). The site is improved with existing infrastructure. An existing 60-foot wide Southern California Edison easement with above-ground power poles, extends along the northeast portion of the parcel.

SURROUNDING LAND USES

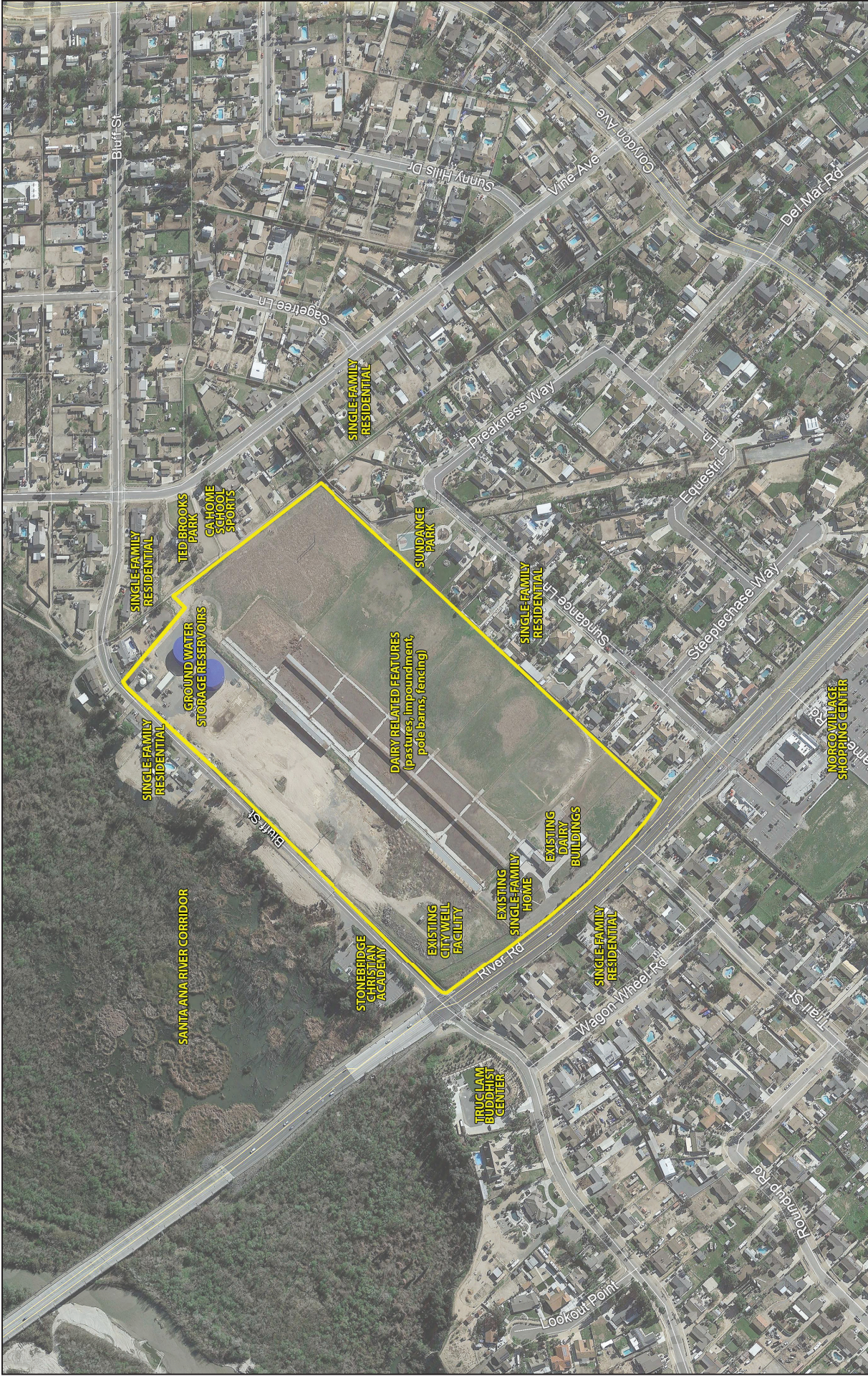
The project site is situated within an urbanized area and is generally surrounded by developed land uses. Surrounding land uses to project site are shown in [Figure 4.11-1, *Existing and Surrounding Land Uses*](#).

To the east are existing single-family residential neighborhoods. Most homes are single-story structures. An existing park, Ted Brooks Park, is in the neighborhood. Presently, chain link fencing is located between the neighborhood and the project site.

To the southwest is River Road and single-family homes. The homes are mostly one-story. An existing block wall is located between the existing homes and River Road.

To the south is an existing single-family residential neighborhood. The homes consist of a combination of one-story and two-story structures. An existing park, Sundance Park, is in the residential neighborhood. An existing concrete block wall is located between the existing single-family land uses and the project site.

To the north and northwest are Bluff Street, single-family homes, Stonebridge Christian Academy and the Santa Ana River area, open space, and homes. North of Bluff Street is the Santa Ana River Corridor.



Source: Google Earth Pro; June 2021.
 - approximate Project Site Boundary

Existing and Surrounding Land Uses

Figure 4.11-1



4.11.3 REGULATORY SETTING

REGIONAL – SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Southern California Association of Governments

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a regional council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties, which encompass over 38,000 square miles. SCAG is the federally-recognized metropolitan planning organization for this region and a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and state law. In this role, SCAG reviews proposed development and infrastructure projects to analyze their impacts on regional planning programs. As the Southern California region’s metropolitan planning organization, SCAG cooperates with the South Coast Air Quality Management District, the California Department of Transportation, and other agencies in preparing regional planning documents. SCAG has developed regional plans to achieve specific regional objectives.

SCAG Connect SoCal

The SCAG Regional Council fully adopted Connect SoCal in September 2020. Connect SoCal, also known as the 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS, builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. The long-range visioning plan balances future mobility and housing needs with goals for the environment, the regional economy, social equity and environmental justice, and public health.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

The City of Norco General Plan contains goals, policies, and plans to guide land use and development decisions in the future. The General Plan consists of the following elements: Circulation, Conservation, Land Use, Noise, Open Space, Safety and Housing.

LAND USE ELEMENT

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to provide appropriate land for a variety of activities including residential, commercial, public, etc., and to guide the manner each land use is developed and used. The primary objectives of the Land Use Element are to determine the future location, type, and intensity of new development and redevelopment projects, and to establish the desired mix and relationship between such projects to maximize the long-term livability of the community. [Table 4.11-1, *Land Use Distribution*](#), identifies the land use distribution within the City of Norco.

Table 4.11-1
Land Use Distribution

Land Use	Acreage	Percentage
Residential	5,465	59.1
Commercial	571	6.2
Industrial	656	7.1
Other (Open Space, Streets, Limited Development)	2,545	27.6
City Total	9,237	100.0
Source: City of Norco General Plan, <i>Land Use Element</i> ; Update Adoption Date: October 7, 2009.		

HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element is one of the seven elements required by the State to be included in the City's General Plan. The purpose of the Housing Element is to ensure the City establishes policies, procedures and incentives in its land use planning and redevelopment activities that will result in the maintenance and expansion of the housing supply to adequately accommodate households currently living and expected to live in Norco. It institutes policies that will guide City decision making and establishes an action program to implement housing goals. The City of Norco has adopted the Updated Housing Element for the 2021-2029 planning period which has been certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

City of Norco Zoning Code

The purpose of the Zoning Code is to (1) Preserve and enhance the distinctive rural and equestrian-oriented environment of Norco and the City's potential for equestrian and other outdoor type of recreation activities, (2) Provide the economic and social advantages resulting from an orderly planned use of the City's resources, (3) Conserve and promote the public health, safety and general welfare, (4) Encourage the most appropriate use of land consistent with the General Plan and (5) Provide a basis for planning the provisions of public facilities necessary to fulfill the requirements of existing and future development. The proposed project includes a request for Zone Change from A-1-20 Agricultural Low Density 21,780 to R-1-10 Residential 10,000, Open Space to R-1-10 Residential 10,000 and A-1-20 Agricultural Low Density 21,780 to Open Space.

4.11.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- LU-1: Physically divide an established community?
- LU-2: 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?

4.11.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT LU-1: Physically divide an established community?

The project site is currently developed and situated within a suburban setting. The proposed project requests approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and Tentative Parcel Map (on 34.38 acres), to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City's R-1 Zoning regulations. The minimum lot width would be 85 feet and the minimum lot depth would be 100 feet. The anticipated house sizes would be a combination of one- and two-story dwelling units that would range from approximately 2,700 square feet to 3,500 square feet. The proposed project lot sizes would all accommodate the potential for animal keeping based on the requirements of the R-1 Zoning. The project site is surrounded by single-family land uses to the north, south, southwest and east and would be a compatible land use. Residential uses adjacent to the site would be buffered from the project by a block perimeter wall and landscaping. The proposed project would not divide or create a barrier to existing communities or result in the development of incompatible land uses; therefore, there are no impacts.

Potential infrastructure connections along River Road and Bluff Street could temporarily close roadway travel lanes that could provide access to existing communities. The project would require construction permits and would coordinate with the City of Norco on traffic control requirements to ensure access to existing communities. Such traffic control measures include detour signs or flag man to direct traffic. Compliance with the City of Norco traffic control requirements would reduce temporary access impacts to existing communities to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT LU-2: 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?

Below is an evaluation of the project’s consistency with applicable plans and policies that have been adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (SCAG)

SCAG’s Intergovernmental Review Section is responsible for performing consistency reviews of regionally significant local plans, projects, and programs with SCAG’s adopted regional plans. The criteria for projects of regional significance are outlined in *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15125 and 15206. Based on the criteria provided in *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15125 and 15206, the proposed project involves a General Plan Amendment and would be considered regionally significant and must demonstrate consistency with the Connect SoCal the 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS, goals and adopted growth forecasts. Table 4.11-2, SCAG 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS Consistency Analysis, provides an analysis of the project’s consistency with the applicable 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS goals and adopted growth forecasts. As concluded in Table 4.11-2, the project is consistent with the 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS goals and adopted growth forecasts, resulting in a less than significant impact in this regard.

Table 4.11-2
SCAG 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS Consistency Analysis

SCAG Connect SOCAL Goals and Growth Forecasts		Consistency Determination
2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS		
Goal 1	Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness.	Consistent: The project would revitalize a predominately vacant/underused site, allowing for the development of a single-family home community which would provide property tax revenues to the City. Additionally, the project would provide tax revenues helping to support regional economic development.
Goal 2	Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability and travel safety for people and goods.	Consistent: The project would improve existing streets to facilitate vehicle access and provide pathways and public trails to enhance equestrian and pedestrian circulation. The project will construct critical missing linkages on the City’s trail system. Additionally, the site is near existing and planned arterials, which provide direct access to the regional transportation systems that connects the City of Norco to the surrounding area.

SCAG Connect SOCAL Goals and Growth Forecasts		Consistency Determination
Goal 3	Enhance the preservation, security and resilience of the regional transportation system.	Consistent: This goal does not apply to this project. The nearest public transit stop is at Norco College, approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the project site.
Goal 4	Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system.	Consistent: See response to Goal 2.
Goal 5	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.	Consistent: The operation of the project would not exceed operational air quality and greenhouse gas emission thresholds. See also response to Goals 3 and 6.
Goal 6	Support healthy and equitable communities.	Consistent: The project includes onsite and offsite equestrian and pedestrian trails along River Road and Bluff Street. Within the development, a trail connection on Lot F leads into Sundance Park.
Goal 7	Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network.	Consistent: The project would be required to comply with Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which provide minimum efficiency standards related to various building features, including appliances, water and space heating and cooling equipment, building insulation and roofing, and lighting. Implementation of the Title 24 standards significantly reduces energy usage. Please also see also response to Goal 5.
Goal 8	Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel.	Not Applicable: The leveraging of new transportation technologies is beyond the scope of the project. The project includes road improvements and construction of pathways and trails to provide alternative modes of transportation.
Goal 9	Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.	Consistent: The project would increase the amount of single-family home opportunities in the City of Norco. Please also see response to Goal 3.
Goal 10	Promote conservation of natural and agriculture lands and restoration of habitats.	Not Applicable: The project does not remove Prime Agriculture lands or sensitive habitats and is being developed on land designated for residential uses.
Source: Southern California Association of Governments, 2016-2040 RTP/SCS Final Growth Forecast by Jurisdiction, https://scag.ca.gov/Documents/2016_2040RTPSCS_FinalGrowthForecastbyJurisdiction.pdf , accessed March 2022.		

CITY OF NORCO ZONING ORDINANCE

The proposed project includes a request for a Zone Change to allow for the development of the proposed project. The proposed Zone Changes are shown in Table 4.11-3, Proposed Zoning Designations.

The proposed Zone Change would convert 19.37 acres of area currently zoned Agricultural Low Density (A-1-20), minimum 21,780 square foot lot to Residential Single Family (R-1), minimum 10,000 square foot lot size. Additionally, the project would change 8.20 acres of area currently zoned Open Space, which is currently used by the City as a spoils and staging yard to Residential Single Family (R-1), minimum 10,000 square foot lot size and would change 6.78 acres of area currently zoned Agricultural Low Density, minimum 21,780 square foot lot to Open Space. There would be a net decrease of approximately one acre of area zoned open space. The decrease in area zoned Open Space would not

have a significant adverse impact on open space opportunities in the City when considering that the City of Norco’s Municipal Code Section 17.14.06 (Formula for Dedication of Land) states park dedication is 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents and the City currently maintains a parkland/open space to-resident ratio of approximately 65 acres per 1,000 residents.

Table 4.11-3
Proposed Zoning Designations

Existing Zoning Designation	Proposed Zoning Designations
8.20 acres Open Space	Residential Single Family (R-1), minimum 10,000 square foot lot size
19.37 acres Agricultural Low Density (A-1-20), minimum 21,780 square foot lot	Residential Single Family (R-1), minimum 10,000 square foot lot size
6.78 acres Agricultural Low Density (A-1-20), minimum 21,780 square foot lot	Open Space

Zone Change Required Conditions

The City of Norco Zoning Code Section 18.47.12 identifies the conditions necessary to approve a Zone Change request. These conditions include:

- The requested change of zone is necessary and desirable for the development of the community in harmony with the objectives of the General Plan.
- The requested change of zone will be compatible and complementary to existing conditions in the surrounding area.
- The site is adequate in size to accommodate uses permitted in the zone requested, and that all applicable property development standards can be complied with. The architecture for the project would be reviewed and approved by the City to be consistent with the City’s policies including aesthetics, height limits, and setbacks.
- The site properly relates to streets and highways designed and fully improved to carry the type and quantity of traffic that is expected to be generated in this area; and that utilities exist or are planned which will adequately serve the property as rezoned.

The primary goal of the General Plan Land Use Element is the maintenance of the small plot agriculture/animal-keeping/equestrian lifestyle, to which all other elements of the General Plan must be consistent. Even though the proposed zone change would reduce the minimum lot size from 21,780 square feet to 10,000 square feet, the home sites would still be of sufficient size to accommodate small-plot agriculture/animal-keeping/equestrian lifestyle objective envisioned in the General Plan and as described in the City’s Animal Keeping Overlay Zone.

The requested change of zone will be compatible and complementary to existing conditions in the surrounding area. The project site is surrounded by single-family land uses to the north, south, southwest and to the east. The proposed project would involve the development of a single-family community. The project would be self-contained and would be buffered from surrounding developments by a combination of perimeter walls and landscape treatment. Proposed homes would be similar in scale to adjacent residential areas and would be compatible with the surrounding area.

The site is adequate in size to accommodate uses permitted in the zone requested, and that all applicable property development standards can be complied with: The proposed lot sizes are of adequate size to comply with site development standards provided for the Residential Low-Density land uses without the need for variances.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY

The project would be consistent with relevant policies from the City of Norco General Plan except for Land Use Element Policy 2.2.1a, which states that Existing A-1 zones and similar agricultural-residential specific plan districts with similar densities shall not be rezoned for higher intensity residential uses. The proposed project includes a request for a Zone Change from A-1-20 Agricultural Low Density 21,780 to R-1-10 Residential 10,000. The zone change would not set a new precedent because the project is surrounded on three sides by residential neighborhoods; refer to [Figure 4.11-1, *Surrounding Land Uses*](#). The project would be consistent with all other relevant policies including the City of Norco Housing Element Policy 4.7, which encourages residential infill within existing neighborhoods to better utilize existing services and utilities and to reduce infrastructure development costs and Policy 6.2, which encourages higher densities and promotes infill and compact development patterns to encourage housing, affordability, maximize existing land resources, reduce pressure to convert agricultural resources, and conserve habitat and environmentally sensitive areas. Both policies promote infill housing development, that could be consistent with the proposed project.

The proposed project would also be consistent with the conditions required for proposed changes established in the City's Municipal Code. As discussed above, the proposed zone change would not set a new precedent, the R-1-10 Residential 10,000 zoning occurs in areas of the City and are adjacent to areas that currently zoned A-1-20 Agricultural Low Density 21,780 and have shown to be a compatible land use. Additionally, the proposed change would create an open space buffer between the project and existing residential uses to the northeast which would enhance the compatibility of the project. The City of Norco would evaluate the project for consistency with the Residential Low Density permitted uses and development standards and compliance with Zone Change required conditions, which would ensure that no adverse impacts would occur.

The project would meet the conditions for a Zone Change and would be consistent with relevant policies in the General Plan except for Land Use Element Policy 2.2.1a While the project would conflict with Land Use Element Policy 2.2.1a, the proposed General Plan Amendment and Zone Change would not cause adverse land use compatibility impacts or result in significant impacts to the environment.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.11.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *Comprehensive Trail Master Plan*. March 21, 2018.

City of Norco, *General Plan 2021-2029 Housing Element*. Adopted October 6, 2021.

City of Norco, *General Plan Circulation Element*. Update Adoption Date: March 15, 2000.

City of Norco General Plan, *Conservation Element*. Update Adoption Date: December 17, 2014.

City of Norco General Plan, *Land Use Element*. Update Adoption Date: October 7, 2009.

City of Norco General Plan, *Noise Element*. Update Adoption Date: March 5, 2003.

City of Norco General Plan, *Open Space Element*. Update Adoption Date: June 1989.

City of Norco General Plan, *Safety Element*. Update Adoption Date: January 16, 2013.

City of Norco Municipal Code, Title 18 – Zoning. Updated November 17, 2021.

Norco Municipal Code, 17.14.06 Formula for Dedication of Land, <<https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Norco/#!/Norco17/Norco1714.html>>. Accessed on February 27, 2024.

Southern California Association of Governments, *Connect SoCal Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report*. Adopted September 3, 2020.

Southern California Association of Governments, *2016-2040 RTP/SCS Final Growth Forecast by Jurisdiction*. Accessed March 2022.

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4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

4.12.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential impacts to mineral resources associated with development of the proposed project.

4.12.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

In 1975, the State adopted the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA). The primary objectives of SMARA are the assurance of adequate supplies of mineral resources important to California's economy and the reclamation of mined lands. These objectives are implemented through land use planning and regulatory programs administered by local government with the assistance of the State. The State Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, and the State Mining and Geology Board are the agencies responsible for administering this program at the State level.

The California Department of Conservation (CDC) has a classification system for soils based on the suitability of the soils for mining and extraction of resources. The CDC establishes a hierarchy of mineral resources zones as follows:

MRZ-1	Areas where geologic information indicates no significant mineral deposits are present.
MRZ-2	Areas that contain identified mineral resources.
MRZ-2a	Areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic data shows that significant measured or indicated resources are present.
MRZ-2b	Areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic information indicates that significant inferred resources are present.
MRZ-3	Areas of undetermined resources significance.
MRZ-3a	Areas containing known mineral deposits that may qualify as mineral resources.
MRZ-3b	Areas containing inferred mineral deposits that may qualify as mineral resources.
MRZ-4	Areas where geologic information does not rule either the presence or absence of mineral resource (no known mineral resources).

According to the CDC California Geological Survey (CGS), the proposed project has an MRZ-3 classification.

4.12.3 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA), enacted in 1975 by the State of California, provides for management of mineral resource activities at the State and local level. The primary objectives of SMARA are the assurance of adequate supplies of mineral resources important to California's economy and the reclamation of mined lands. The act establishes mining operation and reclamation requirements and a statewide resource inventory and classification process. Implementation of

SMARA promotes both the conservation and sensitive development of mineral resources particularly sand and gravel resources.

4.12.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **MR-1:** Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?
- **MR-2:** 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?

4.12.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT MR-1: Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State. According to the California Department of Conservation, Division Mine Reclamation, the project site does not contain mines, mineral deposits, or other mineral resources. The proposed project is not planned for mineral extraction and it would not result in loss of availability of a known mineral that is of value to the region and the residents of the State. In addition, the CGS depicts the proposed project as having an MRZ-3 classification. Therefore, impacts to mineral resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT MR-2: Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

The proposed project would not 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. According to the California Department of Conservation, Division Mine Reclamation, the project site does not contain mines, mineral deposits, or other mineral resources. In addition, the CGS depicts the proposed project as having an MRZ-3 classification. Because there are no locally important mineral resources on the project site or in the City, as indicated in the City's General Plan, implementation of the proposed project would not 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. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.12.6 REFERENCES

California Department of Conservation California Geological Survey [<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=mlc>]. Accessed on May 7, 2024.

California Department of Conservation Mines Online [Mines Online (ca.gov)]. Accessed May 23, 2023.

City of Norco, *Conservation Element*. Update Adoption Date: December 17, 2014.

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4.13 NOISE

4.13.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate the potential noise impacts from the proposed project and provide recommendations, if necessary, to minimize any project-related noise impacts. The assessment was conducted within the context of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and utilizes the noise standards set forth by the applicable federal, State, and local agencies. This report has been prepared under the supervision of a certified acoustical consultant for the City of Norco. The analysis in this section is based on the following technical report:

- *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Residential Project*, Vista Environmental, April 4, 2024 ([Appendix H](#)).

4.13.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

BACKGROUND

Noise Levels

Noise level (or volume) is generally measured in decibels (dB) using the A-weighted sound pressure level (dBA). The A-weighted scale is an adjustment to the actual sound pressure levels to be consistent with that of human hearing response, which is most sensitive to frequencies around 4,000 Hertz (about the highest note on a piano) and less sensitive to low frequencies (below 100 Hertz). Sound pressure level is measured on a logarithmic scale with the 0 dB level based on the lowest detectable sound pressure level that people can perceive (an audible sound that is not zero sound pressure level). Based on the logarithmic scale, a doubling of sound energy is equivalent to an increase of three dBA, and a sound that is 10 dBA less than the ambient sound level has no effect on ambient noise. Because of the nature of the human ear, a sound must be about 10 dBA greater than the reference sound to be judged as twice as loud. In general, a three dBA change in community noise levels is noticeable, while a one to two dB change is generally not perceived. Quiet suburban areas typically have noise levels in the range of 40-50 dBA, while arterial streets are in the 50 to 60+ dBA range.

Noise Metrics

One of the most frequently used noise metrics that considers both duration and sound power level is the equivalent noise level (Leq). The Leq is defined as the single steady A-weighted level that is equivalent to the same amount of energy as that contained in the actual fluctuating levels over a period (essentially, the average noise level). Typically, Leq is summed over a one-hour period. Lmax is the highest RMS (root mean squared) sound pressure level within the measuring period, and Lmin is the lowest RMS sound pressure level within the measuring period. The time in which noise occurs is also important since noise that occurs at night tends to be more disturbing than that which occurs during the day. Community noise is usually measured using Day-Night Average Level (Ldn), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a 10 dBA penalty for noise occurring during nighttime (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM) hours, or Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a five dBA penalty for noise occurring from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM and a 10 dBA penalty for noise occurring from 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM. Noise levels described by Ldn and CNEL usually do not differ by more than one dB. Daytime Leq levels are louder than Ldn or CNEL levels; thus, if the Leq meets noise standards, the Ldn and CNEL are also met.

Human Response to Changes in Noise Levels

In general, the healthy human ear is most sensitive to sounds between 1,000 Hz and 5,000 Hz, (A-weighted scale) and it perceives a sound within that range as being more intense than a sound with a higher or lower frequency with the same magnitude. For purposes of this report as well as with most environmental documents, the A-scale weighting is typically reported in terms of A-weighted decibel (dBA). Typically, the human ear can barely perceive the change in noise level of 3 dB. A change in 5 dB is readily perceptible, and a change in 10 dB is perceived as being twice or half as loud. As previously discussed, a doubling of sound energy results in a 3 dB increase in sound, which means that a doubling of sound energy (e.g., doubling the volume of traffic on a highway), would result in a barely perceptible change in sound level.

Sound Attenuation

From the noise source to the receiver, noise changes both in level and frequency spectrum. The most obvious is the decrease in the level of noise as the distance from the source increases. The way the noise level reduces with distance depends on whether the source is a point or line source as well as ground absorption, atmospheric effects, and refraction, and shielding by natural and manmade features. Sound from point sources, such as air conditioning condensers, radiate uniformly outward as it travels away from the source in a spherical pattern. The noise drop-off rate associated with this geometric spreading is 6 dBA per each doubling of the distance (dBA/DD) between source and receiver. Transportation noise sources such as roadways are typically analyzed as line sources, since at any given moment the receiver may be impacted by noise from multiple vehicles at various locations along the roadway. Because of the geometry of a line source, the noise drop-off rate associated with the geometric spreading of a line source is 3 dBA/DD.

The sound drop-off rate is highly dependent on the conditions of the land between the noise source and the receiver. To account for this ground-effect attenuation (absorption), two types of site conditions are commonly used in traffic noise models, soft-site and hard-site conditions. Soft-site conditions account for the sound propagation loss over natural surfaces such as normal earth and ground vegetation. For point sources, a drop-off rate of 7.5 dBA/DD is typically observed over soft ground with landscaping, as compared with a 6.0 dBA/DD drop-off rate over hard ground such as asphalt, concrete, stone, and very hard packed earth. For line sources a 4.5 dBA/DD is typically observed for soft-site conditions compared to the 3.0 dBA/DD drop-off rate for hard-site conditions. Caltrans research has shown that the use of soft-site conditions is more appropriate for the application of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) traffic noise prediction model used in this analysis.

Additionally, noise levels may also be reduced by intervening structures; generally, a single row of buildings between the receptor and the noise source reduces the noise level by about five dBA, while a solid wall or berm reduces noise levels by approximately seven dBA. The way older homes in California were constructed (approximately 30 years old or older) generally provides a reduction of exterior-to-interior noise levels of about 20 to 25 dBA with closed windows. The exterior-to-interior reduction of newer residential units and office buildings constructed to California Energy Code standards is generally 30 dBA or more (Harris, Miller, and Hanson, 2006).

EXISTING NOISE ENVIRONMENT

To determine the existing noise levels, noise measurements have been taken in the vicinity of the project site. The field survey noted that noise within the proposed project area is generally

characterized by vehicle traffic on River Road that is adjacent to the southwest side of the project site and Bluff Street that is adjacent to the northwest side of the project site. The noise measurements were taken using three Larson Davis Model LXT1 Class 1 sound level meters programmed in “slow” mode to record the sound pressure level at 1-second intervals for 24 hours in “A” weighted form. In addition, the L_{eq} averaged over the entire measuring time and L_{max} were recorded with the three sound level meters. The sound level meters and microphones were mounted on trees and fences, were placed between four and six feet above the ground and were equipped with windscreens during all measurements. The noise meters were calibrated before and after the monitoring using a Larson Davis Cal200 calibrator. All noise level measurement equipment meets American National Standards Institute (ANSI) specifications for sound level meters (ANSI S1.4-2014 standard). The noise monitoring locations were selected in order to obtain noise levels on the project site. Descriptions of the noise monitoring sites are provided below in [Table 4.13-1, Existing \(Ambient\) Noise Level Measurements](#), and are shown in [Figure 4.13-1, Field Noise Monitoring Locations](#).

Table 4.13-1
Existing (Ambient) Noise Level Measurements

Site No.	Site Description	Average (dBA L_{eq})		1-hr Average (dBA L_{eq} /Time)		24-hr dBA CNEL
		Daytime ¹	Nighttime ²	Minimum	Maximum	
1	Located near north corner of residential portion of project site, on a fence on southeast side of Pump Station, approximately 60 feet southeast of Bluff Street centerline.	58.1	51.9	44.8 1:15 AM	62.2 9:33 AM	60.3
2	Located near west corner of project site on a log pile and approximately 65 feet southeast of Bluff Street centerline and 340 feet northeast of River Road centerline.	51.7	49.7	41.3 1:39 AM	57.0 7:05 AM	56.6
3	Located near south corner of project site on a palm tree approximately 100 feet northwest of the southeast property line and 90 feet northeast of River Road centerline.	63.2	59.1	52.6 1:41 AM	66.1 7:33 AM	66.7
Noise measurements taken between April 5, 2022, and April 6, 2022. Notes: ¹ Daytime defined as 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM (Section 8.24.040 of the Municipal Code). ² Nighttime defined as 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM (Section 8.24.040 of the Municipal Code). Source: Vista Environmental, <i>Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Residential Project</i> ; April 4, 2024.						



Source: Vista Environmental; May 3, 2022.

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
 Notice of Preparation and Initial Study
Field Noise Monitoring Locations

Figure 4.13-1



4.13.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Federal Noise Control Act

The adverse impact of noise was officially recognized by the federal government in the Noise Control Act of 1972, which serves three purposes:

- Promulgating noise emission standards for interstate commerce.
- Assisting state and local abatement efforts.
- Promoting noise education and research.

The Federal Office of Noise Abatement and Control (ONAC) was initially tasked with implementing the Noise Control Act. However, the ONAC has since been eliminated, leaving the development of federal noise policies and programs to other federal agencies and interagency committees. For example, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) agency prohibits exposure of workers to excessive sound levels. The Department of Transportation (DOT) assumed a significant role in noise control through its various operating agencies. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulates noise of aircraft and airports. Surface transportation system noise is regulated by a host of agencies, including the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which regulates transit noise, while freeways that are part of the interstate highway system are regulated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Finally, the federal government actively advocates that local jurisdiction use their land use regulatory authority to arrange new development in such a way that “noise sensitive” uses are either prohibited from being sited adjacent to a highway or, alternately that the developments are planned and constructed in such a manner that potential noise impacts are minimized.

Although the proposed project is not under the jurisdiction of the FTA, the *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual* (FTA Manual), prepared by the FTA, September 2018, is the only guidance document from a government agency that has defined what constitutes a significant noise increase impact from a project’s cumulative noise impacts and this standard has been utilized to analyze the proposed project’s cumulative roadway noise impacts. The FTA standards are based on extensive studies by the FTA and other governmental agencies on the human effects and reaction to noise and a summary of the FTA findings are provided in [Table 4.13-2, FTA Project Effects on Cumulative Noise Exposure](#).

Table 4.13-2
FTA Project Effects on Cumulative Noise Exposure

Existing Noise Exposure (dBA Leq or Ldn)	Allowable Noise Impact Exposure dBA Leq or Ldn		
	Project Only	Combined	Noise Exposure Increase
45	51	52	+7
50	53	55	+5
55	55	58	+3
60	57	62	+2
65	60	66	+1
70	64	71	+1
75	65	75	0

Source: Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Project*; April 4, 2024.

STATE

California Department of Health Services Office of Noise Control

Established in 1973, the California Department of Health Services Office of Noise Control (ONC) was instrumental in developing regularity tools to control and abate noise for use by local agencies. One significant model is the “Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments Matrix,” which allows the local jurisdiction to clearly delineate compatibility of sensitive uses with various incremental levels of noise.

California Noise Insulation Standards

Title 24, Chapter 1, Article 4 of the California Administrative Code (California Noise Insulation Standards) requires noise insulation in new hotels, motels, apartment houses, and dwellings (other than single-family detached housing) that provides an annual average noise level of no more than 45 dBA CNEL. When such structures are located within a 60-dBA CNEL (or greater) noise contour, an acoustical analysis is required to ensure that interior levels do not exceed the 45-dBA CNEL annual threshold. In addition, Title 21, Chapter 6, Article 1 of the California Administrative Code requires that all habitable rooms, hospitals, convalescent homes, and places of worship shall have an interior CNEL of 45 dB or less due to aircraft noise.

Government Code Section 65302

Government Code Section 65302 mandates that the legislative body of each county and city in California adopt a noise element as part of its comprehensive general plan. The local noise element must recognize the land use compatibility guidelines published by the State Department of Health Services. The guidelines rank noise land use compatibility in terms of normally acceptable, conditionally acceptable, normally unacceptable, and clearly unacceptable.

Title 14 of the California Administrative

Title 14 of the California Administrative Code Section 15000 requires that all state and local agencies implement the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, which requires the analysis of exposure of persons to excessive ground borne vibration. However, no statute has been adopted by the state that quantifies the level at which excessive ground borne vibration occurs.

The *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*, prepared by Caltrans, April 2020, provides practical guidance to Caltrans engineers, planners, and consultants who must address vibration issues associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of Caltrans projects. However, this manual is also used as a reference point by many lead agencies and CEQA practitioners throughout California, as it provides numeric thresholds for vibration impacts. Thresholds are established for continuous (construction-related) and transient (transportation-related) sources of vibration, which found that the human response becomes distinctly perceptible at 0.25 inch per second PPV for transient sources and 0.04 inch per second PPV for continuous sources.

LOCAL

City of Norco Municipal Code

The City of Norco Municipal Code Section 9.07.040 establishes the following applicable standards related to noise. No person shall create any sound, or allow the creation of any sound, on any property

that causes the exterior sound level on any other occupied property to exceed the sound level standards set forth in Table 4.13-3, *City of Norco Sound Level Standards*, or that violates the special sound source standards set forth in Section 9.07.060 in the Municipal Code.

Table 4.13-3
City of Norco Sound Level Standards

Land Use		dB Lmax	
Land Use	Land Use Designation Name	7 AM – 10 PM	10 PM – 7 AM
Community Development	Estate Density Residential	55	45
	Very Low Density Residential	55	45
	Low Density Residential	55	45
	Medium Density Residential	55	45
	Medium High Density Residential	55	45
	High Density Residential	55	45
	Very High Density Residential	55	45
	Highest Density Residential	55	45
	Retail Commercial	65	55
	Office Commercial	65	55
	Tourist Commercial	65	55
	Community Center	65	55
	Light Industrial	75	55
	Heavy Industrial	75	75
	Business Park	65	45
	Public Facility	65	45
	Specific Plan – Residential	65	45
	Specific Plan – Commercial	55	55
Specific Plan – Light Industrial	65	55	
Specific Plan – Heavy Industrial	75	55	
Rural Community	Estate Density Residential	55	45
	Very Low Density Residential	55	45
	Low Density Residential	55	45
Agriculture	Agriculture	45	45
Open Space	Conservation	45	45
	Conservation Habitat	45	45
	Recreation	45	45
	Rural	45	45

Source: Section 9.07.040 of the Norco Municipal Code.

SECTION 9.07.20 EXEMPTIONS

In accordance with the Norco Municipal Code Noise Ordinance, sound emanating from the following sources is exempt from the provisions of this chapter:

- I. Private construction projects involving no more than one unit located within one-quarter of a mile from an inhabited dwelling; provided that:

- Construction does not occur between the hours of 7:00 PM and 7:00 AM, Monday through Friday and 7:00 PM and 8:00 AM, on Saturday and Sunday, unless specified by permit.
- J. Property maintenance, including, but not limited to, the operation of lawnmowers, leaf blowers, etc., provided such maintenance occurs between the hours of 8:00 AM and 7:00 PM.
- K. Motor vehicles, other than off-highway vehicles. This exemption does not include sound emanating from motor vehicle sound systems.
- L. Heating, exhaust, and air conditioning equipment.
- P. Construction-related single events or continuous events subject to a permit issued by the City of Norco.

