

City of Santa Clarita

Town Center Specific Plan Project

Program Draft Environmental Impact Report

Master Case 22-105
State Clearinghouse No. 2023120123

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ES-1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Town Center Specific Plan (Project) is located in the community of Valencia in the City of Santa Clarita (City). The Town Center Specific Plan Area (TCSP Area or Specific Plan Area) is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Valencia Boulevard to the south and east, and by McBean Parkway to the west, with a 3.7-acre portion of the Specific Plan Area located on the southwest side of McBean Parkway connecting to the McBean Regional Transit Center. Citrus Street bisects the Specific Plan Area from north to south. Town Center Drive traverses the TCSP Area, connecting to both McBean Parkway and Magic Mountain Parkway and forming a loop road around the Valencia Town Center Mall, which is one of the primary existing land uses in the TCSP Area. The Specific Plan Area comprises four subareas:

- Subarea 1 – Valencia Town Center
- Subarea 2 – Town Center East
- Subarea 3 – Town Center Drive
- Subarea 4 – McBean and Valencia

ES-2 PROPOSED PROJECT AND OBJECTIVES

The Project is a long-range land use plan that establishes the City's vision for the TCSP Area as a regional destination incorporating a balanced mix of uses. The City's goals for the Specific Plan are to create a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; create a distinct sense of place; create a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and create a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element.

In general, the Specific Plan content is presented in four chapters: an introduction and the proposed Specific Plan's vision and goals; a development plan framework element that seeks to establish the components, expectations, and general requirements for all future development plans for sites within the TCSP Area; a description of the development and design standards regulating future development plans in the Specific Plan Area; and an implementation plan that could be utilized to implement the goals of the Specific Plan. A description of each chapter is included in the following paragraphs.

Chapter 1 of the proposed Specific Plan includes a description of the regional setting, the relationship of the Specific Plan to other City plans (such as the City's General Plan and 6th cycle Housing Element), and a discussion of existing conditions, as well as the proposed Vision Statement and Goals, which are provided below.

The Vision Statement for the Proposed Specific Plan is:

The Santa Clarita Town Center is a lively hub that embodies a spirit of community, inviting people from all walks of life to live, work, shop, play, and socialize. It features a balance of retail, office, restaurants, recreational, hospitality, and residential spaces, seamlessly integrated with a pedestrian and bike friendly setting. The Town Center features an efficient multimodal transportation system, providing easy connectivity to regional and

local trail systems. The Town Center provides a community identity and is a vibrant place for people to gather, socialize, and celebrate in the City of Santa Clarita.

The primary goals of the proposed Specific Plan are to:

- Create a balanced mix of uses within the TCSP Area that combines commercial and service opportunities with a residential environment that creates a more livable and pedestrian oriented space.
- Further establish and enhance the Specific Plan Area as a regional destination for employment, entertainment, dining, retail, and services.
- Provide a long-term vision for development within the most intensive commercial and residential district of the City of Santa Clarita that facilitates the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan including, but not limited to, the creation of a robust jobs-to-housing balance, and implements the City’s Housing Element.

Chapter 2 includes framework elements, which contain the building blocks, details, examples, and rationale for the contents of the Specific Plan. As stated above, the details within the framework element are intended to establish the components, expectations, and general requirements for all future development plans for sites within the Specific Plan. This chapter also includes two conceptual development plans, illustrating examples of how the Specific Plan Area could build out. These plans do not serve as rigid blueprints for development, but rather provide guidance for future endeavors, considering long-term needs of the community and market trends.

Chapter 3 includes the development standards that would regulate development within the Specific Plan Area. The development standards identified in this chapter are intended to achieve the core components of the framework elements included within Chapter 2. These development standards include flexible land use regulations, architectural standards, parking requirements, and density standards to ensure a balance and efficiency of uses, amenities, and improvements.¹ Further, these standards promote mixed-use development to ensure that future development projects incorporate a balance of uses, provide appropriate amenities, and create a sense of place. These standards address building heights, setbacks, public spaces, and architectural standards to maintain visual appeal and compatibility with the surrounding area.

Within the Specific Plan Area, the existing Regional Commercial (CR) zone allows for a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2:1 (87,120 square feet of floor area per acre) and the provision for residential densities between a minimum of 18 units and a maximum of 50 units per acre. The Specific Plan maintains this FAR of 2:1 and the residential densities of up to 50 units per acre.

Chapter 4 includes an implementation plan that describes the manner in which the proposed Specific Plan could be implemented. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan emphasizes improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center, thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services.

¹ The proposed Specific Plan does not change the density standards from the current zoning designation.

The Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the Specific Plan Area, which includes programmable gathering spaces and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children’s playgrounds, and parks.

Since the vast majority of the Specific Plan Area is privately owned, implementation of the TCSP would require participation from private property owners and developers. Thus, the City undertook a study to envision how the proposed Specific Plan could be ultimately built out, which resulted in the development of two conceptual plans and three buildout scenarios: low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout. Chapter 2, Project Description, presents the conceptual plans and describes in detail three buildout scenario calculations for the TCSP. In summary, the buildout scenarios consist of:

- Low Buildout Scenario: 1,426 residential units and a net increase of 487,113 square feet of nonresidential building space;
- Full Buildout Scenario: 2,229 residential units and a net increase of 482,595 square feet of nonresidential building space; and
- High Buildout Scenario: 2,563 residential units and a net increase of 631,196 square feet of nonresidential building space.

ES-3 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines require that a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency, including issues raised by other agencies and the public. The issues of concern are generally associated with impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, land use, noise, public services, and transportation. The following agencies responded to the Notice of Preparation: California Department of Transportation and Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. In general, these agencies’ comments (see **Appendix A**) focused on the need to undergo required consultations and to comply with codes and ordinances. These issues have been incorporated into the environmental analysis of the Project, contained in Section 4.0, Environmental Analysis.

The environmental topics, which are further discussed in Sections 4.1 through 4.13 of this Draft EIR, are as follows:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

Potential areas of controversy and issues to be resolved by the City’s decisionmakers may include those environmental issue areas where the potential for a significant and unavoidable impact has been identified. As identified in this EIR, the Project would have significant and unavoidable impacts related to air quality during operations. In addition, the EIR identified potentially significant

impacts that are mitigable to less than significant levels related to the following environmental topics: archaeological resources, paleontological resources, tribal cultural resources, and hazards and hazardous materials.

ES-4 ALTERNATIVES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) states that “an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of 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. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. An EIR is not required to consider alternatives which are infeasible.” In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b) states that because “an EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment, 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.”

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, this Draft EIR contains a comparative impact assessment of alternatives, including the No Project Alternative, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e), that would lessen the significant impacts of the Project while attaining most of the basic objectives of the Project. A comparative analysis of the following alternatives is presented in Chapter 5, Alternatives, of this Draft EIR:

ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT/NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Project/No Build Alternative, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Individual building tenants might change over time, but the overall mix of uses in the TCSP Area would remain, primarily consisting of various commercial, retail, restaurant, office, and civic uses.

ALTERNATIVE 2: NO PROJECT/INFILL DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT UNDER EXISTING ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS ALTERNATIVE

Under Alternative 2, the TCSP Area would be further built out in accordance with the existing applicable zoning regulations and General Plan land use designation criteria. The entire approximately 111-acre Specific Plan Area is zoned Regional Commercial (CR) and has an equivalent General Plan Land Use designation of Regional Commercial (CR). The density standards in the CR zone are 18-50 units per acre for residential uses and a FAR of 2:1 for nonresidential uses. The proposed Specific Plan would not change these density standards. Consequently, buildout under Alternative 2 is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, i.e., the Project’s low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. However, the primary difference between the Project and Alternative 2 is that the Project would implement a Specific Plan that would regulate the buildout of the TCSP Area in a cohesive and coordinated manner to create a variety of community benefits, including a pedestrian-friendly environment, circulation improvements, parks/plazas, trails/paseos, and monumental architecture. Without these

regulations, buildout of the TCSP Area would be expected to occur largely on a parcel-by-parcel basis without a governed unified approach.

ALTERNATIVE 3: REDUCED SCALE SPECIFIC PLAN ALTERNATIVE

Under Alternative 3, the Los Angeles County government center in Subarea 2 (Town Center East) would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. In this alternative, the remaining portions of Subarea 2 would continue to be within the Specific Plan Area, including the existing 31,000-square-foot retail/commercial center along Citrus Street, the two private office buildings near Valencia Boulevard, and the City-owned land. Subarea 1 (Valencia Town Center), Subarea 3 (Town Center Drive), and Subarea 4 (McBean and Valencia) would also remain within the Specific Plan Area. Under Alternative 3, buildout of Subareas 1, 3, and 4 would be the same as buildout under the proposed Project. Except for the Los Angeles County government center—which would remain—buildout of Subarea 2 would be similar to buildout of the Project. Given the reduction in acreage, total buildout projections of Alternative 3 would be less than those of the proposed Project. Buildout of Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project’s low and full buildout scenarios, but is not expected to achieve the Project’s high buildout scenario.

As a reduced-scale alternative, Alternative 3 is intended to potentially reduce the overall impacts of the Project, including its significant air quality impacts. In addition, as there are no current plans to end the operations of the Los Angeles County government center, Alternative 3 is intended to evaluate a scenario in which Los Angeles County continues to utilize its government center into the future indefinitely.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Alternative 1 (No Project/No Build Alternative) would be considered the environmentally superior alternative as it would have the least impact. Alternative 1 is the only alternative that would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts and would not require any of the mitigation measures proposed by the Project.

Based on CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2), if the environmentally superior alternative is the “no project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Accordingly, based on a comparative impact evaluation of Alternative 2 (No Project/Infill Development and Redevelopment Under Existing Zoning and General Plan Designations Alternative) and Alternative 3 (Reduced Scale Specific Plan Alternative), Alternative 3 is identified as the environmentally superior alternative. Alternative 3 would reduce the Project’s significant and unavoidable air quality impact by reducing the overall air pollutant emissions attributable to the Project as a result of the reduction in buildout potential, although air quality impacts remain significant and unavoidable under Alternative 3. Alternative 3, as a reduced-scale TCSP, would also reduce the less than significant impacts related to energy, GHG emissions, noise, public services, and utilities and service systems.

ES-5 APPROVALS AND ACTIONS

Pursuant to Article 4 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City of Santa Clarita is the Lead Agency for this Project, taking primary responsibility for conducting environmental review and approving or denying the Project. There are no responsible or trustee agencies with any discretionary approval authority for the Project. In order to adopt the proposed Specific Plan, the City would have to take the following actions:

- Certify the Final EIR
- Adopt the proposed Specific Plan
- Amend the General Plan to reflect the proposed Specific Plan
- Amending the Zoning to reflect the proposed Specific Plan

Additionally, while not required for approval of the proposed Specific Plan, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan is anticipated to involve entitlement applications and other permits/approvals for specific development projects within the TCSP Area. This program EIR may also be used, as appropriate, for such future projects and other later activities pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15168(c) (use of a program EIR with later activities), 15152 (tiering), 15162-15164 (subsequent or supplemental CEQA documentation and addendums), 15183 (projects consistent with a community plan or zoning), and/or other sections of the CEQA Guidelines that provide for streamlined environmental review.

ES-6 IMPACTS, MITIGATION MEASURES, AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

This EIR has been prepared to assess potentially significant impacts on the environment that could result from implementation of the Project. For a detailed discussion regarding potential impacts, refer to Section 4.0, Environmental Analysis, of this EIR. A summary of Project-related impacts and a list of the proposed mitigation measures that are recommended in response to these Project impacts is provided in **Table ES-1**. This table also provides a determination of the level of significance of the Project impact after implementation of the recommended mitigation measures.

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Topic/Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
AESTHETICS		
Threshold 4.1(c): The Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
AIR QUALITY		
Threshold 4.2(a): The Project would potentially conflict with or obstruct implementation of the South Coast Air Quality Management District's 2022 Air Quality Management Plan.	See MM-AQ-1 below.	Significant and unavoidable.
Threshold 4.2(b): The Project would potentially result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard.	<p>MM-AQ-1: To reduce emissions at the site-specific level, prior to issuance of a building permit for each project implementing the Town Center Specific Plan and to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita, the applicant must develop and commit to implementing a list of project-specific/building-specific emission reduction features. Such features must include, without limitation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program Plans will be required by the following projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi-family residential developments with 100 or more units ○ Any mixed use or commercial project that generates 50 full-time employees or more. <p>TDM Program Plans must meet the satisfaction of the City's Traffic and Transportation Planning Division (or future iteration thereof) prior to the issuance of a building permit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of energy-efficient design features beyond those required by Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and the CALGreen Code, as adopted by the Santa Clarita Municipal Code. • Consideration of electric landscape maintenance equipment. 	Significant and unavoidable.
Threshold 4.2(c): The Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
CULTURAL RESOURCES		
Threshold 4.3(b): The Project would potentially cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.	<p>To reduce potentially significant impacts to archaeological resources, the following mitigation measure is proposed for the Project:</p> <p>MM-CR-1: Treatment of previously unidentified archaeological deposits: If suspected prehistoric or historical archaeological deposits are discovered during construction, all work within 60 feet of the discovery must be redirected and a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional</p>	Less than significant with mitigation.

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES (CONTINUED)**

Topic/Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
	<p>Qualification Standards must assess the situation and make recommendations regarding the treatment of the discovery.</p> <p>For significant cultural resources meeting the definition of a historical resource per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) or a unique archaeological resource per PRC Section 21083.2(g) as determined by the City of Santa Clarita, if avoidance and preservation-in-place is not feasible, a Research Design and Data Recovery Program to mitigate impacts must be prepared by the consulting archaeologist and approved by the City of Santa Clarita before being implemented using professional archaeological methods. Before construction activities are allowed to resume in the affected area, the Data Recovery Program must be completed to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita. Work may continue on other parts of the construction site while consultation and treatment are concluded. All significant archaeological resources collected must be taken to a properly equipped archaeological laboratory, where they must be cleaned, analyzed, and prepared for curation. At a minimum, and unless otherwise specified in any treatment plans prepared for the development, all resources must be identified, analyzed, catalogued, photographed, and labeled. At the close of construction, the collection must be donated to a public institution with a research interest in the materials and the capacity to care for the materials in perpetuity. Accompanying notes, maps, and photographs must also be filed at the repository, as appropriate. The cost of curation is assessed by the repository and is the responsibility of the project applicant. All costs must be borne by the project applicant.</p>	
ENERGY		
<p>Threshold 4.4(a): The Project would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation.</p>	<p>No mitigation measures are required.</p>	<p>Less than significant without mitigation.</p>
<p>Threshold 4.4(b): The Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.</p>	<p>No mitigation measures are required.</p>	<p>Less than significant without mitigation.</p>
GEOLOGY AND SOILS		
<p>Threshold 4.5(j): The Project would potentially directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site. The Project would not result in the direct or indirect destruction of any unique geologic feature.</p>	<p>To reduce potential significant impacts to paleontological resources, the following mitigation measures are proposed for the Project:</p> <p>MM-GEO-1: Before starting construction for development projects in the TCSP Area, the applicant must retain a qualified professional paleontologist as defined by Society for Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) (2010) standards. The paleontologist must create a Worker's Environmental Awareness Program pamphlet that is provided as training to construction personnel to understand</p>	<p>Less than significant with mitigation.</p>

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES (CONTINUED)**

Topic/Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
	<p>regulatory requirements for the protection of paleontological resources. Additionally, the paleontologist must conduct training class(es) that include examples of paleontological resources to look for and protocols to follow if discoveries are made. The paleontologist must develop Project-specific training and supply any supplemental materials necessary to execute the training.</p> <p>MM-GEO-2: Paleontological resources monitoring must be conducted under the guidance of a qualified professional paleontologist and by a qualified paleontological resource monitor(s) as defined by SVP (2010) standards during grading/excavation activities for development projects building out the TSCP area, unless it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita that such grading/excavation activities would be limited to engineered fill materials and/or the younger Quaternary Alluvium that makes up the surface layer. Monitoring must include visual inspection of excavated or graded area and trench sidewalls. The monitor has authority to temporarily halt or divert construction equipment in order to investigate and salvage finds. The paleontological monitor has the authority to take sediment samples and test for microfossils at the discretion of the qualified professional paleontologist. If no significant fossils are exposed or the qualified professional paleontologist otherwise finds that the scientific value of the resource is exhausted, the qualified professional paleontologist may determine that full-time monitoring is no longer necessary or, with the approval of the City, may reduce or eliminate monitoring.</p> <p>MM-GEO-3: Should a paleontological resource be encountered when a monitor is not on-site or a potentially significant resource is encountered that requires additional investigation or cannot be quickly salvaged by the paleontological monitor, all construction must cease within 50 feet of the discovery and the qualified professional paleontologist must be immediately notified. If the monitor is present at the time of discovery, then the monitor may temporarily divert the construction equipment around the find and notify the qualified professional paleontologist. The qualified professional paleontologist must then visit the site and assess the resource for its scientific significance. Project excavations may continue elsewhere, monitored by a paleontological resource monitor. The qualified professional paleontologist must evaluate the find and contact the City as soon as possible with recommendations as to the significance and potential treatment of the find. Depending on the nature of the find, the determination of significance may require additional excavation, potentially including the preparation and execution of a Paleontological Testing Plan. If significant, depending on the nature of the resource, treatment may require the preparation and execution of a Paleontological Treatment Plan. The City, acting with the</p>	

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES (CONTINUED)**

Topic/Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
	<p>advice of the qualified professional paleontologist, must determine the significance and treatment of the discovered resources.</p> <p>MM-GEO-4: All significant fossils collected must be prepared in a properly equipped paleontology laboratory to a point ready for permanent curation to the satisfaction of the City. Preparation must include the careful removal of excess matrix from fossil materials and stabilizing and repairing specimens, as necessary. Any fossils encountered and recovered must be prepared to the point of identification. Following the initial laboratory work, all fossil specimens must be identified to the lowest taxonomic level, analyzed, photographed, and catalogued, before being delivered to an accredited local museum repository for permanent curation and storage. All costs must be borne by the project applicant.</p> <p>MM-GEO-5: At the conclusion of laboratory work and preparation for museum curation, a final report must be prepared describing the results of the paleontological monitoring efforts and submitted to the City of Santa Clarita. The report must include a summary of the field and laboratory methods, an overview of the geology and paleontology in the Project vicinity, a list of taxa recovered (if any), an analysis of fossils recovered (if any) and their scientific significance, and recommendations. If the monitoring efforts produced fossils, then a copy of the report must also be submitted to the designated museum repository. Accompanying notes, maps, and photographs must also be filed at the repository. The cost of curation is assessed by the repository and is the responsibility of the Project applicant.</p>	
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS		
Threshold 4.6(a): The Project would not 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 without mitigation.
Threshold 4.6(b): The Project would not 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 without mitigation.
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS		
Threshold 4.7(d): The Project would 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 potentially create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.	MM-HAZ-1: Prior to development approval for future development within 200 feet of the leaking underground storage tank (Case # T0603704904) site associated with the Los Angeles County Sheriff Station, located at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway, a letter of completion for remediation actions or letter indicating contamination would not exceed applicable thresholds for occupancy from the applicable oversight agency (e.g., LARWQCB) shall be submitted to the City of Santa Clarita.	Less than significant with mitigation.

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES (CONTINUED)**

Topic/Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
	Prior to development approval for future development within 100 feet of the western boundary of Subarea 4 (McBean and Valencia), a letter of completion for remediation actions (Case # SL2048Y1711), located at 24375 Valencia Boulevard, or letter indicating contamination would not exceed applicable thresholds for occupancy from the applicable oversight agency (e.g., LARWQCB) shall be submitted to the City of Santa Clarita.	
LAND USE AND PLANNING		
Threshold 4.8(b): The Project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
NOISE		
Threshold 4.9(a): The Project would not expose persons to or result in generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.9(b): The Project would not expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.9(c): The Project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the Project vicinity above levels existing without the Project.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.9(d): The Project would not result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the Project vicinity above levels existing without the Project.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
PUBLIC SERVICES		
Threshold 4.10(a.i): The 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, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES (CONTINUED)**

Topic/Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
times or other performance objectives for fire protection.		
Threshold 4.10(a.ii): The 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, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.10(a.iii): The 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, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for schools.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
TRANSPORTATION		
Threshold 4.11(a): The Project would not 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 without mitigation.
Threshold 4.11(b): The Project would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.11(c): The Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.11(d): The Project would not result in inadequate emergency access.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES		

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES (CONTINUED)**

Topic/Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
<p>Threshold 4.12(a.i): The Project would potentially 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).</p>	<p>To reduce potential significant impacts to tribal cultural resources, the following mitigation measures are proposed for the Project:</p> <p>MM-TCR-1: In the Event of an Inadvertent Discovery: If cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior Professional Qualification Standards retained by the project applicant shall assess the find. Work on the portions of the project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA, the project applicant shall retain a professional Tribal Monitor procured by the FTBMI to observe all remaining ground-disturbing activities including, but not limited to, clearing, grading, excavating, digging, trenching, plowing, drilling, tunneling, quarrying, leveling, driving posts, auguring, blasting, stripping topsoil or similar activity, and archaeological work.</p> <p>MM-TCR-2: Disposition and Treatment of Inadvertent Discoveries: The Lead Agency and/or project applicant shall, in good faith, consult with the FTBMI on the disposition and treatment of any Tribal Cultural Resource encountered during all ground disturbing activities.</p> <p>MM-TCR-3: In the Event of Inadvertent Discovery, Human Remains: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the Project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code shall be enforced for the duration of the Project.</p> <p>a) Inadvertent discoveries of human remains and/or funerary object(s) are subject to California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and the subsequent disposition of those discoveries shall be decided by the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), as determined by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), should those findings be determined as Native American in origin.</p>	<p>Less than significant with mitigation.</p>
<p>Threshold 4.12(a.ii): The Project would potentially 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</p>	<p>See MM-TCR-1 through MM-TCR-3 above.</p>	<p>Less than significant with mitigation.</p>

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES (CONTINUED)**

Topic/Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1..		
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS		
Threshold 4.13(a): The Project would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.13(b): The Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.13(d): The Project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, and new or expanded entitlements would not be needed.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.13(e): The Project would 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.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.
Threshold 4.13(f): The Project would be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than significant without mitigation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

This program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared in accordance with and in fulfillment of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An EIR is described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15121(a) as a “public informational document that analyzes the environmental effects of a project, identifies ways to minimize the significant impacts, and describes reasonable alternatives to the project.” A “project” refers to the whole of an action that has the potential for resulting in a direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378[a]). The City of Santa Clarita (City), as the Lead Agency, has determined that the proposed Town Center Specific Plan (Project) is a project as defined by CEQA.

The adoption of the proposed Project does not constitute a commitment to any specific development project. As detailed further below, the Project would establish the general requirements and design standards for all future development plans for sites within the Project Area. The City, as the Lead Agency, has determined that the Project’s EIR is a program EIR per CEQA Guidelines Section 15168.

This document analyzes the actions associated with the Project to determine the short-term and long-term effects associated with their implementation. This EIR discusses both the direct and indirect impacts of the Project, as well as the cumulative impacts associated with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (i.e., related projects). CEQA requires the preparation of an objective full disclosure document to inform agency decision-makers and the public of the direct and indirect environmental effects of the proposed action, provide mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant adverse effects, and identify and evaluate reasonable alternatives to the Project.

1.2 PROJECT SUMMARY

The Project Site is located in the community of Valencia in the City of Santa Clarita. The Town Center Specific Plan Area (TCSP Area or Specific Plan Area) area is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Valencia Boulevard to the south and east, and McBean Parkway to the west, with a 3.7-acre portion of the Specific Plan Area located on the southwest side of McBean Parkway connecting to the McBean Regional Transit Center. Citrus Street bisects the Specific Plan Area from north to south. Town Center Drive traverses the TCSP area, connecting to both McBean Parkway and Magic Mountain Parkway and forming a loop road around the Valencia Town Center Mall, which is one of the primary existing land uses in the Specific Plan Area.

The Project is a long-range land use plan that establishes the City’s vision for the TCSP Area as a regional destination incorporating a balanced mix of uses. The City’s goals for the Specific Plan are to create a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; create a distinct sense of place; create a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and create a practical, timeless and buildable plan that is consistent with the City’s General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan content is presented in four chapters: an introduction and the proposed Specific Plan’s vision and goals; a development plan framework chapter that seeks to establish the components, expectations, and general

requirements for all future development plans for sites within the TCSP Area; a description of the development and design standards regulating future development plans in the Specific Plan Area; and an implementation plan that could be utilized to implement the goals of the Specific Plan.

For more detailed information about construction and operation of the Project, refer to Section 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR.

1.3 ORGANIZATION AND SCOPE

CEQA Guidelines Sections 15122 through 15132 identify the content requirements for Draft and Final EIRs. The contents of an EIR include a project description, a description of the environmental setting, an environmental impact analysis, mitigation measures, alternatives, identification of significant irreversible environmental impacts, and growth-inducing and cumulative impacts. The environmental issues addressed in this Draft EIR were established through the Initial Study, as well as by responses to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) (December 6, 2023; provided in **Appendix A**). Based on the NOP process, the City of Santa Clarita has determined the scope for this Draft EIR.

This Draft EIR is organized in the following manner:

- Section ES, Executive Summary
This section provides a project narrative and identifies environmental impacts and mitigation measures in a summary table, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15123.
- Section 1.0, Introduction and Purpose
This section provides an introduction and overview of the EIR.
- Section 2.0, Project Description
This section describes the project in detail, including the intended objectives, background information, proposed physical changes, and technical characteristics of the Project.
- Section 3.0, Environmental Setting
This section provides general overview of the existing setting and identification of the related projects.
- Section 4.0, Environmental Analysis
This section contains an analysis of environmental topic areas in Subsection 1.4, EIR Scoping Process, below. Each section contains a description of the Project's existing setting, the regulatory and planning framework, the thresholds of significance, methodology, Project-related and cumulative impacts, and recommended mitigation measures, if applicable.
- Section 5.0, Alternatives
CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project that can feasibly attain the basic objectives of the Project and avoid and/or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project. This section discusses alternatives to the Project, including the CEQA-mandated "No Project

Alternative,” that are intended to avoid or reduce the Project’s significant environmental impacts.

- Section 6.0, Other CEQA Considerations

This section contains discussions and analyses of various topical issues mandated by CEQA. These topics include significant unavoidable impacts, significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, potential secondary effects, and a list of the effects found not to be significant, which were identified in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**).

- Section 7.0, References

This section lists the documents and other reference sources used in support of the environmental analyses considered in the Draft EIR.

- Section 8.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted

This section lists the agencies, organizations, and persons consulted in preparing this Draft EIR, and the persons, firm, and the Lead Agency preparing this Draft EIR.

1.4 EIR SCOPING PROCESS

Prior to preparation of this EIR, the City distributed an NOP and notification of a public scoping meeting. The NOP was published with the Los Angeles County Clerk and the State Clearinghouse on December 6, 2023, which provided instructions for how to comment on the scope of the EIR, a project description, a list of environmental factors potentially affected by the Project, and notification of a public scoping meeting, held on December 13, 2023, at the City of Santa Clarita City Hall.

This EIR focuses primarily on changes in the environment that would result from the Project. This EIR identifies potential impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the Project and provides measures to mitigate potential significant impacts. Impacts that cannot be mitigated to less-than-significant levels are also identified. Accordingly, this EIR addresses impacts in the following areas:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

1.5 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Pertinent documents relating to this EIR have been cited in accordance with Section 15148 of the CEQA Guidelines, which encourages “incorporation by reference” as a means of reducing redundancy and length of environmental reports. The following documents are incorporated and available for public review at the City of Santa Clarita and hereby incorporated by reference into this EIR:

- City of Santa Clarita General Plan, and General Plan EIR, June 2011: The City’s General Plan (the One Valley One Vision Plan) was a joint effort between the City, the County of Los Angeles, and Santa Clarita Valley residents and businesses to create a single vision and guidelines for the future growth of the Valley. This plan is a land use plan that envisions how the Santa Clarita Valley will build out over the plan’s 20-year planning horizon. It is related to the Specific Plan because the Specific Plan is located within the One Valley One Vision Plan’s area of influence and because the Specific Plan further refines the land use plan and development standards for the Specific Plan Area.

1.6 USE OF THIS EIR WITH FUTURE PROJECTS

The adoption of the proposed TCSP does not constitute a commitment to any specific development project. It is contemplated that future site-specific approvals in the TCSP Area may be evaluated with consideration of this EIR under one or more of the following CEQA provisions:

1.6.1 USE OF A PROGRAM EIR WITH LATER ACTIVITIES

Section 15168(c) of the CEQA Guidelines describes the use of a program EIR with later activities. This section states:

(c) Use with Later Activities. Later activities in the program must be examined in the light of the program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared.

(1) If a later activity would have effects that were not examined in the program EIR, a new Initial Study would need to be prepared leading to either an EIR or a Negative Declaration. That later analysis may tier from the program EIR as provided in Section 15152. [See below under the heading “Tiering.”]

(2) If the agency finds that pursuant to Section 15162, no subsequent EIR would be required, the agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by the program EIR, and no new environmental document would be required. Whether a later activity is within the scope of a program EIR is a factual question that the lead agency determines based on substantial evidence in the record. Factors that an agency may consider in making that determination include, but are not limited to, consistency of the later activity with the type of allowable land use, overall planned density and building intensity, geographic area analyzed for environmental impacts, and covered infrastructure, as described in the program EIR. [See below under the heading “Subsequent or Supplemental CEQA Documentation and Addendums” for the relevant parts of CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, as referenced in this section.]

(3) *An agency shall incorporate feasible mitigation measures and alternatives developed in the program EIR into later activities in the program.*

(4) *Where the later activities involve site specific operations, the agency should use a written checklist or similar device to document the evaluation of the site and the activity to determine whether the environmental effects of the operation were within the scope of the program EIR.*

(5) *A program EIR will be most helpful in dealing with later activities if it provides a description of planned activities that would implement the program and deals with the effects of the program as specifically and comprehensively as possible. With a good and detailed project description and analysis of the program, many later activities could be found to be within the scope of the project described in the program EIR, and no further environmental documents would be required.*

1.6.2 TIERING

Section 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines describes the process of tiering. This section states:

(a) *“Tiering” refers to using the analysis of general matters contained in a broader EIR (such as one prepared for a general plan or policy statement) with later EIRs and negative declarations on narrower projects; incorporating by reference the general discussions from the broader EIR; and concentrating the later EIR or negative declaration solely on the issues specific to the later project.*

(b) *Agencies are encouraged to tier the environmental analyses which they prepare for separate but related projects including general plans, zoning changes, and development projects. This approach can eliminate repetitive discussions of the same issues and focus the later EIR or negative declaration on the actual issues ripe for decision at each level of environmental review. Tiering is appropriate when the sequence of analysis is from an EIR prepared for a general plan, policy, or program to an EIR or negative declaration for another plan, policy, or program of lesser scope, or to a site-specific EIR or negative declaration. Tiering does not excuse the lead agency from adequately analyzing reasonably foreseeable significant environmental effects of the project and does not justify deferring such analysis to a later tier EIR or negative declaration. However, the level of detail contained in a first tier EIR need not be greater than that of the program, plan, policy, or ordinance being analyzed.*

(c) *Where a lead agency is using the tiering process in connection with an EIR for a large-scale planning approval, such as a general plan or component thereof (e.g., an area plan or community plan), the development of detailed, site-specific information may not be feasible but can be deferred, in many instances, until such time as the lead agency prepares a future environmental document in connection with a project of a more limited geographical scale, as long as deferral does not prevent adequate identification of significant effects of the planning approval at hand.*

(d) *Where an EIR has been prepared and certified for a program, plan, policy, or ordinance consistent with the requirements of this section, any lead agency for a later project pursuant to or consistent with the program, plan, policy, or ordinance should limit the EIR or negative declaration on the later project to effects which:*

- (1) *Were not examined as significant effects on the environment in the prior EIR; or*
- (2) *Are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by the choice of specific revisions in the project, by the imposition of conditions, or other means.*

(e) Tiering under this section shall be limited to situations where the project is consistent with the general plan and zoning of the city or county in which the project is located, except that a project requiring a rezone to achieve or maintain conformity with a general plan may be subject to tiering.

(f) A later EIR shall be required when the initial study or other analysis finds that the later project may cause significant effects on the environment that were not adequately addressed in the prior EIR. A negative declaration shall be required when the provisions of Section 15070 are met.

(1) Where a lead agency determines that a cumulative effect has been adequately addressed in the prior EIR, that effect is not treated as significant for purposes of the later EIR or negative declaration, and need not be discussed in detail.

(2) When assessing whether there is a new significant cumulative effect, the lead agency shall consider whether the incremental effects of the project would be considerable when viewed in the context of past, present, and probable future projects. At this point, the question is not whether there is a significant cumulative impact, but whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable. For a discussion on how to assess whether project impacts are cumulatively considerable, see Section 15064(i).

(3) Significant environmental effects have been “adequately addressed” if the lead agency determines that:

(A) they have been mitigated or avoided as a result of the prior environmental impact report and findings adopted in connection with that prior environmental report; or

(B) they have been examined at a sufficient level of detail in the prior environmental impact report to enable those effects to be mitigated or avoided by site specific revisions, the imposition of conditions, or by other means in connection with the approval of the later project.

(g) When tiering is used, the later EIRs or negative declarations shall refer to the prior EIR and state where a copy of the prior EIR may be examined. The later EIR or negative declaration should state that the lead agency is using the tiering concept and that it is being tiered with the earlier EIR.

(h) The rules in this section govern tiering generally. Several other methods to streamline the environmental review process exist, which are governed by the more specific rules of those provisions. Where multiple methods may apply, lead agencies have discretion regarding which to use. These other methods include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) General plan EIR (Section 15166).

(2) Staged EIR (Section 15167).

- (3) *Program EIR (Section 15168).*
- (4) *Master EIR (Section 15175).*
- (5) *Multiple-family residential development / residential and commercial or retail mixed-use development (Section 15179.5).*
- (6) *Redevelopment project (Section 15180).*
- (7) *Projects consistent with community plan, general plan, or zoning (Section 15183). [See below under Subsection 1.4.4, Projects Consistent with a Community Plan or Zoning, of this PEIR for more information.]*
- (8) *Infill projects (Section 15183.3).*

1.6.3 SUBSEQUENT OR SUPPLEMENTAL CEQA DOCUMENTATION AND ADDENDUMS

Sections 15162 through 15164 of the CEQA Guidelines explain when subsequent or supplemental CEQA documentation is required and when an Addendum to a previously certified EIR is appropriate. As noted above, when considering the use of a program EIR with a later activity, “If the agency finds that pursuant to Section 15162, no subsequent EIR would be required, the agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by the program EIR, and no new environmental document would be required.” Sections 15162 through 15164 state:

15162. SUBSEQUENT EIRS AND NEGATIVE DECLARATIONS

(a) When an EIR has been certified or a negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:

- (1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;*
- (2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or Negative Declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or*
- (3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the Negative Declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:*
 - (A) The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;*

(B) Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;

(C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible, and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or

(D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

(b) If changes to a project or its circumstances occur or new information becomes available after adoption of a negative declaration, the lead agency shall prepare a subsequent EIR if required under subdivision (a). Otherwise the lead agency shall determine whether to prepare a subsequent negative declaration, an addendum, or no further documentation.

(c) Once a project has been approved, the lead agency's role in project approval is completed, unless further discretionary approval on that project is required. Information appearing after an approval does not require reopening of that approval. If after the project is approved, any of the conditions described in subdivision (a) occurs, a subsequent EIR or negative declaration shall only be prepared by the public agency which grants the next discretionary approval for the project, if any. In this situation no other responsible agency shall grant an approval for the project until the subsequent EIR has been certified or subsequent negative declaration adopted.

(d) A subsequent EIR or subsequent negative declaration shall be given the same notice and public review as required under Section 15087 or Section 15072. A subsequent EIR or negative declaration shall state where the previous document is available and can be reviewed.

15163. SUPPLEMENT TO AN EIR

(a) The Lead or Responsible Agency may choose to prepare a supplement to an EIR rather than a subsequent EIR if:

(1) Any of the conditions described in Section 15162 would require the preparation of a subsequent EIR, and

(2) Only minor additions or changes would be necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation.

(b) The supplement to the EIR need contain only the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the project as revised.

(c) A supplement to an EIR shall be given the same kind of notice and public review as is given to a draft EIR under Section 15087.

(d) A supplement to an EIR may be circulated by itself without recirculating the previous draft or final EIR.

(e) When the agency decides whether to approve the project, the decision-making body shall consider the previous EIR as revised by the supplemental EIR. A finding under Section 15091 shall be made for each significant effect shown in the previous EIR as revised.

15164. ADDENDUM TO AN EIR OR NEGATIVE DECLARATION

(a) The lead agency or responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.

(b) An addendum to an adopted negative declaration may be prepared if only minor technical changes or additions are necessary or none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration have occurred.

(c) An addendum need not be circulated for public review but can be included in or attached to the final EIR or adopted negative declaration.

(d) The decision making body shall consider the addendum with the final EIR or adopted negative declaration prior to making a decision on the project.

(e) A brief explanation of the decision not to prepare a subsequent EIR pursuant to Section 15162 should be included in an addendum to an EIR, the lead agency's findings on the project, or elsewhere in the record. The explanation must be supported by substantial evidence.

1.6.4 PROJECTS CONSISTENT WITH A COMMUNITY PLAN OR ZONING

Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines provides an exemption for projects that:

1. Are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified (in this case, the TCSP for which this EIR was prepared).
2. Do not cause project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site.
3. Do not cause significant effects that the prior EIR (in this case, this EIR) failed to analyze as significant effects.
4. Do not cause potentially significant off-site and/or cumulative impacts which were not discussed in the prior EIR (in this case, this EIR).
5. Do not cause more severe adverse impacts than discussed in the prior EIR (in this case, this EIR) as a result of substantial new information.

Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines states:

15183. PROJECTS CONSISTENT WITH A COMMUNITY PLAN OR ZONING

(a) CEQA mandates that projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be

necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. This streamlines the review of such projects and reduces the need to prepare repetitive environmental studies.

(b) In approving a project meeting the requirements of this section, a public agency shall limit its examination of environmental effects to those which the agency determines, in an initial study or other analysis:

- (1) Are peculiar to the project or the parcel on which the project would be located,
- (2) Were not analyzed as significant effects in a prior EIR on the zoning action, general plan, or community plan, with which the project is consistent,
- (3) Are potentially significant off-site impacts and cumulative impacts which were not discussed in the prior EIR prepared for the general plan, community plan or zoning action, or
- (4) Are previously identified significant effects which, as a result of substantial new information which was not known at the time the EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the prior EIR.

(c) If an impact is not peculiar to the parcel or to the project, has been addressed as a significant effect in the prior EIR, or can be substantially mitigated by the imposition of uniformly applied development policies or standards, as contemplated by subdivision (e) below, then an additional EIR need not be prepared for the project solely on the basis of that impact.

(d) This section shall apply only to projects which meet the following conditions:

- (1) The project is consistent with:
 - (A) A community plan adopted as part of a general plan,
 - (B) A zoning action which zoned or designated the parcel on which the project would be located to accommodate a particular density of development, or
 - (C) A general plan of a local agency, and
- (2) An EIR was certified by the lead agency for the zoning action, the community plan, or the general plan.

(e) This section shall limit the analysis of only those significant environmental effects for which:

- (1) Each public agency with authority to mitigate any of the significant effects on the environment identified in the EIR on the planning or zoning action undertakes or requires others to undertake mitigation measures specified in the EIR which the lead agency found to be feasible, and
- (2) The lead agency makes a finding at a public hearing as to whether the feasible mitigation measures will be undertaken.

(f) An effect of a project on the environment shall not be considered peculiar to the project or the parcel for the purposes of this section if uniformly applied development policies or

standards have been previously adopted by the city or county with a finding that the development policies or standards will substantially mitigate that environmental effect when applied to future projects, unless substantial new information shows that the policies or standards will not substantially mitigate the environmental effect. The finding shall be based on substantial evidence which need not include an EIR. Such development policies or standards need not apply throughout the entire city or county, but can apply only within the zoning district in which the project is located, or within the area subject to the community plan on which the lead agency is relying. Moreover, such policies or standards need not be part of the general plan or any community plan, but can be found within another pertinent planning document such as a zoning ordinance. Where a city or county, in previously adopting uniformly applied development policies or standards for imposition on future projects, failed to make a finding as to whether such policies or standards would substantially mitigate the effects of future projects, the decision-making body of the city or county, prior to approving such a future project pursuant to this section, may hold a public hearing for the purpose of considering whether, as applied to the project, such standards or policies would substantially mitigate the effects of the project. Such a public hearing need only be held if the city or county decides to apply the standards or policies as permitted in this section.

(g) Examples of uniformly applied development policies or standards include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Parking ordinances.*
- (2) Public access requirements.*
- (3) Grading ordinances.*
- (4) Hillside development ordinances.*
- (5) Flood plain ordinances.*
- (6) Habitat protection or conservation ordinances.*
- (7) View protection ordinances.*
- (8) Requirements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as set forth in adopted land use plans, policies, or regulations.*

(h) An environmental effect shall not be considered peculiar to the project or parcel solely because no uniformly applied development policy or standard is applicable to it.

(i) Where the prior EIR relied upon by the lead agency was prepared for a general plan or community plan that meets the requirements of this section, any rezoning action consistent with the general plan or community plan shall be treated as a project subject to this section.

- (1) "Community plan" is defined as a part of the general plan of a city or county which applies to a defined geographic portion of the total area included in the general plan, includes or references each of the mandatory elements specified in Section 65302 of the Government Code, and contains specific development policies and implementation measures which will apply those policies to each involved parcel.*

(2) For purposes of this section, “consistent” means that the density of the proposed project is the same or less than the standard expressed for the involved parcel in the general plan, community plan or zoning action for which an EIR has been certified, and that the project complies with the density-related standards contained in that plan or zoning. Where the zoning ordinance refers to the general plan or community plan for its density standard, the project shall be consistent with the applicable plan.

(j) This section does not affect any requirement to analyze potentially significant offsite or cumulative impacts if those impacts were not adequately discussed in the prior EIR. If a significant offsite or cumulative impact was adequately discussed in the prior EIR, then this section may be used as a basis for excluding further analysis of that offsite or cumulative impact.

1.6.5 PROJECTS PURSUANT TO A SPECIFIC PLAN

Section 15182 of the CEQA Guidelines provides two exemptions for certain projects that are consistent with or implement a specific plan: Projects Proximate to Transit and Residential Projects Implementing Specific Plans. Depending on the details, future development projects within the TCSP may qualify for these exemptions. Section 15182 of the CEQA Guidelines states:

15182. PROJECTS PURSUANT TO A SPECIFIC PLAN

...(b) *Projects Proximate to Transit.*

(1) *Eligibility. A residential or mixed-use project, or a project with a floor area ratio of at least 0.75 on commercially-zoned property, including any required subdivision or zoning approvals, is exempt if the project satisfies the following criteria:*

(A) *It is located within a transit priority area as defined in Public Resources Code section 21099(a)(7);*

(B) *It is consistent with a specific plan for which an environmental impact report was certified; and*

(C) *It is consistent with the general use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area in either a sustainable communities strategy or an alternative planning strategy for which the State Air Resources Board has accepted the determination that the sustainable communities strategy or the alternative planning strategy would achieve the applicable greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.*

(2) *Limitation. Additional environmental review shall not be required for a project described in this subdivision unless one of the events in section 15162 occurs with respect to that project.*

(3) *Statute of Limitations. A challenge to a project described in this subdivision is subject to the statute of limitations periods described in section 15112.*

(c) *Residential Projects Implementing Specific Plans.*

(1) *Eligibility. Where a public agency has prepared an EIR on a specific plan after January 1, 1980, a residential project undertaken pursuant to and in conformity to that*

specific plan is exempt from CEQA if the project meets the requirements of this section. Residential projects covered by this section include but are not limited to land subdivisions, zoning changes, and residential planned unit developments.

(2) Limitation. If after the adoption of the specific plan, an event described in Section 15162 occurs, the exemption in this subdivision shall not apply until the city or county which adopted the specific plan completes a subsequent EIR or a supplement to an EIR on the specific plan. The exemption provided by this section shall again be available to residential projects after the Lead Agency has filed a Notice of Determination on the specific plan as reconsidered by the subsequent EIR or supplement to the EIR.

(3) Statute of Limitations. A court action challenging the approval of a project under this subdivision for failure to prepare a supplemental EIR shall be commenced within 30 days after the lead agency's decision to carry out or approve the project in accordance with the specific plan.

The CEQA provisions described above are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all potential ways that this TCSP EIR can be used with future projects. Future projects are not precluded from using this EIR in any manner allowed by CEQA or the CEQA Guidelines, including any future streamlining or similar opportunity added to CEQA or the CEQA Guidelines after the certification of this EIR.

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2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the proposed Town Center Specific Plan (Project) and its location, identifies the objectives of the Project, describes the characteristics of the Project, and describes the intended uses of the EIR including the agencies that are expected to use the EIR and the discretionary approvals required to implement the Project.

2.1 PROJECT SUMMARY

The Project is a long-range land use plan that establishes the vision of the City of Santa Clarita (City) for the Town Center Specific Plan area (TCSP Area or Specific Plan Area) as a regional destination incorporating a balanced mix of uses. The City's goals for the Specific Plan are to create a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; create a distinct sense of place; create a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and create a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan content is presented in four chapters: an introduction and the proposed Specific Plan's vision and goals; a development plan framework chapter that seeks to establish the components, expectations, and general requirements for all future development plans for sites within the TCSP Area; a description of the development and design standards regulating future development plans in the Specific Plan Area; and an implementation plan that could be utilized to implement the goals of the Specific Plan.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

As shown in **Figure 2-1**, the Specific Plan Area is located in the community of Valencia in the City of Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County, California. The Specific Plan Area is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Valencia Boulevard to the south and east, and by McBean Parkway to the west, with a 3.7-acre portion of the TCSP Area located on the southwest side of McBean Parkway connecting to the McBean Regional Transit Center (as shown in **Figure 2-2**). Citrus Street bisects the Specific Plan Area from north to south. Town Center Drive traverses the TCSP Area, connecting to both McBean Parkway and Magic Mountain Parkway and forming a loop road around the Valencia Town Center Mall, which is one of the primary existing land uses in the TCSP Area. In total, the TCSP Area is approximately 111 acres in size and comprises the following four subareas:

2.2.1 SUBAREA 1 –VALENCIA TOWN CENTER

At approximately 69 acres, the Valencia Town Center Subarea is the largest within the Specific Plan Area. The majority of the developed land in this Subarea is occupied by the Valencia Town Center Mall, which opened in 1992. As shown in **Figure 2-3**, this Subarea is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Citrus Street to the east, Valencia Boulevard to the south, McBean Parkway to the southwest, and Town Center Drive Subarea to the west.

2.2.2 SUBAREA 2 – TOWN CENTER EAST

The Town Center East Subarea is approximately 23 acres in size, including approximately 13 acres that are dedicated to parking. Located on the east side of the TCSP Area, this Subarea is

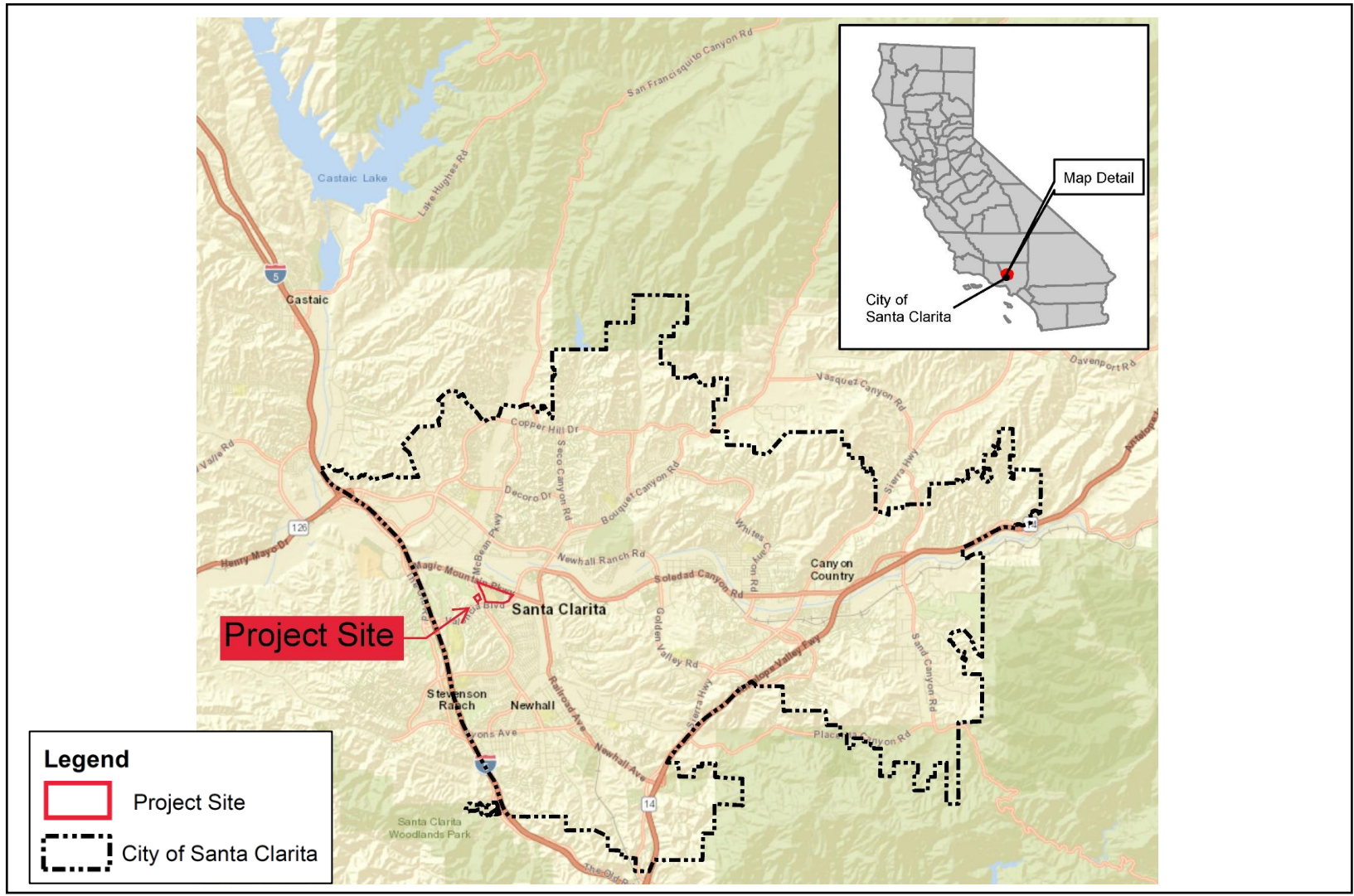
bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Valencia Boulevard to the east and south, and Citrus Street to the west (as shown in **Figure 2-4**). This Subarea includes the former Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the Los Angeles County Fire Department Station 126, the County of Los Angeles Superior Court, offices of the Los Angeles County Planning Division, Building and Safety Division, and the Los Angeles County Fire Department. The Subarea also contains the City of Santa Clarita Library, Valencia Branch and two office buildings.

2.2.3 SUBAREA 3 – TOWN CENTER DRIVE

Town Center Drive is approximately 16 acres in size and is located on the west side of the TCSP Area. As shown in **Figure 2-5**, this Subarea is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Town Center Drive to the east, Mall Entrance Drive to the south, and McBean Parkway to the east. This Subarea is mostly built out and includes several office buildings measuring between four and six stories in height, restaurants, a twelve-theater Regal Cinema, several one- and two-story retail/office buildings, and two multilevel parking structures.