9.07.060 SPECIAL SOUND SOURCES STANDARDS

The general sound level standards set forth in Section 9.07.040 apply to sound emanating from all sources, including the following special sound sources, and the person creating, or allowing the creation of, the sound is subject to the requirements of that section. The following special sound sources are also subject to the following additional standards, the failure to comply with which constitutes separate violations of this chapter:

- A. Motor Vehicles: Off-Highway Vehicles
 - No person shall operate an off-highway vehicle unless it is equipped with a USDA-qualified spark arrester and a constantly operating and properly maintained muffler. A muffler is not considered constantly operating and properly maintained if it is equipped with a cutout, bypass or similar device. No person shall operate an off-highway vehicle unless the noise emitted by the vehicle is not more than 96 dBA if the vehicle was manufactured on or after January 1, 1986 or is not more than 101 dBA if the vehicle was manufactured before January 1, 1986. For purposes of this subsection, emitted noise shall be measured 20 inches from the vehicle tailpipe using test procedures established by the Society of Automotive Engineers under Standard J-1287.
- B. Power Tools and Equipment. No person shall operate any power tools or equipment between the hours of 10:00 PM and 8:00 AM such that the power tools or equipment are audible to the human ear inside an inhabited dwelling other than a dwelling in which the power tools or equipment may be located. No person shall operate any power tools or equipment at any other time such that the power tools or equipment are audible to the human ear at a distance greater than 100 feet from the power tools or equipment. Sound level measurements may be used but are not required to establish a violation of this subsection.

City of Norco General Plan

NOISE ELEMENT

In addition to the standards provided above, the City of Norco General Plan Noise Element includes the following goals and policies that are applicable to the proposed project:

- GOAL 2.1: Noise Issues and Problems.
- Policy 2.1.2: Noise Impacts on Animal Keeping. As a community dedicated to preserving small-plot agriculture/animal keeping/equestrian lifestyle there is concern about the impacts from noise sources, specifically noise from increasing street traffic, on the long-term health of animals. The concern is not just limited to traffic noise. Industrial and commercial noises, if too close to residential areas, may create impacts that are not safe for the keeping of animals on adjacent residential lots.
- Policy 2.1.3: Noise Impacts from Animal Keeping. While the overall community goal is to establish, protect and promote the agriculture/animal-keeping/equestrian lifestyle that is unique in Southern California, animal keeping, as a land use, can affect adjoining land uses with noise impacts depending on the density and type of animals being kept. Certain animals when kept in large numbers can negatively influence the community because of the noise impacts created by that specific land use.
- Policy 2.1.7: Truck Traffic on Residential Streets. The Circulation Element lists the established truck routes in the City (p. 24 of the Circulation Element). Some of the routes have existing residences along them, and there is an on-going concern for the noise impact to these residences. Some of these residences are in commercial zones and will eventually be replaced by commercial uses. Others of these residences, though, are in residential zones that are not anticipated to change. Of equal concern is truck traffic on streets that are not designated truck routes, but because they provide easy through routes, have the potential to attract truck traffic. Example streets include Parkridge Avenue and Second Street from Mountain Avenue west to River Road. The State Vehicle Code requires that trucks be allowed to travel on roads that will provide the most direct line of travel to a given destination from a given origination point.
- Policy 2.1.8: Aircraft Noise. The City of Norco is not located within the Airport Land Use Compatibility Zones for any of the airports in the region (Ontario, Riverside, Chino, Corona) but because of the take-off patterns from Ontario International Airport that outgoing flights have to take, there is some overflight noise impact that can occur depending on the air traffic and the weather patterns that affect the air patterns. Norco is also below one of the approach patterns for flights into Los Angeles International Airport, but planes on approach to that airport are still generally high enough in the air that any noise impact is not considered a significant impact.
- GOAL 2.2: Exterior Noise Control Goal. Control outdoor noise levels to safe and comfortable levels that protect residences and the small plot agriculture/animal-keeping/equestrian lifestyle in the community.
- Policy 2.2.2: Construction Noise Control Policy. The City should consider adopting and updating as necessary, regulations to minimize noise impacts from construction sites and equipment to residential areas.

Policy 2.2.2a: New development projects near developed and occupied residential areas should be evaluated for possible submittal of a noise reduction plan prior to the issuance of grading permits.

Policy 2.2.2b: All construction equipment should be equipped with noise attenuation features including mufflers and engine shrouds that are at least as effective as original manufacturer equipment.

Policy 2.2.2c: The City should regulate wherever feasible the hours of operation for construction areas including haul routes that may include residential streets and/or sensitive land uses.

GOAL 2.3: Interior Noise Attenuation Goal: Control of interior residential noise levels to comfortable levels.

Policy 2.3.1: Interior Noise Attenuation Policy. The City should adopt and implement construction standards to reduce interior residential noise levels on new residential development from outside sources to 45 dB(A) or lower.

Policy 2.3.2: Noise-Impacted Areas Policy. New residential development in areas that already are impacted by noise levels 65 dB(A) or greater should be required to incorporate, as feasible and practical, additional noise attenuation measures to effectuate an interior noise level of 45 dB(A) or lower using such things as double glazing of exposed windows, and the requirement for air conditioning to minimize the need to keep windows open. Exterior noise levels shall be mitigated as much as possible using landscaping and site grading to reduce noise impacts.

Policy 2.3.2a: Acoustical studies should be required for all new residential development in noise impacted areas.

4.13.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **NOI-1:** Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?
- **NOI-2:** Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?
- **NOI-3:** For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip of 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?

4.13.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT NOI-1: Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

The proposed project would not generate 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. The proposed project requests approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and Tentative Parcel Map (on 37.84 acres), to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City's R-1 Zoning regulations. The proposed General Plan Amendment would increase population and associated traffic generated from the project site above the level identified in the existing General Plan which could increase operational noise levels and long-term traffic noise levels above levels currently estimated in the existing General Plan.

The following section discusses the potential noise emissions associated with the temporary construction activities and long-term operations of the proposed project and compares the project noise impacts to the City standards.

For City analysis of noise impacts and determining appropriate mitigation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), in addition to the sound level standards outlined in [Table 4.13-3](#), an increase in ambient noise levels is assumed to be a significant noise impact if a project causes ambient noise levels to exceed the following:

- Where the existing ambient noise level is less than 65 dBA, a project related permanent increase in ambient noise levels of 5 dBA CNEL or greater.
- Where the existing ambient noise level is greater than 65 dBA, a project related permanent increase in ambient noise levels of 3 dBA CNEL or greater.

SHORT-TERM TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION NOISE IMPACTS

The construction activities for the proposed project are anticipated to include demolition of the milking barn, retail outlet, barns/sheds, and dairy related features on the project site, site preparation and grading of up to 27.57 acres of the 37.84-acre project site that would include import of approximately 48,400 cubic yards of dirt to the project site building construction of 68 single-family homes, paving of the onsite roads, sidewalks and hardscapes, and application of architectural coatings. Construction activities would primarily create noise impacts from haul truck trips on the nearby roadways and from off-road equipment operating on the project site.

[Table 4.13-4, *Construction Equipment Noise Emissions and Usage Factors*](#), below provides a list of the construction equipment anticipated to be used for each phase of construction.

Table 4.13-4
Construction Equipment Noise Emissions and Usage Factors

Equipment	Number of Equipment	Acoustical Use Factor (percent)	Spec 721.560 Lmax at 50 feet ² (dBA, slow ³)	Actual Measured Lmax at 50 feet ⁴ (dBA, slow ³)
Demolition				
Concrete/Industrial Saws	1	20	90	90
Excavators	3	40	85	81
Rubber Tired Dozers	2	40	85	82
Site Preparation				
Rubber Tired Dozers	3	40	85	82
Crawler Tractors	4	40	84	N/A
Grading				
Dump Truck	1	40	84	76
Excavators	2	40	85	81
Grader	1	40	85	83
Rubber Tired Dozer	1	40	85	82
Scraper	2	40	85	84
Crawler Tractors	2	40	84	N/A
Building Construction				
Crane	1	16	85	81
Forklift	3	40	85	83
Generator	1	50	82	81
Tractor	1	40	84	N/A
Front End Loader	1	40	80	79
Backhoe	1	40	80	78
Welder	1	40	73	74
Paving				
Paver	2	50	85	77
Paving Equipment	2	50	85	77
Roller	2	20	85	80
Architectural Coating				
Air Compressor	1	40	80	78
Notes:				
¹ Acoustical use factor is the percentage of time each piece of equipment is operational during a typical workday. ² Spec 721.560 is the equipment noise level utilized by the RCNM program. ³ The “slow” response averages sound levels over 1-second increments. A “fast” response averages sound levels over 0.125-second increments. ⁴ Actual Measured is the average noise level measured of each piece of equipment during the Central Artery/Tunnel project in Boston, Massachusetts primarily during the 1990s. Source: Vista Environmental, <i>Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Project</i> ; April 4, 2024.				

Haul Trucks on Nearby Roads

Vehicle noise is a combination of the noise produced by the engine, exhaust and tires. The level of traffic noise depends on three primary factors (1) the volume of traffic, (2) the speed of traffic, and (3) the number of trucks in the flow of traffic. The proposed project would not alter the speed limit on any existing roadway so the proposed project’s potential offsite noise impacts have been focused on the noise impacts associated with the change of volume of traffic and the change in number of trucks in the traffic flow that would occur during the import of dirt to the project site.

Neither the General Plan nor the Municipal Code defines what constitutes a “substantial permanent increase to ambient noise levels”. As such, this impact analysis has utilized guidance from the Federal Transit Administration for a moderate impact that shows that the project contribution to the noise environment can range between 0 and 7 dB, which is dependent on the existing roadway noise levels.

According to Section 3.1.2 of the Norco General Plan Circulation Element, the City has designated truck routes throughout the City and truck deliveries are required to use the most direct route between the delivery location and closest designated truck route, which includes River Road in its entirety. As such, it is assumed that all haul trucks will enter and leave the project site directly onto River Road. The potential offsite haul truck noise impacts created during construction of the proposed project have been analyzed through utilization of the FHWA model and parameters. The proposed project’s potential offsite traffic noise impacts have been calculated through a comparison of the without project scenario to the With Project scenario, as shown in Table 4.13-5, Proposed Construction Related Haul Truck Noise Contributions to Nearby Homes.

**Table 4.13-5
Proposed Construction Related Haul Truck Noise Contributions to Nearby Homes**

Roadway	Segment	Without Project	With Haul Trucks	Project Contribution	Increase Threshold
Residential	80	67.5 dBA	67.6 dBA	+0.1	+1 dBA

Source: Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Project*; April 4, 2024.

Table 4.13-5 shows that the proposed project’s construction-related noise increases to the nearby homes created from the haul trucks importing dirt to the project site would not exceed the FTA’s allowable increase thresholds detailed above. Therefore, the vehicular traffic generated by construction of the proposed project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels. Impacts would be less than significant.

Off-Road Construction Equipment Operating Onsite

Noise impacts from off-road construction equipment associated with the proposed project would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, equipment location, sensitivity of nearby land uses, and the timing and duration of the construction activities. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are residents at the single-family homes located as near as 70 feet northwest of the project site. There are also single-family homes located as near as 100 feet to the southeast of the project site and as near as 120 feet to the southwest of the project site.

The General Plan Noise Element Policy 2.2.2a requires that new development projects near occupied residential areas to be evaluated for possible submittal of a construction noise reduction plan, Policy 2.2.2b requires that all construction equipment to be equipped with noise attenuation features that include mufflers and engine shrouds that are at least as effective as original manufacturer equipment, and Policy 2.2.2c requires the City to regulate the hours of operation for construction activities, including haul trucks operating on roads near sensitive land uses. It should be noted that Section 9.07.010(1) of the Municipal Code for Noise Regulations states that the Code is not intended to establish thresholds of significance of any analysis required by CEQA, that includes this Analysis. As such, no construction noise thresholds have been derived from the Municipal Code.

Mitigation Measure N-1 has been incorporated into this analysis in order for the proposed project to meet the requirements of Policy 2.2.2a that requires the submittal of a construction noise reduction plan. Mitigation Measure N-1 also addresses Policy 2.2.2.b by requiring all construction equipment to be equipped with mufflers and engine shrouds and addresses Policy 2.2.2c that requires limitation of when construction equipment and haul trucks may operate. As such, with implementation of Project Mitigation Measure N-1, the proposed project would be following the construction noise standards provided in General Plan Noise Element Policies 2.2.2a, 2.2.2b, and 2.2.2c.

However, the City construction noise standards do not provide any limits to the noise levels that may be created from construction activities and even with adherence to the City standards, the resultant construction noise levels may result in a significant substantial temporary noise increase to the nearby residents. Pursuant to *King and Gardiner Farms v. County of Kern (February 25, 2020) Cal.App.5th*, that requires CEQA noise analyses to provide evidence showing if the magnitude of an increase in noise created from construction activities would result in a significant impact. As such, this analysis has utilized Table 3.9 from the General Plan Noise Element that provides a correction for previous exposure and community attitudes 10 dBA for “Community aware that operation causing noise is very necessary and it will not continue indefinitely. This correction can be applied for an operation of limited duration and under emergency circumstances.”

Construction noise impacts to the nearby sensitive receptors have been calculated through use of the RCNM and the parameters and assumptions. Table 4.13-6, Construction Noise Levels at the Nearest Sensitive Receptors, shows the anticipated construction equipment per phase and the results.

Table 4.13-6 shows that the greatest noise impacts would occur during the grading phase, with noise levels as high as 66.7 dBA Leq at the nearest homes to the northwest, 61.0 dBA Leq at the nearest homes to the southeast, and 61.9 dBA Leq at the nearest homes to the southwest. Table 4.13-6 also shows that construction-related noise would exceed the existing ambient noise levels by up to 9.3 dBA at the homes to the southeast, which is below the ambient plus 10 dBA threshold detailed above. Therefore, through implementation of Project Design Feature 1, construction-related noise levels would not exceed any standards established in the General Plan or Noise Ordinance nor would construction activities create a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels from construction of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.

Table 4.13-6
Construction Noise Levels at the Nearest Sensitive Receptors

Construction Phase	Construction Noise Level (dBA Leq) at:		
	Nearest Homes to the Northwest ¹	Nearest Homes to the Southeast ²	Nearest Homes to the Southwest ³
Demolition	64.9	59.2	60.0
Site Preparation	66.0	60.3	61.2
Grading	66.7	61.0	61.9
Building Construction	65.4	59.7	60.6
Paving	60.0	54.3	55.2
Painting	52.1	46.4	47.2
Maximum Construction Noise Level	66.7	61.0	61.9
Existing Ambient Daytime Noise Level	58.1	51.7	63.2
Construction Noise Level Above Ambient	+8.6	+9.3	-1.3
Exceed Ambient Plus 10 dBA Threshold?⁴	No	No	No
Notes:			
¹ The nearest homes to the northwest are located as near as 600 feet from the center of the project site.			
² The nearest homes to the southeast are located as near as 650 feet from the center of the project site. In order to account for the existing 6-foot-high CMU wall, +5 dBA shielding added to the RCNM Model.			
³ The nearest homes to the southwest are located as near as 1,050 feet from the center of the project site.			
⁴ The +10 dBA ambient threshold obtained from Table 3.9 of the General Plan Noise Element.			
Source: Vista Environmental, <i>Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Project</i> ; April 4, 2024.			

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL NOISE IMPACTS

The proposed project would consist of the development of 68 single-family homes. Potential noise impacts associated with the operations of the proposed project would be from project-generated vehicular traffic on the nearby roadways. In addition, the proposed development would be adjacent to River Road and Bluff Street, which may create exterior and interior noise levels.

Roadway Vehicular Noise Impact to Nearby Sensitive Receptors

Vehicle noise is a combination of the noise produced by the engine, exhaust, and tires. The level of traffic noise depends on three primary factors (1) the volume of traffic, (2) the speed of traffic, and (3) the number of trucks in the flow of traffic.

Neither the General Plan nor the Municipal Code defines what constitutes a “substantial permanent increase to ambient noise levels.” As such, this impact analysis has utilized guidance from the Federal Transit Administration for a moderate impact that has been detailed below in [Table 4.13-7, *FTA Project Effects on Cumulative Noise Exposure*](#), that shows that a project contribution to the noise environment can range between 0 and 7 dB, which is dependent on the existing roadway noise levels.

Table 4.13-7
FTA Project Effects on Cumulative Noise Exposure

Existing Noise Exposure (dBA Leq or Ldn)	Allowable Noise Impact Exposure dBA Leq or Ldn		
	Project Only	Combined	Noise Exposure Increase
45	51	52	+7
50	53	55	+5
55	55	58	+3
60	57	62	+2
65	60	66	+1
70	64	71	+1
75	65	75	0

Notes: Source: Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Residential Project*; April 4, 2024.

Although the proposed project is not under the jurisdiction of the FTA, the *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, prepared by the FTA, September 2018, is the only guidance document from a government agency that has defined what constitutes a significant noise impact from implementing a project. The FTA standards are based on extensive studies by the FTA and other governmental agencies on the human effects and reaction to noise and a summary of the FTA findings are provided in [Table 4.13-7](#).

The potential offsite traffic noise impacts created by the on-going operations of the proposed project have been analyzed through utilization of the FHWA model. The proposed project’s potential offsite traffic noise impacts have been analyzed and are discussed below.

The proposed project’s potential offsite traffic noise impacts have been calculated through a comparison of an existing scenario to the existing with project scenario. The results of this comparison are shown in [Table 4.13-8](#), *Project Traffic Noise Contributions to Nearby Homes*.

Table 4.13-8
Project Traffic Noise Contributions to Nearby Homes

Roadway	Segment	dBA CNEL at Nearest Receptor ¹			Increase Threshold ²
		Existing	Existing Plus Project	Project Contribution	
Bluff Street	Northeast of River Road	53.2	53.4	+0.2	+5 dBA
River Road	Southeast of Bluff Street	67.5	67.6	+0.1	+1 dBA

Notes:
¹ Distance to nearest residential use shown in Table G of the *Noise Impact Analysis*, does not consider existing noise barriers.
² Increase Threshold based on the significance thresholds defined in the General Plan, which is derived from the threshold of human perception.
Source: Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Residential Project*; April 4, 2024.

[Table 4.13-8](#) shows that the proposed project’s permanent roadway noise increases to the nearby sensitive receptors from the generation of additional vehicular traffic would not exceed the allowable increase thresholds detailed above. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a substantial

permanent increase in ambient noise levels for the existing conditions. Impacts would be less than significant.

Roadway Noise Impacts to Proposed Homes

The proposed project’s permanent roadway noise increases to the nearby sensitive receptors from the generation of additional vehicular traffic would not exceed the allowable increase thresholds detailed above. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels. Long-term operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed Onsite Noise Sources

The proposed project would consist of the development of a residential community with 68 single-family homes. General Plan Noise Element shows that the “Normally Acceptable” exterior noise level for new single-family homes is 60 dBA CNEL or lower. In addition, General Plan Noise Element Policy 2.3.1 details that the interior noise level of new homes in the City should be 45 dBA or lower.

It is anticipated that the primary source of noise impacts to the project site will be traffic noise from River Road that is adjacent to the southwest side of the project site and from Bluff Street that is adjacent to the northwest side of the project site. The anticipated exterior noise levels have been calculated for backyards that are adjacent to River Road and Bluff Street for representative lots and the results are shown below in Table 4.13-9, Operational Noise Levels at the Nearby Residential Uses. Table 4.13-9 also shows the anticipated interior noise levels at the proposed homes. The exterior to interior noise reduction (attenuation) rate of 20 dB was obtained from the County of Riverside General Plan, December 8, 2015, since the City of Norco General Plan does not provide an attenuation rate to utilize.

Table 4.13-9
Operational Noise Levels at the Nearby Residential Uses

Lot Number	Roadway	Exterior Backyard Noise Level ¹ (dBA CNEL)	Interior Noise Levels		Exceed 60 dBA Exterior or 45 dBA Interior Threshold?
			Floor	Noise Level ²	
57	River Road	57	First	35	No/No
			Second	41	No/No
58	River Road	56	First	33	No/No
			Second	39	No/No
60	Bluff Street	39	First	15	No/No
			Second	21	No/No
64	Bluff Street	42	First	19	No/No
			Second	24	No/No
68	Bluff Street	42	First	19	No/No
			Second	24	No/No

Notes:

1 As shown in the Wall and Fence Plan (see Figure 3 of Appendix H), the exterior backyard noise calculations account for the noise reduction provided by a 6-foot-high concrete masonry unit (CMU) wall at the rear of the backyards that are adjacent to River Road and Bluff Street.

2 Based on a 20 dB exterior to interior noise reduction rate (County of Riverside, 2015)

Source: Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Residential Project*; April 4, 2024.

Table 4.13-9 shows that the noise levels at all analyzed residential backyards would be within the “Normally Acceptable” noise standard of 60 dBA CNEL. The interior noise levels of all analyzed homes would be within the City’s 45 dBA CNEL interior noise standard. Therefore, the onsite operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

As shown above, implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant temporary construction noise impacts or long-term operational noise impacts.

Project Design Feature NOI-1 has been incorporated into the proposed project to meet requirements of Policy 2.2.2a that requires the submittal of a construction noise reduction plan. It also addresses Policy 2.2.2b by requiring all construction equipment to be equipped with mufflers and engine shrouds and addresses Policy 2.2.2c that requires limitation of when construction equipment and haul trucks may operate. As such, with implementation of Project Design Feature NOI-1, the proposed project would be following the construction noise standards provided in General Plan Noise Element Policies 2.2.2a, 2.2.2b, and 2.2.2c.

PDF-NOI-1: Prior to the issuance of the grading permit, the project applicant shall submit a construction related noise mitigation plan to the City for review and approval. The plan shall depict the locations of where construction equipment will operate on the project site and how the noise from the construction equipment will be mitigated during construction of the project, through use of the following methods:

1. Restriction of use of construction equipment and haul truck operations between 7:00 PM and 7:00 AM, Monday through Friday and between 7:00 PM and 8:00 AM on Saturday and Sunday, unless specified by permit for activities such as pouring of concrete that may need to occur outside of these hours;
2. Placement of temporary noise attenuation fences around stationary equipment (i.e., air compressors and generators) that are used in close proximity to sensitive receptors;
3. Placement of equipment storage and staging areas as far away as practical from sensitive receptors;
4. Limitation of construction equipment idling time to less than 5 minutes per occurrence; and,
5. Require the use of construction equipment noise attenuation features that include mufflers and engine shrouds that are at least as effective as the original manufacturer equipment.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT NOI-2: Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?

The proposed project would not result in the generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels. Ground-borne vibrations consist of rapidly fluctuating motions within the ground that have an average motion of zero. The effects of ground-borne vibrations typically only cause a

nuisance to people, but at extreme vibration levels, damage to buildings may occur. Although ground-borne vibration can be felt outdoors, it is typically only an annoyance to people indoors where the associated effects of the shaking of a building can be notable. Ground-borne noise is an effect of ground-borne vibration and only exists indoors since it is produced from noise radiated from the motion of the walls and floors of a room and may also consist of the rattling of windows or dishes on shelves. One method used to quantify vibration amplitude is peak particle velocity (PPV) known which is the maximum instantaneous peak in vibration velocity, typically given in inches per second.

Title 14 of the California Administrative Code Section 15000 requires that all state and local agencies implement the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, which requires the analysis of exposure of persons to excessive groundborne vibration. However, no statute has been adopted by the state that quantifies the level at which excessive groundborne vibration occurs.

The *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*, prepared by Caltrans, April 2020, provides practical guidance to Caltrans engineers, planners, and consultants who must address vibration issues associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of Caltrans projects. However, this manual is also used as a reference point by many lead agencies and CEQA practitioners throughout California, as it provides numeric thresholds for vibration impacts. Thresholds are established for continuous (construction-related) and transient (transportation-related) sources of vibration, which found that the human response becomes distinctly perceptible at 0.25 inch per second PPV for transient sources and 0.04 inch per second PPV for continuous sources. According to the FTA, fragile buildings can be exposed to ground-borne vibration levels of 0.3 inches per second without experiencing structural damage.

SHORT-TERM TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION VIBRATION IMPACTS

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the equipment used on the site. The operation of construction equipment causes ground vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. Buildings in the vicinity of the construction site respond to these vibrations with varying results ranging from no perceptible effects at the low levels to damage at the highest levels. Table 4.13-10, *Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment*, gives approximate vibration levels for particular construction activities. The data in Table 4.13-10 provides a reasonable estimate for a wide range of soil conditions.

The construction activities for the proposed project are anticipated to include demolition of the milking barn, retail outlet, barns/sheds, and dairy related features on the project site, site preparation and grading of up to 27.57 acres of the 37.84-acre project site, building construction of 68 single-family homes, paving of the onsite roads, sidewalks, and hardscapes. Vibration impacts from construction activities associated with the proposed project would typically be created from the operation of heavy off-road equipment. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are residents at the single-family homes located as near as 70 feet northwest of the project site.

Since neither the Municipal nor the General Plan provide a quantifiable vibration threshold for temporary construction activities, guidance from the *Transportation and Construction-Induced Vibration Guidance Manual*, prepared by Caltrans, April 2020, has been utilized, which defines the threshold of perception from transient sources such as off-road construction equipment at 0.25 inch per second peak particle velocity (PPV).

Table 4.13-10
Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Peak Particle Velocity (inches/second)	Approximate Vibration Level (Lv) at 25 feet
Pile driver (impact)	Upper Range Typical	112 104
Pile driver (sonic)	Upper Range Typical	105 93
Clam shovel drop (slurry wall)		94
Vibratory Roller		94
Hoe Ram		87
Large bulldozer		87
Caisson drill		87
Loaded trucks		86
Jackhammer		79
Small bulldozer		58

Source: Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Residential Project*; April 4, 2024.

The primary source of vibration during construction would be from the operation of a bulldozer. Shown in [Table 4.13-10](#), a large bulldozer would create a vibration level of 0.089 inch per second PPV at 25 feet. Based on typical propagation rates, the vibration level at the nearest offsite home (70 feet to the northwest) would be 0.029 inch per second PPV. The vibration level at the nearest offsite home would be below the 0.25 inch per second PPV threshold detailed above. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL VIBRATION IMPACTS

The proposed project would consist of the development of 68 single-family homes. The on-going operation of the proposed project would not include the operation of any known vibration sources other than typical onsite vehicle operations for a residential development.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT NOI-3: 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?

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, the proposed project would not excessively expose people residing or working in the project area. The nearest airport is Corona Municipal Airport that is located as near as 1.5 miles south of the project site. The project site is located outside of the 60 dBA CNEL noise contours of this airport. Therefore, the

proposed homes would not be exposed to excessive aircraft noise and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.13.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *City of Norco General Plan Noise Element*. March 15, 2000.

City of Norco, *Norco Municipal Code A Codification of General Ordinances of the City of Norco, California*. March 5, 2003.

Vista Environmental, *Noise Impact Analysis JD Ranch Residential*, April 4, 2024.

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4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

4.14.1 INTRODUCTION

This section discusses the potential population and housing impacts associated with the proposed project. Information in this section is based on data from the City of Norco General Plan Housing Element and Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) regional growth forecasts.

4.14.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. SCAG is the federally recognized metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for this region, which encompasses over 38,000 square miles. It serves as a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG develops, refines, and maintains SCAG’s regional and small area socio-economic forecasting/allocation models. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and state law. Additionally, SCAG publishes every two years a Local Profile Report for cities within the SCAG region. SCAG Regional Forecasts are shown in [Table 4.14-1, SCAG Regional Forecasts](#).

Table 4.14-1
SCAG Regional Forecasts

Unit	2020	2030	2035	2045
Population	19,517,731	20,821,171	21,443,006	22,503,899
Households	6,333,458	6,902,821	7,170,110	7,633,451
Employment	8,695,427	9,303,627	9,566,384	10,048,822
Source: Southern California Association of Governments, Connect SoCal Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Adopted September 3, 2020.				

SCAG REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The California State Housing Element Law enacted in 1980 requires SCAG and other regional councils of government in California to determine the existing and projected regional housing needs for persons at all income levels. SCAG is also required by law to determine each jurisdiction’s share of the regional housing need in the six-county southern California region. The intent of Senate Bill (SB) 375 and the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process is to create a better balance of jobs and housing in communities, ensure the availability of decent affordable housing for all income groups and achieve sustainability through long term strategic land use planning. SCAG takes the lead in overseeing the assessment by identifying measures to gauge housing demand and comparing those numbers against socioeconomic factors throughout the region. The RHNA consists of two measurements: 1) existing need for housing, and 2) future need for housing.

California’s Housing Element law requires local governments to make plans to adequately address their share of existing and projected population growth, taking into consideration affordability of available and future housing. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

enforces the State Housing Element Law by requiring Housing Elements as part of every city’s General Plan.

The City of Norco General Plan 2021-2029 Housing Element was adopted in October 2021 for the 2021-2029 planning period. For the 2021-2029 planning period, the City of Norco (City) was allocated a total of 454 residential units, including 145 units affordable to very low income, 85 units affordable to low income, 82 units affordable to moderate income and 142 units affordable to above moderate- income households.

JOBS-HOUSING RATIO

Based on the City of Norco’s share of California’s and the region’s employment growth, migration and immigration trends, and birth rates, SCAG projects that population, housing, and employment will grow at an increasing rate in Norco. These projections are summarized in [Table 4.14-2, SCAG Growth Projections for the City of Norco](#). As shown in [Table 4.14-1](#), based on SCAG’s growth projections, the City of Norco is projected to be an employment-rich community, with the number of jobs increasing at a faster rate than the number of households.

Table 4.14-2
SCAG Growth Projections for the City of Norco

Unit	2016	2020	2035	2040	2045
Population	27,100	28,600	31,800	32,100	27,300
Households	7,100	8,000	9,100	9,200	7,100
Employment	15,200	19,000	24,800	25,700	22,100
Employment/Housing Ratio	2.14	2.38	2.73	2.79	3.11

Sources: SCAG, 2016-2040 RTP/SCS Final Growth Forecast by Jurisdiction, Page 3. 2016.
SCAG, Connect SoCal Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report. Adopted September 3, 2020.

City of Norco Community Profile

According to the California Department of Finance (DOF) 2023 Population and Housing Estimates, the population of Norco is 25,037 persons. Norco represents approximately 1.1% of the total population of Riverside County, which is estimated by DOF to be 2,439,234 in January 2023. Between 2020 and 2023, the City’s population decreased by 1,622 residents, a decrease of 6%. Specifically, the DOF population in 2020 was 26,659 persons, in 2021 was 24,680 persons, in 2022 was 25,035 persons, and 2023 was 25,037 persons. Between 2023 and 2040, the City’s population is estimated to grow by 7,063 persons, an increase of approximately 28% over 2023; refer to [Table 4.14-3, City of Norco’s Estimated Population Growth](#).

Table 4.14-3
City of Norco’s Estimated Population Growth

Unit	2010	2020	2030	2040
Population	27,063	27,564	31,800	32,100

Source: City Norco Housing Element 2021-2029 Planning Period.

The Census defines a household as all persons occupying a housing unit. Families are a subset of households and include all persons living together who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption; refer to [Table 4.14-4, Household Characteristics](#). Single households include persons living alone in housing units, but do not include persons in group quarters such as assisted living, convalescent homes, dormitories, or rehabilitation facilities.

Table 4.14-4
Household Characteristics

Total Households	Average Household Size	Family Households	Non-Family Households
7,472	3.34	5,420	1,699
Source: City Norco Housing Element 2021-2029 Planning Period.			

4.14.3 REGULATORY SETTING

REGIONAL – SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. SCAG is the federally recognized metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for this region, which encompasses over 38,000 square miles. It serves as a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG develops, refines, and maintains SCAG’s regional and small area socio-economic forecasting/allocation models. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and state law.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element is one of the seven General Plan elements mandated by the State of California. Sections 65580 to 65590 of the California Government Code contain the legislative mandate for the housing element. State law requires that the City of Norco Housing Element consist of an identification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs and a statement of goals, policies, quantified objectives, financial resources, and scheduled programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing (Section 65583). In addition, the housing element is required to identify adequate sites for housing, including rental housing, factory-built housing, and mobile homes, and shall make adequate provisions for the existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community. The City of Norco General Plan 2021-2029 Housing Element was adopted in October 2021 for the 2021-2029 planning period.

4.14.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **PH-1:** 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)?
- **PH-2:** Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

4.14.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT PH-1: Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The proposed project would construct 68 single-family dwellings. Based on the City of Norco average household size of 3.34 persons per household, the project is estimated to have 227 residents. This analysis assumes that the project would attract new residents who do not currently reside in Norco.

CONSTRUCTION

Construction of the proposed project would require contractors and laborers. Due to the size of the proposed project, the City expects that the supply of general construction labor would be available from the local and regional labor pool. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

POPULATION

According to the Norco 2021-2029 Housing Element, the City of Norco's population is expected to reach 32,100 residents by 2040, which is an increase of 7,063 residents, compared to the DOF 2023 estimate of 25,037 residents. The proposed project is expected to add 227 new residents, approximately less than 1% of the 2040 population projection in the Housing Element.

The project site is an infill development site surrounded by existing roadways and infrastructure. The proposed project would not involve the construction of any offsite roadways or infrastructure that would indirectly facilitate additional growth within the project area. The project would be consistent with the City of Norco General Plan Housing Element Policy 4.7 which encourages residential infill within existing neighborhoods to better utilize existing services and utilities and to reduce infrastructure development costs. Therefore, the project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly and potential impacts would be less than significant.

HOUSING

According to the City of Norco 2021-2029 Housing Element, 454 housing units are needed to meet regional housing needs. The proposed project would provide 15% of these housing units. The project site is surrounded by single-family homes. As shown previously in Table 4.14-4, Household Characteristics, Family Households make up the majority of housing stock in the City. The proposed project would be targeted for Family Households and would increase the housing stock for Family Household opportunities in the City. Additionally, as previously indicated, the increased housing from implementation of the General Plan Amendment would be consistent with the goals of California Senate Bill 330, "The Housing Crisis Act of 2019," which establishes a statewide housing emergency and the need for an estimated 180,000 additional homes annually to keep up with population growth

within California. Because the proposed project would help the City meet its housing needs requirements, impacts would be less than significant.

EMPLOYMENT

The proposed project would not add any permanent employment; however, construction of the proposed project would provide short-term employment for contractors and laborers which would be available from the local and regional labor pool. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

JOBS-HOUSING RATIO

The jobs-housing ratio for the City is employment-rich (2.38 jobs per dwelling unit; refer to [Table 4.14-2](#)). Although the proposed project would increase the jobs-housing ratio by adding 68 additional homes, the proposed jobs-housing ratio for the proposed project would be 2.35, which would provide more housing units in a city with a high number of jobs. Therefore, project implementation would have no impact on employment.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT PH-2: Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The proposed project would not displace any people or existing housing that would require replacement housing. The existing house on the project site (Lot 69) would be retained but is not a part of the proposed project and no changes/improvements would occur to the existing structure. The proposed project would not displace any people/existing housing nor require replacement housing. The project would construct 68 new single-family homes. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: No Impact.

4.14.6 REFERENCES

California Department of Finance. 2023 Norco Population, [<https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/%20demographics/estimates/e-4-population-estimates-for-cities-counties-and-the-state-2021-2023-with-2020-census-benchmark/>]. Accessed on April 8, 2024.

City of Norco, *General Plan 2021-2029 Housing Element*. Adopted October 6, 2021.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), 2016-2040 RTP/SCS Final Growth Forecast by Jurisdiction, Page 3. 2016. [https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2016_2040rtpscsc_finalgrowthforecastbyjurisdiction.pdf?1605576071]. Accessed February 13, 2024.

Southern California Association of Governments, *Connect SoCal Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report*. Adopted September 3, 2020.

Southern California Association of Governments, *Profile of the City of Norco*. May 2019.

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4.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

4.15.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides a discussion and analyses of public services that may be affected by the development of the proposed project. Public agencies that would serve the proposed project are identified and evaluated for potential impacts that could occur because of project implementation. Public service providers were asked to provide information on their capability to serve the proposed project. The impact analyses below include a summary of agency responses. The letters received are provided in [Appendix I \(Public Service Correspondence\)](#).

4.15.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

FIRE PROTECTION

The Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) provides fire and emergency services to residents of unincorporated areas of Riverside County and to 20 partner cities, which includes the City of Norco. RCFD also responds to eight additional cities through mutual and automatic aid agreements. RCFD provides full-service municipal and wildland fire protection, pre-hospital emergency medical response by paramedics and emergency medical technicians, technical rescue services, and response to hazardous materials discharges. RCFD consists of four operational support divisions: Conservation Camps, Emergency Command Center, Hemet Ryan Air Attack Base, and Pre-Fire Management.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) identifies the project site as not located in a Very High Fire Severity Zone; refer to [Figure 4.20-1, Regional Fire Hazard Severity Zones](#). The nearest Very High Fire Severity Zone is located approximately 1.5 miles southwesterly of the project, as shown in [Figure 4.20-1](#). As shown in [Table 4.15-1, City of Norco Fire Station Locations](#), there are three fire stations in the City of Norco. The nearest fire station is Station 57, located approximately 0.75 miles northeast from the project site. In 2021, RCFD responded to 4,291 calls for service in the City of Norco, of which 1,408 were responded from Station 14, 1,403 from Station 57, and 1,480 from Station 47.

Table 4.15-1
City of Norco Fire Station Locations

Station Number	Address	Location from Project Site	Distance (Miles)	Staffing
Station 14	3902 Hillside Avenue Norco, CA 92860	East on Bluff Street toward Vine Avenue, left onto Corydon Avenue, left onto Hillside Avenue.	1.95	1-Three Person Type 1 Engine
Station 47	3367 Corydon Avenue Norco, CA 92860	East on Bluff Street toward Vine Avenue, left onto Vine Avenue, left onto Corydon Avenue.	3.13	1-Three Person Type 1 Engine
Station 57	1511 Hammer Avenue Norco, CA 92860	Southwest onto Bluff Street, left onto River Road, left onto N Lincoln Avenue, left onto Hamner Avenue.	0.75	1-Three Person Type 1 Engine

Presently, RCFD is evaluating target response times, generally for development projects, 4-minute response times are targeted. Responses to the project site would include 5 minutes from Station 57, 9 minutes from Station 14, and 12 minutes from Station 47. At this time, there are no plans to expand existing or construct new fire protection facilities.

POLICE PROTECTION

Norco contracts with the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department (RCSD) for law enforcement protection services. The RCSD is the second largest Sheriff’s Office in California. The adopted County of Riverside Fiscal Year 2022-2023 budget funds 4,849 RCSD positions. RCSD has 12 Sheriff stations and manages five correctional facilities, conducts Coroner-Public Administrator duties, and provides court services (Riverside County 2021).

The Sheriff’s Jurupa Valley Station is located in Jurupa Valley at 7477 Mission Boulevard, and its substation, which serves Norco, is located in City Hall at 2870 Clark Avenue in Norco. The Jurupa Valley Station is commanded by a Captain and consists of a patrol function and an investigative function providing contract police services for the cities of Norco, Eastvale, and Jurupa Valley, as well as the unincorporated areas of eight cities (RCSD 2020). The Norco Sheriff’s Office is 1.5 miles east of the project site and would serve the project.

The City of Norco has a contract with RCSD for law enforcement services. The City has one Sheriff’s Lieutenant assigned as the Police Chief, two Sheriff’s Sergeant who supervise the operation, one city-employed Executive Secretary to perform clerical and administrative tasks as well as help coordinate Norco Citizens Patrol, one part-time city-employed Community Service Officer (CSO) to maintain the public lobby operation from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Monday through Thursday, eight full-time Deputy Sheriff’s assigned to patrol providing 48 hours of patrol staffing per 24-hour period, three Deputy Sheriff’s assigned to the Special Enforcement Team (providing crime prevention, event planning, and quality of life), three Deputy Sheriff’s assigned to Traffic Enforcement, and four civilian Community Service Officers to assist patrol operations and logistics. The contract is funded via the General Fund and a supplemental law enforcement fund (Norco 2023).

SCHOOL SERVICES

The project site is served by the Corona-Norco Unified School District (CNUSD), which is the largest school district in Riverside County and the ninth largest school district in California. Table 4.15-2, Existing Student Enrollment and Capacity, shows the 2021/2022 existing student enrollment, student capacity and existing seating capacity for all elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools within the CNUSD.

Table 4.15-2
Existing Student Enrollment and Capacity

School Type	2021/2022 Capacity	2021/2022 Enrollment	Existing Seat Surplus
Elementary	27,181	25,887	1,294
Middle School	8,932	7,953	979
High School	16,604	17,498	0
Total K-12 Enrollment	52,717	51,338	2,273
Source: Special District Financing & Administration, <i>Corona-Norco Unified School District Developer Fee Justification Study</i> ; April 12, 2022.			

As shown in [Table 4.15-3, *Project Area School Sites*](#), there are nine school sites within the City of Norco that are less than four miles from the project site. Based on the Corona-Norco School Finder, the schools assigned to the project site are Highland Elementary School, Norco Intermediate School and Norco High School.

Table 4.15-3
Project Area School Sites

School	Address	Distance to School Site	2021/2022 Enrollment	Seating Capacity
Elementary School				
Highland Elementary	2301 Alhambra Street	1.8 miles	539	675
Middle Schools				
Norco Intermediate	2711 Temescal Avenue	2.6 miles	720	900
High Schools				
Norco High School	2065 Temescal Avenue	2.4 miles	2,063	2,600
Specialty School				
Victress Bower School	1250 W. Parkridge Avenue	1.2 miles	66	70
Source: Corona-Norco Unified School District, Correspondence with Nicole Lavallee, Facilities Analyst. May 16, 2022.				

As shown in [Table 4.15-3, *Project Area School Sites*](#), all elementary, middle, and high schools near the project site have available seating. Additionally, the Corona-Norco Unified School District assesses a Level I developer fee on all new housing projects at a rate of \$4.79 per square foot to help fund the maintenance and construction of new and existing facilities. Currently, the Corona-Norco Unified School District has capital facilities projects at Highland Elementary that include gym upgrades, updating pool, and field lighting. Modernization projects were recently completed at Norco Intermediate.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The City of Norco Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services offers a wide range of recreational and leisure programs, services, and activities for the citizens of Norco and the surrounding communities. According to the *Norco 2050 General Plan Existing Conditions Analysis Report*, there are over 500 acres of park and open space in Norco with the City owning and maintaining 17 neighborhood and community parks, sports fields, recreational facilities, equestrian staging areas, equestrian arenas, and the Ingalls Event Center. The Silverlakes Sports Park is leased to the Balboa Management Group. The City of Norco Municipal Code Section 17.14.06 (Formula for Dedication of Land) states park dedication is 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents. Norco currently maintains a parkland/open space to-resident ratio of approximately 65 acres per 1,000 residents, which is higher than the average ratio for low-density cities of 24 acres per 1,000 residents (The Trust for Public Land 2017). A listing of park sites and facilities and their distance to the project site are shown in [Table 4.15-4, *Norco Park and Recreational Facilities*](#).

Table 4.15-4
Norco Park and Recreational Facilities

Park	Hours of Operation	Acreeage	Facilities	Distance from Project Site
Basin Park 3015 Dapplegray Lane	7AM-Dusk	8.75	Horse arena.	3.2 miles
Clark Field 1740 Detroit Street	7AM-10PM	2.0	Adult ballfields, youth ballfields, lighted ballfields, and accessible for handicapped	2.3 miles
Community Center Park 3900 Acacia Avenue	7AM-10PM	10.5	Picnic tables, gymnasium, tot lots, restrooms, adult ballfields, youth ballfields, lighted ballfields, volleyball court, meeting room, multi-purpose, kitchen facility, basketball court, and accessible for handicapped.	2.14 miles
Corydon Staging Area 3300 Corydon Avenue	7AM-Dusk	5.8	Picnic table, restrooms, and a horse arena.	0.73 miles
George Ingalls Event Center 3737 Crestview Drive	Permit	97	Restrooms, horse arena, 4-H shelters, fairgrounds, kitchen facility, special facility, accessible for handicapped and holding corrals.	4.0 miles
Hawks Crest Park 276 Gulf Stream Lane	7AM-Dusk	1.18	Picnic tables, tot lots, horse arena and holding corrals.	3.6 miles
Kips Korner Park 2455 Kips Korner Road	7AM-Dusk	2	Picnic tables, tot lots, tennis courts and accessible for handicapped.	0.75 miles
Makin/Shearer Sports Complex 3364 Western Avenue	Permit	22	Picnic tables, restrooms, adult ballfields, youth ballfields, lighted ballfields, football fields, soccer fields and accessible for handicapped.	0.74 miles
Neal Snipes Park 1885 Fifth Street	7AM-Dusk	15	Picnic tables, covered shelters, group picnic shelter, tot lots, restrooms, exercise course, accessible for handicapped and holding corrals.	1.7 miles
Norco Hills Park 913 Harness Lane	7AM-10PM	1.8	Picnic tables, covered shelters, tot lots, horse arena, accessible for handicapped and holding corrals.	2.9 miles
Norco Ridge Ranch Park 460 Cavaletti Lane	7AM-Dusk	3	Picnic tables, tot lots, restrooms, horse arena and holding corrals.	3.2 miles
Pacer Park 3307 Morgan Drive	7AM-Dusk	1.7	Picnic tables, restrooms, horse arena and accessible for handicapped.	0.54 miles
Parmenter Park 2760 Reservoir Drive	7AM-10PM	5	Picnic tables, covered shelters, tot lots, restrooms, adult ballfields, youth ballfields, lighted ballfields and accessible for handicapped.	2.45 miles

Park	Hours of Operation	Acreage	Facilities	Distance from Project Site
Pikes Peak Park 97 Sixth Street	7AM-10PM	8.4	Picnic tables, covered shelters, group picnic shelter, tot lots, adult ballfields, horseshoe pits, basketball court, accessible for handicapped, and holding corrals.	4.1 miles
River Trails Park 4645 Hamner Avenue	Permit	277	Special facility.	2.45 miles
Silverlakes Sports Park 5555 Hamner Avenue (Leased to Balboa Management Group)	Permit	130	Regional sports complex with 24 soccer fields, four LED synthetic fields, five equestrian arenas, 1,500 horse stalls, 10,000-person concert facility, restaurant, and private banquet facility.	3.0 miles
Sundance Park 4047 Sundance Lane	7AM-Dusk	1.5	Picnic tables, covered shelters, tot lots, restrooms, basketball court, accessible for handicapped and holding corrals.	Adjacent to Site
Ted Brooks Park 2770 Vine Street	7AM-Dusk	2	Horse arena, accessible for handicapped and holding corrals.	0.14 miles

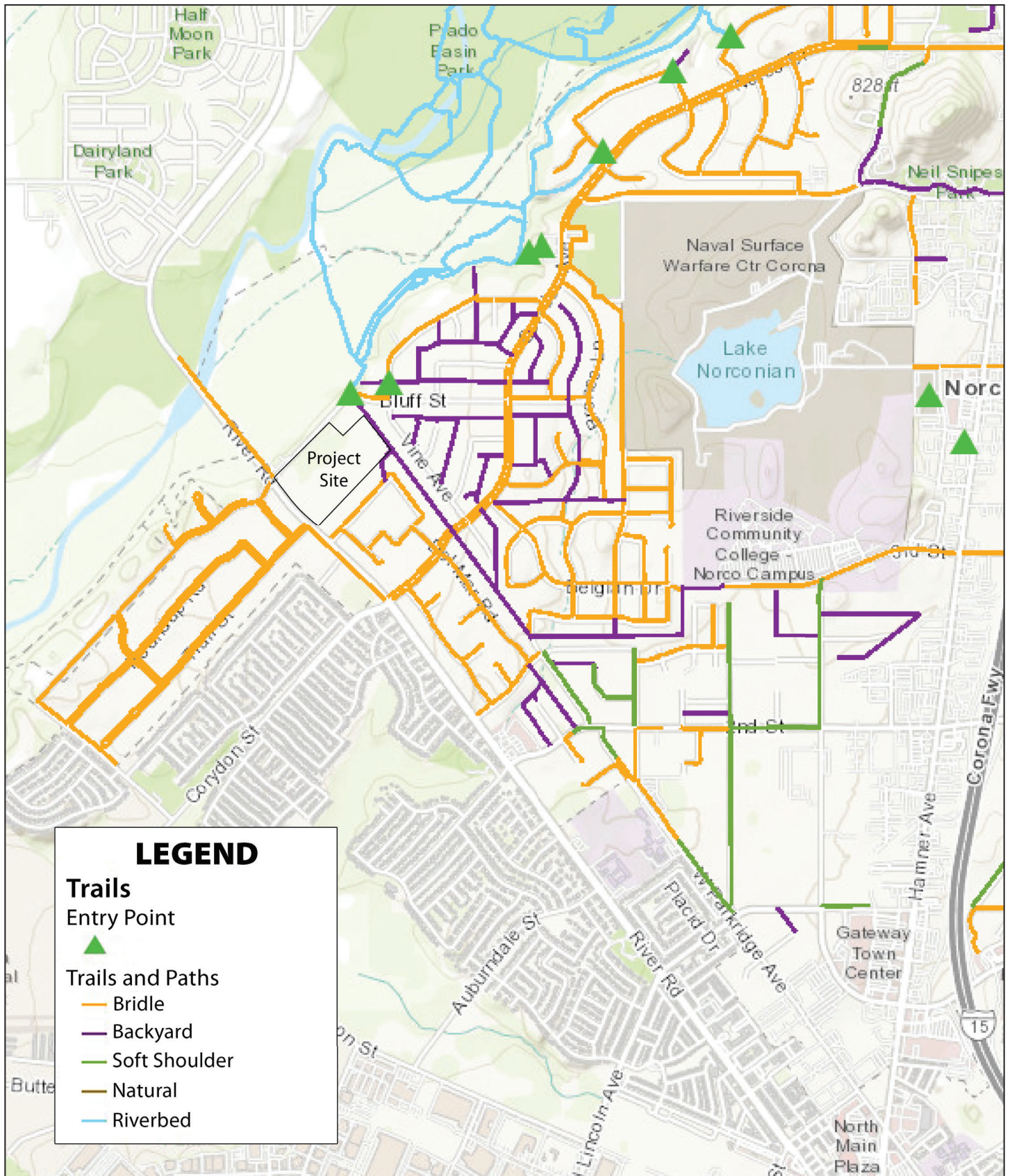
Source: City of Norco Community Services, *City of Norco Parks Guide*; February 2024.

Equestrian Trail

The equestrian and animal-keeping lifestyle is a key characteristic of the City of Norco. In upholding the City’s vision as “Horse Town USA”, the City has established an elaborate pedestrian/equestrian trail network of nearly 104 miles as of 2018. The City’s Comprehensive Trail Master Plan (2018a) provides design and maintenance standards for the City’s pedestrian and equestrian trails to promote development of the alternative recreational transportation modes. As shown in [Figure 4.15-1, *City of Norco Trails Map*](#), within the vicinity of the project site are Bridle Trails located along River Road and throughout the residential areas south and west of the project site. Additionally, Backyard Trails are located between existing residential uses and the eastern boundary of the project site. A trail entry point is located at Bluff Street.

LIBRARY FACILITIES

The 10,400 square-foot Norco Public Library is part of the Riverside County Library system and is located at 3240 Hamner Avenue, approximately 1.75 miles east of the project site. The Riverside County Library System has 35 branches, two bookmobiles, and a museum (Riverside County Library System 2020).



Source: City of Norco Parks and Facilities Department, Interactive Trail Map; Accessed April 19, 2022.



4.15.3 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9, California Code of Regulations)

The California Fire Code incorporates the Uniform Fire Code (UFC) with necessary California amendments. This Code prescribes regulations consistent with nationally recognized good practices for the safeguarding, to a reasonable degree, of life and property from the hazards of fire explosion. It also addresses dangerous conditions arising from the storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials and devices; conditions hazardous to life or property in the use or occupancy of buildings or premises; and provisions to assist emergency response personnel.

California Building Code

The 2016 California Building Code (CBC) became effective January 1, 2017, including Part 9 of Title 24, the California Fire Code. Section 701A.3.2 of the CBC requires that new buildings located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone within State Responsibility Areas, any Local Agency Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area designated by the enforcing agency for which an application for a building permit is submitted, comply with all sections of the Chapter.

California Health and Safety Code (Sections 13000 et seq.)

This Code establishes State fire regulations, including regulations for building standards (also set forth in the CBC), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire suppression training.

Government Code Section 66477 (Quimby Act)

The Quimby Act (Government Code Section 66477) allows local governments to require developers to dedicate land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees to fund parkland development. The Quimby Act has a standard of 3.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The City requires five acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.

California Government Code Section 65995 (California Government Code, Title 7, Chapter 4.9)

California Government Code Section 65995 authorizes school districts to collect impact fees from developers of new residential and commercial/industrial building space. Section 65995 was established under the School Facilities Act of 1986 and refined and amended by the Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998 (SB 50) to provide further guidance and restrictions on fee limits and fee types. The maximum fees authorized under SB 50 apply to zone changes, general plan amendments, zoning permits and subdivisions. The payment of school impact fees by developers are deemed to provide full and complete mitigation of school facilities impacts, notwithstanding any contrary provisions in CEQA or other State or local laws. The Corona-Norco Unified School District determines fees annually in accordance with California Government Code Section 65995.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

SAFETY ELEMENT

The following are relevant goals and policies from the City of Norco General Plan Safety Element:

GOAL 2.3: Fire Hazard Safety.

Policy 2.3.1: Fire Safety. The City shall maintain adequate fire protection in both urban and hillside areas through the enforcement of the latest fire codes, encouraging cooperation between the fire department, planning, and building divisions, and coordinating with neighboring fire departments.

Policy 2.3.1a: Coordinate with other fire protection agencies to provide adequate levels of fire protection throughout the General Plan Area, through a combination of both aggressive prevention and suppression activities.

Policy 2.3.1b: Pursue mutual response agreements between fire districts and departments. These agreements should provide equal and reciprocal benefits and enhance the ability of local entities to provide levels of adequate fire protection.

Policy 2.3.1c: The minimum fire flow standard for low density residential construction should be 1,000 gallons of water per minute.

Policy 2.3.1f: Endeavor to meet and maintain adequate fire response time for all residents and businesses.

Policy 2.3.1j: The City Fire Department should provide input to the Planning Division for all developments that require site plan or subdivision review prior to hearings before official commissions or the City Council. Street and driveway widths shall be adequate to provide access to sites and buildings shall be configured to provide adequate sufficient clearances for fire suppression and other emergency access needs.

Policy 2.5.2: Police Service. The City shall endeavor to provide a safe, low-crime environment through neighborhood watch programs, citizen patrols, and ensuring adequate police response times.

Policy 2.5.2a: Endeavor to provide a minimum response time of 5 minutes on all priority 1 calls and 12 minutes on all priority 2 calls. Priority 1 calls include those of a life-threatening nature such as: robbery in progress, accident involving bodily injury, death-threatening situation, a person unable to breathe, and violent crimes in process. Priority 2 calls include those that are not life threatening such as: burglary past, petty theft, shoplifting.

Policy 2.5.3: Security Design Program. The City will work to reduce crime potential in the urban environment by making sure that any input regarding crime-reduction strategies from the Planning Division and the Sherriff's Department are considered in all development plans.

Policy 2.5.3a: Through zoning, subdivision and building regulations, and environmental assessment practices, the City should encourage development that will increase or better ensure the public's safety.

Policy 2.5.3b: Encourage and implement appropriate utilization of defensible space design concepts in new developments.

Policy 2.5.3c: Encourage community crime prevention measures, such as building security hardware that could result in a reduction in insurance premiums and other economic incentives.

Policy 2.5.3e: Promote land use and design policies and regulations which encourage a mixture of compatible uses to promote and increase the safety of public use areas and pedestrian/equestrian travel.

Policy 2.5.3f: Systematically mitigate crime hazards related to urban development or patterns of urban development as they are identified and as resources permit.

City of Norco Municipal Code

CHAPTER 15.12 SECURITY AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Chapter 15.12 declares the provisions contained in this chapter both desirable and necessary for the safety and protection of human life and property. This includes general security standards for louvered windows, overhead garage doors, sliding/accordion doors, sliding glass windows/doors, street number in a prominent position so that it shall be easily visible from the street, and lighting devices for exterior doorway entrances.

4.15.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- 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:
 - PS-1: Fire protection?
 - PS-2: Police protection?
 - PS-3: Schools?
 - PS-4: Parks?
 - PS-5: Libraries?

4.15.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT PS-1: Would the project result in the need for additional fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

The proposed project would construct 68 single-family dwellings which would accommodate approximately 227 residents. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) identifies the project site as not located in a Very High Fire Severity Zone; refer to [Figure 4.20-1, Regional Fire Hazard Severity Zones](#). According to the City of Norco 2050 General Plan Existing Conditions Analysis Report: Safety Analysis (Figure 1 – Fire Hazard Severity Zones, WUI, and CPUC Fire Hazard Threat Mapping), the northwestern portion of the project site, near the Santa Ana River Corridor, is identified as a fire hazard threat zone by the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC). The proposed project would increase the population on the project site by an additional 227 persons over the planned population for the project site, based on the current zoning. The construction and operation of the proposed project could potentially increase the demand for fire protection and/or emergency services calls because of an increase in the number of people who would live on the project site.

Fire protection service would be provided from the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). The project would be located in the existing service area of RCFD and would not increase its coverage area. Fire Station 57 would be the closest fire station to the site with a response time of approximately 5 minutes, which would be a close target response time of 4 minutes. According RCFD (Adria Reinertson, Deputy Fire Marshal), current levels of staff and facilities are adequate to serve the proposed project.

The project would be required to comply with applicable Riverside County Fire Department codes, ordinances, and regulations regarding fire prevention and suppression measures; fire hydrants and sprinkler systems; emergency access; and other similar requirements. Appropriate fire protection measures would be incorporated into the design of proposed project buildings in accordance with the CBC and California Fire Code (2022 editions) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. As part of the development review process, the City of Norco would work with RCFD to ensure that fire safety issues associated with the proposed project are considered, including adequate street and driveway widths to provide access to sites and buildings to provide adequate sufficient clearances for fire suppression and other emergency access needs. To reduce the project's cumulative impact on fire protection services, the project would require payment of proportionate Development Impact Fees allocated to fire protection services. These fees would cover potential station construction or expansion to accommodate cumulative increases in RCFD service population.

With compliance with Riverside County Fire Department codes, ordinances, regulations and payment of Development Impact Fees, potential impacts to fire protection services would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT PS-2: Would the project result in the need for additional police protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

The proposed project would increase the population on the project site by an additional 227 persons over the planned population for the project site, based on the current zoning. The proposed project would increase the demand for police protection services. Police protection services would be provided by the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department (RCSD). The project would be located in the existing service area of RCSD and would not increase its service area. Policy 2.5.2a of the General Plan Safety Element states that the City shall endeavor to provide a minimum response time of 5 minutes on all priority 1 calls (life-threatening situations and violent crime) and 12 minutes on all priority 2 calls (non-life-threatening situations).

The project would be required to comply with the City of Norco Municipal Code Chapter 15.12 (Security and Safety Standards) which established safety standards for residential uses. To reduce potential cumulative impacts on law enforcement protection services, the project would provide payment of proportionate Development Impact Fees that would be allocated for law enforcement protection services. These fees would cover future construction and/or expansion of RCSD Sheriff’s stations to accommodate cumulative service demand and population increases in RCSD’s service area. With compliance with the Municipal Code Chapter 15.12, and payment of Development Impact Fees, potential project and cumulative impacts associated with increased demands for law enforcement services would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT PS-3: Would the project result in impacts to the availability of school facilities?

The project site is within the Corona-Norco Unified School District. Table 4.15-5, *CNUSD School Locations and Generation Factors for Single-Family Residences*, shows the District Generation Rate and projected students generated by the project.

Table 4.15-5
CNUSD School Locations and Generation Factors for Single-Family Residences

School Level	Closest School	Student Generation	Estimated Number Students	Available Capacity	Remaining Capacity With Project
Elementary	Highland Elementary	0.3360	23	675	652
Intermediate	Norco Intermediate	0.1040	7	900	893
High School	Norco High School	0.6703	46	2,600	2,554
Total			76	4,175	4,099

Source: Corona-Norco Unified School District, Correspondence with Nicole Lavalley, Facilities Analyst. May 16, 2022.

Correspondence from Facilities Analyst, Nicole Lavallee, reports the current generation rates to predict future population growth for single families are 0.3360 for Elementary School, 0.1040 for Middle School, and 0.2303 for High School. Based on the CNUSD student generation rates, the project would generate 76 new students, 41 additional students above what is currently estimated for the site based on existing zoning. The proposed project would incrementally increase the enrollment of students and the use of CNUSD facilities. As shown in Table 4.15-5, there would be available capacity at each school upon implementation of the proposed project.

The proposed project would be required to pay development fees prior to issuance of a building permit to offset the cost of providing school services and facilities. These numbers reflect the Corona-Norco Unified School District's (CNUSD) estimate of land acquisition and construction costs, and also include anticipated costs for furniture, equipment, and technology. CNUSD fees on all new housing projects are at a rate of \$4.79 per square foot and for new commercial or industrial the fee is assessed at \$0.78 per square foot (Nicole Lavallee, Facilities Analyst). State law assumes that the developer's payment of school impact fees to the local school district, in an amount established by the school district, would address school capacity impacts. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65995(h), payment of impact fees fully mitigates impacts to school facilities. With payment of school impact fees, potential environmental impacts related to the construction of new or expanded school facilities would be less than significant.

Implementation of the proposed project would not 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, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for school services.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT PS-4: Would the project result in impacts to the availability of parkland and recreational facilities?

The proposed project would increase the population on the project site by an additional 227 persons over the planned population for the project site, based on the current zoning and would increase the demand for recreation uses. The City of Norco maintains 17 outdoor public parks that are less than five miles from the project site. Within less than one mile of the project site, there are four park sites; refer to Table 4.15-4, *Norco Park and Recreational Facilities*. Norco currently maintains a parkland/open space to-resident ratio of approximately 65 acres per 1,000 residents, well in excess of the 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents required by the City's Quimby Act regulation. The population generated by the proposed project would not substantially reduce the City's existing parkland/open space to-resident ratio and the availability of parkland for other residents in the City. In fact, the project would be required to contribute 1.14 acres of parkland or an in-lieu park fee equivalent. Additionally, the proposed project would provide onsite equestrian trails and expand offsite equestrian trails near the project site which would enhance recreational opportunities in the City.

To reduce the proposed project’s cumulative impact on parklands, the creation of up to 1.14 acres¹ of park and recreation improvements or equivalent in-lieu fee payment would be required. These fees would cover future parkland and recreation facility construction or expansion to accommodate cumulative increases in Norco’s population. A combination of the project proposed onsite and offsite trail improvements and payment of park fees would reduce project-related and cumulative impacts to parks to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT PS-5: Would the project result in impacts to libraries?

The proposed project would result in a total of 227 residents, and based on the current zoning, would increase the demand for library facilities. The project’s increase in population would be a nominal increase in demand for library services compared to the existing population that is served by local libraries; however, the Riverside County Library System states that Riverside County Library cardholders have unlimited access to thousands of digital books 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To reduce the project’s cumulative impact on library facilities, the project would provide payment of Development Impact Fees to help fund future acquisition or expansion of library facilities. With payment of Development Impact Fees, project and cumulative impacts on library facilities would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.15.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *2050 General Plan Existing Conditions: Land Use/Community Character Assessment*, page 15. November 13, 2023.

City of Norco, *2050 General Plan Existing Conditions: Safety Analysis*, pages 5 and 6. November 13, 2023.

City of Norco, *Adopted Budget Fiscal Year 2023-2024*. June 21, 2023, [<https://norco.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/5764/?preview=70577>]. Accessed on February 27, 2024.

City of Norco Community Services, *City of Norco Parks Guide*; February 2024.

City of Norco, Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services, *Parks and Facilities Website* [<https://www.norco.ca.us/departments/parks-facilities>]. Accessed April 2022.

City of Norco, *General Plan Open-Space Element*. Update Adoption Date: June 1989.

City of Norco, *General Plan Safety Element*. Update Adoption Date: January 16, 2013.

¹ Calculation is based on the City’s parkland ratio of 5 acres per 1,000 residents, proposed project would result in 227 residents (5/1000 * 227 = 1.135).

Corona-Norco Unified School District, [<https://www.cnusd.k12.ca.us/>]. Accessed April 2022.

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Corona-Norco Unified School District, MySchool Locator, [<https://locator.pea.powerschool.com/?StudyID=236502>]. Accessed February 27, 2024.

County of Riverside Executive Office, *Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Adopted Budget*, [<https://rivco.org/sites/g/files/aldnop116/files/2022-10/FY22-23%20Adopted%20Budget%20Volume%201.pdf>]. Accessed February 7, 2024.

County of Riverside Fire Department, Correspondence with Adria Reinertson, Deputy Fire Marshal. April 1, 2022.

County of Riverside Sheriff, [<https://www.riversidesheriff.org/168/Patrol-Stations>]. Accessed February 7, 2024.

Norco Municipal Code, 17.14.06 Formula for Dedication of Land, [<https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Norco/#!/Norco17/Norco1714.html>]. Accessed on February 27, 2024.

Riverside County Library System, [<https://www.rivlib.info/digital-library#:~:text=Riverside%20County%20Library%20cardholders%20now,computers%2C%20tablets%2C%20and%20phones>]. Accessed on March 3, 2024.

Special District Financing & Administration, *Corona-Norco Unified School District Developer Fee Justification Study*. April 12, 2022.

4.16 RECREATION

4.16.1 INTRODUCTION

This section discusses the potential impacts to park and recreation resources associated with implementation of the proposed project. The information in this section is based on the Open Space Element of the City of Norco General Plan. The analysis examines the existing and future parks and recreation opportunities in the project vicinity and the potential impacts of the proposed project on these resources.

4.16.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Norco Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services offers a wide range of recreational and leisure programs, services, and activities for the citizens of Norco and the surrounding communities. According to the Norco *2050 General Plan Existing Conditions Analysis Report*, there are over 500 acres of park and open space in Norco with the City owning and maintaining 17 neighborhood and community parks, sports fields, recreational facilities, equestrian staging areas, equestrian arenas, and the Ingalls Event Center; refer to Section 4.15, *Public Services*, [Table 4.15-4](#), *Norco Park and Recreational Facilities*. The Silverlakes Sports Park is leased to the Balboa Management Group. Additionally, the City has established an elaborate equestrian/pedestrian trail network of nearly 104 miles as of 2018. The City's Comprehensive Trail Master Plan (2018a) provides design and maintenance standards for the City's equestrian and pedestrian trails. The number one missing link in the City's Trail Master Plan, according to the Norco Horsemen's Association, is the Bluff Street Trail from River Road to Corydon Street. The proposed project closes the gap along Bluff Street from River Road across the proposed project and adjacent City parcel. The number 10 missing link is River Road to the existing trail. The proposed project includes the installation of a portion of these two missing links.

4.16.3 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

Quimby Act

The Quimby Act (Government Code Section 66477) allows local governments to require developers to dedicate land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees to fund parkland development. The Quimby Act has a standard of 3.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The City requires five acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.

LOCAL

City of Norco Comprehensive Trail Master Plan

The purpose of the Comprehensive Trail Master Plan is to assist in providing for a safe, convenient, and efficient trail system and trail plan for the community's equestrians and pedestrians. The following are relevant goals and policies for the proposed project:

- GOAL 1: A circulation network of equestrian trails and streets, integrated with the planned land uses that provide for a safe, efficient, and economic movement of people and goods.

- Policy 1.1: Develop a circulation system of equestrian trails connecting all residential lots into a city-wide network that connects residential areas with commercial areas, public facilities, and open space/recreational elements.
- Policy 1.2: Establish a trail system that is separate and safe from vehicular traffic with appropriate (signalized as necessary) road and intersection crossings to maintain circularity of the trail system.
- GOAL 5: To provide a safe, thorough network connecting equestrians and pedestrians with residential and commercial areas, public facilities, and open space/ recreational areas.
- Policy 5.1: Establish trails that are separate and safe from vehicular traffic with appropriate (signalized as necessary) road and intersection crossings to maintain circularity of the trail system.
- Policy 5.2: Promote the expansion of the City’s local trail system to integrate with the Crest to Coast trail system.
- Policy 5.3: Strengthen community image and sense of place, identifying trails for recreational purposes, providing educational information on surrounding habitat and points of interest, and to develop an objective trail rating system for both equestrians and hikers for user ability and conditions.

4.16.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **REC-1:** 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?
- **REC-2:** Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

4.16.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT REC-1: Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

The proposed project is within the vicinity of several park sites and recreational facilities that provide a wide range of recreation amenities. The City of Norco maintains an extensive network of equestrian/pedestrian trails. The project would provide onsite recreation equestrian/pedestrian trails and expand critical missing links pursuant to the Trail Master Plan on River Road and Bluff Street; shown previously in [Figure 3-10, *Equestrian Trail Plan*](#).

Norco currently maintains a parkland/open space to-resident ratio of approximately 65 acres per 1,000 residents. Implementation of the proposed project would increase the population and recreation

demand. However, the additional population generated by the proposed project would not 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. Norco currently maintains a parkland/open space to-resident ratio of approximately 65 acres per 1,000 residents, well in excess of the 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents required by the City's Quimby Act regulation. To reduce the proposed project's cumulative impact on parklands, the creation of up to 1.14 acres¹ of park and recreation improvements or equivalent in-lieu fee payment would be required. These fees would cover future parklands and recreation facilities construction or expansion to accommodate cumulative increases in Norco's population. With the combination of project proposed onsite and offsite trail improvements and payment of park fees, potential impacts and cumulative impacts on recreation facilities would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT REC-2: Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The proposed project would not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. As shown previously in [Figure 3-10, *Equestrian Trail Plan*](#), the project proposes to construct critical missing links to the City's trail system with a 12-foot trail on River Road and on Bluff Street. Both trails would connect to existing City trails. Additionally, within the project a 12-foot trail is proposed that would connect to the proposed trails along River Road and Bluff Street, and there would be a 15-foot pedestrian access (Lot F), between Lots 10 and 11, to Sundance Park; refer to [Figure 3-9, *Tentative Tract Map*](#). The overall intent of the project is to close critical gaps in the City's equestrian/pedestrian trail system as well as create an equestrian community that is unified by tree lined equestrian trails that circulate through the community connecting residents to the City's equestrian heritage. The landscape treatment for the project is influenced by the native environs of the Santa Ana River and the City of Norco equestrian heritage. Impacts of the proposed recreational facilities onsite (equestrian/ pedestrian trails) have been analyzed throughout this DEIR. The proposed project would not increase the demand for recreation facilities where new facilities would be needed; therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.16.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *2050 General Plan Existing Conditions: Land Use/Community Character Assessment*, page 15. November 13, 2023.

City of Norco, *Open Space Element*. Update Adoption Date: June 1989.

¹ Calculation is based on the City's parkland ratio of 5 acres per 1,000 residents, proposed project would result in 227 residents (5/1000 * 227 = 1.135).

City of Norco Community Services, *City of Norco Parks Guide*; February 2024.

City of Norco Department of Public Works, *Comprehensive Trail Master Plan*. March 21, 2018.

4.17 TRANSPORTATION

4.17.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential traffic impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project. The analysis in this section is based on the following technical reports:

- *Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis*, LLG Engineers, March 21, 2024 ([Appendix J](#)).

4.17.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

CIRCULATION SYSTEM

Regional access to the project is provided by Interstate 15 (I-15). Local access to the project site would be provided from River Road and Bluff Street.

River Road

River Road is an existing north-south arterial linking the City of Corona to the south and the City of Eastvale to the north. The City of Norco General Plan Circulation Element designates River Road as a Major-4 Classification, which consists of a 100-foot right-way with 4 travel lanes. The majority of the roadway is fully dedicated and improved with four lanes of traffic and a raised landscaped median island along the roadway between Second Street and Corydon Avenue. The roadway transitions into River Road Bridge providing access over the Santa Ana River which is used by surrounding residences and commuter traffic.

Bluff Street

Bluff Street is an existing east-west local street. The City of Norco General Plan Circulation Element designates Bluff Street as a Local Roadway Classification. The Local Roadway classification is applied to roadways that, at buildout, will have two lanes of travel within a right-of-way width of 60 feet and a curb-to-curb pavement width of 36 feet. Local street standards can be applied for commercial or residential uses. Local streets are intended to provide access to adjacent properties.

COMPREHENSIVE TRAILS MASTER PLAN

The purpose of the Comprehensive Trails Master Plan is to assist in providing for a safe, convenient, and efficient trail system for the community's equestrians and pedestrians. The plan identifies existing equestrian trails, as well as establishing clear design standards and criteria for the rehabilitation. The streets of Norco are lined with horse trails wherever possible, helping to maintain its commitment to the rural atmosphere and an equestrian lifestyle. The City has avoided the standard suburban sidewalk treatment in favor of decomposed granite pedestrian/equestrian trails. These trails are designated for pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle use only and are not meant to serve as multi-purpose recreational trails (i.e., no motorized vehicles) of existing trails.