2.2.4 SUBAREA 4 – McBEAN AND VALENCIA

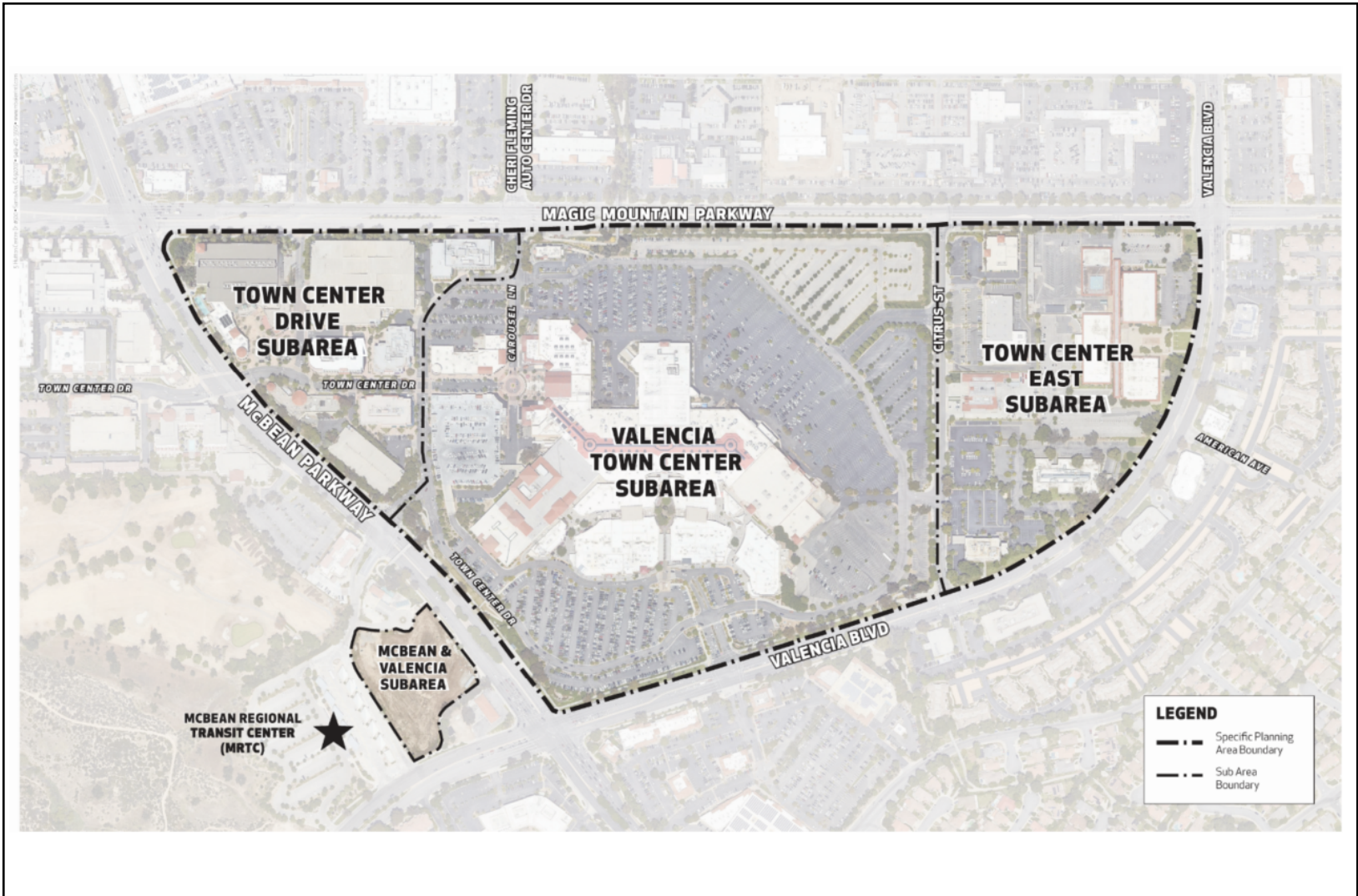
At approximately 4 acres, this is the smallest of the subareas but occupies a prominent location in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of two major highways—Valencia Boulevard and McBean Parkway. As shown in **Figure 2-6**, this Subarea is bounded by McBean Parkway to the east, Valencia Boulevard to the south, the McBean Regional Transit Center to the west, and a coffee shop (under construction) and Mall Entrance Drive to the north. This Subarea is currently vacant and entitled for the construction of a five-story hotel and freestanding restaurant.



Town Center Specific Plan EIR
 City of Santa Clarita – March 2024
Regional Location Map

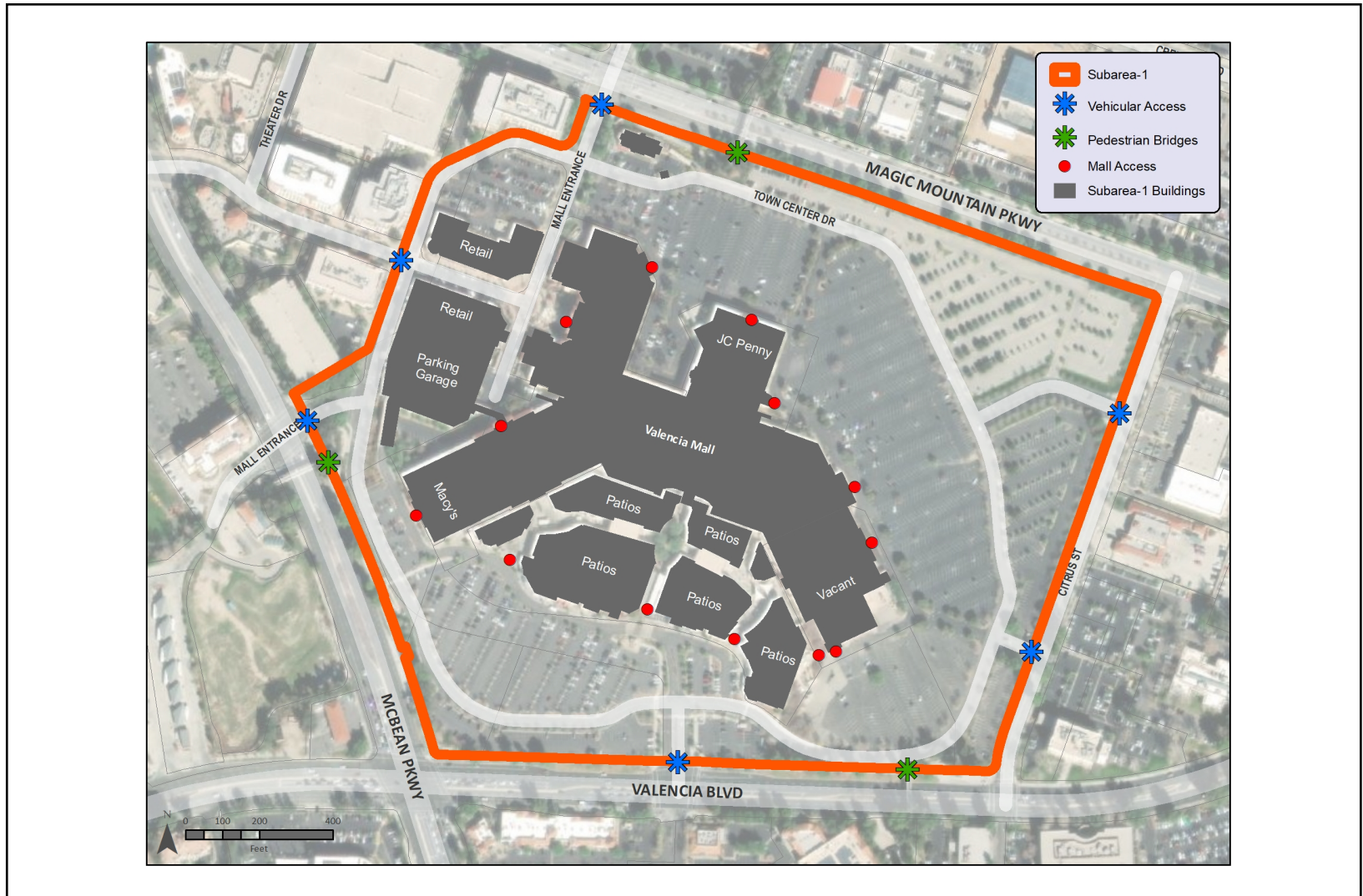
Figure 2-1

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Town Center Specific Plan EIR
 City of Santa Clarita – March 2024
Project Vicinity Map

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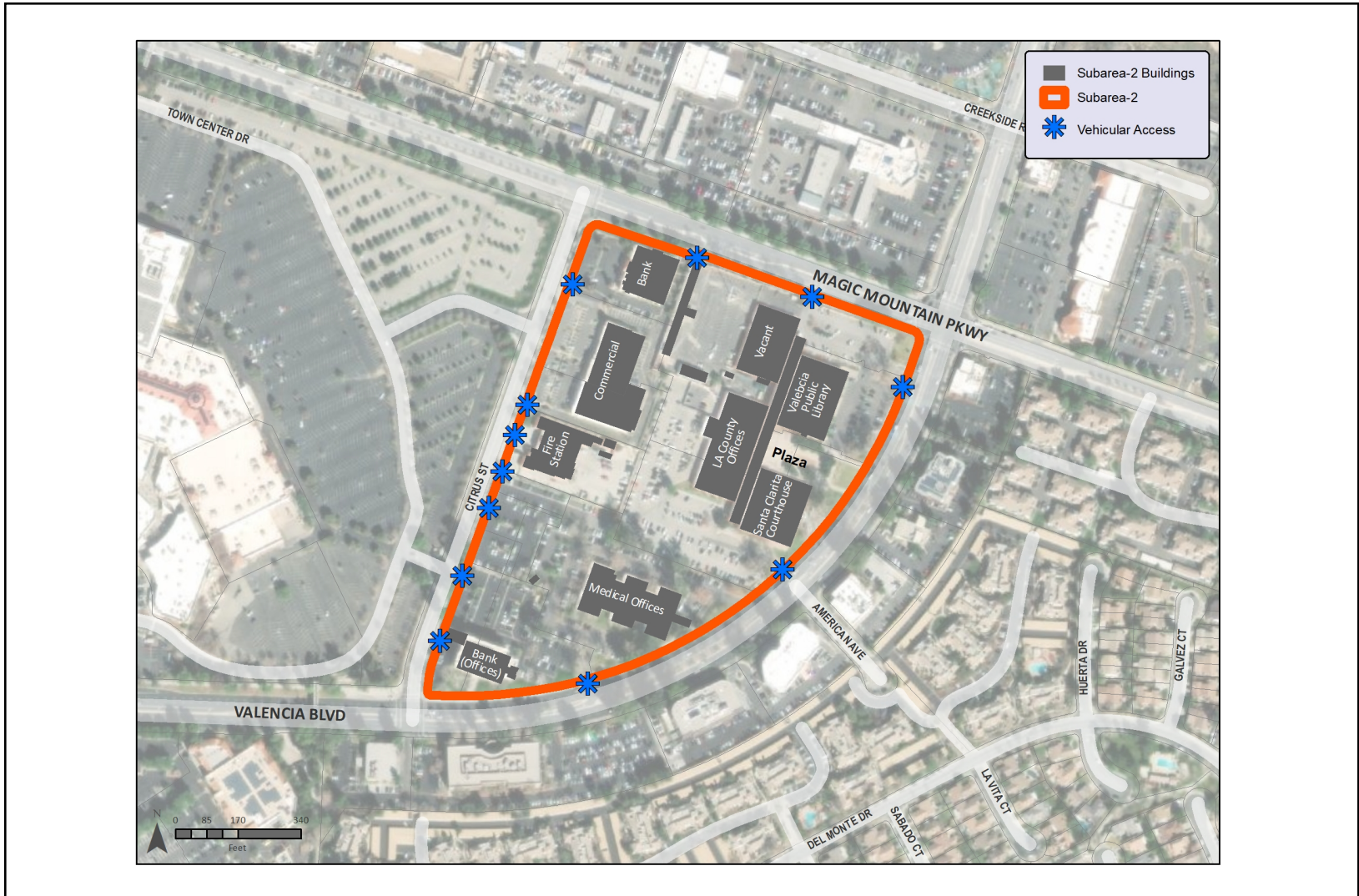


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Subarea 1 Map

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Subarea 2 Map

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Subarea 3 Map

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Subarea 4 Map

Source: City of Santa Clarita, Michael Baker International, ESRI

Figure 2-6

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2.3 EXISTING LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The entire approximately 111-acre Specific Plan Area falls in the Regional Commercial (CR) land use according to the City's General Plan Land Use Map. It should be noted that the General Plan land use categories are the same as the zoning classifications in the City. As such, the entire Specific Plan Area has a Regional Commercial (CR) zoning classification. Per the City's General Plan, the CR land use designation is intended to promote the development of regional focal points for commercial, entertainment, cultural, and business uses, serving the public and drawing from a market area encompassing the entire Santa Clarita Valley. With an allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 2:1 and the provision for residential densities between a minimum of 18 units and a maximum of 50 units per acre, the CR zone currently contemplates the most intensive commercial and residential development within the City. The Specific Plan Area is also located within the City's Jobs Creation Overlay Zone (JCOZ), which supports the General Plan objective of promoting the creation of strong regional and local economies by implementing strategic land use planning policies. The JCOZ provides a streamlined approval process for qualifying office projects (up to five stories) and industrial projects (up to 55 feet), whereas the underlying zoning district allows for buildings up to 35 feet by right. Building heights that exceed these standards would require the approval of a conditional use permit.

2.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15124(b) states that an EIR project description shall contain "a statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project." CEQA Guidelines Section 15124(b) further states that "the statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project." The underlying purpose of the Proposed Project is to provide a long-range land use plan that establishes the City's vision for the TCSP area as a regional destination incorporating a balanced mix of uses. The City's goals for the Specific Plan are to create a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; create a district sense of place; create a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and create a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. The Vision and Goals of the proposed Specific Plan together constitute the Project objectives, and are as follows:

The Vision Statement for the Proposed Specific Plan is:

The Santa Clarita Town Center is a lively hub that embodies a spirit of community, inviting people from all walks of life to live, work, shop, play, and socialize. It features a balance of retail, office, restaurants, recreational, hospitality, and residential spaces, seamlessly integrated with a pedestrian and bike friendly setting. The Town Center features an efficient multimodal transportation system, providing easy connectivity to regional and local trail systems. The Town Center provides a community identity and is a vibrant place for people to gather, socialize, and celebrate in the City of Santa Clarita.

The primary goals of the proposed Specific Plan are to:

- Create a balanced mix of uses within the TCSP area that combines commercial and service opportunities with a residential environment that creates a more livable and pedestrian oriented space.

- Further establish and enhance the Specific Plan Area as a regional destination for employment, entertainment, dining, retail, and services.
- Provide a long-term vision for development within the most intensive commercial and residential district of the City of Santa Clarita that facilitates the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan including, but not limited to, the creation of a robust jobs-to-housing balance, and implements the City's Housing Element.

2.5 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

In general, the Specific Plan content is presented in four chapters: an introduction and the proposed Specific Plan's vision and goals; a development plan framework chapter that seeks to establish the components, expectations, and general requirements for all future development plans for sites within the TCSP Area; a description of the development and design standards regulating future development plans in the Specific Plan Area; and an implementation plan that could be utilized to implement the goals of the Specific Plan. A description of each chapter follows.

2.5.1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 includes a description of the regional setting, the relationship of the Specific Plan to other City plans (such as the City's General Plan and 6th Cycle Housing Element), and a discussion of existing conditions, as well as the proposed Vision Statement and Goals, which are provided above.

2.5.2 CHAPTER 2: DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

Chapter 2 includes framework elements, which contain the building blocks, details, examples, and rationale for the contents of the Specific Plan. As stated above, the details in the framework element are intended to establish the components, expectations, and general requirements for all future development plans for sites within the Specific Plan Area. This chapter also includes two conceptual development plans (shown in this EIR as **Figure 2-7** and **Figure 2-8**), illustrating examples of how the Specific Plan Area could build out. These plans do not serve as rigid blueprints for development, but rather provide guidance for future endeavors, considering long-term needs of the community and market trends.

Specifically, this chapter includes framework elements that seek to realize the Vision and Goals for the Specific Plan Area and provide a comprehensive, organized structure to guide future development and redevelopment within the Specific Plan Area.

These framework elements are be framed around six categories: Land Use, Built Environment, Mobility, Parking, Public Amenities, and Infrastructure. The framework elements included in the Specific Plan are provided in **Table 2-1**, below.

**TABLE 2-1
LIST OF FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS**

Land Use	Placemaking	Mobility	Parking & Infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of Uses • Flexible Uses • Housing Choices • Temporary Uses, Events, and Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Blocks and Street Networks • Terminal Vistas • Pedestrian Scale and Interest • Architectural Character • Building Setbacks and Stepbacks • Public Gathering Spaces • Gateway/ Access • Public Art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Connection • Internal Road Network • Roundabouts • Pedestrian Mobility • Pedestrian Bridges • Bicycle Mobility • Connection to McBean Regional Transit Center • Bus Stops Connectivity • Micro Mobility • Drop-off Zone • Loading Zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-street Parking • Off-street Parking • Infrastructure and Utilities

Each of the framework elements include a description of the meaning of the framework element, why it is important, where in the TCSP Area the framework element is applicable, and how it would be implemented. Each of the framework elements include references to the development standards included in Chapter 3 of the proposed Specific Plan, discussed in **Section 2.5.3**, below, which would be used to encourage future mixed-use development in the Subareas identified, such as flexible land use regulations and development and design standards (including building heights, setbacks, public areas, and architectural standards).

2.5.3 CHAPTER 3: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Chapter 3 includes the development standards that would regulate development within the Specific Plan Area. The development standards identified in this chapter are intended to achieve the core components of the framework elements included in Chapter 2. These development standards include flexible land use regulations, architectural standards, parking requirements, and density standards to ensure a balance and efficiency of uses, amenities, and improvements.¹ Further, these standards promote mixed-use development to ensure that future development projects incorporate a balance of uses, provide appropriate amenities, and create a sense of place. These standards address building heights, setbacks, public spaces, and architectural standards to maintain visual appeal and compatibility with the surrounding area.

Within the Specific Plan Area, the existing CR zone allows for a FAR of 2:1 (87,120 square feet of floor area per acre) and the provision for residential densities between a minimum of 18 units and a maximum of 50 units per acre. The Specific Plan maintains this FAR of 2:1 and the residential densities of up to 50 units per acre.

2.5.4 CHAPTER 4: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Chapter 4 includes an implementation plan that describes the manner in which the proposed Specific Plan could be implemented. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan emphasizes improved

¹ The proposed Specific Plan does not change the density standards from the current zoning designation.

access to the McBean Regional Transit Center, thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services.

The Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the Specific Plan Area, which includes programmable gathering spaces and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children's playgrounds, and parks.

2.5.5 BUILDOUT SCENARIOS

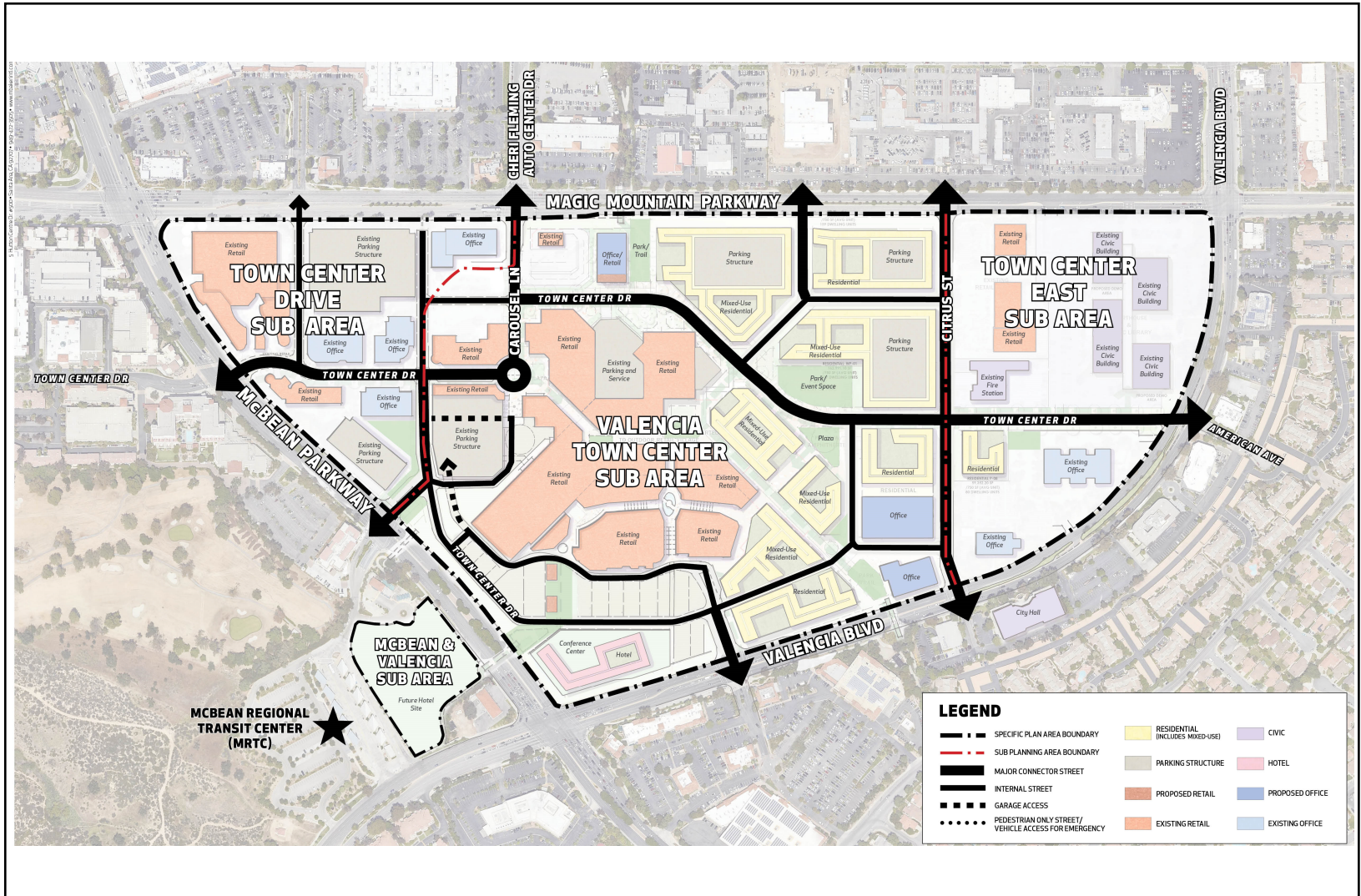
As discussed above, two conceptual plans were developed that illustrate examples of how the Specific Plan Area could build out. See **Figure 2-7** and **Figure 2-8**. It is important to note that these plans do not serve as a rigid blueprint for development, but rather as a source of guidance and inspiration for future endeavors, considering the community's goals, market trends, and long-term needs.

2.5.6 BUILDOUT SCENARIOS

The proposed Specific Plan is intended to guide future development within the TCSP Area and, since the vast majority of the Specific Plan Area is privately owned, implementation of the Specific Plan would require participation from private property owners and developers. The City undertook a study to envision how the proposed Specific Plan could be ultimately built out. This study was conducted by City planning staff and consulting professional planners, architects, and urban designers to consider the proposed Specific Plan's allowable uses and densities, market research/trends, and the physical conditions and constraints of the Specific Plan Area. The conceptual plans for the Specific Plan Area shown in **Figure 2-7** and **Figure 2-8** and the buildout scenarios identified in **Table 2-2** are the results of this study.

Three buildout scenarios are provided in **Table 2-2**, representing low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios. The intent of these three scenarios is to frame the anticipated buildout of the TCSP Area with the low estimate representing a scaled-back version of the City's envisioned full buildout of the TCSP Area and the high estimate being additional growth beyond the City's envisioned full buildout. These estimates are for planning and analysis purposes only and do not compel the construction or redevelopment of any individual property.

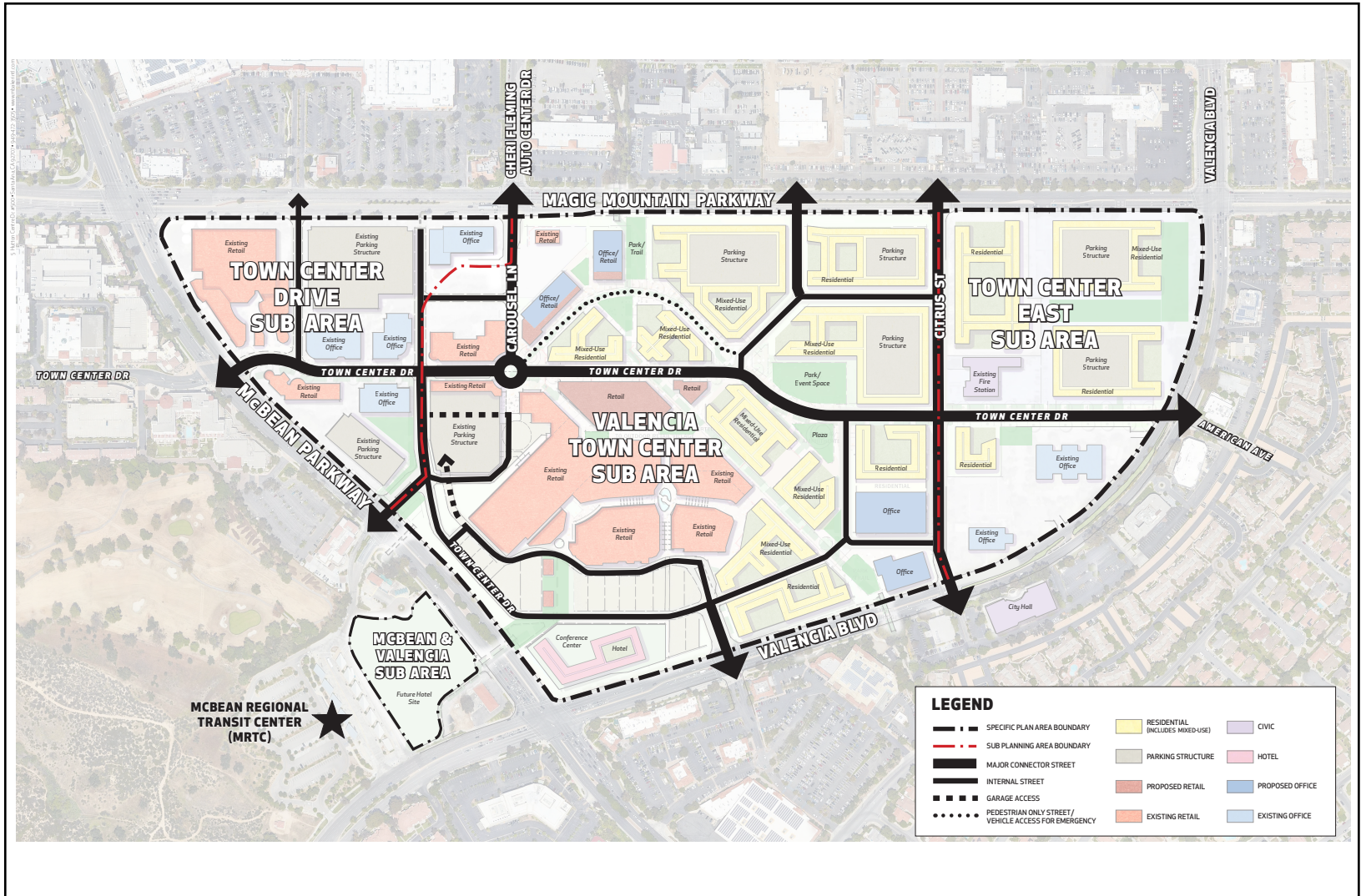
The low buildout scenario is based on the conceptual plan shown in **Figure 2-7** and the full buildout scenario is based on the conceptual plan shown in **Figure 2-8**. The low buildout conceptual plan in **Figure 2-7** depicts a scenario in which less of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall building is demolished/replaced compared to the full buildout conceptual plan shown in **Figure 2-8**. It is anticipated that the buildout of the Specific Plan may occur gradually over time. Thus, the conceptual plans were developed in a manner such that the low buildout plan shown in **Figure 2-7** could be an interim condition leading to the eventual full buildout of the TCSP Area shown in **Figure 2-8**. While the conceptual plan shown in **Figure 2-8** depicts the City's best estimation of full buildout of the TCSP Area, given the uncertainty in predicting the buildout of a long-range plan, for conservative analysis purposes the high buildout scenario was created by adding an additional 15 percent growth onto the full buildout scenario. As the high buildout scenario is only described for conservative analysis purposes, there is not a conceptual plan for this scenario.



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 City of Santa Clarita – March 2024
Low Buildout Scenario

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Town Center Specific Plan EIR
 City of Santa Clarita – March 2024
Full Buildout Scenario

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**TABLE 2-2
DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS**

	Existing Conditions	Low Buildout Scenario		Full Buildout Scenario		High Buildout Scenario	
	Area (square feet)	Area (square feet)	Change in Area vs. Existing Conditions (square feet)	Area (square feet)	Change in Area vs. Existing Conditions (square feet)	Area (square feet)	Change in Area vs. Existing Conditions (square feet)
Regional Mall and Retail	982,344	728,407	-253,937	623,466	-358,878	623,466	-358,878
Other Retail	83,579	185,635	102,056	178,216	94,637	199,642	116,063
Office	507,500	829,294	321,794	1,038,136	530,636	1,117,731	610,231
Civic Uses	95,800	95,800	0	20,800	-75,000	20,800	-75,000
Library	26,000	26,000	0	0	-26,000	0	-26,000
Theatre	182,700	182,700	0	182,700	0	182,700	0
Restaurants	80,200	80,200	0	80,200	0	80,200	0
Hotel + Convention Center	0	317,200	317,200	317,200	317,200	364,780	364,780
TOTALS	1,958,123	2,445,236	487,113	2,440,718	482,595	2,589,319	631,196
No. of Housing Units	0	1,426		2,229		2,563	

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2.6 INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

Pursuant to Article 4 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City of Santa Clarita is the Lead Agency for this Project, taking primary responsibility for conducting environmental review and approving or denying the Project. There are no responsible or trustee agencies with any discretionary approval authority for the Project. In order to adopt the proposed Specific Plan, the City would have to take the following actions:

- Certify the Final EIR
- Adopt the proposed Specific Plan
- Amend the General Plan to reflect the proposed Specific Plan
- Amending the Zoning to reflect the proposed Specific Plan

Additionally, while not required for approval of the proposed Specific Plan, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan is anticipated to involve entitlement applications and other permits/approvals for specific development projects within the TCSP Area. This program EIR may also be used, as appropriate, for such future projects and other later activities pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15168(c) (use of a program EIR with later activities), 15152 (tiering), 15162-15164 (subsequent or supplemental CEQA documentation and addendums), 15183 (projects consistent with a community plan or zoning), and/or other sections of the CEQA Guidelines that provide for streamlined environmental review. See Section 1.6, Use of this EIR with Future Projects, of this EIR, for further details.

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3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides an overview of the existing regional and local setting in which the Town Center Specific Plan Area (TCSP Area or Specific Plan Area) is located and a brief description of the existing conditions at the Project Site. Detailed environmental setting information is provided for each of the environmental issue analyses found in Section 4.0, Environmental Impact Analysis, of this EIR. In addition, Section 2.0, Project Description, of this EIR provides further details regarding existing conditions at the Specific Plan Area.

3.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Specific Plan Area is located in the community of Valencia in the City of Santa Clarita. The Specific Plan Area is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Valencia Boulevard to the south and east, and by McBean Parkway to the west, with a 3.7-acre portion of the TCSP Area located on the southwest side of McBean Parkway connecting to the McBean Regional Transit Center. Citrus Street bisects the Specific Plan Area from north to south. Town Center Drive traverses the TCSP Area, connecting to both McBean Parkway and Magic Mountain Parkway and forming a loop road around the Valencia Town Center Mall, which is one of the primary existing land uses in the TCSP Area. The TCSP Area comprises four subareas:

- Subarea 1 – Valencia Town Center
- Subarea 2 – Town Center East
- Subarea 3 – Town Center Drive
- Subarea 4 – McBean and Valencia

The Specific Plan Area includes the following parcels: Assessor Parcel Numbers 2861-058-036; 2861-058-044; 2861-058-059; 2861-058-060; 2861-058-061; 2861-058-062; 2861-058-063; 2861-058-085; 2861-058-073; 2861-058-081; 2861-058-083; 2861-058-082; 2861-058-077; 2861-058-080; 2861-058-079; 2861-058-075; 2861-058-074; 2861-058-078; 2861-058-076; 2861-058-072; 2861-058-084; 2861-058-071; 2861-058-064; 2861-058-065; 2861-058-065; 2861-058-066; 2861-058-045; 2861-058-041; 2861-058-046; 2861-009-022; 2861-009-041; 2861-009-040; 2861-009-909; 2861-009-908; 2861-009-902; 2861-009-901; 2861-009-903; 2861-009-904; 2861-009-905; 2861-009-906; 2861-009-907; 2861-009-038; 2861-009-032; 2861-009-042; 2861-062-049; 2861-062-040.

3.1.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

As stated above, the TCSP Area comprises four subareas: the Valencia Town Center Subarea (68.7 acres in size), the Town Center East Subarea (22.7 acres in size), the Town Center Drive Subarea (16.2 acres in size), and the McBean and Valencia Subarea (3.7 acres in size). The approximately 111-acre TCSP Area is currently characterized by a variety of development types, including the Valencia Town Center mall, the Town Center Drive commercial district, the Princess Cruise Lines (owned by Carnival Corporation) corporate office building, the County of Los Angeles Superior Court, the Santa Clarita Library, Valencia Branch, offices for the City of Hope, Bank of America, and a variety of other retail businesses, restaurants, offices, government buildings, and

other commercial uses. The Valencia Town Center Mall is the largest development in the Specific Plan Area, with approximately 1 million square feet of commercial space.

SUBAREA 1: VALENCIA TOWN CENTER

The Valencia Town Center Mall site is considered Subarea 1 of the proposed Specific Plan. The Valencia Town Center Mall includes an enclosed mall area, an outdoor lifestyle retail center called The Patios, and commercial development, including a fast-food restaurant at the northern edge of the Subarea and commercial uses along Town Center Drive, immediately west of the mall's main entrance. There are approximately 130 stores, including anchor spaces currently occupied by Macy's and JCPenney (a third anchor space formerly occupied by Sears is currently vacant), and larger spaces currently occupied by tenants such as Apple store, H&M, and Forever 21. There are also approximately 31 restaurant and food uses in this Subarea, i.e., sit-down restaurants such as Lazy Dog, Wokcano, and Lucille's, along with a traditional mall food court. A portion of Town Center Drive between the ring road and western entry to the Valencia Town Center Mall is within this Subarea, along with a parking garage. Additional amenities include outdoor pedestrian plazas with seating and children's play areas. The enclosed mall building is approximately 68 feet high and 2,000 feet in length, with large anchor stores on each end. Other stores face inwards towards the central corridor, which receives natural light via skylights. There are three main entrances to the mall building—one is on the west accessed by Town Center Drive and the other two are on the southwest and northeast sides, accessed through the surrounding surface parking area. Other entrances are provided via the anchor stores, which then open to the interior of the mall. The entrance via Town Center Drive forms a public space that opens to a roundabout. The one-story Patios development on the south side of the mall is divided into four blocks ranging from 250 to 350 feet in length and two corridors intersecting at a central open space leading to the mall. The corridors are open to the sky and create a lifestyle center type of environment with restaurants and specialty stores.

This Subarea has six vehicular access points, as well as three pedestrian bridges that provide access to the area over McBean Parkway, Valencia Boulevard, and Magic Mountain Parkway. Most parking in the area is provided as surface parking, which is accessible from the Town Center Drive ring road. The total number of parking spaces in the area is approximately 4,300, including the parking spaces in the parking garage. Landscaping and shade trees are located along the road adjacent to the mall building, along public streets, and within tree wells and landscape beds in front of the mall's elevations and within the surface parking areas surrounding the mall.

SUBAREA 2: TOWN CENTER EAST

Town Center East is characterized by approximately 245,000 square feet of public services, office space, personal service, and retail development. The public services include the former Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD), Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) Station 126, County of Los Angeles Superior Court, offices of the Los Angeles County Planning Division, Los Angeles County Building and Safety Division, and the LACoFD. This Subarea also contains the City of Santa Clarita Library, Valencia Branch. Two private office buildings, including the Bank of America building and Skylight Medical Plaza building, the latter which has medical offices, a pharmacy, and an urgent care facility, are in the southern portion of this Subarea. An approximately 31,000-square-foot retail/commercial center is in the northwestern portion of the Subarea. Most of the structures in this Subarea were constructed from the 1980s to the present and reflect a contemporary architectural style mixed with natural materials, new materials, and

attached accents. Additionally, all buildings in this area are single-storied except for the Skylight Medical Plaza building, which is two stories high, and the Bank of America office building, which is four stories high.

This Subarea has 12 vehicular access points, including one access point for the current LACoFD Station 126 on Citrus Street and access to the former LASD on Magic Mountain Parkway (however, access to the Sheriff's Department property is currently restricted). Most buildings are directly accessed from individual parking lots. Sidewalks are provided along peripheral roads—Citrus Street, Valencia Boulevard, and Magic Mountain Parkway. The parking in the Town Center East Subarea is provided as surface parking, serving specific buildings and uses. In addition, there is a City Hall overflow parking lot in this Subarea along the east side of Citrus Street. In general, the majority of trees within this Subarea are located along perimeter roadways, such as Valencia Boulevard, Citrus Street, and Magic Mountain Parkway, with limited decorative, shade vegetation provided within the surface parking lots.

SUBAREA 3: TOWN CENTER DRIVE

The Town Center Drive Subarea is primarily built out and extends from the Valencia Town Center Mall Subarea to the west with street-oriented office space, entertainment, dining, personal services, and specialty retail uses. This Subarea includes approximately 460,000 square feet of commercial space composed of several office buildings measuring between four and six stories in height with ground-floor retail, restaurants, and services, a twelve-theater Regal Cinema, several one- or two-story retail/office buildings, and two multilevel parking structures. The Subarea is laid out with smaller blocks ranging from 350 feet to 500 feet with streets forming a modified grid pattern that provides connections between the peripheral roads. The mixed-use buildings along Town Center Drive have small building setbacks and include pedestrian-friendly designs, including seating areas, shade trees, landscaping, wayfinding signs, pedestrian-scale lighting, street art, and on-street parking. Town Center Drive terminates on the east side of the Subarea in a roundabout at the mall entrance that creates a plaza characterized by raised planters of trees and flowers, pavers and stones laid out in a decorative pattern, and sitting areas. Most buildings in this Subarea were built in the 1990s and include some of the tallest buildings in the City. This includes the six-story Princess Cruise building, which is 99 feet high and is the tallest building in the City and four other buildings that range from 50 to 80 feet in height.

There are four vehicular access points to the Subarea, with Town Center Drive as the main entrance. The pedestrian bridge over McBean Parkway and the signalized intersection of McBean Parkway and Town Center Drive provide pedestrian connectivity from the McBean Regional Transit Center to this Subarea. Pedestrian connectivity to the northern side of the Subarea across Magic Mountain Parkway is possible only at intersections with McBean Parkway and Cheri Flemming Auto Center Drive/Mall Entrance. This Subarea has on-street diagonal parking spaces along Town Center Drive and two parking structures.

SUBAREA 4: MCBEAN AND VALENCIA

The McBean and Valencia Subarea is the smallest of the subareas, but occupies a prominent location near the intersection of two major thoroughfares—Valencia Boulevard and McBean Parkway. Most of the property is vacant, with a coffee shop currently under construction in the northeastern portion of the Subarea, replacing a former car wash. The balance of the Subarea is

entitled for the construction of a five-story hotel and freestanding restaurant. Rough grading on-site has occurred, but no hotel or restaurant-related improvements have been constructed.

There is one vehicular access point to this Subarea, which is located along the Mall Entrance road west of the intersection with McBean Parkway, which ends in a roundabout. There are no existing access points along Valencia Boulevard or McBean Parkway. The future coffee shop and the vacant site are both accessed from the roundabout. A pedestrian bridge is located just south of the intersection of McBean Parkway and Mall Entrance Road, which connects pedestrian pathways at the north end of this Subarea to sidewalks along Town Center Drive, on the east side of McBean Parkway.

SPECIFIC PLAN AREA CONNECTIVITY

Pedestrian facilities are provided on the perimeter of the Specific Plan Area, with sidewalks present on both sides of the streets. Pedestrian crossings are provided at controlled intersections and pedestrian bridges. There are three pedestrian bridges that provide access to the Specific Plan Area: the Magic Mountain Parkway pedestrian bridge, the McBean Parkway pedestrian bridge, and the Valencia Boulevard pedestrian bridge. The pedestrian facilities within the Specific Plan Area are limited to sidewalks leading into the Specific Plan Area at the signalized driveways and a raised pedestrian walkway adjacent to the mall building. Most of the internal Specific Plan Area consists of surface parking spaces through which pedestrians walk to access the mall.

The Specific Plan Area is connected to the existing regional bicycle network by paseos, which are paved paths that provide pedestrian and bicycle connections outside of the street network. There are two paseos that terminate at the Specific Plan Area—one to the north by the Magic Mountain Parkway pedestrian bridge and one to the south by the Valencia Boulevard pedestrian bridge. These paseos connect bicyclists to off-street bicycle paths that traverse north–south and east–west across the City.

The TCSP Area is served by Santa Clarita Transit, which provides service to and around the Specific Plan Area. The transit bus routes have frequencies ranging from 15 minutes to one-hour headways and include Routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 14, 501, 636, 757, 791, 792, and 794. Below is a list of the corridors surrounding the planning area and the bus routes that provide service to and around the planning area:

- Magic Mountain Parkway – Between McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard, there are seven bus stops adjacent to the planning area serving Santa Clarita Transit Bus Routes 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, and 501.
- McBean Parkway – Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard, there are five bus stops adjacent to the planning area serving Santa Clarita Transit Bus Routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 14, 636, 791, 792, and 794.
- Valencia Boulevard – Between Magic Mountain Parkway and McBean Parkway, there are five bus stops adjacent to the planning area serving Santa Clarita Transit Bus Routes 5, 6, 12, 501, and 757.

Santa Clarita Transit's Go! Santa Clarita service also offers a pick-up/drop-off ride-share program that is accessible citywide within Santa Clarita Transit's service area.

In addition to the bus stops along the Specific Plan Area perimeter, the area is served by the McBean Regional Transit Center, located at the northwest corner of the intersection of McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard. The McBean Regional Transit Center is a transfer station where passengers can transfer between multiple bus routes, including Santa Clarita Transit local routes serving the Santa Clarita Valley, Santa Clarita Transit commuter routes serving Downtown Los Angeles, Century City, Warner Center, and North Hollywood as well as regional transit operator routes serving Bakersfield and Kern County. It is also a park-and-ride location with 289 parking spaces. Regional rail transit is provided by the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line. The nearest station is the Santa Clarita station, which is approximately 1.5 miles east of the planning area. Santa Clarita Transit Bus Routes 5, 6, 501, 796, 797, and 799 connect the planning area to the Metrolink station.

The City has identified the McBean Regional Transit Center as a major transit stop, which qualifies the area within a one-half mile radius of the Transit Center as a transit priority area (TPA). The City has determined that the proposed Project meets the definition of being located in a TPA pursuant to the City's *Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita*.

3.1.2 SURROUNDING LAND USES

The TCSP Area is immediately surrounded on all sides by land with a General Plan land use designation and zoning classification of Regional Commercial (CR), with the exception of the McBean Regional Transit Center (zoned PI-Public/Institutional), which is located immediately west of the McBean and Valencia Subarea. Land to the west of the Specific Plan Area, across McBean Parkway, is designated and zoned as CR, with PI and Open Space zoning beyond. Land to the south and east, across Valencia Boulevard, is designated and zoned as CR, with Urban Residential 4, Urban Residential 3, and Urban Residential 2 zoning beyond. Land to the north, across Magic Mountain Parkway, is designated and zoned CR with Specific Plan designation (the North Valencia Specific Plan) farther to the north. Uses adjacent to the TCSP Area include auto dealerships and retail commercial uses to the north; restaurants, banks, supermarket, retail commercial uses, a medical office building, and Santa Clarita City Hall to the south; banks, medical clinics, restaurants, and retail stores to the east; and multifamily residential uses, a hotel, restaurants, retail stores, the Santa Clarita Conference Center, and Santa Clarita McBean Regional Transit Center to the west.

3.2 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following sections provide a brief description of the environmental setting of the EIR sections. Detailed environmental setting information is provided in each of the environmental issue analyses found in Sections 4.1 through 4.13 of this EIR.

3.2.1 AESTHETICS

The City of Santa Clarita lies within Southern California's Santa Clarita Valley, which is bounded by the San Gabriel Mountains to the south and east, the Santa Susana Mountains to the southwest, and the mountains of the Angeles National Forest to the north. The surrounding natural mountains and ridgelines, some of which extend into the City, provide a visual backdrop for the City. The majority of the TCSP Area is built out and developed with a number of buildings, structures, hardscape and landscape improvements, including the Town Center Mall, five- and six-story office buildings, surface and structured parking, institutional uses, and restaurant and

entertainment spaces. Further description of the aesthetic characteristics of the existing environment is presented in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, of this EIR.

3.2.2 AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The TCSP Area is located in the South Coast Air Basin, which includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties, in addition to the San Geronio Pass area of Riverside County. The Basin's terrain and geographical location (i.e., a coastal plain with connecting broad valleys and low hills) determine its distinctive climate, which is mild and tempered by cool sea breezes. The effect of the cool sea breezes is less pronounced within the inland valleys in the Basin, including in the Santa Clarita Valley. The usually mild climatological pattern is interrupted infrequently by periods of extremely hot weather, winter storms, or Santa Ana winds. The extent and severity of the air pollution issue in the Basin is a function of the area's natural physical characteristics (weather and topography), as well as man-made influences (development patterns and lifestyle). Factors, such as wind, sunlight, temperature, humidity, rainfall, and topography, all affect the accumulation and/or dispersion of pollutants throughout the Basin.

Further description of the air quality characteristics and the existing environment are presented in Section 4.2, Air Quality, and Section 4.6, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, of this EIR.

3.2.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Much of the TCSP Area is characterized by existing improvements where the ground has already been disturbed during development (e.g., the Valencia Town Center Mall, commercial and office buildings, parking lots). No designated historical resources exist in the TCSP Area. Further description of the existing archaeological resources conditions in the TCSP Area is presented in Section 4.3, Cultural Resources, of this EIR.

3.2.4 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The City's General Plan EIR identifies that Los Angeles County, including the Santa Clarita Valley, is sensitive for paleontological resources, with more than 1,100 known vertebrate fossil localities countywide. Most of these localities are generally scattered within 700 square miles (about 17 percent of the County) of hilly terrain that is underlain by fossil-producing rock formations. Most of the potential fossil-producing rock formations in the City's planning area are located within hilly terrain. The General Plan EIR specifically notes that the Santa Susana Mountains, along the City's southwest boundary, are sensitive to paleontological resource impacts, as are the Sierra Pelona Mountains to the north of the City. Further description of the existing paleontological resources conditions in the TCSP Area is presented in Section 4.5, Geology and Soils, of this EIR.

3.2.5 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Based on a review of the list of Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites from the State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker database, two LUST cases were identified in the TCSP Area; one of these cases is closed and the other is currently open with ongoing remediation. In addition, two contaminated sites were identified immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan Area: one of these cases is closed and the other is currently open. Further description of the existing cleanup sites is presented in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this EIR.

3.2.6 LAND USE AND PLANNING

The TCSP Area is located in the community of Valencia and has General Plan land use designation of CR (Regional Commercial) with zoning classifications of CR (Regional Commercial) and JCOZ (Jobs Creation Overlay Zone). The City's Housing Element also identifies the TCSP Area as a suitable site for housing. A further discussion of the local and regional plans that are applicable to the TCSP Area is presented in Section 4.8, Land Use and Planning, of this EIR.

3.2.7 NOISE

Major transportation noise sources include traffic on roadways that surround and traverse the TCSP Area, including Valencia Boulevard, McBean Parkway, Magic Mountain Parkway, Town Center Drive, and Citrus Street. In addition, stationary noise sources within the TCSP Area generate noise that affect noise-sensitive uses located nearby. These stationary noise sources may include a wide range of commercial, entertainment, and business activities. Further description of the existing noise conditions in the TCSP Area is presented in Section 4.9, Noise, of this EIR.

3.2.8 PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Public services in the City include fire protection services provided by the LACoFD, law enforcement services provided by the LASD, and public school facilities provided by the Saugus Union School District (elementary school) and the William S. Hart School District (junior high and high school).

The wastewater collection system and sewer treatment services are provided by the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District and Los Angeles County Sanitation District. The water purveyor to the Specific Plan Area is the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency. Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company provide electrical and natural gas services to the Specific Plan Area. Telecommunication services are offered through several providers. Further description of each of these services is presented in Section 4.10 of this EIR for public services, including fire protection, police protection, and schools, and Section 4.13 of this EIR for utilities and service systems, including water supply, wastewater, and energy and telecommunications infrastructure.

3.2.9 TRANSPORTATION

The TCSP Area is located approximately a mile east of Interstate 5 (I-5) and can be accessed via Magic Mountain Parkway, Valencia Boulevard, and McBean Parkway, all of which are classified as Major Highways in the City's General Plan. Citrus Street crosses through the Specific Plan Area from north to south, and Town Center Drive circumnavigates the Valencia Town Center and provides an east/west spine in the northwestern part of the TCSP Area (i.e., the Town Center Drive commercial district). The McBean Regional Transit Center, which is located west of the Specific Plan Area, also provides regional connectivity to the Specific Plan Area and includes a park-and-ride facility. As described above, the City has identified the McBean Regional Transit Center as a major transit stop, which qualifies the area within a one-half mile radius of the Transit Center as a TPA. The City has determined that the proposed Project meets the definition of being located in a TPA pursuant to the City's *Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita*.

Pedestrian facilities are provided on the perimeter of the Specific Plan Area, with sidewalks present on both sides of the streets. Pedestrian crossings are provided at controlled intersections and pedestrian bridges, of which there are three that provide access to the Specific Plan Area, as mentioned earlier: the Magic Mountain Parkway pedestrian bridge, the McBean Parkway pedestrian bridge, and the Valencia Boulevard pedestrian bridge. On-street bicycle facilities are currently not provided in the Specific Plan Area. Further description of the existing transportation setting in the TCSP Area is presented in Section 4.11, Transportation, of this EIR.

3.2.10 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Native American archaeological resources in the region have been found near sources of water, including perennial and intermittent streams and springs, on mid-slope terraces and elevated knolls above the flood plain, and near ecotones and other productive environments. While much of the City is developed with uses where the surface has been previously disturbed, undisturbed soils exist below the disturbed surficial soils in many parts of the City. Further description of existing conditions related to tribal cultural resources is presented in Section 4.12, Tribal Cultural Resources, of this EIR.

3.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SETTING

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a) requires that an EIR discuss the cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is "cumulatively considerable." As set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(3), "cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project 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. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(3), 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. In addition, the lead agency is required to identify facts and analysis supporting its conclusion that the contribution will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) further provides that the discussion of cumulative impacts reflects "the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great of detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone." Rather, the discussion is to "be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) states that one of the following two elements is necessary to provide an adequate discussion of significant cumulative impacts:

- (A) A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or
- (B) A summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect. Such plans may include: a general plan, regional transportation plan, or plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. A summary of projections may also be contained in an adopted or certified prior environmental document for such a plan. Such projections may be supplemented with additional

information such as a regional modeling program. Any such document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.

The cumulative impact analysis in this EIR generally uses the second method. Consistent with Section 15130(b)(1)(B) of the CEQA Guidelines, this EIR analyzes the environmental impacts of development in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan, including buildout scenarios of the proposed Specific Plan as described Section 2.0, Project Description, of this EIR. As a result, this EIR considers the cumulative impacts of development in the TCSP Area and the City, as appropriate. The cumulative impacts discussion utilizes the buildout projections of the City's General Plan and General Plan EIR to define the cumulative conditions analyzed in this EIR. As detailed in Section 1.5, Incorporation by Reference, of this EIR, the City's General Plan and General Plan EIR are incorporated by reference into this EIR. Cumulative study areas are defined based on an analysis of the geographical scope relevant to each particular environmental issue. Therefore, the cumulative study area for each individual environmental impact issue may vary. For example, a cumulative land use impact generally may only affect the compatibility of uses within the immediate vicinity of the Specific Plan Area, while a cumulative air quality impact may affect the entire South Coast Air Basin. The specific boundaries and the projected growth within those boundaries for the cumulative study area of each environmental issue are identified in the applicable environmental issue sections in Section 4.0, Environmental Impact Analysis, of this EIR.

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4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Sections 4.1 through 4.13 of this EIR contain detailed descriptions of the existing conditions of the Project Site and surrounding area; Project impacts, including indirect, direct, short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts; and recommended mitigation measures, if necessary. This EIR addresses those environmental issues identified in the Notice of Preparation (NOP), which is available, along with the NOP response letters, in **Appendix A**.