The trail system includes several types of trails and organizes the community's circulation needs into a coherent pattern of movement. This system minimizes conflicts between pedestrians and equestrians and defines each trail according to its function and level of enhancement. The four types of trails are explained as follows:

- **Primary Access Trails:** A primary access trail system consists of major circulation routes, not necessarily adjacent to the streets, which are wider and can carry the bulk of non-auto traffic volume moving within and through the City. This system would integrate pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle circulation within wider trail sections, and would minimize conflict between bicycles and equestrians through trail location and buffer planting. The primary trails would connect the community to major regional features including Norco Community College, Norco Hills, the Santa Ana River, and parks, as feasible. Currently, there are no trails in the City that can be designated as primary access trails, and the opportunity for creating such trails is limited because of the extent of development in the City.
- **Secondary Trails:** Secondary trails would be the trails that connect to the primary access trails and to most locations in the City. These trails, commonly known as Bridle or Soft Shoulder in design, are twelve-foot trails that are designed to be adjacent to the streets and represent the bulk of trails that currently exist in the community. These trails carry most of the City's pedestrian and equestrian circulation and are not intended to accommodate bicycle traffic because of the potential conflict with equestrian use. Since these trails are designed to carry most of the equestrian traffic in the City and are highly visible by being adjacent to the streets, appropriate landscaping should be incorporated into street/trail sections to enhance the use of the trails and to improve the aesthetics of the community.
- **Tertiary Trails:** Tertiary Trails, also known as Backyard Trails, are meant only to provide access to the main trail system from areas not adjacent to public right-of-way and the trail system. Since tertiary trails carry only a small volume of traffic, surfacing and planting should be minimal.
- **Natural Trails:** Natural equestrian trails are located away from the surfaced streets and are generally located on the edges of town (Santa Ana River or Norco Hills areas). These trails are important in enhancing the rural atmosphere because they provide trail users with a unique opportunity to access the City's surrounding open space. They can provide an important link to the regional trail system as well as providing access to local landscape features. These trails accommodate hikers and equestrians but are generally not wide enough to also accommodate bicycles. Ideally, rest stops, and a marker system should be provided along the natural trails wherever possible for pedestrians' and equestrians' benefit. This type of trail would also benefit from the development of staging areas at the beginning of natural trails.

Within the vicinity of the project site are Bridle Trails located along River Road and throughout the residential areas south and west of the project site. Additionally, Backyard Trails are located between existing residential uses and the eastern boundary of the project site. A Trail Entry Point is located at Bluff Street.

TRANSIT FACILITIES

The Riverside Transit Agency (RTA) provides bus service to the City of Norco. Route 3 provides bus service from Norco to the Corona Transit Station and to the City of Eastvale. There are no bus stops near the project site. The closest bus stop would be at Norco College, approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the project site.

Truck Routes

The City of Norco has designated and established commercial vehicle truck routes throughout the City. These routes indicate arterial streets that should be used for truck movements that exceed the established weight limits of local streets. River Road is a designated Truck Route.

4.17.3 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

Senate Bill 743

Senate Bill (SB) 743, which was codified in Public Resources Code Section 21099, required changes to the State CEQA Guidelines regarding the analysis of transportation impacts. Pursuant to Section 21099, the criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts must “promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses.” Thus, the Office of Planning and Research proposed, and the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted changes to the State CEQA Guidelines in December 2018, which changed the thresholds of significance for the evaluation of impacts to transportation.

The updated State CEQA Guidelines include the addition of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, of which Subdivision (b) establishes criteria for evaluating a project’s transportation impacts based on project type and using automobile vehicle miles traveled or VMT as the metric. Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), states, “For the purposes of this section, ‘vehicle miles traveled’ refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project.” Here, the term “automobile” refers to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks (i.e., no heavy-duty trucks). As identified in Section 15064.3(b)(4), a lead agency has the discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology to evaluate a project’s VMT. Pursuant to SB 743 and Public Resources Code Section 21099, the requirement for analyzing congestion impacts, known as level of service or LOS, for CEQA purposes was eliminated in December 2018. Therefore, an analysis of congestion impacts, including analysis of impacts related to the level of service of the circulation system is not provided in this Draft EIR.

SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a regional agency established pursuant to California Government Code Section 6500, also referred to as the Joint Powers Authority law. SCAG is designated as a Council of Governments, a Regional Transportation Planning Agency, and a Metropolitan Planning Organization. The proposed project is within SCAG’s regional authority.

On September 3, 2020, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted Connect SoCal - the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy of the Southern California Association of Governments (Connect SoCal 2020). Connect SoCal 2020 is a long-range visioning plan that builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. It charts a path toward a more mobile, sustainable, and prosperous region by making connections between transportation networks, between planning strategies and between the people whose collaboration can improve the quality of life for Southern Californians.

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

County of Riverside Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service and Vehicle Miles Traveled

The City of Norco utilizes the County of Riverside Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service (LOS) and Vehicle Miles Traveled analysis. The purpose of the Transportation Analysis Guidelines is to provide instructions for analyzing projects in compliance with (1) the City of Norco General Plan Circulation Element policies and (2) transportation related Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis as required under CEQA.

LOCAL

City of Norco General Plan

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The primary purpose of the Circulation Element is to provide for a safe, convenient, and efficient circulation system for the City's motorized vehicles and equestrians. Since there is strong encouragement for the use of its equestrian trails citywide and for an equestrian lifestyle, there are additional issues that need to be addressed for the City of Norco in order to provide a safe, functional, and integrated circulation system for all forms of transportation. In order to meet this objective, the Circulation Element has been designed to accommodate all anticipated transportation needs. The City of Norco has established LOS D as the minimum standard for intersections during peak hours.

The following goals and policies from the Circulation Element are relevant to the proposed project:

- GOAL 1: A circulation network of equestrian trails and streets, integrated with the planned land uses, that provide for a safe, efficient, and economic movement of people and goods.
- Policy 1.1: Develop a circulation system of equestrian trails connecting all residential lots into a city-wide network that connects residential areas with commercial areas, public facilities, and open space/recreational elements.
- Policy 1.2: Establish a trail system that is separate and safe from vehicular traffic with appropriate (signalized as necessary) road and intersection crossings to maintain circularity of the trail system.
- Policy 1.3: Develop a circulation system of City streets, excluding freeways, capable of serving existing and future increases in traffic.
- Policy 1.4: Follow appropriate City standards in designing and constructing future street improvements.
- Policy 1.7: Establish a signalized arterial street system that provides an acceptable level of service during peak hours under build out conditions.
- Policy 1.8: Develop, and update as necessary, a program for general mitigation fees for roads and traffic signals.

- Policy 1.9: Encourage a minimum Level of Service D for roadway segments and a minimum Level of Service D for intersections at peak hours under build out conditions.
- Policy 2.11: Provide safe and convenient equestrian/pedestrian access between residential neighborhoods and the parks, open space and schools which service those neighborhoods.

City of Norco Resolution No. 2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Travelled Impact

Project screening is used to determine if a project will be required to conduct a detailed VMT analysis. The following section discusses the screening methods outlined in the City of Norco Resolution No.2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Travelled Impact (dated September 2, 2020) for land use projects and outlines whether the Project will screen-out, either in its entirety, or partially based on individual land uses. The City of Norco Resolution No.2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Travelled Impact (dated September 2, 2020) states:

“The City of Norco hereby adopts the VMT Project Screening Criteria consistent with OPR guidelines and screen out projects which fall into the following categories:

- Retail projects up to 50,000 SF in floor area.
- Projects generating less than 110 daily trips.
- Projects within a Transit Priority Area (TPA). A TPA is defined as locations within ½ mile of a major transit stop or within ½ mile of a high-quality transit corridor with 15-minute or less headways during peak commute hours.
- Affordable housing developments or affordable housing units within mixed-use developments.
- Transportation projects that promote non-auto travel, improve safety, or improve traffic operations at current bottlenecks, such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, intersection traffic control (e.g., traffic signals or roundabouts), or widening at intersections to provide new turn lanes.”

City of Norco Development Impact Fee Program

The City of Norco has implemented a local Development Impact Fee (DIF) Program (Norco Municipal Code, Chapter 3.40) to impose and collect fees from new development that may be used to mitigate the additional traffic burdens created by new development to the City’s arterial and collector street system. A “Streets, Traffic Signals, and Bridges” fee is imposed on all new development in the City to finance the costs of street improvements, which include widening and reconstruction, new traffic signals, street landscaping, intersection improvements, and freeway interchange improvements. The project would be subject to the DIF Program and would be required to pay fees as part of permit approval.

4.15.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **TRA-1:** Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?
- **TRA-2:** Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?
- **TRA-3:** Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?
- **TRA-4:** Result in inadequate emergency access?

4.17.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT TRA-1: Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

The project has been designed to provide equestrian trail circulation within the project and the construction of trail extensions to existing equestrian trails in the City. The project proposes a 12-foot equestrian trail on River Road and Bluff Street. Both equestrian trails would allow connection to an existing City equestrian trail located on River Road and Bluff Street. Additionally, within the proposed project, a 12-foot equestrian trail is proposed along the local streets within the proposed development. Within the project, the proposed 12-foot equestrian trails would connect to the proposed equestrian trails along River Road and Bluff Street. Additionally, there would be a 15-foot pedestrian access (Lot G), between Lots 10 and 11, to Sundance Park; refer to [Figure 3-10, Equestrian Trail Plan](#). The overall intent of the project is to create an equestrian community that is unified by tree lined equestrian trails that circulate through the community connecting residents to the City's equestrian heritage. Through connection to the existing trail network and design of the development, the project would be consistent with the following goals and policies from the City of Norco Trails Master Plan and would not conflict with implementation of the Trails Master Plan.

- GOAL 1: A circulation network of equestrian trails and streets, integrated with the planned land uses that provide for a safe, efficient, and economic movement of people and goods.
- Policy 1.1: Develop a circulation system of equestrian trails connecting all residential lots into a city-wide network that connects residential areas with commercial areas, public facilities, and open space/recreational elements.
- GOAL 2: Encourage the use of alternate transportation modes.
- Policy 2.3: Provide safe and convenient equestrian/pedestrian access between residential neighborhoods and the parks, open space and schools which service those neighborhoods.
- GOAL 6: Horse trails shall be developed to maintain the City's commitment to the rural atmosphere and an equestrian lifestyle.
- Policy 6.1: All residential lots have direct access to this trail system.

TRANSIT SERVICE

There are no existing transit services near the project site that could potentially be impacted by the project. Implementation of the project would not conflict with any transit service plans.

TRUCK ROUTES

The City of Norco Circulation Element identifies River Road as a Truck Route. Construction equipment mobilization and demobilization would utilize River Road to access the site, which would avoid wear and tear on local streets in the City that are not designated Truck Routes.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT TRA-2: Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

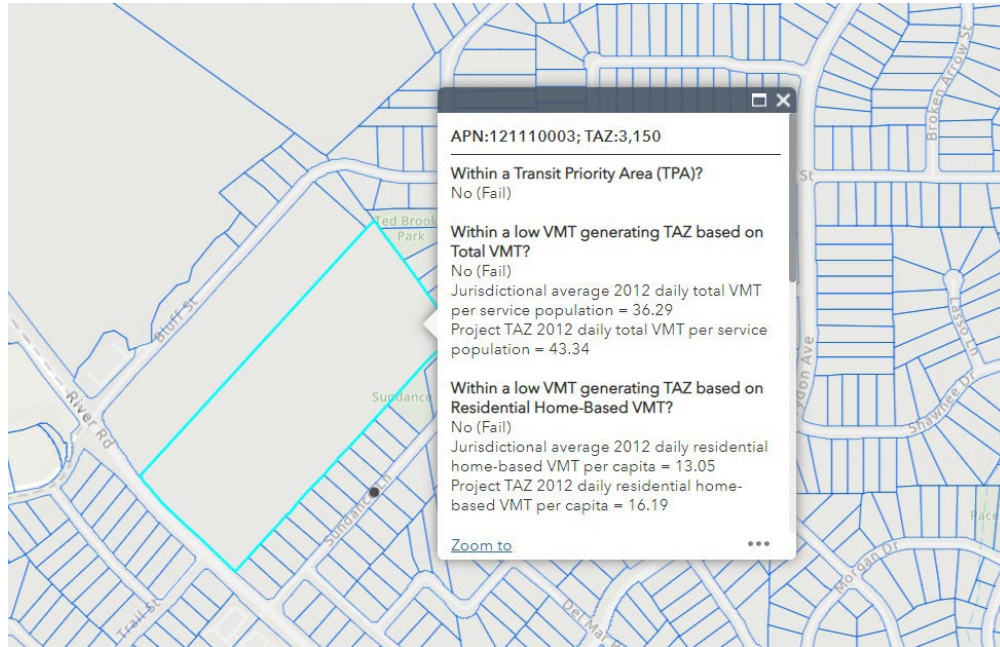
PROJECT SCREENING CRITERIA

Project screening is used to determine if a project will be required to conduct a detailed VMT analysis. The following section discusses the screening methods outlined in the *City of Norco Resolution No. 2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Traveled Impact* (dated September 2, 2020) for land use projects and outlines whether the project will screen-out, either in its entirety or partially, based on individual land uses. The *City of Norco Resolution No. 2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Traveled Impact* (dated September 2, 2020) states:

The City of Norco hereby adopts the VMT Project Screening Criteria consistent with Office Planning Research guidelines and screen out projects which fall into the following categories:

- *Retail projects up to 50,000 SF in floor area.*
- *Projects generating less than 110 daily trips.*
- *Projects within a Transit Priority Area (TPA). A TPA is defined as locations within ½ mile of a major transit stop or within ½ mile of a high-quality transit corridor with 15-minute or less headways during peak commute hours.*
- *Affordable housing developments or affordable housing units within mixed-use developments.*
- *Transportation projects that promote non-auto travel, improve safety, or improve traffic operations at current bottlenecks, such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, intersection traffic control (e.g., traffic signals or roundabouts), or widening at intersections to provide new turn lanes.*

The proposed project will not screen-out of a VMT analysis as it does not satisfy any of the screening criteria listed above. Also, the proposed project does not screen-out as presented in the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) VMT Screening Tool Website.



VMT SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLD

A project that does not meet the screening criteria will require preparation of a detailed transportation analysis. The VMT significance criteria as stated in the *City of Norco Resolution No.2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Traveled Impact* (dated September 2, 2020) is shown in Table 4.17-1, City of Norco VMT Baselines and Thresholds of Significance.

Table 4.17-1
City of Norco VMT Baselines and Thresholds of Significance

Project Type	Thresholds
Land Use Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <u>Project Impact</u>: A significant impact would occur if the VMT rate for the plan would exceed the applicable baseline VMT rate per service population. Baseline VMT rate is defined as the City’s jurisdictional average VMT per appropriate development category. 2) <u>Cumulative Project Effect</u>: A significant impact would occur if the project increased total regional VMT compared to cumulative no project conditions.
Land Use Project (Residential)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <u>Project Impact</u>: A significant impact would occur if the VMT rate for the project would exceed the daily total VMT per service population; OR 2) <u>Project Impact</u>: A significant impact would occur if the VMT rate for the project would exceed daily residential home-based VMT per capita. 3) <u>Cumulative Project Effect</u>: A significant impact would occur if the project would exceed the total regional VMT compared to cumulative no project conditions, under either condition above.

Project Type	Thresholds
Office, Commercial or Retail Land Use Project	1) <u>Project Impact</u> : A significant impact would occur if the VMT rate for the project would exceed the applicable baseline VMT rate per service population; OR 2) <u>Project Impact</u> : A significant impact would occur if the VMT rate for the project would exceed daily home-based work VMT per worker. 3) <u>Cumulative Project Effect</u> : A significant impact would occur if the project increases the VMT rate in the study area above the baseline conditions for that area.
Transportation Project	A significant impact would occur if the project caused a net increase in total regional VMT compared to baseline conditions, opening year no project conditions, or cumulative no project conditions.
All Land Use and Transportation Projects	A significant impact would occur if the project were inconsistent with the RIVTAM/RIVCOM.
Source: Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers (LLG), <i>Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis</i> ; March 21, 2024.	

VMT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

According to *City of Norco Resolution No.2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Traveled Impact* (dated September 2, 2020), projects that do not screen-out based on the aforementioned criteria shall complete a full VMT analysis and forecasting using the Riverside County Traffic Analysis Model (RIVTAM/RIVCOM) to determine if it will have a significant VMT impact. Based on the above, a full VMT analysis utilizing RIVTAM has been used to determine the VMT for the project as well as for the City of Norco average and will provide the following:

- Daily Home-based VMT per Capita
- Total Regional VMT

VMT Analysis

Summarized below are the average VMT per Capita values utilizing RIVTAM for the City of Norco and for the proposed project. It should be noted that the project is located in Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) 3150 and the project development totals were converted into Socio-Economic Data (SED) and inputted into the RIVTAM.

Project Impact

As shown in Table 4.17-2, *Project Threshold*, the proposed project VMT per Capita is 22.50% higher than the City average VMT per Capita. Based on the criteria outlined in this report, the proposed project will exceed the City of Norco base year VMT per Capita of 13.05 and thus will have a significant project VMT impact.

**Table 4.17-2
Project Threshold**

Base Year	TAZ 3150	City Average Threshold	Compare to City Threshold
VMT Per Capita	15.99	13.05	22.50% Higher
Source: Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers (LLG), <i>Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis</i> ; March 21, 2024.			

Cumulative Impact

As shown in [Table 4.17-3, *Cumulative Threshold*](#), the proposed project total daily VMT within the City is 0.10% higher than the “no Project” scenario total daily VMT under cumulative conditions. Based on the criteria outlined in this report, the proposed project total daily VMT will exceed under the “with Project” condition when compared to the “without Project” condition and thus the project will have a significant cumulative VMT impact.

**Table 4.17-3
Cumulative Threshold**

Cumulative Year	With Project Scenario	Without Project Scenario	Compare to Threshold
Total VMT	1,164,288.81	1,163,127.15	0.10% Higher

Source: Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers (LLG), *Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis*; March 21, 2024.

VMT MITIGATION ANALYSIS

If a significant VMT impact is identified, measures to reduce the project’s VMT impact should be identified to reduce the VMT levels to a level at or below the City’s thresholds. To mitigate VMT impacts, the project applicant must reduce VMT, which can be done by either reducing the number of automobile trips generated by the project or by reducing the distance that people drive. The following strategies are available to achieve this:

1. Modify the project’s build environment characteristics to reduce VMT generated by the project.
2. Implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to reduce VMT generated by the project.

Strategies that reduce single-occupant automobile trips or reduce travel distance are called TDM strategies. There are several resources for determining the reduction in VMT due to TDM measures such as the CAPCOA Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures.

As referenced in the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Technical Advisory, the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association’s *Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity, Designed for Local Government, Communities, and Project Developers Report*, Chapters 3 - Transportation, December 2021, (CAPCOA Report) quantifies the reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) associated with a particular mitigation measure. The CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies include built environment changes and TDM actions. The acceptable TDM strategies and VMT calculations are outlined in more detail in the *Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis* ([Appendix J.](#))

The recommended mitigation measures for the project type of residential with the project locational Context of suburban, consist as the following:

- T-1 (Increase Residential Density): up to 30% maximum VMT reduction.
- T-18 (Provide Pedestrian Network Improvement): up to 6.4% maximum VMT reduction.
- T-42 (Implement Telecommute and/or Alternative Work Schedule Program)

T-1: Increase Residential Density

The proposed project Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) area is 1,120 acres. The Project TAZ in the Traffic Model contains 252 dwelling units (DU) without the Project (baseline condition) and 320 DU with the Project. The CAPCOA T-1 formula was applied accordingly, as shown below:

$$VMT\ Reduction = \frac{\frac{320\ DU}{1,120\ Acre} - \frac{252\ DU}{1,120\ Acre}}{\frac{252\ DU}{1,120\ Acre}} * -0.22 = 5.9\%$$

Based on the above, after considering that the project would support and contribute to a greater residential density in the TAZ where the project is located, the project's VMT could reasonably be reduced by 5.9% (less than the CAPCOA's maximum reduction 30%).

T-18: Provide Pedestrian Network Improvement

According to CAPCAO, this measure would increase the trail coverage to improve pedestrian access. Providing trails and an enhanced pedestrian network encourages people to walk instead of drive. This mode shift results in a reduction in VMT and GHG emissions.

The CAPCOA T-18 formula was applied accordingly, as shown below:

$$VMT\ Reduction = \left(\left[\frac{1.28}{0.40} \right] - 1 \right) * -0.05 = 11\%$$

The 1.28 value (miles) in the numerator represents the trail length in study area with measure and the 0.40 value (miles) in the denominator represents the existing trail length in study area. Based on the above, the project's VMT could reasonably be reduced by 6.4% (equal to CAPCOA's maximum VMT reduction of 6.4%).

T-42: Implement Telecommute and/or Alternative Work Schedule Program

According to CAPCAO, this measure requires projects to permit employee telecommuting and/or alternative work schedules and monitor employee involvement to ensure forecasted participation matches observed participation.

Based on information provided by the project applicant, it is understood that the proposed project is designed to accommodate the teleworking needs of future residents through features, technology, finishes and filters that help contribute to improved working conditions, increased convenience, healthier indoor air quality, and energy efficiency. The proposed project would include:

- Dedicated home office spaces;
- High-speed internet connections and Wi-Fi network infrastructure;
- Data connections power outlets and USB charging outlets;
- Smart home technology (e.g., smart thermostats, locks and/or video doorbells);
- Modern internet routers in each home;
- Electric appliances, advanced technology HVAC air filters, and low VOC interior finishes; and
- Energy efficient features (e.g., low E glass, smart thermostats, Energy-Start appliances, LED lighting, and tankless water heaters).

Based on inclusion of the above, the project's VMT could reasonably be reduced by 6.40%.

Total Combined VMT Reduction Calculation

Based on the combined implementation of the recommended VMT impact mitigation measures described above, the total VMT reduction will be:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total VMT Reduction} &= 1 - (1 - T1) * (1 - T18) * (1 - T42) \\ &= 1 - (1 - 5.9\%) * (1 - 6.40\%) * (1 - 12.79\%) = \mathbf{23.19\%} \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the above mitigations would offset the project's VMT impacts by 17.56%, less than would be required to fully mitigate the impact.

CONCLUSION

Consistent with the City of Norco Resolution No.2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Travelled Impact (dated September 2, 2020) and based on the VMT methodology, criteria, guidelines, thresholds, and results outlined in the *Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis (Appendix J)*, the proposed project would have a significant project VMT impact.

Options for mitigation were reviewed including smart home technology and home office space to encourage working from home and proximity to existing transit facilities which the nearest is located approximately 1.5 miles from the project site at Norco College. Such mitigation measures were determined infeasible because 1) the number of residents choosing to work from home would be speculative and unmeasurable, and 2) proximity to existing transit facilities and resident commuter choice would also be speculative and unmeasurable. Therefore, the project would result in a significant and unavoidable adverse impact to VMT, and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.

Mitigation Measures: No feasible mitigation measures would be available to reduce the impact; therefore, the impact would be significant and unavoidable.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Significant and Unavoidable Impact.

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

Access to the proposed project will be provided via one (1) full movement driveway along River Road and one (1) full-movement driveway along Bluff Street.

The project proposes to widen River Road to full half width street improvements based on the City of Norco Standard Plans of 110 feet. The roadway travel lanes would be widened an additional 21 feet with a proposed 6-foot wide parkway and 12-foot wide equestrian trail for a total half width of 61 feet. The project proposes to signalize the intersection of Trail Street and River Road. The project also proposes the widening of Bluff Street to full half width street improvements, based on the City of Norco Modified Plans of 60 feet. The roadway travel lanes would be widened an additional 2 feet, with a proposed 6-foot wide parkway, a 12-foot wide equestrian trail, and curb and gutters for a total half width of 36 feet. The existing traffic signal at Bluff Street and River Road would be replaced as part of the roadway widening.

The proposed roadway improvement has been designed in accordance with the City of Norco roadway design standards. Additionally, the proposed project primary entrance/exits and secondary

entrance/exits would also be constructed to meet City standards and specifications and line of sight requirements. These standards would ensure that the proposed roadway improvement would provide a safe means of travel for motorists and pedestrians. To ensure appropriate design and implementation of all project circulation improvements, the final design of the project site plan, the locations and design of proposed driveways, would be reviewed and approved by the City Traffic Engineer. In addition, representatives of the Riverside County Fire Department and Riverside County Sheriff's Department would review the project's plans for emergency access before approved by the City of Norco prior to construction. With compliance to City roadway design standards and specification and line of sight requirements, potential long-term traffic hazards would be less than significant.

Construction activities for the proposed project would result in temporary impacts to existing roadways and would require the mobilization and demobilization of construction equipment and the operation of heavy construction equipment within the study area. During mobilization and demobilization of heavy construction equipment, turning movements into the project site could require temporary lane closures. Mitigation Measure TRANS-1 would require a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) be prepared for review and approval by the City of Norco. The TMP must be prepared by the Contractor because it requires an understanding of construction access, schedule and equipment. With compliance with Mitigation Measure TRANS-1, potential short-term traffic impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

TRANS-1: A Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared for temporary construction within the road right-of-way to ensure pedestrian, equestrian and vehicular safety and shall be approved prior to issuance of an encroachment permit.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT TRA-4: Result in inadequate emergency access?

The project includes two full access points that can be utilized for emergency vehicle access on River Road and Bluff Street. The project would be required to design, construct, and maintain structures and access ways in compliance with local, regional, and state requirements related to emergency vehicle access. The County of Riverside Fire Department and County of Riverside Sheriff's Department would review the plans and ensure that adequate emergency vehicle access and adequate emergency response times are maintained. Compliance with local, regional, and state requirements related to emergency vehicle access including County of Riverside Fire Department and County of Riverside Sheriff's Department would reduce potential operational emergency access impacts to less than significant.

Temporary activities associated with improvements to River Road and Bluff Street and the extension of infrastructure into the project site could result in temporary partial lane closures. As part of the construction coordination for the project, the project would coordinate with the City of Norco in regard to Traffic Control Measures necessary to maintain emergency vehicle access during construction. With compliance with the City of Norco Traffic Control requirements, potential short-term traffic impacts associated with the emergency vehicle access would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.17.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco, *General Plan Circulation Element*. Update Adoption Date: March 15, 2000.

City of Norco, *Comprehensive Trail Master Plan*. March 21, 2018.

City of Norco, *Resolution No.2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Traveled Impact*. September 2, 2020.

County of Riverside Transportation Department, *Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service Vehicle Miles Traveled*. December 2020.

Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers (LLG), *Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis for the Proposed JD Ranch Residential Project*. March 21, 2024.

4.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.18.1 INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates the potential for implementation of the proposed project to impact tribal cultural resources in the City of Norco. Tribal cultural resources include landscapes, sacred places, or objects with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe. Other potential impacts to cultural resources (i.e., prehistoric, historic, and disturbance of human remains) are evaluated in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*.

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following information:

- *Phase 1 Cultural Resources Assessment*, VCS Environmental, February 2024 ([Appendix D1](#)).

4.18.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

At the time of European contact in 1769, when Gaspar de Portolá's expedition crossed the Los Angeles Basin, what were to be named the Gabrieleno Native Americans by the Spanish occupied the area around the project site (Kroeber 1925; Bean and Smith 1978; McCawley 1996). While the term Gabrieleno identifies those Native Americans who were under the control of the Spanish Mission San Gabriel Archángel, the overwhelming number of people in these areas were of the same ethnic nationality and language (Tatic) group. Their territory extended from northern Orange County north to the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles County and eastward to the San Bernardino area.

This ethnographic information relates to currently surviving native peoples still living in Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties. They maintain their cultural practices and customs. The current Gabrieleno comprise at least five bands that are recognized Tribes by the State of California (they do not yet enjoy Federal recognition, however). They include the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation; the Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council; the Gabrieleno-Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians; the Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe; and the Gabrielino/Tongva Nation. The terms the Native Americans in southern California used to identify themselves have, for the most part, been lost; therefore, the names do not necessarily identify specific ethnic or tribal groups. Some currently refer to themselves as *Tongva*, while others prefer the term *Kizh*.

SACRED LANDS FILE SEARCH, SB 18 CONTACT LIST AND CITY OF NORCO AB 52 CONTACT LISTS

A Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File Search and Tribal contacts list (SB 18) was requested via email on June 14, 2021. The Sacred Lands File Search was negative and Tribal contacts list was received from the NAHC on July 7, 2021. The tribal contacts provided by the NAHC include:(refer to [Appendix D1, Attachment C](#)):

- Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians: Jeff Grubbe, Chairperson
- Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians: Patricia Garcia-Plotkin, Director
- Campo Band of Diegueno Mission Indians: Ralph Goff, Chairperson
- Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians: Michael Garcia, Vice Chairperson
- Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians: Robert Pinto, Chairperson

- Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation: Andrew Salas, Chairperson
- Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians: Anthony Morales, Chairperson
- Gabrielino/Tongva Nation: Sandonne Goad, Chairperson
- Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council: Robert Dorame, Chairperson; Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant and Administrator
- Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe: Charles Alvarez, Chairperson
- Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation – Belardes: Matias Belardes, Chairperson
- La Posta Band of Diegueno Mission Indians: Javaughn Miller, Tribal Administrator
- La Posta Band of Diegueno Mission Indians: Gwendolyn Parada, Chairperson
- Manzanita Band of Kumeyaay Nation: Angela Elliott Santos, Chairperson
- Mesa Grande Band of Diegueno Mission Indians: Michael Linton, Chairperson
- Pala Band of Mission Indians: Shasta Gaughen, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians: Mark Macarro, Chairperson
- Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation: Jill McCormick, THPO
- Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians: Cheryl Madrigal, THPO
- Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians: Bo Mazzetti, Chairperson
- Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians: Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair
- Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians: Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson

The following list was provided by the City of Norco for AB 52 Consultation:

- Cahuilla Band of Indians: Daniel Salgado, Chairman
- Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians: Andrew Salas, Chairperson
- Morongo Band of Mission Indians: Ann Brierty, THPO
- Morongo Band of Mission Indians: Charles Martin, Tribal Chairman
- Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians: Tribal Chairman, Mark Macarro
- Ramona Band of Mission Indians: Danae Hamilton Vega, Chairwoman
- Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians: Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair
- Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians: Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson

Four tribes appear on both lists, and therefore, were contacted and offered consultation under both AB 52 and SB 18. They include the following:

- Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians: Andrew Salas, Chairperson
- Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians: Tribal Chairman, Mark Macarro
- Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians: Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair
- Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians: Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson

AB 52/SB 18 CONSULTATION

The City of Norco initiated tribal consultation for the purposes of AB 52 and SB 18 for the proposed project on July 26, 2023. Those tribes that have requested to be listed on the City of Norco's notification list for the purposes of AB 52 and those identified by the NAHC for SB 18 were notified via email and in writing via certified mail on July 26, 2023. As part of this process, the City of Norco has provided notification to each of these listed tribes and the opportunity to consult with the City regarding the proposed project.

A listing of 26 tribal individuals representing 21 tribes were consulted as part of the AB 52/SB 18 consultation. A total of 12 tribes provided responses to the consultation request, of which four indicated they did not want to consult and eight indicated that they wanted to consult. The tribes that requested to consult include the Cahuilla Band of Indians, Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation, Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians, and Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians. Consultation is currently underway with these tribes. A total of nine tribes, after multiple contact attempts, have not responded to the consultation request.

4.18.3 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

Assembly Bill (AB) 52

This project is subject to the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 52. AB 52 is applicable to projects that have filed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or notice of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or Negative Declaration (ND) on or after July 1, 2015. The law requires lead agencies to initiate consultation with California Native American Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project and have requested such consultation, prior to determining the type of CEQA documentation that is applicable to the project (i.e., EIR, MND, ND). Significant impacts to "tribal cultural resources" are considered significant impacts to the environment.

For "tribal cultural resources," PRC §21074, enacted and codified as part of a 2014 amendment to CEQA through Assembly Bill 52, provides the statutory definition as follows:

"Tribal cultural resources" are either of the following:

1. Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - A. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.
 - B. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.
2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for

the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

To determine if such resources exist, under AB 52 (PRC §21080.3.1) lead agencies must consult with tribes that request consultation and must make a reasonable and good faith effort to mitigate the impacts of a development on such resources to a less than significant level. AB 52 allows tribes 30 days after receiving notification to request consultation and the lead agency must then initiate consultation within 30 days of the request by tribes.

California Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) established a formal consultation process for California tribes within the CEQA process. AB 52 specifies any project that may affect or cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource would require a lead agency to “begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditional and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project.” Section 21074 of AB 52 also defines a new category of resources under CEQA called “tribal cultural resources.” Tribal cultural resources are defined as “sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe” and is either listed on or eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources or a local historic register, or if the lead agency chooses to treat the resource as a tribal cultural resource.

Senate Bill (SB) 18

Senate Bill 18 (SB 18) (California Government Code Section 65352.3) sets forth requirements for local governments to consult with Native American tribes to aid in the protection of traditional tribal cultural places through local land use planning. The intent of SB 18 is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early stage of planning for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts on, cultural places. The Tribal Consultation Guidelines: Supplement to General Plan Guidelines (OPR 2005), identifies the following contact and notification responsibilities of local governments:

- Prior to the adoption or any amendment of a general plan or specific plan, a local government must notify the appropriate tribes (on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission [NAHC]) of the opportunity to conduct consultations for the purpose of preserving, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places located on land within the local government’s jurisdiction that is affected by the proposed plan adoption or amendment. Tribes have 90 days from the date on which they receive notification to request consultation unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed to by the tribe (Government Code Section 65352.3).
- Prior to the adoption or substantial amendment of a general plan or specific plan, a local government must refer the proposed action to those tribes that are on the NAHC contact list and have traditional lands located within the city or county’s jurisdiction. The referral must allow a 45-day comment period (Government Code Section 65352). Notice must be sent regardless of whether prior consultation has taken place. Such notice does not initiate a new consultation process.
- Local government must send a notice of a public hearing, at least 10 days prior to the hearing, to tribes who have filed a written request for such notice (Government Code Section 65092).

California Public Resources Code 5097.9–5097.991

California Public Resources Code 5097.9–5097.991 provides protection to Native American historical and cultural resources, and sacred sites and identifies the powers and duties of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). It also requires notification to descendants of discoveries of Native American human remains and provides for treatment and disposition of human remains and associated grave goods.

California Public Resources Code 5097.9

California Public Resources Code 5097.9 states that no public agency or private party on public property shall interfere with the free expression or exercise of Native American Religion.

California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5

California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation...until the coroner...has determined...that the remains are not subject to...provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible.... The coroner shall make his or her determination within two working days from the time the person responsible for the excavation, or his or her authorized representative, notifies the coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and...has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission.

4.18.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **TCR-1:** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is 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)?
- **TCR-2:** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

4.18.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT TCR-1: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is 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)?

The archaeological site recorded on the project site, (P-33-001436/CA-RIV-1436), is not listed nor 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) (refer to Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*, Impact CR-2, for a discussion on eligibility). Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not cause an adverse change to known historical resources. The regional area is known to contain historical resources and therefore, the potential exists that unknown historical resources could be present and could be encountered during excavation activities. To avoid impacts to unknown historical resources, the project would be required to implement Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 which would require that a certified archaeologist and a Native American monitor(s) be onsite to observe grading activities, and salvage and catalogue historical resources, if encountered. With implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2, potential impacts to tribal resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT TRC-2: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

The EIC records search identified one cultural resource (P-33-001436) recorded in the northwest portion of the project site, adjacent to Bluff Street. The NAHC Sacred Lands File Search was negative. The grading activities associated with construction of the proposed project would encounter native soils and could have the potential to encounter unknown historical resources. Because tribal cultural resources are known to occur within the region, there is the potential that tribal cultural resources could be encountered during excavation activities. To avoid adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources that could be encountered during construction, it is recommended that a qualified archaeologist and Native American monitor be retained to monitor grading of the site. Should the archaeologist and Native American Monitor find the potential exists for impacts to tribal cultural resources, the archaeologist and Native American Monitor should have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect,

or halt grading activity to allow recovery of tribal cultural resources and report on the findings. With implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 (Monitoring) and CR-2 (Reporting), potential impacts to unknown tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

The City of Norco initiated tribal consultation for the purposes of AB 52 and SB 18 for the proposed project on July 26, 2023. A listing of 26 tribal individuals representing 21 tribes were consulted as part of the AB 52/SB 18 consultation. A total of 12 tribes provided responses to the consultation request, of which four indicated they did not want to consult and eight indicated that they wanted to consult. The tribes that requested to consult include the Cahuilla Band of Indians, Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation, Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians, and Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians. Consultation is currently underway with these tribes. A total of nine tribes, after multiple contact attempts, have not responded to the consultation request.

In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5; Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5; Public Resources Code Section 5097.94 and Section 5097.98 must be followed. Therefore, with compliance with Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2, potential impacts to historical resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

4.18.6 REFERENCES

City of Norco General Plan, *Land Use Element*. Update Adoption Date: October 7, 2009.

City of Norco Municipal Code, Title 18 – Zoning. Updated November 17, 2021.

VCS Environmental, *JD Ranch Residential Project Phase 1 Cultural Resources Assessment*, February 2024.

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4.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

4.19.1 INTRODUCTION

This section analyzes the project’s potential impacts on utilities and service systems. The analysis contains a description of existing utilities systems and services, the regulatory setting for utilities and service systems, and a discussion of anticipated demand on utilities and services from the proposed project.

4.19.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

WATER SERVICE

The project site is within the service area of the City of Norco Water Utility Division. The City owns and operates a potable domestic drinking water system, wastewater collection system, and recycled water system within the City’s boundaries and provides management through its Water Utility Division. The City is a member agency of the Chino Desalter Authority (CDA) and the Western Riverside County Regional Wastewater Authority (WRCRWA).

Water Supplies

The City’s primary source of water is pumped groundwater from the Temescal and Chino water basins. Currently, local groundwater from the Temescal Groundwater Basin contributes about 30% of the City’s annual water production. In addition to its local groundwater supply, the City entered into an agreement with the Western Municipal Water District (WMWD) to purchase treated groundwater to meet its annual water demands. The City purchases treated groundwater water from the CDA and the Arlington Desalter. As a member agency of the CDA, the City has agreed to purchase 1,000 AF annually of treated groundwater and actively participates in regional management of the authority and Chino Basin. The City also has agreements and connections with the City of Corona to obtain imported water from MWD, City of Riverside to obtain groundwater, and Jurupa Community Services District that can provide treated groundwater. Existing and projected water supplies for the City of Norco service area are shown in [Table 4.19-1, Existing and Projected Water Supplies](#). Imported water and groundwater water supplies are projected to remain consistent up to 2045.

Table 4.19-1
Existing and Projected Water Supplies

Water Supply	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Purchased or Imported Water	9,900	9,900	9,900	9,900	9,900	9,900
Groundwater	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
Total	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400

Water Demands

The City’s water service area serves the 27,564 City residents (City of Norco Housing Element, 2020). The City contains a State of California prison which houses a population of approximately 3,000 inmates; these individuals are included in the overall population. The City currently serves approximately 7,500 municipal connections and delivers approximately 6,400 AF annually to its customers (City of Norco 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, July 2021). The existing and projected

water supplies for different land uses in the service area are shown in [Table 4.19-2, *Land Use Water Demands*](#).

**Table 4.19-2
Land Use Water Demands**

Land Use	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Single-Family Residential	3,098	3,275	3,450	3,525	3,700	3,675
Multi-Family Residential	30	85	87	89	91	96
Commercial	1,267	1,300	1,350	1,400	1,450	1,500
Industrial	0	150	150	150	150	150
Institutional/Governmental	1,200	1,225	1,250	1,275	1,300	1,325
Total	5,595	6,035	6,287	6,439	6,691	6,746

Source: City of Norco, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan; July 1, 2020.

Urban Water Management Plan

Water Service providers such as the City of Norco are required to prepare and update their Urban Water Management Plans (UWMP) every five years. The UWMP identifies long-term resource planning to ensure that adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future water needs. The UWMP includes a water supply and demand assessment that compares the total water supply sources available to the water supplier with the long-term total projected water use over the next 20 years, in five-year increments, for a normal water year, a single dry water year, and a drought lasting multiple consecutive water years. The water service reliability assessment is based on regional and local planning programs that provide population projections within the service area of the urban water supplier. The most recent UWMP for the City of Norco was prepared in 2020 and subsequently adopted in 2021. Below is a comparison between the supply and demand within the City of Norco service area for the projected years between 2025 and 2045 under a normal water year, single dry year, and multiple dry years; refer to [Table 4.19-3, *Normal Year Demand Comparison*](#), [Table 4.19-4, *Single Dry Year Demand Comparison*](#), and [Table 4.19-5, *Multiple Dry Years Demand Comparison*](#).

**Table 4.19-3
Normal Year Demand Comparison (acre-feet per year)**

Unit	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Supply Totals	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Demand Totals	7,425	7,425	7,707	7,889	8,246
Difference	+6,975	+6,975	+6,693	+6,511	+6,154

City of Norco, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan; July 1, 2020.

**Table 4.19-4
Single Dry Year Demand Comparison (acre-feet per year)**

Unit	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Supply Totals	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Demand Totals	7,275	7,557	7,739	8,016	8,096
Difference	+7,125	+6,843	+6,661	+6,384	+6,304

City of Norco, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan; July 1, 2020.

Table 4.19-5
Multiple Dry Years Demand Comparison (acre-feet per year)

Unit	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
First Year					
Supply Totals	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Demand Totals	6,810	7,035	7,310	7,560	7,710
Difference	+7,590	+7,365	+7,090	+6,840	+6,690
Second Year					
Supply Totals	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Demand Totals	6,810	7,035	7,310	7,560	7,710
Difference	+7,590	+7,365	+7,090	+6,840	+6,690
Third Year					
Supply Totals	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Demand Totals	6,810	7,035	7,310	7,560	7,710
Difference	+7,590	+7,365	+7,090	+6,840	+6,690
Fourth Year					
Supply Totals	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Demand Totals	6,810	7,035	7,310	7,560	7,710
Difference	+7,590	+7,365	+7,090	+6,840	+6,690
Fifth Year					
Supply Totals	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Demand Totals	6,810	7,035	7,310	7,560	7,710
Difference	+7,590	+7,365	+7,090	+6,840	+6,690
City of Norco, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan; July 1, 2020.					

As shown in the Tables above, the City of Norco would have 100% water reliability normal year, single dry year, and multiple dry years for years 2025 to 2045, because of a diversified supply and conservation measures. The Tables above show that there would be available water supplies based on projected water supplies and projected water demands within the City of Norco service area.

Water System Infrastructure

The project site will include an onsite water distribution system; refer to [Figure 3-16, Proposed Water Plan](#). The existing water infrastructure surrounding the project site includes 12-inch water mains along Bluff Street and River Road. Additionally, located on the project site is an existing City of Norco operating groundwater well (Lots 58 and 59; refer to [Figure 3-9, Tentative Tract Map](#), Existing Conditions Note 19). Adjacent to the project site towards the north are two above-ground reservoirs and a pump station that are owned and operated by the City of Norco (this parcel is depicted on [Figure 3-9, Tentative Tract Map](#), as “Not A Part”).

WASTEWATER SERVICE

The City of Norco Public Works Department and Western Riverside County Regional Wastewater Authority (WRCRWA) provide sewer system services to the City. The City of Norco owns and operates approximately 120 miles of sanitary sewer collection system facilities that include 12 lift stations and

approximately 2,206 manholes. Wastewater flows are conveyed from the project site and vicinity through the Norco sewer collection facilities to the WRCRWA tertiary wastewater treatment facility. The City of Norco owns 2.5 million gallons per day (MGD) of conveyance capacity and 2.7 MGD of treatment capacity at the WRCRWA facility. Norco has an average daily flow of approximately 1.8 MGD.

The WRCRWA plant was originally constructed in 1998 and recently completed an expansion to nearly double treatment capacity to 14 MGD. The facility treats influent to tertiary standards, meeting all Title 22 requirements for recycled water. Currently, treatment plant effluent is discharged to the Santa Ana River. According to the 2018-2022 Countywide Water and Wastewater Municipal Services Review by the Riverside Local Agency Formation Commission (RLAFC), both the City's water and sewer infrastructure systems are aging, but no immediate or long-term capacity issues were identified.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The Pre-Developed Hydrology Condition on the project site is shown previously in [Figure 4.10-1, *Pre-Developed Condition Hydrology Map*](#). In the existing condition, the site is open space and was a former dairy farm. Approximately 1.80 acres (.046) of 34.48 acres site consists of impervious surfaces (e.g., buildings). The site is relatively flat. However, surface water drains from northeast to southwest to a sump. There is an existing 54-inch storm drain along River Road; refer to [Figure 3-9, *Tentative Tract Map*](#).

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Waste hauling services in Norco are provided by Waste Management of the Inland Empire (City of Norco n.d.). No landfills are located in Norco; instead, municipal solid waste is disposed of at the El Sobrante Landfill near Corona, approximately 10.5 miles southeast from the project site. El Sobrante Landfill is privately-owned and operated by USA Waste Services of California, Inc. and accepts construction/demolition, contaminated soil, mixed municipal, and tire waste (California Department of Resources and Recycling and Recovery [CalRecycle] 2019a). Additional landfills in western Riverside County that may receive waste generated in Norco include the Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill near Beaumont, approximately 33 miles east from the project site. Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill is owned and operated by the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources. The landfill accepts agricultural, asbestos, ash, construction/demolition, contaminated soil, green materials, industrial, liquid waste, metals, mixed municipal, sludge (biosolids), tires, and wood wastes (CalRecycle 2019b and 2019c).

The El Sobrante Landfill is permitted to receive 16,054 tons of solid waste per day and has a maximum permitted capacity of 209,910,000 cubic yards with a remaining capacity of 50.1 million tons per the 2021 Annual Report.¹ The Lamb Canyon Landfill is permitted to receive 5,000 tons of solid waste per day and has a maximum permitted capacity of 21.1 million tons with a remaining capacity of 7.3 million

¹ Riverside County Department of Waste Resources, NOP Correspondence with Katherine Avila, Urban/Regional Planner I, dated July 19, 2023. ([Appendix A2](#))

tons.¹ The Badlands Landfill is permitted to receive 5,000 tons of solid waste per day and has a maximum permitted capacity of 82.3 million tons with a remaining capacity of 3.5 million tons.¹

UTILITY SERVICE SYSTEMS

Electricity

Southern California Edison (SCE) provides electricity to Norco, including the project site. SCE maintains substations and distribution lines in the region, including the Norco Substation (ID No. SS3358), located approximately 2.27 miles northeast of the project site in Norco, and the Delgen Substation (ID No. SS1299), located approximately 2.2 miles southeast of the project site in Corona.² SCE overhead transmission lines are located within the project site and along River Road.

Natural Gas

Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) provides natural gas service to approximately six million residential and business customers across 20,000 square miles of southern California, including Norco (SoCalGas 2019). The project site is located in SoCalGas's Southern Zone. An existing natural gas transmission line owned and operated by SoCalGas provides service to Norco, including the project site. The transmission line runs northwest along River Street, where it joins with a high-pressure natural gas distribution line that runs east along Bluff Street and Vine Street and concludes at Fifth Street and Hamner Avenue.

Telecommunications

Numerous private local, wireless, and cellular phone service providers serve the Norco area and the project site, though Spectrum (a Charter Cable company) is the primary telecommunications service provider (City of Norco n.d.). Existing telecommunications lines are located on the project site and along River Road.

4.17.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Clean Water Act

The Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), enacted by Congress in 1972 and amended several times since, is the primary Federal law regulating water quality in the United States and forms the basis for several State and local laws throughout the country. The CWA established the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. The CWA gave the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to implement federal pollution control programs, such as setting water quality standards for contaminants in surface water, establishing wastewater and effluent discharge limits for various industry contaminants in surface water, establishing wastewater and effluent discharge limits for various industry categories, and imposing requirements for controlling nonpoint-source pollution. Under the Act, the EPA is authorized to set wastewater standards and runs the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. Under the NPDES program, permits are required for all new developments that discharge directly into Waters of the United States. The CWA requires treatment of all effluent before it is discharged into surface waters.

² Conservation Biology Institute: Data Basin (California Energy Commission GIS Unit), Electric Substations, California, <<https://databasin.org/maps/new/#datasets=20502139197843f7b1b2751a427d9f68>>. Accessed on March 4, 2024.

At the federal level, the CWA is administered by the USEPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). At the State and regional levels in California, the act is administered and enforced by the SWRCB and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs).

Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) regulates public water systems that supply drinking water (42 USC Section 300(f) et seq.; 40 CFR Section 141 et seq.). The primary objective of the federal SDWA is to ensure that water from the tap is potable (safe and satisfactory for drinking, cooking, and hygiene). The main components of the federal SDWA are to:

- Ensure that water from the tap is potable.
- Prevent contamination of groundwater aquifers that are the main source of drinking water for a community.
- Regulate the discharge of wastes into underground injection wells pursuant to the Underground Injection Control program (see 40 CFR Section 144).
- Regulate distribution systems.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), enacted in 1976, is the principal federal law in the United States governing the disposal of solid waste and hazardous waste. Congress enacted RCRA to address the increasing problems the nation faced from its growing volume of municipal and industrial waste. RCRA was an amendment of the Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965. The act set national goals for:

- Protecting human health and the natural environment from the potential hazards of waste disposal.
- Energy conservation and natural resources.
- Reducing the amount of waste generated through source reduction and recycling.
- Maintaining environmental health standards.
- Ensuring the management of waste in an environmentally sound manner.

The RCRA program is a joint federal and state endeavor, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) providing basic requirements that states then adopt, adapt, and enforce. RCRA is now most widely known for the regulations promulgated under it that set standards for the treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous waste in the U.S.

Energy Star Program

In 1992, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced Energy Star as a voluntary labeling program to identify and promote energy-efficient products to reduce GHG emissions. The program applies to major household appliances, lighting, computers, and building components, such as windows, doors, roofs, and heating and cooling systems. Under this program, appliances that meet specification for maximum energy use established under the program are certified to display the Energy Star label. In 1996, the EPA joined with the Energy Department to expand the program, which now includes qualifying commercial and industrial buildings as well as homes.

STATE

Senate Bills 221 and 610

Senate Bills (SB) 221 and 610 were signed into law in 2001 and took effect January 1, 2002. The two bills amended State law to better link information on water supply availability to certain land use decisions by cities and counties. The two companion bills provide a regulatory forum that requires more collaborative planning between local water suppliers and cities and counties. SB 221 and SB 610 reports are generated and adopted by the public water supplier (PWS). SB 610 requires a detailed report regarding water availability and planning for additional water suppliers that is included with the environmental document for specified projects.

Executive Order B-29-15

In response to the ongoing drought in California, Executive Order (EO) B-29-15 (April 2015) set a goal of achieving a statewide reduction in potable urban water usage of 25% relative to water use in 2013. The term of the EO was extended through February 28, 2016, although many of the directives have since become permanent water efficiency standards and requirements. The EO includes specific directives that set strict limits on water usage in the state. In response to EO B-29-15, the California Department of Water Resources has modified and adopted a revised version of the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance that, among other changes, significantly increases the requirements for landscape water use efficiency and broadens its applicability to include new development projects with smaller landscape areas.

California Safe Drinking Water Act

The California SDWA (Health & Safety Code Section 116270 et seq.; CCR Title 22 Section 64400 et seq.) regulates drinking water more rigorously than the Federal law. Like the Federal SDWA, California requires that primary and secondary maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) be established for pollutants in drinking water; however, some California MCLs are more protective of health. The CA SDWA also requires the SWRCB to issue domestic water supply permits to public water systems. Implementation of the Federal SDWA is delegated to California, and the SWRCB enforces the Federal and State SDWAs and regulates more than 7,500 public water systems. The SWRCB's Division of Drinking Water oversees the State's comprehensive Drinking Water Program (DWP). The DWP is authorized to issue public water system permits.

Urban Water Management Planning Act

The Urban Water Management Planning Act (UWMP) Act was passed in 1983 and codified as Water Code Sections 10610 through 10657. Since its adoption in 1983, the UWMP Act has been amended on several occasions. Some of the more notable amendments include an amendment in 2004, which required additional discussion of transfer and exchange opportunities, non-implemented demand management measures, and planned water supply projects. Also, in 2005, another amendment required water use projections (required by Water Code Section 10631) to include projected water use for single-family and multiple-family residential housing needed for lower-income households. In addition, Government Code Section 65589.7 was amended to require local governments to provide the adopted housing element to water and sewer providers. The UWMP Act requires "every urban water supplier providing water for municipal purposes to more than 3,000 customers or supplying more than 3,000 acre-feet of water annually, to prepare and adopt, in accordance with prescribed

requirements, an urban water management plan.” Urban water suppliers must file these plans with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) every five years describing and evaluating reasonable and practical efficient water uses, reclamation, and conservation activities. As required by the *Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Urban Water Conservation in California* and Assembly Bill 11 (Filante, 1991), the 2005 UWMP Act incorporated water conservation initiatives, and a Water Shortage Contingency Plan.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

In September 2014, the Governor signed legislation requiring that California’s critical groundwater resources be sustainably managed by local agencies. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) gives local agencies the power to sustainably manage groundwater and requires groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) to be developed for medium- and high-priority groundwater basins, as defined by the Department of Water Resources (DWR). The project site overlies the Chino Groundwater Subbasin (Basin) which has been designated by DWR as very low priority.

State of California Water Recycling Act

Enacted in 1991, the Water Recycling Act established water recycling as a State priority. The Water Recycling Act encourages municipal wastewater treatment districts to implement recycling programs to reduce local water demands.

State Efficiency Standards

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 contains the California Building Standards, including the California Plumbing Code (Part 5), which promotes water conservation. CCR Title 20 addresses Public Utilities and Energy and includes appliance efficiency standards that promote water plumbing fixtures in structures:

- CCR Title 20 Section 1604(g) establishes efficiency standards that give the maximum flow rate of all new showerheads, lavatory faucets, sink faucets, and tub spout diverters;
- CCR Title 20 Section 1606 prohibits the sale of fixtures that do not comply with established efficiency regulations;
- CCR Title 24 Sections 25352(i) and (j) address pipe insulation requirements, which can reduce water used before hot water reaches equipment or fixtures. Insulation of water-heating systems is also required; and
- Health and Safety Code Section 17921.3 requires low-flush toilets and urinals in virtually all buildings.

California Integrated Waste Management Act

The California Integrated Waste Management Act (CIWMA) of 1989 is the result of two pieces of legislation, AB 939 and SB 1322. The CIWMA was intended to minimize the amount of solid waste that must be disposed of by transformation and land disposal by requiring all cities and counties to divert 25% of all solid waste from landfill facilities by January 1, 1995, and 50% by January 1, 2000.

The CIWMA created the California Integrated Waste Management Board (now known as CalRecycle). CalRecycle is the agency designated to oversee, manage, and track California’s 92 million tons of waste

generated each year. CalRecycle provides grants and loans to help cities, counties, businesses, and organizations meet the state's waste reduction, reuse, and recycling goals. In addition to many programs and incentives, CalRecycle promotes the use of new technologies for the practice of diverting resources away from landfills. CalRecycle is responsible for ensuring that waste management programs are primarily carried out through local enforcement agencies.

California Green Building Standards Code

The standards included in the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code) (Title 24, Part 11 of the California Code of Regulations) became effective on January 1, 2023. The CALGreen Code was developed to enhance the design and construction of buildings, and the use of sustainable construction practices, through planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, and environmental air quality (California Building Standards Commission 2022).

Chapters 4 and 5 of the 2022 CALGreen Code require residential and nonresidential developments to comply with a local water efficient landscape ordinance or the current California Department of Water Resources' Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, whichever is more stringent. Both chapters require all residential and nonresidential construction contractors to reduce construction waste and demolition debris by 65%. Code requirements include preparing a construction waste management plan that identifies the materials to be diverted from disposal by efficient usage, recycling, reuse on the project, or salvage for future use or sale; determining whether materials will be sorted on-site or mixed; and identifying diversion facilities where the materials collected will be taken. The code also specifies that the amount of materials diverted should be calculated by weight or volume, but not by both. In addition, the 2022 CALGreen Code requires that 100% of trees, stumps, rocks, and associated vegetation and soils resulting primarily from land clearing be reused or recycled.

Senate Bill 1601 (Disposal Management System Act of 2008)

The Legislature amended the California Integrated Waste Management Act in 2007 through SB 1016. SB 1016 maintains the 50% diversion rate requirement established by AB 939 but established a per capita disposal measurement system to make the process of goal measurement, as established by AB 939, simpler, timelier, and more accurate. The new disposal-based indicator—the per capita disposal rate—uses only two factors: a jurisdiction's population (or in some cases employment) and its disposal, as reported by disposal facilities.

SB 1016 also requires CalRecycle to issue an order of compliance if it finds that the jurisdiction has failed to make a good faith effort to implement its source reduction and recycling element or its household hazardous waste element pursuant to a specified procedure. CalRecycle is required to comply with certain requirements in making this determination, including considering the extent to which the jurisdiction has maintained its per capita disposal rate.

Assembly Bill 341

Assembly Bill 341 (AB 341) (Chapter 476) increased the statewide solid waste diversion goal to 75% by 2020. The law, passed in 2011, mandates recycling for businesses producing four or more cubic yards of solid waste per week. This commercial recycling law took effect July 1, 2012.

Assembly Bill 802

Assembly Bill 802 (AB 802) (Building Energy Benchmarking Program) requires owners of large commercial and multi-family buildings to report energy use to the California Energy Commission by June 1 annually.

Assembly Bill 939

Assembly Bill 939 (AB 939) (California Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989; Public Resources Code 40050 et seq.) established an integrated waste-management system that focused on source reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal of waste. AB 939 required every California city and county to divert 50% of its waste from landfills by the year 2000. Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by comparing solid waste disposal rates for a jurisdiction with target disposal rates; actual rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939. AB 939 also requires California counties to show 15 years of disposal capacity for all jurisdictions in the county or show a plan to transform or divert its waste.

Assembly Bill 1327

Assembly Bill 1327 (AB 1327) (California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act, Public Resources Code §§ 42900 et seq.) requires areas to be set aside for collecting and loading recyclable materials in development projects. The act required the California Integrated Waste Management Board to develop a model ordinance for adoption by any local agency requiring adequate areas for collection and loading of recyclable materials as part of development projects. Local agencies are required to adopt the model or an ordinance of their own.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 20

On November 3, 1976, the CEC adopted the *Regulations for Appliance Efficiency Standards Relating to Refrigerators, Refrigerator-Freezers and Freezers and Air Conditioners*, which were the first energy-efficiency standards for appliances. The appliance efficiency regulations have been updated several times by the Commission and the most current version is the *2016 Appliance Efficiency Regulations*, adopted January 2017, and now includes almost all types of appliances and lamps that use electricity, natural gas as well as plumbing fixtures. The authority for the CEC to control the energy-efficiency of appliances is detailed in California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 20, Division 2, Chapter 4, Article 4, Sections 1601-1609.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 6

The California Energy Commission (CEC) is responsible for implementing the CCR Title 24, Part 6: *California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings* (Title 24 Part 6) that were first established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. In 2008 the State set an energy-use reduction goal of zero-net-energy use of all new homes by 2020 and the CEC was mandated to meet this goal through revisions to the Title 24, Part 6 regulations.

The Title 24 standards are updated on a three-year schedule and since 2008 the standards have been incrementally moving to the 2020 goal of the zero-net-energy use. The 2022 Title 24 standards are the current standards that went into effect on January 1, 2023.

According to the Title 24 Part 6 Fact Sheet, the CEC estimates that over 30 years the 2022 Title 24 standards will reduce 10 MMTCO₂e of GHG emissions, which is equivalent to taking nearly 2.2 million cars off the road for a year. For single-family homes, the CEC estimates that the 2022 Title 24 changes from using natural gas furnaces to electric heat pumps to heat new homes and would reduce net CO₂ emissions by 16,230 MTCO₂e per year, when compared to the 2019 Title 24 standards, which is equivalent of taking 3,641 gas cars off the road each year. The 2022 Title 24 standards will: (1) Increase onsite renewable energy generation; (2) Increases electric load flexibility to support grid reliability; (3) Reduces emissions from newly constructed buildings; (4) Reduces air pollution for improved public health; and (5) Encourages adoption of environmentally beneficial efficient electric technologies.

California Public Utilities Commission

The California Public Utilities Commission develops and implements policies for the telecommunication industry. The Communications Division is responsible for licensing, registration and the processing tariffs of local exchange carriers, competitive local carriers, and non-dominant interexchange carriers. It is also responsible for registration of wireless service providers and franchising of video service providers. The Division tracks compliance with commission decisions and monitors consumer protection and service issues and Commission reliability standards for safe and adequate service.

REGIONAL

Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan

The County of Riverside Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) was prepared in accordance with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, Chapter 1095 (AB 939). The CIWMP's components include the Countywide Summary Plan, the Countywide Siting Element, the Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE), the Household Hazardous Waste Element (HHWE) and Non-Disposal Facility Element (NDFE).

The Summary Plan summarizes the steps needed to cooperatively implement programs among the County's jurisdictions to meet and maintain the 50% diversion mandates. The Siting Element demonstrates that there are at least 15 years of remaining solid waste disposal capacity to serve all the jurisdictions within the County. If there is not adequate capacity, a discussion of alternative disposal sites and additional diversion programs must be included in the Siting Element. The SRRE was developed separately by each Riverside County jurisdiction to analyze the local waste stream to determine where to focus diversion efforts, including programs and funding. The HHWE was developed by jurisdictions and provides a framework for recycling, treatment, and disposal practices for Household Hazardous Waste programs. The NDFE identifies and describes existing and proposed facilities, other than landfills and transformation facilities, requiring a solid waste permit to operate. Non-disposal facilities are also those facilities that will be used by a jurisdiction to meet its diversion goals. The Riverside County NDFE identifies and describes those non-disposal facilities that will be needed to implement the Riverside County SRRE.

LOCAL

City of Norco 2020 Urban Water Management Plan

The California Water Code, Division 6, Part 2.6, Section 10610 et. seq. (California Urban Water Management Planning Act) requires any municipal water supplier serving over 3,000 connections or

3,000 AFY to prepare a UWMP. The City of Norco 2020 UWMP characterizes historical water supplies and use, projects future demand and supply through 2045, and identifies supply augmentation projects and programs, cumulative water demand projections, and water shortage contingency plans. Supply and demand projections are included for normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year scenarios.

City of Norco Sewer System Management Plan

On May 2, 2006, the California State Water Resources Control Board adopted Order No. 2006-0003, Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) for Wastewater Collection Agencies. The order applies to all federal and state agencies, municipalities, counties and other public agencies that own or operate sanitary sewer systems greater than one mile in length that collect or convey untreated or partially treated wastewater to a publicly owned treatment facility in the State of California. The City of Norco City Council adopted its original Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) in 2009. The SSMP was prepared in compliance with State Order 2006-0003 issued May 2, 2006, to all publicly owned wastewater collection agencies owning more than one mile of pipeline. Included in the State Order is a requirement that all agencies audit their SSMPs every two years to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and staff member's compliance with the State Order.

City of Norco Emergency Water Conservation Program

The City of Norco Emergency Water Conservation Program is codified in the Norco Municipal Code Section 14.04.220. The Emergency Water Conservation Program establishes a five-level water shortage contingency plan, under which the Norco City Council may require increasingly stringent water conservation.

City of Norco Municipal Code

The following Norco Municipal Code sections would apply to the project:

- **6.42.270 Separation of Recyclable and Organic Materials, Storage, and Containers.** This section outlines the requirements for owners, operators, and/or occupants of any premises, business establishment, industry, or property for the safe and sanitary storage of, all solid waste, designated recyclables, organic materials, and compost accumulated on the property.
- **6.42.310 Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling.** This section specifies the requirements to submit a construction and demolition waste management report on a waste management report form approved by the City, that must meet the requirements of the City and California Green Building Standards Code.
- **13.08.010 Underground Utility Installation.** This section specifies the requirement that all facilities and wires for supplying and distributing electrical energy and service, including telephone, telegraph, and cable television service, to be constructed in the city shall be installed underground.
- **14.04.150 Water Utility Policy – New Development and Main Extensions.** This section outlines the requirements of new development to pay a water infrastructure facilities fee that is intended to provide funds for the construction of facilities to ensure a continuing supply of potable water including pump stations, water reservoir facilities, wells, treatment facilities and waterlines. Main extensions shall generally be located on dedicated City streets or on rights-of-way granted to the City of Norco or the water main location.

- **14.07.160 Sewer Utility Policy – New Development and Main Extensions.** This section outlines the requirements of new development to pay a wastewater infrastructure facilities fee for the construction of facilities to ensure a continuing collection and treatment of wastewater including pipelines, manholes, lift stations, siphons, force mains and treatment facilities. It also outlines the provisions for extending the collection and transmission mains. Main extensions shall generally be located within dedicated City streets or in rights-of-way granted to the City of Norco or the sewer main location. Transmission collection mains shall be paid for jointly by the Sewer Utility and the developer extending the main. However, for this project all transmission collection mains will be paid by the developer.
- **15.08.020 Green Building Code Adoption.** This section requires that the rules, regulations, provisions, and conditions set forth in the 2016 California Green Building Standards Code are adopted as the green building code of the City of Norco.
- **15.70 City of Norco Stormwater/Urban Runoff Management and Discharge Controls.** This section ensures the future health, safety and general welfare of City residents by reducing pollutants in stormwater discharges, regulating illicit connections and discharges to the storm drain system and regulating non-stormwater discharges to the storm drain system.
- **15.110 Small Residential Solar Energy System.** This section establishes an expedited, streamlined solar permitting process to facilitate timely and cost-effective installations of small residential rooftop solar energy systems. This chapter is designed to encourage the use of solar systems by removing unreasonable barriers, minimizing costs to property owners and the City, and expanding the ability of property owners to install solar energy systems, all while protecting the public health and safety. (Ord. 994 Sec. 2, 2015)
- **18.55.08 Xeriscape Requirements for Landscape and Irrigation Plans.** This section specifies the design guidelines for new development applications for landscape and irrigation plans to demonstrate an aggregate reduction in the demand for and consumption of water.

City of Norco General Plan

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The following energy and water policies from the City of Norco General Plan Conservation Element pertain to utilities and service systems:

- Policy 2.2.1a: Continue to promote water conservation through the use of xeriscape designs in new development. Additionally, public spaces shall incorporate xeriscape landscaping where feasible.
- Policy 2.2.1d: Ensure that there are adequate increases in water production and distribution capabilities to meet future growth demands.
- Policy 2.3.2a: Require the installation of flow restriction fixtures in all new development.
- Policy 2.9.15: Building Utility Efficiency Policy. In addition to compliance with the California Green Building Code requirements, encourage innovation in residential and non-residential design to further minimize ultimate consumption of energy and water resources including the development of green roofs.

HOUSING ELEMENT

The following are relevant policies from the City of Norco General Plan Housing Element:

- Policy 6.3: Promote renewable energy generation and water conservation and efficiency in new development of housing.
- Policy 6.5: Encourage new residential development to include energy efficiency measures beyond the minimum standards of Title 24.

4.17.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **USS-1:** Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- **USS-2:** Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?
- **USS-3:** Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?
- **USS-4:** 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?
- **USS-5:** Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

4.17.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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

A Traffic Mitigation Plan would be prepared and approved by the City to ensure that offsite utility construction will be staged to ensure the safety of pedestrian, equestrians and vehicular traffic as well as ensure that emergency access is maintained throughout construction (please see Mitigation Measure TRANS-1).

WATER SERVICE

The City of Norco would provide water service to the project. To provide domestic water service to the project site, a new water distribution main would be added to the interior of the development. The project would construct an onsite 8-inch water line system that would connect to existing 12-inch water mains along Bluff Street and River Road; refer to [Figure 3-16, Proposed Water Plan](#). There would

be new water meters for each property, hydrants and other appurtenances as needed based on the final design. Construction connections to offsite water service utility systems would involve minor trenching. Construction of the water utility service systems requires coordination with the City of Norco to ensure that water service systems would comply with construction standards and ensure that any work that may affect services to the existing water lines would be coordinated with the City and that adverse impacts to the environment are avoided. Impacts related to installation are relatively short-term and would cease once installation is complete. The project would comply with the Norco Municipal Code Section 14.04.150 (New Development and Main Extensions) and the payment of a Water Infrastructure Facilities Fees.

With compliance with the Norco Municipal Code Section 14.04.150 and payment of Water Infrastructure Facilities Fees, potential impacts to water service would be less than significant.

WASTEWATER SERVICE

The City of Norco would provide wastewater service to the project. To provide wastewater service to the project site, the project proposes to construct a gravity main collection system that will collect at a new sewer lift station and then sewer force main that would connect to an existing sewer manhole within River Road, located south of the project site, between Trail Street and Sundance Lane; refer to [Figure 3-17, Proposed Sewer Plan](#). The use of a sewer lift station helps reduce the amount of import fill and eliminate the need for perimeter retaining walls. Construction connections to offsite wastewater service systems would involve excavation and minor trenching. Construction of the sewer utility service systems would require coordination with the City of Norco to ensure that wastewater service systems would comply with construction and ensure that any work that may affect services to the existing sewer lines would be coordinated with the City and that adverse impacts to the environment are avoided. Impacts related to installation are relatively short-term and would cease once installation is complete. The project would comply with the Norco Municipal Code Section 14.07.160 (New Development and Main Extensions) and the payment of a Wastewater Infrastructure Facilities Fee.

With compliance with the Norco Municipal Code Section 14.07.160, construction BMPs and payment of a Water Infrastructure Facilities Fee, potential impacts to wastewater service would be less than significant.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

In accordance with Norco Municipal Code Chapter 15.70 (City of Norco Stormwater/Urban Runoff Management and Discharge Controls), the project would implement a Water Quality Management Plan that would include structural BMPs to retain and infiltrate stormwater runoff, as well as nonstructural BMPs for good housekeeping, including requirements related to storage of household chemicals, street sweeping and storm drain stenciling. A series of storm drain lines (24-inch RCP and 36-inch RCP) and curbs and gutters would convey stormwater flows to a 0.90-acre water quality detention basin. The proposed project would be graded to allow all lots to drain to the public street. Cross-lot drainage would not be provided. The proposed storm management improvements would connect to existing storm management facilities within the project area; refer to [Figure 3-15, Proposed Storm Drain Plan](#). The existing storm drain catch basin at the intersection of Bluff Street and River Road would be relocated to the southern corner of the site and would be replaced as part of the widening of River Road. Prior to construction, a Final Hydrology Study would be approved by the City of Norco which would demonstrate that onsite drainage facilities are designed and sized adequately to convey

and reduce runoff such that onsite and offsite drainage capacity would not be exceeded in a design storm. With approval of the Final Hydrology Report and implementation of the project drainage plan, potential stormwater management impacts would be less than significant.

ELECTRICAL SERVICE

Southern California Edison (SCE) would provide electrical service to the project. The operations-related electricity usage was calculated in the CalEEMod model run that is detailed in Section 4.5, *Energy*, of this EIR. The proposed project would consume 96,232 kilowatt-hours per year of electricity. This equates to 0.0006% of the electricity consumed annually in the County of Riverside. As such, the operations-related electricity use would be nominal, when compared to current electricity usage rates in the County. The proposed project would comply with all Federal, State, and County requirements related to the consumption of electricity, which includes CCR Title 24, Part 6 *Building Energy Efficiency Standards* and CCR Title 24, Part 11: *California Green Building Standards*. The CCR Title 24, Part 6 and Part 11 standards require numerous energy-efficiency measures to be incorporated into the proposed residences, including enhanced insulation, use of energy efficient lighting and appliances as well as requiring a variety of other energy-efficiency measures to be incorporated into the development. In addition, the Norco Municipal Code Chapter 15.110 (Small Residential Solar Energy System) encourages the project to install solar energy systems in order to minimize costs to property owners. The proposed project would be designed to install electrical lines underground. All electricity connections would be installed to meet SCE's requirements; therefore, existing and planned electricity capacity and electricity supplies would be sufficient to support the proposed project's electricity demand. Thus, impacts with regard to electrical supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant. No mitigation measures would be required.

NATURAL GAS

The Southern California Gas Company would provide natural gas service to the project. Operation of the proposed project would result in increased consumption of natural gas at the project site. The proposed project would consume 1,952 MBTU per year of natural gas. This equates to 0.0045% of the natural gas consumed annually in Riverside County. As such, the operations-related natural gas use would be nominal, when compared to current natural gas usage rates in the County.