The EIR examines the following environmental issue areas:

- 4.1 Aesthetics
- 4.2 Air Quality
- 4.3 Cultural Resources
- 4.4 Energy
- 4.5 Geology and Soils
- 4.6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- 4.8 Land Use and Planning
- 4.9 Noise
- 4.10 Public Services
- 4.11 Transportation
- 4.12 Tribal Cultural Resources
- 4.13 Utilities and Service Systems

Each environmental issue is addressed in a separate section of the Draft EIR and is organized into subsections, as follows:

Environmental Setting

The Environmental Setting subsections describe the existing and pre-Project conditions in terms of the physical environment at the time of the NOP issuance. These subsections also provide background information to support the analysis of the Project's impacts presented in the subsections that follow.

Regulatory and Planning Framework

The Regulatory and Planning Framework subsections explain the applicable federal, State, regional, and/or local regulations, statutes, and guiding policies that pertain to each respective environmental issue that may be applicable to the Proposed Project.

Thresholds of Significance

The Thresholds of Significance subsections identify the significance thresholds, which are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and, if relevant, the City's Initial Study Checklist, that are used to determine the level of significance of a particular issue. These subsections also identify those significance thresholds for which the Project would not result in significant impacts as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A** of this EIR).

Methodology

The Methodology subsections identify the methods used to analyze the impacts of the Project in consideration of the significance thresholds. Each environmental issue area has its own methodology, which may include identification of models used (if applicable), surveys and research that were conducted, calculations, and plans or policies reviewed for consistency.

Analysis of Project Impacts

The Analysis of Project Impacts subsections address each environmental topic that was determined to have a potentially significant impact in the Initial Study (**Appendix A** of this EIR). The environmental impact analysis involves the identification of the environmental changes to existing physical conditions that could occur upon buildout of the proposed Specific Plan, as well as the magnitude, duration, extent, frequency, and range of potential impacts, as determined through review of factual, scientific data and consideration of all potential direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect effects of the Project. The impact determination is either no impact, less than significant impact, or potentially significant impact (prior to mitigation). If potentially significant impacts are identified, feasible mitigation measures are recommended. These mitigation measures are Project-related actions taken to (1) avoid significant adverse impacts, (2) minimize a significant adverse impact, (3) rectify a significant adverse impact through restoration, (4) compensate for the impact by replacement of a substitute resource or environment, or (5) reduce or eliminate a significant adverse impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations. After consideration of the mitigation measures, the "Level of Significance after Mitigation" determination is made and identifies impacts that would remain after the application of Project-level mitigation measures and whether the impacts are considered significant. If mitigation measures would not reduce the effects of a Project impact to a less than significant level, then the Project effects are considered significant and unavoidable.

Cumulative Impacts

The Cumulative Impacts subsections analyze the impacts created as a result of the combination of the Project together with other projects causing related impacts. These other projects may include past, present, and probable future projects that have the potential to produce cumulative impacts. As described in Section 3.3, Cumulative Impacts Setting, of this EIR, the cumulative impact analyses in this EIR generally utilize the projections contained in the City's General Plan and General Plan EIR to provide the setting for considering cumulative conditions.

4.1 AESTHETICS

Pursuant to Public Resources Code 21099(d), aesthetic and parking impacts of a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project on an infill site within a transit priority area (TPA) shall not be considered significant impacts on the environment. The City has identified the McBean Regional Transit Center as a major transit stop resulting in the area within a one-half mile radius of the Transit Center to qualify as a TPA. The City has determined that the proposed Project meets the definition of being located in a TPA pursuant to the City's *Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita*. As such, the Project's aesthetic impacts would not be considered significant impacts on the environment pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21099. Nonetheless, this section provides an evaluation of the Project's potential aesthetic impacts for informational purposes. This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the existing visual setting of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area and vicinity within the context of the surrounding community; identifies applicable laws, regulations, guidelines and policies relating to aesthetics; and evaluates potential aesthetic impacts related to implementation of the Project.

4.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Specific Plan Area is within the community of Valencia, a master-planned community. The Specific Plan Area is located approximately 0.3 miles south of the Santa Clara River, and is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway on the north, Valencia Boulevard on the south and east, and generally McBean Parkway on the west, creating a roughly triangular site. A small portion of the Specific Plan Area is on the west side of McBean Parkway and connects to the McBean Regional Transit Center.

VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREAS

The Specific Plan Area is currently developed with the Valencia Town Center mall, the Town Center Drive commercial district, the Princess Cruise Lines corporate office building, the County of Los Angeles Superior Court, the Santa Clarita Library, Valencia Branch, offices for the City of Hope, Bank of America, and a variety of other retail businesses, restaurants, offices, government buildings, and other commercial uses. Streetlights and tall ornamental trees line the perimeter the Specific Plan Area. Public views of the area are primarily from the roadways that border the Specific Plan Area.

Land uses adjacent to the TCSP Area include auto dealerships and retail commercial uses to the north; banks, medical clinics, restaurants, and retail stores to the east; restaurants, banks, supermarket, retail commercial uses, a medical office building, and Santa Clarita City Hall to the south; and multi-family residential uses, a hotel, restaurants, retail stores, the Santa Clarita Conference Center, and Santa Clarita McBean Regional Transit Center to the west.

The visual character of each Subarea is discussed below.

Subarea 1 – Valencia Town Center

Subarea 1 is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Citrus Street to the east, Valencia Boulevard to the south, McBean Parkway to the southwest, and the Town Center Drive subarea to the west. Land uses in this Subarea are the Valencia Town Center mall, including the Patios, surface parking lots, and commercial development, including a fast-food restaurant at the northern

edge of the Subarea and commercial uses along Town Center Drive, immediately west of the Mall's main entrance. The Valencia Town Center mall, located centrally within the Subarea, includes 1 million square feet of commercial space, office, retail, and restaurant uses. The Valencia Town Center consists of an enclosed mall area and an outdoor area with commercial uses. The mall is two-stories, approximately 68 feet high, and 2,000 feet in length, with large anchor stores on each end. Surrounding the mall is approximately 39 acres of surface parking as well as a two-story, three-level parking garage on the west side along Town Center Drive. Ornamental trees of various sizes are scattered throughout the Subarea, primarily along the perimeter of the Subarea as well as in the surface parking area. Town Center Drive forms an internal loop within the Subarea. Additional visible uses include outdoor pedestrian plazas with seating and children's play areas. Subarea 1 also contains three pedestrian bridges elevated above roadways on the north, west, and south perimeters of the Subarea. The northern pedestrian bridge is located east of Magic Mountain Parkway and Auto Center Drive and crosses over Magic Mountain Parkway. The western pedestrian bridge is south of Mall Entrance and Town Center Drive and crosses over McBean Parkway. The southern pedestrian bridge is west of Valencia Boulevard and Citrus Street and crosses over Valencia Boulevard.

Subarea 2 – Town Center East

Subarea 2 is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Valencia Boulevard to the east and south, and Citrus Street to the west. This Subarea is primarily developed with various government buildings, including the former Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Los Angeles County Fire Department Station 126, Santa Clarita Courthouse/Santa Clarita Superior Court, offices of the Los Angeles County Planning Division, Building and Safety Division, Los Angeles County Fire Department, and the City of Santa Clarita Library, Valencia Branch. Additional uses include a retail center facing Citrus Street and office buildings near Valencia Boulevard. Most of the structures in this Subarea were constructed from the 1980s to the present and reflect a contemporary architectural style mixed with natural materials, new materials, and attached accents. Common building materials consist of stucco, native stone, glass, and wood.

All buildings in this area are single-storied with heights ranging from 22 feet to 35 feet, except for the Skylight Medical Plaza building, which is two stories high, and the Bank of America office building at the northwest corner of the Subarea, which is four stories high. The Skylight Medical Plaza building also uses continuous corridors and a cantilevered roof that seems to be inspired by Prairie-style architecture. Of 23 acres, approximately 13 acres of the Subarea are dedicated to surface parking, which surrounds the buildings within the Subarea and separates the street from the buildings.¹ Ornamental trees are scattered throughout the Subarea within the parking area as well as surrounding the commercial buildings.

Subarea 3 – Town Center Drive

Subarea 3 is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, the Valencia Town Center Subarea to the east, Mall Entrance Drive to the south, and McBean Parkway to the west. Town Center Drive bisects the Subarea, creating a "main street" character with shops, restaurants, and other businesses that engage the sidewalk. Visible uses in this Subarea include approximately 460,000 square feet of commercial space composed of several office buildings measuring between four and six stories in height with ground-floor retail, restaurants, and services, a movie

¹ One surface parking lot is owned by the City.

theater, several one- and two-story retail/office buildings, and two multi-level parking structures. Most buildings in this Subarea were built in the 1990s. At 99 feet, the six-story Princess Cruise building is the tallest in the Subarea, as well as the entire Specific Plan Area. Four other buildings in this Subarea range from 50 to 80 feet in height. Most buildings in this Subarea have a Modernist/International and Art Deco architectural style but have overlapping elements and ornamentation from other architectural styles. The most prominent, the Princess Cruise building, uses a Streamlined Art Deco style featuring curving forms and long horizontal lines.

This Subarea also includes shaded sidewalks, marked/textured crosswalks, and narrow streets. The mixed-use buildings are located close to the street, with ground floor articulation. This Subarea also includes seating areas, shaded trees, landscaping, wayfinding signs, pedestrian-scale lighting, street art, and on-street parking. Town Center Drive terminates in a roundabout at the mall entrance.

Subarea 4 – McBean and Valencia

Subarea 4 is bounded by McBean Parkway and a gas station to the east, Valencia Boulevard and a gas station to the south, the McBean Regional Transit Center to the west, a coffee shop (under construction) and Mall Entrance Drive to the north. This Subarea is currently vacant and the soils have been graded for future construction. Ornamental trees are present primarily surrounding the Subarea on the south and west.

4.1.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

There are no federal regulations or planning programs that apply to the proposed Project regarding aesthetic resources.

STATE

There are no state regulations or planning programs that apply to the proposed Project regarding aesthetic resources.

LOCAL

Santa Clarita Beautification Master Plan

The Santa Clarita Beautification Master Plan, adopted by City Council on December 11, 2001, is a tool to aid the City in accomplishing the long-term goal of citywide streetscape improvements and beautification. The Beautification Master Plan addresses concepts for streetscape design, landscape enhancement, gateways, and monumentation and signage, on both a regional and a community scale. The plan strives to maintain the identity of individual communities while unifying the entire City through design. The plan identifies a goal of providing landscaped medians within major arterial roadways in order to provide aesthetic appeal, control vehicle circulation, calm traffic, and provide area for directional and traffic signs. The TCSP Area is included in the Valencia community portion of the Beautification Master Plan Area, which describes the Valencia community as one that is landscaped in a lush and manicured fashion with well-maintained streetscapes, bright and colorful flowers at entrances, and tree-lined streets.² The Beautification

² City of Santa Clarita, Beautification Master Plan - Valencia, page V-1, December 2001.

Master Plan identifies Valencia Boulevard to Magic Mountain, McBean Parkway, and Magic Mountain Parkway as second priority primary corridors and recommends beautification treatments, such as signage, median landscaping, and community entrance treatments.

Santa Clarita Community Character and Design Guidelines

The Santa Clarita Community Character and Design Guidelines were adopted to provide direction for the design of new residential, commercial, mixed-use, and industrial developments within the City and for the renovation and redevelopment of built areas. The guidelines are intended to ensure that existing and future development is compatible in size, scale, and appearance with existing neighborhood character within Santa Clarita and provide pedestrian-oriented design to enrich the pedestrian experience. The guidelines define the individual character of communities within Santa Clarita, list suggested building materials, and identify specific design considerations. City staff use the guidelines in assisting applicants with all aspects of project development, including site planning, building orientation, building massing and articulation, and architectural themes. The City uses the guidelines to evaluate proposals for quality of design. The guidelines suggest appropriate building materials for use in the Valencia area, including appropriate wall materials (such as native stone veneer, stucco, tile, wood or fiber cement board siding), accent materials (such as tile, stucco, timber, clay, wood, arches, colonnades, wrought iron, and wood trellises), and roofing materials (such as clay tiles, cement tiles, asphalt shingles, metal, “cool roof”, and tapered barrel tiles).³

Santa Clarita Municipal Code

Section 17.38.015 Jobs Creation Overlay Zone

The purpose of the City's Jobs Creation Overlay Zone (JCOZ) is to support the General Plan objective of promoting the creation of strong regional and local economies by implementing strategic land use planning policies. The JCOZ provides a streamlined approval process for qualifying office projects (up to five stories) and industrial projects (up to 55 feet), whereas the underlying zoning district allows for buildings up to 35 feet by right. Building heights that exceed these standards would require the approval of a conditional use permit.

Section 17.51.050 Outdoor Lighting Standards

The Outdoor Lighting Code of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code (SCMC) establishes the regulations for outdoor lighting, in order to minimize adverse off-site light obtrusion and reduce light pollution to preserve the night environment. In general, the regulations require outdoor lighting to be shielded (i.e., directed downward and be of a cut-off design), designed to avoid light trespass onto neighboring properties, and operated so that lighting does not disturb neighboring uses.

Section 17.51.030 Landscaping and Irrigation Standards

The landscaping standards in SCMC Section 17.51.030 establish design standards for landscaping in new development to enhance the appearance of all development and to encourage protection of landmark, native, and specimen trees. The design standards accomplish this by

³ City of Santa Clarita, Santa Clarita Community Character & Design Guidelines, page 3-34 to 3-44, March 2009.

requiring design, installation, and maintenance of landscaping and by providing standards relating to the quality, quantity, and functional aspects of landscaping and landscape screening.

Division 6 Development Standards

Chapter 17.51 provides property development standards for all zones. Chapter 17.53 provides property development standards for commercial and industrial zones. Chapter 17.55 provides property development standards for mixed use zones. Chapter 17.57 provides property development standards for residential zones.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Applicable goals, objectives, and policies from the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Land Use Element and Conservation and Open Space Element are listed below:⁴

Land Use Element: Community Appearance

Goal LU 6: A scenic and beautiful urban environment that builds on the community's history and natural setting.

- Objective LU 6.5: Promote high quality development that enhances the urban environment and builds long-term value.
 - Policy LU 6.5.1: Require use of high quality, durable, and natural-appearing building materials pursuant to applicable ordinances.
 - Policy LU 6.5.2: Encourage the use of designs and architectural styles that incorporate classic and timeless architectural features.
 - Policy LU 6.5.3: Require architectural enhancement and articulation on all sides of buildings (360 degree architecture), with special consideration at building entrances and corners, and along facades adjacent to major arterial streets.
 - Policy LU 6.5.4: Evaluate new development in consideration of its context, to ensure that buildings create a coherent living environment, a cohesive urban fabric, and contribute to a sense of place consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Conservation and Open Space Element: Scenic Resources

Goal CO 6: Preservation of scenic features that keep the Santa Clarita Valley beautiful and enhance quality of life, community identity, and property values.

- Objective CO 6.3: Protect the scenic character of major water bodies.
 - Policy CO 6.3.2: Protect the banks of the Santa Clara River and its major tributaries through open space designations and property acquisitions, where feasible, to protect and enhance the scenic character of the river valley.
- Objective CO 6.6: Limit adverse impacts by humans on the scenic environment.

⁴ City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Land Use Element, June 2011; Conservation and Open Space Element, June 2011.

- Policy CO 6.6.1: Enhance views of the night sky by reducing light pollution through use of light screens, downward directed lights, minimized reflective paving surfaces, and reduced lighting levels, as deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority.
- Policy CO 6.6.4: Where appropriate, require new development to be sensitive to scenic viewpoints or viewsheds through building design, site layout and building heights.

4.1.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to aesthetics are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to aesthetics if it would:

Threshold 4.1(a): *Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;*

Threshold 4.1(b): *Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;*

Threshold 4.1(c): *In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; and/or,*

Threshold 4.1(d): *Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.*

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The proposed Project would not result in significant impacts related to the following significance thresholds, as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**); therefore, they are not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.1(a): *Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.*

Threshold 4.1(b): *Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.*

Threshold 4.1(d): *Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.*

4.1.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to aesthetics considered the potential future improvements in the TCSP Area which are envisioned as creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous

development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the TCSP Area, which include programmable gathering spaces and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children's playgrounds, and parks.

The analysis of aesthetics impacts is based on a desktop review of the visual character in the TCSP Area. The evaluation considers impacts based on whether implementation of the Specific Plan would be inconsistent or incompatible with the existing visual character of the area, thereby degrading the existing aesthetic value of the Project Area and surrounding area.

4.1.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

The proposed Specific Plan would guide growth in the TCSP Area and include development standards and design guidelines that regulate and direct certain built environmental features that contribute to aesthetic character and quality such as building height, density, and footprint; architectural styles, form, and character; signage; landscaping; and other design and development standards.

4.1.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.1(c): *In non-urbanized areas, would the project 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?*

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The proposed Specific Plan would provide structure to guide future development and redevelopment within the TCSP Area based on six categories, including Land Use, Built Environment, Mobility, Parking, Public Amenities, and Infrastructure. While there are no development applications currently under consideration by the City in the TCSP Area, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would establish the Project Area's zoning regulations, development standards, and design guidelines. Mixed-use development including residential, commercial, and recreational spaces would be encouraged, along with emphasis on a walkable community with gathering spaces such as publicly accessible plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, and parks. Compared to the existing visual character of the Project Area, which lacks cohesion and dedicates a substantial amount of space to surface parking lots, the proposed Specific Plan would provide regulations, standards, and guidelines to ensure that future development projects incorporate a balance of uses, provide appropriate amenities, and create a sense of place. Standards provided in the proposed Specific Plan would address building heights, orientation, and scale, setbacks, public spaces, and architectural standards such as building façade/frontage and landscaping to promote a more uniform visual

appeal within the Specific Plan Area as well as compatibility with the surrounding area. The proposed Specific Plan would not change the allowable floor area ratio or residential densities of the area. Commercial buildings would be a maximum of 5 floors, mixed-use buildings would be a maximum of 7 floors. Such heights are consistent with the heights of existing buildings in the TCSP and surrounding area, including the 99-foot-tall Princess Cruise building in the Specific Plan Area, the five-story Hyatt Valencia (85 feet) on the west side of McBean Parkway, and the five-story Monticello mixed-use building (68 feet) at the corner of McBean Parkway and Mall Entrance Drive. Future development would likely benefit and improve the visual character and quality in the Specific Plan Area, for example, with new monumental architectural elements, as new development would be designed in accordance with the standards provided in the Specific Plan, which are more design-focused than the existing zoning regulations. Overall, implementation of the proposed Project is anticipated to enhance the visual character of the Specific Plan Area. Therefore, the proposed Project would neither substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings nor conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts with regard to visual character were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts with regard to visual character were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.1.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The Project's impacts on aesthetic resources were determined to be less than significant. Impacts related to visual character are localized, and the visual character of the Specific Plan Area would not change with growth and development in another part of the City. Thus, there would not be a combined effect on the visual setting and views. Within the Specific Plan Area, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would provide development standards and design guidelines for new development, which would promote a more cohesive aesthetic for the area. Additionally, as the Specific Plan Area is surrounded by existing development, through incorporation of design standards such as massing standards, architectural design elements, and landscaping, the Project would provide a visually compatible transition between the Specific Plan Area and adjacent areas. As a result, the Project's incremental contribution to cumulative aesthetic impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Cumulative impacts related to aesthetics were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Cumulative impacts related to aesthetics were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.2 AIR QUALITY

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates the Project's potential impacts on air quality. This section estimates the air pollutant emissions generated by construction and operation of the Project and evaluates whether the Project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the air pollution reduction strategies set forth in the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) *2022 Air Quality Management Plan*. The analysis of Project-generated air emissions focuses on whether the Project would cause an exceedance of an ambient air quality standard or SCAQMD significance thresholds.

4.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

SOUTH COAST AIR BASIN

Climate

The City of Santa Clarita (City) is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), a 6,745-square-mile area bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west; the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto Mountains to the north and east; and San Diego County to the south. The SCAB includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties, in addition to the Coachella Valley area in Riverside County. The SCAQMD monitors and regulates local air quality in the SCAB.

The general region lies in the semi-permanent high-pressure zone of the eastern Pacific. The regional climate in the SCAB is semi-arid and is characterized by warm summers, mild winters, infrequent seasonal rainfall, moderate daytime onshore breezes, and moderate humidity. The usually mild climatological pattern is interrupted occasionally by periods of extremely hot weather, winter storms, or Santa Ana winds. The average annual temperature varies little throughout the SCAB, averaging 75 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). However, with a less-pronounced oceanic influence, the eastern inland portions of the SCAB show greater variability in annual minimum and maximum temperatures. All portions of the SCAB have had recorded temperatures over 100°F in recent years.

The SCAB experiences a persistent temperature inversion, meaning an increase in temperature with an increase in altitude, because of the North Pacific High.¹ This inversion limits the vertical dispersion of air contaminants, trapping a layer of stagnant air near the ground, where it is then further loaded with pollutants. As the sun warms the ground and the lower air layer, the temperature of the lower air layer approaches the temperature of the base of the inversion (upper) layer until the inversion layer finally breaks, allowing vertical mixing with the lower layer. These inversions cause haziness, which is caused by moisture, suspended dust, and a variety of chemical aerosols emitted by trucks, automobiles, furnaces, and other sources.

The height of the inversion is important in determining pollutant concentration. When the inversion is approximately 2,500 feet above sea level, the sea breezes carry the pollutants inland to escape over the mountain slopes or through the passes. At a height of 1,200 feet, the terrain prevents the pollutants from entering the upper atmosphere, resulting in a settlement in the foothill communities. Below 1,200 feet, the inversion puts a tight lid on pollutants, concentrating them in

¹ The North Pacific High is a semi-permanent, subtropical anticyclone located in the northeastern portion of the Pacific Ocean.

a shallow layer over the entire coastal basin. Usually, inversions are lower before sunrise than during the day. Mixing heights for inversions are lower in the summer and more persistent, being partly responsible for the high levels of ozone (O₃) observed during summer months in the SCAB. Smog in Southern California is generally the result of these temperature inversions combining with coastal day winds and local mountains to contain the pollutants for long periods of time, allowing them to form secondary pollutants by reacting with sunlight. The SCAB has a limited ability to disperse these pollutants due to typically low wind speeds.

The combination of stagnant wind conditions and low inversions in the SCAB produces the greatest pollutant concentrations. Ambient air pollutant concentrations are lowest on days of no inversion or high wind speeds, while air pollutants generated in urbanized areas are transported predominantly onshore into Riverside and San Bernardino Counties during periods of low inversions and low wind speeds. In the winter, the greatest pollution problem is the accumulation of carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) due to low inversions and air stagnation during the night and early morning hours. In the summer, the longer daylight hours and the brighter sunshine combine to cause a reaction between hydrocarbons and NO_x to form photochemical smog.

The City experiences a mild Southern California high desert climate with average high temperatures between 63°F and 95°F, and average low temperatures between 45°F to 65°F. The area also experiences an average of up to 3.3 inches of precipitation per month, with the most precipitation occurring in the month of February.²

Ambient Air Quality

Air pollutant emissions within the SCAB are generated primarily by stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources can be divided into two major subcategories: point and area sources. Point sources occur at a specific location and are often identified by an exhaust vent or stack (e.g., boilers or combustion equipment that produce electricity or generate heat). Area sources are widely distributed and include sources, such as residential and commercial water heaters, painting operations, lawn mowers, and landfills. Mobile sources refer to emissions from motor vehicles and are classified as either on-road or off-road. On-road sources may come from vehicles on roadways and highways, while off-road sources may come from aircraft, ships, trains, and construction equipment. Air pollutants can also be generated by the natural environment, such as when high winds suspend fine dust particles.

Criteria Pollutants

Criteria pollutants are pollutants for which national and State criteria and standards have been promulgated and which are most relevant to current air quality planning and regulation in the SCAB. Criteria pollutants include O₃, respirable and fine particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}, respectively), CO, nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and lead (Pb).

Ozone (O₃)

Ozone is a gas that is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and NO_x, both byproducts of internal combustion engine exhaust, undergo slow photochemical reactions in the presence of

² Weather Spark, Average Weather in Los Angeles, California, United States, <https://weatherspark.com/y/1726/Average-Weather-in-Santa-Clarita-California-United-States-Year-Round>, accessed on January 11, 2024.

sunlight. As a highly reactive molecule, O₃ readily combines with many different components of the atmosphere. Consequently, high O₃ levels tend to occur only while high VOC and NO_x levels are present to sustain the formation process, and O₃ levels rapidly decline once the precursors have been depleted. O₃ is considered a regional pollutant because its reactions occur on a regional rather than local scale. In addition, because O₃ requires sunlight to form, significant concentrations occur between the months of April and October. O₃ is a pungent, colorless, toxic gas with direct health effects on humans, including changes in breathing patterns, reduction of breathing capacity, increased susceptibility to infections, inflammation of lung tissue, and some immunological changes. Groups most sensitive to ozone include children, the elderly, people with respiratory disorders, and people who exercise strenuously outdoors.

Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5})

Particulate matter pollution consists of very small liquid and solid particles floating in the air (e.g., soot, dust, aerosols, fumes, and mists) that can form when gases emitted from industries and motor vehicles undergo chemical reactions in the atmosphere. PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} consist of extremely small, suspended particles or droplets 10 microns and 2.5 microns or smaller in diameter, respectively. Man-made sources of PM₁₀ are agricultural operations, industrial processes, combustion of fossil fuels, construction, demolition operations, and entrainment of road dust into the atmosphere. Natural sources of PM₁₀ include windblown dust, wildfire smoke, and sea spray salt. Elevated levels of PM₁₀ can cause respiratory irritation, reduced lung function, aggravation of cardiovascular disease, and cancer in individuals. PM_{2.5} is generally associated with combustion processes, as well as formation in the atmosphere as a secondary pollutant through chemical reactions. PM_{2.5} is more likely to penetrate deeply into the lungs and poses a health threat to all groups but particularly to the elderly, children, and those with respiratory problems. Elevated levels of PM_{2.5} can cause respiratory stress, decreased lung function, and increased risk of long-term disease, such as chronic bronchitis, asthma, and lung cancer.

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas primarily emitted from combustion processes and motor vehicles due to incomplete combustion of carbon-containing fuels, such as gasoline or wood. CO is a localized pollutant that is found in high concentrations only near its source; therefore, elevated concentrations are usually only found near areas of high traffic volumes. Other sources of CO include the incomplete combustion of petroleum fuels at power plants and fuel combustion from wood stoves and fireplaces during the winter. CO causes a number of health problems, including the aggravation of some heart diseases, reduced tolerance for exercise, impaired mental function, and impaired fetal development. At high levels of exposure, carbon monoxide reduces the amount of oxygen in the blood, which may be fatal.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)

Nitrogen dioxide is a nitrogen oxide compound produced by the combustion of fossil fuels, such as in both gasoline and diesel-powered internal combustion engines, and from point sources, such as power plants. NO₂ absorbs blue light, gives a reddish-brown cast to the atmosphere, and reduces visibility. The principal form of NO_x produced by combustion is nitric oxide, which reacts rapidly to form NO₂, creating the mixture of nitric oxide and NO₂. NO₂ is an acute irritant that can aggravate respiratory illnesses and symptoms. NO₂ may have negative impacts on those with existing illnesses, such as chronic pulmonary fibrosis and an increase in bronchitis in young children.

Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂)

Sulfur oxides (SO_x) are compounds of sulfur and oxygen molecules. SO₂ is classified in a group of highly reactive gases known as “oxides of sulfur.” The largest sources of SO₂ emissions are from fossil fuel combustion at power plants and other industrial facilities. Other sources of SO₂ emissions include industrial processes, such as extracting metal from ore, and the burning of fuels with a high sulfur content by locomotives, large ships, and off-road equipment. SO₂ is linked to several adverse effects on the respiratory system, including aggravation of respiratory diseases, such as asthma and emphysema, and reduced lung function.

Lead (Pb)

Lead is a metal found naturally in the environment, as well as in manufactured products. Historically, the major sources of Pb emissions have been mobile and industrial sources. Since the 1970s, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has set national regulations to gradually reduce the Pb content in gasoline. As a result of phasing out leaded gasoline, metal processing is the current primary source of Pb emissions. The highest level of Pb in the air is generally found near Pb smelters. Other stationary sources include waste incinerators, utilities, and lead-acid battery manufacturers. The health impacts of Pb include behavioral and hearing disabilities in children and nervous system impairment.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Toxic air contaminants (TAC) are air pollutants that may cause or contribute to an increase in deaths or serious illness, or that may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. TACs are different than criteria pollutants because ambient air quality standards have not been established for TACs. One of the main sources of TACs in California is diesel engine exhaust that contains solid material known as diesel particulate matter (DPM). TACs include both organic and inorganic chemical substances that may be emitted from a variety of common sources, including gasoline stations, motor vehicles, dry cleaners, industrial operations, painting operations, and research and teaching facilities. Exposure to TACs may result in long-term health effects, such as cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, asthma, or genetic damage; or short-term acute effects, such as eye watering, respiratory irritation, runny nose, throat pain, and headaches. TACs are considered either carcinogenic or non-carcinogenic based on the nature of the health effects associated with exposure. For carcinogenic TACs, potential health impacts are evaluated in terms of overall relative risk expressed as excess cancer cases per one million exposed individuals. Non-carcinogenic TACs differ in that there is generally assumed to be a safe level of exposure below which no negative health impact is believed to occur. TAC impacts are described by carcinogenic risk and by chronic (i.e., long duration) and acute (i.e., severe but of short duration) adverse effects on human health.

Local Air Quality

The SCAQMD operates a network of air quality monitoring stations throughout the SCAB to measure and monitor ambient pollutant concentrations and air quality. Each monitoring station is in a source receptor area (SRA), and the Project Site is located in SRA 13 (Santa Clarita Valley). The monitoring station representative of SRA 13 is the Santa Clarita station, at 22224 Placerita Canyon Road, located approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the Project Site. This monitoring station measures ozone, CO, NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. SO₂ and Pb are not monitored at this station, and, since the area is designated unclassified/attainment for these pollutants, air quality data for

these pollutants are not included in **Table 4.2-1**, which reports ambient air quality measurements and indicates the number of days that each standard has been exceeded at the Santa Clarita station.

**TABLE 4.2-1
AMBIENT AIR QUALITY AT THE SANTA CLARITA MONITORING STATION BY YEAR**

Pollutant	Primary Standard		Year	Maximum Concentration ¹	Number of Days State/Federal Std. Exceeded
	California	Federal			
Ozone (O ₃) ² (1-hour)	0.09 ppm for 1 hour	NA ⁵	2020	0.148 ppm	44/10
			2021	0.125 ppm	30/1
			2022	0.129 ppm	28/0
Ozone (O ₃) ² (8-hour)	0.070 ppm for 8 hours	0.070 ppm for 8 hours	2020	0.122 ppm	75/74
			2021	0.104 ppm	63/61
			2022	0.115 ppm	68/66
Carbon Monoxide (CO) ^{2,3} (1-hour)	20 ppm for 1 hour	35 ppm for 1 hour	2020	1.165 ppm	0/0
			2021	1.003 ppm	0/0
			2022	1.469 ppm	0/0
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂) ²	0.18 ppm for 1 hour	0.100 ppm for 1 hour	2020	0.046 ppm	0/0
			2021	0.056 ppm	0/0
			2022	0.051 ppm	0/0
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5}) ^{2,3}	No Separate Standard	35 µg/m ³ for 24 hours	2020	43.3 µg/m ³	NA/*
			2021	30.1 µg/m ³	NA/0
			2022	27.2 µg/m ³	NA/0
Coarse Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀) ^{2,3,4}	50 µg/m ³ for 24 hours	150 µg/m ³ for 24 hours ⁶	2020	64.7 µg/m ³	1/0
			2021	45.0 µg/m ³	0/0
			2022	35.3 µg/m ³	0/0

ppm = parts per million

µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter

NA = Not Applicable

Sources:

California Air Resources Board, *ADAM Air Quality Data Statistics*, <http://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/>, accessed January 11, 2024.

California Air Resources Board, *AQMIS2: Air Quality Data*, <https://www.arb.ca.gov/aqmis2/aqdsselect.php>, accessed January 11, 2024

Notes:

1. Maximum concentration is measured over the same period as the California Standards.
2. Data collected from the Santa Clarita Monitoring Station located at 22224 Placerita Canyon Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91321.
3. PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} exceedances are derived from the number of samples exceeded, not days.
4. PM₁₀ exceedances are based on State thresholds established prior to amendments adopted on June 20, 2002.
5. The federal standard for 1-hour ozone was revoked in June 2005.
6. The federal standard for average PM₁₀ was revoked in December 2006.

SENSITIVE RECEPTORS

Sensitive receptors are a land use associated with persons of a population that are more susceptible to the effects of air pollution than the general population. Sensitive receptors that are in proximity to localized sources of TACs and CO are of particular concern. The following population groups are most likely to be adversely affected by air pollution, as identified by the California Air Resources Board (CARB): children under 14, elderly over 65, athletes, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Land uses that may contain a high concentration of these sensitive population groups include residential areas, hospitals, day-care facilities, elder-care facilities, elementary schools, and parks.

Sensitive receptors that may be affected by air quality impacts associated with Project construction and operation include the following:

- Multi-family apartment uses to the west (The Madison at Town Center Apartments Community located approximately 180 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive);
- Hotel use located to the west (Hyatt Regency Valencia located approximately 175 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive);
- Multi-family uses to the west (Monticello apartments located approximately 175 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive and Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center and approximately 180 feet north of Subarea 4—McBean and Valencia);
- Multi-family apartment building (Del Monte Apartments located approximately 320 feet south of proposed Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center);
- Multi-family uses to the east (Northglen Apartments Community located approximately 300 feet east of proposed Subarea 2—Town Center East); and
- Multi-family uses to the south (Portofino Apartments Community located approximately 200 feet south of Subarea 4—McBean and Valencia).

4.2.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

The federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) was first enacted in 1970 and amended in 1977 and 1990 for the purposes of protecting and enhancing the quality of the nation's air resources to benefit public health, welfare, and productivity. The USEPA has set primary and secondary National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for O₃, CO, NO₂, SO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}, and Pb. Primary standards are those levels of air quality deemed necessary, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect public health. **Table 4.2-2** lists the current federal and State standards for regulated pollutants.

STATE

State Implementation Plan

The FCAA Amendments require that states submit and implement a State Implementation Plan (SIP) for areas not meeting air quality standards. In California, the SIP is a collection of documents that set forth the State's strategies for achieving the NAAQS and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS)—a compilation of new and previously submitted plans, programs (such as monitoring, modeling, and permitting), district rules, state regulations, and federal controls. CARB is the lead agency for all purposes related to the SIP under State law. Local air districts are responsible for preparing and implementing air quality attainment plans for pollutants for which the district is in non-compliance and the plans are incorporated into the SIP.

**TABLE 4.2-2
FEDERAL AND CALIFORNIA AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS**

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California ¹		Federal ²	
		Standard ³	Attainment Status	Standards ^{3,4}	Attainment Status
Ozone (O ₃)	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m ³)	Nonattainment	N/A	N/A ⁵
	8 Hours	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m ³)	Nonattainment	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m ³)	Nonattainment
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	24 Hours	50 µg/m ³	Nonattainment	150 µg/m ³	Attainment/Maintenance
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m ³	Nonattainment	N/A	N/A
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	24 Hours	No Separate State Standard		35 µg/m ³	Nonattainment
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m ³	Nonattainment	9.0 µg/m ³	Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8 Hours	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m ³)	Attainment	9 ppm (10 mg/m ³)	Attainment/Maintenance
	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m ³)	Attainment	35 ppm (40 mg/m ³)	Attainment/Maintenance
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂) ⁵	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m ³)	N/A	53 ppb (100 µg/m ³)	Attainment/Maintenance
	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m ³)	Attainment	100 ppb (188 µg/m ³)	Attainment/Maintenance
Lead (Pb) ^{7,8}	30 days Average	1.5 µg/m ³	Attainment	N/A	N/A
	Calendar Quarter	N/A	N/A	1.5 µg/m ³	Nonattainment
	Rolling 3-Month Average	N/A	N/A	0.15 µg/m ³	Nonattainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂) ⁶	24 Hours	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m ³)	Attainment	0.14 ppm (for certain areas)	Unclassified/Attainment
	3 Hours	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m ³)	Attainment	75 ppb (196 µg/m ³)	N/A
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	N/A	N/A	0.30 ppm (for certain areas)	Unclassified/Attainment
Visibility-Reducing Particles ⁹	8 Hours (10 a.m. to 6 p.m., PST)	Extinction coefficient = 0.23 km @ <70% RH	Unclassified	No Federal Standards	
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m ³	Attainment		
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m ³)	Unclassified		
Vinyl Chloride ⁷	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m ³)	N/A		

µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter; ppm = parts per million; ppb = parts per billion; km = kilometer(s);

RH = relative humidity; PST = Pacific Standard Time; N/A = Not Applicable

Source: California Air Resources Board, Ambient Air Quality Standards Chart, <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/aaqs2.pdf>, May 4, 2016

Notes:

- California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except 8-hour Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide (1- and 24-hour), nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and visibility reducing particles), are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.
- National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest 8-hour concentration measured at each site in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM₁₀, the 24-hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 µg/m³ is equal to or less than one. For PM_{2.5}, the 24-hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard.

**TABLE 4.2-2
FEDERAL AND CALIFORNIA AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS (CONTINUED)**

3. Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.
4. National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health.
5. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 98th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 100 ppb. Note that the national 1-hour standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the national 1-hour standard to the California standards the units can be converted from ppb to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 100 ppb is identical to 0.100 ppm.
6. On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO₂ standard was established, and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb. The 1971 SO₂ national standards (24-hour and annual) remain in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2010 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1971 standards, the 1971 standards remain in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2010 standards are approved. Note that the 1-hour national standard is in units of ppb. California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.
7. CARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as 'toxic air contaminants' with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.
8. The national standard for lead was revised on October 15, 2008, to a rolling 3-month average. The 1978 lead standard (1.5 µg/m³ as a quarterly average) remains in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2008 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1978 standard, the 1978 standard remains in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2008 standard are approved.
9. In 1989, CARB converted both the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard and the Lake Tahoe 30-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which are "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" and "extinction of 0.07 per kilometer" for the statewide and Lake Tahoe Air Basin standards, respectively.

California Clean Air Act

The California Clean Air Act (CCAA), enacted in 1988, developed the CAAQS, which are generally more stringent than the NAAQS. The CCAA requires that each local air district prepare and maintain an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) to achieve compliance with the CAAQS. These standards, included in the NAAQS in **Table 4.2-2**, apply to more pollutants than the NAAQS. In addition to the criteria pollutants, CAAQS have been established for visibility-reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride.

While the USEPA is the federal agency designated to administer air quality regulation, CARB is the State equivalent in the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA). As with the FCAA, the CCAA also designates areas within California as either attainment or nonattainment for each criteria pollutant based on whether the CAAQS have been achieved. Under the CCAA, areas designated as nonattainment are those that do not meet (or that contribute to ambient air quality in a nearby area that does not meet) the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant. Areas designated as attainment are those that meet the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant.

REGIONAL

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The SCAQMD is primarily responsible for planning, implementing, and enforcing air quality standards for the SCAB, which is a subregion within the western portion of the SCAQMD. The SCAQMD also regulates portions of the Salton Sea Air Basin and Mojave Desert Air Basin within Riverside County. The SCAB is designated non-attainment for O₃ 8-hour NAAQS and nonattainment for the PM_{2.5} and Pb NAAQS. The SCAB is also designated non-attainment for the

O₃, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} CAAQS. The SCAB is designated unclassifiable or in attainment for all other federal and State standards.

Air Quality Management Plan

The SCAQMD is required to monitor air pollutant levels to ensure that State and federal air quality standards are met and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards. Under State law, the SCAQMD is required to prepare an AQMP for pollutants for which its jurisdiction is in noncompliance.

To meet the NAAQS and CAAQS, the SCAQMD has adopted a series of AQMPs that serve as a regional blueprint to develop and implement an emissions reduction strategy that will bring the SCAB into attainment with the standards in a timely manner. The most significant air quality challenge in the SCAB is to reduce NO_x emissions to meet the ozone standard deadline for the non-Coachella Valley portion of the SCAB, as NO_x plays a critical role in the creation of O₃. The 2022 AQMP, adopted by the SCAQMD's Governing Board on December 2, 2022, includes strategies to ensure the SCAQMD does its part to further its ability to reduce NO_x emissions as expeditiously as practicable, but no later than the statutory attainment deadline of August 3, 2038, for the SCAB and August 3, 2033, for the Riverside County portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin to meet the 2015 federal O₃ standards.³ The 2022 AQMP was adopted by CARB on January 26, 2023, and CARB has submitted the 2022 AQMP and the relevant portions of the CARB Staff Report to the USEPA for inclusion in the SIP. On October 12, 2023, USEPA proposed a rule to approve a revision to the SCAQMD portion of the SIP as SIP strengthening. It should be noted that this proposed rule has not been approved yet. The 2022 AQMP builds on the measures already in place from the previous AQMPs and includes a variety of additional strategies, such as regulation, accelerated deployment of available cleaner technology, best management practices, co-benefits from existing programs, incentives, and other CCAA measures to meet the 8-hour O₃ standard. Since NO_x emissions also lead to the formation of PM_{2.5}, the NO_x reductions needed to meet the O₃ standards will likewise lead to improvement of PM_{2.5} levels and attainment of annual PM_{2.5} standards.⁴

The SCAQMD's strategy to meet the NAAQS and CAAQS distributes the responsibility for emissions reductions across federal, State, and local levels and industries. Most of these emissions are from heavy-duty trucks, ships, and other State and federally regulated mobile source emissions, the majority of which are beyond SCAQMD's control. The SCAQMD has limited control over truck emissions with rules, such as Rule 1196. The 2022 AQMP is composed of stationary and mobile source emissions reductions, including traditional regulatory control measures, incentive-based programs, co-benefits from climate programs, mobile source strategies, and reductions from federal sources (e.g., aircraft, locomotives, and ocean-going vessels). These strategies are to be implemented in partnership with CARB and USEPA. The SCAQMD will not meet the standard without significant federal action. In addition to federal action, the 2022 AQMP relies on substantial future development of advanced technologies to meet the standards, including the transition to zero- and low-emission technologies. Of the needed NO_x emissions reductions, 46 percent will come from federal actions, 34 percent from CARB actions, and 20 percent will come directly from SCAQMD actions.⁵

³ South Coast AQMD, 2022 Air Quality Management Plan, 2022.

⁴ South Coast AQMD, 2022 Air Quality Management Plan, 2022.

⁵ South Coast AQMD, 2022 Air Quality Management Plan, 2022.

The 2022 AQMP also incorporates the transportation strategy and transportation control measures from Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2020-2045 RTP/SCS). A more detailed discussion of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is included below.

CEQA Air Quality Handbook

The SCAQMD published the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, which was approved by the SCAQMD Governing Board in 1993. The *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* guides local government agencies and consultants in preparing air quality assessments for environmental documents required by CEQA. With the help of the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, local land use planners and other consultants can analyze and document how proposed and existing projects affect air quality and fulfill the requirements of the CEQA review process. The SCAQMD is in the process of developing an *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook* to replace the current *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*.

Rules and Regulations

The SCAQMD has adopted several rules and regulations to regulate sources of air pollution in the SCAB and help achieve air quality standards for land use development projects. The following rules apply to the Project:

- Rule 402 – Nuisance: This rule states that a person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material, which cause 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.
- Rule 403 – Fugitive Dust: This rule requires projects to prevent, reduce, or mitigate fugitive dust emissions from a site. Rule 403 restricts visible fugitive dust to a project property line, restricts the net PM₁₀ emissions to less than 50 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), and restricts the tracking out of bulk materials onto public roads. Additionally, projects must utilize one or more of the best available control measures (identified in the tables within the rule). Best available control measures may include adding freeboard to haul vehicles, covering loose material on haul vehicles, watering, using chemical stabilizers, and/or ceasing all activities. Finally, a contingency plan may be required if so determined by the USEPA.
- Rule 445 – Wood-Burning Devices: This rule prohibits installation of wood-burning devices into any new development.
- Rule 1113 – Architectural Coatings: This rule requires manufacturers, distributors, and end users of architectural and industrial maintenance coatings to reduce VOC emissions from the use of these coatings, primarily by placing limits on the VOC content of various coating categories.
- Rule 1138 – Control of Emissions from Restaurant Operations: This rule specifies PM and VOC emissions and odor control requirements for commercial cooking operations that use chain-driven charbroilers to cook meat.

- Rule 1146.2 – Emissions of Oxides of Nitrogen from Large Water Heaters and Small Boilers and Process Heaters: This rule requires manufacturers, distributors, retailers, refurbishers, installers, and operators of new and existing units to reduce NO_x emissions from natural gas-fired water heaters, boilers, and process heaters as defined in this rule.
- Rule 1186 – PM₁₀ Emissions from Paved and Unpaved Roads, and Livestock Operations: This rule applies to owners and operators of paved and unpaved roads and livestock operations. The rule is intended to reduce PM₁₀ emissions by requiring the cleanup of material deposited onto paved roads, use of certified street sweeping equipment, and treatment of high-use unpaved roads (see also Rule 403).
- Rule 1403 – Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities: This rule requires owners and operators of any demolition or renovation activity and the associated disturbance of asbestos-containing materials, any asbestos storage facility, or any active waste disposal site to implement work practice requirements to limit asbestos emissions from building demolition and renovation activities, including the removal and associated disturbance of asbestos-containing materials.
- Rule 1470 – Requirements for Stationary Diesel-Fueled Internal Combustion and Other Compression Ignition Engines: This rule applies to stationary compression ignition engines greater than 50 brake horsepower and sets limits on emissions and operating hours. In general, new stationary emergency standby diesel-fueled engines greater than 50 brake horsepower are not permitted to operate more than 50 hours per year for maintenance and testing.

Southern California Association of Governments 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2020-2045 RTP/SCS)

SCAG is the regional planning agency that implements the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS 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 coordinates with various air quality and transportation stakeholders in Southern California to ensure compliance with the federal and State air quality requirements. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 40460, SCAG has the responsibility of preparing and approving the portions of the AQMP relating to the regional demographic projections and integrated regional land use, housing, employment, and transportation programs, measures, and strategies. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS includes transportation programs, measures, and strategies generally designed to reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT), which are contained in the 2022 AQMP. The SCAQMD combines its portion of the AQMP with measures prepared by SCAG.⁶ The Transportation Control Measures, included as Appendix IV-C of the 2022 AQMP, are based on the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS.

The 2022 AQMP forecasts the 2037 emissions inventories “with growth” based on the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. The region is projected to see a 12 percent growth in population, a 17 percent growth in housing units, an 11 percent growth in employment, and a 5 percent growth in VMT between

⁶ South Coast AQMD, 2022 Air Quality Management Plan, 2022.

2018 and 2037. Despite regional growth in the past, air quality has improved substantially over the years, primarily because of air quality control programs at the local, State, and federal levels.⁷

LOCAL

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the Santa Clarita General Plan includes the following goals, objectives, and policies related to air quality that would be applicable to the Proposed Project:⁸

Air Quality

Goal CO 7: Clean air to protect human health and support healthy ecosystems.

- Objective CO 7.1: Reduce air pollution from mobile sources.
 - Policy 7.1.1: Through the mixed land use patterns and multi-modal circulation policies set forth in the Land Use and Circulation Elements, limit air pollution from transportation sources.
 - Policy 7.1.2: Support the use of alternative fuel vehicles.
 - Policy 7.1.3: Support alternative travel modes and new technologies, including infrastructure to support alternative fuel vehicles, as they become commercially available.
- Objective CO 7.2: Apply guidelines to protect sensitive receptors from sources of air pollution as developed by CARB, where appropriate.
 - Policy CO 7.2.1: Ensure adequate spacing of sensitive land use from the following sources of air pollution: high traffic freeways and roads; distribution centers; truck stops; chrome plating facilities; dry cleaners using perchloroethylene; and large gas stations, as recommended by CARB.
- Objective CO 7.3: Coordinate with other agencies to plan for and implement programs for improving air quality in the South Coast Air Basin.
 - Policy CO 7.3.1: Coordinate with local, regional, State, and federal agencies to develop and implement regional air quality policies and programs.

4.2.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project on air quality are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to air quality if it would:

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan;

⁷ South Coast AQMD, 2022 Air Quality Management Plan, 2022.

⁸ City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element, June 2011.

- 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;
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; and/or
- Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

To assist in answering the threshold questions, the City utilizes the thresholds of significance established by the SCAQMD.

REGIONAL THRESHOLDS

The SCAQMD's numeric significance thresholds for impacts to regional air quality are presented in **Table 4.2-3**. There are separate thresholds for short-term construction and long-term operational emissions. A project with daily emissions below these thresholds is considered to have a less-than-significant effect on regional air quality from both a direct and cumulative impact standpoint.

**TABLE 4.2-3
SOUTH COAST AQMD AIR QUALITY SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS**

Phase	Pollutant (pounds per day)					
	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Construction	75	100	550	150	150	55
Operational	55	55	550	150	150	55

Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District, *South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds*, April 2019.

Notes: ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_x = nitrous oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_x = sulfur oxides;

PM₁₀ = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less; PM_{2.5} = particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less

LOCALIZED SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The SCAQMD has also developed localized significance thresholds (LST) as a tool to assist lead agencies in analyzing localized air quality impacts to sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the Project. The SCAQMD's LST Methodology outlines how to analyze localized impacts from common pollutants of concern, including NO₂, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}.⁹ Localized air quality impacts would occur if pollutant concentrations at sensitive receptors exceeded applicable NAAQS or CAAQS, as shown in Table 4.2-2.

To minimize efforts, the SCAQMD developed mass rate lookup tables as a simple screening procedure. If a project's on-site emissions do not exceed the screening levels for any pollutant, it can be concluded that the project would not cause or contribute to an adverse localized air quality impact. Screening levels are provided for various distances (i.e., 82 feet [25 meters], 164 feet [50 meters], 328 feet [100 meters], 656 feet [200 meters], and 1,640 feet [500 meters]) between the project boundary and the nearest sensitive receptor and various project site acreages (i.e., 1, 2, and 5 acres).

The Project Site is in SRA 13 (Santa Clarita Valley). The nearest sensitive receptors would be located approximately 175 feet (53 meters) to the west of the Project Site; therefore, LSTs for 50 meters were conservatively used. While specific construction activities are not currently proposed

⁹ South Coast Air Quality Management District, *Finalized Localized Significance Threshold Methodology*, July 2008.

or precisely known, the analysis conservatively uses the most stringent LST screening levels, which are those for one acre per day of construction disturbance. The operational LST analysis for the Project is qualitative. Applicable LST screening levels are shown in **Table 4.2-4**.

TABLE 4.2-4
SOUTH COAST AQMD LST SCREENING LEVELS

Pollutant	Construction Mass Daily Emissions Screening Criteria (pounds/day)
NO _x /NO ₂	115
CO	879
PM ₁₀	12
PM _{2.5}	4

Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District, *Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology*, Table C-1, 2006-2008 Thresholds for Construction and Operation with Gradual Conversion of NO_x to NO₂, revised October 21, 2009.

Notes: NO_x/NO₂ = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; PM₁₀ = particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter;

PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter

Source Receptor Area 13 at 164 feet (50 meters) for 1-acre during construction and 5-acre during operation.

TOXIC AIR CONTAMINANTS THRESHOLDS

To determine whether a proposed project would cause a significant health risk effect on the environment, the impact of the project must be determined by examining the types and levels of air toxics generated and the associated impacts on factors that affect air quality. While the final determination of significance thresholds is within the purview of the lead agency pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines, the SCAQMD recommends that the following air pollution thresholds be used by lead agencies in determining whether a project results in potentially significant impacts. If the lead agency finds that a proposed project has the potential to exceed the following air pollution thresholds, the project's impact should be considered significant.

- Cancer Risk: Emit carcinogenic or toxic contaminants that exceed the maximum individual cancer risk of 10 in one million.
- Non-Cancer Risk: Emit toxic contaminants that exceed the maximum hazard quotient of 1.0.

Cancer risk is expressed in terms of expected incremental incidence per million population. The SCAQMD has established an incidence rate of 10 persons per one million as the maximum acceptable incremental cancer risk due to DPM exposure. This threshold serves to determine whether a given project has a potentially significant development-specific and cumulative impact.

The SCAQMD has also established non-carcinogenic risk parameters for use in Health Risk Assessments (HRAs). Noncarcinogenic risks are quantified by calculating a "hazard index," expressed as the ratio between the ambient pollutant concentration and its toxicity or Reference Exposure Level (REL). An REL is a concentration at or below, which health effects are not likely to occur. A hazard index of less than one (1.0) means that adverse health effects are not expected. Therefore, non-carcinogenic exposures of less than 1.0 are considered less than significant.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Based on SCAQMD guidance, individual construction projects that exceed the SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would also cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which SCAB is in non-attainment. As

discussed in the SCAQMD's White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution:

As Lead Agency, the AQMD uses the same significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts for all environmental topics analyzed in an Environmental Assessment or EIR... 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.¹⁰

The cumulative analysis of air quality impacts in this EIR follows the SCAQMD's guidance such that construction or operational Project emissions will be considered cumulatively considerable if Project-specific emissions exceed an applicable recommended significance threshold established by the SCAQMD.

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The Proposed Project would not result in a significant impact related to the following significance threshold, as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**), and, therefore, is not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.2(d): *Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.*

4.2.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to air quality considered the potential future improvements in the Project area which are envisioned as creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the Project Site which include programmable gathering space and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children's playgrounds, and parks.

Criteria pollutants for Project construction and operation were calculated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) version 2022.¹ The methodology for construction and operation emission estimates for the Project are discussed below.

¹⁰ South Coast Air Quality Management District, White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution, Appendix D, August 2003.

CONSTRUCTION

Project construction would primarily generate temporary criteria pollutants from construction equipment operation on-site and construction worker vehicle trips to and from the Project Site, and from construction material deliveries to and from the Project Site. Construction input data for CalEEMod include, but are not limited to, (1) the anticipated start and finish dates of construction activity; (2) inventories of construction equipment to be used; and (3) areas to be excavated and graded. The Project is a planning document and does not propose construction activities, and although the Specific Plan contemplates three different potential buildout concepts, the exact details of future construction activities are unknown at the time of preparation of this EIR. Nevertheless, to assess the potential air quality impacts from construction activities of future projects building out the proposed Specific Plan, a worst-case construction condition was assumed and modeled.

Construction emissions were modeled in CalEEMod to start in 2025. The quantity, duration, and the intensity of construction activity influences the amount of construction emissions and their related pollutant concentrations that occur at any one time. The emission forecasts reflect conservative assumptions where a relatively large amount of construction is occurring in a relatively intensive manner. If construction is delayed or occurs over a longer period, criteria pollutant emissions would be reduced because of (1) a more modern and cleaner-burning construction equipment fleet mix in future years than assumed in the CalEEMod, and/or (2) a less intensive buildout schedule (total annual emissions occurring over a greater number of days). Based on the existing condition of the site and proposed land uses, the worst-case construction condition was assumed to involve the demolition, grading, and building construction phases of three separate building projects occurring simultaneously, and building construction and architectural coating phases occurring simultaneously. The following assumptions were made for each phase, and the CalEEMod default phase length was assumed:

- Demolition (20 days): 150,000 square feet of building to be demolished on a 6-acre site.
- Grading (20 days): 6-acre site; although the site is relatively flat and soil would most likely be balanced on-site, as a worst-case scenario, 10,000 cubic yards of soil export was assumed.
- Building Construction (230 days): 225 residential units totaling 175,000 square feet and 1,200 parking spaces on a 6-acre site.
- Architectural Coating (20 days): painting of 225 residential units totaling 175,000 square feet.

Construction emissions were quantified by estimating the types and quantity of equipment that would be used on-site during each construction phase, as provided by the model defaults generated from the above assumptions. CalEEMod also estimates off-site emissions from worker, vendor, and hauling truck trips. The number of worker and vendor trips were based on CalEEMod defaults, and the hauling truck trips were based on the demolished building area and soil export assumptions. The default trip lengths were used for all construction trips.

OPERATION

Operational sources of criteria pollutant emissions include area, energy, and mobile sources, which are further discussed below. CalEEMod modeling was conducted for existing (baseline), low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios. The total existing (baseline) emissions were deducted from the total emissions of each buildout scenario to determine the Project-generated emissions.

Area Sources

Emissions associated with area sources include hearths, consumer products, landscape maintenance, and architectural coating. Area source emissions were calculated using standard emission rates from CARB, USEPA, SCAQMD, and CalEEMod model defaults. Per SCAQMD Rule 445, wood-burning devices are prohibited in new development, and therefore only natural gas hearths were assumed to be installed.

Energy Sources

The Project would be served by Southern California Edison (SCE) and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). Emissions from energy sources are primarily generated by natural gas use. The emissions factors for natural gas combustion are based on USEPA's AP-42 (Compilation of Air Pollutant Emissions Factors). Emissions from electricity use are not included in the air quality analysis as they only apply to greenhouse gas emissions since electricity generation is an indirect emission generated off-site and, therefore, not relevant for local and regional air quality conditions. The annual natural gas consumption was provided by model defaults generated from the Project's buildout land use types and sizes.

Mobile Sources

Mobile source emissions are estimated by multiplying the Project's total VMT by the vehicle emission factors. As provided in **Appendix B** of this Draft EIR, under the existing (baseline) condition, the Project Site generates 20,635 trips per day and 188,068 miles of VMT per day. Under the low buildout condition, the Project would generate 32,915 trips per day and 322,406 miles of VMT per day. Under the full buildout condition, the Project would generate 37,666 trips per day and 383,296 miles of VMT per day. Under the high buildout condition, the Project would generate 41,050 trips per day and 424,647 miles of VMT per day.

4.2.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

The Project does not propose design features specifically related to air quality.

4.2.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.2(a): *Would the Project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

IMPACT ANALYSIS

On December 2, 2022, the SCAQMD Governing Board adopted the 2022 AQMP. The 2022 AQMP incorporates the latest scientific and technical information and planning assumptions, including the latest applicable growth assumptions, updated emission inventory methodologies

for various source categories. Additionally, the 2022 AQMP utilized information and data from SCAG and its 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. According to the SCAQMD's *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, projects must be analysed for consistency with two main criteria, as discussed below.

Criterion 1:

With respect to the first criterion, SCAQMD methodologies require that an air quality analysis for a project include forecasts of project emissions in relation to contributing to air quality violations and delay of attainment.

a) Would the project result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations?

Since the consistency criteria identified under the first criterion pertain to pollutant concentrations, rather than to total regional emissions, an analysis of a project's pollutant emissions relative to localized pollutant concentrations associated with the CAAQS and NAAQS is used as the basis for evaluating project consistency. As detailed below under Threshold 4.2(b), the emissions associated with future development in the Specific Plan area would cause potential significant and unavoidable air quality impacts during operation, even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1**. Given the volume of air pollutants attributable to buildout of the Specific Plan area, the Proposed Project could potentially cause an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations and delay the attainment of air quality standard or interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.

b) Would the project cause or contribute to new air quality violations?

As discussed under Threshold 4.2(b), the Proposed Project would cause potential significant and unavoidable air quality impacts during operation, even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1**. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have the potential to contribute to a violation of the ambient air quality standards.

c) Would the project delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP?

As discussed in Threshold 4.2(c), the Proposed Project would potentially result in significant and unavoidable impacts regarding localized concentrations during operation, even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1**. As such, the Proposed Project would have the potential to delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or 2022 AQMP emissions reductions.

Criterion 2:

With respect to the second criterion for determining consistency with SCAQMD and SCAG air quality policies, it is important to recognize that air quality planning within SCAB focuses on attainment of ambient air quality standards at the earliest feasible date. Projections for achieving air quality goals are based on assumptions regarding population, housing, and growth trends. Thus, the SCAQMD's second criterion for determining project consistency focuses on whether the project exceeds the assumptions utilized in preparing the forecasts presented in the 2022 AQMP. Determining whether a project exceeds the assumptions reflected in the 2022 AQMP involves the evaluation of the following criteria.

a) *Would the project be consistent with the population, housing, and employment growth projections utilized in the preparation of the AQMP?*

The population, housing, and employment forecasts, which are adopted by SCAG's Regional Council, are based on the local plans and policies applicable to the Specific Plan Area, which are used by SCAG in all phases of implementation and review. The Project Site is zoned Regional Commercial (CR) and likewise designated Regional Commercial (CR) by the City's General Plan, which both allow for a wide range of commercial and residential uses. Therefore, the Proposed Project is consistent with the General Plan land use designation. Although buildout of the proposed Town Center Specific Plan is anticipated to include residential uses and thus is expected to result in population growth, the growth has been incorporated in SCAG's projections and the SCAQMD has incorporated these projections into the 2022 AQMP.

As such, the Proposed Project is considered consistent with the General Plan, and is consistent with the types, intensity, and patterns of land use envision for the site vicinity. The population, housing, and employment forecasts, which are adopted by SCAG's Regional Council, are based on the local plans and policies applicable to the City. As the SCAQMD has incorporated these same projections into the 2022 AQMP, it can be concluded that the proposed Project would be consistent with the 2022 AQMP.

b) *Would the project implement all feasible air quality mitigation measures?*

The Proposed Project would be required to comply with applicable emission reduction measures identified by the SCAQMD, including Rule 403, which requires control of excessive fugitive dust emissions by regular watering or other dust prevention measures, and Rule 1113, which regulates the ROG content of paint. As such, the Proposed Project meets this AQMP consistency criterion.

c) *Would the project be consistent with the land use planning strategies set forth in the AQMP?*

The AQMP relied upon SCAG's RTP/SCS for land use planning strategies. As discussed in **Table 4.6-8** in **Section 4.6, Greenhouse Gas Emissions**, of this Draft EIR, the proposed Project would be consistent with SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. In summary, the proposed Project would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center, thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. Therefore, although the proposed Project would accommodate an increase in residential units within the Specific Plan Area, the developments would be consistent with the land use planning strategies. The Proposed Project would be consistent with this criterion.

In conclusion, the determination of 2022 AQMP consistency is primarily concerned with the long-term influence of a project on air quality in the SCAB. Implementation of the proposed Project would have the potential to contribute to a violation of the ambient air quality standards, although the Project would be consistent with the population, housing, and employment growth projections utilized in the preparation of the AQMP. Thus, impacts associated with compliance with the 2022 AQMP would be significant and unavoidable.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Refer to **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1** under Threshold 4.2(b) below.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The Proposed Project would be inconsistent with the SCAQMD AQMP as buildout of the Proposed Project would cumulatively contribute to the non-attainment designations of the SCAB. Incorporation of **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1** into future development projects during operation described under Threshold 4.2(b), below, would contribute to reduced criteria air pollutant emissions associated with buildout of the Proposed Project. In addition, goals and policies included in the proposed Specific Plan would promote increased capacity for alternative transportation modes and implementation of transportation demand management strategies. However, since implementation of the Proposed Project would introduce land use intensification in the Specific Plan Area, no mitigation measures are available that would reduce total air quality emissions from buildout of the Proposed Project to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, air quality impacts related to the implementation of the AQMP would remain significant and unavoidable.

Threshold 4.2(b): *Would the Project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard?*

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Construction

Project construction activities would generate air pollutant emissions. **Table 4.2-5** summarizes the estimated maximum daily emissions of VOC, NO_x, CO, SO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. As shown, emissions from Project worst-case construction condition activities would not exceed the SCAQMD regional thresholds. Furthermore, the Project would be required to comply with SCAQMD rules and regulations to control fugitive dust emissions, which have been incorporated in the modeling. Because the Project's emissions are below applicable SCAQMD significance thresholds, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment, and regional construction impacts would be less than significant.

**TABLE 4.2-5
CONSTRUCTION CRITERIA POLLUTANT EMISSIONS**

Emissions Source	Maximum Emissions (pounds/day) ¹					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
2025 Summer Emissions	2.78	15.72	40.15	0.05	6.11	1.78
2025 Winter Emissions	57.97	67.81	80.90	0.18	17.65	5.88
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	57.97	67.81	80.90	0.18	17.65	5.88
<i>South Coast AQMD Regional Thresholds</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>550</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>55</i>
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis

Notes: VOC = volatile organic compounds; NO_x = nitrogen oxide; CO = carbon monoxide; SO₂ = sulfur dioxide;

PM₁₀ = particulate matter 10 micrometers in diameter or less; PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2022.1, as recommended by the SCAQMD. Modeling assumptions include compliance with SCAQMD Rule 403 which requires: properly maintain mobile and other construction equipment; replace ground cover in disturbed areas quickly; water exposed surfaces twice daily; cover stockpiles with tarps; water all haul roads twice daily; and limit speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.

Operation

Operational emissions currently exist with the developments on-site. **Table 4.2-6** summarizes the emissions from the existing (baseline) condition.

**TABLE 4.2-6
EXISTING (BASELINE) OPERATIONAL CRITERIA POLLUTANT EMISSIONS**

Emission Source	Maximum Emissions (pounds per day) ^{1,2}					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer Emissions						
Mobile	78.41	67.51	701.78	1.56	134.87	35.02
Area	58.69	0.72	85.14	0.01	0.15	0.11
Energy	0.59	10.70	8.99	0.06	0.81	0.81
Total Summer Emissions	137.69	78.93	795.91	1.63	135.83	35.94
Winter Emissions						
Mobile	77.40	73.78	646.53	1.50	134.87	35.02
Area	44.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Energy	0.59	10.70	8.99	0.06	0.81	0.81
Total Winter Emissions	122.72	84.48	655.52	1.56	135.68	35.83

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis

Notes: VOC = volatile organic compounds; NO_x = nitrogen oxide; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_x = sulfur dioxide;

PM₁₀ = particulate matter 10 micrometers in diameter or less; PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2022.1, as recommended by SCAQMD.

2. The numbers may not add up precisely due to rounding.

Operational emissions generated by both stationary and mobile sources of the Project would result from normal daily activities on-site after construction is complete. **Table 4.2-7**, **Table 4.2-8**, and **Table 4.2-9** summarize the Project's operational emissions generated by area sources, energy sources, and mobile sources, and the net increase from existing (baseline) conditions under the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively.

As shown in **Table 4.2-7**, the net increase of operational emissions from the Project under the low buildout scenario would not exceed the regional thresholds of significance established by the SCAQMD for criteria pollutants. As shown in **Table 4.2-8**, the net increase of operational emissions from the Project under the full buildout scenario would not exceed the regional thresholds of significance established by the SCAQMD, except for VOC. As shown in **Table 4.2-9**, the net increase of operational emissions from the Project under the high buildout scenario would not exceed the regional thresholds of significance established by the SCAQMD, except for VOC and PM₁₀. Therefore, because Project emissions would exceed the regional thresholds under the full buildout and high buildout scenarios, the Project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutants for which the SCAB is non-attainment under the NAAQS or the CAAQS, and, as such, regional operational impacts would be potentially significant.

However, as a Specific Plan, the Project would not include any direct demolition or development. Future individual development projects within the Specific Plan would be required to comply with **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1**, which requires implementation of energy efficiency and transportation measures to reduce emissions to the extent feasible. As no mitigation measures are feasible at the Specific Plan level to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, thus, the impact would be significant and unavoidable.

**TABLE 4.2-7
LOW BUILDOUT OPERATIONAL CRITERIA POLLUTANT EMISSIONS**

Emission Source	Maximum Emissions (pounds per day) ^{1,2}					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer Emissions						
Mobile	76.83	50.84	728.31	2.08	229.53	58.88
Area	112.94	22.93	196.75	0.15	1.95	1.89
Energy	1.07	19.11	14.40	0.12	1.47	1.47
Total Summer Emissions	190.83	92.88	939.46	2.34	232.95	62.24
Net Increase From Existing Conditions	53.15	13.95	143.55	0.71	97.11	26.30
<i>SCAQMD Thresholds</i>	55	55	550	150	150	55
<i>Exceed Threshold?</i>	No	No	No	No	No	No
Winter Emissions						
Mobile	76.64	55.53	664.98	1.99	229.53	58.88
Area	88.43	21.29	9.06	0.14	1.72	1.72
Energy	1.07	19.11	14.40	0.12	1.47	1.47
Total Winter Emissions	166.13	95.94	688.43	2.24	232.72	62.07
Net Increase From Existing Conditions	43.41	11.45	32.91	0.68	97.04	26.24
<i>SCAQMD Thresholds</i>	55	55	550	150	150	55
<i>Exceed Threshold?</i>	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis

Notes: VOC = volatile organic compounds; NO_x = nitrogen oxide; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_x = sulfur dioxide;

PM₁₀ = particulate matter 10 micrometers in diameter or less; PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2022.1, as recommended by South Coast AQMD.

2. The numbers may not add up precisely due to rounding.

**TABLE 4.2-8
FULL BUILDOUT OPERATIONAL CRITERIA POLLUTANT EMISSIONS**

Emission Source	Maximum Emissions (pounds per day) ^{1,2}					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer Emissions						
Mobile	88.82	59.68	860.62	2.47	272.87	70.00
Area	135.19	35.34	247.45	0.22	2.94	2.88
Energy	1.22	21.80	15.72	0.13	1.69	1.69
Total Summer Emissions	225.23	116.82	1123.78	2.83	277.50	74.56
Net Increase From Existing Conditions	87.54	37.89	327.88	1.20	141.66	38.62
<i>SCAQMD Thresholds</i>	55	55	550	150	150	55
<i>Exceed Threshold?</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Winter Emissions						
Mobile	88.58	65.20	784.35	2.37	272.87	70.00
Area	106.76	33.28	14.16	0.21	2.69	2.69
Energy	1.22	21.80	15.72	0.13	1.69	1.69
Total Winter Emissions	196.56	120.27	814.23	2.71	277.25	74.37
Net Increase From Existing Conditions	73.84	35.79	158.71	1.15	141.57	38.54
<i>SCAQMD Thresholds</i>	55	55	550	150	150	55
<i>Exceed Threshold?</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis

Notes: VOC = volatile organic compounds; NO_x = nitrogen oxide; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_x = sulfur dioxide;

PM₁₀ = particulate matter 10 micrometers in diameter or less; PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2022.1, as recommended by South Coast AQMD.

2. The numbers may not add up precisely due to rounding.

**TABLE 4.2-9
HIGH BUILDOUT OPERATIONAL CRITERIA POLLUTANT EMISSIONS**

Emission Source	Maximum Emissions (pounds per day) ^{1,2}					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer Emissions						
Mobile	97.23	65.77	951.04	2.73	302.31	77.55
Area	148.93	40.55	275.03	0.26	3.36	3.29
Energy	1.33	23.67	16.90	0.14	1.83	1.83
Total Summer Emissions	247.49	129.99	1242.97	3.14	307.50	82.68
Net Increase From Existing Conditions	109.80	51.06	447.06	1.51	171.67	46.73
SCAQMD Thresholds	55	55	550	150	150	55
Exceed Threshold?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Winter Emissions						
Mobile	96.96	71.85	866.08	2.62	302.31	77.55
Area	117.81	38.26	16.28	0.24	3.09	3.09
Energy	1.33	23.67	16.90	0.14	1.83	1.83
Total Winter Emissions	216.09	133.78	899.27	3.01	307.24	82.48
Net Increase From Existing Conditions	93.37	49.30	243.75	1.45	171.55	46.64
SCAQMD Thresholds	55	55	550	150	150	55
Exceed Threshold?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis

Notes: VOC = volatile organic compounds; NO_x = nitrogen oxide; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_x = sulfur dioxide;

PM₁₀ = particulate matter 10 micrometers in diameter or less; PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2022.1, as recommended by South Coast AQMD.

2. The numbers may not add up precisely due to rounding.

Air Quality Health Impacts

Adverse health effects induced by criteria pollutant emissions are highly dependent on a multitude of interconnected variables (e.g., cumulative concentrations, local meteorology and atmospheric conditions, and the number and character of exposed individual [e.g., age, gender]). In particular, O₃ precursors, VOCs and NO_x, affect air quality on a regional scale. Health effects related to O₃ are therefore the product of emissions generated by numerous sources throughout a region. Existing models have limited sensitivity to small changes in criteria pollutant concentrations, and, as such, translating project-generated criteria pollutants to specific health effects or additional days of nonattainment would produce meaningless results. In other words, the Project's increases in regional air pollution from criteria air pollutants would have nominal or negligible impacts on human health.

Further, as noted in the Brief of Amicus Curiae by the SCAQMD,¹¹ the SCAQMD acknowledged it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to quantify health impacts of criteria pollutants for various reasons including modeling limitations as well as where in the atmosphere air pollutants interact and form. Furthermore, as noted in the Brief of Amicus Curiae by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD),¹² the SJVAPCD has acknowledged that currently

¹¹ South Coast Air Quality Management District, Application of the South Coast Air Quality Management District for Leave to File Brief of Amicus Curiae in Support of Neither Party and Brief of Amicus Curiae. In the Supreme Court of California. Sierra Club, Revive the San Joaquin, and League of Women Voters of Fresno v. County of Fresno, 2014.

¹² San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Application for Leave to File Brief of Amicus Curiae Brief of San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District in Support of Defendant and Respondent, County of Fresno

available modeling tools are not equipped to provide a meaningful analysis of the correlation between an individual development project's air emissions and specific human health impacts.

The SCAQMD acknowledges that health effects quantification from O₃, as an example is correlated with the increases in ambient level of O₃ in the air (concentration) that an individual person breathes. SCAQMD's Brief of Amicus Curiae states that it would take a large amount of additional emissions to cause a modeled increase in ambient O₃ levels over the entire region. The SCAQMD states that based on their own modeling in the SCAQMD's *2012 Air Quality Management Plan*, a reduction of 432 tons (864,000 pounds) per day of NO_x and a reduction of 187 tons (374,000 pounds) per day of VOCs would reduce O₃ levels at highest monitored site by only nine parts per billion. As such, the SCAQMD concludes that it is not currently possible to accurately quantify O₃-related health impacts caused by NO_x or VOC emissions from relatively small projects (defined as projects with regional scope) due to photochemistry and regional model limitations. As such, since the Project would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds during construction, and the operational emissions would be orders of magnitude lower than 432 tons for NO_x and 187 tons for VOC, the Project would have a less than significant impact for air quality health impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURES

MM-AQ-1: To reduce emissions at the site-specific level, prior to issuance of a building permit for each project implementing the Town Center Specific Plan and to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita, the applicant must develop and commit to implementing a list of project-specific/building-specific emission reduction features. Such features must include, without limitation:

- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program Plans will be required by the following projects:
 - Multi-family residential developments with 100 or more units
 - Any mixed use or commercial project that generates 50 full-time employees or more.

TDM Program Plans must meet the satisfaction of the City's Traffic and Transportation Planning Division (or future iteration thereof) prior to the issuance of a building permit.

- Consideration of energy-efficient design features beyond those required by Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and the CALGreen Code, as adopted by the Santa Clarita Municipal Code.
- Consideration of electric landscape maintenance equipment.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Construction activities associated with future developments under the Proposed Project would not generate short-term emissions that exceed the SCAQMD's significance thresholds or

and Real Party In Interest and Respondent, Friant Ranch, L.P. In the Supreme Court of California. Sierra Club, Revive the San Joaquin, and League of Women Voters of Fresno v. County of Fresno, 2014.

cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the SCAB, and therefore the impact would be less than significant.

Buildout of the Proposed Project would generate long-term emissions that may exceed SCAQMD's regional significance thresholds and cumulatively contribute to the non-attainment designations of the SCAB. As such, **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1**, in addition to the consistency with the goals and policies of the proposed Specific Plan related to creating a mixed-use pedestrian-friendly Town Center within a transit rich area and the corresponding reduction in VMT, would reduce air pollutant emissions to the extent feasible. However, since implementation of the Proposed Project would introduce land use intensification in the Specific Plan Area, it cannot be determined with certainty that **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1** would reduce impacts below SCAQMD's thresholds in all cases. As a result, and given the total volume of air pollutants attributable to buildout of the proposed Project, operational impacts related to the increase of criteria pollutants for which the SCAB is non-attainment are conservatively considered significant and unavoidable.

Threshold 4.2(c): *Would the Project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

IMPACT ANALYSIS

As identified above, sensitive receptors that may be affected by air quality impacts associated with Project construction and operation include the following:

- Multi-family apartment uses to the west (The Madison at Town Center Apartments Community located approximately 180 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive);
- Hotel use located to the west (Hyatt Regency Valencia located approximately 175 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive);
- Multi-family uses to the west (Monticello apartments located approximately 175 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive and Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center and approximately 180 feet north of Subarea 4—McBean and Valencia);
- Multi-family apartment building (Del Monte Apartments located approximately 320 feet south of proposed Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center);
- Multi-family uses to the east (Northglen Apartments Community located approximately 300 feet east of proposed Subarea 2—Town Center East); and
- Multi-family uses to the south (Portofino Apartments Community located approximately 200 feet south of Subarea 4—McBean and Valencia).

Localized Significance Thresholds

Construction

The SCAQMD guidance on applying CalEEMod to LSTs specifies the number of acres a particular piece of equipment would likely disturb per day.¹³ The SCAQMD provides LST thresholds for one-, two-, and five-acre site disturbance areas; SCAQMD but not for projects over five acres. While specific construction activities are not currently proposed or precisely known, the analysis conservatively uses the most stringent LST screening levels, which are those for one acre per day of construction disturbance. Further, the nearest sensitive receptors would be located approximately 175 feet (53 meters) to the west of the Project Site. LST thresholds are provided for distances to sensitive receptors of 25, 50, 100, 200, and 500 meters. Therefore, the LST values for 50 meters were used.

Table 4.2-10 shows the localized construction-related emissions. It is noted that the localized emissions presented in **Table 4.2-10** are less than those in **Table 4.2-5** because localized emissions include only on-site emissions (i.e., from construction equipment and fugitive dust) and do not include off-site emissions (i.e., from the worker, vendor, and hauling trips). As seen in **Table 4.2-10**, emissions would not exceed the LST screening level for SRA 13 (Santa Clarita Valley). Construction LST impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

TABLE 4.2-10
ON-SITE CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS

Construction Phase	Pollutant (pounds/day) ¹			
	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Demolition	22.20	19.92	5.69	1.57
Grading	16.27	17.91	2.57	1.56
Building Construction	1.13	10.44	0.43	0.40
Maximum Total Daily Emissions^{2,3}	48.91	50.88	8.69	3.52
<i>Localized Significance Threshold⁴</i>	115	879	12	4
Thresholds Exceeded?	No	No	No	No

Notes:

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod, version 2022.1.
2. Highest levels of emissions are when demolition, grading, and building construction phases occur simultaneously. Totals may be off due to rounding.
3. The reduction/credits for construction emissions are based on adjustments to CalEEMod and are required by the SCAQMD Rules. The adjustments applied in CalEEMod include the following: properly maintain mobile and other construction equipment; replace the ground cover in disturbed areas quickly; water exposed surfaces three times daily; cover stockpiles with tarps; and limit speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.
4. The Localized Significance Threshold was determined using Appendix C of the SCAQMD *Final Localized Significant Threshold Methodology* guidance document for pollutants NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. The Localized Significance Threshold was based on the anticipated daily acreage disturbance for construction (the thresholds for one-acre were used), the LST thresholds of 50 meters based on the distance to sensitive receptors, and the source receptor area (Santa Clarita Valley).

Operation

According to SCAQMD localized significance threshold methodology, LSTs would apply to the operational phase of a proposed project if the project includes stationary sources or attracts mobile sources that may spend extended periods queuing and idling at the site (e.g., warehouse

¹³ The number of acres represent the total acres traversed by grading equipment. To properly grade a piece of land, multiple passes with equipment may be required. The disturbance acreage is based on the equipment list and days of the grading phase according to the anticipated maximum number of acres a given piece of equipment can pass over in an 8-hour workday.

or transfer facilities). No industrial uses are proposed in the Specific Plan area. Therefore, operational LSTs would not apply to the developments associated with the proposed Project. As such, the impacts would be less than significant.

Localized Air Quality Health Impacts

Construction

The construction activities induced by the Proposed Project are anticipated to involve the operation of diesel-powered equipment, which would emit DPM. In 1998, CARB identified diesel exhaust as a TAC. Cancer health risks associated with exposures to diesel exhaust typically are associated with chronic exposure, in which a 30-year exposure period often is assumed. Construction of the individual development projects within the Specific Plan area would be required to comply with the California Code Regulations (CCR), Title 13, Sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485, which minimize the idling time of construction equipment either by shutting it off when not in use or by reducing the time of idling to no more than five minutes. Implementation of these regulations would reduce the amount of DPM emissions from the construction of the development projects under the proposed Project.

There are sensitive receptors located near the Specific Plan area. However, health impacts on sensitive receptors associated with exposure to DPM from construction of developments projects associated with the proposed Project are anticipated to be less than significant because construction activities of individual development projects are expected to occur well below the 30-year exposure period used in health risk assessments. Additionally, emissions would be short-term and intermittent in nature, and therefore would not generate TAC emissions at high enough exposure concentrations to represent a health hazard. Therefore, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project are not anticipated to result in an elevated cancer or other health risk to nearby sensitive receptors and the impact would be less than significant.

Operations

The proposed Project would involve new developments including residential uses, offices, retail, hotel, and restaurants that would result in very limited operational activities with potential health risks, including landscaping maintenance operations and boilers for restaurants. None of these activities would result in the generation of excessive TAC emissions, or associated health risks from the individual development projects' operation. Therefore, operation associated with the proposed Project is not anticipated to result in an elevated cancer or other health risk to nearby sensitive receptors and the impact would be less than significant.

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

CO emissions are a function of vehicle idling time, meteorological conditions and traffic flow. Under certain extreme meteorological conditions, CO concentrations near a congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthy levels (i.e., adversely affect residents, school children, hospital patients, the elderly, etc.).

The SCAB is designated as an attainment area for State and federal CO standards. There has been a decline in CO emissions even though VMT on U.S. urban and rural roads have increased. On-road mobile source CO emissions declined 24 percent between 1989 and 1998, despite a 23 percent rise in motor VMT over the same 10 years. California trends have been consistent with national trends; CO emissions declined 20 percent in California from 1985 through 1997, while

VMT increased 18 percent in the 1990s. Three major control programs have contributed to the reduced per-vehicle CO emissions: exhaust standards, cleaner burning fuels, and motor vehicle inspection/maintenance programs.

A detailed CO analysis was conducted in the Federal Attainment Plan for Carbon Monoxide (CO Plan) for the SCAQMD's 2003 AQMP. The locations selected for microscale modeling in the CO Plan are worst-case intersections in the SCAB and would likely experience the highest CO concentrations. Of these locations, the Wilshire Boulevard/Veteran Avenue intersection experienced the highest CO concentration (4.6 ppm), which is well below the 35-ppm 1-hr CO federal standard. The Wilshire Boulevard/Veteran Avenue intersection is one of the most congested intersections in southern California with an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of approximately 100,000 vehicles per day. As the CO hotspots were not experienced at the Wilshire Boulevard/Veteran Avenue intersection (100,000 ADT), it can be reasonably inferred that CO hotspots would not be experienced at any locations within the Specific Plan Area as the highest anticipated volume of traffic in the Specific Plan Area would be 69,600 ADT on Magic Mountain Parkway west of McBean Parkway under the high buildout scenario; refer to **Appendix B** of this Draft EIR. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Construction and operational activities associated with future development under the proposed Project would not generate short-term or long-term emissions that may cause localized air quality impacts. As such, localized impacts are less than significant.

4.2.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Cumulative Consistency with Applicable Air Quality Plan

The proposed Project would be consistent with the SCAQMD and SCAG's goals and policies, and the population, housing, and employment forecasts. However, the proposed Project would have the potential to contribute to a violation of the ambient air quality standards. As such, impacts associated with the proposed Project in this regard would be cumulatively considerable. Cumulative impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

Cumulative Short-term Construction Emissions

The SCAQMD neither recommends quantified analyses of cumulative construction emissions, nor does it provide separate methodologies or thresholds of significance to be used to assess cumulative construction impacts. The SCAQMD significance thresholds for construction are intended to meet the objectives of the 2022 AQMP to ensure the NAAQS and CAAQS are not exceeded. As the timing or sequencing of cumulative projects in the Project vicinity is unknown at this time, any quantitative analysis to ascertain the daily construction emissions that assumes multiple, concurrent construction would be speculative. Future cumulative projects would also be required to analyze construction emission impacts on a project-level under CEQA and implement mitigation as needed.

As indicated in **Table 4.2-5**, the Project would not result in short-term air quality impacts as the emissions under worst-case construction conditions would not exceed the SCAQMD adopted construction thresholds. Therefore, the Project would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts with regards to short-term construction air quality emissions.

Cumulative Long-term Mobile and Stationary Source Emissions

The SCAQMD has set forth both a methodological framework as well as significance thresholds for the assessment of a project's cumulative operational air quality impacts. The SCAQMD's approach for assessing cumulative impacts is based on the SCAQMD's 2022 AQMP forecasts of attainment of NAAQS in accordance with the requirements of the FCAA and CCAA. This forecast also considers SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS forecasted future regional growth. As such, the analysis of cumulative impacts focuses on determining whether a project is consistent with the growth assumptions upon which the SCAQMD's 2022 AQMP is based. If a project is consistent with the growth assumptions, then the future development would not impede the attainment of NAAQS, and a significant cumulative air quality impact would not occur.

As discussed above, the Project would potentially result in long-term air quality impacts, as the Project's operational emissions would exceed the SCAQMD adopted operational thresholds of VOC and PM₁₀. As a result, the Project would potentially contribute a cumulatively considerable net increase of non-attainment criteria pollutant. Therefore, cumulative operational impacts associated with the implementation of the Project would be significant and unavoidable.

Cumulative Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

Cumulative development is not expected to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, such as CO hotspots. Thus, this is a less-than-significant cumulative impact. Future ambient CO concentrations resulting from the Proposed Project would be substantially below federal and State standards. These future concentrations consider cumulative development that would occur in SRA 13 (Santa Clarita Valley). Therefore, the contribution of future development under the Proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable, and the cumulative impact would be less than significant.

Cumulative Localized Air Quality Impacts

Cumulative development is not expected to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, such as TACs. In addition, no industrial uses that would potentially generate substantial pollutant concentrations currently exist or are planned in the Specific Plan Area. Therefore, the contribution of future development under the proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable, and the cumulative impact would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Refer to **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1** under Threshold 4.2(b) above.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Emissions from operations of future development associated with implementation of the Proposed Specific Plan would potentially exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for criteria pollutants, resulting in a significant impact. In accordance with SCAQMD methodology, any project emissions that cannot be mitigated to less-than-significant levels are also significant on a cumulative basis. Therefore, air quality impacts associated with the buildout of the Proposed Project would be cumulatively considerable, and, thus, are significant and unavoidable.

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4.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates potential impacts to cultural resources, specifically archaeological resources, that may result from the Project. Archaeological resources include artifacts, structural remains, and human remains belonging to an era of history or prehistory. The information in this section is derived, in part, from the One Valley One Vision Program EIR (i.e., the General Plan EIR, 2011) for the City, as well as environmental documents for other projects in the vicinity of the Town Center Specific Plan Area.

4.3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The cultural record for Southern California is generally divided into the prehistoric and historic periods. The prehistoric period is the time prior to written documentation and colonization. The historic period represents the time from which written documentation was kept for Southern California—from the first Spanish explorers in the 1500s to the present day. The historic period begins when the first Spanish explorers recorded in writing their observations of the area and its inhabitants.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

The Specific Plan Area is within an area where little documentation for early human occupation exists; however, it is possible to infer the prehistory of the area by consulting that of neighboring regions in Southern California.¹ Evidence of early habitation comes from the City of Los Angeles, which has two of the earliest sites that contain human remains in all of the Americas: “La Brea Woman” and “Los Angeles Man.” Found in 1914, the “La Brea Woman” site contained the osteological remains of a young Native American woman, dated to approximately 40,000 years ago and discovered at the La Brea Tar Pits in Hancock Park. The “Los Angeles Man” site contained several human skull fragments found in 1936, with two teeth and several bones of an Imperial Mammoth (*Mammuthus imperator*), all dated to be approximately 20,000 years old.²

Other prehistoric human archaeological records date to as early as 11,000 years before present (BP), near the beginning of the Archaic period in coastal Southern California with the San Dieguito Tradition. The San Dieguito Tradition is described as a generalized hunting tradition dating from 9,000 to 10,000 years ago; it has since been subsumed into the longer Western Pluvial Lakes Tradition. The people from this period were possibly descended from Paleo-Indians who inhabited the desert regions of southeastern California.³

Between 8,000 and 6,000 BP, regional exploitation of food resources in California became more systematic and efficient. Flourishing between 7,500 and 5,000 BP, the populations of the Encinitas Tradition continued to exploit game and vegetation in the same traditions as their San Dieguito predecessors but added seasonal foraging strategies that yielded protein-rich plant

¹ City of Santa Clarita, Bouquet Canyon Road Project, Cultural Resources Survey and Assessment, HELIX Environmental Planning, May 2019.

² Michael Moratto, California Archaeology with New Introduction, 2004.

³ Michael Moratto, California Archaeology with New Introduction, 2004; Claude Warren, Archaic Prehistory in the Western United States: Cultural Tradition and Ecological Adaptation on the Southern California Coast, 1968, pp. 1-14.

material. Evidence of formalized burials suggest that the Encinitas way of life was more socioculturally complex than that of the San Dieguito Tradition.⁴

During the Campbell Tradition, circa 5,000–4,500 BP, new forms of subsistence procurement and technology, increasing societal changes, and growing core settlements began to emerge throughout Southern California. Many Native American settlements were located in transitional ecological zones, which provided these groups with a broad spectrum of subsistence (e.g., land and sea mammals, fish, and acorns) without extensive migration, resulting in village-style communities surrounded by peripheral settlements.⁵

Historic

Historic-era California 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).

European explorers made sporadic visits into the general Los Angeles area during the sixteenth century. Extensive Spanish interaction with the Gabrieleño began in 1769, when Gaspar de Portolá led an overland expedition from San Diego across Southern California.⁶ The expedition party traveled through the San Fernando Valley to Newhall, the Castaic Junction area, down the Santa Clara River, and north to Monterey. The trail became known as the El Camino Viejo (The Old Road).⁷

The religious missions became the cornerstone of Spanish colonization.⁸ California native peoples worked on the farms and ranches present on mission grounds. Many of the Gabrieleño were gradually forced to move to the San Gabriel or San Fernando Missions to provide labor, and many of the Native Americans living on the coastal plains and inland valleys at the time were also transported here, though small groups did escape this confinement.⁹ Members of the Tataviam tribe, who lived primarily in the upper reaches of the Santa Clara River and northward to the southern part of Antelope Valley and the San Gabriel Mountains, were forced to work and constructed the Estancia buildings near the confluence of Castaic Creek and the Santa Clara River. Today, these buildings no longer exist, but the area is a protected site and considered archaeologically rich.¹⁰

The forced interaction with the Spanish marked the beginning of the decline of the indigenous population, especially as the local population suffered from the European epidemics. By 1800, the original Gabrieleño villages were empty and the Gabrieleños and other Native Americans

⁴ Joseph Chartkoff & Kerry Kona Chartkoff, *The Archaeology of California*, 1984; Michael Moratto, *California Archaeology with New Introduction*, 2004; Mark Sutton and Jill Gardner, *Pacific Coast Archaeological Society Quarterly: Reconceptualizing the Encinitas Transition of Southern California*, 2006.

⁵ Claude Warren, *Archaic Prehistory in the Western United States: Cultural Tradition and Ecological Adaptation on the Southern California Coast*, 1968, pp. 1-14; William Wallace, "Suggested Chronology for Southern California Coastal Archaeology," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 1955; Joseph Chartkoff & Kerry Kona Chartkoff, *The Archaeology of California*, 1984; Michael Moratto, *California Archaeology with New Introduction*, 2004.

⁶ Blake Gumprecht, *The Los Angeles River: Its Life, Death, and Possible Rebirth*, 1999.

⁷ City of Santa Clarita, *One Valley One Vision Draft Program EIR*, September 2010

⁸ Joseph Chartkoff and Kerry Kona Chartkoff, *The Archaeology of California*, 1984.

⁹ Lowell J. Bean & Charles R. Smith, *Handbook of North American Indians Vol. 8: California*, 1978, pp. 538-549.

¹⁰ City of Santa Clarita, Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project Draft Environmental Impact Report, February 2018.

provided much of the labor for the European ranches, farms, and communities.¹¹ During this time, only fragmentary ethnographic information was recorded.¹²

The Mexican period began when Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, and, at the same time, the mission system began to break down. Around 1834, the secularization of the mission system in Alta California began. After Mexico gained independence from Spain, California experienced a period of thriving ranchos from 1821 through 1848.¹³ American military forces were present in California during the summer of 1846 as a result of the Mexican American War. Mexican resistance deteriorated, and the United States occupied Mexico City in 1848, marking the beginning of the American period (1848 to present).¹⁴ The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed on February 2, 1848, ended the war between the United States and Mexico. By its terms, Mexico ceded 55 percent of its territory, including the present-day states California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, most of Arizona and Colorado, and parts of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Wyoming. Mexico also relinquished all claims to Texas, and recognized the Rio Grande as the southern boundary with the United States.¹⁵

Local History

In 1850, Henry Mayo Newhall, who emigrated from Saugus (Massachusetts) after selling his auction firm, became an early pioneer of Santa Clarita upon news of the Gold Rush of 1849. However, he shifted his focus to railroad manufacturing when he realized that most of the gold mining sites had already been claimed. In 1857, Newhall invested in rail companies for the rail systems that would connect San Francisco to other cities. After much success in his railroad investments, Newhall returned to auctioneering and began to focus on real estate. Newhall's largest purchase in the area was the acquisition of Rancho San Francisco, which was renamed after his death as Newhall Ranch. At the time of the Rancho San Francisco acquisition, construction had begun for the San Fernando railroad tunnel through the Newhall Pass. Upon completion of the railroad, many of the local preliminary workers moved three miles south to the area, which officially became known as the town of Newhall in 1878.

The Kentucky native Henry Clay Needham began to establish the Kansas prohibition laws that he wrote, enacted by then Kansas Governor John St. John, when he arrived in downtown Newhall in 1888. To expand on and achieve their ideas of prohibition, St. John, George B. Katzenstein of Sacramento and James Yarnell of Los Angeles combined their finances in 1887 to purchase 10,000 acres of land from the town of Newhall to establish a subdivision of the Newhall property as a "dry" colony, which Needham supervised. The area included Lyons Station and Lyons Station Cemetery and ran all the way north through the present Circle J tract to Soledad Canyon Road. Needham plotted the subdivision, within which he settled on an approximately 700-acre lot, known as Needham Ranch, located southwest of today's intersection of Newhall Avenue and Sierra

¹¹ Lowell J. Bean & Charles R. Smith, *Handbook of North American Indians* Vol. 8: *California*, 1978, pp. 538-549.

¹² Blake Gumprecht, *The Los Angeles River: Its Life, Death, and Possible Rebirth*, 1999.

¹³ Kevin Starr, *California: A History*, 2005; R.J. Wlodarski, "A Phase 1 Archaeological Study for the New Studio Project Subsequent EIR," Culver City, County of Los Angeles, California, 1998.

¹⁴ U.S. Congress, *The Statutes at Large, Treaties, and Proclamations, of the United States of America from December 5, 1859 to March 3, 1863, Acts of the Thirty-seventh Congress of the United States, Statute II—1861-62, 1863.*

¹⁵ U.S. National Archives, *Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)*, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/treaty-of-guadalupe-hidalgo>, accessed February 27, 2024.

Highway. Mark Gates Sr. purchased the 700-acre Needham Ranch in 1957, to develop the Eternal Valley Memorial and Mortuary Park in the northeastern corner of the property.

The Newhall community merged with the communities of Valencia, Saugus, and Canyon Country, forming the City of Santa Clarita and becoming an incorporated city in 1987. Old Town Newhall is the oldest neighborhood, known as the historic core of Santa Clarita, and is located approximately 2.5 miles south of the Specific Plan Area.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

A records search was conducted at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at the California State University, Fullerton, for the Westfield Valencia Town Center Patios Connection Project in January 2019.¹⁶ The records search included the Westfield Valencia Town Center project site and a half-mile radius, which covers the entirety of the Specific Plan Area. The search included a review of all recorded archaeological and built-environment resources as well as a review of cultural resource reports. In addition, the search reviewed listings in the California Points of Historical Interest, the California Historical Landmarks, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and the California State Historic Properties Directory. Based on that records search, there were 24 reports and studies conducted within the half-mile radius, but no archaeological sites present. Accordingly, no archaeological sites are recorded within the Specific Plan Area.

4.3.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

In 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act established the NRHP as a guide for local, state, and federal governments, private groups, and citizens to identify historic resources and properties that should be protected from destruction or impairment. The NRHP identifies significant cultural resources that may include districts, buildings, structures, objects, prehistoric archaeological sites, historic-period archaeological sites, traditional cultural properties, and cultural landscapes from the local to the national level. In the NRHP, approximately 2,500 of more than 90,000 districts, buildings, structures, objects, and sites are recognized as National Historic Landmarks or National Historic Landmark Districts, meaning they possess exceptional national significance in American history and culture. A resource that is listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP is considered a “historic property” under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

To be eligible for listing in the NRHP, a resource must be at least 50 years of age, unless it is of exceptional importance as defined in Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 60, Section 60.4(g). In addition, a resource must be significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. The following four criteria for evaluation have been established to determine the significance of a resource:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

¹⁶ City of Santa Clarita Westfield Valencia Town Center Patios Connection Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, December 2019

- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In addition to meeting one or more of these significance criteria, a property must have integrity, which is defined as “the ability of a property to convey its significance.”¹⁷ The NRHP recognizes seven qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. To retain historic integrity, a property must possess several of these seven aspects. In general, the NRHP has a higher integrity threshold than state or local registers.

STATE

California Register of Historical Resources

The CRHR, similar in nature to the NRHP, is “an authoritative listing and guide to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens in identifying the existing historical resources of the state and to indicate which resources deserve to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change.”¹⁸ The CRHR was enacted in 1992 and its regulations are administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). The criteria for eligibility for the CRHR are based upon NRHP criteria but are specific to California’s history and cultural heritage. Certain resources are determined to be automatically included in the CRHR, including California properties formally determined eligible for listing, or already listed in, the NRHP.

A resource eligible for the CRHR must meet one of the four criteria and retain enough of its historic character or appearance (integrity) to be recognized as a historical resource and convey the reason for its significance. These four criteria, which are similar to those of the NRHP, are as follows:

- 1) If the resource is associated with events which have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and historical heritage;
- 2) If the resource is associated with the lives of persons significant in California’s past;
- 3) If the resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic value; or
- 4) If the resource yields, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

A historic resource that may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR. Additionally, the CRHR consists of resources that are listed automatically and those that must be nominated through an application and public hearing process. The CRHR automatically includes the following:

¹⁷ United States Department of the Interior, “National Register Bulletin #15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” 1997, page 44.

¹⁸ California Public Resources Code, Section 5024.1(a).

- California properties listed on the NRHP and those formally determined eligible for the NRHP;
- California Registered Historical Landmarks from No. 770 onward; and
- California Points of Historical Interest that have been evaluated by the OHP and have been recommended to the State Historical Resources Commission for inclusion on the CRHR.

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is the principal statute governing environmental review of projects occurring in the state and is codified in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21000 et seq. CEQA requires lead agencies to determine if a proposed project would have a significant effect on the environment, including significant effects on historical or unique archaeological resources. Under PRC Section 21084.1, a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.

The term “historical resource” is defined in PRC Section 21084.1. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 describes how significant impacts on historical and archaeological resources are determined. Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a), historical resources include:

1. A resource listed in or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the CRHR, as defined in PRC Section 5024.1.
2. A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k) or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements of PRC Section 5024.1(g), will be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.
3. 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 to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency’s determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource will be considered by the lead agency to be “historically significant” if the resource meets the four criteria for listing in the CRHR as outlined in PRC Section 5024.1.

The fact that a resource is not listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the CRHR, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to PRC Section 5020.1[k]), or not identified in a historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in PRC Section 5024.1[g]) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(j) or PRC Section 5024.1.

CEQA also requires lead agencies to consider whether projects will impact unique archaeological resources. PRC Section 21083.2(g) states:

“Unique archaeological resource’ means an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

- 1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.*
- 2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.*
- 3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.”*

According to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.5(b)(1) and 15064.5(b)(2), a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired; the significance is materially impaired when a project demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion, or eligibility for inclusion, in the CRHR.

California Administrative Code

Title 14, Section 4307 of the California Code of Regulations states that “no person shall remove, injure, deface, or destroy any object of paleontological, archaeological, or historical interest or value.”

Public Resources Code

Section 30244

PRC Section 30244 protects cultural resources and states that feasible mitigation measures shall be required for development that would adversely impact archaeological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Section 5097.98

PRC Section 5097.98 provides procedures in the event that human remains of Native American origin are discovered during implementation of a project. PRC Section 5097.98 requires that no further disturbances occur in the immediate vicinity of the discovery, that the discovery is adequately protected according to generally accepted cultural and archaeological standards, and that further activities take into account the possibility of multiple burials. PRC Section 5097.98 further requires that, upon notification by a County coroner, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) designate and notify a most likely descendant (MLD) regarding the discovery of Native American human remains. Once the MLD has been granted access to the site by the landowner and inspected the discovery, the MLD then has 48 hours to provide recommendations to the landowner for the treatment of the human remains and any associated grave goods. In the event that no descendant is identified, or the descendant fails to make a recommendation for disposition, or if the landowner rejects the recommendation of the descendant, the landowner may, with appropriate dignity, reinter the remains and burial items on the property in a location that will not be subject to further disturbance.

Health and Safety Code

Health and Safety Code Sections 7050.5, 7051, and 7054 address the illegality of interference with human burial remains and the disposition of Native American burials in archaeological sites. These regulations protect such remains from disturbance, vandalism, or inadvertent destruction and establish procedures to be implemented if Native American skeletal remains are discovered during construction of a project, including treatment of the remains prior to, during, and after evaluation, and reburial procedures.

LOCAL

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan for the City of Santa Clarita includes the following goals, objectives, and policies related to cultural resources that would be applicable to the Proposed Project:¹⁹

- Goal CO 5: Protection of historical and culturally significant resources that contribute to community identity and a sense of history.
 - Objective CO 5.1: Protect sites identified as having local, state, or national significance as a cultural or historical resource.
 - Policy CO 5.1.1: For sites identified on the Cultural and Historical Resources Map (Exhibit CO-6), review appropriate documentation prior to issuance of any permits for grading, demolition, alteration, and/or new development, to avoid significant adverse impacts. Such documentation may include cultural resource reports, environmental impact reports, or other information as determined to be adequate by the reviewing authority.
 - Policy CO 5.1.2: Review any proposed alterations to cultural and historic sites identified in Table CO-1 or other sites which are so designated, based on the guidelines contained in the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Properties (Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 68, also known as 36 CFR 68), or other adopted City guidelines.
 - Policy CO 5.1.3: As new information about other potentially significant historic and cultural sites becomes available, update the Cultural and Historical Resources Inventory and apply appropriate measures to all identified sites to protect their historical and cultural integrity.

Santa Clarita Municipal Code

Santa Clarita Municipal Code (SCMC) Chapter 17.64, Historic Preservation, seeks to preserve, protect, or relocate (where necessary) historic, cultural, and natural resources that have special historic or aesthetic character or interest. Specifically, SCMC Section 17.64.030 states that a “building, structure, or object may be designated by the [City’s Planning] Commission as a historic

¹⁹ City of Santa Clarita, City of Santa Clarita General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element, June 2011.

resource if it possesses sufficient character-defining features and integrity, and meets at least one (1) of the following criteria:

- A. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural development of the City, State or nation; or
- B. Is associated with persons significant in the history of the City, State or nation; 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. Has a unique location, singular physical characteristic(s), or is a landscape, view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City; or
- E. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the history or prehistory of the City, State, or nation.”

4.3.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to cultural resources are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City’s Initial Study Checklist. In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to cultural resources if it would:

Threshold 4.3(a): Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5;

Threshold 4.3(b): Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or

Threshold 4.3(c): Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts related to the following significance thresholds, as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**); therefore, they are not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.3(a): Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.

Threshold 4.3(c): Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

4.3.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to cultural resources considered the potential future improvements in the TCSP Area, which are envisioned as creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous

development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, retail, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the TCSP area which include programmable gathering spaces and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children's playgrounds, and parks.

This analysis evaluates anticipated changes in the physical environment resulting from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan against the threshold of significance identified above to determine if direct and indirect changes to existing conditions would constitute potentially significant effects to known or potential archaeological resources. Project changes are described and potential impacts, if any, are identified under the impact discussion. Where impacts would be considered potentially significant, mitigation measures are identified to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

As stated above, a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired; the significance is materially impaired when a project demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion, or eligibility for inclusion, in the CRHR. The evaluation of impacts to archaeological resources is based on previous studies conducted in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area. The analysis of impacts to archaeological resources considers the extent of ground-disturbing activities that could occur during potential future construction projects implementing the proposed Specific Plan and considers the potential for such ground-disturbing activities to uncover such resources.

4.3.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

No Project Design Features are proposed with respect to cultural resources.

4.3.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.3(b): Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to [CEQA Guidelines] Section 15064.5?