The proposed project would comply with all Federal, State, and County requirements related to the consumption of natural gas, that includes CCR Title 24, Part 6 *Building Energy Efficiency Standards* and CCR Title 24, Part 11: *California Green Building Standards*. The CCR Title 24, Part 6 and Part 11 standards require numerous energy efficiency measures to be incorporated into the proposed structures, including enhanced insulation as well as use of efficient natural gas appliances and HVAC units. Therefore, the proposed project will be designed and built to minimize natural gas use and that existing and planned natural gas capacity and natural gas supplies would be sufficient to support the proposed project's natural gas demand. All natural gas connections would be installed to meet Southern California Gas Company's requirements. Thus, impacts with regard to natural gas supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.

COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Numerous private local, wireless, and cellular phone service providers serve the Norco area and could provide communication service to the project. Existing telecommunications lines are located along River Road and Bluff Street. The long-term operation of the project would require construction of a

new communication system on the project site. As part of the construction activities for the proposed project, new onsite utility service systems would be constructed that would connect to existing utility systems currently provided in the project area. Additionally, existing utility lines along River Road and Bluff Street would be relocated underground. The relocation, routing, and sizing of the communication system would be required to be coordinated with the communication provider to ensure that the long-term operational needs of the project are met. No adverse long-term communication impacts would occur. The onsite utilities would be exposed during grading activities and would not result in additional impacts beyond those associated with grading exposure. Construction connections to offsite utility systems would involve minor trenching. Potential impacts would be short-term and would cease once installation is complete. Each communication service provider would coordinate on the utility design and installation to ensure compliance with construction standards; connections would be installed to meet communication service provider’s requirements, thus avoiding adverse impacts to the environment. Therefore, less than significant impacts would occur to communication systems.

Mitigation Measures: Mitigation Measure TRANS-1 is required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

IMPACT USS-2: Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

The City of Norco would provide water service to the project. To provide domestic water service to the project site, the project would construct an onsite 8-inch water line system that would connect to existing 12-inch water mains along Bluff Street and River Road; refer to [Figure 3-16, Proposed Water Plan](#).

The estimated water demand for the proposed project is shown in [Table 4.19-6, Estimated Water Demand](#).

Table 4.19-6
Estimated Water Demand

Land Use	Population	Demand Rate	Water Demand in Gallons Per Day ¹	Annual Water Demand
Residential	227	361 gallons per day per person	88,445	99-acre feet
Notes:				
¹ Domestic water use City of Norco Urban Water Management Plan Table 5 Baseline Per Capita Day.				

As shown in [Table 4.19-6](#), the project is estimated conservatively to have a water demand of 99-acre feet per year. The increase in demand would be an approximate 0.013 increase compared to the 2025 estimated demand of 7,425 acre-feet and an approximate increase of 0.012 in 2045. The increase in water demand would be nominal.

The City Urban Water Management Plan shows that there would be between 6,840 acre-feet and 7,590 acre-feet of additional water supplies over projected demands during multiple dry years between 2025 and 2045. The proposed project would increase water demand by 99 acre-feet per year. Based on available water supplies between 2025 and 2045, there would be adequate water supplies for the project.

To help reduce water demands, the project would comply with all requirements of CALGreen, as adopted by Norco Municipal Code Section 15.08.020 (Green Building Code Adoption) as it pertains to maximum flow rates for plumbing fixtures, such as toilets, showerheads, and faucets. Proposed residences would also include individual unit water-use monitoring. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with the Norco Municipal Code Section 18.55.08 (Xeriscape Requirements for Landscape and Irrigation Plans) and the principles of the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance that requires improvements in the efficiency of water use in existing and new urban irrigated landscapes in California. The proposed project would be subject to this ordinance and would be required to implement water-efficient landscaping design and water conserving irrigation features within the project site. At this time, there is no recycled water proposed for the project. However, there are recycled pipes in both River Road and Bluff Street, and they would need to be verified for the availability of reclaimed water with the City for the perimeter open space lots (Lots D and E). The final standards which would ensure water efficient facilities and water conservation measures are incorporated into the project. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to coordinate with the City of Norco and secure a Will Serve Letter which would indicate that the City of Norco would have the ability to provide adequate water service to the proposed project.

The City of Norco Urban Water Management Plans identified there would be adequate water supplies for the proposed project and 100% reliability during normal wet year, single dry year and multiple dry years between 2025 and 2045. The project would also reduce water demand by complying with the requirements of CALGreen and the Norco Municipal Code. Potential impacts associated with providing adequate water supplies to the project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT USS-3: Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments?

The City of Norco would provide wastewater service to the project. The estimated wastewater demand for the proposed project is shown in Table 4.19-7, Estimated Wastewater Demand.

Table 4.19-7
Estimated Wastewater Demand

Land Use	Households	Demand Rate Per Household Per Day	Total Daily Demand
Residential	68	250 ¹ gpd	17,000 gpd
Abbreviations: gpd – gallons per day Notes: ¹ State Water Resources Control Board, Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems; April 18, 2023. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/owts/docs/adopted_owts_policy.pdf			

Wastewater treatment for the project would be provided by the Western Riverside County Regional Wastewater Authority (WRCRWA), a tertiary wastewater treatment facility. The total treatment capacity of the plant is 14 million gallons per day (mgd). The City of Norco owns 2.5 mgd of conveyance capacity and 2.7 mgd of treatment capacity at the Western Riverside County Regional Wastewater Authority. Norco has an average daily flow of approximately 1.8 mgd. The wastewater flows generated by the proposed project would increase wastewater flows by 17,000 gpd, a minimal increase of 0.006% of the total available treatment capacity of 2.7 mgd; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT USS-4: 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?

Solid waste disposal for the proposed project would be provided at the El Sobrante Landfill, Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill and/or the Badlands Landfill. The El Sobrante Landfill is permitted to receive 16,054 tons of solid waste per day and has a maximum permitted capacity of 209,910,000 cubic yards with a remaining capacity of 50.1 million tons per the 2021 Annual Report.³ The Lamb Canyon Landfill is permitted to receive 5,000 tons of solid waste per day and has a maximum permitted capacity of 21.1 million tons with a remaining capacity of 7.3 million tons.² The Badlands Landfill is permitted to receive 5,000 tons of solid waste per day and has a maximum permitted capacity of 82.3 million tons with a remaining capacity of 3.5 million tons.²

Waste includes the GHG emissions associated with the processing of waste from the proposed project as well as the GHG emissions from the waste once it is interred into a landfill. The analysis was based on the default CalEEMod waste generation rate of 82 tons of solid waste per year or approximately 450 pounds per day. The project's anticipated solid waste generation would account for less than 1% (0.045%) of the El Sobrante Landfill's daily and Lamb Canyon Landfill total amount of solid waste it is permitted to receive. Both landfills would have available capacity for the proposed project. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

The demolition phase would consist of demolishing the existing the milking barn, barns/sheds, and dairy related features that has been estimated to consist of 48,000 square feet of building space and approximately 90,000 square feet of pavement on the project site that would be removed. The pavement was analyzed based on an average of 4-inches thick and a weight of 145 pounds per square foot which results in 2,175 tons of pavement that would be removed from the project site. For the existing structures, CalEEMod utilizes a factor of 0.046 tons of debris of building material per building square foot. This results in 2,208 tons of debris that would be generated from demolition of the 48,000 square feet of existing building space. Therefore, the combined demolition of the structures and pavement area would require the removal of 4,383 tons of debris that would be exported from the site and would require a total of 433 haul truck trips and an average 14 haul truck trips per day. Each truck would have the capacity to hold 18 cubic yards of solid waste which would result in 258 pounds of construction solid waste, which would be well below the amount permitted per day at the El

³ Riverside County Department of Waste Resources, NOP Correspondence with Katherine Avila, Urban/Regional Planner I, dated July 19, 2023. ([Appendix A2](#))

Sobrante Landfill, the Lamb Canyon Landfill and the Badlands Landfill. The landfills would have available capacity for the project construction debris. Additionally, the handling of all debris and waste generated during construction of the project would be subject to the 2022 CALGreen requirements and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) requirements for salvaging, recycling, and reuse of materials from construction activity on the project site. Furthermore, pursuant to the Norco Municipal Code Section 6.42.310 (Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling), the project would be required to submit a construction and demolition waste management report on a form approved by the City, which must meet the requirements of the City and CALGreen. Potential project impacts related to solid waste generated during construction would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT USS-5: Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The proposed project would produce solid waste associated with the demolition and construction stages as well as during operation. Solid waste disposed for the proposed project would be provided at the El Sobrante Landfill or Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill. The project would be required to comply with Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste as well as CALGreen which requires a minimum of 65% of non-hazardous construction and demolition debris be recycled or salvaged. For operational waste, AB 939 requires all cities and counties to divert a minimum of 50% of all solid waste from landfills. Additionally, the project would comply with the Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Ordinance, codified in the Norco Municipal Code Section 6.42.270 (Separation of Recyclable and Organic Materials, Storage, and Containers), which regulates waste storage, collection, transfer, and disposal. In accordance with the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery disposal requirements. Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with the ability to comply with Federal, State, County or local regulations related to solid waste. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.19.6 REFERENCES

California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details - El Sobrante Landfill (33-AA-0217),
[<https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/2256?siteID=2402>].
Accessed on March 4, 2024.

Conservation Biology Institute: Data Basin (California Energy Commission GIS Unit), Electric Substations, California,
[<https://databasin.org/maps/new/#datasets=20502139197843f7b1b2751a427d9f68>].
Accessed on March 4, 2024.

City of Norco, *2020 Urban Water Management Plan*. July 1, 2020.

City of Norco, *General Plan 2021-2029 Housing Element*. Adopted October 6, 2021.

City of Norco General Plan, *Conservation Element*. Update Adoption Date: December 17, 2014.

City of Norco Public Works Department, Correspondence with Chad Blais, Director of Public Works, dated March 22, 2022. ([Appendix I](#))

Riverside County Department of Waste Resources, NOP Correspondence with Katherine Avila, Urban/Regional Planner I, dated July 19, 2023. ([Appendix A2](#))

State Water Resources Control Board, *Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems*; April 18, 2023. [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/owts/docs/adopted_owts_policy.pdf]. Accessed on March 8, 2024.

Vista Environmental, *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis – JD Ranch Residential Project*. March 15, 2024.

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4.20 WILDFIRE

4.20.1 INTRODUCTION

The following analysis addresses existing wildfire hazard conditions of the proposed project and surroundings, considers applicable goals and policies, identifies and analyzes environmental impacts, and recommends measures to reduce or avoid adverse impacts, as applicable.

4.20.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

A wildland fire is a non-structural fire that occurs in vegetative fuels. Wildland fires can occur in undeveloped areas and spread to urban areas where the landscape and structures are not designed, development is adjacent to open space or within proximity to wildland fuels or designated Fire Hazard Safety Zones.

The project site is surrounded on three sides with existing housing. The Santa Ana River is north of the site. According to the City of Norco *2050 General Plan Existing Conditions Analysis Report: Safety Analysis* (Figure 1 – Fire Hazard Severity Zones, WUI, and CPUC Fire Hazard Threat Mapping), the City property and the northerly portion of the project site, near the Santa Ana River Corridor, is identified as a fire hazard threat zone by the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC).

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) identifies the project site as not located in a Very High Fire Severity Zone; refer to [Figure 4.20-1, Regional Fire Hazard Severity Zones](#). The nearest Very High Fire Severity Zone is located approximately 1.5 miles southwesterly of the project, as shown in [Figure 4.20-1](#).

City of Norco




The City of Norco contracts with the County of Riverside Fire Department for fire protection, emergency medical services and rescue services. As shown in [Table 4.20-1, Project Area Fire Stations](#), there are three fire stations in the City of Norco. The nearest fire station would be Station 57 located approximately 0.75 miles from the project site.

Table 4.20-1
Project Area Fire Stations




Station Number	Address	Location from Project Site	Distance (Miles)	Staffing
Station 14	3902 Hillside Avenue Norco, CA 92860	East on Bluff Street toward Vine Avenue, left onto Corydon Avenue, left onto Hillside Avenue.	1.95	1-Three Person Type 1 Engine
Station 47	3367 Corydon Avenue Norco, CA 92860	East on Bluff Street toward Vine Avenue, left onto Vine Avenue, left onto Corydon Avenue.	3.13	1-Three Person Type 1 Engine
Station 57	1511 Hammer Avenue Norco, CA 92860	Southwest onto Bluff Street, left onto River Road, left onto N Lincoln Avenue, left onto Hamner Avenue.	0.75	1-Three Person Type 1 Engine



Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area (SRA)

	Very High	533,565 Acres
	High	37,864 Acres
	Moderate	63,549 Acres

Fire Protection Responsibility Areas (non-SRA)

	Federal Responsibility Area (FRA)
	Local Responsibility Area (LRA)
	Waterbody


Public Resources Code 4201-4204 directs the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to map fire hazard within State Responsibility Areas (SRA) based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors present, including areas where winds have been identified by the department as a major cause of wildfire spread. These zones, referred to as Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ), classify a wildland zone as Moderate, High, or Very High fire hazard based on the average hazard across the area included in the zone.

Access PDF versions of the maps at <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/fhsz-maps>. For more information, please visit the Frequently Asked Questions document for the 2023 Fire Hazard Severity Zones at <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/fhsz> or scan the QR code at right. If you have further questions, please call 916-633-7655 or email FHSZcomments@fire.ca.gov.



Scan or click the QR code for more information and to visit the interactive FHSZ viewer.

Source: CAL FIRE, Riverside County State Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones; June 15, 2023.

 - approximate Project Location



4.20.3 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

National Fire Protection Association Standards

The National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) is a global, non-profit organization that promotes safety standards, education, training, and advocacy on fire and electrical-related hazards. NFPA codes, standards, recommended practices, and guides are developed through a consensus standards development process approved by the American National Standards Institute. NFPA standards are recommended guidelines in fire protection but are not laws or “codes” unless adopted or referenced as such by the California Fire Code or local fire agency. Specific standards applicable to wildland fire hazards include, but are not limited to:

- NFPA 1 - Fire Code 2024
- NFPA 1141 - Fire Protection Infrastructure for Land Development in Wildlands
- NFPA 1142 - Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Fire Fighting
- NFPA 1143 - Wildland Fire Management
- NFPA 1144 - Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire
- NFPA 1710 - Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations

STATE

CAL FIRE

Section 51175 et seq. of the Government Code directs the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to identify areas of very high fire hazard severity zones within Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). The Government Code then provides directions for the local jurisdiction to take appropriate action.

CAL FIRE Strategic Plan

The 2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California focuses on fire prevention, suppression, and natural resource management to reduce wildfire hazards and protect lives, property, and ecosystems.

Fire Safety During Construction and Demolition (CFC Chapter 33)

California Fire Code (CFC) Chapter 33 outlines general fire safety precautions for all structures and all occupancies during construction and demolition operations. In general, these requirements seek to maintain required levels of fire protection, limit fire spread, establish the appropriate operation of equipment, and promote prompt response to fire emergencies. There is an emphasis on owner responsibility and the need to create and implement a site safety plan. Features regulated include fire protection systems, fire fighter access to the site and building, water supply, means of egress, hazardous materials storage and use, and temporary heating equipment and other ignition sources.

California Building Code for Exterior Wildfire Exposure

Section R337.1 established minimum standards for the protection of life and property by increasing the ability of a building located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone within State Responsibility Areas or any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area to resist the intrusion of flame or burning embers projected by a vegetation fire and contributes to a systematic reduction in conflagration losses.

2022 California Building and Fire Codes

In accordance with the 2022 California Building and Fire Codes as adopted by the County of Orange; specifically Building Code Chapter 7A; Fire Code, Chapter 49. Chapter 7A of the Building Code focuses primarily on hardening the structures against wildland fire impacts. In addition to state regulations and adopted model codes, the Project Site will be in compliance with the OCFA Guidelines (Fire Alarm systems, Architectural review, Fire Master Plan, Fire Sprinkler systems, Underground installations, Fuel Modification & Vegetation Management, and any other applicable standards).

California Health and Safety Code

Sections 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code include fire regulations for building standards (also in the California Building Code), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire suppression training.

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration

In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 8 Sections 1270 “Fire Prevention” and 6773 “Fire Protection and Fire Fighting Equipment,” California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) has established minimum standards for fire suppression and emergency medical services. The standards include, but are not limited to, guidelines on the handling of highly combustible materials, fire house sizing requirements, restrictions on the use of compressed air, access roads, and the testing, maintenance and use of all firefighting and emergency medical equipment.

California Public Resources Code Section 4290

The California Public Resources Code, Section 4290, requires the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection to “adopt regulations implementing minimum fire safety standards related to defensible spaces which are applicable to state responsibility area lands under the authority of the department.” The requirements for protection from wildfire are further clarified and made specific in regulations in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Natural Resources, Division 1.5 Department of Forestry, Chapter 7 - Fire Protection, Subchapter 2 entitled, “SRA Fire Safe Regulations.”

California Public Resource Code Sections 4290 and 4291

California Public Resource Code Sections 4290 and 4291 require property owners to conduct maintenance to reduce the fire danger. Required fire maintenance includes, but is not limited to, maintaining 100 feet of defensible space along all sides of a structure or up to a property line; removing dead or dying vegetative materials, trees, and/or shrubs; constructing fire breaks or other appropriate vegetation management techniques around fire-sensitive land uses (i.e., hospitals, adult residential

care facilities, schools, storage tanks, and hazardous materials facilities); and maintaining vegetative clearings near electrical transmission or distribution lines.

LOCAL

Riverside County Strategic Fire Plan

The purpose of the Riverside County Fire Plan is to describe the Riverside Unit's preparedness and firefighting capabilities, identify collaboration with all County stakeholders, identify Values at Risk, discuss Pre-Fire management strategies, and articulate Pre-fire Management tactics.

The City of Norco General Plan put forth a comprehensive strategy for the development, management, preservation, and conservation of resources that are necessary to meet the City's existing and future demands. This strategy is expressed as an integrated framework of resource goals, policies, and programs. The following are applicable goals and policies from the Safety Element:

- Policy 2.3.1: The City shall maintain adequate fire protection in both urban and hillside areas through the enforcement of the latest fire codes, encouraging cooperation between the Fire department, Planning, and building divisions, and coordinating with neighboring fire departments.
- Policy 2.3.1i: Consider the needs of fire prevention and suppression during project review of development projects. These include, but are not limited to, providing adequate access to buildings, adequate separation between buildings, and adequate building setbacks from fuel modification areas. Fire suppression measures also include continued implementation of adopted fire and building codes (Title 15) pertaining to the installation of automatic fire extinguishing systems in new buildings.
- Policy 2.3.1j: The City Fire Department should provide input to the Planning Division for all developments that require site plan or subdivision review prior to hearings before official commissions or the City Council. Street and driveway widths shall be adequate to provide access to sites and buildings shall be configured to provide sufficient clearances for fire suppression and other emergency access needs.

City of Norco Municipal Code

SECTION 17.24.120 UTILITIES

Section 17.24.120 states that all utility lines and facilities, including but not limited to electric power, telephone or other communication, street lighting, cable television lines, and other such utility lines, shall be placed installed in accordance with standards prescribed by the California Public Utilities Commission in streets or alleys, or in easements provided for that purpose with widths and locations that are adequate for the service agencies. The standards shall apply to any agency owning or operating the line whether or not it is subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission. If no standard is so prescribed, installation shall be made in accordance with practices usual in the particular field, subject to the approval of the city engineer.

5.20.4 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- **WF-1:** Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- **WF-2:** 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?
- **WF-3:** Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?
- **WF-4:** Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

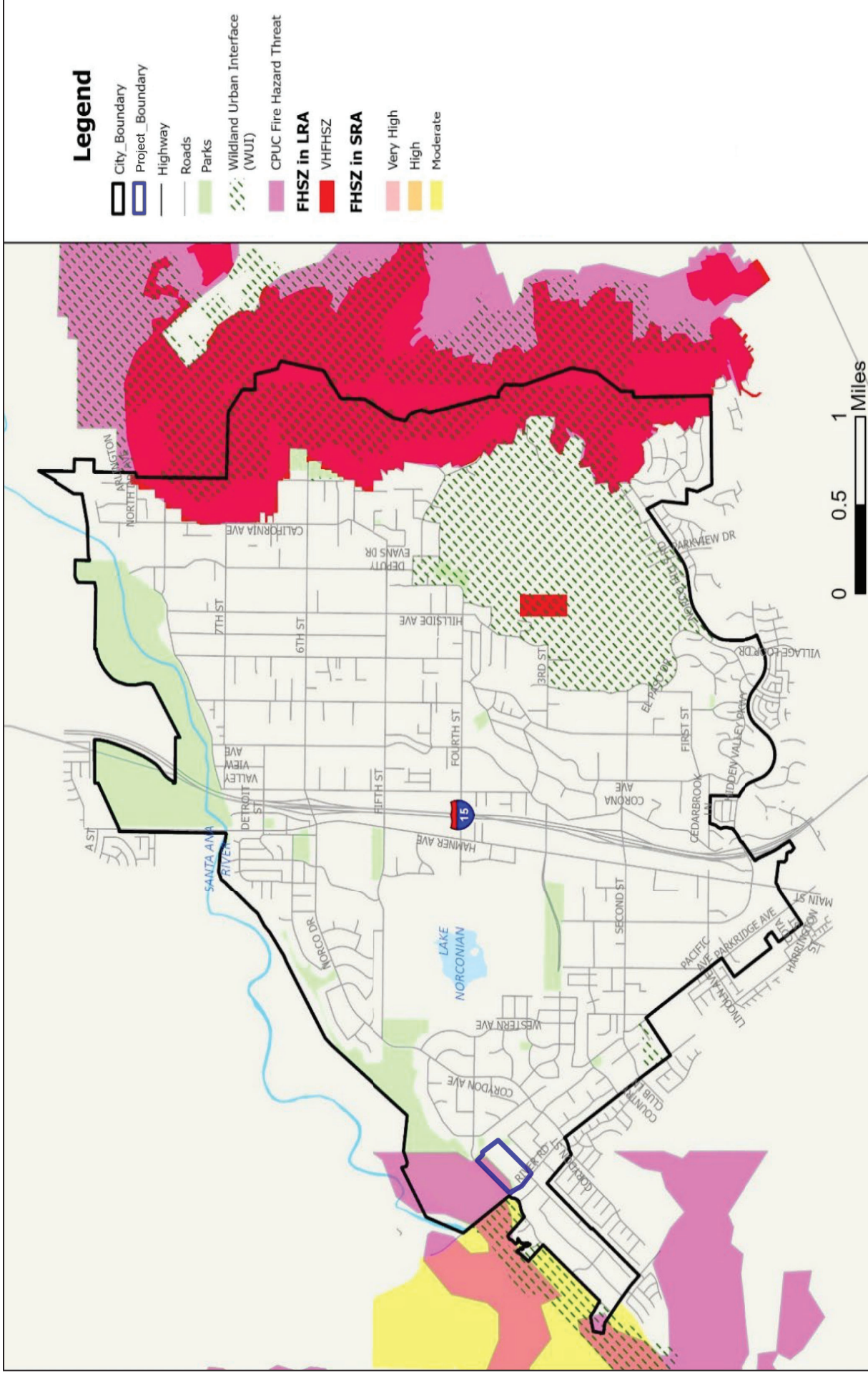
5.20.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

IMPACT WF-1: Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the project site is not identified as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ); however, it is located in a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) fire hazard threat zone; refer to [Figure 4.20-2, Fire Hazard Severity Zones, WUI, and CPUC Fire Hazard Threat Mapping](#). Riverside County Fire Department would be in charge of evacuating neighborhoods in the event of a fire that threatens homes. These evacuations would be decided within the Incident Command structure in consultation with the fire department, law enforcement, public works, and local government liaisons in order to establish when and where they would occur.

The City of Norco maintains a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan which identifies City's hazards, review and assesses past disaster occurrences, estimates the probability of future occurrences and set goals to mitigate potential risks to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural and man-made hazards. The plan identifies vulnerabilities, provides recommendations for prioritized mitigation actions, evaluates resources, identifies mitigation shortcomings, provides future mitigation planning and maintenance of an existing plan.

The City's primary tool in preparing for emergencies is its adopted Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP is designed to guide the City's response to various emergencies, by establishing procedures and responsibilities for City personnel. The Emergency Services Division is responsible for emergency preparedness in the City. The Division is responsible for both planning and implementation of emergency response efforts, and coordinates with other local jurisdictions and the County of Riverside in emergency response planning, training, and disaster exercises. Close coordination with both the Sheriff and Fire Departments is included in all disaster planning efforts. In addition, the City participates in the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) program, and Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Incident Management System (NIMS), to assure coordinated response at the state and federal levels.



Source: City of Norco, Safety Analysis Existing Conditions Memo, November 13, 2023.

Fire Hazard Severity Zones, WUI, and CPUC Fire Hazard Threat Mapping



In the event evacuation is required, the Riverside County Sheriff's Department would identify and direct traffic to designated emergency evacuation routes to ensure that residents can leave their neighborhoods safely, which would avoid any potential conflicts with emergency response plans. Should they be needed, evacuation routes would be established based on the location and magnitude of an event. The City's main evacuation routes are the 1-15 Freeway and Hamner Avenue (2.1 miles from project site). Secondary routes include Second Street and River Road (0.86 miles from project site)/Archibald Avenue (0.79 miles from the project site), California Avenue/North Drive (4.15 miles from project site), and Mountain Avenue and Hidden Valley Parkway (2.13 miles from project site)/McKinley Avenue (3.77 miles from project site). The proposed project is estimated to have 227 residents. In the event evacuation is needed, a worst case of 227 vehicle trips would occur assuming each resident would drive their own vehicle. The vehicle trips would be distributed between the two different access points (River Road and Bluff Street) from the project site, which would reduce congestion. The City of Norco's Fire Department would review site plans for the proposed project to ensure adequate ingress/egress. In addition, the proposed project would comply with applicable regulations (e.g., CBC, CFC).

In the event of emergency, residents would be directed to these specific evacuation routes to avoid conflicts with emergency response plans. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. With compliance with state and local fire laws and regulations, potential impacts to an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT WF-2: 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?

The proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Topography influences the movement of air and the direction of a fire course. Additionally, wind events magnify the risks of wildfire and would have the potential to expose inhabitants to elevated pollutant concentrations. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project site is not identified as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ); however, it is located in a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) fire hazard threat zone. The project site is not contiguous to wildland slope areas that could act as conduit for wildland fire.

The topography within 2.0 miles of Norco contains very significant variations in elevation, with a maximum elevation change of 866 feet and an average elevation above sea level of 701 feet. Within 10 miles contains very significant variations in elevation (3,583 feet). Within 50 miles also contains extreme variations in elevation (11,503 feet). The area within 2 miles of Norco is covered by shrubs (53%), artificial surfaces (31%), and cropland (13%), within 10 miles by shrubs (43%) and artificial surfaces (36%), and within 50 miles by shrubs (51%) and artificial surfaces (21%) (Weather Spark, 2024).

The average hourly wind speed in Norco experiences mild seasonal variation over the course of the year. The windier part of the year lasts for 6.0 months, from November 10 to May 10, with average wind speeds of more than 6.3 miles per hour. The windiest month of the year in Norco is December, with an average hourly wind speed of 7.2 miles per hour. The calmer time of year lasts for 6.0 months, from May 10 to November 10. The calmest month of the year in Norco is September, with an average hourly wind speed of 5.3 miles per hour (Weather Spark, 2024).

The project site is surrounded by roadways and developed uses which would act as fire breaks. The weeds and old dairy buildings would be replaced by new development, further limiting the risk of fuel. Therefore, the proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. With the implementation of current 2022 California Building and Fire Code requirements, the proposed Project would have a less than significant effect and would not exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, or other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT WF-3: Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

The proposed project would not 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. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project site is not identified as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ); however, it is located in a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) fire hazard threat zone. The proposed project would comply with the California Building Code (CBC) and the California Fire Code (CFC) guidelines. The proposed project would not require the construction of any infrastructure that would increase fire risk.

The proposed project would require connecting to existing utility lines, such as electricity, sewer, and water, along Third Street and Hamner Avenue (sewer), along Bluff Street and Vine Street (gas), along Bluff Street and River Road (water service), and other utility improvements. The utility lines would be constructed/installed to meet the service requirements of each utility provider and in accordance with Norco Municipal Code Section 17.24.120 (Utilities) for fees, installation and maintenance. The proposed project does not include any changes to existing roadways that would exacerbate fire risk. Therefore, the proposed project would not exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones; impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

IMPACT WF-4: Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Implementation of the proposed project would not 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. Landslides, including mud flows and debris flows can be triggered by erosion and downslope runoff caused by rain following a fire. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project site is not identified as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ); however, it is located in a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) fire hazard threat zone. The topography of the project site and surrounding area is relatively level, reducing the chance of landslides or slope instability.

As indicated in Impact GEO-6, the project is not within a landslide hazard area and the potential for lateral spreading is considered low. The City of Norco Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies that the project site is in an area of potential liquefaction. The geotechnical evaluation prepared for the project identifies that the proposed project and associated improvements would be feasible from a geotechnical standpoint, provided that the recommendations contained in the geotechnical evaluation (site earthwork, foundation systems, soil bearing/lateral resistance, retaining walls, pile construction, slope creep, lot stretching, fences/freestanding walls, nonstructural concrete flatwork, subsurface water infiltration, surface water/drainage control, geotechnical plan review) are incorporated during site grading and development. The project would be required to comply with the City Construction Development Standards as well as the California Uniform Building Code Seismic Safety Standards.

As indicated in Impact HWQ-6, the project site is in Zone X, an area subject to minimal flooding, shown on [Figure 4.10-2, *National Flood Hazard Map*](#). West of Bluff Street, a small strip of area is subject to a 0.2% Annual Flood Hazard and the Santa Ana River is designated as a Special Flood Hazard Area. The proposed project would include a basin that would serve as a storm detention basin, in addition to a water quality infiltration basin that would retain surface water runoff generated from the site from a 100-year storm event. The project would not redirect flows from the site onto other properties and would not impede flows in the Santa Ana River Special Flood Hazard Area where they would create a flood hazard.

The proposed project would not increase the risk for wildland fire impacts that 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 in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Impact After Mitigation: Less Than Significant.

4.20.6 REFERENCES

CAL FIRE, Fire Hazard Severity Zones [Fire Hazard Severity Zones | OSFM (ca.gov)]. Accessed June 15, 2023.

City of Norco, *2050 General Plan Existing Conditions: Safety Analysis*, pages 5 and 6. November 13, 2023.

City of Norco, *City of Norco General Plan, Safety Element*, January 16, 2013.

LGC Geotechnical, Inc., *Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation for the Proposed Residential Development*. January 21, 2022.

Norco Municipal Code, 17.14.06 Formula for Dedication of Land, [<https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Norco/#!/Norco17/Norco1724.html>]. Accessed on February 28, 2024.

Weather Spark, *Climate and Average Weather Year-Round in Norco*, [<https://weatherspark.com/y/1879/Average-Weather-in-Norco-California-United-States-Year-Round>]. Accessed on February 15, 2024.

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SECTION 5.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

5.1 BASIS FOR CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS

Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the discussion of cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable. Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines explains that a project's incremental effects are "cumulatively considerable" when they are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. Section 15130 provides that when a lead agency is examining a project with an incremental effect that is not cumulatively considerable, the lead agency need not consider that effect significant, but shall briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable.

Section 15355 of the Guidelines defines cumulative impacts as "... two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." Cumulative impacts represent the change caused by the incremental impact of a project when added to other proposed or committed projects in the vicinity. Under Section 15130, generally cumulative impacts should be discussed where they are significant. However, when the cumulative impacts do not result in part from the project, they should not be discussed in the EIR. When the combined cumulative impact associated with the project's incremental effect and the effects of other projects is not significant, the EIR shall briefly indicate why the cumulative impact is not significant and is not discussed in further detail in the EIR.

Section 15130 of the Guidelines states that an EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and thus is not significant. A project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact. The discussion of any cumulative impacts shall reflect the level and severity of the impact and the likelihood of occurrence, but not in as great a level of detail as that necessary for the project alone.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1) states that the information utilized in an analysis of cumulative impacts should come from one of two sources:

- A list of past, present, and probable future projects, producing related cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency, or
- A summary of projections contained in an adopted General Plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions.

The proposed project proposes approval of a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and a Tentative Tract Map, to allow for the development of a 68-unit single-family detached housing project on a minimum of 10,000 square foot lots in accordance with the City's R-1 Zoning regulations with offsite equestrian/pedestrian trails and River Road and Bluff Street improvements. The proposed project would also retain the existing single-family detached home "in place" (Lot 69) and the City's Water Quality Infiltration Basin and Storm Detention Basin (Lot A); refer to [Figure 3-9, *Tentative Tract Map*](#).

The project site is situated within an urbanized area and is generally surrounded by developed land uses. To the north and northwest are Bluff Street, Stonebridge Christian Academy and the Santa Ana River area, open space, and existing single-family homes. The Santa Ana River Corridor is to the north of Bluff Street. To the south is an existing single-family residential neighborhood. An existing park, Sundance Park, is in the residential neighborhood. To the east are existing single-family residential neighborhoods. An existing park, Ted Brooks Park, is in the neighborhood. To the west is River Road and single-family homes.

This cumulative analysis focuses on past, present and probable future development projects in the area, as identified by the City. A summary of related projects in the vicinity of the project site which was used in the cumulative analysis is presented in Table 5-1, JD Ranch EIR Cumulative Project List. The locations of these related projects are shown in Figure 5-1, Cumulative Project Location Map. Additionally, the City identified capital improvement projects that are planned to occur in the project area including a watermain replacement on Bluff Street from River Road to Stagecoach Drive (2022-24), watermain replacement on Corydon Avenue from Fifth Street to River Rod (2022-24) and Sewer Lift Station No. 10 upgrade (between Corydon Avenue and Sundance Lane). These improvements would service existing and planned land uses and would generate short-term construction impacts that would not result in significant cumulative impacts.