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Much of the Specific Plan Area, including Subareas 1, 2, and 3, is completely urbanized. A portion of Subarea 4 is currently vacant but was previously developed and graded and is entitled for a five-story hotel and freestanding restaurant. Soils throughout the Specific Plan Area have been previously disturbed from excavation and grading activities. Any archaeological resources that may have existed may have been previously disturbed from existing and past development. Additionally, according to the records search, no archaeological resources have been recorded in the Project Site. However, future development within the Specific Plan Area could require ground-disturbing activities at greater depths than existing foundations. Thus, it cannot be precluded that future grading activities would not encounter, and potentially damage or destroy,

previously unidentified archaeological resources. Therefore, without mitigation, ground-disturbing activities have the potential to result in significant impacts to archaeological resources.

MITIGATION MEASURES

To reduce potentially significant impacts to archaeological resources, the following mitigation measure is proposed for the Project:

MM-CR-1 Treatment of previously unidentified archaeological deposits: If suspected prehistoric or historical archaeological deposits are discovered during construction, all work within 60 feet of the discovery must be redirected and a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards must assess the situation and make recommendations regarding the treatment of the discovery.

For significant cultural resources meeting the definition of a historical resource per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) or a unique archaeological resource per PRC Section 21083.2(g) as determined by the City of Santa Clarita, if avoidance and preservation-in-place is not feasible, a Research Design and Data Recovery Program to mitigate impacts must be prepared by the consulting archaeologist and approved by the City of Santa Clarita before being implemented using professional archaeological methods. Before construction activities are allowed to resume in the affected area, the Data Recovery Program must be completed to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita. Work may continue on other parts of the construction site while consultation and treatment are concluded. All significant archaeological resources collected must be taken to a properly equipped archaeological laboratory, where they must be cleaned, analyzed, and prepared for curation. At a minimum, and unless otherwise specified in any treatment plans prepared for the development, all resources must be identified, analyzed, catalogued, photographed, and labeled. At the close of construction, the collection must be donated to a public institution with a research interest in the materials and the capacity to care for the materials in perpetuity. Accompanying notes, maps, and photographs must also be filed at the repository, as appropriate. The cost of curation is assessed by the repository and is the responsibility of the project applicant. All costs must be borne by the project applicant.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM-CR-1 would reduce potential impacts to archaeological resources to a less than significant level.

4.3.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The Project's impacts on archaeological resources were determined to be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure MM-CR-1. Given the site-specific nature of cultural resources, impacts on cultural resources are generally project-specific rather than a result of cumulative projects/growth. Depending on the depth of excavation and sensitivity of development

sites in the City, mitigation measures would be required for development projects in the area that have the potential to cause significant impacts on undiscovered cultural resources. In addition, related projects would be required to comply with State law regarding archaeological resources to ensure proper identification, treatment, and/or preservation of certain sensitive cultural resources. Therefore, the Project's impacts to archaeological resources would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts to archaeological resources would be less than significant with mitigation.

MITIGATION MEASURES

As set forth above, the Project would implement Mitigation Measure MM-CR-1 related to archaeological resources to reduce the Project's impacts to less-than-significant levels.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

With the implementation of Mitigation Measure MM-CR-1, the Project would not considerably contribute to cumulative impacts associated with archaeological resources, and such cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

4.4 ENERGY

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzes impacts on energy resources resulting from construction and operation of the Project, with potential short- and long-term energy consumption impacts. This section evaluates the Project's impacts regarding the avoidance of wasteful and inefficient energy usage.

4.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Energy use is typically quantified using British thermal units (Btu). A Btu is the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of one pound of water by one degree Fahrenheit (°F). The generating capacity of a unit of electricity is expressed in megawatts (MW). Electricity generation may be quantified in megawatt-hours (MWh), kilowatt-hours (kWh), or gigawatt-hours (GWh). Natural gas generation is expressed in therms, where one therm is equivalent to 100,000 Btu.

STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL ENERGY USAGE

California is one of the lowest per capita energy users in the United States due to its energy efficiency programs and mild climate. In 2021, California consumed 7,359 trillion Btu of energy with a total consumption per capita of 189 million Btu.

Electricity and Natural Gas

Electricity and natural gas are primarily consumed by the built environment for lighting, appliances, heating and cooling systems, and fireplaces, as well as industrial processes and alternative fuel vehicles.

Most of California's electricity is generated in-State, but California relies on out-of-State imports for nearly 90 percent of its natural gas supply. In 2022, approximately 30 percent of California's electricity was imported from the northwest and southwest. Of the 287,220 GWh of total electricity consumed in California in 2022, 203,257 GWh was generated in-State.¹ Approximately 52 percent of the in-State generation was from renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar photovoltaic, geothermal, and biomass.²

Petroleum

Petroleum fuels are primarily consumed by on-road and off-road equipment, and some industrial processes. Though California's population and economy are expected to grow, gasoline demand is forecasted to decline due to improvements in fuel efficiency and increased light-duty vehicle electrification.

California is one of the top producers of petroleum in the nation, with Statewide drilling operations concentrated primarily in Kern and Los Angeles Counties. A network of crude oil pipelines connects production areas to oil refineries in the Los Angeles area, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Central Valley. In 2019, the State supplied about 3 percent of the United States' total onshore and offshore production of crude oil. California oil refineries also process Alaskan and foreign crude oil received at ports in Los Angeles, Long Beach, and the San Francisco Bay Area.

¹ California Energy Commission, "2022 Total System Electric Generation," accessed January 22, 2024, <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/california-electricity-data/2022-total-system-electric-generation>.

² California Energy Commission, "2022 Total System Electric Generation."

Crude oil production in California and Alaska is in decline, and California refineries depend increasingly on imports. Of the total amount of California’s oil supply in 2022, 59 percent was supplied by imports, 26 percent by California, and 15 percent by Alaska.

In California, gasoline consumed primarily by light-duty cars, pickup trucks, and sport utility vehicles is the most used transportation fuel. Diesel, the second most-used transportation fuel, is primarily consumed by heavy-duty trucks, delivery vehicles, buses, trains, ships, boats and barges, farm equipment, and heavy-duty construction and military vehicles. Both gasoline and diesel are primarily petroleum-based, and their consumption releases greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The transportation sector is the single largest source of GHG emissions in the State and accounts for the largest share of the State’s energy consumption. Approximately 40 percent of all inventoried GHG emissions in the State in 2019 was generated by the transportation sector. The State’s transportation sector accounted for one-third of California’s total energy consumption in 2020. To reduce Statewide vehicle emissions, California requires that all motorists use California Reformulated Gasoline, which is sourced almost exclusively from in-State refineries. In 2020, Los Angeles County consumed approximately 2,770 million gallons of gasoline and 299 million gallons of diesel—representing approximately 22 percent and 17 percent of the Statewide gasoline/diesel consumption, respectively—for a total of 3,069 million gallons total petroleum fuel consumption.

Alternative Fuels

A variety of alternative fuels are used to reduce petroleum-based fuel demand. Conventional gasoline and diesel may be replaced by alternative fuels such as hydrogen, biodiesel, and electricity, depending on the capability of the vehicle. Currently, there are 36 biodiesel refueling stations, 107 hydrogen refueling stations, and 93,855 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations (41,384 public EV chargers and 52,471 private chargers) across California.³

LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

Southern California Edison (SCE) provides electrical service to the Project Site. SCE is an independently owned utility that provides electrical service to approximately 15 million customers across a 50,000-square-mile service, including 180 incorporated cities across 15 counties. In 2022, the total electricity consumption in the SCE service area was 107,876 GWh, with the greatest consumption occurring in the residential and commercial building sectors, which consumed 39,400 GWh and 36,069 GWh, respectively.

Southern California Gas (SoCalGas) provides natural gas service to the Project Site. SoCalGas provides natural gas to approximately 21.8 million customers across a 24,000-square-mile territory, including parts of the following counties: Riverside, Orange, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, Inyo, Tulare, and Mono. In 2022, the total natural gas consumption in the SoCalGas service area was 6,566 million therms, with the greatest

³ US Department of Energy, *Biodiesel Fueling Station Locations*, accessed January 22, 2024, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/biodiesel_locations.html#/find/nearest?fuel=BD; California Energy Commission, *Hydrogen Refueling Station in California*, accessed January 22, 2024, <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/zero-emission-vehicle-and-infrastructure-statistics/hydrogen-refueling>; California Energy Commission, *Electric Vehicle Chargers in California*, accessed January 22, 2024, <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/zero-emission-vehicle-and-infrastructure-statistics/electric-vehicle>.

consumption occurring in the residential and industrial sectors, which consumed 2,275 million therms and 1,645 million therms, respectively.

4.4.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 was enacted to improve vehicle fuel economy and help reduce dependence on foreign oil. Specifically, the act increases the supply of alternative fuel sources by setting a mandatory Renewable Fuel Standard, which requires fuel producers to use at least 36 billion gallons of biofuel in 2022 and reduces the nation's demand for oil by setting a national fuel economy standard of 35 miles per gallon by 2020, an increase in fuel economy standards of 40 percent. On June 21, 2023, the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) announced a final rule to establish biofuel volume requirements and associated percentage standards for cellulosic biofuel, biomass-based diesel, advanced biofuel, and total renewable fuel for the years 2023 to 2025. The Energy Independence and Security Act also sets energy efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

Energy Policy and Conservation Act

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act was enacted in 1975 and established fuel economy standards for new light-duty vehicles sold in the United States. As a result of the act, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) is responsible for establishing and regularly updating vehicle standards.

Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards

Established by the US Congress in 1975, the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards (49 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 531 and 533) set fuel economy standards for all new passenger cars and light trucks sold in the United States. The NHTSA and the USEPA jointly administer the CAFE standards, which become more stringent each year.

In August 2016, the USEPA and NHTSA announced the adoption of the phase two programs related to the fuel economy and GHG standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. The phase two program applies to vehicles with model year 2018 through 2027 for certain trailers, and model years 2021 through 2027 for semi-trucks, large pickup trucks, vans, and all types and sizes of buses and work trucks. The final standards are expected to lower carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by approximately 1.1 billion metric tons of CO₂ (MTCO₂) and reduce oil consumption by up to two billion barrels over the lifetime of the vehicles sold under the program. The NHTSA and the USEPA jointly published the "Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule Part One: One National Program" (SAFE I Rule) in September 2019 and issued the Final SAFE Rule (i.e., SAFE Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks) in April 2020. The SAFE I Rule relaxes federal CAFE vehicle standards and revokes California's authority to set its own vehicle standards. On December 29, 2021, the NHTSA issued the final rule to repeal the SAFE I Rule, effective January 28, 2022, which removed the improper restrictions placed on states and local governments from developing innovative policies to address their specific

environmental and public health challenges.⁴ The USEPA also issued a decision on March 14, 2022, that rescinded its 2019 withdrawal of California’s authority to set its own vehicle standards.⁵

Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard

The USEPA sets emission standards for construction equipment. The first federal standards (Tier 1) were adopted in 1994 for all off-road engines over 50 horsepower (hp) and were phased in by 2000. A new standard was adopted in 1998 that introduced Tier 1 for all equipment below 50 hp and established the Tier 2 and Tier 3 standards. The Tier 2 and Tier 3 standards were phased in by 2008 for all equipment. The current iteration of emissions standards for construction equipment are the Tier 4 efficiency requirements, which are contained in 40 CFR Parts 1039, 1065, and 1068 (originally adopted in 69 Federal Register 38958 [June 29, 2004], and most recently updated in 2014 [79 Federal Register 46356]). Emissions requirements for new off-road Tier 4 vehicles were to be completely phased in by the end of 2015.

STATE

Assembly Bill 2076

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 2076, the California Energy Commission (CEC) and California Air Resources Board (CARB) prepared and adopted a joint-agency report in 2003, titled Reducing California’s Petroleum Dependence. The report included recommendations to increase the use of alternative fuels to 20 percent of on-road transportation fuel use by 2020 and 30 percent by 2030; significantly increase the efficiency of motor vehicles; and reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT). One of the performance-based goals of Assembly Bill 2076 is to reduce petroleum demand to 15 percent below 2003 demand. Furthermore, in response to the CEC’s 2003 and 2005 Integrated Energy Policy Reports (IEPR), the governor directed the CEC to take the lead in developing a long-term plan to increase alternative fuel use.

California Energy Plan

The CEC is responsible for preparing the California Energy Plan, which identifies emerging trends related to energy supply, demand, conservation, public health and safety, and the maintenance of a healthy economy. The 2008 California Energy Plan calls for the State to assist in the transformation of the transportation system to improve air quality, reduce congestion, and increase the efficient use of fuel supplies with the least environmental and energy costs. To further this policy, the plan identifies several strategies, including assistance to public agencies and fleet operators in implementing incentive programs for zero-emission vehicles and addressing their infrastructure needs, as well as encouragement of urban designs that reduce VMT and accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access.

California Energy Commission Integrated Energy Policy Report

In 2002, the California State legislature adopted Senate Bill (SB) 1389, which requires the CEC to develop an Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR) every two years. SB 1389 requires the CEC to conduct assessments and forecasts of all aspects of energy industry supply, production, transportation, delivery and distribution, demand, and prices, and use these assessments and

⁴ Federal Register, Vol. 86, No. 247, December 29, 2021.

⁵ Federal Register, Vol. 87, No. 49, March 14, 2022.

forecasts to develop energy policies that conserve resources, protect the environment, ensure energy reliability, enhance the State's economy, and protect public health and safety.

The CEC adopted the 2022 IEPR Update on February 28, 2023. The 2022 IEPR Update provides the results of the CEC's assessments of a variety of energy issues facing California, many of which will require action if the State is to meet its climate, energy, air quality, and other environmental goals while maintaining reliability and controlling costs. Overall, the IEPR Update identifies actions the State and others can take that would strengthen energy resiliency, reduce GHG emissions that contribute to climate change, improve air quality, and contribute to a more equitable future.

Renewables Portfolio Standards

First established in 2002 under SB 1078, California's Renewables Portfolio Standards (RPS) requires retail sellers of electric services to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent by 2020 and 50 percent by 2030. SB 350, signed October 7, 2015, is the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015. The objectives of SB 350 are to (1) increase the procurement of electricity from renewable sources from 33 percent to 50 percent and (2) double the energy savings in electricity and natural gas final end uses of retail customers through energy efficiency and conservation. On September 10, 2018, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 100, which further increased California's RPS and requires retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities to procure eligible renewable electricity for 44 percent of retail sales by December 31, 2024, 52 percent by December 31, 2027, and 60 percent by December 31, 2030, and states that CARB should plan for 100 percent eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources by December 31, 2045.

The California Public Utilities Commission and the CEC jointly implement the RPS program. The California Public Utilities Commission's responsibilities include:

- a) Determining annual procurement targets and enforcing compliance;
- b) Reviewing and approving each investor-owned utility's renewable energy procurement plan;
- c) Reviewing contracts for RPS-eligible energy; and
- d) Establishing the standard terms and conditions used in contracts for eligible renewable energy.

California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (Title 24 CCR Part 6)

In 1978, the CEC established Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations, which is California's energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. Title 24, Part 6, also referred to as the California Energy Code, was codified in response to a legislative mandate to create uniform building codes to reduce California's energy consumption and provide energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. California's energy efficiency standards are updated on an approximate three-year cycle. The 2022 California Energy Code became effective on January 1, 2023, and applies to the Project.

California Green Building Standards (Title 24 CCR Part 11)

The California Green Building Standards Code (Title 24 CCR Part 11), commonly referred to as CALGreen Code, is a Statewide mandatory construction code that was developed and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission and the California Department of Housing and Community Development. CALGreen standards require new residential and commercial buildings to comply with mandatory measures under five topical areas: planning and design; energy efficiency; water efficiency and conservation; material conservation and resource efficiency; and environmental quality. CALGreen also provides voluntary tiers and measures that local governments may adopt which encourage or require additional measures in the five green building topics. The most recent update to the CALGreen Code was adopted in 2022 and became effective on January 1, 2023.

LOCAL

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Applicable goals, objectives, and policies from the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element are listed below:

Greenhouse Gas Reduction

- e) Goal CO 8: Development designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.
 - o Objective CO 8.3: Encourage the following green building and sustainable development practices on private development Projects, to the extent reasonable and feasible.
 - Policy CO 8.3.1: Evaluate site plans proposed for new development based on energy efficiency pursuant to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards for New Construction and Neighborhood Development, including the following: a) location efficiency; b) environmental preservation; c) compact, complete and connected neighborhoods; and d) resource efficiency, including use of recycled materials and water.
 - Policy CO 8.3.2: Promote construction of energy efficient buildings through requirements for LEED certification or through comparable alternative requirements as adopted by local ordinance.
 - Policy CO 8.3.6: Require new development to use passive solar heating and cooling techniques in building design and construction, which may include but are not limited to building orientation, clerestory windows, skylights, placement and type of windows, overhangs to shade doors and windows, and use of light-colored roofs, shade trees, and paving materials.
 - Policy CO 8.3.7: Encourage the use of trees and landscaping to reduce heating and cooling energy loads, through shading of buildings and parking lots.

- Policy CO 8.3.8: Encourage energy-conserving heating and cooling systems and appliances, and energy-efficiency in windows and insulation, in all new construction.
- Policy CO 8.3.9: Limit excessive lighting levels and encourage a reduction of lighting when businesses are closed to a level required for security.

City of Santa Clarita Green Building Standards Code

Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 25.01.010, Adoption of the City Green Building Standards Code, regulates the planning, design, operation, construction, use and occupancy of every new building or structure to ensure buildings have a more positive environmental impact and encourage sustainable construction practices.

City of Santa Clarita Energy Conservation Code

Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 24.01.010, Adoption of the City Energy Conservation Code, regulates the design, construction, alteration, installation, and repair of building envelopes, space-conditioning systems, water-heating systems, indoor lighting systems of buildings, outdoor lighting and signage, and certain equipment to enhance the efficiency and reduce energy use of buildings.

4.4.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to energy are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. In accordance these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to energy if it would:

Threshold 4.4(a): *Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation; or*

Threshold 4.5(b): *Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.*

4.4.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to energy use considered the potential future improvements in the Project Site which are envisioned as creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the Project Site which include programmable gathering space and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children's playgrounds, and parks.

The analysis of operational electricity and natural gas usage is based on the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) modeling results for the Project. The Project's estimated electricity

and natural gas consumption is based primarily on CalEEMod's default settings for Los Angeles County, and consumption factors provided by SCE and Southern California Gas, the electricity and natural gas providers, respectively, for the City and the Project Site. The results of the CalEEMod modeling are included in **Appendix B**. The amount of operational fuel consumption was estimated using the CARB EMFAC2021 website platform, which provides projections for typical daily fuel usage in the County, and the Project's annual VMT. The estimated construction fuel consumption is based on the Project's construction equipment list, timing/phasing, and hours of duration for construction equipment, as well as vendor, hauling, and construction worker trips.

Table 4.4-1 lists the type and square footage of buildings that would be constructed as part of the Project and the comparable CalEEMod land use. The proposed land uses and building square footage were put into CalEEMod to calculate energy consumption for all buildout scenarios.

**TABLE 4.4-1
PROPOSED BUILDING TYPES AND LAND USES**

Building Land Use	CalEEMod Land Use ¹	Existing Square Footage	Low Buildout Scenario Square Footage	Full Buildout Scenario Square Footage	High Buildout Scenario Square Footage
Regional Mall and Retail	Regional Shopping Center	982,344	728,407	623,466	623,466
Other Retail	Strip Mall	83,579	185,635	178,216	199,642
Offices	General Office Building	507,500	829,294	1,038,136	1,117,731
Civic Uses	Government Office Building	95,800	95,800	20,800	20,800
Library	Library	26,000	26,000	0	0
Theatre	Movie Theater (No Matinee)	182,700	182,700	182,700	182,700
Restaurants	High Turnover (Sit Down Restaurant)	80,200	80,200	80,200	80,200
Hotel and Convention Center	Hotel	0	317,200	317,200	364,780
Apartments ²	Apartments Mid Rise	0	1,368,960	2,139,840	2,460,480
Total Square Footage		1,958,123	2,445,236	2,440,718	2,589,319

Notes:

1. As modeled in CalEEMod version 2022.1.

Calculated from CalEEMod defaults based on proposed number of units, which are 1,426 units under low buildout, 2,229 units under full buildout, and 2,563 units under high buildout.

Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

This analysis evaluates energy demand and consumption during the construction and operation of the Proposed Project and its various buildout scenarios.

CONSTRUCTION

Project construction would require temporary energy consumption primarily through the use of fuel for construction equipment, construction worker vehicle trips to and from the Project Site, and the import and export of earth materials to and from the Project Site by heavy trucks. Energy consumption during construction, including gasoline and diesel fuel consumption from construction equipment, hauling trips, vendor trips, and worker trips, was estimated using the assumptions and factors from CalEEMod.

OPERATION

The Project would require energy use in the form of electricity, natural gas, and fuel consumption. **Table 4.4-2** displays the existing operational energy consumption for electricity, natural gas, and operational mobile sources.

TABLE 4.4-2
EXISTING PROJECT SITE ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Energy Type	Existing Condition Annual Energy Consumption
Electricity Consumption ¹	25,999 MWh
Natural Gas Consumption ¹	398,695 therms
Operational Automotive Fuel Consumption	3,704,293 gallons

Notes:

1. As modeled in CalEEMod version 2022.1.

Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

Energy Sources

The annual electricity and natural gas consumption from the Proposed Project were compared to the total consumption in Los Angeles County in 2022, the latest year for which consumption data is available. Energy consumption from the existing uses was deducted from the Project's consumptions under each buildout scenario. The CalEEMod modeling included energy consumption data for the Project and each buildout. The annual electricity (kWh) and natural gas (therms) consumption from CalEEMod was used as the approximate annual energy consumption during operation.

Mobile Sources

The Project's mobile source energy consumption was estimated by multiplying the Project's total VMT (provided by Fehr and Peers in **Appendix B** of this Draft EIR) by the fuel consumption rate from EMFAC2021. The assumed vehicle fleet mix provided in CalEEMod for the opening year of 2040 was used to determine the total annual operational fuel consumption of the Project. Under the existing (baseline) condition, the Project Site generates 20,635 trips per day and 188,068 miles of VMT per day. Under the low buildout condition, the Project would generate 32,915 trips per day and 322,406 miles of VMT per day. Under the full buildout condition, the Project would generate 37,666 trips per day and 383,296 miles of VMT per day. Under the high buildout condition, the Project would generate 41,050 trips per day and 424,647 miles of VMT per day.

CEQA GUIDELINES APPENDIX F

CEQA Guidelines Appendix F is an advisory document that assists EIR preparers in determining whether a project will result in the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy. The analysis in **Threshold 4.4(a)** is informed by Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, which includes the following criteria to determine whether this threshold of significance is met:

- **Criterion 1:** The Project's energy requirements and its energy use efficiencies by amount and fuel type for each stage of the Project including construction, operation, maintenance and/or removal. If appropriate, the energy intensiveness of materials may be discussed.
- **Criterion 2:** The effects of the Project on local and regional energy supplies and on requirements for additional capacity.

- **Criterion 3:** The effects of the Project on peak and base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy.
- **Criterion 4:** The degree to which the Project complies with existing energy standards.
- **Criterion 5:** The effects of the Project on energy resources.
- **Criterion 6:** The Project’s projected transportation energy use requirements and its overall use of efficient transportation alternatives.

4.4.5 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.4(a): *Would the Project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation?*

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Project-Related Sources of Energy Consumption

This analysis focuses on three sources of energy that are relevant to the Proposed Project: electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel for vehicle trips and off-road equipment associated with Project construction and operations. The various buildout scenarios’ estimated energy consumption is summarized in **Table 4.4-3** through **Table 4.4-5**.

The existing annual energy consumption for electricity, natural gas, and automotive fuel was deducted from the various buildout scenarios for the Proposed Project. **Table 4.4-6** summarizes the various buildout scenarios’ net increase in energy consumption compared to Los Angeles County’s energy consumption. As shown in **Table 4.4-6**, the Project’s electricity usage would result in a 0.0203 percent, 0.0261 percent, and 0.0312 percent increase over the Los Angeles County’s typical annual electricity consumption for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively.

**TABLE 4.4-3
LOW BUILDOUT ANNUAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION INCREASE FROM EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Energy Type	Low Buildout Annual Energy Consumption ¹	Net Increase from Existing Conditions ²
Electricity Consumption	39,919 MWh	13,920 MWh
Natural Gas Consumption	721,057 therms	322,362 therms
Fuel Consumption³		
Construction Off-Road Fuel Consumption	366,550 gallons	366,550 gallons
Construction On-Road Fuel Consumption	12,976,167 gallons	12,979,167 gallons
Operational Automotive Fuel Consumption	6,350,290 gallons	2,645,997 gallons

Notes:

1. As modeled in CalEEMod version 2022.1.
2. Net increase is calculated by Low Buildout Annual Energy Consumption minus Existing Condition Annual Energy Consumption; refer to Table 4.4-2.
3. The existing conditions do not include any construction off-road or on-road usages. Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

**TABLE 4.4-4
FULL BUILDOUT ANNUAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION INCREASE FROM EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Energy Type	Full Buildout Annual Energy Consumption ¹	Net Increase from Existing Conditions ²
Electricity Consumption	43,865 MWh	17,866 MWh
Natural Gas Consumption	799,344 therms	400,649 therms
Fuel Consumption³		
Construction Off-Road Fuel Consumption	366,550 gallons	366,550 gallons
Construction On-Road Fuel Consumption	16,301,776 gallons	16,301,776 gallons
Operational Automotive Fuel Consumption	7,549,613 gallons	3,845,320 gallons

Notes:

1. As modeled in CalEEMod version 2022.1.
2. Net increase is calculated by Full Buildout Annual Energy Consumption minus Existing Condition Annual Energy Consumption; refer to **Table 4.4-2**.
3. The existing conditions do not include any construction off-road or on-road usages. Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

**TABLE 4.4-5
HIGH BUILDOUT ANNUAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION INCREASE FROM EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Energy Type	High Buildout Annual Energy Consumption ^{1,2}	Net Increase from Existing Conditions ³
Electricity Consumption	47,399 MWh	21,400 MWh
Natural Gas Consumption	898,283 therms	499,588 therms
Fuel Consumption³		
Construction Off-Road Fuel Consumption	366,550 gallons	366,550 gallons
Construction On-Road Fuel Consumption	18,125,016 gallons	18,125,016 gallons
Operational Automotive Fuel Consumption	8,364,086 gallons	4,659,793 gallons

Notes:

1. As modeled in CalEEMod version 2022.1.
2. Net increase is calculated by Full Buildout Annual Energy Consumption minus Existing Condition Annual Energy Consumption; refer to **Table 4.4-2**.
3. The existing conditions do not include any construction off-road or on-road usages. Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

Also, the Project's natural gas usage would result in a 0.0114 percent, 0.0142 percent, and 0.0177 percent increase over the Los Angeles County's typical annual natural gas consumption for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively. The Project's construction off-road energy consumption would result in a 1.1445 percent increase over the Los Angeles County consumption for all buildout scenarios. The Project's construction on-road (vehicle) consumption would result in a 0.3275 percent, 0.4114 percent, and 0.4574 percent increase over the County's consumption for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively. Lastly, the Project's operational vehicle fuel consumption would increase the County's consumption by 0.0822 percent, 0.1194 percent, and 0.1447 percent for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 1**). Overall, the various buildout scenarios would result in a nominal energy consumption increase over the County's existing consumption. Therefore, the Project would not result in a significant increase in construction and operational energy consumption and impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**TABLE 4.4-6
PROJECT AND COUNTYWIDE ENERGY CONSUMPTION**

Energy Type	Los Angeles County Annual Energy Consumption	Net Increase of Low Buildout Annual Energy Consumption and Percentage Increase^{1,2}	Net Increase of Full Buildout Annual Energy Consumption and Percentage Increase^{1,2}	Net Increase of High Buildout Annual Energy Consumption and Percentage Increase^{1,2}
Electricity Consumption ³	68,484,956 MWh	13,920 MWh (0.0203%)	17,866 MWh (0.0261%)	21,400 MWh (0.0312%)
Natural Gas Consumption ³	2,820,285,935 therms	322,362 therms (0.0114%)	400,649 therms (0.0142%)	499,588 therms (0.0177%)
Fuel Consumption⁴				
Construction Off-Road Fuel Consumption ⁵	32,027,987 gallons	366,550 gallons (1.1445%)	366,550 gallons (1.1445%)	366,550 gallons (1.1445%)
Construction On-Road Fuel Consumption	3,962,644,738 gallons	12,979,167 gallons (0.3275%)	16,301,776 gallons (0.4114%)	18,125,016 gallons (0.4574%)
Operational Automotive Fuel Consumption	3,220,182,055 gallons	2,645,997 gallons (0.0822%)	3,845,320 gallons (0.1194%)	4,659,793 gallons (0.1447%)

Notes:

- Buildout annual energy consumption is based on the net increase from existing conditions. Refer to **Table 4.4-2** through **Table 4.4-4**.
- Percentages calculated based on net increase of the respective Buildout Annual Consumption divided by Los Angeles County Annual Energy Consumption.
- The buildout scenarios' electricity and natural gas consumption are compared to the total consumption in Los Angeles County in 2022, the latest year for which consumption data is available. Los Angeles County electricity consumption data source: California Energy Commission, Electricity Consumption by County, accessed January 22, 2024, <http://www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx>; Los Angeles County natural gas consumption data source: California Energy Commission, accessed January 22, 2024, Gas Consumption by County, <http://www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx>.
- The buildout scenarios' construction and automotive fuel consumption is compared with the projected Countywide fuel consumption in 2025 (construction start year) and 2040 (buildout year). Fuel consumption calculated based on CalEEMod results. Countywide fuel consumption is from the California Air Resources Board EMFAC2021 model.
- Construction off-road equipment list is based on CalEEMod defaults, which used Project site total acreage (approximately 111 acres) to generate the equipment list. Therefore, construction off-road fuel consumption is the same for all buildout scenarios.

Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

Construction

During construction, the Project would consume energy in two general forms: (1) the fuel energy consumed by construction vehicles and equipment; and (2) bound energy in construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass.

Fossil fuels used for construction vehicles and other energy-consuming equipment would be used during demolition, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coatings. Fuel energy consumed during construction would be temporary and would not represent a significant demand on energy resources. In addition, some incidental energy conservation would occur during construction through compliance with State requirements that heavy-duty diesel equipment not in use for more than five minutes be turned off. Project construction equipment would also be required to comply with the latest USEPA and CARB engine emissions standards. These emissions standards require highly efficient combustion systems that maximize fuel efficiency and reduce unnecessary fuel consumption. Due to increasing transportation costs and fuel prices, contractors and owners have a strong financial incentive to avoid wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 4**).

The Project-related incremental increase in the use of energy bound in construction materials such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes and manufactured or processed materials (e.g., lumber

and gas) would not substantially increase demand for energy compared to overall local and regional demand for construction materials. As indicated in **Table 4.4-6**, the Project's fuel consumption from off-road construction equipment use would be approximately 366,550 gallons for all buildout scenarios,⁶ which would increase fuel use in the County by 1.1445 percent. As also indicated in **Table 4.4-6**, the Project's fuel consumption from on-road construction vehicle use would be approximately 12,979,167 gallons, 16,301,776 gallons, and 18,125,016 gallons for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios respectively, which would increase fuel use in the County by 0.3275 percent, 0.4114 percent, and 0.4574 percent, respectively. As such, construction would have a nominal effect on the local and regional energy supplies (**CEQA Appendix F – Criterion 2**). It is noted that construction fuel use is temporary and would cease upon completion of construction activities. There are no unusual Project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in the region or State (**CEQA Appendix F – Criterion 5**). Additionally, construction contractors would be required to comply with the provisions of California Code of Regulations Title 13, Sections 2449 and 2485, which prohibit diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles and off-road diesel vehicles from idling for more than five minutes and would minimize unnecessary fuel consumption. Construction equipment would be subject to the USEPA Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard, which would also minimize inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary fuel consumption. Furthermore, per applicable regulatory requirements such as the 2022 CALGreen Code, the Project would comply with construction waste management practices to divert a minimum of 65 percent of construction debris. Therefore, construction fuel consumption would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than other similar development projects. As such, a less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Operation

Transportation Energy Demand

Pursuant to the Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, the NHTSA is responsible for establishing additional vehicle standards and for revising existing standards. Compliance with federal fuel economy standards is not determined for each individual vehicle model. Rather, compliance is determined based on each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the portion of their vehicles produced for sale in the United States. As indicated in **Table 4.4-6**, the operational VMT are estimated to consume approximately 2,645,997, 3,845,320, and 4,659,793 gallons of fuel per year for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively, which would increase the County's automotive fuel consumption by 0.0822 percent, 0.1194 percent, and 0.1447 percent, respectively, which is a nominal increase. The Project does not propose any unusual features that would result in excessive long-term operational fuel consumption (**CEQA Appendix F – Criterion 2**).

The Project would include surface parking lots and various parking structures. The proposed surface parking lots and parking structures would be required to comply with 2022 Title 24 standards pertaining to EV capable spaces and parking stalls with EV chargers. The Specific Plan also requires parking costs to be unbundled from the costs to rent or own a residential unit and includes provisions for the inclusion of affordable housing. The Project would include features

⁶ Construction off-road equipment list is based on CalEEMod defaults, which used Project site total acreage (approximately 111 acres) to generate the equipment list. Therefore, construction off-road fuel consumption is the same for all buildout scenarios.

such as short- and long-term bicycle parking spaces, which would encourage alternative modes of transportation. Additionally, the Project Site is surrounded by bus stops that are serviced by Santa Clarita Transit. Thus, the Project would encourage and support the use of EVs and alternative modes of transportation, thus reducing VMT and petroleum fuel consumption (**CEQA Appendix F – Criterion 4 and Criterion 6**).

Therefore, fuel consumption associated with vehicle trips generated by the Project would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary in comparison to other similar developments in the region. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Building Energy Demand

The CEC developed 2023–2035 forecasts for energy consumption and peak demand in support of the 2022 IEPR Update for each of the major electricity and natural gas planning areas and the State based on economic and demographic growth projections. The CEC forecasted baseline electricity consumption and natural gas grows at a rate of about 1.8 percent and 0.2 percent, respectively, annually through 2035.⁷ As shown in **Table 4.4-6**, operational energy consumption of the various buildout scenarios would result in a maximum 0.0312 percent increase in electricity consumption and a maximum 0.0177 percent increase in natural gas consumption over the current Countywide usage. As such, energy consumption would be significantly below the CEC’s forecasts and current Countywide usage. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the CEC’s energy consumption forecasts and would not require additional energy capacity or supplies (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 2**). The Project would also consume energy during the same time periods as other surrounding residential and commercial developments. As a result, the Project would not result in unique or more intensive peak or base period electricity demand (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 3**).

The Project would be required to comply with the most current and applicable version of the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (commonly known as Title 24), 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. Compliance with the most current and applicable Title 24 standards significantly reduces energy usage (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 4**).

Furthermore, the electricity provider, SCE, is subject to California’s RPS. The RPS requires investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 60 percent of total procurement by 2030 and 100 percent of total procurement by 2045. Renewable energy is generally defined as energy that comes from resources that are naturally replenished within a human timescale, such as sunlight, wind, tides, waves, and geothermal heat. The increase in reliance of such energy resources further ensures that new development projects will not result in the waste of the finite energy resources. In compliance with Title 24 and CALGreen standards, the Project would install high efficiency lighting, energy-efficient appliances, solar-ready roofs, and photovoltaic panels. As a result, the Project would ensure that energy consumption will be kept to a minimum through these components (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 5**).

⁷ California Energy Commission, *Final 2022 Integrated Energy Policy Report Update*, pp. 58 and 62, May 10, 2023.

Based on the analysis above, the Project would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of building energy during Project operation, or preempt future energy development or future energy conservation. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts with regard to energy consumption were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts with regard to energy consumption were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4.4(b): *Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.*

The Project would comply with the State and regional plans for renewable energy and energy efficiency. State and regional plans for renewable energy and energy efficiency include the CEC's IEPR and Title 24 standards, which includes CALGreen. The Project would meet the most current and latest Title 24 standards for energy efficiency and incorporate all applicable energy efficiency measures (solar-ready roof, high efficiency lighting, energy-efficient appliances, etc.). Compliance with Title 24 standards would ensure the Project's consistency with the IEPR building energy efficiency recommendations, which would ensure Project conformance with the State's energy reduction goals. The Project would also comply with the City's Green Building Standard Code and Energy Conservation Code, as well as with applicable energy goals and measures identified in the City's General Plan; refer to Section 4.6, Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

4.4.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The geographic context for the cumulative analysis of electricity consumption is SCE's service area and the geographic context for the cumulative analysis of natural gas consumption is SoCalGas' service area. While the geographic context for transportation-related energy use is more difficult to define, it is meaningful to consider the Project in the context of Countywide consumption. Growth within these areas is anticipated to increase the demand for electricity, natural gas, and transportation energy, as well as the need for energy infrastructure, such as new or expanded energy facilities.

Electricity and Natural Gas

Buildout of the Project's additional growth, as forecasted to occur in the SCE and SoCalGas service areas, would increase electricity and natural gas consumption. Therefore, the Project and related projects would cumulatively increase the need for electrical and natural gas supplies and infrastructure capacity, potentially including new or expanded electrical and natural gas facilities. However, as discussed above, the Project's electricity demand would not significantly increase SCE's total electricity demand for its service population for all buildout scenarios, and the Project's natural gas demand would be nominal compared to SoCalGas' total natural gas demand for its service population.

Although future developments would result in the use of renewable and nonrenewable electricity and natural gas resources during construction and operation, which could limit future availability, the use of such resources would be on a relatively small scale given the sizes and types of uses proposed by the related projects and, further, would be reduced by measures being similarly implemented for the Project. In addition, SCE and SoCalGas both implement long-range planning methods that would account for regional and local growth expectations for their respective service areas. Furthermore, other future development projects and related projects would be expected to incorporate energy conservation features, comply with applicable regulations, including the CALGreen Code and California Energy Code standards, and incorporate mitigation measures as necessary. As such, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts related to the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary use of electricity and natural gas would not be cumulatively considerable and, therefore, would be less than significant.

Transportation Fuel

Buildout of the Project, the related projects, and additional forecasted growth would cumulatively increase the demand for transportation-related fuel in the State and region. As analyzed above, Project transportation fuel usage would represent a small percentage of total fuel consumption within Los Angeles County. As with the Project, other future development projects would be expected to reduce VMT by encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation and other design features that promote VMT reductions. As such, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts related to the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary use of transportation fuel would not be cumulatively considerable and, therefore, would be less than significant.

Consistency with Applicable Plans

The related projects within the Project vicinity and future development projects would be required to comply with the California Energy Code, CALGreen Code, and the City of Santa Clarita's Green Building Standards Code and Energy Conservation Code. As related projects would be required to meet the same energy consumption standards, there would be no significant cumulative impacts with regard to consistency with applicable energy conservation plans. Therefore, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts related to consistency with adopted energy conservation plans or State/local energy standards for renewable energy or energy efficiency would not be cumulatively considerable and, therefore, would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The Project's contribution to cumulative energy impacts is not cumulatively considerable. Therefore, cumulative energy impacts are less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The Project's contribution to cumulative energy impacts is not cumulatively considerable and cumulative energy impacts are less than significant without mitigation.

4.5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the existing geologic and soils conditions in the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) Area and evaluates the potential impacts to paleontological resources (i.e., fossil materials) and unique geologic features. The information in this section is derived, in part, from the One Valley One Vision Program EIR (i.e., the General Plan EIR, 2011) for the City, as well as environmental documents for other projects in the vicinity of the TCSP area.

4.5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

REGIONAL GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The TCSP area is located within the Santa Clarita Valley, which lies in the region of the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province of California. The Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province is characterized by east-west trending mountains and faults. Sedimentary basins within the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province include the Ventura, Soledad, and Ridge Basins, and the San Fernando Valley, which continue to accumulate alluvial sediments because of the continuous shifting of the San Andreas Fault and the Transverse Ranges fault systems.

The Santa Clarita Valley is surrounded by the Santa Susana Mountains to the south and west, the San Gabriel Mountains to the southeast, and the Sierra Pelona Mountains to the north, all of which are part of the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province. Smaller hills and ridgelines bisect the valley floor, which contains the drainage courses of the Santa Clara River and its tributaries. Within the Santa Clarita Valley, about 168,345 acres of land contain slopes greater than 10 percent, and 7,866 acres of land contain slopes of 25 percent or greater.¹

PROJECT SITE GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Geology

The City of Santa Clarita contains various soil types, including various soils classified under the following associations:² Saugus-Castaic-Balcom, Gaviota-Millsholm, Vista-Amargosa, Hanford-Ramona-Greenfield, Oak Glen-Gorman, and Ojai-Agua Dulce. The most abundant type of soil found within the City is the Saugus loam with 30 to 50 percent slopes, comprising approximately 7,689 acres of the City. The Saugus series are located on uplands, well drained, and contain slopes that range from 15 percent to 50 percent. In a typical profile, the Saugus soils consist of a surface layer of about 15 inches of grayish-brown loam and grayish-brown loam underlain by weakly consolidated sediment at a depth of 42 inches.³

The *Preliminary Report of Geotechnical Engineering Services: Proposed Sears Redevelopment (DP54), 24201 West Valencia Boulevard, Valencia, California* (Geotechnical Report) was prepared by GeoDesign Inc. dated November 20, 2018, for the Westfield Valencia Town Center Patios Connection Project. The project site for the Patios Connection Project is located within the boundaries of the TCSP Area. Soil borings were conducted as part of the Geotechnical Report to

¹ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, Conservation and Open Space, 2012.

² A soil association is a landscape that has a distinctive proportional pattern of soils.

³ City of Santa Clarita, One Valley One Vision Draft Program Environmental Impact Report – Geology and Soils, September 2010.

examine subsurface conditions. The soil borings found that soils at the Patios Connection Project site consist of 3 to 4.5 inches of asphalt concrete paving underlain by 4 to 6 inches of base, underlain by fill soils ranging from 4 to 6 feet, and consisting of medium dense sandy soils and medium stiff fine-grained soils. The native soils underlying the upper fill soils consist of alternating layers of loose to medium dense sandy soils and medium stiff to stiff fine-grained soils.⁴

According to the US Department of Agriculture Web Soil Survey, the TCSP Area contains approximately 42 percent of Sorrento loam soils with 0 to 2 percent slopes, and approximately 57 percent of Yolo loam soils with 0 to 9 percent slopes.⁵

Topography

The TCSP Area is developed with existing uses including the Valencia Town Center, surface parking and parking structures, Los Angeles County-owned buildings, office and retail buildings, restaurants, and vacant land. Accordingly, the TCSP Area was previously graded by existing development and is largely flat. The TCSP Area does not contain hilly terrain or steep slopes. As discussed above, the TCSP Area contains slopes ranging from 0 to 9 percent.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act defines paleontological resources as “any fossilized remains, traces, or imprints of organisms, preserved in or on the earth’s crust, that are of paleontological interest and that provide information about the history of life on earth,” except for when these materials are associated with archaeological resources or cultural items (16 United States Code Section 470aaa).

Regional Paleontological Prehistory

The information in this section pertains to the paleontological history of the Los Angeles region. Los Angeles County is a prominent fossil-rich area for both fossil marine vertebrates and land vertebrates from rock deposited over the last 25 million years. This is due to several major events in the geologic history of the area.

During the Miocene and Pliocene periods (23.8 to 1.8 million years ago), most of what is now the greater Los Angeles Basin and the surrounding hills, including the Santa Clarita Valley, was submerged beneath the Pacific Ocean. Thousands of feet of sand, mud, and other materials containing marine animals and shore birds were deposited at the ocean bottom. Over time, many of these specimens became fossilized.

During the Pleistocene age, the movement and collision of tectonic plates elevated much of the Los Angeles County area above the ocean, forming hills and mountains where the ocean bottom and valleys once existed. The older sediments were eroded as they were uplifted from the terrain that now exists. Over 1,100 vertebrate fossil localities are known to exist within the County area, and much of these localities are generally scattered within 700 square miles (about 17 percent of the County) of hilly terrain that is underlain by fossil-producing rock formations. A substantial portion of the 700-square-mile area has been developed, and much of the remaining area is

⁴ GeoDesign Inc., *Preliminary Report of Geotechnical Engineering Services: Proposed Sears Redevelopment (DP54), 24201 West Valencia Boulevard, Valencia, California*, November 2018.

⁵ United States Department of Agriculture, Web Soil Survey, accessed January 2024, <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>.

threatened. The Santa Susana Mountains along the City’s southwest boundary and the Sierra Pelona Mountains to the north of the City are sensitive for paleontological resources. Accordingly, most of the potential fossil-producing rock formations are located within hilly terrain in the City.⁶

Existing Conditions

A paleontological resources record search was conducted by the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum for the Patios Connection Project in January 2019, which concluded that there are no recorded paleontological resources within the Patios Connection Project site boundaries. However, the records search did indicate that the sedimentary deposits underlying the Patios Connection Project site may have the potential to contain fossil materials. Specifically, shallow excavations in the younger Quaternary Alluvium that make up the surface layer are unlikely to discover significant fossil materials. Deeper excavations that extend into older Quaternary deposits of the Saugus Formation may contain significant fossil materials.⁷

4.5.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

Paleontological Resources Preservation Act

The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act was enacted to codify the generally accepted practice of limiting the collection of vertebrate fossils and other rare and scientifically significant fossils to qualified researchers. These researchers must obtain a permit from the appropriate state or federal agency and agree to donate any materials recovered to recognized public institutions, where they will remain accessible to the public and to other researchers.

STATE

California Code of Regulations

Title 14, Section 4307 of the California Code of Regulations states that “no person shall remove, injure, deface, or destroy any object of paleontological, archaeological, or historical interest or value.”

Public Resources Code Section 5097.5

Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 defines and details the unauthorized disturbance or removal of archaeological, paleontological, or historical resources located on public lands which is considered a misdemeanor violation:

“A person shall not knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure, or deface, any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, rock art, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over the lands.”

⁶ City of Santa Clarita, One Valley One Vision Draft Program Environmental Impact Report – Cultural Resources, September 2010.

⁷ Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Paleontological resources for the proposed Valencia Sears Redevelopment Project, January 2019.

LOCAL

There are no local regulations that apply to paleontological resources or unique geologic features. Similarly, the City's General Plan does not include any goals, objectives, and policies specifically related to paleontological resources or unique geologic features.

4.5.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to geology and soils are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist.

In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to geology and soils if it would:

- Threshold 4.5(a):** *Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*
- i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42;*
 - ii. Strong seismic ground shaking;*
 - iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction;*
 - iv. Landslides;*
- Threshold 4.5(b):** *Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;*
- Threshold 4.5(c):** *Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse;*
- Threshold 4.5(d):** *Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property;*
- Threshold 4.5(e):** *Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater;*
- Threshold 4.5(f):** *Result in a change in topography or ground surface relief features;*
- Threshold 4.5(g):** *Result in earth movement (cut and/or fill) of 10,000 cubic yards or more;*
- Threshold 4.5(h):** *Involve development and/or grading on a slope greater than 10% natural grade;*
- Threshold 4.5(i):** *Result in the destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical feature; and/or*

Threshold 4.5(j): *Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.*

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The Project would not result in significant impacts related to the following significance thresholds as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**); therefore, they are not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.5(a): *Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*

- i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42;*
- ii. Strong seismic ground shaking;*
- iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction;*
- iv. Landslides;*

Threshold 4.5(b): *Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;*

Threshold 4.5(c): *Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse;*

Threshold 4.5(d): *Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property;*

Threshold 4.5(e): *Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater;*

Threshold 4.5(f): *Result in a change in topography or ground surface relief features;*

Threshold 4.5(g): *Result in earth movement (cut and/or fill) of 10,000 cubic yards or more;*

Threshold 4.5(h): *Involve development and/or grading on a slope greater than 10% natural grade; or*

Threshold 4.5(i): *Result in the destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical feature.*

4.5.4 METHODOLOGY

This analysis evaluates anticipated changes in the physical environment resulting from the Project against the threshold of significance identified above to determine if direct and indirect changes

to existing conditions would constitute potentially significant effects to paleontological resources or unique geologic features. The analysis of Project impacts is based, in part, on regional information pertaining to paleontological resources and unique geologic features provided in the One Valley One Vision Program EIR for the City. Site-specific analysis is based, in part, on the Geotechnical Report and paleontological records search from the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum conducted for the Patios Connection Project. The site-specific analysis used technical information from the Patios Connection Project due to this project site coinciding with the TCSP Area.

4.5.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

No Project Design Features are proposed with respect to geology and soils.

4.5.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.5(j): Would the Project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

IMPACT ANALYSIS

As identified in Section 4.5.1, Environmental Setting, portions of the City of Santa Clarita are sensitive for paleontological resources and unique geologic features. Specifically, most of the potential fossil-producing rock formations are located within the hilly terrain surrounding the City, such as the Santa Susana Mountains and the Sierra Pelona Mountains to the southwest and north, respectively. The TCSP area is not within these areas.

Regarding unique geologic features, the Santa Clarita Valley contains diverse topography and prominent ridgelines. However, the existing topography of the TCSP Area is largely flat due to its location on the valley floor and prior grading associated with past development of the area. The TCSP Area does not contain any ridgelines or other natural topographic features. As such, areas containing unique geologic features as identified by the City's General Plan do not exist within the TCSP Area. Therefore, the Project would not result in the direct or indirect destruction of any unique geologic or physical feature, and impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed in Section 4.5.1, Environmental Setting, a paleontological resources record search was conducted by the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum for the Patios Connection Project, which is located within the boundaries of the TCSP area. There are no recorded paleontological resources within the Patios Connection Project site boundaries. However, deeper excavations that extend into older Quaternary deposits of the Saugus Formation underlying portions of the TCSP area may have the potential to encounter significant fossil materials.⁸ Future development within the TCSP area may require ground-disturbing activities that would extend into older Quaternary deposits of the Saugus Formation. Therefore, without mitigation, ground-disturbing activities resulting from buildout of the Specific Plan may result in significant impacts to paleontological resources.

Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-1 and MM-GEO-2 are included to require awareness training for construction workers and for a qualified paleontologist to monitor grading/excavation activities for development projects building out the proposed Specific Plan. If significant paleontological

⁸ Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Paleontological resources for the proposed Valencia Sears Redevelopment Project, January 2019.

resources are discovered, future development would implement Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-2 through MM-GEO-5, which would require evaluation of the significant resource, preservation of the resource in a paleontology laboratory, and a final report of results. With implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-1 through MM-GEO-5, impacts to paleontological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level.

MITIGATION MEASURES

To reduce potential significant impacts to paleontological resources, the following mitigation measures are proposed for the Project:

MM-GEO-1 Before starting construction for development projects in the TCSP area, the applicant must retain a qualified professional paleontologist as defined by Society for Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) (2010) standards. The paleontologist must create a Worker's Environmental Awareness Program pamphlet that is provided as training to construction personnel to understand regulatory requirements for the protection of paleontological resources. Additionally, the paleontologist must conduct training class(es) that include examples of paleontological resources to look for and protocols to follow if discoveries are made. The paleontologist must develop Project-specific training and supply any supplemental materials necessary to execute the training.

MM-GEO-2 Paleontological resources monitoring must be conducted under the guidance of a qualified professional paleontologist and by a qualified paleontological resource monitor(s) as defined by SVP (2010) standards during grading/excavation activities for development projects building out the TCSP Area, unless it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita that such grading/excavation activities would be limited to engineered fill materials and/or the younger Quaternary Alluvium that makes up the surface layer. Monitoring must include visual inspection of excavated or graded area and trench sidewalls. The monitor has authority to temporarily halt or divert construction equipment in order to investigate and salvage finds. The paleontological monitor has the authority to take sediment samples and test for microfossils at the discretion of the qualified professional paleontologist. If no significant fossils are exposed or the qualified professional paleontologist otherwise finds that the scientific value of the resource is exhausted, the qualified professional paleontologist may determine that full-time monitoring is no longer necessary or, with the approval of the City, may reduce or eliminate monitoring.

MM-GEO-3 Should a paleontological resource be encountered when a monitor is not on-site or a potentially significant resource is encountered that requires additional investigation or cannot be quickly salvaged by the paleontological monitor, all construction must cease within 50 feet of the discovery and the qualified professional paleontologist must be immediately notified. If the monitor is present at the time of discovery, then the monitor may temporarily divert the construction equipment around the find and notify the qualified professional paleontologist. The qualified professional paleontologist must then visit the site

and assess the resource for its scientific significance. Project excavations may continue elsewhere, monitored by a paleontological resource monitor. The qualified professional paleontologist must evaluate the find and contact the City as soon as possible with recommendations as to the significance and potential treatment of the find. Depending on the nature of the find, the determination of significance may require additional excavation, potentially including the preparation and execution of a Paleontological Testing Plan. If significant, depending on the nature of the resource, treatment may require the preparation and execution of a Paleontological Treatment Plan. The City, acting with the advice of the qualified professional paleontologist, must determine the significance and treatment of the discovered resources.