Table 5-1
JD Ranch EIR Cumulative Project List

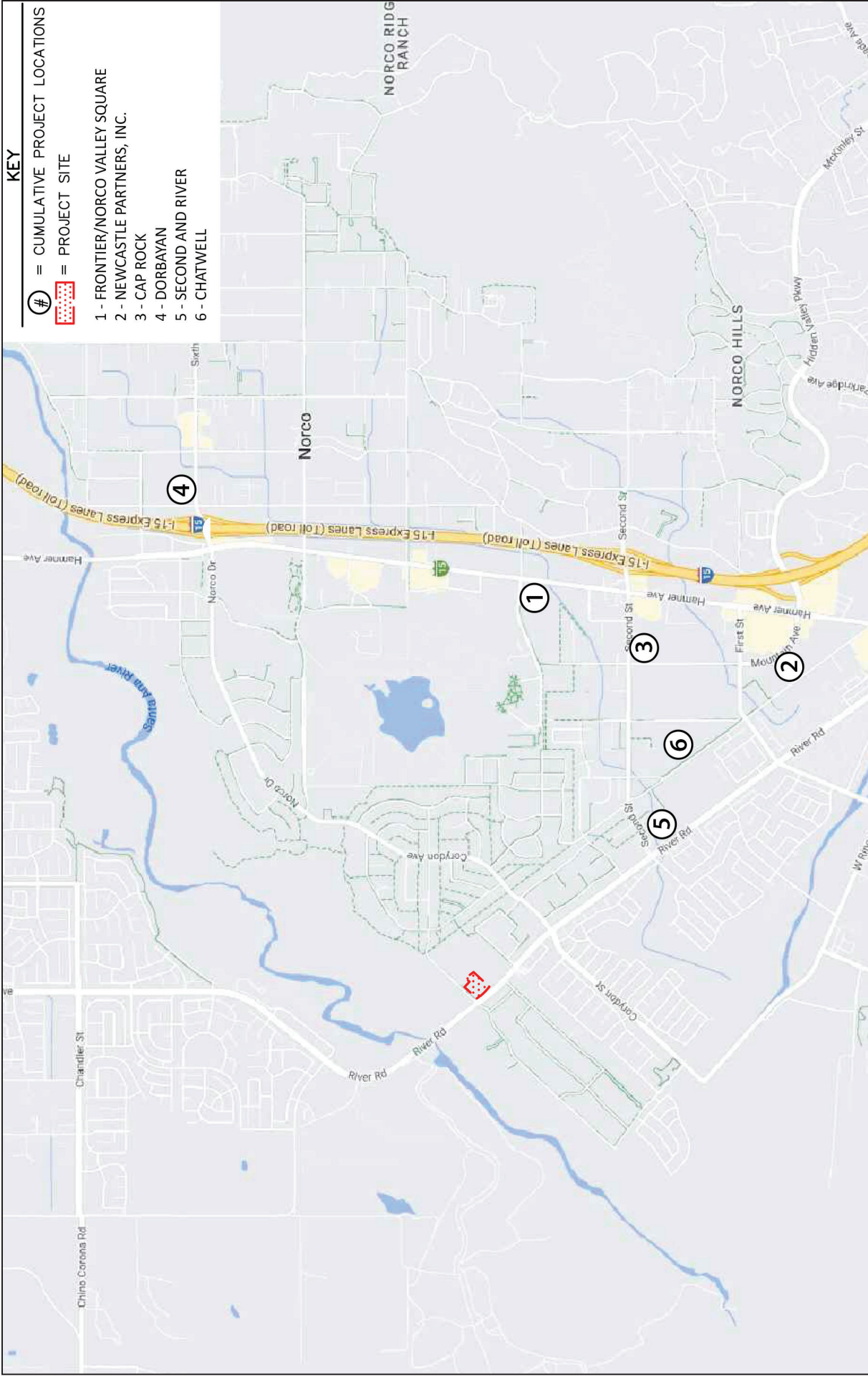
Location No. on Map	Project	City	Description	Status
1.	Frontier/Norco Valley Square Site Plan 2020-06	City of Norco	A Commercial and Residential mixed-use development consisting of a hotel, an outdoor food garden and 320 residential apartments on the southwest corner of Hamner Avenue and Third Street.	Approved
	Frontier Site Plan 2022-12 (Modification to Approved Site Plan 2020-06)	City of Norco	A request to modify the approved Site Plan 2020-06 to replace the approved hotel use with 75 residential units (APNs 126-050-002, 126-050-004, 129-380-010).	In Review
2.	Newcastle Partners, Inc. Site Plan 2020-11	City of Norco	A request for approval to allow the development of a six-building (6) industrial complex, totaling 80,078 square-feet, within the Industrial District of the Gateway Specific Plan located at 1004 Parkridge Avenue (APN: 119-070-021).	Approved

Location No. on Map	Project	City	Description	Status
3.	Cap Rock Site Plan 2021-13 and TTM 37804	City of Norco	Construct 511,035 square feet of industrial development located on the east side of Mountain Avenue, south of Second Street. Note: This is the third phase of the Palomino Ranch industrial project.	Phase 1 & 2: Approved Phase 1: Constructed Phase 3: In Review
4.	Dorbayan CUP 2023-02	City of Norco	Construct a shopping center with approximately 16,000 square feet of commercial space including two drive-thru restaurants, located at 1461 Sixth Street, and APNs 131-140-026, -036 and -037 located on the north side of Sixth Street, east of Sierra Avenue.	In Review. Sizes of buildings expected to be reduced.
5.	Second and River Site Plan 2022-17	City of Norco	Construct 455-unit multi-family units located at the southeast corner of Second Street and River Road.	In Review
6.	Chatwell Site Plan 2022-09	City of Norco	Two new industrial warehouse buildings (124,750 square feet and 117,700 square feet) on an 11-acre site, located at 1741 Parkridge Avenue.	In Review
Source: City of Norco.				

5.2 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

5.2.1 AESTHETICS

Project implementation would not adversely impact the visual quality or character of the existing surrounding urban/suburban neighborhood setting. Based on review of the City’s cumulative projects shown in [Table 5-1](#), which includes ongoing/completed projects in the City of Norco, the proposed project is not near or adjacent to other ongoing/complete projects that may affect the aesthetic quality of the surrounding area. The project would be subject to the City’s design review to ensure it is aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area and would not result in adverse aesthetic impacts. With compliance of the City’s Design Review requirements, the proposed project would not be contributing considerably to cumulative aesthetic impacts. Related development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) could result in adverse aesthetic impacts including potential impacts to public vistas and creation of additional sources of light and glare. Through the City’s design review process, the City would review projects on a project-by-project basis for potential aesthetic impacts. Related development projects would be required to comply with applicable site development and design standards to minimize potential aesthetic impacts. Compliance with the City’s design review process and compliance with applicable site development and design standards would reduce potential cumulative aesthetic impacts to less than significant. When considered with the related cumulative projects, the proposed project would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant aesthetic impacts.



Source: Open Streets and City of Norco, April 25, 2024.

JD RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT
 Notice of Preparation and Initial Study
Cumulative Project Location Map

Figure 5-1



5.2.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Related cumulative development projects identified would be evaluated for potential impacts to prime farmland, farmland of Statewide Importance, and/or would displace existing agriculture activities. No potential impacts to agricultural lands associated with the proposed project would occur. Therefore, the proposed project, when considered with the related cumulative projects, would not contribute considerably to a cumulatively significant agriculture impact.

5.2.3 AIR QUALITY

OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

The proposed project would increase the population on the project site above what is currently projected for the project, which would increase long-term operational air emissions above the level anticipated in the current General Plan. For operational air quality emissions, any project that does not exceed or can be mitigated to less than the daily regional threshold values would not be considered by SCAQMD to be a substantial source of air pollution and would not add significantly to a cumulative impact. Operation of the project would not result in emissions excess of the SCAQMD regional emissions thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Additionally, operational source emissions for the project would not exceed the applicable LSTs with implementation. Thus, the project's operational localized emissions impacts would not be cumulatively considerable toward exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The project's operational emissions would not exceed SCAQMD regional thresholds and would be consistent with the AQMP. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute considerably to significantly cumulative operational air impacts.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The proposed project would increase the number of residential structures to be constructed on the project site, which would increase the level of construction emissions that could be generated by the project and that are anticipated in the existing General Plan. The context for assessing cumulative air impacts from short-term construction activities includes quantifying emissions and comparing the emissions to the applicable SCAQMD screening thresholds. As discussed in Section 4.2, *Air Quality*, the proposed project's construction emissions would be below SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be required to reduce their emissions per SCAQMD rules and mandates. Cumulative construction emissions would not contribute to an exceedance of air quality standards, and therefore would comply with the goals of the AQMP. Thus, it can be reasonably inferred that the project-related construction activities, in combination with those from other projects in the area, would not deteriorate the local air quality and would not result in cumulative considerable construction-related impacts. Construction source emissions for the project would not exceed the applicable LSTs with implementation. Additionally, source emissions for the project would not exceed the applicable LSTs with implementation. Thus, the project's construction localized emissions impacts would not contribute considerably toward exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN (AQMP)

The proposed project would be subject to the 2022 AQMP. The proposed project construction and operational air emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD regional thresholds. Localized NO_x emissions during construction would be below SCAQMD LST thresholds. The project would also be required to comply with the applicable SCAQMD emission reduction measures to further reduce fugitive dust emissions. As such, the proposed project would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant air quality impacts.

5.2.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The proposed project would not increase impacts to biological resources above the level of impacts identified in the existing General Plan and would not contribute considerably to potential cumulative significant impacts to biological resources. The cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be reviewed for potential impacts to biological resources and would be required to comply with State and federal laws that provide for the protection of biological resources and, where needed, measures would be implemented to minimize impacts to biological resources. Compliance with local, State, and federal laws would reduce the potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant impacts to biological resources.

5.2.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The proposed project would not increase impacts to cultural resources above the level of impacts identified in the existing General Plan and would not contribute considerably to potential cumulative significant impacts to cultural resources. Related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be reviewed for potential impacts to cultural resources and would be required to comply with state and federal laws that provide for the protection of cultural resources and, where needed, would be required to implement the measures to minimize impacts to cultural resources. Compliance with local, State, and federal laws would reduce the potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, and with the required mitigation measures, would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant impacts to cultural resources.

5.2.6 ENERGY

Implementation of the proposed project would increase the demand for electricity and natural gas. Related development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would also generate additional demands for electricity and natural gas. The proposed project and related development projects are within the Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company service areas and would be required to comply with the Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen, which would contribute to minimizing wasteful energy consumption and would reduce potentially significant cumulative energy impacts to less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant impacts to energy resources.

5.2.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The proposed project would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant impacts with regard to seismic shaking or geological impacts. Related development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) could also be subject to seismic, geologic and soil constraints and would be evaluated as such and would be required to comply with state and local building codes and if needed, to incorporate mitigation measures to ensure geologic stability, which would reduce potential cumulative geologic impacts to less than significant.

The proposed project and related development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) could involve construction activities which could result in soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Cumulative impacts would depend upon each respective cumulative site's topography and onsite soils susceptibility to erosion. Impacts would be evaluated at the project-level through site-specific soil investigations and would be mitigated through site-specific recommendations for design and construction. Compliance with existing regulations and implementation of site-specific recommendations outlined in site-specific soil investigations, would reduce cumulative impacts concerning soil erosion or loss of topsoil to less than significant. Project impacts related to soil erosion or loss of topsoil would be reduced through compliance with the State Water Resources Control Board General Construction Permit requirements. Therefore, the project's incremental effects involving exposure of persons or structures to potential substantial adverse effects related to soil erosion and loss of topsoil would not be considerable.

Related development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) in the area involving ground disturbance would be required to evaluate if the construction activities could have the potential to damage paleontological resources that could be buried in those project sites. As with the proposed project, other projects would require site-specific paleontological analysis that could lead to mitigation requiring monitoring and recovery, identification, and curation of any resources discovered. This would reduce the potential for significant cumulative impacts to paleontological resources. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant impacts to paleontological resources.

5.2.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The proposed project would increase the population on the project site, which would increase long-term greenhouse gas emissions above the level currently estimated in the existing General Plan. Project-related greenhouse gas emissions are not confined to a particular air basin but are dispersed worldwide. Therefore, the proposed project greenhouse gas emission impacts are not project-specific impacts but are the proposed project's contribution to cumulative greenhouse gas impacts. Implementation of the proposed project would not exceed the greenhouse gas emissions significance threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. Therefore, project related greenhouse gas emissions and their contribution to global climate change would not be cumulatively considerable and greenhouse gas emissions impacts would be less than significant.

5.2.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Implementation of the proposed project would not increase the risks for hazards and hazardous materials above the level of risks in the existing General Plan and would not contribute considerably to potential cumulative significant impacts. Hazards and hazardous waste impacts are typically unique to each site and do not usually contribute to cumulative impacts. Land use developed under the

proposed project would involve the use of incidental amounts of hazardous substances, such as fuel, oil, and solvents. The amounts of hazardous substances involved would be relatively small and would pose minimal risks for public exposure. Additionally, the project would be required to comply with local, state, and federal regulations and laws regarding the storage and handling of hazardous substances. With compliance with local, state, and federal regulations and laws, potential handling of hazardous materials would be less than significant. The proposed project would not contribute considerably to significant cumulative impacts with regard to the release of hazardous materials into the environment.

The proposed project was determined to have a less than significant impact to interfering with an emergency evacuation plan. Cumulative projects in the area would be analyzed for impairment of emergency access vehicles and consistency with the City emergency response plans on a project-by-project basis and would be required to comply with all roadway design standards to ensure adequate emergency access is not impacted. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, would have a less than significant cumulative impact to interfering with an emergency plan.

5.2.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Implementation of the proposed project would not increase the potential for significant hydrology and water quality impacts above the level of risks and impacts identified in the existing General Plan and would not contribute considerably to potential cumulative significant impacts. Construction activities developed under the proposed project, could increase impervious areas and increase stormwater runoff rates and have the potential to generate degraded surface water impacts which could adversely affect downstream receiving water bodies. To reduce potential hydrology/water quality and land use impacts, construction activities developed under the proposed project, would be required to prepare and implement a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) that would include provisions for the capture and infiltration of runoff in accordance with the City of Norco's Stormwater and Urban Runoff Ordinance. Therefore, the project would not contribute to significant cumulative drainage impacts. Related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be required to comply with the City of Norco's Stormwater and Urban Runoff Ordinance, which would reduce potential project and cumulative stormwater runoff impacts to less than significant.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project could have the potential to uncover soils on the project site and be exposed to water erosion and/or wind erosion impacts. The project would be required to obtain a General Construction Permit from the State Water Resources Control Board. The General Construction Permit would require preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to avoid erosion and sediment transfer impacts. With implementation of the General Construction Permit, including preparation and implementation of a construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, the project would not contribute considerably to cumulative erosion and sediment transport impacts. Potential cumulative impacts would be less than significant. Related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would also be required to implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) or Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize erosion and sediment transfer impacts, which would reduce the potential for significant cumulative erosion and sediment transfer impacts to occur.

The project site is in Zone X, areas subject to minimal flooding. The project would not contribute to cumulative flood hazard impacts by constructing within a Flood Hazard Zone or impeding flood flows.

Related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) were evaluated for potential flood hazards and, if needed, would be required to provide improvements to reduce potential flood hazards to less than significant.

Related development projects would be evaluated for potential water quality and flood hazard impacts. Related development projects would be required to prepare a stormwater management plan to minimize potential flood hazards. Related development that disturbs one or more acres of soil would be required to obtain coverage under the NPDES General Construction Permit and would avoid and/or reduce construction-related impacts to water quality through the preparation of a site-specific SWPPP, which identifies applicable BMPs. Each project would be required to comply with existing water quality standards at the time of development review and implement BMPs, as necessary. Thus, related development projects would not contribute considerably to construction-related hydrology and water quality impacts. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with related cumulative development projects, would have a less than significant cumulative impact on water quality and hydrology.

5.2.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

While the project would require a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change, it remains consistent with relevant policies from the City of Norco's General Plan and SCAG's Connect SoCal, also known as the 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with related cumulative development projects, would not contribute considerably to significant land use impacts related to conflicts with relevant planning programs.

Related development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be subject to site-specific planning reviews that would address consistency with adopted regional plan programs, General Plan goals, objectives, and policies, as well as with the local development code standards. Each cumulative project would be analyzed independent of other projects, within the context of their respective land use and regulatory setting. As part of the review process, each project would be required to demonstrate compliance with the provisions of the applicable land use designation(s). Additionally, as part of the planning reviews, related projects would be subject to CEQA environmental review, where needed. In addition, projects would be required to provide mitigation to reduce potential adverse impacts to the environment. Thus, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant land use impacts.

5.2.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

Related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be reviewed for potential impacts to mineral resources and would be required to comply with state and federal laws that provide for the protection of mineral resources and, where needed, would need to implement the measures to minimize impacts. Compliance with local, state, and federal laws would reduce the potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant impacts to mineral resources.

5.2.13 NOISE

The proposed project's long-term and short-term noise contribution would not be considerable and would not contribute to significant cumulative noise impacts. Related cumulative development

projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be required to comply with applicable noise standards and regulations to minimize noise impacts. Each cumulative project would require separate discretionary approval and CEQA assessment, which would address potential noise impacts and identify necessary attenuation measures, where appropriate. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative projects, would not result in significant cumulative noise impacts.

Projects shown in [Table 5-1](#), including the proposed project, would be evaluated for potential vibration impacts. There are no ongoing or planned construction activities near the project site that would contribute to cumulative vibration impacts. In addition, groundborne vibration generated at the project site during construction would not be in exceedance of the FTA threshold of 0.12 inch/second PPV. Long-term vibration impacts from operations at the project site would be less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project contribution to cumulative vibration impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

5.2.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

The proposed project would allow 68 single-family dwelling units to be developed on the project site. Current zoning allows for 32 units. Based on the City of Norco's average household size of 3.34 persons per household, the project is estimated to have 227 residents. The estimated population increase would be a negligible increase and would be in the range of estimated future growth projections and would not be considered substantial unplanned housing growth. As such, the proposed project would not contribute considerably to cumulative adverse unplanned housing growth impacts. The proposed project would increase the population on the project site by approximately 120 persons over the estimated population anticipated in the existing General Plan.

Related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be reviewed by the City of Norco to determine if they are consistent with City of Norco growth projections and regional growth projects and associated policies, regulations, and plans, to minimize the effect of the increase in population on physical impacts on the environment. Therefore, the development of the proposed project, combined with related projects, would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to population and housing as no substantial new unplanned growth would occur.

5.2.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

The proposed project would increase population on the project site as well as increase the demand for fire protection services above the level of demand anticipated in the existing General Plan. Land uses developed under the proposed project, and cumulative development projects in the City of Norco, would receive fire protection services from the County of Riverside Fire Department. The Fire Department has indicated that the increased demand generated by the proposed project would not require the expansion of fire protection facilities or services. Further, the project would be designed in compliance with the California Building Code, California Fire Code and related codes and would be reviewed by the County of Riverside Fire Department. The project's cumulative impacts to fire protection services would be less than significant and would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant impacts. Additionally, cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be subject to all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for fire protection and emergency services. The County of Riverside Fire Department would review all cumulative related

development projects to ensure adequate site access, fire flow, sprinkler systems, hydrant spacing, and turning radii, among other required fire protection safety criteria, is provided. With project coordination review and recommendations provided from County of Riverside Fire Department, overall cumulative impacts to fire protection services would be less than significant.

POLICE PROTECTION SERVICES

The proposed project would increase population on the project site as well as increase the demand for police protection services above the level of demand anticipated in the existing General Plan. Land uses developed under the proposed project, and related cumulative development projects, would receive police protection services from the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's Department has confirmed that based on current staffing and the increased demand for police protection services generated by the proposed project, it would be able to adequately service the project area and the proposed project would not cause the need for new or expanded sheriff facilities. Additionally, the project would be required to meet all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for police protection services. The project's cumulative impacts to police protection services would be less than significant and would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant impacts. Cumulative related development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be required to comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for police protection services and would also be required to coordinate with the County of Riverside Sheriff's Department to determine if existing facilities and patrol service needs are adequately addressed. Compliance with police protection ordinances and regulations and coordination with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department would reduce cumulative development project impacts to police protection services to less than significant. Overall, cumulative impacts to police protection services would be less than significant.

SCHOOL SERVICES

The proposed project would increase the population on the project site above the level identified in the existing General Plan and would incrementally increase the enrollment of students and the use of Norco Unified School District facilities. As identified in Section 4.15, *Public Services*, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on school services. Land uses developed under the proposed project would be required to pay development fees prior to the issuance of a building permit to offset the cost of providing school services and facilities. Related development projects would be evaluated for potential impacts to schools and would be required to pay development fees to fund existing and future school facilities. With coordination with the Norco Unified School District and the payment of development fees, potential cumulative impacts to school services would be less than significant.

5.2.16 RECREATION

The proposed project would increase population on the project site and would increase the demand for recreation facilities. The proposed project has been designed to provide onsite recreation trail amenities for residents and expand existing offsite recreation trails which would expand trail recreation opportunities and reduce the pressure on existing recreation facilities in the City. The project proposes a 12-foot equestrian trail on the north side of River Road and on the east side of Bluff Street. Both equestrian trails would allow connection to an existing City equestrian trail. Additionally, within the project, a 12-foot equestrian trail is proposed along the local streets that would connect to

the proposed equestrian trails along River Road and Bluff Street. Additionally, there would be a 15-foot pedestrian access (Lot F), between Lots 10 and 11, to Sundance Park. The overall intent of the project is to create an equestrian community that is unified by tree lined equestrian trails that circulate through the community connecting residents to the City's equestrian heritage.

Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially contribute to significant cumulative impacts on recreation facilities. Related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be evaluated for potential impacts on recreation facilities and would be required to meet park and open space requirements to reduce impacts on existing recreation facilities. Therefore, the proposed project, combined with cumulative development projects, would not contribute considerably to significant cumulative impacts to recreation facilities.

5.2.17 TRANSPORTATION

The proposed project would increase population and associated traffic generated from the project site above the level anticipated in the existing General Plan.

The California Office of Planning and Research PR states that a project's cumulative Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) impacts are based on a determination of whether the "incremental effects of an individual 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." City of Norco Resolution No.2020-62 – Vehicle Miles Travelled Impact (dated September 2, 2020) requires project-by-project analysis.

Pursuant to the City VMT Policy, if a significant VMT impact is identified, measures to reduce the project's VMT impact should be identified. The proposed project would implement several Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures, which when combined, reduce VMT by 17.50%. Because the proposed project's VMT would not be completely offset by Mitigation Measure TRANS-1, the project would have a significant unavoidable adverse impact to VMT. Related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be evaluated for potential VMT impacts, and would have to comply with applicable regulations, and mitigation measures on a project-by-project basis to ensure significant cumulative impacts to VMT do not occur.

5.2.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The proposed project would not increase impacts to tribal resources above the level of impacts anticipated in the existing General Plan and would not contribute considerably to potential cumulative significant tribal resources impacts. Related cumulative projects in the area would be required to comply with the provisions of AB 52, which would reduce cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources. Therefore, the development of the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative projects, would not result in a significant cumulative impact to tribal cultural resources.

5.2.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

WATER

The proposed project would increase population and water demands above the level anticipated in the existing General Plan. The proposed project and related cumulative development projects would increase water demand. The City of Norco's Urban Water Management Plan concludes that adequate water supplies would be available under normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year conditions through

2045. Additionally, to help reduce water demands, the project would comply with all requirements of CALGreen, as adopted by City of Norco's Municipal Code Section 15.08.020 as it pertains to maximum flow rates for plumbing fixtures, such as toilets, showerheads, and faucets in non-residential buildings. Proposed residences would also include individual unit water-use monitoring. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with the principles of the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance that requires improvements in the efficiency of water use in existing and new urban irrigated landscapes in California. Because the Urban Water Management Plan shows that there would be substantial available additional water supplies above the projected demands, the project would not contribute considerably to significant cumulative water supply impacts.

Related cumulative development projects shown in Table 5-1 would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis at the project level as they are implemented for their potential water demands and the availability of existing and projected water supplies and would be subject to compliance with the relevant laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for water facilities and conserving water. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, would not result in significant cumulative impacts to water supplies.

RECYCLED WATER

The proposed project is not expected to use recycled irrigation water; however, it would adhere to the City of Norco's Water Conservation Program, which limits landscape and household water usage.¹ The projects listed in Table 5-1 would also be required to adhere to the City's Water Conservation Program. Therefore, no cumulative impacts related to recycled water would occur.

WASTEWATER

The proposed project would increase population and wastewater demands above the level anticipated in the existing General Plan. Wastewater treatment for the project would be provided by Western Riverside County Regional Wastewater Authority (WRCRWA), a tertiary wastewater treatment facility. The total treatment capacity of the plant is 14 MGD. The wastewater flows generated by the proposed project would account for less than 1% of the available capacity at the plant, which would indicate that sufficient capacity would be available for the proposed project. Additionally, the project would pay relevant sewer connection fees and ongoing user fees to maintain existing facilities and needed improvements. With available treatment capacity for the project and payment of required sewer connection fees, the proposed project's cumulative impacts to wastewater treatment facilities would be less than significant.

Related cumulative development projects shown in Table 5-1 would be evaluated for potential impacts related to available wastewater treatment capacity and, if needed, would be required to implement measures to reduce wastewater treatment capacity impacts. Additionally, related development projects would be subject to sewer connection fees and ongoing user fees to maintain existing facilities and needed improvements to reduce cumulative impacts to less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project, considered with the related cumulative development projects, would not result in significant cumulative impacts to wastewater treatment capacity.

¹ City of Norco, Water, Water Conservation Program, <<https://www.norco.ca.us/departments/public-works-engineering/water-conservation-program>>. Accessed on February 22, 2024.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

The proposed project would increase the demand for solid waste disposal over the amount anticipated in the existing General Plan. Sufficient capacity would be available at two landfills that could potentially serve the project site. Additionally, the proposed project and related cumulative development projects would be required to comply with local, regional, and state source reduction and recycling measures on a project-by-project basis. This includes compliance with AB 939, which requires a 50% diversion of all solid waste from disposal in local landfills, and the 2016 (or most recent) California Green Building Standards Code, which includes design and construction measures that act to reduce construction-related waste through material conservation measures and other construction-related efficiency measures. With compliance with relevant laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for solid waste disposal, cumulative impacts to solid waste would be less than significant.

ELECTRICITY

The proposed project would increase the demand for electricity service over the amount anticipated in the existing General Plan. The proposed project and related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be required to comply with all federal, state, and county requirements related to the consumption of electricity, which includes CCR Title 24, Part 6 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CCR Title 24, Part 11: California Green Building Standards. The CCR Title 24, Part 6 and Part 11 standards require numerous energy efficiency measures to be incorporated into the proposed buildings, including enhanced insulation, use of energy efficient lighting and appliances as well as requiring a variety of other energy-efficiency measures to be incorporated into all proposed structures. Therefore, the proposed project and related cumulative development projects would be designed and built to minimize electricity use. Potential cumulative impacts to electrical usage would be less than significant.

NATURAL GAS

The proposed project would increase the demand for natural gas service over the amount anticipated in the existing General Plan. The proposed project and related cumulative development projects shown in [Table 5-1](#) would be required to comply with federal, state, and local requirements related to the consumption of natural gas, including CCR Title 24, Part 6 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CCR Title 24, Part 11: California Green Building Standards. The CCR Title 24, Part 6 and Part 11 standards require numerous energy efficiency measures to be incorporated into the proposed structures, including enhanced insulation as well as use of efficient natural gas appliances and HVAC units. Therefore, the proposed project will be designed and built to minimize natural gas use. Potential cumulative impacts to natural gas usage would be less than significant.

5.2.20 WILDFIRE

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project site is not within a High Fire Hazard Area or a State Responsibility Area. The project site is not contiguous to wildland slope conditions that would facilitate the spread of wildfire. The proposed project would be required to comply with local and state fire code requirements to reduce the risks for wildland fire impacts. The project would not involve the construction of habitable structures, increase population within the project area, or have substantial amounts of onsite employees that could conflict with emergency

plans and responses. Potential wildland fire impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant wildfire impacts.

Related cumulative projects would be evaluated for potential wildland fire risks and would be required to comply with local and state fire code requirements to reduce the risks for wildland fire impacts. Therefore, the proposed project, when considered with related cumulative projects, would not contribute considerably to cumulatively significant wildfire impacts.

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SECTION 6.0 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

6.1 PURPOSE

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) include a discussion of reasonable project alternatives that would “feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives” (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6[a]). As required by CEQA, this chapter identifies and evaluates potential alternatives to the proposed project.

Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines explains the foundation and legal requirements for the alternative’s analysis in an EIR. Key provisions are:

- The discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which, are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly.
- The specific alternative of “no project” shall also be evaluated along with its impact.
- The no project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.
- If the environmentally superior alternative is the “no project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.
- The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a “rule of reason” that requires the EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. The alternatives shall be limited to ones that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.
- Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR.
- An EIR need not consider an alternative whose effect cannot be reasonably ascertained and whose implementation is remote and speculative.

Section 15126.6(f)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines explains how feasibility is to be considered for alternatives capable of otherwise resolving environmental impacts resulting from the project as proposed. This section states that among the factors to be taken into account in determining feasibility are:

- Site suitability.
- Economic viability.
- Availability of infrastructure.

- General Plan consistency.
- Other plans and regulatory limitations.
- Jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context).
- Whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to an alternative site or offsite areas.

6.2 FEASIBILITY OF ALTERNATIVES

According to Section 15126.6(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, “[i]f an alternative would cause significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.” For each development alternative, the EIR:

- Describes the alternative,
- Analyzes the impact of the alternative as compared to the proposed project,
- Identifies the impacts of the project that would be avoided or lessened by the alternative,
- Assesses whether the alternative would meet most of the basic project objectives, and
- Evaluates the comparative merits of the alternative and the project.

6.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Objectives for the proposed project are defined to aid decision makers in their review of the proposed project and its associated environmental impacts. The project objectives are summarized as follows:

- Create a high-quality, single-family equestrian community with horse and pedestrian trails.
- Include Primary Animal Keeping Areas (PAKA) on each lot to promote the equestrian lifestyle.
- Exchange acreage with the City in order to build critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road.
- Widen River Road to its full width and complete the interchange improvements at River Road and Bluff Street and install landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages.

6.4 OFFSITE ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERED BUT NOT ADVANCED DURING PLANNING PROCESS

The EIR considers only feasible alternatives. A project alternative is considered infeasible if it fails to carry out the basic goals and objectives of the proposed project and if its implementation is remote and speculative.

CEQA requires that the discussion of alternatives focus on alternatives to the project or its location that are capable of avoiding, or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project. An alternative site does not need to be considered when implementation is “remote and speculative,” such as when the alternative site is beyond the control of a project applicant. Presently, there are no suitable alternative sites within the control of the project applicant. Therefore, analysis of an alternative site for the proposed project is not required.

6.5 PROPOSED PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a “rule of reason” that requires the EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice (CEQA Guidelines §15126.6(f)). As described previously in this EIR, TACRD Investments and the City have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to allow a land exchange to facilitate the completion of critical equestrian trail links as well as important public roadway improvements on River Road and Bluff Street. This alternatives analysis looks at the No Project Alternative and an Alternative to build 21,780 square foot lots (Existing Zoning) with no land swap. The proposed project objectives are as follows:

1. Create a high-quality, single-family equestrian community with horse and pedestrian trails.
2. Include Primary Animal Keeping Areas (PAKA) on each lot to promote the equestrian lifestyle.
3. Exchange acreage with the City in order to build critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road.
4. Widen River Road to its full width and complete the interchange improvements at River Road and Bluff Street and install landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages.

The Draft EIR evaluates two alternatives, identified below:

- **Alternative 1:** No Project
- **Alternative 2:** Existing Zoning with No Land Use Exchange

Table 6-1, *Project Alternatives*, identifies which project objectives (numbered above as 1 through 4) are met by each alternative.

Table 6-1
Project Alternatives

Topic	Proposed Project	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Existing Zoning with No Land Use Exchange
Unit Count	68	0	32
Zoning	10,000 sq.ft./ac	N/A	21,780 sq.ft./ac
Includes City Land Swap	Yes	No	No
Meets Project Objectives	Yes	No	Meets Objective 1 and 2 only

6.6 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e) requires consideration of the “no project” alternative to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the project with the impacts of not approving the project. This No Project Alternative assumes that no development would occur on the project site, and that the project site would continue to exist under its current condition.

6.6.1 AESTHETICS

The City of Norco General Plan does not identify the project site as a designated scenic resource or identify any public scenic vistas on the project site or surrounding area. The No Project Alternative would not obstruct or modify any scenic resource or vista.

There are no designated State Scenic Highways within the viewshed of the project site. The No Project Alternative would not obstruct or modify any scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway.

The project site is situated within an urbanized environment. The Dallape Dairy property (2877 River Road/APN 121-110-003) would remain as a former milking barn with associated barns/sheds, and dairy related features (pastures, impoundment, pole barns, fencing). Under the No Project Alternative, River Road and Bluff Street landscaping would not be installed.

Under the No Project Alternative, existing levels of lighting in the project area would remain the same.

The No Project Alternative would have no significant impact on designated scenic resources, scenic vistas, state scenic highway, or contribute to light and glare impacts. However, the River Road and Bluff Street landscaping improvements would not be made; for that reason, impacts would be greater with the No Project Alternative but would remain less than significant.

6.6.2 AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

There is no designated Farmland (Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance) within the project area, and no lands under a Williamson Act contract. Both the project and the No Project Alternative would have no impact on designated Farmland or conflict with Williamson Act contract lands. Therefore, impacts would be similar to the proposed project.

6.6.3 AIR QUALITY

The No Project Alternative would not increase vehicle trips that would generate increased air pollutant emissions over the existing condition. There would also be no construction activities and therefore no construction-related air quality impacts. Neither the project nor the No Project Alternative would conflict with or obstruct implementation of an adopted air quality plan.

The No Project/No Development Alternative would have less long-term air quality impacts than the proposed project.

6.6.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project site does not support sensitive biological habitat or waters of the U.S. or State, is not within a wildlife movement corridor, and is not subject to local biological ordinances. It is within the western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan area. Potential biological impacts to nesting birds during construction would not occur under the No Project/No Development Alternative. The proposed project would be required to survey for nesting birds and set back from nests to ensure no impacts. Post construction, there will be more vegetation and trees on site to support nesting birds. Therefore, no long-term impacts or short-term construction impacts would occur.

Because the proposed project will include new habitat for nesting birds, compared to the project, the No Project/No Development Alternative would have greater long-term benefits and similar short-term construction impacts to biological resources, therefore the No Project Alternative is considered to have

greater impacts to biological resources than the proposed project but would remain less than significant.

6.6.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Grading would not occur under the No Project Alternative. Therefore, there would be no potential to uncover any potentially impact unknown cultural resources. Compared to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would have less impacts to cultural resources.

6.6.6 ENERGY

The No Project Alternative would have no increase of long-term energy consumption over the existing condition. There would also be no construction activities and no increased construction-related energy demands.

Neither the proposed project nor the No Project Alternative would result in significant impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during the construction or operation, and neither would conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Compared to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would have less long-term operational impacts related to energy.

6.6.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The No Project Alternative would have no development on the project site. The project site would remain in its current condition and would still be subject to seismic shaking impacts.

The No Project Alternative proposes no grading activity. Therefore, there would be no potential for erosion impacts caused by construction activities. There would be no potential to uncover unknown paleontological resources. Compared to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would have less geological and paleontological impacts.

6.6.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The No Project Alternative would have no increase in long-term operational greenhouse gas emissions over the existing condition. There would be no construction activity and therefore no short-term construction-related greenhouse gas emission impacts. The No Project Alternative would not conflict with an applicable greenhouse gas reduction emission plan or policy. Compared to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would have less long-term operational greenhouse gas impacts.

6.6.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The No Project Alternative would have no increased handling, storing, or transporting of hazardous materials over the current condition that could increase the risk of hazardous materials being released into the environment. The No Project Alternative would not be subject to aircraft hazards. There would be no increase in population that could potentially interfere with implementation of emergency response plans. Although the project's impacts with respect to hazards and hazardous materials would all be mitigated to less than significant, compared to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would have less impacts to hazards and hazardous materials.

6.6.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The No Project Alternative would have no development on the project site. There would be no increase in the amount of impervious surfaces on the project site. There would be no increase in the rate of surface water runoff that could have the potential to exceed the capacity of existing drainage systems. Additionally, there would be no increased potential for long-term surface water quality impacts. The No Project Alternative proposes no construction activities, and therefore there would be no potential for short-term construction-related water quality impacts. Although the project's impacts with respect to hydrology and water quality would be mitigated to less than significant, compared to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would have less impact on hydrology and water quality.

6.6.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

The No Project Alternative would not physically divide an established community. Under this alternative, the project site would remain in its current condition. The No Project would not require a General Plan Amendment or a Zone Change; however, the No Project Alternative would have a greater impact on land use and planning because it would not allow for additional housing units in the City. For that reason, the No Project Alternative is considered to have a greater impact on land use and planning than the proposed project but remains a less than significant impact.

6.6.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

According to the California Department of Conservation, Division Mine Reclamation, the project site does not contain mines, mineral deposits, or other mineral resources. Additionally, there are no locally important mineral resources on the project site or in the City and implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. The No Project Alternative proposes no development on the project site. However, since there are no mineral resources onsite, impacts would be similar to the proposed project.

6.6.13 NOISE

The No Project Alternative would not increase daily vehicle trips that could generate mobile source noise impacts. Additionally, there would be no construction activities that would generate onsite short-term noise impacts. The No Project Alternative would not have ground borne vibration or ground borne noise impacts. The No Project Alternative would have less long-term noise impacts than the proposed project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have fewer noise impacts than the proposed project.

6.6.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

The No Project Alternative would not increase population or housing stock on the project site. This alternative would not induce substantial unplanned population growth. Additionally, this alternative would not displace people or housing. However, the No Project Alternative would impact the City's projected housing needs. For that reason, the No Project Alternative has a greater impact than the proposed project.

6.6.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

The No Project Alternative would not increase demand for police, fire protection, school, parks and recreational facilities, library and other public facilities services. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have fewer public services impacts than the proposed project.

6.6.16 RECREATION

The No Project Alternative would have no development on the project site. There would be no increased demand for recreational facilities. However, the No Project Alternative would not complete a critical equestrian/pedestrian trail connection in the City, and therefore, would have a greater impact on recreational facilities than the proposed project.

6.6.17 TRANSPORTATION

The No Project Alternative would have no development on the project site, therefore there would be no increase in daily vehicle trips on project area roadway segments and intersections. Additionally, there would be no increase in vehicle miles traveled from the project site. There would be no increase in design hazards or incompatible uses in inadequate emergency access. The No Project Alternative would result in less transportation impacts than the proposed project.

6.6.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The No Project Alternative would have no development on the project site; therefore, no grading or excavation activities would occur. There would be no potential to uncover and adversely impact unknown tribal resources. The No Project Alternative would have less impact on tribal resources than the proposed project.