MM-GEO-4 All significant fossils collected must be prepared in a properly equipped paleontology laboratory to a point ready for permanent curation to the satisfaction of the City. Preparation must include the careful removal of excess matrix from fossil materials and stabilizing and repairing specimens, as necessary. Any fossils encountered and recovered must be prepared to the point of identification. Following the initial laboratory work, all fossil specimens must be identified to the lowest taxonomic level, analyzed, photographed, and catalogued, before being delivered to an accredited local museum repository for permanent curation and storage. All costs must be borne by the project applicant.

MM-GEO-5 At the conclusion of laboratory work and preparation for museum curation, a final report must be prepared describing the results of the paleontological monitoring efforts and submitted to the City of Santa Clarita. The report must include a summary of the field and laboratory methods, an overview of the geology and paleontology in the Project vicinity, a list of taxa recovered (if any), an analysis of fossils recovered (if any) and their scientific significance, and recommendations. If the monitoring efforts produced fossils, then a copy of the report must also be submitted to the designated museum repository. Accompanying notes, maps, and photographs must also be filed at the repository. The cost of curation is assessed by the repository and is the responsibility of the Project applicant.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-1 through MM-GEO-5 would reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level.

4.5.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Due to the site-specific nature of geological conditions (e.g., soils, topography, and geological features), geological impacts are typically assessed on a project-by-project basis, rather than on a cumulative basis. As a result, whether a project would impact unique geologic feature depends on the geotechnical conditions of the individual development site. Further, ground-disturbing activities occurring within the TCSP Area would not directly interact or combine with similar effects

involving related projects outside of the TCSP Area. Thus, construction activities would not affect the same geologic features. Therefore, because Project-related impacts related to geologic features are site-specific, the Project's impacts to unique geologic features would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts to unique geologic features would be less than significant.

Regarding potential cumulative impacts related to paleontological resources, the TCSP Area is located within the Santa Clarita Valley, which has been identified as an area that is sensitive for paleontological resources. The Project's impacts on paleontological resources were determined to be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-1 through MM-GEO-5. As with the Project, it is anticipated that mitigation measures would be established, as necessary, to address potential impacts to paleontological resources as part of the environmental review processes for related projects. In addition, related projects would be required to comply with federal and State law regarding paleontological resources to ensure the proper preservation of any sensitive paleontological resources. Therefore, the Project's impacts to paleontological resources would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant with mitigation.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Cumulative impacts with regard to geology and soils were determined to be less than significant with the implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-1 through MM-GEO-5, as described above.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Cumulative impacts with regard to geology and soils are less than significant after mitigation.

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4.6 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) compares the Project's characteristics with applicable regulations, plans, and policies set forth by the State of California, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the City of Santa Clarita (City) to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to determine whether the Project is consistent with and/or would conflict with the provisions of these plans. To assist in analyzing the Project's potential to conflict with applicable regulations, plans, and policies, this section also estimates the Project's GHG emissions generated by Project construction and operations.

4.6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is the observed changes in the average temperature of Earth's atmosphere and oceans over an extended period. The baseline against which these changes are measured originates in historical records that identify temperature changes that occurred in the past. The global climate is changing continuously, as evidenced in the geologic record which indicates repeated episodes of substantial warming and cooling, typically at an incremental rate over the course of thousands of years. However, scientists have observed acceleration in the rate of warming over the past 150 years.

The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) expressed that the rise and continued growth of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentrations is due to human activities, which has led the climate to warm at an unprecedented rate in the last 2,000 years. Since the late 1700s, estimated concentrations of CO₂, methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O) in the atmosphere have increased by over 43 percent, 156 percent, and 17 percent, respectively, primarily due to human activity. Emissions resulting from human activities are thereby contributing to an average increase in Earth's temperature.

Greenhouse Gases

Gases that absorb and re-emit infrared radiation in the atmosphere are called GHGs. GHGs are emitted by natural processes and human activities. The gases that are widely seen as the principal contributors to human-induced climate change include CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, fluorinated gases such as hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆). Of these gases, CO₂ and CH₄ are emitted in the greatest quantities from human activities. CO₂ emissions are usually by-products of fossil fuel combustion, and CH₄ emissions result from off-gassing associated with agricultural practices and landfills. Human-made GHGs, many of which have greater heat-absorption potential than CO₂, include fluorinated gases and SF₆. Water vapor is excluded from the list of GHGs because it is short-lived in the atmosphere, and its atmospheric concentrations are largely determined by natural processes, such as oceanic evaporation.

Different types of GHGs have varying global warming potentials (GWP). The GWP of a GHG is the potential of a gas or aerosol to trap heat in the atmosphere over a timescale of generally 100 years. Because GHGs absorb different amounts of heat, CO₂ is used as a common reference gas to relate the amount of heat absorbed to the amount of the gas emitted. This relationship is referred to as a "carbon dioxide equivalent" (CO₂e), which is the amount of GHG emitted multiplied by its GWP. CO₂ has a 100-year GWP of one. By contrast, CH₄ has a GWP of 30, meaning its global warming effect is 30 times greater than CO₂ on a molecule per molecule basis.

The accumulation of GHGs in the atmosphere regulates the earth's temperature. Without the natural heat-trapping effect of GHGs, the earth's surface would be about 33°C cooler. GHG emissions from human activities, particularly the consumption of fossil fuels for electricity production and transportation, are believed to have elevated the concentration of these gases in the atmosphere beyond the level of concentrations that occur naturally.

Climate Change Impacts

Globally, climate change can affect environmental resources through impacts related to future temperatures and precipitation patterns. Scientific modeling predicts that continued GHG emissions at or above current rates would induce more extreme climate changes during the 21st century than were observed during the 20th century. Long-term trends have found that each of the past three decades has been warmer than all the previous decades in the instrumental record, and the decade from 2000 through 2010 has been the warmest. Due to past and current activities, anthropogenic GHG emissions are increasing the global mean surface temperature at a rate of 0.2°C per decade. In addition to these findings, there are identifiable signs that global warming is currently taking place, including substantial ice loss in the Arctic over the past two decades.

CLIMATE CHANGE IN CALIFORNIA

Greenhouse Gases

Based on the California Air Resources Board (CARB) California Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2000-2021, California produced 381.3 million metric tons of CO₂e (MMTCO₂e) in 2021, which is 12.6 MMTCO₂e higher than 2020 levels.¹ The decrease in emissions during 2020 are likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The major source of GHG emissions in California is the transportation sector, which comprises 38.2 percent of the State's total GHG emissions. The industrial sector is the second largest source, comprising 19.4 percent of the State's GHG emissions, while electrical power accounts for approximately 16.4 percent. The magnitude of California's total GHG emissions is due in part to its large size and population compared to other states. However, a factor that reduces California's per capita fuel use and GHG emissions as compared to other states is its relatively mild climate. The State of California has achieved its 2020 GHG emissions reduction target of reducing emissions to 1990 levels, as emissions have stayed below 431 MMTCO₂e per year since 2016.

Climate Change Impacts

Potential impacts of climate change in California may include loss in water supply from reduced snowpack; sea level rise; and an increase in extreme heat days per year, large forest fires, and drought years. Below is a summary of some of the potential effects that could be experienced in California due to climate change.

Air Quality

Scientists project that the annual average maximum daily temperatures in California could rise by 2.4 to 3.2°C in the next 50 years and by 3.1 to 4.9°C in the next century. Higher temperatures are conducive to air pollution formation, and rising temperatures could lead to worsened air quality in

¹ California Air Resources Board, *California Greenhouse Gas Emissions from 2001 to 2021: Trends of Emissions and Other Indicators*, December 14, 2023.

California. As temperatures have increased in recent years, the area burned by wildfires throughout the State has increased, and wildfires have occurred at higher elevations in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Severe heat accompanied by drier conditions and poor air quality could increase the number of heat-related deaths, illnesses, and asthma attacks.

Water Supply

The average early spring snowpack in the western United States, including the Sierra Nevada Mountains, decreased by about 10 percent during the last century. During the same period, sea levels rose over 0.15 meters along the Central and Southern California coasts. The Sierra snowpack provides most of California's water supply as snow that accumulates during wet winters is released slowly during the dry months of spring and summer. A warmer climate is predicted to reduce the fraction of precipitation that falls as snow and the amount of snowfall at lower elevations, thereby reducing the total snowpack. Year-to-year variability in Statewide precipitation levels has increased since 1980, meaning that wet and dry precipitation extremes have become more common. The overall impact of climate change on future precipitation trends and water supplies in California is uncertain, although projections indicate that the average spring snowpack in the Sierra Nevada and other mountain catchments in Central and Northern California will decline by approximately 66 percent from its historical average by 2050.

Hydrology and Sea Level Rise

Climate change could affect the intensity and frequency of storms and flooding and induce substantial sea level rise in the coming century. The rate of increase of global mean sea levels between 1993 to 2020, observed by satellites, is approximately 3.3 millimeters per year, double the twentieth century trend of 1.6 millimeters per year. A rise in sea levels could erode 31 to 67 percent of Southern California beaches and cause flooding of approximately 370 miles of coastal highways during 100-year storm events. This would also jeopardize California's water supply due to saltwater intrusion and induce groundwater flooding and/or exposure of buried infrastructure. Furthermore, increased storm intensity and frequency could affect the ability of flood-control facilities, including levees, to handle storm events.

Agriculture

The annual average maximum daily temperatures in California could rise by 4.4 to 5.8 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) in the next 50 years and by 5.6 to 8.8°F in the next century. Rising temperatures resulting from climate change could have four major impacts on plants and animals related to: (1) timing of ecological events; (2) geographic distribution and range; (3) species' composition and the incidence of non-native species within communities; and (4) ecosystem processes, such as carbon cycling and storage. Increases in wildfire would further remove sensitive habitat; increased severity in droughts would potentially starve plants and animals of water; and sea level rise would affect sensitive coastal ecosystems.

Ecosystems and Wildlife

The annual average maximum daily temperatures in California could rise by 4.4 to 5.8 degrees °F in the next 50 years and by 5.6 to 8.8°F in the next century. Rising temperatures resulting from climate change could have four major impacts on plants and animals related to: (1) timing of ecological events; (2) geographic distribution and range; (3) species' composition and the incidence of non-native species within communities; and (4) ecosystem processes, such as carbon cycling and storage. Increases in wildfire would further remove sensitive habitat; increased

severity in droughts would potentially starve plants and animals of water; and sea level rise would affect sensitive coastal ecosystems.

4.6.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

United States Supreme Court Cases

The U.S. Supreme Court in *Massachusetts et al. v. Environmental Protection Agency et al.* (549 U.S. 05-1120 [2007]) held that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has the authority to regulate motor-vehicle GHG emissions under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA). The USEPA issued a Final Rule for mandatory reporting of GHG emissions in October 2009. This Final Rule applies to fossil fuel suppliers, industrial gas suppliers, direct GHG emitters, and manufacturers of heavy-duty and off-road vehicles and vehicle engines and requires annual reporting of emissions. In 2012, the USEPA issued a Final Rule that establishes the GHG permitting thresholds that determine when CAA permits under the New Source Review Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Title V Operating Permit programs are required for new and existing industrial facilities.

In 2014, the US Supreme Court in *Utility Air Regulatory Group v. EPA* (134 S. Ct. 2427 [2014]) held that the USEPA may not treat GHGs as an air pollutant for purposes of determining whether a source is a major source required to obtain a Prevention of Significant Deterioration or Title V permit. The Court also held that Prevention of Significant Deterioration permits that are otherwise required (based on emissions of other pollutants) may continue to require limitations on GHG emissions based on the application of Best Available Control Technology.

STATE

Assembly Bill 1493

Assembly Bill (AB) 1493, also known as the Pavley Bill, requires that CARB develop and adopt by January 1, 2005, regulations that achieve “the maximum feasible and cost-effective reduction of GHG emissions from motor vehicles.” On June 30, 2009, the USEPA granted the waiver of CAA preemption to California for its GHG emissions standards for motor vehicles beginning with the 2009 model year. Pavley I regulates model years from 2009 to 2016 and Pavley II, which is now referred to as “LEV (Low Emission Vehicle) III GHG,” regulates model years from 2017 to 2025. The Advanced Clean Cars program coordinates the goals of the LEV, Zero Emissions Vehicles (ZEV), and Clean Fuels Outlet programs, and should provide major reductions in GHG emissions. By 2025, when the rules will be fully implemented, new automobiles will emit 34 percent fewer GHGs and 75 percent fewer smog-forming emissions from their model year 2016 levels.

Assembly Bill 32 - California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006

California’s major initiative for reducing GHG emissions is outlined in AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, which was signed into law in 2006. AB 32 codifies the Statewide goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and required CARB to prepare a Scoping Plan that outlines the main State strategies for reducing GHGs to meet the 2020 deadline. In addition, AB 32 required CARB to adopt regulations to require reporting and verification of Statewide GHG emissions. Based on this guidance, CARB approved a 1990 Statewide GHG level

and 2020 limit of 427 MMTCO₂e. The Scoping Plan was approved by CARB on December 11, 2008, and included measures to address GHG emissions reduction strategies related to energy efficiency, water use, and recycling and solid waste, among other measures. Many of the GHG emissions reduction measures included in the Scoping Plan (e.g., Low Carbon Fuel Standard, Advanced Clean Car standards, and Cap-and-Trade) have been adopted since approval of the Scoping Plan.

In May 2014, CARB approved the first update to the AB 32 Scoping Plan. The 2013 Scoping Plan Update defined CARB's climate change priorities for the next five years and set the groundwork to reach post-2020 Statewide goals. The update highlighted California's progress toward meeting the "near-term" 2020 GHG emission reduction goals defined in the original Scoping Plan. It also evaluated how to align the State's longer-term GHG emissions reduction strategies with other State policy priorities, including those for water, waste, natural resources, clean energy, transportation, and land use.

Senate Bill 32 - California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2016

Senate Bill (SB) 32, signed into law in 2016, extended AB 32 by requiring the State to further reduce GHGs to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (the other provisions of AB 32 remained unchanged). In 2017, CARB adopted the 2017 Scoping Plan, which provided a framework for achieving the 2030 target. The 2017 Scoping Plan relied on the continuation and expansion of existing policies and regulations, such as the Cap-and-Trade Program, as well as implementation of then recently adopted policies, such as SB 350 and SB 1383. The 2017 Scoping Plan also put an increased emphasis on innovation, adoption of existing technology, and strategic investment to support its strategies. As with the 2013 Scoping Plan Update, the 2017 Scoping Plan did not provide project-level thresholds for land use development. Instead, it recommended that local governments adopt policies and locally appropriate quantitative thresholds consistent with Statewide per capita goals of no more than 6 MTCO₂e by 2030 and 2 MTCO₂e by 2050.

2022 Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan

In response to the passage of AB 1279 and the identification of the 2045 GHG emissions reduction target, CARB published the Final 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan in November 2022 (2022 Scoping Plan). The 2022 Scoping Plan builds upon the framework established by the 2008 Climate Change Scoping Plan and previous updates while identifying a new, technologically feasible, cost-effective, and equity-focused path to achieve California's climate target. The 2022 Scoping Plan includes policies to achieve a significant reduction in fossil fuel combustion, further reductions in short-lived climate pollutants, support for sustainable development, increased action on natural and working lands to reduce emissions and sequester carbon, and the capture and storage of carbon.

The 2022 Scoping Plan assesses the progress California is making toward reducing its GHG emissions by at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, as called for in SB 32 and laid out in the 2017 Scoping Plan; addresses recent legislation and direction from Governor Newsom; extends and expands upon these earlier plans; and implements a target of reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045, as well as taking an additional step of adding carbon neutrality as a science-based guide for California's climate work. As stated in the 2022 Scoping Plan, "the plan outlines how carbon neutrality can be achieved by taking bold steps to reduce GHGs to meet the anthropogenic emissions target and by expanding actions to

capture and store carbon through the State's natural and working lands and using a variety of mechanical approaches." Specifically, the 2022 Scoping Plan achieves the following:

- Identifies a path to keep California on track to meet its SB 32 GHG reduction target of at least 40 percent below 1990 emissions by 2030.
- Identifies a technologically feasible, cost-effective path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and a reduction in anthropogenic emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels.
- Focuses on strategies for reducing California's dependency on petroleum to provide consumers with clean energy options that address climate change, improve air quality, and support economic growth and clean sector jobs.
- Integrates equity and protecting California's most impacted communities as driving principles throughout the document.
- Incorporates the contribution of natural and working lands to the State's GHG emissions, as well as their role in achieving carbon neutrality.
- Relies on the most up-to-date science, including the need to deploy all viable tools to address the existential threat that climate change presents, including carbon capture and sequestration, as well as direct air capture.
- Evaluates the substantial health and economic benefits of taking action.
- Identifies key implementation actions to ensure success.

In addition to reducing emissions from transportation, energy, and industrial sectors, the 2022 Scoping Plan includes emissions and carbon sequestration in natural and working lands and explores how they contribute to long-term climate goals. Under the Scoping Plan Scenario, California's 2030 emissions are anticipated to be 48 percent below 1990 levels, representing an acceleration of the current SB 32 target. Cap-and-trade regulation continues to play a large factor in the reduction of near-term emissions for meeting the accelerated 2030 reduction target. Every sector of the economy will need to begin to transition in this decade to meet these GHG emissions reduction goals and achieve carbon neutrality no later than 2045. The 2022 Scoping Plan approaches decarbonization from two perspectives, managing a phasedown of existing energy sources and technologies, as well as increasing, developing, and deploying alternative clean energy sources and technology.

Senate Bill 375 - 2008 Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act

SB 375, signed in August 2008, enhances the State's ability to reach AB 32 goals by directing CARB to develop regional GHG emission reduction targets to be achieved from passenger vehicles by 2020 and 2035. In addition, SB 375 directs each of the State's 18 major metropolitan planning organizations to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that contains a growth strategy to meet these emission targets for inclusion in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). On March 22, 2018, CARB adopted updated regional targets for reducing GHG emissions from 2005 levels by 2020 and 2035. SCAG was assigned targets of an 8 percent reduction in GHGs from transportation sources by 2020 and a 19 percent reduction in GHGs from transportation sources by 2035. In the SCAG region, SB 375 also provides the option for the

coordinated development of subregional plans by the subregional councils of governments and the county transportation commissions to meet SB 375 requirements.

Senate Bill 100 - California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program

Adopted on September 10, 2018, SB 100 supports the reduction of GHG emissions from the electricity sector by accelerating the State's Renewables Portfolio Standard Program, which had been last updated by SB 350 in 2015. SB 100 requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total retail sales by 2020, 60 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2045.

Executive Order B-55-18 to Achieve Carbon Neutrality

On September 10, 2018, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-55-18, which established a new Statewide goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 and maintaining net negative emissions thereafter. This goal is in addition to the existing Statewide GHG emissions reduction targets established by SB 375, SB 32, SB 1383, and SB 100.

California Building Standards Code

California Code of Regulations Title 24 is referred to as the California Building Standards Code. It consists of a compilation of several distinct standards and codes related to building construction, including plumbing, electrical, interior acoustics, energy efficiency, and accessibility for persons with physical and sensory disabilities. These standards are updated every three years. The most recent update, the 2022 California Building Standards Code, went into effect on January 1, 2023.

Part 6 – Building Energy Efficiency Standards/Energy Code

California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6, is the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, also referred to as the California Energy Code. This code, originally enacted in 1978, establishes energy-efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings to reduce California's energy demand. New construction and major renovations must demonstrate their compliance with the current Energy Code through submittal and approval of a Title 24 Compliance Report to the local building permit review authority and the California Energy Commission. The 2022 standards continue to improve upon the previous (2019) Title 24 standards for new construction of, and additions and alterations to, residential and nonresidential buildings. The 2022 Energy Code is anticipated to reduce GHG emissions by 10 MMTCO_{2e} over the next 30 years and result in approximately \$1.5 billion in consumer savings. Compliance with Title 24 is enforced through the building permit process.

Part 11 – California Green Building Standards

Title 24, Part 11, is referred to as the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code and was developed to help the State achieve its GHG emissions reduction goals under AB 32 by codifying standards for reducing building-related energy, water, and resource demand, which in turn reduces GHG emissions from energy, water, and resource demand. The CALGreen Code establishes mandatory measures for new residential and nonresidential buildings, which include energy efficiency, water conservation, material conservation, planning and design, and overall environmental quality.

REGIONAL

SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)

SCAG adopted the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS (titled Connect SoCal) in 2020 to provide a roadmap for sensible ways to expand transportation options, improve air quality, and bolster Southern California's long-term economic viability. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS builds upon the progress made through implementation of the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS and includes ten goals focused on promoting economic prosperity, improving mobility, protecting the environment, and supporting healthy/complete communities. The SCS implementation strategies include focusing growth near destinations and mobility options, promoting diverse housing choices, leveraging technology innovations, and supporting implementation of sustainability policies. The SCS establishes a land use vision of center-focused placemaking, concentrating growth in and near Priority Growth Areas, transferring of development rights, urban greening, creating greenbelts and community separators, and implementing regional advance mitigation.

LOCAL

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the Santa Clarita General Plan includes the following goals, objectives, and policies related to GHG emissions that would be applicable to the Proposed Project:²

Conservation and Open Space Element: Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Goal CO 8: Development designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

- Objective CO 8.1: Comply with the requirements of State law, including AB 32, SB 375 and implementing regulations, to reach targeted reductions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
 - Policy CO 8.1.3: Revise codes and ordinances as needed to address energy conservation, including but not limited to the following:
 - Strengthen building codes for new construction and renovation to achieve a higher level of energy efficiency, with a goal of exceeding energy efficiency beyond that required by Title 24;
 - Adopt a Green Building Program to encourage green building practices and materials, along with appropriate ordinances and incentives;
 - Require orientation of buildings to maximize passive solar heating during cool seasons, avoid solar heat gain during hot periods, enhance natural ventilation, promote effective use of daylight, and optimize opportunities for on-site solar generation;

² City of Santa Clarita, *General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element*, June 2011.

- Encourage mitigation of the “heat island” effect through use of cool roofs, light-colored paving, and shading to reduce energy consumption for air conditioning.
- Objective CO 8.3: Encourage the following green building and sustainable development practices on private development projects, to the extent reasonable and feasible.
 - Policy CO 8.3.1: Evaluate site plans proposed for new development based on energy efficiency pursuant to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards for New Construction and Neighborhood Development, including the following: a) location efficiency; b) environmental preservation; c) compact, complete, and connected neighborhoods; and d) resource efficiency, including use of recycled materials and water.
 - Policy CO 8.3.2: Promote construction of energy efficient buildings through requirements for LEED certification or through comparable alternative requirements as adopted by local ordinance.
 - Policy CO 8.3.6: Require new development to use passive solar heating and cooling techniques in building design and construction, which may include but are not limited to building orientation, clerestory windows, skylights, placement and type of windows, overhangs to shade doors and windows, and use of light colored roofs, shade trees, and paving materials.
 - Policy CO 8.3.7: Encourage the use of trees and landscaping to reduce heating and cooling energy loads, through shading of buildings and parking lots.
 - Policy CO 8.3.8: Encourage energy-conserving heating and cooling systems and appliances, and energy-efficiency in windows and insulation, in all new construction.
 - Policy CO 8.3.9: Limit excessive lighting levels, and encourage a reduction of lighting when businesses are closed to a level required for security.
 - Policy CO 8.3.10: Provide incentives and technical assistance for installation of energy-efficient improvements in existing and new buildings.
 - Policy CO 8.3.11: Consider allowing carbon off-sets for large development projects, if appropriate, which may include funding off-site projects or purchase of credits for other forms of mitigation, provided that any such mitigation shall be measurable and enforceable.
 - Policy CO 8.3.12: Reduce extensive heat gain from paved surfaces through development standards wherever feasible.

City of Santa Clarita Green Building Standards Code

Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 25.01.010 (Adoption of the City Green Building Standards Code) regulates the planning, design, operation, construction, use, and occupancy of every new building or structure to ensure buildings have a more positive environmental impact and to encourage sustainable construction practices.

City of Santa Clarita Energy Conservation Code

Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 24.01.010 (Adoption of the City Energy Conservation Code) regulates the design, construction, alteration, installation, or repair of building envelopes, space-conditioning systems, water-heating systems, indoor lighting systems of buildings, outdoor lighting and signage, and certain equipment to enhance the efficiency and reduce energy use of buildings.

4.6.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project on GHG emissions are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City’s Initial Study Checklist. In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to GHG emissions if it would:

Threshold 4.6(a): *Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; and/or*

Threshold 4.6(b): *Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.*

4.6.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to GHG emissions considered the buildout of the proposed Specific Plan, which is envisioned as creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless and buildable plan that is consistent with the City’s General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the Project Area, which include programmable gathering spaces and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children’s playgrounds, and parks.

The baseline against which to compare potential impacts of the Project includes the natural and anthropogenic drivers of global climate change, including worldwide GHG emissions from human activities that have increased by about 90 percent since 1970.³ As a result, the study area for climate change and the analysis of GHG emissions is broad. However, the study area is also informed by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b), which directs lead agencies to consider an “indirect physical change” only if that change is a reasonably foreseeable impact, which may be caused by the Project.

³ USEPA, *Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data*, <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-data>, accessed February 6, 2024.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 recommends that lead agencies quantify GHG emissions of projects and consider several other factors that may be used in the determination of significance of GHG emissions from a project, including the extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions; whether a project exceeds an applicable significance threshold; and the extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 does not establish a threshold of significance. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.6 provides lead agencies the discretion to establish significance thresholds for their respective jurisdictions, and in establishing those thresholds, a lead agency may appropriately look to thresholds developed by other public agencies or suggested by other experts, if any threshold chosen is supported by substantial evidence. The City of Santa Clarita has not adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing impacts related to GHG emissions and has not formally adopted a local plan for reducing GHG emissions subsequent to 2020. Similarly, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, CARB, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), or any other State or applicable regional agency has yet to adopt a numerical significance threshold for assessing GHG emissions that is applicable to the Project. The SCAQMD formed a GHG CEQA Significance Threshold Working Group (Working Group) to provide guidance to local lead agencies on determining significance for GHG emissions in their CEQA documents, which proposed a tiered approach for evaluating GHG emissions for development projects where SCAQMD is the lead agency as of the last Working Group meeting (Meeting No.15) held in September 2010.⁴ However, the proposed threshold was based on the State's GHG emissions reduction goal identified in AB 32 for the year 2020, which has been outdated, and SCAQMD never adopted the threshold.

Impacts of climate change are experienced on a global scale regardless of the location of GHG emission sources, and therefore, a numerical significance threshold for individual development projects is speculative. Throughout the State, air districts are moving from numerical significance threshold to qualitative significance thresholds that focus on project features to reduce GHG emissions or consistency with GHG reduction plans. For example, in the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) 2022 CEQA Guidelines, the GHG thresholds of significance are either whether land use projects include certain project design elements related to buildings and transportation or whether the project is consistent with a local GHG reduction strategy that meets the criteria under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b). This is a major update to BAAQMD's 2017 CEQA Guidelines, where a numerical significance threshold was required. To reduce GHG emissions impact, it is more effective for development projects to include project features that directly or indirectly reduce GHG emissions, than relying on a numerical significance threshold, which highly depends on the type and size of the development.

Therefore, the significance of the Project's potential impacts regarding GHG emissions and climate change is assessed in this EIR solely on its consistency with plans and policies adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions and mitigating the effects of climate change and the Project's ability to incorporate sustainable features and strategies in its design to reduce GHG emissions. The analysis has also quantified the Project's GHG emissions for informational

⁴ South Coast Air Quality Management District, *Board Letter – Interim CEQA GHG Significance Threshold for Stationary Sources, Rules and Plans*, December 5, 2008.

purposes. The methodology for quantifying GHG emissions is the same as the methodology for quantifying criteria pollutants and is discussed in detail in Section 4.2, Air Quality, of this Draft EIR.

Individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to directly influence climate change. However, physical changes caused by a project can contribute incrementally to significant cumulative effects, even if individual changes resulting from a project are limited. As a result, the issue of climate change typically involves an analysis of whether a project's contribution towards an impact would be cumulatively considerable. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(1), "cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(3), a project's incremental contribution to a cumulative impact can be found not cumulatively considerable if the project would comply with an approved plan or mitigation program that provides specific requirements that would avoid or substantially lessen the cumulative problem in the geographic area of the project. To qualify, such plans or programs must be specified in law or adopted by the public agency with jurisdiction over the affected resources through a public review process to implement, interpret, or make specific the law enforced or administered by the public agency. Examples of such programs include a water quality control plan, air quality attainment or maintenance plan, integrated waste management plan, habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plans, and plans or regulations for the reduction of GHG emissions. Therefore, a lead agency can make a finding that a project's GHG emissions impacts are less than significant and less than cumulatively considerable if the project complies with adopted programs, plans, policies, and/or other regulatory strategies to reduce GHG emissions.

4.6.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

The Project does not propose design features with the specific intent of reducing GHG emissions. However, by its nature, the proposed Specific Plan includes a variety of features that have the co-benefit of reducing GHG emissions by reducing vehicle miles travelled (VMT). Examples include providing a balanced mix of residential and commercial uses in a town center setting with a variety of onsite and nearby amenities for residents, employees, and patrons; proximity to transit opportunities, including the adjacent McBean Regional Transit Center; promoting infill development in an area with existing infrastructure and services; and providing enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities connecting to the City's existing network of sidewalks, trails, and paseos.

4.6.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.6(a): Would the Project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Threshold 4.6(b): Would the Project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Quantification of Project GHG Emissions

As discussed in Section 4.6.4, Methodology, Project emissions are quantified for informational purposes only as there is no applicable numeric threshold.

Construction

Construction of the Project would generate temporary GHG emissions primarily from construction equipment, construction worker trips to and from the Project Area, and heavy trucks to transport building materials. Construction GHG emissions are typically summed and amortized over the lifetime of a project (assumed to be a minimum of 30 years),⁵ then added to the operational emissions. As shown in

Table 4.6-1, construction from the Proposed Project would generate a total of 58,025 MTCO_{2e}, 70,754 MTCO_{2e}, and 77,952.45 MTCO_{2e} for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenario, respectively. Amortized over a 30-year period per SCAQMD guidance, construction emissions associated with the Project would generate 1,934.17 MTCO_{2e}, 2,358.47 MTCO_{2e}, and 2,598.41 MTCO_{2e} per year for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenario, respectively.

**TABLE 4.6-1
PROJECT CONSTRUCTION GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Construction Year	Low Buildout Scenario Emissions (MTCO _{2e})	Full Buildout Scenario Emissions (MTCO _{2e})	High Buildout Scenario Emissions (MTCO _{2e})
2025	673.80	673.80	673.80
2026	777.40	777.40	777.40
2027	3,537.97	4,048.50	4,436.02
2028	5,152.07	6,332.63	6,994.93
2029	5,038.18	6,192.91	6,840.33
2030	4,933.24	6,065.00	6,698.91
2031	4,831.86	5,941.78	6,562.77
2032	4,743.84	5,835.69	6,445.68
2033	4,610.52	5,671.42	6,263.75
2034	4,517.90	5,559.89	6,140.74
2035	4,435.32	5,460.49	6,031.11
2036	4,369.41	5,381.98	5,944.64
2037	4,290.29	5,286.48	5,839.30
2038	4,229.18	5,213.60	5,759.07
2039	1,430.07	1,731.50	1,898.33
2040	455.31	581.85	645.67
Total	57,846.36	70,754.53	77,952.45
Amortized Over 30 Years	1,928.21	2,358.48	2,598.41

Notes: MTCO_{2e} = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.
Refer to **Appendix B**.

⁵ When calculating construction emissions, SCAQMD policy requires that construction GHG emissions are amortized over a 30-year project lifespan, according to South Coast Air Quality Management District, *Board Letter – Interim CEQA GHG Significance Threshold for Stationary Sources, Rules and Plans*, December 5, 2008.

Operation

Operation of the Project would generate direct GHG emissions associated with area sources (such as landscape maintenance), mobile sources, and refrigerants. Indirect emission from the Proposed Project would include emission from energy consumption, water demand, and solid waste generation. The most recent version of the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2022.1 was used to calculate Project-related GHG emissions. The Project-specific VMT (as calculated by the Project’s Regional Travel Demand Model results) are discussed in detail in Section 4.11, Transportation, of this Draft EIR. Under the existing (baseline) condition, the Project Site generates 20,635 trips per day and 188,068 miles of VMT per day. Under the low buildout condition, the Project would generate 32,915 trips per day and 322,406 miles of VMT per day. Under the full buildout condition, the Project would generate 37,666 trips per day and 383,296 miles of VMT per day. Under the high buildout condition, the Project would generate 41,050 trips per day and 424,647 miles of VMT per day. Annual operational emissions from the existing conditions are summarized in **Table 4.6-2**. Annual operational emissions and amortized construction emissions from the various buildout scenarios for the Proposed Project are displayed in **Table 4.6-3** through **Table 4.6-5**. **Table 4.6-6** summarizes the amortized construction and net increase of operational emissions from existing conditions for the various buildout scenarios.

**TABLE 4.6-2
EXISTING OPERATIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Source	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	Refrigerants	CO ₂ e
	Metric Tons/year ¹				
Direct Emissions					
Area Source	39.71	0.00	0.00	-	39.86
Mobile Source	19,886.11	0.76	0.76	4.84	20,137.84
Refrigerants	-	-	-	22.07	22.07
<i>Total Direct Emissions²</i>	19,925.82	0.76	0.77	26.91	20,199.76
Indirect Emissions					
Energy	8,387.57	0.58	0.05	-	8,417.22
Solid Waste	330.14	33.00	0.00	-	1,155.05
Water Demand	565.45	9.36	0.23	-	866.47
<i>Total Indirect Emissions²</i>	9,283.17	42.93	0.28	0.00	10,438.74
Total Existing Emissions (MTCO₂e)²	30,638.51				

Notes:

1. Emissions calculated using California Emissions Estimator Model Version 2022.1 (CalEEMod) computer model.

2. Totals may be slightly off due to rounding.

Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

**TABLE 4.6-3
LOW BUILDOUT SCENARIO OPERATIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Source	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	Refrigerants	CO ₂ e
	Metric Tons/year ¹				
Direct Emissions					
Construction (amortized over 30 years)	1,889.66	0.04	0.12	1.40	1,928.21
Area Source	380.57	0.01	0.00	-	381.16
Mobile Source	34,029.96	1.26	1.29	8.30	34,453.80
Refrigerants	-	-	-	106.03	106.03
<i>Total Direct Emissions²</i>	36,300.19	1.32	1.41	115.72	36,869.19
Indirect Emissions					
Energy	13,458.59	0.94	0.08	-	13,505.73
Solid Waste	447.40	44.72	0.00	-	1,565.31
Water Demand	774.43	12.77	0.31	-	1,185.33
<i>Total Indirect Emissions²</i>	14,680.43	58.42	0.39	0.00	16,256.37
Total Project-Related Emissions (MTCO₂e)²	53,125.56				
Net Increase from Existing Conditions³ (MTCO₂e)	22,487.05				

Notes:

1. Emissions calculated using California Emissions Estimator Model Version 2022.1 (CalEEMod) computer model.
2. Totals may be slightly off due to rounding.
3. Net increase is calculated by total Project-related emissions minus existing conditions; refer to **Table 4.6-2**. Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis

**TABLE 4.6-4
FULL BUILDOUT SCENARIO OPERATIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Source	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	Refrigerants	CO ₂ e
	Metric Tons/year ¹				
Direct Emissions					
Construction (amortized over 30 years)	2,312.94	0.05	0.14	1.74	2,358.48
Area Source	566.85	0.01	0.00	-	567.66
Mobile Source	40,420.61	1.48	1.52	9.86	40,919.91
Refrigerants	-	-	-	106.89	106.89
<i>Total Direct Emissions²</i>	43,300.40	1.54	1.66	118.49	43,952.95
Indirect Emissions					
Energy	14,976.47	1.05	0.09	-	15,028.79
Solid Waste	498.83	49.86	0.00	-	1,745.24
Water Demand	860.42	14.18	0.34	-	1,316.48
<i>Total Indirect Emissions²</i>	16,335.72	65.08	0.43	0.00	18,090.51
Total Project-Related Emissions (MTCO₂e)²	62,043.45				
Net Increase from Existing Conditions³ (MTCO₂e)	31,404.95				

Notes:

1. Emissions calculated using California Emissions Estimator Model Version 2022.1 (CalEEMod) computer model.
2. Totals may be slightly off due to rounding.
3. Net increase is calculated by total Project-related emissions minus existing conditions; refer to **Table 4.6-2**. Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

**TABLE 4.6-5
HIGH BUILDOUT SCENARIO OPERATIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Source	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	Refrigerants	CO ₂ e
	Metric Tons/year ¹				
Direct Emissions					
Construction (amortized over 30 years)	2,548.42	0.05	0.16	1.93	2,598.41
Area Source	647.36	0.01	0.00	-	648.28
Mobile Source	44,764.47	1.63	1.68	10.93	45,315.51
Refrigerants	-	-	-	119.35	119.35
<i>Total Direct Emissions</i> ²	47,960.25	1.70	1.83	132.21	48,681.55
Indirect Emissions					
Energy	16,203.72	1.13	0.09	-	16,260.31
Solid Waste	531.03	53.07	0.00	-	1,857.89
Water Demand	918.04	15.12	0.36	-	1,404.54
<i>Total Indirect Emissions</i> ²	17,652.79	69.33	0.46	0.00	19,522.74
Total Project-Related Emissions (MTCO₂e)²	68,204.29				
Net Increase from Existing Conditions (MTCO₂e)	37,565.78				

Notes:

1. Emissions calculated using California Emissions Estimator Model Version 2022.1 (CalEEMod) computer model.
2. Totals may be slightly off due to rounding.
3. Net increase is calculated by total Project-related emissions minus existing conditions; refer to **Table 4.6-2**. Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

**TABLE 4.6-6
BUILDOUT SCENARIOS GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS NET INCREASE**

Emission Source	Low Buildout Scenario Net Increase from Existing Conditions (MTCO ₂ e)	Full Buildout Scenario Net Increase from Existing Conditions (MTCO ₂ e)	High Buildout Scenario Net Increase from Existing Conditions (MTCO ₂ e)
Construction	1,928.21	2,358.48	2,598.41
Area Source	341.30	527.80	608.42
Mobile Source	14,315.96	20,782.07	25,177.67
Refrigerants	83.96	84.82	97.28
Energy	5,088.51	6,611.57	7,843.09
Solid Waste	410.26	590.19	702.84
Water Demand	318.86	450.01	538.07
<i>Net Increase from Existing</i> ³	22,487.05	31,404.95	37,565.78

Notes:

1. Emissions are based on the net increase from existing conditions.
2. Net increase is calculated through respective buildout scenarios minus existing conditions; refer to Table 4.6-2 through Table 4.6-5.

Direct Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

- **Construction Emissions.** Construction GHG emissions are typically summed and amortized over the lifetime of the project (assumed to be a minimum of 30 years), then added to the operational emissions. As shown in **Table 4.6-1** and **Table 4.6-3** through **Table 4.6-5**, the Proposed Project would result in 1,928.21 MTCO₂e/year, 2,358.48 MTCO₂e/year, and 2,598.41 MTCO₂e/year of construction emissions when amortized over 30 years for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively.
- **Area Source.** The Project would result in a net increase of 341.30 MTCO₂e/year, 527.80 MTCO₂e/year, and 608.42 MTCO₂e/year from area source emissions for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively; refer to **Table 4.6-6**.

- **Mobile Source.** CalEEMod relies upon VMT rates, as calculated by the Regional Travel Demand Model for the Project, and project specific land use data to calculate mobile source emissions. The Project-specific VMT are discussed in detail in **Section 4.11, Transportation**, of this Draft EIR. The Project would directly result in a net increase of 14,315.96 MTCO₂e/year, 20,782.07 MTCO₂e/year, and 25,177.67 MTCO₂e/year of mobile source-generated GHG emissions for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively; refer to **Table 4.6.6**.
- **Refrigerants.** Refrigerants are substances used in equipment for air conditioning and refrigeration. Most of the refrigerants used today are HFCs or blends thereof, which can have high GWP values. All equipment that uses refrigerants has a charge size (i.e., quantity of refrigerant the equipment contains), and an operational refrigerant leak rate, and each refrigerant has a GWP that is specific to that refrigerant. CalEEMod quantifies refrigerant emissions from leaks during regular operation and routine servicing over the equipment lifetime, and then derives average annual emissions from the lifetime estimate. The Proposed Project would have various land uses that would have air conditioning and refrigeration on-site. The Project would directly result in a net increase of 83.96 MTCO₂e/year, 84.82 MTCO₂e/year, and 97.28 MTCO₂e/year from refrigerants for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively; refer to **Table 4.6-6**.

Indirect Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

- **Energy Consumption.** Energy consumption emissions were calculated using CalEEMod and Project-specific land use data. Southern California Edison (SCE) and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) would provide electricity and natural gas to the Project Site. The Project would indirectly result in a net increase of 5,088.51 MTCO₂e/year, 6,611.57 MTCO₂e/year, and 7,843.09 MTCO₂e/year due to energy consumption for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively; refer to **Table 4.6-6**.
- **Water Demand.** The Project operations would result in water demand. Emissions from indirect energy impacts due to water supply would result in a net increase of 318.86 MTCO₂e/year, 450.01 MTCO₂e/year, and 538.07 MTCO₂e/year for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively; refer to **Table 4.6-6**.
- **Solid Waste.** Solid waste associated with operations of the Proposed Project would result in a net increase of 410.6 MTCO₂e/year, 590.19 MTCO₂e/year, and 702.84 MTCO₂e/year for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively; refer to **Table 4.6-6**.

Total Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

As shown in **Table 4.6-6**, the total amount of Project-related GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources combined would result in a net increase of 22,487.05 MTCO₂e/year, 31,404.95 MTCO₂e/year, and 37,565.78 MTCO₂e/year for the low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios, respectively.

Project Consistency with Applicable Plans

Several plans and policies have been adopted to reduce GHG emissions in the Southern California region. The Project's consistency with the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan, SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, and the City of Santa Clarita General Plan are discussed below.

2022 Scoping Plan

The 2022 Scoping Plan strategies that are applicable to the Project include reducing fossil fuel use, energy demand, and VMT; maximizing recycling and diversion from landfills; and increasing water conservation. In addition, the 2022 Scoping Plan recommends project attributes for residential and mixed-use projects to qualitatively determine consistency with the Scoping Plan, included in Appendix D, Local Actions of the 2022 Scoping Plan. The Project's consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan is shown in **Table 4.6-7**. As shown, the Project would be consistent with applicable actions and strategies contained in the 2022 Scoping Plan.

SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS includes ten goals with corresponding implementation strategies for focusing growth near destinations and mobility options, promoting diverse housing choices, leveraging technology innovations, and supporting implementation of sustainability policies. These strategies include similar measures to the 2022 Scoping Plan, such as encouraging use of EVs. The Project's consistency with the applicable 2020-2045 RTP/SCS strategies is discussed in **Table 4.6-8**. As shown therein, the Project would be consistent with the GHG emissions reduction strategies contained in the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS.

**TABLE 4.6-7
CONSISTENCY WITH THE 2022 SCOPING PLAN**

Actions and Strategies	Project Consistency Analysis
Smart Growth / Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT)	
Reduce VMT per capita to 25% below 2019 levels by 2030, and 30% below 2019 levels by 2045	Consistent. The Project would include the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in accordance with the CALGreen requirements, including the most ambitious voluntary standards. Additionally, the Project would install short- and long-term bicycle parking and would enhance bicycle and pedestrian connectivity through the Project Site. The Project is also surrounded by bus stops, including the McBean Regional Transit Center, which served by the City of Santa Clarita Transit. As such, the Project is in close proximity to public transit and includes features that would promote alternative modes of transportation. As such, the Project would be consistent with this action.
Provide EV charging infrastructure that, at minimum, meets the most ambitious voluntary standard in the California Green Building Standards Code at the time of project approval	Consistent. The proposed Town Center Specific Plan includes requirements for EV charging infrastructure that meets the most ambitious voluntary standards in CALGreen.
For multifamily residential development, requiring parking costs to be unbundled from costs to rent or own a residential unit	Consistent. Assembly Bill (AB) 1317 requires that for residential developments issued a certificate of occupancy on or after January 1, 2025, and consist of 16 or more residential units located in Los Angeles County, parking costs must be unbundled from the price of rent. As the Project would be operational after 2025, the Project would be required to unbundle parking costs from costs of rent and therefore would be consistent with this action.
At least 20 percent of units included are affordable to lower-income residents	Consistent. The Project would provide 20 percent affordable housing units, which would indirectly reduce VMT. The Project would be consistent with the action.
New Residential and Commercial Buildings	
All electric appliances beginning 2026 (residential) and 2029 (commercial), contributing to 6 million heat pumps installed statewide by 2030	Consistent. Currently, the City has not adopted an ordinance or program limiting the use of natural gas for on-site cooking and/or heating. Additionally, the City also does not have any policy that requires an all-electric development. Thus, it is possible that future projects building out the Specific Plan may include natural gas appliances. However, if policies related to all-electric development are adopted in the future, the Project would comply with the applicable goals or policies limiting the use of natural gas equipment in the future and/or requiring all electric developments. Furthermore, the Project would comply with Title 24 standards which would reduce energy consumption. The Project would be consistent with this action.
Use all-electric appliances without any natural gas connections and does not use propane or other fossil fuels for space heating, water heating, or indoor cooking.	
Construction Equipment	
Achieve 25% of energy demand electrified by 2030 and 75% electrified by 2045	Not Applicable. Currently, the City has not adopted an ordinance or program requiring electricity-powered construction equipment which would be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan. However, if such programs or ordinance is adopted in the future, the Project would be required to comply with the applicable goals or policies requiring the use of electric construction equipment in the future.
Non-combustion Methane Emissions	
Divert 75% of organic waste from landfills by 2025	Consistent. SB 1383 establishes targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction by 2022 in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. The Project would comply with local and regional regulations and recycle or compost 75 percent of waste by 2025 pursuant to SB 1383. As such, the Project would be consistent with this action.

Source: California Air Resources Board, 2022 Scoping Plan, November 16, 2022.

**TABLE 4.6-8
CONSISTENCY WITH THE SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS**

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
Focus Growth Near Destinations and Mobility Options		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize land use patterns that facilitate multimodal access to work, educational and other destinations • Focus on a regional jobs/housing balance to reduce commute times and distances and expand job opportunities near transit and along center-focused main streets • Plan for growth near transit investments and support implementation of first/last mile strategies • Promote the redevelopment of underperforming retail developments and other outmoded nonresidential uses • Prioritize infill and redevelopment of underutilized land to accommodate new growth, increase amenities and connectivity in existing neighborhoods • Encourage design and transportation options that reduce the reliance on and number of solo car trips (this could include mixed uses or locating and orienting close to existing destinations) • Identify ways to “right size” parking requirements and promote alternative parking strategies (e.g., shared parking or smart parking) 	<p>Center Focused Placemaking, Priority Growth Areas (PGA), Job Centers, High Quality Transit Areas (HQTAs), Transit Priority Areas (TPA), Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMAs), Livable Corridors, Spheres of Influence (SOIs), Green Region, Urban Greening.</p>	<p>Consistent. Transit Priority Areas (TPAs) are defined in the 0.5-mile radius around an existing or planned major transit stop or an existing stop along a High-Quality Transit Corridor (HQTC). A HQTC is defined as a corridor with fixed route bus service frequency of 15 minutes (or less) during peak commute hours. The Project is located in a TPA surrounding the McBean Regional Transit Center, which provides access to various points within the Santa Clarita Valley and to North Hollywood, Union Station, Warner Center, Chatsworth, Burbank, Burbank Airport, Van Nuys, and Century City. The Project Site is in an urbanized area and within walking and biking distance of existing residential and commercial uses that would contribute to reduction in VMT and associated GHG emissions. In addition, the Project implements the RTP/SCS’s Center Focused Placemaking tool, as it proposes a human-scale, compact, and pedestrian oriented town center with a variety and mix of housing types that provides increased proximity of housing to job centers, goods, and services. The Project would also provide bicycle parking spaces in accordance with CALGreen, and provisions for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure that meets the most ambitious voluntary standards in CALGreen. Additionally, the Project would propose the construction of residential units and new commercial components to revitalize the existing uses on-site. Therefore, the Project would focus growth near destinations and mobility options. The Project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.</p>
Promote Diverse Housing Choices		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and rehabilitate affordable housing and prevent displacement • Identify funding opportunities for new workforce and affordable housing development • Create incentives and reduce regulatory barriers for building context sensitive accessory dwelling units to increase housing supply • Provide support to local jurisdictions to streamline and lessen barriers to housing development that supports reduction of greenhouse gas emissions 	<p>PGA, Job Centers, HQTAs, NMA, TPAs, Livable Corridors, Green Region, Urban Greening.</p>	<p>Consistent. The Proposed Project would create a plan that would create a balance of residential, commercial, and entertainment uses on-site. The Project would increase housing supply in the City by constructing new residential units on-site. As such, the Project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.</p>

TABLE 4.6-8, CONTINUED

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
Leverage Technology Innovations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote low emission technologies such as neighborhood electric vehicles, shared rides hailing, car sharing, bike sharing and scooters by providing supportive and safe infrastructure such as dedicated lanes, charging and parking/drop-off space Improve access to services through technology—such as telework and telemedicine as well as other incentives such as a “mobility wallet,” an app-based system for storing transit and other multi-modal payments Identify ways to incorporate “micro-power grids” in communities, for example solar energy, hydrogen fuel cell power storage and power generation 	<p>HQTA, TPAs, NMA, Livable Corridors.</p>	<p>Consistent. The Project would install EV charging stations as well as bicycle parking spaces in accordance with the most current and applicable Title 24 standards and CALGreen Code. Therefore, the proposed Project would leverage technology innovations to promote alternative modes of transportation and help the City, County, and State meet their GHG reduction goals. The Project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.</p>
Support Implementation of Sustainability Policies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding opportunities to support local sustainable development implementation projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions Support statewide legislation that reduces barriers to new construction and that incentivizes development near transit corridors and stations Support local jurisdictions in the establishment of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs), or other tax increment or value capture tools to finance sustainable infrastructure and development projects, including parks and open space Work with local jurisdictions/communities to identify opportunities and assess barriers to implement sustainability strategies Enhance partnerships with other planning organizations to promote resources and best practices in the SCAG region Continue to support long range planning efforts by local jurisdictions Provide educational opportunities to local decisions makers and staff on new tools, best practices and policies related to implementing the Sustainable Communities Strategy 	<p>Center Focused Placemaking, PGA, Job Centers, HQTAs, TPA, NMAs, Livable Corridors, Spheres of Influence, Green Region, Urban Greening.</p>	<p>Consistent. As previously discussed, the proposed Project would install EV charging stations and provide bike storage spaces to promote alternative modes of transportation. Further, the Project would comply with sustainable practices included in the most current and applicable Title 24 standards and California Building Code requirements, including the installation of electric vehicle charging stations and bicycle parking spaces, high efficiency lighting, rooftop solar systems, water efficient landscaping, and low-flow water fixtures. In addition, the Project implements the RTP/SCS’s Center Focused Placemaking tool, as it proposes a human-scale, compact, and pedestrian oriented town center with a variety and mix of housing types that provides increased proximity of housing to job centers, goods, and services. Thus, the Project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.</p>

TABLE 4.6-8, CONTINUED

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
<p>Promote a Green Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of local climate adaptation and hazard mitigation plans, as well as project implementation that improves community resiliency to climate change and natural hazards • Support local policies for renewable energy production, reduction of urban heat islands and carbon sequestration • Integrate local food production into the regional landscape • Promote more resource efficient development focused on conservation, recycling and reclamation • Preserve, enhance and restore regional wildlife connectivity • Reduce consumption of resource areas, including agricultural land • Identify ways to improve access to public park space 	<p>Green Region, Urban Greening, Greenbelts and Community Separators.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed Project consists of plan that would create a balance between residential, commercial, and entertainment uses in an urbanized area and would not interfere with regional wildlife connectivity or concert agricultural land. The Project would be required to comply with the most current and applicable Title 24 standards and California Building Code, which would help reduce energy consumption and reduce GHG emissions. Thus, the Project would support resource efficient development that reduces energy consumption and GHG emissions. The Project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.</p>

Source: Southern California Association of Governments, 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy – Connect SoCal, September 3, 2020.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The City's General Plan includes Goal CO 8, which is directed at improving energy efficiency, reducing energy and natural resource consumption, and reducing GHG emissions associated with development. The Project would be required to comply with the applicable requirements of the CALGreen Code and California Energy Code, the City's Green Building Standards Code, and the City's Energy Conservation Code, which include energy efficiency and generation of renewable energy on-site with rooftop solar systems. The Project would be constructed in compliance with the most current and applicable Title 24 (CALGreen and Energy Code) standards and is located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and approximately 1.5 miles from the Santa Clarita Metrolink Station. As previously discussed, the Project is also surrounded by bus stops served by the City of Santa Clarita Transit. In addition, the Project would include bicycle parking spaces and EV charging stations, which would contribute to vehicle trip reductions. Additionally, the Project would include pedestrian networks and design features that encourage walking. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the applicable goals, objectives, and policies in the City's General Plan.

Conclusion

In summary, the Project would be consistent with the plans, policies, regulations, and GHG emissions reduction actions/strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan, 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, and the Santa Clarita General Plan. Furthermore, because the Project is consistent and does not conflict with these plans, policies, and regulations, the Project's incremental increase in GHG emissions as described above would not result in a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, Project-related impacts related to GHG emissions would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts regarding GHG emissions were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts regarding GHG emissions were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.6.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The geographic scope for related projects considered in the cumulative impact analysis for GHG emissions is global because impacts of climate change are experienced on a global scale regardless of the location of GHG emission sources. Therefore, GHG emissions and climate change are, by definition, cumulative impacts. As discussed in Section 4.6.1, Environmental Setting, adverse environmental impacts of cumulative GHG emissions, including sea level rise, increased average temperatures, more drought years, and more large forest fires, are already occurring. As a result, cumulative impacts related to GHG emissions are significant. Thus, the issue of climate change involves an analysis of whether a project's contribution towards an impact is cumulatively considerable. As discussed above, the Project would not conflict with applicable regulations or plans and would further certain GHG emission reduction initiatives in these plans as a result of the Project's GHG emission reducing features, including proximity and access to multiple transit opportunities, location within a developed area with a mix of residential and

commercial uses, incorporation of EV charging capabilities, and generation of renewable energy on-site with the provision of rooftop solar systems in compliance with Title 24 standards. Therefore, the Project's contribution to impacts related to GHG emissions and climate change would not be cumulatively considerable, and, as such, the Project's cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Cumulative impacts related to GHG emissions were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Cumulative impacts related to GHG emissions were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.7 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the existing and historical hazardous conditions of the Project Site and vicinity, discusses the regulatory framework involving hazards and hazardous materials, and analyzes the Project's potential hazards and hazardous materials impacts that could occur during Project construction and operation. The analysis in this section relies on information provided in Cortese List Data Resources including the List of Hazardous Waste and Substances sites from the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database and the List of Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker database.

4.7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Hazardous substances are defined by State and federal regulations as substances that are regulated to protect public health and the environment. Hazardous materials have certain chemical, physical, or infectious properties that cause them to be hazardous. California Code of Regulations (CCR) (Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 11, Article 2, Section 66261.10) defines a hazardous material as a substance or combination of substances which, due to quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may either "cause, or significantly contribute to, an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible, or incapacitating reversible illness; or pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed of or otherwise managed."

According to the CCR (Title 22, Chapter 11, Article 3), substances having the characteristics of toxicity (i.e., poisonous), ignitability (i.e., can be ignited by open flame), corrosivity (i.e., corrode other materials), or reactivity (i.e., react violently, explode, or generate vapors when mixed with water) are considered hazardous. Hazardous wastes are hazardous substances that no longer have a practical use, such as material that has been abandoned, discarded, spilled, or contaminated, or which is being stored prior to disposal.

Toxic substances can cause short-term or long-term health effects that range from temporary effects to permanent disability or death. Examples of toxic substances include most heavy metals, pesticides, benzene, gasoline, hexane, natural gas, sulfuric acid, lye, explosives, pressurized canisters, and radioactive and biohazardous materials. Soils may also be toxic because of accidental spilling or disposal of toxic substances.

EXISTING PROJECT SITE CONDITIONS

The TCSP Area is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Valencia Boulevard to the south and east, and by McBean Parkway to the west, with a 3.7-acre portion of the Specific Plan Area located on the southwest side of McBean Parkway connecting to the McBean Regional Transit Center. The Project Site is primarily composed of developed land related to the Valencia Town Center Mall and other commercial uses along with vacant land located at the northwest corner of Valencia Boulevard and McBean Parkway. The vacant land has been cleared of its natural vegetation.

HISTORICAL USES ON THE PROJECT SITE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

The TCSP Area, adjoining properties, and surrounding area include various current and past uses and conditions. Development in the Valencia community started as early as the 1970s with the Valencia Town Center Mall being constructed in 1992. Review of historical aerial photographs, provided via Google Earth, from 1994 shows the Project Site developed with the Valencia Town Center Mall as a central commercial use with adjacent properties vacant and graded for future development. In addition, the Target shopping center and auto dealerships to the north of Magic Mountain Parkway and office buildings along Valencia Boulevard had been developed at this time. Lastly, residential uses to the south and east had also been developed.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATABASE SEARCH RESULTS

Based on a review of EnviroStor, the DTSC's data management system for tracking site cleanup, permitting, enforcement, and investigation efforts, no sites included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962.5 were found active or open for investigation in the TCSP Area. Based on a review of the list of Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites from the SWRCB GeoTracker database, four cases were identified in the TCSP Area or within 0.25 miles. Two LUST cases were identified in the Specific Plan Area: a leaking underground gasoline tank associated with the former Los Angeles County Sheriff Station, located at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway, and a leaking underground gasoline tank associated with the Newhall Land and Farm Company, located at 23823 Valencia Boulevard. Two contaminated sites are identified immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan Area: hydrocarbon-contaminated soil and groundwater associated with the Newhall Land and Farm Company, located at 24375 Valencia Boulevard, and a LUST associated with the Shell gasoline station, located at 24301 Valencia Boulevard.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE GENERATION

The TCSP Area is primarily developed and, therefore, contains the potential for hazardous materials use or hazardous waste generation. As stated above, two LUSTs were identified in the TCSP Area, and two LUSTs were identified within 0.25 miles of the TCSP Area. No other evidence of significant unauthorized releases was identified for the Specific Plan Area.

4.7.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, which is implemented by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), contains provisions for the handling of hazardous materials. OSHA was created to ensure safe and healthful working conditions by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education, and assistance. OSHA provides standards for general workplace safety and for the construction industry on hazardous waste operations and emergency response. OSHA requirements, as set forth in Title 29 of Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 1910 et seq., are designed to promote worker safety, worker training, and a worker's right-to-know.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act

The US Department of Transportation prescribes strict regulations for the safe transportation of hazardous materials, including requirements for hazardous waste containers and licensed haulers who transport hazardous waste on public roads. The Secretary of the US Department of Transportation receives the authority to regulate the transportation of hazardous materials from the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (HMTA) as amended and codified in Title 49 of United States Code (USC) Section 5101 et seq. The HMTA was enacted in 1975 and serves the purpose of protecting against “the risks to life, property, and the environment that are inherent in the transportation of hazardous material in intrastate, interstate, and foreign commerce.” The HMTA was passed to improve the uniformity of existing regulations for transporting hazardous materials and to prevent spills and illegal dumping from endangering the public and the environment. In addition, it requires drivers to be trained in function and commodity specific requirements and requires vehicles transporting certain quantities of hazardous materials to display placards.

STATE

California Environmental Protection Agency

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) has been granted primary responsibility by the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for administering and enforcing hazardous materials management plans within California. The DTSC, a division of CalEPA, regulates hazardous waste. The DTSC defines a hazardous material as a waste with a chemical composition or other properties that make it capable of causing illness, death, or some other harm to humans and other life forms when mismanaged or released into the environment. California regulations governing hazardous materials include detailed planning and management requirements to ensure that hazardous materials are properly handled, stored, and disposed of in order to reduce human health risks. In particular, the State has acted to regulate the transfer and disposal of hazardous waste. Hazardous waste haulers are required to comply with regulations that establish numerous standards, including criteria for handling, documenting, and labeling the shipment of hazardous waste. Hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities are also regulated and must meet standard criteria for processing, containment, and disposal of hazardous materials.

California Division of Occupational Safety and Health

Within California, the US Department of Labor has delegated the authority to administer OSHA regulations to the State of California. The California OSHA program (Cal/OSHA) (codified in CCR Title 8 and in Labor Code Sections 6300-6719) is administered and enforced by the Division of Occupational Safety and Health. Cal/OSHA is similar to the federal OSHA program in that it is responsible for developing and enforcing workplace safety standards and ensuring worker safety in the handling and use of hazardous materials. Among other requirements, Cal/OSHA requires entities handling specified amounts of certain hazardous chemicals to prepare injury and illness prevention plans and chemical hygiene plans and provides specific regulations to limit exposure of construction workers to lead.

REGIONAL

South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1113

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) Rule 1113, Architectural Coatings, requires manufacturers, distributors, and end users of architectural and industrial maintenance coatings to reduce volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from the use of these coatings. The South Coast AQMD primarily achieves emission reductions by placing limits on the VOC content of various coating categories.

LOCAL

Los Angeles County Certified Unified Program Agency

The Los Angeles County Certified Unified Program Agency is managed by the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) Health Hazardous Materials Division. The Health Hazardous Materials Division administers the following programs in Los Angeles County:

- Hazardous Waste Generator Program
- Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Program
- California Accidental Release Prevention Program
- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tank Program
- Underground Storage Tank Program

Santa Clarita Municipal Code, Chapter 22, City Fire Code

The Santa Clarita Municipal Code, Title 22, contains regulations consistent with the California Fire Code and nationally recognized accepted practices for safeguarding, to a reasonable degree, life and property from the hazards of fire and explosion; hazardous conditions in the use or occupancy of buildings or premises; and dangerous conditions arising from the storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials and devices.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The applicable goals, objectives, and policies from the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Safety Element pertaining to hazards and hazardous materials are listed below.¹

Safety Element: Hazardous Materials

Goal S 4: Protection of public safety and property from hazardous materials.

- Objective S 4.1: Identify sites that are contaminated with chemicals and other hazardous materials and promote clean-up efforts.
 - Policy S 4.1.2: Coordinate with other agencies to address contamination of soils and groundwater from hazardous materials on various sites and require that

¹ City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Safety Element, May 2022.

contamination be cleaned up to the satisfaction of the City and other responsible agencies prior to issuance of any permits for new development.

2021 Santa Clarita Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City of Santa Clarita 2021 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) serves the purposes of documenting known hazards and identifying community actions that can be implemented over the short and long term to reduce future risk and loss in the City. The HMP was prepared in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, and the 2021 HMP is a federally mandated update that ensures continuing eligibility for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding. The HMP addresses several key topics, including the following:

- **Planning Process:** Provides a record of public process and involvement from committee members and stakeholders.
- **Community Profile:** Presents the history, geography, demographics, and socioeconomics of the City to provide historical context of hazards.
- **Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment:** Provides information on hazard identification, vulnerability, and risk associated with hazards in the City.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** Describes existing mitigation and the mitigation process.

In addition, the HMP addresses the process of plan review, evaluation, implementation, and adoption. The HMP provides context and planning for hazard identification, risk, and mitigation strategies for wildfires, earthquakes, energy disruption, drought, severe weather events, pandemics, man-made hazards (e.g., cyber-attacks, terrorism), the release of hazardous materials, landslides, and flooding.

4.7.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to hazards and hazardous materials are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist.

In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to hazards and hazardous materials if it would:

Threshold 4.7(a): *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;*

Threshold 4.7(b): *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;*

Threshold 4.7(c): *Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;*

Threshold 4.7(d): *Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as*

a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment;

Threshold 4.7(e): *Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport;*

Threshold 4.7(f): *Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; and/or*

Threshold 4.7(g): *Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.*

Threshold 4.7(h): *Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip; or*

Threshold 4.7(i): *Expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards (e.g., electrical transmission lines, gas lines, oil pipelines).*

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The Project would not result in significant impacts related to the following significance thresholds as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**); therefore, they are not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.7(a): *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;*

Threshold 4.7(b): *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;*

Threshold 4.7(c): *Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;*

Threshold 4.7(e): *Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport;*

Threshold 4.7(f): *Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; and/or*

Threshold 4.7(g): *Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires*

Threshold 4.7(h): *Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip; or*

Threshold 4.7(i): *Expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards (e.g., electrical transmission lines, gas lines, oil pipelines).*

4.7.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of potential hazards and hazardous materials potentially creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment is based on search of environmental databases.

4.7.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

No Project Design Features are proposed with respect to hazards and hazardous materials.

4.7.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.7(d): *Would the Project 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?*

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The TCSP Area is currently characterized by a variety of development types, including the Valencia Town Center Mall, the Town Center Drive commercial district, the Princess Cruise Lines (owned by Carnival Corporation) corporate office building, the County of Los Angeles Superior Court, Santa Clarita Courthouse the Valencia Public Library, Offices for the City of Hope, and a variety of other retail businesses, restaurants, offices, government buildings, and other commercial uses. The Valencia Town Center Mall is the largest development within the Specific Plan Area, with 1 million square feet of commercial space, and occupies 69 acres of the 111-acre Specific Plan Area.

Based on a review of the LUST site list from the State Water Board's GeoTracker database, four cases were identified in the TCSP Area or within 0.25 miles and are discussed in further detail below.

Located In Specific Plan Area

- Remediation of a leaking underground gasoline tank (Case # T0603704904) associated with the former Los Angeles County Sheriff Station, located at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway, was outlined in a Remedial Action Plan Addendum (RAP Addendum) dated January 18, 2023. The RAP Addendum was approved by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) on January 31, 2023. According to the most recent progress report (dated June 15, 2023) to the LARWQCB, remediation will be conducted through implementation of dual-phase extraction technologies, combining vacuum extraction with groundwater pumping and supplemented with air-sparging. The remediation activities currently involve establishing access agreements with Los Angeles County Public Works and off-site property owners. NV5 Alta Environmental, the contractor overseeing the remediation activities, is currently preparing details of the approximate locations for well abandonment and installation, trenching, and piping installation activities along with identifying a fieldwork schedule. NV5 Alta Environmental anticipates up to one year (from June 15, 2023) could pass before access agreements are finalized. It is noted that groundwater monitoring wells are currently operating to confirm concentrations of gasoline (TPH, BTEX, ethanol, fuel oxygenates) as groundwater levels begin to rise and to verify plume stability. Remediation of this LUST is currently ongoing.

- A leaking underground gasoline tank (Case #T0603732554), associated with the Newhall Land and Farm Company, was located at 23823 Valencia Boulevard. The Newhall Land and Farm Company retained Anacapa Geoservices to prepare a work plan to fully assess the lateral and vertical extent of potentially impacted soil, if any, at the site. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works – Environmental Programs Division approved the work plan and an addendum on December 15, 2008. In January 2009, Anacapa procured soil samples at the site. Gasoline and VOCs were not detected in the soil. Therefore, cleanup of this site was determined to be completed in 2009.

Located With 0.25 Miles of Specific Plan Area

- A leaking underground storage tank (Case #T060379630) associated with the Shell gasoline station was located at 24301 Valencia Boulevard. In September 2003, approximately 226 tons of contaminated soil was excavated and transported off-site for disposal. Between March and April 2014, an air sparge and soil vapor extraction system operated at the site until being shut down in November 2014. A total of 15 groundwater monitoring wells were installed and operated on-site and off-site between April 2013 and April 2017 to monitor concentrations of gasoline. During the last groundwater sampling event (April 2017), the maximum concentrations of gasoline reported non-detect concentrations. Therefore, cleanup of this site was determined to be completed in 2017.
- Remediation of hydrocarbon-contaminated soil and groundwater (Case #SL2048Y1711) associated with an approximately 1-acre site owned by Newhall Land and Farm Company and currently used as a park-and-ride bus terminal, located at 24375 Valencia Boulevard, was outlined in a RAP dated March 31, 2014. The RAP was approved by the LARWQCB on September 16, 2014. The site includes easements for several pipelines, including three Mobil (6-, 10-, and 12-inch diameter) crude oil pipelines, a 10-inch-diameter inactive Arco pipeline that reportedly transmitted crude oil mixed with diluent, a 24-inch diameter Southern California Gas transmission line, two 12-inch-diameter abandoned natural gas pipelines (unknown owners), and a 14-inch-diameter Pacific Pipeline oil pipeline. The Arco pipeline was idled in 1994 and the Mobil crude oil pipelines were removed between Valencia Country Club and Valencia Boulevard in 1993.

According to the RAP, ExxonMobil has been conducting remediation activities at the site since 2014. Remediation activities include utilizing a dual-phase extraction mobile treatment system, which consists of extracting hydrocarbons in groundwater and soil vapor. According to the latest groundwater monitoring and status report, groundwater sampling events occurred between March 2022 and September 2023 and concluded that dissolved-phase concentrations remain orders of magnitude less than those observed historically over the 20 years that groundwater data has been collected on the site. Based on these results, on November 8, 2023, the property owner requested site closure from the LARWQCB for this case and that no further action is warranted. However, official closure from the LARWQCB has not occurred to date; thus, remediation of the site is considered ongoing.

It should be noted that a Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) and Closure Request submitted to the LARWQCB in July 2003 concluded that elevated concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons in soil are generally limited to between approximately 20 and 50 feet below ground. The Human Health Risk Assessment further concluded that due to

these depths, human contact with impacted soil is unlikely and complete human exposure pathways are not present.

Lastly, ExxonMobil requested transfer of environmental remediation responsibilities and liabilities to PBF Energy in March 2016. It is assumed that PBF Energy continues to be the responsible party for cleanup of the site and that Newhall Land and Farm Company continues to be the site owner.

Given the presence of an open LUST case on the former Los Angeles County Sheriff Station parcel within the TCSP Area and an open LUST case within 0.25 miles of the TCSP Area at 24375 Valencia Boulevard, there are hazardous material sites that could result in a hazard to the public or the environment. Any future development resulting from buildout of the proposed TCSP would need to address contamination issues at these sites. It is noted that even though one LUST case (24375 Valencia Boulevard) is located outside the TCSP boundary, the contamination has the potential to affect future development inside the TCSP Area (such as through potential soil vapor in Subarea 4 – McBean and Valencia). Therefore, without mitigation, future development activities may result in significant impacts related to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment as a result of a portion of the TCSP Area being included on a list of hazardous material sites.

MITIGATION MEASURES

To reduce potential significant impacts related to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment, the following mitigation measure is proposed for the Project:

MM-HAZ-1 Prior to development approval for future development within 200 feet of the leaking underground storage tank (Case # T0603704904) site associated with the Los Angeles County Sheriff Station, located at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway, a letter of completion for remediation actions or letter indicating contamination would not exceed applicable thresholds for occupancy from the applicable oversight agency (e.g., LARWQCB) shall be submitted to the City of Santa Clarita.

Prior to development approval for future development within 100 feet of the western boundary of Subarea 4 (McBean and Valencia), a letter of completion for remediation actions (Case # SL2048Y1711), located at 24375 Valencia Boulevard, or letter indicating contamination would not exceed applicable thresholds for occupancy from the applicable oversight agency (e.g., LARWQCB) shall be submitted to the City of Santa Clarita.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Based on review of remedial action plans and monitoring and status reports for the two LUST sites (Los Angeles County Sheriff Station and Newhall Land and Farm Company), implementation of **Mitigation Measure MM-HAZ-1** would reduce potential impacts related to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment to a less than significant level.²

² Stantec, Second Half 2023 Groundwater Monitoring and Status Report, Valencia Pipeline, 24375 Valencia Boulevard, November 8, 2023; NV5 Alta Environmental, Remedial Action Plan Addendum, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Santa Clarita Valley Station, January 18, 2023.

4.7.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

As detailed in Chapter 3.0, Environmental Setting, of this Draft EIR, buildout of the City in accordance with the General Plan would result in additional development activity and growth across the City, including in the area surrounding the TCSP Area. As with buildout of the TCSP, buildout of the City has the potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment, should development occur on sites included on a list of hazardous material sites. However, each individual project would be required to evaluate any potential threats to public safety, including those associated with the use, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous materials. Such projects would be required to comply with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, rules, and regulations as discussed above in Section 4.7.2, Regulatory and Planning Framework. Because environmental safety issues are largely site-specific, this evaluation would occur on a case-by-case basis for each individual project affected in conjunction with development proposals on these properties. Therefore, with compliance with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, rules, and regulations, significant cumulative impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would not occur. As such, the Project would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Cumulative impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Cumulative impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.8 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzes the Project's potential impacts with regard to land use and planning. This section identifies on-site and surrounding land use conditions and relevant land use policies and regulations, as set forth by the City of Santa Clarita (City), and other State and regional plans. The analysis in this section evaluates whether the Project would conflict with any land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Analyses of consistency and/or potential conflicts with plans that are more directly related to other environmental topics are addressed in other sections of this Draft EIR (specifically, Section 4.2, Air Quality; Section 4.6, Greenhouse Gas Emissions; and Section 4.11, Transportation).

4.8.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

ON-SITE LAND USES

The Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) Area is an approximately 111-acre area located in the community of Valencia which is in the west-central portion of the City of Santa Clarita. The Specific Plan area is bounded by Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, Valencia Boulevard to the south and east, and by McBean Parkway to the west, with a 3.7-acre portion of the Specific Plan Area located on the southwest side of McBean Parkway connecting to the McBean Regional Transit Center. The TCSP Area is currently characterized by a variety of development types, including the Valencia Town Center mall, the Town Center Drive commercial district, the Princess Cruise Lines (owned by Carnival Corporation) corporate office building, the County of Los Angeles Superior Court, the Santa Clarita Library, Valencia Branch, offices for the City of Hope, Bank of America, and a variety of other retail businesses, restaurants, offices, government buildings, and other commercial uses. The Valencia Town Center Mall is the largest development within the TCSP Area, with approximately 1 million square feet of commercial space.

The entire Specific Plan Area is zoned Regional Commercial (CR) and is located within the City's Jobs Creation Overlay Zone (JCOZ). The JCOZ provides incentives for qualifying office projects (up to five stories) and industrial projects (up to 55 feet), whereas the underlying zoning district allows for buildings up to 35 feet by right. Building heights that exceed these standards would require the approval of a conditional use permit. The City's Housing Element also identifies the TCSP Area as a suitable site for housing.

The City has identified the McBean Regional Transit Center as a major transit stop resulting in the area within a one-half mile radius of the Transit Center to qualify as a transit priority area (TPA). The City has determined that the proposed Project meets the definition of being located in a TPA pursuant to the City's *Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita*.

SURROUNDING LAND USES

The TCSP Area is immediately surrounded on all sides by land with a land use and zoning designation of CR, with the exception of the McBean Regional Transit Center (zoned PI-Public/Institutional) that is located immediately west of the McBean and Valencia Subarea. Land to the west of the Specific Plan Area, across McBean Parkway is designated and zoned as CR, with PI and Open Space zoning beyond. Land to the south and east, across Valencia Boulevard, is designated and zoned as CR, with Urban Residential 4, Urban Residential 3, and Urban

Residential 2 zoning beyond. Land to the north, across Magic Mountain Parkway, is designated and zoned CR with Specific Plan designation (the North Valencia Specific Plan) further to the north. Uses adjacent to the TCSP Area include auto dealerships and retail commercial uses to the north; restaurants, banks, supermarket, retail commercial uses, a medical office building, and Santa Clarita City Hall to the south; banks, medical clinics, restaurants, and retail stores to the east; and multifamily residential uses, a hotel, restaurants, retail stores, the Santa Clarita Conference Center, and Santa Clarita McBean Regional Transit Center to the west.

4.8.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

There are no federal regulations or planning programs that apply to the Project regarding land use and planning.

STATE

Senate Bill 375

Senate Bill (SB) 375 was adopted in 2008 to help achieve the (GHG) emission reduction goals set by Assembly Bill (AB) 32 through regulation of cars and light trucks. SB 375 aligns three policy areas of importance to local government: (1) regional long-range transportation plans and investments; (2) regional allocation of the obligation for cities and counties to zone for housing; and (3) achievement of GHG emission reduction targets for the transportation sector set forth in AB 32. SB 375 establishes a process for the California Air Resource Board (CARB) to develop GHG emission reduction targets for each region as opposed to individual local governments or households. SB 375 also requires metropolitan planning organizations to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy in the Regional Transportation Plan that guides growth while accounting for transportation, housing, environmental, and economic needs of the region. SB 375 uses California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining as an incentive to encourage the development of residential or mixed-use residential projects, which helps achieve AB 32 goals to reduce GHG emissions.

REGIONAL

In 2020, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council adopted the 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS presents a long-term transportation vision through the year 2045 for the six-county region of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS contains baseline socioeconomic projections that are used as the basis for SCAG’s transportation planning and the provision of services by other regional agencies.

The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS builds upon the sustainability goals established in previous RTPs, which reflected the ever-evolving needs and priorities of the SCAG region. The performance measures developed in support of the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS are focused on a set of outcomes that aim to continue to strengthen land use and transportation connections by focusing growth in Priority Growth Areas (PGA), which include, but are not limited to, job centers, Transit Priority

Areas (TPA), and High Quality Transit Areas (HQTA);¹ enhance the health of the SCAG region's residents; reduce GHG emissions; and address the effects of climate change. SCAG found that implementation of the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS would result in the following:²

- A 3 percent increase in the combined percentage of work trips made by carpooling, active transportation, and public transit, with a commensurate reduction in the number of commuters traveling by single-occupancy vehicle;
- A reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita by 5 percent and vehicle hours traveled per capita by 9 percent (for automobiles and light/medium-duty trucks) as a result of more efficient land use strategies and improved regional transit service;
- A 2 percent increase in transit use for work trips as a result of improved transit service and more transit-oriented, mixed-use development;
- A 26 percent reduction in travel delay per capita;
- A 26 percent reduction in heavy-duty truck travel delay;
- The creation of more than 264,500 new jobs annually due to an increased level of economic competitiveness throughout the SCAG region and improved regional economic performance. This more competitive economic environment would be the result of an improved regional transportation system and reduced levels of congestion; and
- A 29 percent reduction in greenfield development. Conservation of open space, agricultural lands, and other rural land uses may be achieved by focusing new residential and commercial development in higher density areas that are already equipped with the urban infrastructure that would adequately serve planned growth.

SCAG's overarching strategy for achieving its goals is to integrate land use and transportation. SCAG policies are directed toward the development of regional land use patterns that contribute to reductions in VMT and improvements to the transportation system. The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS intends to create benefits for the SCAG region by achieving regional goals for sustainability, transportation equity, improved public health and safety, and enhancement of the region's overall quality of life.

LOCAL

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The City of Santa Clarita's General Plan establishes goals and policies related to land use, transportation, population growth and distribution, development, open space, resource preservation and utilization, air and water quality, noise impacts, public safety, infrastructure, and other related physical, social, and economic factors. In addition to serving as a guide for local decision making, the General Plan establishes a clear set of development guidelines for citizens, developers, neighboring jurisdictions, and agencies, and provides the community with an

¹ SCAG defines PGAs as areas where many of the strategies of the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS can be fully realized; TPAs are PGAs that are within 0.5 miles of existing or planned major transit stops in the region; HQTAs are corridor-focused TPAs.

² SCAG, *Connect SoCal: The 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy*, September 3, 2020.

opportunity to participate in the planning process. The purpose of the City's General Plan is to comply with State requirements and to provide the City with a comprehensive, long-range policy guideline for future development. Applicable elements of the City's General Plan are summarized below.

Land Use Element

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to designate land for housing, business, industry, and open space, as well as guiding and directing the physical development of the community. The Land Use Element is the City's long-term blueprint for development to meet the Santa Clarita Valley's future needs for housing, retail, office, industrial, parks, open space, and other uses. The Land Use Element includes goals, policies, and programs designed to address the development issues facing the City through a variety of land use planning strategies, along with the type, intensity, quality, and location of future uses within the planning area. The Land Use Element also provides the standards and targets for residential population density and building intensity, with a framework for focusing sustainable future growth.

Circulation Element

The Circulation Element plans for the continued development of efficient, cost-effective, and comprehensive transportation systems that are consistent with regional plans, local needs, and the Santa Clarita Valley's community character. The Circulation Element complements and supports the Land Use Element. The Circulation Element recommends techniques such as development of alternative travel modes and support facilities; increased efficiency and capacity of existing systems through management strategies; and coordination of land use planning with transportation planning by promoting concentrated, mixed-use development near transit facilities.

Noise Element

The Noise Element provides a comprehensive program for planners to include noise management in the planning process and to achieve and maintain land uses that are compatible with existing and future environmental noise levels. The Noise Element identifies current noise conditions, noise-sensitive land uses, and noise sources within the planning area and projects future noise impacts resulting from continued growth allowed by the Land Use Element.

Conservation and Open Space Element

The combined Conservation and Open Space Element establishes a policy framework for the designation and long-term preservation of open space within the planning area and addresses community benefits derived from open space, such as providing land for park and recreational facilities, habitat preservation, scenic views, and water recharge and watershed protection.

Safety Element

The Safety Element provides guidelines for protecting public health and safety and addresses natural and man-made hazards that may affect existing and future residents. The Safety Element establishes policies and standards designed to minimize risks from hazards, informs citizens about hazardous conditions, and assists policy makers in making land use and development decisions.

Santa Clarita Municipal Code

All development activity on the Project Site is subject to the Santa Clarita Municipal Code (SCMC), particularly Title 17, Zoning. The SCMC establishes requirements for the Project Site with respect to permitted uses, building height, density, yard setbacks, and parking.

SCMC Section 17.38.015 – Jobs Creation Overlay Zone

The JCOZ regulations are intended to support the General Plan objective of promoting the creation of strong regional and local economies via the implementation of strategic land use planning policies. Specifically, the JC overlay zone is intended to: (1) attract and promote the creation of high-quality jobs within the City's four targeted industries, which include aerospace, biomedical, entertainment, and technology, and other industries at the discretion of the Director; (2) enhance the City's overall jobs/housing balance; and (3) provide greater employment opportunities throughout the entire City.

SCMC Section 17.34.030 – Regional Commercial Zone

The Regional Commercial zone regulations are intended to promote the development of regional focal points for commercial, entertainment, cultural, and business uses serving the public and drawing from a market area encompassing the entire Santa Clarita Valley. Multiple-family dwellings (including live-work units) may be allowed in this zone.

City of Santa Clarita Community Character and Design Guidelines

The purpose of the Santa Clarita Community Character and Design Guidelines is to guide the creation of new residential, commercial, mixed-use, and industrial developments or the renovation and redevelopment of built areas. The Design Guidelines include up-to-date planning trends and guidelines to promote the high-quality standards that the City and the community value, which include architectural variety, quality development, and that both existing and new developments exhibit the following:

- Compatibility in size, scale, and appearance with the character of Santa Clarita.
- Attractiveness and being an asset to the community.
- Preservation and enhancement of natural features of a site.
- Incorporation of quality articulation, community character features, multiple building forms, desirable building details, and other elements that display excellence in design.
- Provision of pedestrian-oriented design to enrich the pedestrian experience.
- Inclusion of pedestrian-friendly amenities, such as pedestrian connections, plazas, seating, bike racks, fountains, and other similar features, for the enjoyment of the community and visitors.
- Use of high-quality materials.
- Well-landscaped parking lots with efficient pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
- Improvement of the environmental performance of projects through the strategic incorporation of green building components.

The Design Guidelines also lay the foundation for development in the City by exploring relevant and successful neighborhood design concepts, including the following and their core principles:

- **Smart Growth:** Mix of land uses, walkable neighborhood, distinctive and attractive communities with a strong sense of place, preservation of natural beauty and critical environmental areas, development toward existing communities, variety of transportation choices, and community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.
- **New Urbanism:** Discernible center, well-connected network of streets and pedestrian paths to provide a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination, shade trees along City streets, placement of buildings in a neighborhood center close to the street, and parking lot locations away from the street.
- **Transit-Oriented Development:** Enhanced access to public transportation by placing development around a transit station.
- **Valley of Villages:** Mix of land uses; a variety of transit alternatives, including rail and bus; outdoor, pedestrian-oriented gathering places with amenities; quality architecture design elements that promote a pedestrian-oriented environment; reduced need for vehicle use and travel outside the village for employment, goods, and services; and trail and roadway linkages throughout the village and to other villages.
- **Low Impact Development:** Incorporation of best management practices, including, but not limited to, vegetated swales, porous pavements, bioretention, wet ponds, infiltration basins, and rain gardens.
- **Sustainable Design Principles:** A variety of green building practices and the availability of pedestrian-oriented amenities; development within and near existing communities or public transit; neighborhood connectedness; minimization of erosion to protect habitats; and parking design that leaves building frontages and streetscapes free of parking facilities.
- **General Design Principles:** Design elements that include richness of material surface and texture; muted earth tone colors; significant wall articulation; full-sloped roofs and multi-planed roofs; roof overhangs, articulated eaves, and parapets; compatible window configurations with the design of the building; articulated building mass and form; and landscape elements.

In addition to these general design concepts, the Design Guidelines have specific requirements to address the identity of the Valencia community, including identifying appropriate primary wall surfaces, wall articulation and accents, roofing materials, and color palettes.

4.8.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to land use and planning are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. In accordance these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to land use and planning if it would:

Threshold 4.8(a): Physically divide an established community;

Threshold 4.8(b): *Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; or*

Threshold 4.8(c): *Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, and/or policies by agencies with jurisdiction over the Project.*

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The Project would not result in significant impacts related to the following significance thresholds, as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**); therefore, they are not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.8(a): *Physically divide an established community; or*

Threshold 4.8(c): *Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, and/or policies by agencies with jurisdiction over the Project.*

4.8.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to land use and planning considered the potential future improvements in the TCSP Area which are envisioned as creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the TCSP Area which include programmable gathering spaces and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children's playgrounds, and parks.

The determination of consistency with applicable land use policies and ordinances is based upon a review of the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS, the City's General Plan elements, and the SCMC. CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(d) requires that an EIR discuss any inconsistencies with applicable general plans, specific plans, and regional plans. Under State Planning and Zoning law (Government Code Section 65000 et seq.), strict conformity with all aspects of a plan is not required. Generally, agencies are responsible for determining whether a project is consistent with the plan. As discussed in the State of California General Plan Guidelines, a proposed project should be considered consistent with a general plan or elements of a general plan if, considering all its aspects, it will further the objectives and policies of the general plan and will not inhibit their attainment.

4.8.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

No specific Project Design Features are proposed in regard to land use beyond the Project features discussed in Chapter 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR.

4.8.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.8(b): *Would the Project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?*

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Consistency with the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS

The general consistency of the Project, including off-site improvements, with the applicable goals identified in the SCAG 2020–2045 RTP/SCS is presented in **Table 4.8-1**. As shown in the table, the Project would not conflict with the goals, principles, and strategies identified in the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects. Specifically, the Sustainable Communities Strategy Technical Report of the RTP/SCS identifies PGAs in the region where growth is forecasted to occur due to proximity to existing and planned transit, existing job centers, existing and planned infrastructure to support more walkable communities, and the use of alternative transportation modes; the TCSP Area is located in an area of the City that has been identified as a PGA. Furthermore, the Project would support the goals of the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS to improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods and support healthy communities by redeveloping the existing Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area with a mixed-use community on a Project Site that is well-served by the adjacent McBean Regional Transit Center. The Project would promote walking and use of bicycles through a series of proposed Specific Plan framework elements that prioritize pedestrian mobility, pedestrian bridges connectivity, and bike connectivity. The improved connection to the McBean Regional Transit Center would promote the use of alternative modes of transportation (i.e., walking, biking, public transit), which would reduce dependency on single-occupancy vehicles. Therefore, as detailed in **Table 4.8-1**, the Project would not conflict with the applicable goals, objectives, and policies of the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

**TABLE 4.8-1
2020–2045 RTP/SCS CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

Goals, Principles, and Strategies	Consistency Assessment
Goal 1. Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness.	Not Applicable. This goal is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects.
Goal 2. Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods.	Consistent. The TCSP would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this goal.
Goal 3. Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system.	Not Applicable. This goal is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would support the regional transportation system by encouraging increased housing choices and improving access to the McBean Regional Transit Center for people who prefer convenient access to transit services.
Goal 4. Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system.	Consistent. The TCSP would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this goal. See Goal 2 for additional details.
Goal 5. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. Goal 6. Support healthy and equitable communities.	Consistent. As discussed under Goals 2 and 4, the TCSP would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services, encouraging non-motorized travel, reducing dependency on automobiles, and resulting in a corresponding reduction in air pollutant and GHG emissions per capita. Therefore, the Project is consistent with these goals.
Goal 7. Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network.	Not Applicable. This goal is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the TCSP would encourage the creation of a walkable community and would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center (thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services).
Goal 8. Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel.	Not Applicable. This goal is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the TCSP would encourage the creation of a walkable community and would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center thereby promoting low-emission technologies and alternative low-carbon modes of transportation.
Goal 9. Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.	Consistent. The TCSP would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this goal.

Goals, Principles, and Strategies	Consistency Assessment
<p>Goal 10. Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This goal is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the TCSP Area is not zoned for agricultural use or open space or located within a Significant Ecological Area.</p>
<p>Principle 1. Base transportation investments on adopted regional performance indicators and MAP-21/FAST Act regional targets.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This principle is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects.</p>
<p>Principle 2. Place high priority for transportation funding in the region on projects and programs that improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and safety, and that preserve the existing transportation system.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This principle is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would support this principle by encouraging the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services.</p>
<p>Principle 3. Assure that land use and growth strategies recognize local input, promote sustainable transportation options, and support equitable and adaptable communities.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This principle is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would support this principle by encouraging the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center thereby promoting sustainable transportation options and supporting equitable and adaptable communities</p>
<p>Principle 4. Encourage RTP/SCS investments and strategies that collectively result in reduced non-recurrent congestion and demand for single occupancy vehicle use, by leveraging new transportation technologies and expanding travel choices.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This principle is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would support this principle by encouraging the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby expanding travel choices.</p>
<p>Principle 5. Encourage transportation investments that will result in improved air quality and public health, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This principle is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would support this principle by improving air quality and public health and reducing per capita GHG emissions as discussed under Goals 5 and 6.</p>
<p>Principle 6. Monitor progress on all aspects of the Plan, including the timely implementation of projects, programs, and strategies.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This principle is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects.</p>
<p>Principle 7. Regionally, transportation investments should reflect best-known science regarding climate change vulnerability, in order to design for long-term resilience.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. This principle is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects.</p>

Goals, Principles, and Strategies	Consistency Assessment
Strategy 1 – Focus Growth Near Destinations & Mobility Options	
a) Emphasize land use patterns that facilitate multimodal access to work, educational, and other destinations.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan would promote the creation of a mixed-use walkable community located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby creating land use patterns that facilitate multimodal access to work, educational, and other destinations.
b) Focus on a regional jobs/housing balance to reduce commute times and distances and expand job opportunities near transit and along center-focused main streets.	Consistent. The Project would encourage the development of a balance of residential and commercial uses within a walkable mixed-use community. The Specific Plan area is also located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the proposed TCSP emphasizes improved access to the transit center. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this strategy.
c) Plan for growth near transit investments and support implementation of first/last mile strategies.	Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area is located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and therefore plans for growth near transit investments.
d) Promote the redevelopment of underperforming retail developments and other outmoded nonresidential uses.	Consistent. The Specific Plan would encourage redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall with a mix of uses, promoting a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community, where a variety of housing options are developed alongside businesses and community facilities.
e) Prioritize infill and redevelopment of underutilized land to accommodate new growth, increase amenities and connectivity in existing neighborhoods.	Consistent. The Specific Plan would encourage redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area with growth in the Specific Plan area anticipated to result in densification of currently underutilized land. In addition, the proposed Specific Plan promotes a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community, with various amenities for residents, patrons, and visitors.
f) Encourage design and transportation options that reduce the reliance on and number of solo car trips (this could include mixed uses or locating and orienting close to existing destinations).	Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area is located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby providing transportation options that reduce the reliance on car trips.
g) Identify ways to “right size” parking requirements and promote alternative parking strategies (e.g., shared parking or smart parking).	Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community and the TCSP would include parking requirements that are reflective of industry standards, and density standards to ensure a balance and efficiency of uses, amenities, and improvements.
Strategy 2 – Promote Diverse Housing Choices	
a) Preserve and rehabilitate affordable housing and prevent displacement.	Not Applicable. The TCSP Area is currently devoid of housing. There is no affordable housing in the TCSP Area that could be preserved, rehabilitated, or displaced. However, the Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities.

Goals, Principles, and Strategies	Consistency Assessment
b) Identify funding opportunities for new workforce and affordable housing development.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities thereby resulting in diverse job opportunities near housing in the City.
c) Create incentives and reduce regulatory barriers for building context-sensitive accessory dwelling units to increase housing supply.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would encourage the development of a variety of housing options, although accessory dwelling units are not anticipated in the buildout of the Specific Plan, given the mixed-use/multifamily nature of the Specific Plan.
d) Provide support to local jurisdictions to streamline and lessen barriers to housing development that supports reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual development projects. However, as discussed under Goals 5 and 6, the Project would support the reduction of GHG emissions.
Strategy 3 – Leverage Technology Innovations	
a) Promote low emission technologies such as neighborhood electric vehicles, shared rides hailing, car sharing, bike sharing, and scooters by providing supportive and safe infrastructure such as dedicated lanes, charging, and parking/drop-off space.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center, along with various forms of alternative transportation.
b) Improve access to services through technology—such as telework and telemedicine as well as other incentives such as a “mobility wallet,” an app-based system for storing transit and other multi-modal payments.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual projects.
c) Identify ways to incorporate “micro-power grids” in communities, for example solar energy, hydrogen fuel cell power storage, and power generation.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, subject to City and other agency approvals, future redevelopment in the TCSP Area would install rooftop solar systems and solar panels as required by local and state regulations.
Strategy 4 – Support Implementation of Sustainability Policies	
a) Pursue funding opportunities to support local sustainable development implementation projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, as discussed under Goals 5 and 6, the Project would support the reduction of GHG emissions.

Goals, Principles, and Strategies	Consistency Assessment
b) Support statewide legislation that reduces barriers to new construction and that incentivizes development near transit corridors and stations.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area is located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby incentivizing development near transit services.
c) Support local jurisdictions in the establishment of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs), or other tax increment or value capture tools to finance sustainable infrastructure and development projects, including parks and open space.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual projects.
d) Work with local jurisdictions/communities to identify opportunities and assess barriers to implement sustainability strategies.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual projects.
e) Enhance partnerships with other planning organizations to promote resources and best practices in the SCAG region.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual projects.
f) Continue to support long range planning efforts by local jurisdictions.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual projects.
g) Provide educational opportunities to local decisions makers and staff on new tools, best practices and policies related to implementing the Sustainable Communities Strategy.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and does not apply to individual projects.
Strategy 5 – Promote a Green Region	
a) Support development of local climate adaptation and hazard mitigation plans, as well as project implementation that improves community resiliency to climate change and natural hazards.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, the Specific Plan would encourage redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area with mixed-use development and would promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community, where a variety of housing options are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The redevelopment would retain existing community resiliency to natural hazards resulting from climate change, such as wildfires, by redeveloping an existing urban environment.

Goals, Principles, and Strategies	Consistency Assessment
b) Support local policies for renewable energy production, reduction of urban heat islands and carbon sequestration.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions. However, the Specific Plan would encourage redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area with a mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community, where a variety of housing options are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The redevelopment would retain, but not exacerbate, the existing urban environment and conditions (e.g., urban heat islands, carbon sequestration).
c) Integrate local food production into the regional landscape.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual projects.
d) Promote more resource efficient development focused on conservation, recycling and reclamation.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual development projects. However, future redevelopment in the Specific Plan area would be required to support this strategy by complying with Title 24 (California Building Energy Efficiency Standards). Energy-saving and sustainable design features would be incorporated, including but not limited to installation of energy-efficient light fixtures, high-efficiency plumbing fixtures, EV parking spaces, and rooftop solar systems and solar panels. In addition, future redevelopment activities would be required to comply with the City's Construction and Demolition (C&D) Ordinance (05-09), which requires all new commercial projects over 1,000 square feet to recycle a minimum of 65 percent of all inert materials and 65 percent of all other materials. The future mixed-use community would be required to maintain a minimum diversion rate of 50 percent and encouraged to meet the City's solid waste diversion goal of 75 percent.
e) Preserve, enhance and restore regional wildlife connectivity.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual projects. Given the fully urbanized nature of the Specific Plan area, it does not provide regional wildlife connectivity.
f) Reduce consumption of resource areas, including agricultural land.	Consistent. The Project Site is not located within any resource areas. The TCSP Area is not zoned for agricultural use or open space or located within a Significant Ecological Area. The TCSP would retain the existing urban environment and conditions of the Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area.
g) Identify ways to improve access to public park space.	Not Applicable. This strategy is directed toward SCAG and local jurisdictions and does not apply to individual projects. However, the proposed Specific Plan promotes the creation of publicly accessible plazas and park spaces.

Source: SCAG, 2020–2045 RTP/SCS,

Consistency with the City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The proposed TCSP is a long-range land use plan that establishes the City’s vision for the TCSP Area as a regional destination incorporating a balanced mix of uses. The City’s goals for the Specific Plan are to create a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; create a distinct sense of place; create a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and create a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City’s General Plan and implements the Housing Element.

Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the California Building Standards Code, the CALGreen Code, and the Building Energy Efficiency Standards to support the State’s and the City’s energy and water conservation efforts. The general consistency of the Project with the applicable policies identified in the City’s General Plan is presented in **Table 4.8-2**. As shown, the Project would not conflict with the policies identified in the City’s General Plan elements, including the Land Use Element, Circulation Element, Noise Element, Conservation and Open Space Element, and Safety Element, adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects, for the reasons described above, the additional reasons discussed in **Table 4.8-2**, and the same reasons identified in **Table 4.8-1** regarding the Project’s consistency with the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS.