6.6.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

The No Project Alternative would have no development on the project site, therefore there would be no increased demand for water service during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Additionally, there would be no increased demand for wastewater treatment or solid waste disposal. The No Project Alternative would have less impact on utilities and service systems than the proposed project.

6.6.20 WILDFIRE

Under the No Project Alternative, development would not occur. The existing parcel owned by the City of Norco would continue to be used by the City as a spoils/staging yard. The Dallape Dairy property would continue to consist of a former milking barn, barns/sheds, and dairy-related features (pastures, impoundment, pole barns, fencing). There would be no emergency access from Bluff Street and no landscape treatments and trail improvements which would have the potential to reduce fire hazard. Compared to the project, the No Project Alternative would have a greater level of risk for wildland fire impacts than the proposed project.

6.6.21 ALTERNATIVE 1 CONCLUSION

ABILITY TO INCREASE OR REDUCE IMPACTS

As shown in [Table 6-1, *Project Alternatives*](#), implementation of the No Project Alternative would have no impacts related to construction and would have less impacts to air quality, cultural resources, energy, geology/soils, greenhouse gas, hazards/hazardous materials, hydrology/water quality, noise, public services, transportation, tribal cultural resources and utilities and services systems. It would have greater impacts to aesthetics, biology, land use and planning, population and housing, recreation and wildfire and similar impacts to agriculture and farming and mineral resources.

ABILITY TO ACHIEVE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Implementation of the No Project Alternative would not meet the following project objectives:

- Create a high-quality, single-family equestrian community with horse and pedestrian trails.
- Include Primary Animal Keeping Areas (PAKA) on each lot to promote the equestrian lifestyle.
- Exchange acreage with the City in order to build critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road.
- Widen River Road to its full width and complete the interchange improvements at River Road and Bluff Street and install landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages.

6.7 ALTERNATIVE 2: EXISTING ZONING WITH NO LAND USE EXCHANGE

Under Alternative 2, the project would be developed under its current General Plan and Zoning designations. Under the current zoning, a total of 32 dwelling units could be developed with an estimated resident population of 107 people. There would be no exchange of parcels with the City of Norco and TACRD as shown on [Figure 3-1, *Parcel Configuration*](#). Grading would occur on 26.15 acres versus 27.57 acres with the proposed project. The existing parcel owned by the City of Norco, would continue to be used by the City as a spoils/staging yard. There would be no opportunity for the City to increase compliance with regional housing needs, no ability to build critical missing equestrian trail connections on Bluff Street and River Road and no roadway improvements on River Road and landscaping on River Road and Bluff Street would not be installed.

6.7.1 AESTHETICS

Neither Alternative 2 nor the proposed project would have a substantial adverse effect on any scenic vistas and would not have an adverse impact on aesthetic resources along a State Scenic Highway. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would have 36 units and would be a less dense residential project. Aesthetic impacts during construction would be similar since grading impacts are similar, however, grading will occur closer to the homes to the northeast under Alternative 2. Under Alternative 2, the equestrian trail on Bluff Street and part of River Road would not be constructed nor would landscape treatment along Bluff Street and a portion of River Road be installed. Light and glare would be expected to be similar to the proposed project. However, impacts would be expected to be greater than the proposed project due to the elimination of the trails and roadway landscaping improvements.

6.7.2 AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

There is no designated Farmland (Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance) within the project area, and no lands under a Williamson Act contract. Neither the proposed project nor Alternative 2 would impact designated Farmland or conflict with Williamson Act contract lands, therefore impacts are similar.

6.7.3 AIR QUALITY

Alternative 2 would require a similar amount of grading compared to the proposed project, except it would not occur on the City parcel and would occur on Lot B. Grading would generate a similar amount of grading emissions. Alternative 2 would generate less operational daily traffic trips and, therefore, would generate less amounts of mobile source air quality emissions. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would generate a similar amount of grading emissions but less operational air quality emissions.

6.7.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Neither implementation of the proposed project nor Alternative 2 would result in significant impacts to sensitive vegetation communities or sensitive plants. Both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would require implementation of mitigation measures to conduct pre-construction surveys to avoid impacts to burrowing owls, active bat roosts and nesting birds. Additionally, neither the proposed project nor Alternative 2 would impact jurisdictional waters as none exists onsite.

The proposed project and Alternative 2 would still require vegetation removal activities to occur outside of the nesting season unless biological monitoring occurs to ensure no harm to nesting birds. Neither Alternative 2 nor the proposed project would substantially impede wildlife movement or conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. The project site would still be within the MSHCP planning area and would be required to pay a mitigation fee. Compared to the proposed project, longer term operation and construction related biological impacts would be similar for Alternative 2.

6.7.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Alternative 2 would require a similar acreage of grading compared to the proposed project and would have the same potential to encounter unknown cultural resources. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would be required to implement mitigation measures to avoid impacts to unknown cultural resources. Compared to the proposed project, potential impacts to unknown cultural resources would be similar.

6.7.6 ENERGY

Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would involve the construction of fewer residential units which would require lower commitments of energy resources for both construction and operation. Neither the proposed project nor Alternative 2 would result in wasteful amounts of energy and would both be required to comply with state and local energy requirements to minimize the consumption of energy. Compared to the proposed project, overall energy impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be less.

6.7.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The proposed project and Alternative 2 would be subject to the same level of seismic risks and geologic constraints. Both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would be required to comply with Building Code seismic safety standards and implement design recommendations from site specific geotechnical reports to ensure the geologic stability of the site.

Alternative 2 would require a similar amount of grading. Both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would disturb more than one acre and both would be required to obtain a General Construction Permit and prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to reduce erosion impacts to less than significant.

Alternative 2 would require a similar amount of grading compared to the proposed project and would have similar potential to encounter unknown paleontological resources. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would both be required to implement mitigation measures to avoid impacts to unknown paleontological resources.

Compared to the proposed project, potential geologic and soil impacts and potential impacts to paleontological resources would be similar.

6.7.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Alternative 2 would require a similar amount of grading compared to the proposed project and would generate a similar amount of construction-related GHG emissions. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would generate less operational daily traffic trips and would therefore generate less operational greenhouse gas emission impacts.

6.7.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Neither the proposed project nor Alternative 2 would be developed on a hazardous material site. The construction of the proposed project and Alternative 2 would both be required to comply with local, state, and federal laws and regulations involving the handling, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials. The proposed project would provide emergency access from both River Road and Bluff Street while Alternative 2 would not include an emergency access point to Bluff Street, limiting emergency access. Neither the proposed project nor Alternative 2 would be subject to aircraft hazards. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would result in greater potential impacts to hazards and hazardous materials because it limits emergency access.

6.7.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would drain into the same downstream water bodies and would be required to implement a Water Quality Management Plan that treats and reduces rates of surface water runoff to pre-project conditions to avoid a conflict with the RWQCB Basin Plan. Potential water quality impacts would be similar.

Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would have less impervious surfaces and would generate lower rates of surface water runoff. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would both be required to construct stormwater management improvements consistent with City Municipal Code regulations to ensure that the project site has adequate drainage facilities that would not increase the

risk for flooding. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would not impede flood flows in the Santa Ana River.

Alternative 2 would require a similar amount of grading and would have a similar potential for erosion impacts. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would both disturb more than one acre, and both would be required to obtain a General Construction Permit and prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to reduce erosion impacts to less than significant.

Because the proposed project and Alternative 2 would both require stormwater management facilities to replicate the site's current hydrology, the impacts would be similar.

6.7.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Like the proposed project, Alternative 2 would not divide or create a barrier to existing communities or redirect traffic through existing surrounding neighborhoods. Under Alternative 2 there would be no need for a General Plan Amendment or Zone Change. However, Alternative 2 would provide less housing units than the proposed project and therefore would not provide the needed housing stock pursuant to Norco's regional housing needs. Alternative 2 would not include the Bluff Street equestrian trail connection or landscape improvements on Bluff Street. The River Road improvements between the TACRD property and the intersection of Bluff Street and River Road would not be completed. Therefore, Alternative 2 would have greater impacts on Land Use and Planning.

6.7.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

According to the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mine Reclamation, the project site does not contain mines, mineral deposits, or other mineral resources. Additionally, there are no locally important mineral resources on the project site or in the City, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would be developed under current General Plan and Zoning designations and would not impact locally important mineral resources, therefore, impacts would be similar.

6.7.13 NOISE

Alternative 2 would involve the construction of fewer residential units which would generate less construction noise impacts and less daily vehicle traffic trips, creating lower levels of traffic noise impacts. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would result in less construction and operational noise impacts.

6.7.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Under Alternative 2 the number of housing units and estimated population for the site would be consistent with the existing General Plan. Alternative 2 would provide 36 fewer new homes in the City. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would generate lower population and housing units. However, the City is required by the State to meet regional housing needs and Alternative 2 would not contribute to that objective. Therefore, Alternative 2 has greater impacts to population and housing.

6.7.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

Under Alternative 2, fewer residential units would be constructed and there would be less demand for public services. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would be required to coordinate with police and fire and comply with codes and standards to minimize public service impacts and provide development impact fees to fund existing and/or future public services to ensure adequate public facilities are available. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would have less demand for public services.

6.7.16 RECREATION

Compared to Alternative 2, the proposed project would have less households and lower demand for recreation activities. However, under Alternative 2, a critical link to the City's equestrian trails would not be provided along Bluff Street nor would a portion of the River Road trail connect. Because Alternative 2 would not provide these critical trail improvements, Alternative 2 would have a greater impact on recreation than the proposed project.

6.7.17 TRANSPORTATION

Alternative 2 can meet City thresholds to comply with numeric standards for vehicle miles traveled. However, Alternative 2 would limit accessibility to the project for emergency access because there would be no access to Bluff Street and roadway improvements to build out the River Road connection to the Bluff Street Intersection which would not be completed. For these reasons, Alternative 2 would have less VMT impacts than the proposed project but greater transportation impacts.

6.7.18 TRIBAL RESOURCES

Alternative 2 would involve a similar amount of grading and would have a similar potential to encounter unknown tribal resources during construction that could potentially be damaged. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would be required to comply with mitigation measures to avoid impacts to unknown tribal cultural resources. Compared to the proposed project, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources under Alternative 2 would be similar.

6.7.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Alternative 2 would have fewer households and a lower demand for utility services both during long-term operation as well as construction. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would be required to coordinate with utility providers to ensure adequate utility service is provided. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would have less demand for utility services.

6.7.20 WILDFIRE

Under Alternative 2, the project would be developed under current General Plan and Zoning designations and there be no parcel exchange. The existing parcel owned by the City of Norco would continue to be used by the City as a spoils/staging yard. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would have fewer units and would be a less dense residential project. Both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would have to be designed to meet Fire Department Codes and Standards and emergency access requirements. Additionally, the City would employ communications protocols and systems for emergency response which establishes general emergency evacuation procedures.

Compliance with Fire Department Codes would help reduce impacts to less than significant for Alternative 2 and the project. The proposed project and Alternative 2 would have a similar level of risk for wildland fire impacts.

6.7.21 ALTERNATIVE 2 CONCLUSION

ABILITY TO INCREASE OR REDUCE IMPACTS

Alternative 2 would have less construction and operational impacts for energy, noise, public services and utilities. Impacts would be similar for cultural resources, geology/soils, hydrology/water quality, and tribal cultural resources.

Alternative 2 would have less operational impacts to air quality, and greenhouse gas, while it would have greater impacts for aesthetics, biology, hazards, land use, population and housing, recreation and transportation.

ABILITY TO ACHIEVE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Implementation of Alternative 2 would not meet the following project objectives:

- Exchange acreage with the City in order to build critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road.
- Widen River Road to its full width and complete the interchange improvements at River Road and Bluff Street and install landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages.

6.8 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE IMPACTS

Table 6-2, *Project Alternative Impact Comparison*, provides a comparison of the No Project Alternative and Alternative 2 construction and operational impacts to the proposed project. The potential for impacts is identified as greater than, less than or similar in potential level to occur, compared to the proposed project. Table 6-3, *Summary Alternative Compliance with Project Objectives*, identifies the project objectives for each of the alternatives to attain.

Table 6-2
Project Alternative Impact Comparison

Issues	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Project	Alternative 2 Existing Zoning with No Land Use Exchange
Aesthetics	Less Than Significant	Greater	Greater
Agriculture/Forestry Resources	No Impact	Similar	Similar
Air Quality	Less Than Significant Impact	Less	Less
Biology	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Greater	Similar
Cultural Resources	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Similar
Energy	Less Than Significant	Less	Less
Geology/Soils	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Similar
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less Than Significant	Less	Less
Hazards/Hazardous Materials	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Greater

Issues	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Project	Alternative 2 Existing Zoning with No Land Use Exchange
Hydrology/Water Quality	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar
Land Use and Planning	Less Than Significant	Greater	Greater
Mineral Resources	Less Than Significant	Similar	Similar
Noise	Less Than Significant	Less	Less
Population/Housing	Less Than Significant	Greater	Greater
Public Services	Less Than Significant	Less	Less
Recreation	Less Than Significant	Greater	Greater
Transportation	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less	Less
Tribal Cultural Resources	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Similar
Utilities/Service Systems	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less	Less
Wildfire	Less Than Significant	Greater	Similar

Table 6-3
Summary Alternative Compliance with Project Objectives

Objective	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Create a high-quality, single-family equestrian community with horse and pedestrian trails.	No	Yes
Include Primary Animal Keeping Areas (PAKA) on each lot to promote the equestrian lifestyle.	No	Yes
Exchange acreage with the City in order to build critically missing links to the Norco Equestrian Trail System along Bluff Street and River Road.	No	No
Widen River Road to its full width and complete the interchange improvements at River Road and Bluff Street and install landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages.	No	No

6.9 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR/PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires that EIRs identify the Environmentally Superior Alternative and discuss the facts that support that selection. The Environmentally Superior Alternative is typically the Alternative that results in the least amount of significant unavoidable adverse impacts. For the proposed project, one significant unavoidable adverse impact was identified for transportation associated with vehicle miles travelled (VMT). The proposed project would also result in impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, hazards/hazardous materials, tribal cultural resources and utilities/service systems which were determined to be less than significant with mitigation. The remaining environmental topics were determined to either have less than significant impacts or no impacts with implementation of standard regulations and requirements.

Alternative 1 No Project was determined to result in no significant unavoidable impacts. In addition, Alternative 1 would result in less overall construction impacts and operational impacts compared to the proposed project.

Alternative 2 Existing Zoning With No Land Use Exchange was determined to result in no significant unavoidable impacts. While Alternative 2 would still result in increased VMT compared to the existing condition, impacts were determined to be less than significant because there would be a reduction from 68 units to 32 units which would be under the VMT screening threshold. Alternative 2 would also result in impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, hazards/hazardous materials, tribal cultural resources and utilities/service systems, which would also be less than significant with mitigation. The remaining environmental topics would also either have less than significant impacts or no impacts with implementation of standard regulations and requirements.

Under CEQA, if the environmentally superior alternative is the “no project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Additionally, under CEQA a Lead Agency is not obligated to select an Environmentally Superior Alternative for implementation if it would not accomplish the basic project objectives and/or is infeasible.

Alternative 2 would not result in a significant unavoidable adverse impact, and therefore, would be environmentally superior to the proposed project; however, Alternative 2 would only meet two of the four project objectives. Two critical objectives that would not be achieved include construction of critical equestrian trail linkages and the completion of River Road improvements and landscaping along the River Road and Bluff Street frontages. Because Alternative 2 would only partially meet the project objectives, it is not considered the Preferred Alternative.

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SECTION 7.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.2(c), this section analyzes short-term uses of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity. If the proposed project is approved and constructed, a variety of short- and long-term impacts would occur. During construction, surrounding land uses could be temporarily impacted by dust and noise. There could also be an increase in vehicle pollutant emissions caused by grading and other construction activities and potential generation of degraded surface water. However, these short-term effects would be temporary and would be avoided or lessened to a large degree through implementation of mitigation measures and compliance with regulatory requirements identified in this EIR.

The project would result in long-term environmental changes associated with a transition of former dairy lands to urbanized land uses. Long-term operation of the project would contribute to increased vehicle miles traveled, increased noise, increased amounts of impervious surfaces and increased energy and natural resource consumption. An incremental increase in mobile sources emissions would be generated from project-related traffic, and stationary source emissions generated from the consumption of natural gas and electricity. Conversely, the development would reduce dust (PM₁₀), provide critical equestrian trail linkages, and construct River Road and Bluff Street improvements including landscaping. Additionally, long-term operational effects would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of mitigation measures and compliance with regulatory requirements identified in this EIR.

7.2 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Pursuant to Sections 15126(d) and 15126.2(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this section is provided to examine ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Also required is an assessment of other projects that could foster other activities which could affect the environment, individually or cumulatively. To address this issue, potential growth-inducing effects would be examined through analysis of the following questions:

- Would this project remove obstacles to growth, e.g., through the construction or extension of major infrastructure facilities that do not presently exist in the project area, or through changes in existing regulations pertaining to land development?
- Would the project foster economic expansion or growth (e.g., changes in revenue base and employment expansion) or foster population growth (e.g., construction of additional housing), either directly or indirectly?
- Would approval of this project involve some precedent-setting action that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment?

Should a project meet any one of the above-listed criteria, it may be considered growth-inducing. Generally, growth-inducing projects are either located in isolated, undeveloped, or underdeveloped areas, necessitating the extension of major infrastructure such as sewer and water facilities or

roadways, or encourage premature or unplanned growth. Note that the *CEQA Guidelines* require an EIR to “discuss the ways” a project could be growth-inducing and to “discuss the characteristics of some projects that may encourage ... activities that could significantly affect the environment.” In accordance with the *CEQA Guidelines* and based on the above-listed criteria, the project’s potential growth-inducing impacts are evaluated below.

Would this project remove obstacles to growth, e.g., through the construction or extension of major infrastructure facilities that do not presently exist in the project area, or through changes in existing regulations pertaining to land development?

The elimination of a physical obstacle to growth, such as the construction or extension of major infrastructure facilities that are not presently in the area, would be considered a growth-inducing impact. The growth-inducing potential of a project would also be considered significant if it fosters growth in excess of what is assumed in the local master plans and land use plans, or in projections made by regional planning agencies.

The project site is currently improved with existing infrastructure. The area surrounding the project site is urbanized with existing infrastructure as well. Existing utilities and service systems would be expanded and/or extended to serve the proposed project. Additionally, the project would take access from existing roadways and would not need to construct new offsite roadways. Therefore, the proposed project would not remove obstacles to growth that facilitates growth in the project area that would be associated with project extension of new utility and service systems or by improved access to the project site and would not be considered growth-inducing.

The proposed project would require a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change to allow a higher density of units to help meet Norco’s regional housing needs. Regulations outline the process for general plan amendments and zone changes. The approval of the proposed project does not establish a precedent for other parcels in the City. The City makes these types of determinations on a case-by-case basis.

Would the project foster economic expansion or growth (e.g., changes in revenue base and employment expansion) or foster population growth (e.g., construction of additional housing), either directly or indirectly?

A project could induce population growth in an area either directly or indirectly. More specifically, the development of new residences or businesses could induce population growth directly, whereas the extension of roads or other infrastructure could induce population growth indirectly. The project site is in a developed area and the extension of infrastructure into the project site would not facilitate growth in the project area.

According to the California Department of Finance (DOF) 2023 Population and Housing Estimates, the population of Norco is 25,037 persons. Norco represents approximately 1.1% of the total population of Riverside County, which is estimated by DOF to be 2,439,234 in January 2023. Between 2020 and 2023, the City’s population decreased by 1,622 residents, a decrease of 6%. Specifically, the DOF population in 2020 was 26,659 persons, in 2021 was 24,680 persons, in 2022 was 25,035 persons, and 2023 was 25,037 persons. Between 2023 and 2040, the City’s population is estimated to grow by 7,063 persons, an increase of approximately 28% over 2023.

In 2023, the City of Norco had a population of 25,037 persons and an estimated population of 32,100 in 2040. The proposed project would construct 68 single-family dwellings. Based on the City of Norco average household size of 3.34 persons per household, the project is estimated to have 227 residents. However, under the current zoning, a total of 32 single-family dwelling units could be developed with an estimated resident population of 107 persons.

The operation of the project would not generate substantial new employment opportunities in the City. The project could generate the needs for household services of the maintenance and upkeep of the new residential homes. It is anticipated that these household services would be provided from existing businesses, and therefore the project would not create a need for additional business to be created to serve the project. Construction of the proposed project would generate short-term employment opportunities. It is anticipated that the short-term employment opportunities would be filled from the local labor force and would not be growth-inducing in this regard. The project's potential growth-inducing impacts would be considered less than significant.

Would approval of this project involve some precedent-setting action that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment?

The proposed project requests approval of a General Plan Amendment, Zone Change and Tentative Tract to allow for construction and operation of the proposed project. The proposed project would change General Plan land use on the project site from Agriculture Low Density 2.1 Dwelling Units per Acre to Residential Low 4.2 Dwelling Units per Acre. Incentives to increase densities on the lands in the City would result from regional economic conditions and market demands for housing and would not be directly or indirectly influenced by proposed actions on the project site. Future actions that may increase densities would be evaluated for potential impacts to the environment and would be required to minimize impacts to the environment. Therefore, approval of the proposed project would not involve a precedent-setting action for other properties and, therefore, does not encourage or facilitate growth that would not otherwise occur.

SUMMARY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF INDUCED GROWTH

Overall, implementation of the proposed project would not generate substantial population growth. Implementation of the project would not be considered growth-inducing, because it is considered an in-fill development surrounded by existing land uses and improved infrastructure. The extension of utility service systems onto the site and improved access to the site would not facilitate additional growth in the project area. All potential effects to the environment associated with the construction and operation of the project have been analyzed in this EIR and potential impacts have been reduced to less than significant through the implementation of mitigation measures or compliance with regulatory requirements. Therefore, potential growth-inducing impacts would be less than significant.

7.3 IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES THAT WOULD OCCUR WITH PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

According to *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15126(c) and 15126.2(c), an EIR is required to address any significant irreversible environmental changes that would occur should the project be implemented.

The project would consume limited, slowly renewable, and non-renewable resources. This consumption would occur during the construction phase of the project and would continue

throughout its operational lifetime. Project development would require a commitment of resources that would include: (1) building materials, (2) fuel and operational materials/resources, and (3) the transportation of goods and people to and from the site. Project construction would require the consumption of resources that are not renewable, or which may renew so slowly as to be considered non-renewable. These resources would include the following construction supplies: lumber and other forest products, aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt, metals, and water. Fossil fuels such as gasoline and oil would also be consumed in the use of construction vehicles and equipment.

The operation of the project would require a commitment of renewable and non-renewable resources. Resources would include energy such as electricity and natural gas, petroleum-based fuels required for vehicle trips, and water. Fossil fuels would represent the primary energy source associated with both construction and ongoing operation of the project and the existing, finite supplies of these natural resources would be incrementally reduced. The level of use of nonrenewable resources required for construction and operation of the proposed project would be typical of this size project and would not result in overconsumption or wasteful use of nonrenewable resources. However, energy requirements associated with the project would, nonetheless, represent a long-term commitment of essentially non-renewable resources. To minimize the commitment of nonrenewable resources, project operation would occur in accordance with Title 24, Part 6 of the *California Code of Regulations*, which sets forth conservation practices that would limit the amount of energy consumed by the project. In summary, the proposed project construction and operation would result in the irretrievable commitment of limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources, which would limit the availability of these specific resource quantities for future generations or for other uses during the life of the project. The proposed project would involve the use of building materials and energy, some of which are non-renewable resources. Consumption of these resources would occur with any development in the region and are not unique to the project. Additionally, increasingly efficient building fixtures and automobile engines are expected to offset this demand to some degree. Continued use of such resources would also be on a relatively small scale and consistent with regional and local growth forecasts in the area. As such, although irreversible environmental changes would result from the proposed project, such changes would not be considered significant.

7.4 UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

An EIR must identify any significant environmental effects that would result from the project. (Public Resources Code, §21100, Subdivision (b)(2)(B).) There are significant VMT effects of the project as summarized below.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED IMPACT

Project Impact

As shown in [Table 7-1, *Project Threshold for VMT*](#), the proposed project VMT per Capita is 22.50% higher than the City average VMT per Capita. Based on the criteria outlined in this report, the proposed project will exceed the City of Norco base year VMT per Capita of 13.05 and thus will have a significant project VMT impact.

Table 7-1
Project Threshold for VMT

Base Year	TAZ 3150	City Average Threshold	Compare to City Threshold
VMT Per Capita	15.99	13.05	22.50% Higher
Source: Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers (LLG), <i>Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis</i> ; March 21, 2024.			

Cumulative Impact

As shown in Table 7-2, *Cumulative Threshold for VMT*, the proposed project total daily VMT within the City is 0.10% higher than the “No Project” scenario total daily VMT under cumulative conditions. Based on the criteria outlined in the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis (Appendix J), the proposed project total daily VMT will exceed under the “With Project” condition when compared to the “Without Project” condition and thus the project will have a significant cumulative VMT impact.

Table 7-2
Cumulative Threshold for VMT

Cumulative Year	With Project Scenario	Without project Scenario	Compare to Threshold
Total VMT	1,164,288.81	1,163,127.15	0.10% Higher
Source: Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers (LLG), <i>Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis</i> ; March 21, 2024.			

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SECTION 8.0 INVENTORY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

BIO-1: Vegetation removal activities shall be conducted outside the nesting season (September 1 to February 14 for songbirds; September 1 to January 14 for raptors) to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds.

Any construction activities that occur during the nesting season (February 15 to August 31 for songbirds; January 15 to August 31 for raptors) will require that all suitable habitats within 500 feet of the project site be thoroughly surveyed for the presence of nesting birds by a qualified biologist within three days before commencement of vegetation clearing/ground disturbance activities. If any active nests are detected, a buffer of 500 feet of an active listed species or raptor nest, 300 feet of other sensitive bird nests (non-listed), and 100 feet of most common songbird nests will be delineated, flagged, and avoided until the nesting cycle is complete. The buffer may be modified and/or other recommendations proposed as determined appropriate by the biological monitor to minimize impacts.

BIO-2: A pre-construction/clearance burrowing owl survey shall be performed not more than 30 days prior to initial ground disturbance activity to formally determine presence/absence of the species. A qualified biologist will survey the project site and a buffer zone, 500-feet outside the project limits for burrows that could be used by burrowing owls. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow will be flagged, and a 160-foot diameter buffer will be established during non-breeding season or a 250-foot diameter buffer during the breeding season. If burrows onsite are unoccupied, construction may proceed.

If the site survey determines the presence of burrowing owl, mitigation in accordance with the CDFW and the MSHCP shall be implemented as follows:

- If burrowing owls are identified as being resident onsite outside the breeding season (September 1 to February 14) they may be relocated to other sites by a permitted biologist (permitted by CDFW), as allowed in the CDFW *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (March 2012).
- If an active burrow is found during the breeding season, the burrow shall be treated as a nest site and temporary fencing shall be installed at a distance from the active burrow, to be determined by the biologist, to prevent disturbance during grading or construction. Installation and removal of the fencing shall be done with a biological monitor present.
- Active relocation and eviction/passive relocation require the preservation and maintenance of suitable burrowing owl habitat determined through coordination with the Wildlife Agencies.

BIO-3: Trees, large shrubs, and structures shall be surveyed for the presence of special status bat species by a qualified bat biologist no more than two weeks prior to the initiation of vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities if work will begin within the maternity season (March 1 to August 31). Surveys may entail direct inspection of the trees, large

shrubs, and structures or nighttime surveys as determined by a qualified biologist. If active bat roosts are present, a qualified bat biologist shall determine the species of bats present and the type of roost (i.e., day roost, night roost, maternity roost). If special-status bat species are present, a qualified bat biologist shall determine appropriate avoidance measures, which may include implementation of a construction-free buffer around the active roost.

BIO-4: MSHCP Mitigation Fee. The project proponent shall be required to pay the City of Norco local development mitigation fees prior to issuance of a building permit. The most current rates are as follows (future developments may be subject to updated fees):

Category	Current Fee as of 1 January 2022
Commercial/Industrial	\$16,358/acre
Residential	
0-8 Units per acre	\$3,635/unit
8.1-14 Units per acre	\$1,515/unit
14+ Units per acre	\$670/unit

CULTURAL RESOURCES

CR-1: Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a qualified Archaeologist and Native American Tribal representative(s) to monitor grading and other ground disturbances related to site development. The Archaeologist, in consultation with the Tribe(s) and City, shall develop a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to address the details, timing, and protocols of all cultural resources activities that occur on the project site. At the project pre-grading meeting, the Archaeologist, the Tribal representative(s), the Applicant, and the excavation and grading contractor shall discuss appropriate grading and ground disturbing methods within archaeologically and culturally sensitive areas on the project site pursuant to the CRMP. Should the Archaeologist, after consultation with the consulting Tribe(s), find the potential exists for impacts to archaeological resources, cultural resources and/or sacred sites, the archaeologist and the Native American tribal representative(s) shall actively monitor project-related grading and in the event that cultural resources are discovered, shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt grading activity to allow recovery of archaeological and/or cultural resources. All cultural material will be temporarily curated on the project site until final disposition is determined. The Applicant shall relinquish ownership of all cultural material, including sacred items, burial goods, and all archaeological artifacts and non-human remains discovered to the consulting Tribe(s) for final disposition. Leaving artifacts in place (in situ) or reburial of them on site are the preferred methods of mitigation. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloguing and basic recordation has been completed.

CR-2: At the completion of grading, excavation, and ground-disturbing activities on the site, a Phase IV Monitoring Report shall be submitted to the City documenting all monitoring activities conducted by the project archaeologist and Native Tribal Monitor(s). All reports produced will be submitted to the City of Norco, the Eastern Information Center, University of California, Riverside, and the consulting Tribe(s).

CR-3: Section 7050.5 of the *California Health and Safety Code* provides for the disposition of accidentally discovered human remains. Section 7050.5 states that, if human remains are found, no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall occur until the county coroner has determined, within two working days, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains. If the coroner recognizes those remains to be Native American or has reason to suspect so, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours.

Section 5097.98 of the PRC states that, when the NAHC receives notification of a discovery of Native American human remains from the county coroner pursuant to Section 7050.5 of the *California Health and Safety Code*, the NAHC shall immediately notify those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The Most Likely Descendants (MLD) shall complete their inspection within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated MLD would then recommend, in consultation with the property owner, the means for treatment or disposition, with appropriate dignity, of the human remains and any associated grave goods.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

GEO-1: Prior to issuance of grading permits, the City of Norco shall confirm that grading and construction plans for the project to incorporate design recommendations provided in the Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation prepared by LGC Geotechnical, Inc. dated January 21, 2022. The design recommendations shall address site earthwork and site preparation; organic rich soils, preliminary foundation, soil bearing, and lateral resistance, retaining wall recommendations, pile construction, slope creep, lot stretching, fences, freestanding walls, corrosivity, asphalt and concrete, non-structural concrete, subsurface water infiltration, surface water control, geotechnical plan review and geotechnical observation and testing.

PALEO-1: Prior to the issuance of any grading permit, the project Applicant shall provide written evidence to the City of Norco, that the Applicant has retained a qualified paleontologist to observe grading activities and salvage and catalogue fossils, as necessary. The paleontologist shall be present at the pre-grade conference, shall establish procedures for paleontological resource surveillance, and shall establish, in cooperation with the Applicant and City, procedures for temporarily halting or redirecting work to permit sampling, identification, and evaluation of the fossils. If deemed necessary, the paleontologist shall collect sediment samples to recover any micro fossils that may be present. If the paleontological resources are found to be significant, the paleontologist shall determine appropriate actions, in cooperation with the Applicant, which ensure proper exploration and/or salvage.

PALEO-2: If paleontological resources are uncovered and after completion of the project, the Applicant shall submit the paleontologist's follow-up report for approval by the City of Norco. The report shall include the period of inspection, a catalogue and analysis of the fossils found, and the present repository of the fossils. The Applicant shall prepare excavated material to the point of identification. The Applicant shall offer excavated finds for curatorial purposes to the City of Norco or its designee, on a first refusal basis. These

actions, as well as final mitigation and disposition of the resources, shall be subject to approval by the City of Norco. Applicant shall pay curatorial fees for the storage of these resources in perpetuity.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

HAZ-1: Additional sampling shall be conducted following demolition and prior to construction to evaluate the extent, depth, and distribution of dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene (DDE). Following additional sampling, recommendations will be made regarding remediation and/or other mitigation and/or sampling options.

HAZ-2: Undocumented fill is located on the northern parcel. One of the following options must be completed to mitigate this REC prior to construction:

- The property owner can properly dispose of the undocumented fill.
- The property owner can properly evaluate the fill to document its suitability for use at the site and provide sampling rationale/standards with sampling location and laboratory data to Client for evaluation.
- Client can properly evaluate the fill using EPA SW-846 or other acceptable sampling guidance.

NOISE

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant temporary construction noise impacts or long-term operational noise impacts.

Project Design Feature NOI-1 has been incorporated into the proposed project to meet requirements of Policy 2.2.2a that requires the submittal of a construction noise reduction plan. It also addresses Policy 2.2.2b by requiring all construction equipment to be equipped with mufflers and engine shrouds and addresses Policy 2.2.2c that requires limitation of when construction equipment and haul trucks may operate. As such, with implementation of Project Design Feature NOI-1, the proposed project would be following the construction noise standards provided in General Plan Noise Element Policies 2.2.2a, 2.2.2b, and 2.2.2c.

PDF-NOI-1: Prior to the issuance of the grading permit, the project applicant shall submit a construction related noise mitigation plan to the City for review and approval. The plan shall depict the locations of where construction equipment will operate on the project site and how the noise from the construction equipment will be mitigated during construction of the project, through use of the following methods:

1. Restriction of use of construction equipment and haul truck operations between 7:00 PM and 7:00 AM, Monday through Friday and between 7:00 PM and 8:00 AM on Saturday and Sunday, unless specified by permit for activities such as pouring of concrete that may need to occur outside of these hours;
2. Placement of temporary noise attenuation fences around stationary equipment (i.e., air compressors and generators) that are used in close proximity to sensitive receptors;
3. Placement of equipment storage and staging areas as far away as practical from sensitive receptors;

4. Limitation of construction equipment idling time to less than 5 minutes per occurrence; and,
5. Require the use of construction equipment noise attenuation features that include mufflers and engine shrouds that are at least as effective as the original manufacturer equipment.

TRANSPORTATION

TRANS-1: A Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared for temporary construction within the road right-of-way to ensure pedestrian, equestrian and vehicular safety and shall be approved prior to issuance of an encroachment permit.

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 are required.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Mitigation Measure TRANS-1 is required.

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SECTION 9.0 ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED

9.1 LEAD AGENCY

CITY OF NORCO

Planning Department
2870 Clark Avenue
Norco, California 92860

Alma Robles, Community Development Director
Chad Blais, Director of Public Works

9.2 APPLICANT

TACRD INVESTMENTS L.P.

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9.3 PREPARERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

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Valerie Flores, Environmental Planner
Andrea Zullo, Environmental Planner
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Wade Caffrey, Biologist
Sierra Valladares, Biologist
Patrick Maxon, RPA, Archaeologist
Willa Sumer, GIS Specialist

9.4 TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS

AIR QUALITY, ENERGY, GREENHOUSE GAS AND NOISE ANALYSIS

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Greg Tonkovich, AICP, Senior Analyst

CIVIL ENGINEER

MDS Consulting
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Irvine, California 92614

Robert Zoller, Principal and Vice President/Preliminary Engineering

GEOTECHNICAL ANALYSIS

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Tim Lawson, GE, CEG, Geotechnical Engineer/Geologist
Barry Graham, CEG, Project Geologist

HYDROLOGY/HYDRAULIC STUDY AND WQMP

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17320 Redhill Avenue, Suite 350
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Ed Lenth, PE, Principal

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Timothy A. Lester, CEM

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION ASSESSMENT/VMT ANALYSIS

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Zawwar Saiyed, PE, Associate Principal
Yi Li, Transportation Engineer I

9.5 PERSONS CONSULTED

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Riverside, California 92501

Adria Reinertson, Deputy Fire Marshal

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Corona-Norco Unified School District
2820 Clark Avenue
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Nicole Lavallee, Facilities Analyst

PARK FACILITIES

City of Norco Community Services
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Megan Arredonado, Community Services Clerical Assistant

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