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**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
LAND USE ELEMENT	
<i>Goal LU 1: An interconnected Valley of Villages providing diverse lifestyles, surrounded by a greenbelt of natural open space.</i>	
Objective LU 1.1: Maintain an urban form for the Santa Clarita Valley that preserves an open space greenbelt around the developed portions of the Valley, protects significant resources from development, and directs growth to urbanized areas served with infrastructure.	
Policy LU 1.1.2: On the Land Use Map, concentrate urban development within flatter portions of the Santa Clarita Valley floor in areas with limited environmental constraints and served with infrastructure.	Consistent. The Specific Plan would encourage redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area with mixed-use development and would promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community, where a variety of housing options are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. Future redevelopment in the TCSP Area would occur in the Santa Clarita Valley floor on existing urban developed land and would be served with existing infrastructure. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Policy LU 1.1.3: Discourage urban sprawl into rural areas by limiting non-contiguous, "leap-frog" development outside of areas designated for urban use.	Consistent. The Specific Plan would encourage redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area, which is surrounded by urban/suburban development. Future redevelopment in the TCSP Area would occur on existing urban developed land and would not leap-frog development. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Policy LU 1.1.4: Preserve community character by maintaining natural features that act as natural boundaries between developed areas, including significant ridgelines, canyons, rivers and drainage courses, riparian areas, topographical features, habitat preserves, or other similar features, where appropriate.	Consistent. The Specific Plan would encourage redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area. The TCSP Area consists of existing urban developed land and devoid of natural features.
Policy LU 1.1.5: Increase infill development and re-use of underutilized sites within and adjacent to developed urban areas to achieve maximum benefit from existing infrastructure and minimize loss of open space, through redesignation of vacant sites for higher density and mixed use, where appropriate.	Consistent. The Specific Plan would encourage infill development and reuse of underutilized sites specifically within and surrounding the existing Valencia Town Center Mall. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Objective LU 1.2: Maintain the distinctive community character of villages and neighborhoods throughout the planning area by establishing uses, densities, and design guidelines appropriate to the particular needs and goals of each area, including but not limited to the following:	
Policy LU 1.2.2: In Valencia, promote business development, job creation, and expansion of regional commercial, civic, cultural, and entertainment uses, to create a vibrant Town Center serving as a community focal point for the entire Santa Clarita Valley.	Consistent. The Specific Plan would redevelop underutilized parcels to expand commercial, retail, and office uses and introduce residential uses to the site, which includes the Valencia Town Center. The Specific Plan would also envision a hotel and convention center in the TCSP Area, which would draw patrons to the Santa Clarita Valley region. The Specific Plan would provide a development plan framework to establish the components, expectations, and general requirements for all future development plans within the Specific Plan area. Development and design standards regulating future development would also be provided therein. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Goal LU 4: A diverse and healthy economy.	
Objective LU 4.1: Promote creation of strong and regional local economies.	
Policy LU 4.1.1: Promote expansion and enhancement of the Valencia Town Center to provide a focal point for cultural, civic, educational, and shopping activities serving the entire Santa Clarita Valley.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan would be aligned with this policy as it would provide a long-range land use plan to enhance the Specific Plan area as a regional destination creating a balanced mix of uses, including residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses. The proposed Specific Plan area includes development of such uses within the 69-acre Valencia Town Center. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Policy LU 4.1.3: Direct business creation and expansion for larger companies within and adjacent to existing and planned business centers and major transportation corridors.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options, businesses, and community facilities. The Specific Plan area is located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center, and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby providing convenient access to transportation services. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Objective LU 4.2: Promote job creation, focusing on employment generators in the technical and professional sectors.	
Policy LU 4.2.1: Pursue business attraction and expansion programs for clean industries that provide job opportunities for local residents, particularly in the areas of film/entertainment, biotechnology, aerospace, and technology.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan would encourage the creation of a balanced mix of uses, including various retail, restaurant, hospitality, office, and other commercial uses that would provide job opportunities for local residents. The Specific Plan area is located adjacent to the McBean Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing convenient access to transit services with connection to other parts of the SCAG region, including jobs in the areas of film/entertainment, biotechnology, aerospace, and technology. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy LU 4.2.3: Encourage businesses to locate in all appropriate areas of the community to encourage job creation in closer proximity to workforce housing.</p>	<p>Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy LU 4.2.1 above.</p>
<p>Objective LU 4.5: Ensure creation of attractive and technology-friendly business environments to attract tenants and employees.</p>	
<p>Policy LU 4.5.3: Promote the inclusion of state-of-the-art technology within business complexes for telecommunications, heating and cooling, water and energy conservation, and other similar design features.</p>	<p>Consistent. Future redevelopment in the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the California Building Standards Code, which includes the CALGreen Code, which requires implementation of energy-efficient light fixtures and building materials into the design of new construction projects, as well as high-efficiency plumbing fixtures. Furthermore, the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards require newly constructed buildings to meet energy performance standards set by the California Energy Commission. These standards are specifically crafted for new buildings to result in energy-efficient performance. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.</p>
<p>Policy LU 4.5.4: Encourage the provision of support services for employees within business park areas, such as dining and personal services where appropriate, to reduce vehicle trips and promote pedestrian-friendly work environments.</p>	<p>Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable mixed-use community providing both employment opportunities and support services within the Town Center. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.</p>
<p>Goal LU 5: Enhanced mobility through alternative transportation choices and land use patterns.</p>	
<p>Objective LU 5.1: Provide for alternative travel modes linking neighborhoods, commercial districts, and job centers.</p>	
<p>Policy LU 5.1.1: Require safe, secure, clearly delineated, adequately illuminated walkways and bicycle facilities in all commercial and business centers.</p>	<p>Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services and ensuring safety and security of pedestrians and bicyclists. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.</p>
<p>Policy LU 5.1.2: Require connectivity between walkways and bikeways serving neighborhoods and nearby commercial areas, schools, parks, and other supporting services and facilities.</p>	<p>Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The proposed Specific Plan prioritizes the connection of the City's paseo system through the site with walkways, bikeways, and multi-use trails. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would provide for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity both internally and externally and the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.</p>

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Objective LU 5.2: Coordinate land use designations with support services and public transit in order to encourage vehicle trip reduction.	
Policy LU 5.2.3: Promote location of non-polluting businesses providing employment opportunities in proximity to neighborhoods, to encourage walking to work.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy LU 4.2.1.
Goal LU 6: A scenic and beautiful urban environment that builds on the community's history and natural setting.	
Objective LU 6.3: Beautify streetscapes and gateways to the community.	
Policy LU 6.3.4: Require undergrounding of utility lines for new development where feasible, and plan for undergrounding of existing utility lines in conjunction with street improvement projects where economically feasible.	Consistent. Future redevelopment in the TCSP Area would connect to existing utilities and would underground all the connections consistent with City policies. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Objective LU 6.5: Promote high quality development that enhances the urban environment and builds long-term value.	
Policy LU 6.5.1: Require use of high quality, durable, and natural-appearing building materials pursuant to applicable ordinances.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan includes development standards and design criteria, which require the use of high-quality materials. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Policy LU 6.5.2: Encourage the use of designs and architectural styles that incorporate classic and timeless architectural features.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan includes development standards and design criteria, which require future development projects to be compatible in size, scale, and appearance with the character of Santa Clarita, and to incorporate articulation, community character features, multiple building forms, and desirable building details. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Policy LU 6.5.3: Require architectural enhancement and articulation on all sides of buildings (360 degree architecture), with special consideration at building entrances and corners, and along facades adjacent to major arterial streets.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan includes development standards and design criteria, which require architectural design with pedestrian-scaled building massing and forms. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Land Use Element policy.
Policy LU 6.5.4: Evaluate new development in consideration of its context, to ensure that buildings create a coherent living environment, a cohesive urban fabric, and contribute to a sense of place consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy LU 6.5.2.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Circulation Element	
Goal C 1: An inter-connected network of circulation facilities that integrates all travel modes, provides viable alternatives to automobile use, and conforms with regional plans.	
Objective C 1.1: Provide multi-modal circulation systems that move people and goods efficiently while protecting environmental resources and quality of life.	
Policy C 1.1.1: Reduce dependence on the automobile, particularly single-occupancy vehicle use, by providing safe and convenient access to transit, bikeways, and walkways.	Consistent. The TCSP would promote the use of public transportation and other alternative modes of transportation that reduce single-occupancy vehicle use. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area is located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Circulation Element policy.
Policy C 1.1.3: Work with local and regional agencies and employers to promote an integrated, seamless transportation system that meets access needs, including local and regional bus service, dial-a-ride, taxis, rail, van pools, car pools, bus pools, bicycling, walking, and automobiles.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.1.
Policy C 1.1.5: Plan for efficient links between circulation systems at appropriate locations, including but not limited to bus-rail connections and pedestrian-bus connections.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.1.
Policy C 1.1.6: Provide adequate facilities for multi-modal travel, including but not limited to bicycle parking and storage, expanded park-and-ride lots, and adequate station and transfer facilities in appropriate locations.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.1.
Policy C 1.1.7: Consider the safety and convenience of the traveling public, including pedestrians and cyclists, in design and development of all transportation systems.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.1. Street standards in the proposed Specific Plan conform to standard and accepted roadway geometries.
Policy C 1.1.8: Acquire and/or reserve adequate right-of-way in transportation corridors to accommodate multiple travel modes, including bus turnouts, bus rapid transit (BRT), bikeways, walkways, and linkages to trail systems.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.1. Street standards in the proposed Specific Plan include provisions for multiple modes of travel.
Policy C 1.1.10: Provide for flexibility in the transportation system to accommodate new technology as it becomes available, in order to reduce trips by vehicles using fossil fuels where feasible and appropriate.	Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby reducing trips by vehicles using fossil fuels. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Circulation Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Objective C 1.2: Coordinate land use and circulation planning to achieve greater accessibility and mobility for users of all travel modes.	
Policy C 1.2.1: Develop coordinated plans for land use, circulation, and transit to promote transit-oriented development that concentrates higher density housing, employment, and commercial areas in proximity to transit corridors.	Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Circulation Element policy.
Policy C 1.2.3: Require that new commercial and industrial development provide walkway connections to public sidewalks and transit stops, where available.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.2.1.
Policy C 1.2.4: Consider location, availability, and accessibility of transit in evaluating new development plans.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.2.1.
Policy C 1.2.8: Provide safe pedestrian connections across barriers, which may include but are not limited to major traffic corridors, drainage and flood control facilities, utility easements, grade separations, and walls.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.2.1.
Policy C 1.2.9: Emphasize providing right-of-way for non-vehicular transportation modes so that walking and bicycling are the easiest, most convenient modes of transportation available for short trips.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.2.1.
Policy C 1.2.11: Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through the use of smart growth concepts.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.2.1.
Policy C 1.2.12: Balance the anticipated volume of people and goods movement with the need to maintain a walkable and bicycle friendly environment.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.2.1.
Goal C 3: Reduction of vehicle trips and emissions through effective management of travel demand, transportation systems, and parking.	
Objective C 3.1: Promote the use of travel demand management strategies to reduce vehicle trips.	
Policy C 3.1.1: In evaluating new development projects, require trip reduction measures as feasible to relieve congestion and reduce air pollution from vehicle emissions.	Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center thereby reducing trips by vehicles and reducing air pollution. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Circulation Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Objective C 3.2: Encourage reduction in airborne emissions from vehicles through use of clean vehicles and transportation system management.	
Policy C 3.2.3: When available and feasible, provide opportunities and infrastructure to support use of alternative fuel vehicles and travel devices.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.10. The proposed TCSP includes provisions for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure that meets the most ambitious voluntary standards in CALGreen.
Objective C 3.3: Make more efficient use of parking and maximize economic use of land, while decreasing impervious surfaces in urban areas, through parking management strategies.	
Policy C 3.3.1: Evaluate parking standards and reduce requirements where appropriate, based on data showing that requirements are in excess of demand.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan includes modern parking standards that reduce the development of excess parking. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Circulation Element policy.
Goal C 6: A unified and well-maintained bikeway system with safe and convenient routes for commuting, recreational use and utilitarian travel, connecting communities and the region.	
Objective C 6.2: Encourage provision of equipment and facilities to support the use of bicycles as an alternative means of travel.	
Policy C 6.2.1: Require bicycle parking, which can include bicycle lockers and sheltered areas at commercial sites and multifamily housing complexes for use by employees and residents, as well as customers and visitors.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.1.
Goal C 7: Walkable communities, in which interconnected walkways provide a safe, comfortable and viable alternative to driving for local destinations.	
Objective C 7.1: A continuous, integrated system of safe and attractive pedestrian walkways, paseos and trails linking residents to parks, open space, schools, services, and transit.	
Policy C 7.1.4: Identify and develop an improvement program to connect existing walkways and paseos to transit and services, where needed and appropriate.	Consistent. Please refer to the responses to Policies LU 5.1.2 and C 1.1.1.
Policy C 7.1.10: Continue to expand and improve the Valley's multi-use trail system to provide additional routes for pedestrian travel.	Consistent. Please refer to the responses to Policies LU 5.1.2 and C 1.1.1.
Noise Element	
Goal N 1: A healthy and safe noise environment for Santa Clarita Valley residents, employees, and visitors.	
Objective N 1.1: Protect the health and safety of the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley by the elimination, mitigation, and prevention of significant existing and future noise levels.	
Policy N 1.1.2: Continue to implement the adopted Noise Ordinance and other applicable code provisions, consistent with state and federal standards, which establish noise impact thresholds for noise abatement and attenuation, in order to reduce potential health hazards associated with high noise levels.	Consistent. Section 4.9, Noise, of this Draft EIR, addressed the noise impacts of the Project. As determined in that section, Project impacts during construction and operation would not exceed any noise impact thresholds, including those established in the City's Noise Ordinance, and, as such, the Project would not expose adjacent sensitive uses to potential health hazards associated with high noise levels. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Noise Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Policy N 1.1.3: Include consideration of potential noise impacts in land use planning and development review decisions.	Consistent. The Project’s noise impacts have been considered in Section 4.9, Noise, of this Draft EIR. As determined in that section, Project impacts during construction and operation would not exceed any noise thresholds and, as such, would result in less-than-significant impacts. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Noise Element policy.
Policy N 1.1.4: Control noise sources adjacent to residential, recreational, and community facilities, and those land uses classified as noise sensitive.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy N 1.1.2.
Goal N 4: Protection of sensitive uses from commercial and industrial noise generators.	
Objective N 4.1: Prevent, mitigate, and minimize noise spillover from commercial and industrial uses into adjacent residential neighborhoods and other noise sensitive uses.	
Policy N 4.1.1: Implement and enforce the applicable Noise Ordinance to control noise from commercial and industrial sources that may adversely impact adjacent residential neighborhoods and other sensitive uses.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy N 1.1.2.
Policy N 4.1.2: Require appropriate noise buffering between commercial or industrial uses and residential neighborhoods and other sensitive uses.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy N 1.1.2.
Policy N 4.1.3: Adopt and enforce standards for the control of noise from commercial and entertainment establishments when adjacent to residential neighborhoods and other sensitive uses.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy N 1.1.2.
Conservation and Open Space Element	
Goal CO 1: A balance between the social and economic needs of Santa Clarita Valley residents and protection of the natural environment, so that these needs can be met in the present and in the future.	
Objective CO 1.5: Manage urban development and human-built systems to minimize harm to ecosystems, watersheds, and other natural systems, such as urban runoff treatment trains that infiltrate, treat and remove direct connections to impervious areas.	
Policy CO 1.5.1: Promote the use of environmentally-responsible building design and efficiency standards in new development, and provide examples of these standards in public facilities.	Consistent. Future redevelopment project in the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the California Building Standards Code, the CALGreen Code, and the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which require new development to use environmentally responsible building design and efficiency standards related to energy and water conservation and waste reduction. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy CO 1.5.5: Promote concentration of urban uses within the center of the Santa Clarita Valley through incentives for infill development and rebuilding, in order to limit impacts to open space, habitats, watersheds, hillsides, and other components of the Valley's natural ecosystems.</p>	<p>Consistent. The TCSP would provide for the development/redevelopment of an infill site in the center of Santa Clarita that is currently development with urban uses. Thus, buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would not impact open space, habitats, watersheds, hillsides, and other components of the Valley's natural ecosystems. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.</p>
<p>Policy CO 1.5.6: Through the development review process, consider the impacts of development on the entire watershed of the Santa Clara River and its tributaries, including hydromodification.</p>	<p>Consistent. The TCSP Area is within an urbanized area of Santa Clarita. Development projects building out the proposed Specific Plan would not occur in flood-prone areas, as none exist in the Specific Plan area. Such projects would be required to comply with all stormwater regulations include the implementation of LID standards, which would minimize the amount of water pollutants exiting the site. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.</p>
<p>Policy CO 1.5.7: Consider the principles of environmental sustainability, trip reduction, walkability, stormwater management, and energy conservation at the site, neighborhood, district, city, and regional level, in land use decisions.</p>	<p>Consistent. The Project would encourage the creation of a walkable community from development of a variety of housing options that are developed alongside businesses and community facilities. The Specific Plan area would be located adjacent to the McBean Regional Transit Center and the TCSP would also emphasize improved access to the transit center (thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.</p>
<p>Goal CO 2: Conserve the Santa Clarita Valley's hillsides, canyons, ridgelines, soils, and minerals, which provide the physical setting for the natural and built environments.</p>	
<p>Objective CO 2.1: Control soil erosion, waterway sedimentation, and airborne dust generation, and maintain the fertility of topsoil.</p>	
<p>Policy CO 2.1.1: Review soil erosion and sedimentation control plans for development-related grading activities, where appropriate, to ensure mitigation of potential erosion by water and air.</p>	<p>Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to submit project-specific soil erosion and sedimentation control plans for development-related grading activities. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.</p>
<p>Policy CO 2.1.2: Promote conservation of topsoil on development sites by stockpiling for later reuse, where feasible.</p>	<p>Consistent. Given the graded and relatively flat topography of the TCSP Area and the cost of import/export of soil, grading for future construction projects building out the proposed Specific Plan is expected to largely balance on-site grading in terms of cut and fill quantities. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.</p>

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Objective CO 2.2: Preserve the Santa Clarita Valley’s prominent ridgelines and limit hillside development to protect the valuable aesthetic and visual qualities intrinsic to the Santa Clarita Valley landscape.	
Policy CO 2.2.1: Locate development and designate land uses to minimize the impact on the Santa Clarita Valley’s topography, minimizing grading and emphasizing the use of development pads that mimic the natural topography in lieu of repetitive flat pads, to the extent feasible.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be developed on a generally flat, previously developed, infill site. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 2.2.3: Preserve designated natural ridgelines from development by ensuring a minimum distance for grading and development from these ridgelines of 50 feet or more if determined appropriate by the reviewing authority based on site conditions, to maintain the Santa Clarita Valley’s distinctive community character and preserve the scenic setting.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would not affect nearby natural ridgelines. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Goal CO 3: Conservation of biological resources and ecosystems, including sensitive habitats and species.	
Objective CO 3.1: In review of development plans and projects, encourage conservation of existing natural areas and restoration of damaged natural vegetation to provide for habitat and biodiversity.	
Policy CO 3.1.1: On the Land Use Map and through the development review process, concentrate development into previously developed or urban areas to promote infill development and prevent sprawl and habitat loss, to the extent feasible.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would occur in the existing urban developed site. Accordingly, the Project would not result in sprawl or significant habitat loss. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 3.1.2: Avoid designating or approving new development that will adversely impact wetlands, floodplains, threatened or endangered species and habitat, and water bodies supporting fish or recreational uses, and establish an adequate buffer area as deemed appropriate through site specific review.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would occur in the existing urban developed site. Accordingly, the Project would not adversely impact wetlands, floodplains, and water bodies supporting fish or recreational uses. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 3.1.5: Promote the use of site-appropriate native or adapted plant materials, and prohibit use of invasive or noxious plant species in landscape designs.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the City’s landscaping standards as established in SCMC Section 17.51.030 and, as such, would not use invasive or noxious plant species as listed by the California Invasive Plant Council. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 3.1.6: On development sites, preserve and enhance natural site elements including existing water bodies, soil conditions, ecosystems, trees, vegetation and habitat, to the extent feasible.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would occur in the existing urban developed site. Accordingly, the Project would not affect natural site elements including existing water bodies, soil conditions, ecosystems, vegetation and habitat. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Policy CO 3.1.8: On development sites, require tree planting to provide habitat and shade to reduce the heat island effect caused by pavement and buildings.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to conform with the tree planting requirements, which would contribute to the reduction in the heat island effect. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 3.1.9: During construction, ensure preservation of habitat and trees designated to be protected through use of fencing and other means as appropriate, so as to prevent damage by grading, soil compaction, pollution, erosion or other adverse construction impacts.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would occur in the existing urban developed site. Accordingly, the Project would not affect habitat. Any trimming or removal of protected oak trees would be required to comply with the City's Oak Tree Preservation ordinance (SCMC Section 17.51.040). Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Objective CO 3.2: Identify and protect areas which have exceptional biological resource value due to a specific type of vegetation, habitat, ecosystem, or location.	
Policy CO 3.2.1: Protect wetlands from development impacts, with the goal of achieving no net loss (or functional reduction) of jurisdictional wetlands within the planning area.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would occur on an existing urban developed site. Accordingly, the Project would not affect wetlands. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 3.2.2: Ensure that development is located and designed to protect oak, and other significant indigenous woodlands.	Consistent. Please refer to Policy CO 3.1.6. There are no oak or other woodlands onsite. Any trimming or removal of individual protected oak trees would be required to comply with the City's Oak Tree Preservation ordinance (SCMC Section 17.51.040).
Policy CO 3.2.3: Ensure protection of any endangered or threatened species or habitat, in conformance with State and federal laws.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 3.1.9.
Objective CO 3.3: Protect significant wildlife corridors from encroachment by development that would hinder or obstruct wildlife movement.	
Policy CO 3.3.1: Protect the banks and adjacent riparian habitat along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries, to provide wildlife corridors.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 3.1.9.
Objective CO 3.5: Maintain, enhance, and manage the urban forest throughout developed portions of the Santa Clarita Valley to provide habitat, reduce energy consumption, and create a more livable environment.	
Policy CO 3.5.2: Where appropriate, promote planting of trees that are native or climactically appropriate to the surrounding environment, emphasizing oaks, sycamores, maple, walnut, and other native species in order to enhance habitat, and discouraging the use of introduced species such as eucalyptus, pepper trees, and palms except as ornamental landscape features.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to prepare landscaping plans and to comply with the planting requirements of the City. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Policy CO 3.5.3: Pursuant to the requirements of the zoning ordinance, protect heritage oak trees that, due to their size and condition, are deemed to have exceptional value to the community.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area could occur on sites containing oak tree(s). However, future development projects would be required to obtain an oak tree permit from the City in accordance with this Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance, as necessary. With the required compliance with the City's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Objective CO 3.6: Minimize impacts of human activity and the built environment on natural plant and wildlife communities.	
Policy CO 3.6.1: Minimize light trespass, sky-glow, glare, and other adverse impacts on the nocturnal ecosystem by limiting exterior lighting to the level needed for safety and comfort; reduce unnecessary lighting for landscaping and architectural purposes, and encourage reduction of lighting levels during non-business nighttime hours.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the City's outdoor lighting standards as established in SCMC Section 17.51.050. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Goal CO 4: An adequate supply of clean water to meet the needs of present and future residents and businesses, balanced with the needs of natural ecosystems.	
Objective CO 4.1: Promote water conservation as a critical component of ensuring adequate water supply for Santa Clarita Valley residents and businesses.	
Policy CO 4.1.5: Promote the use of low-flow and/or waterless plumbing fixtures and appliances in all new non-residential development and residential development of five or more dwelling units.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the California Building Standards Code, which includes the CALGreen Code, which includes provisions related to the installation of high-efficiency plumbing fixtures to achieve the required 20 percent reduction in indoor water use. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO-4.1.10: Support emerging methods and technologies for the onsite capture, treatment, and infiltration of stormwater and greywater, and amend the City Code to allow these methods and technologies when they are proven to be safe and feasible.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would use existing stormwater runoff systems and would be required to comply with Low Impact Development (LID) standards, which require capture and percolation of stormwater. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Objective CO 4.2: Work with water providers and other agencies to identify and implement programs to increase water supplies to meet the needs of future growth.	
Policy CO 4.2.6: Require that all new development proposals demonstrate a sufficient and sustainable water supply prior to approval.	Consistent. As detailed in Section 4.13, Utilities and Service Systems, adequate water supply would be available to serve buildout of the proposed Specific Plan during normal years, dry years, and multiple dry year cycles. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Objective CO 4.3: Limit disruption of natural hydrology by reducing impervious cover, increasing on-site infiltration, and managing stormwater runoff at the source.	
Policy CO 4.3.1: On undeveloped sites proposed for development, promote onsite stormwater infiltration through design techniques such as pervious paving, draining runoff into bioswales or properly designed landscaped areas, preservation of natural soils and vegetation, and limiting impervious surfaces.	Consistent. The TSCP area has been entirely graded as a result of past development activities. The Specific Plan area does not contain any natural drainage patterns or riparian areas. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would use existing stormwater runoff systems and would be required to comply with LID standards, which require capture and percolation of stormwater. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 4.3.7: Reduce the amount of pollutants entering the Santa Clara River and its tributaries by capturing and treating stormwater runoff at the source, to the extent possible.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would use existing stormwater runoff systems and would be required to comply with LID standards, which require capture and percolation of stormwater. The projects would be required to implement BMPs to manage and control soil erosion during construction activities. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Objective CO 4.4: Promote measures to enhance water quality by addressing sources of water pollution.	
Policy CO 4.4.3: Discourage the use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides in landscaping to reduce water pollution by substances hazardous to human health and natural ecosystems.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area that use any chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides in landscaping would be required to comply with regulations for the use and storage of such materials. Refer also to the response to Policy CO 4.3.7. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 4.4.4: Promote the extension of sanitary sewers for all urban uses and densities, to protect groundwater quality, where feasible.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would connect to local sewer lines and the Specific Plan area is currently served by sewer lines. No septic tanks would be used by future redevelopment projects. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Goal CO 5: Protection of historical and culturally significant resources that contribute to community identity and a sense of history.	
Objective CO 5.3: Encourage conservation and preservation of Native American cultural places, including prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial sites on both public and private lands, throughout all stages of the planning and development process.	
Policy CO 5.3.1: For any proposed general plan amendment, specific plan, or specific plan amendment, notify and consult with any California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the California Native American Heritage Commission that have traditional lands located within the City's jurisdiction, regarding any potential impacts to Native American resources from the proposed action, pursuant to State guidelines.	Consistent. The City has consulted with the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and has come to an agreement on the mitigation measures (identified as Mitigation Measures MM TCR-1 through MM TCR-3 in Section 4.12, Tribal Cultural Resources, of this Draft EIR) to be implemented by the Project during construction activities to reduce potential impacts to Native American resources. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy CO 5.3.2: For any proposed development project that may have a potential impact on Native American cultural resources, provide notification to California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission that have traditional lands within the City’s jurisdiction, and consider the input received prior to a discretionary decision.</p>	<p>Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 5.3.1.</p>
<p>Policy CO 5.3.3: Review and consider a cultural resources study for any new grading or development in areas identified as having a high potential for Native American resources, and incorporate recommendations into the project approval as appropriate to mitigate impacts to cultural resources.</p>	<p>Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 5.3.1.</p>
<p>Goal CO 6: Preservation of scenic features that keep the Santa Clarita Valley beautiful and enhance quality of life, community identity, and property values.</p>	
<p>Objective CO 6.1: Protect the scenic character of local topographic features.</p>	
<p>Policy CO 6.1.2: Preserve significant ridgelines, as shown on the Exhibit CO-7, as a scenic backdrop throughout the community by maintaining natural grades and vegetation.</p>	<p>Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy LU 1.1.4. The Specific Plan would encourage redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center Mall and surrounding area, which lie on the Santa Clarita Valley floor and do not contain natural topographic features. Future redevelopment in the TCSP Area would not affect natural grade elevations of significant natural ridgelines or prominent landforms. The redevelopment in the TCSP Area would occur in an existing urban area and would not diminish the overall, existing aesthetic value. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.</p>
<p>Objective CO 6.2: Protect the scenic character of view corridors.</p>	
<p>Policy CO 6.2.1: Where feasible, encourage development proposals to have varied building heights to maintain view corridor sight lines.</p>	<p>Consistent. The Project would promote mixed-use development to ensure that future development projects incorporate a balance of uses, provide appropriate amenities, and create a sense of place. The proposed Specific Plan includes development standards that address building heights, setbacks, stepbacks, public spaces, and architectural standards to maintain visual appeal and compatibility with the surrounding area. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.</p>
<p>Objective CO 6.6: Limit adverse impacts by humans on the scenic environment.</p>	
<p>Policy CO 6.6.1: Enhance views of the night sky by reducing light pollution through use of light screens, downward directed lights, minimized reflective paving surfaces, and reduced lighting levels, as deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority.</p>	<p>Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 3.6.1.</p>

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Policy CO 6.6.2: Improve views of the Santa Clarita Valley through various policies to minimize air pollution and smog, as contained throughout the General Plan.	Consistent. As noted with regard to Policy C 3.1.1, the proposed Specific Plan includes multiple elements intended to reduce the dependency on automobiles, thereby reducing the generation of air pollution. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 6.6.4: Where appropriate, require new development to be sensitive to scenic viewpoints or viewsheds through building design, site layout and building heights.	Consistent. Please refer to the responses to Policy CO 6.1.2 and Policy CO 6.2.1.
Policy CO 6.6.5: Encourage undergrounding of all new utility lines, and promote undergrounding of existing lines where feasible and practicable.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy LU 6.3.4.
Goal CO 7: Clean air to protect human health and support healthy ecosystems.	
Objective CO 7.1: Reduce air pollution from mobile sources.	
Policy CO 7.1.1: Through the mixed land use patterns and multi-modal circulation policies set forth in the Land Use and Circulation Elements, limit air pollution from transportation sources.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 3.1.1.
Policy CO 7.1.2: Support the use of alternative fuel vehicles.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.10.
Policy CO 7.1.3: Support alternative travel modes and new technologies, including infrastructure to support alternative fuel vehicles, as they become commercially available.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy C 1.1.10.
Goal CO 8: Development designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.	
Objective CO 8.3: Encourage the following green building and sustainable development practices on private development projects, to the extent reasonable and feasible.	
Policy CO 8.3.5: Encourage on-site solar generation of electricity in new retail and office commercial buildings and associated parking lots, carports, and garages, in concert with other significant energy conservation efforts.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to conform with existing regulations requiring installation of rooftop solar systems and solar panels, including CALGreen building standards. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 8.3.7: Encourage the use of trees and landscaping to reduce heating and cooling energy loads, through shading of buildings and parking lots.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 3.1.8.
Policy CO 8.3.8: Encourage energy-conserving heating and cooling systems and appliances, and energy-efficiency in windows and insulation, in all new construction.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy LU 4.5.3.
Policy CO 8.3.9: Limit excessive lighting levels, and encourage a reduction of lighting when businesses are closed to a level required for security.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 3.6.1.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Objective CO 8.4: Reduce energy consumption for processing raw materials by promoting recycling and materials recovery by all residents and businesses throughout the community.	
Policy CO 8.4.4: Promote commercial and industrial recycling, including recycling of construction and demolition debris.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the City's standards related to recycling of construction and demolition debris as established in SCMC Chapter 15.46. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 8.4.5: Develop and implement standards for refuse and recycling receptacles and enclosures to accommodate recycling in all development.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the City's recycling program by including adequate, accessible, and convenient areas for collecting and loading recyclable materials, consistent with the provisions of AB 341. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Goal CO 10: Preservation of open space to meet the community's multiple objectives for resource preservation.	
Objective CO 10.2: Ensure the inclusion of adequate open space within development projects.	
Policy CO 10.2.1: Encourage provision of vegetated open space on a development project's site, which may include shallow wetlands and ponds, drought tolerant landscaping, and pedestrian hardscape that includes vegetated areas.	Consistent. The proposed Specific Plan would promote mixed-use development to ensure that future development projects incorporate a balance of uses, provide appropriate amenities, and create a sense of place. These standards would include publicly accessible spaces and recreational spaces as part of a mixed-use community. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Conservation and Open Space Element policy.
Policy CO 10.2.2: Encourage that open space provided within development projects be usable and accessible, rather than configured in unusable strips and left-over remnants, and that open space areas are designed to connect to each other and to adjacent open spaces, to the extent reasonable and practical.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 10.2.1.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Safety Element	
Goal S 1: Protection of public safety and property from hazardous geological conditions, including seismic rupture and ground shaking, soil instability, and related hazards.	
Objective S 1.2: Regulate new development in areas subject to geological hazards to reduce risks to the public from seismic events or geological instability.	
Policy S 1.2.3: Require soils and geotechnical reports for new construction in areas with potential hazards from faulting, landslides, liquefaction, or subsidence, and incorporate recommendations from these studies into the site design as appropriate.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would be required to conduct site-specific geologic and geotechnical engineering investigations to identify constraints related to geology and soils, including potential hazards associated with faulting, landslides, liquefaction, and subsidence. Future redevelopment projects would also be required to comply with California Building Code regulations that are incorporated by reference into SCMC Chapter 18.01, which mandate that structures be designed/constructed to meet seismic safety standards. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Safety Element policy.
Goal S 2: Protection of public safety and property from unreasonable risks due to flooding.	
Objective S 2.1: Plan for flood protection as part of a multi-objective watershed management approach for the Santa Clara River and its tributaries.	
Policy S 2.1.2: Promote Low Impact Development standards on development sites, including but not limited to minimizing impervious surface area and promoting infiltration, in order to reduce the flow and velocity of stormwater runoff throughout the watershed.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects in the TCSP Area would use existing stormwater runoff systems and would be required to comply with LID standards, which require capture and percolation of stormwater. The projects would be required to implement BMPs to manage and control soil erosion during construction activities. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Safety Element policy.
Goal S 3: Protection of public safety infrastructure and property from fires.	
Objective S 3.1: Provide adequate fire protection infrastructure to maintain acceptable service levels as established by the Los Angeles County Fire Department.	
Policy S 3.1.3: Require adequate fire flow and adequate fire protection as a condition of approval for all new development.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects on the TCSP Area would be required to comply with the California Building Code and the Los Angeles County Fire Code regarding fire flow, water mains, fire hydrants, fire lane, building access, apparatus access, and fuel modification plan. Specific fire and life safety requirements are addressed at the Los Angeles County Fire Department building plan check review. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Safety Element policy.
Objective S 3.2: Provide for the specialized needs of fire protection services in both urban and wildland interface areas.	
Policy S 3.2.4: Require sprinkler systems, fire resistant roofs and building materials, and other construction measures deemed necessary to prevent loss of life and property from wildland fires. (Required change to meet Board of Forestry standards)	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy S 3.1.3.
Policy S 3.2.5: Ensure adequate secondary and emergency access for fire apparatus, which includes minimum requirements for road width, surface material, grade, and staging areas.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy S 3.1.3.

**TABLE 4.8-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)**

Applicable General Plan Policies	Project Consistency Analysis
Goal S 6: Reduced risk to public safety and property damage from accidental occurrences.	
Objective S 6.2: Increase public safety through the design of public facilities and urban spaces.	
Policy S 6.2.1: In designing or reviewing development plans, ensure that lighting levels are adequate to provide safe and secure nighttime use of each site, while limiting excessive or unnecessary light and glare.	Consistent. Please refer to the response to Policy CO 3.6.1.
Policy S 6.2.2: In reviewing development plans, consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to increase public safety through establishing defensible space, clearly delineated public and private areas, and effective surveillance of common areas.	Consistent. Future redevelopment projects on the TCSP Area would be required to comply with CPTED principles in project-specific design plans. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this Safety Element policy.

Source: City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, 2011.

Consistency with the Santa Clarita Municipal Code

All redevelopment activities associated with the Project would be subject to the SCMC, particularly Title 17, Zoning. The SCMC establishes the current requirements for the Project Site, which the Project would replace with more detailed site-specific requirements and standards included in the proposed Specific Plan.

SCMC Title 17 - Zoning

The Project would require a Zone Change, Zone Map Amendment, and Zone Text Amendment to change the Project Site's zoning from Regional Commercial (CR) and Jobs Creation Overlay Zone (JCOZ) to Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP). These approvals would occur concurrently with adoption of the proposed Specific Plan, which is intended to create a balance of residential, commercial, dining and entertainment uses; create placemaking; and create a flexible framework for future development. Adoption of the TCSP would establish the Project Area's zoning regulations and development standards. The changes would occur pursuant to SCMC Section 17.28.110 - Specific and Corridor Plans, which establishes procedures for consideration of Specific Plans, and SCMC Section 17.28.120 - Zone Changes and Amendments, which establishes procedures to amend, supplement, or change a property's regulations, zone boundaries, or classifications. Given that the proposed Specific Plan maintains the existing residential density and floor-area-ratio standards of the current CR zone and adds more detailed site specific requirements and standards, the Project would not conflict with SCMC Title 17 - Zoning.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts with regard to Threshold 4.8(b) were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts with regard to Threshold 4.8(b) were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.8.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

As detailed in Chapter 3.0, Environmental Setting, of this Draft EIR, buildout of the City in accordance with the General Plan would result in additional development activity and growth across the City, including in the area surrounding the TCSP Area. As with buildout of the TCSP, buildout of the City has the potential to conflict with relevant land use policies and regulations. Each individual project building out the City would be required to evaluate any potential conflicts with relevant land use policies and regulations. Such projects would be required to comply with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, rules, and regulations as discussed above in Section 4.8.2, Regulatory and Planning Framework. Because land use plan/policy consistency issues are largely project-specific, this evaluation would occur on a case-by-case basis for each individual project affected in conjunction with development proposals on these properties. Therefore, with compliance with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, rules, and regulations, significant cumulative impacts related to the potential for inconsistencies with respect to land use plans, policies, and regulations would not occur. As such, the Project would not have a cumulatively

considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact, and, as such, cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Cumulative impacts related to land use and planning were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Cumulative impacts related to land use and planning were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.9 NOISE

The purpose of this section is to evaluate potential noise related impacts as a result of implementation of the Project. This section evaluates short-term construction-related impacts, as well as long-term operational-related impacts. Noise measurements and traffic noise modeling data can be found **Appendix C, Noise Data**.

4.9.1 EXISTING SETTING

NOISE SCALE AND DEFINITIONS

Sound is mechanical energy transmitted by pressure waves in a compressible medium such as air and is characterized by both its amplitude and frequency (or pitch). The human ear does not hear all frequencies equally. In particular, the ear de-emphasizes low and very high frequencies. To better approximate the sensitivity of human hearing, the A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) has been developed. On this scale, the human range of hearing extends from approximately three dBA to around 140 dBA.

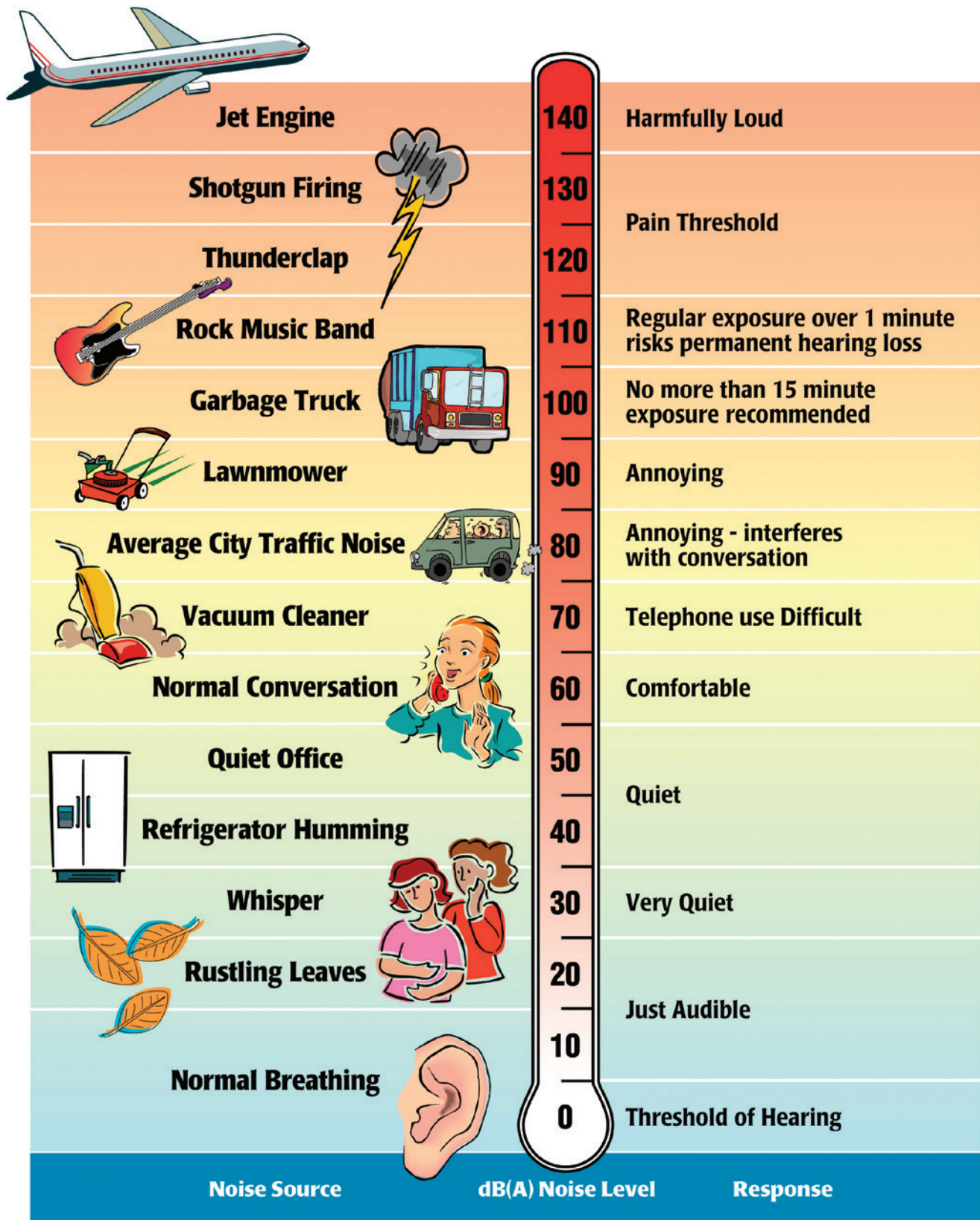
Decibels are based on the logarithmic scale. The logarithmic scale compresses the wide range in sound pressure levels to a more usable range of numbers in a manner similar to the Richter scale used to measure earthquakes. In terms of human response to noise, a sound 10 dBA higher than another is judged to be twice as loud, and 20 dBA higher four times as loud, and so forth. Everyday sounds normally range from 30 dBA (very quiet) to 100 dBA (very loud). Examples of various sound levels in different environments are illustrated on **Figure 4.9-1**.

Many methods have been developed for evaluating community noise to account for, among other things:

- The variation of noise levels over time;
- The influence of periodic individual loud events; and
- The community response to changes in the community noise environment.

Numerous methods have been developed to measure sound over a period of time; refer to **Table 4.9-1**.

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Source:

Melville C. Branch and R. Dale Beland, *Outdoor Noise in the Metropolitan Environment*, 1970.

Environmental Protection Agency, *Information on Levels of Environmental Noise Requisite to Protect Public Health and Welfare with an Adequate Margin of Safety (EPA/ONAC 550/9-74-004)*, March 1974.

Common Environmental Noise Levels

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**Table 4.9-1
NOISE DESCRIPTORS**

Term	Definition
Decibel (dB)	The unit for measuring the volume of sound equal to 10 times the logarithm (base 10) of the ratio of the pressure of a measured sound to a reference pressure (20 micropascals).
A-Weighted Decibel (dBA)	A sound measurement scale that adjusts the pressure of individual frequencies according to human sensitivities. The scale accounts for the fact that the region of highest sensitivity for the human ear is between 2,000 and 4,000 cycles per second (hertz).
Equivalent Sound Level (L_{eq})	The sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given time period. The L_{eq} is the value that expresses the time averaged total energy of a fluctuating sound level.
Maximum Sound Level (L_{max})	The highest individual sound level (dBA) occurring over a given time period.
Minimum Sound Level (L_{min})	The lowest individual sound level (dBA) occurring over a given time period.
Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)	A rating of community noise exposure to all sources of sound that differentiates between daytime, evening, and nighttime noise exposure. These adjustments are +5 dBA for the evening, 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM, and +10 dBA for the night, 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM.
Day/Night Average (L_{dn})	The L_{dn} is a measure of the 24-hour average noise level at a given location. It was adopted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for developing criteria for the evaluation of community noise exposure. It is based on a measure of the average noise level over a given time period called the L_{eq} . The L_{dn} is calculated by averaging the L_{eq} 's for each hour of the day at a given location after penalizing the "sleeping hours" (defined as 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM) by 10 dBA to account for the increased sensitivity of people to noises that occur at night.
Exceedance Level (L_n)	The A-weighted noise levels that are exceeded 1%, 10%, 50%, and 90% (L_{01} , L_{10} , L_{50} , L_{90} , respectively) of the time during the measurement period.

Source: Cyril M. Harris, *Handbook of Noise Control*, 1979.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF NOISE

Human response to sound is highly individualized. Annoyance is the most common issue regarding community noise. However, many factors influence people's response to noise. The factors can include the character of the noise, the variability of the sound level, the presence of tones or impulses, and the time of day of the occurrence. Additionally, non-acoustical factors, such as the person's opinion of the noise source, the ability to adapt to the noise, the attitude towards the source and those associated with it, and the predictability of the noise, all influence people's response. As such, response to noise varies widely from one person to another and with any particular noise, individual responses will range from "not annoyed" to "highly annoyed."

The effects of noise are often only transitory, but adverse effects can be cumulative with prolonged or repeated exposure. The effects of noise on the community can be organized into six broad categories:

- Noise-Induced Hearing Loss;
- Interference with Communication;
- Effects of Noise on Sleep;
- Effects on Performance and Behavior;
- Extra-Auditory Health Effects; and
- Annoyance.

According to the US Public Health Service, nearly 10 million of the estimated 21 million Americans

with hearing impairments owe their losses to noise exposure. Noise can mask important sounds and disrupt communication between individuals in a variety of settings. This process can cause anything from a slight irritation to a serious safety hazard, depending on the circumstance. Noise can disrupt face-to-face communication and telephone communication, and the enjoyment of music and television in the home. It can also disrupt effective communication between teachers and pupils in schools and can cause fatigue and vocal strain in those who need to communicate in spite of the noise.

Interference with communication has proved to be one of the most important components of noise-related annoyance. Noise-induced sleep interference is one of the critical components of community annoyance. Sound level, frequency distribution, duration, repetition, and variability can make it difficult to fall asleep and may cause momentary shifts in the natural sleep pattern, or level of sleep. It can produce short-term adverse effects on mood changes and job performance, with the possibility of more serious effects on health if it continues over long periods. Noise can cause adverse effects on task performance and behavior at work, and non-occupational and social settings. These effects are the subject of some controversy, since the presence and degree of effects depends on a variety of intervening variables. Most research in this area has focused mainly on occupational settings, where noise levels must be sufficiently high and the task sufficiently complex for effects on performance to occur.

Annoyance can be viewed as the expression of negative feelings resulting from interference with activities, as well as the disruption of one's peace of mind and the enjoyment of one's environment. Field evaluations of community annoyance are useful for predicting the consequences of planned actions involving highways, airports, road traffic, railroads, or other noise sources. The consequences of noise-induced annoyance are privately held dissatisfaction, publicly expressed complaints to authorities, and potential adverse health effects, as discussed above. In a study conducted by the US Department of Transportation, the effects of annoyance to the community were quantified. In areas where noise levels were consistently above 60 dBA CNEL, approximately 9 percent of the community is highly annoyed. When levels exceed 65 dBA CNEL, that percentage rises to 15 percent. Although evidence for the various effects of noise have differing levels of certainty, it is clear that noise can affect human health. Most of the effects are, to a varying degree, stress related.

GROUND-BORNE VIBRATION

Sources of ground-borne vibrations include natural phenomena (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides, etc.) or man-made causes (explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment, etc.). Vibration sources may be continuous (e.g., factory machinery) or transient (e.g., explosions).

Ground vibration consists of rapidly fluctuating motions or waves with an average motion of zero. Several different methods are typically used to quantify vibration amplitude. One is the peak particle velocity (PPV); another is the root mean square (RMS) velocity. The PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration wave. The RMS velocity is defined as the average of the squared amplitude of the signal. PPV is typically used for evaluating potential building damage, whereas PPV and RMS vibration velocity amplitudes are used to evaluate human response to vibration. Typically, ground-borne vibration, generated by man-made activities, attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of vibration. Man-made vibration issues

are therefore usually confined to short distances (i.e., 500 feet or less) from the source. Both construction and operation of development projects can generate ground-borne vibration.

Table 4.9-2 displays the reactions of people and the effects on buildings produced by continuous vibration levels. The annoyance levels shown in **Table 4.9-2** should be interpreted with care since vibration may be found to be annoying at much lower levels than those listed, depending on the level of activity or the sensitivity of the individual. To sensitive individuals, vibrations approaching the threshold of perception can be annoying. Low-level vibrations frequently cause irritating secondary vibration, such as a slight rattling of windows, doors, or stacked dishes. The rattling sound can give rise to exaggerated vibration complaints, even though there is very little risk of actual structural damage. In high noise environments, which are more prevalent where groundborne vibration approaches perceptible levels, this rattling phenomenon may also be produced by loud airborne environmental noise causing induced vibration in exterior doors and windows.

**Table 4.9-2
HUMAN REACTION AND DAMAGE TO BUILDINGS FROM CONTINUOUS VIBRATION LEVELS**

Structure and Condition/Human Response	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
	Transient Sources ¹	Continuous/Frequent Intermittent Sources
Extremely fragile historic buildings, ruins, ancient monuments	0.12	0.08
Fragile buildings	0.2	0.1
Historic and some old buildings	0.5	0.25
Older residential structures	0.5	0.3
New residential structures	1.0	0.5
Modern industrial/commercial buildings	2.0	0.5
Barely perceptible	0.04	0.01
Distinctly perceptible	0.25	0.04
Strongly perceptible	0.9	0.10
Severe	2.0	0.40

Source: California Department of Transportation, *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*, Table 19 and Table 20, April 2020.

Note:

1. Transient sources create a single isolated vibration event, such as blasting or drop balls. Continuous/frequent intermittent sources include impact pile drivers, pogo-stick compactors, crack-and-seat equipment, vibratory pile drivers, and vibratory compaction equipment.

SENSITIVE RECEPTORS

Human response to noise varies widely depending on the type of noise, time of day, and sensitivity of the receptor. Sensitive populations are more susceptible to the effects of noise than are the general population. Land uses considered sensitive by the State of California include schools, playgrounds, hospitals, rest homes, rehabilitation centers, long-term care and mental care facilities. Generally, a sensitive receptor is identified as a location where human populations (especially children, senior citizens, and sick persons) are present. Land uses less sensitive to noise are business, commercial, and professional developments. Noise receptors categorized as being least sensitive to noise include industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture, natural open

space, undeveloped land, parking lots, warehousing, and transit terminals. These types of land use often generate high noise levels. Moderately sensitive land uses typically include multifamily dwellings, hotels, motels, dormitories, and outpatient clinics. The following land uses were identified as sensitive receptors in the Project vicinity:

- Multifamily apartment uses to the west (The Madison at Town Center Apartments Community located approximately 180 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive);
- Hotel use located to the west (Hyatt Regency Valencia located approximately 175 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive);
- Multifamily uses to the west (Monticello Apartments located approximately 175 feet west of proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive and Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center and approximately 180 feet north of Subarea 4—McBean and Valencia);
- Multifamily apartment building (Del Monte Apartments located approximately 320 feet south of proposed Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center);
- Multifamily uses to the east (Northglen Apartments Community located approximately 300 feet east of proposed Subarea 2—Town Center East); and
- Multifamily uses to the south (Portofino Apartments Community located approximately 200 feet south of Subarea 4—McBean and Valencia).

The nearby school, Valencia Valley Elementary, is also shielded by intervening commercial and residential uses and is located more than 2,000 feet from the Project Site.

AMBIENT NOISE SOURCES

To quantify existing ambient noise levels in the Project Area, Michael Baker International conducted noise measurements on January 31, 2024; refer to **Figure 4.9-2**.

To determine the typical noise level at the surrounding sensitive receptors, five short-term noise measurements were conducted near the Project Area on January 31, 2024, between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Short-term (L_{eq}) measurements are considered representative of the noise levels at the Project Site; refer to **Table 4.9-3**.



Source: Google Earth Pro, February 2024

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**Table 4.9-3
AMBIENT NOISE MEASUREMENTS**

Measurement Location Number	Location	L _{eq} (dBA)	L _{max} (dBA)	L _{min} (dBA)	Date	Time
NM-1	North of 23626 Magic Mountain Parkway	52.7	70.0	44.7	1/31/2024	11:04 a.m.
NM-2	West of 23947 Del Monte Drive	51.0	67.5	43.5	1/31/2024	11:34 a.m.
NM-3	Approximately 450 feet west of the Valencia Boulevard and McBean Parkway intersection	69.7	78.8	48.5	1/31/2024	11:52 a.m.
NM-4	Approximately 50 feet north from the McBean Parkway and Mall Entrance (Town Center Drive) intersection	72.6	88.7	50.5	1/31/2024	12:19 p.m.
NM-5	Approximately 100 feet south of the McBean Parkway and Magic Mountain Parkway intersection	71.1	87.4	54.0	1/31/2024	12:41 p.m.

Source: Michael Baker International, 2024; refer to **Appendix C**.

dBA = A-weighted decibels; L_{eq} = Equivalent Sound Level; L_{min} = Minimum Sound Level; L_{max} = Maximum Sound Level

Meteorological conditions were partly sunny, warm temperatures, with light wind speeds (less than 7 miles per hour), and low humidity. Noise monitoring equipment used for the ambient noise survey consisted of a Brüel & Kjær Hand-held Analyzer Type 2250 equipped with a Type 4189 pre-polarized microphone. The monitoring equipment complies with applicable requirements of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for sound level meters. The results of the field measurements are included in **Appendix C**.

Mobile Source Noise

To assess the potential for mobile source noise impacts, it is necessary to determine the noise currently generated by vehicles traveling through the Project Area. Existing roadway noise levels in the vicinity of the Project Site were projected utilizing noise models in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration's Highway Noise Prediction Model (FHWA RD-77-108) together with several roadway and site parameters. These parameters determine the projected impact of vehicular traffic noise and include the roadway cross-section (such as the number of lanes), roadway width, average daily traffic (ADT), vehicle travel speed, percentages of auto and truck traffic, roadway grade, angle-of-view, and site conditions ("hard" or "soft"). The model does not account for ambient noise levels (i.e., noise from adjacent land uses) or topographical differences between the roadway and adjacent land uses. Noise projections are based on the ADT developed for the Project; refer to **Appendix B** of this Draft EIR. Under the existing (baseline) condition, the Project Site generates 20,635 trips per day; under the low buildout condition, the Project would generate 32,915 trips per day; under the full buildout condition, the Project would generate 37,666 trips per day; and under the high buildout condition, the Project would generate 41,050 trips per day.

The mile per hour (mph) average vehicle speed was assumed for existing conditions based on the empirical observations and posted maximum speeds along the subject roadways. Existing modeled traffic noise levels are detailed in **Table 4.9-4**. As shown in **Table 4.9-4**, noise within the area from mobile source ranges from 52.0 dBA to 69.9 dBA at 100 feet from roadway centerline.

**Table 4.9-4
EXISTING TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS**

Roadway Segment	Existing Conditions				
	ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)		
			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour
Magic Mountain Parkway					
West of McBean Parkway	22,000	66.4	-	124	268
Between McBean Parkway and Auto Center Drive	22,000	65.3	-	105	226
Between Auto Center Drive and Valencia Boulevard	21,000	65.1	-	102	219
East of Valencia Boulevard	17,000	63.9	-	85	183
Valencia Boulevard					
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	44,000	68.3	77	167	359
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Citrus Street	36,000	67.6	69	148	320
Between Citrus Street and Mall Entrance	36,000	67.6	69	148	320
Between Mall Entrance and McBean Parkway	37,000	67.4	67	145	312
South of McBean Parkway	38,000	69.0	85	184	396
McBean Parkway					
South of Valencia Boulevard	31,000	66.8	-	131	283
Between Mall Entrance and Valencia Boulevard	37,000	68.2	-	163	352
Between Town Center Drive and Mall Entrance	42,000	68.7	82	178	383
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Town Center Drive	44,000	68.8	84	180	389
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	54,000	69.9	99	213	460
Citrus Street					
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard	2,000	52.0	-	-	-

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for ADT assumptions.

ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; CNEL = community noise equivalent level; - = Contour located within the roadway right of way.

Stationary Noise Sources

The Project Area is in an urban area. The Project Area consists of residential, commercial, and institutional uses. The primary sources of stationary noise in the Project vicinity are urban-related activities (i.e., mechanical equipment and parking areas). The noise associated with these sources may represent a single-event noise occurrence, short-term, or long-term/continuous noise.

Most of the existing noise in the Project Area is generated from vehicle sources along Magic Mountain Parkway, Valencia Boulevard, and McBean Parkway.

4.9.1 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

US Environmental Protection Agency

The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) offers guidelines for community noise exposure in the publication *Noise Effects Handbook – A Desk Reference to Health and Welfare Effects of Noise*. These guidelines consider occupational noise exposure as well as noise

exposure in homes. The USEPA recognizes an exterior noise level of 55 decibels day-night level (dB L_{dn}) as a general goal to protect the public from hearing loss, activity interference, sleep disturbance, and annoyance. The USEPA and other federal agencies have adopted suggested land use compatibility guidelines that indicate that residential noise exposures of 55 to 65 dB L_{dn} are acceptable. However, the USEPA notes that these levels are not regulatory goals, but are levels defined by a negotiated scientific consensus, without concern for economic and technological feasibility or the needs and desires of any particular community.

STATE

California Environment Quality Act

The State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) *Noise Element Guidelines* include recommended exterior and interior noise level standards for local jurisdictions to identify and prevent the creation of incompatible land uses due to noise. The *Noise Element Guidelines* contain a land use compatibility table that describes the compatibility of various land uses with a range of environmental noise levels in terms of the CNEL. **Table 4.9-5** presents guidelines for determining acceptable and unacceptable community noise exposure limits for various land use categories. The guidelines also present adjustment factors that may be used to arrive at noise acceptability standards that reflect the noise control goals of the community, the particular community's sensitivity to noise, and the community's assessment of the relative importance of noise pollution.

As depicted in **Table 4.9-5**, the range of noise exposure levels overlap between the normally acceptable, conditionally acceptable, normally unacceptable, and clearly unacceptable categories. OPR's *State General Plan Guidelines* note that noise planning policy needs to be rather flexible and dynamic to reflect not only technological advances in noise control, but also economic constraints governing application of noise-control technology and anticipated regional growth and demands of the community. In Project-specific analyses, each community must decide the level of noise exposure its residents are willing to tolerate within a limited range of values below the known levels of health impairment. Therefore, the City may use its discretion to determine which noise levels are considered acceptable or unacceptable, based on land use, project location, and other project factors.

**Table 4.9-5
LAND USE COMPATIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY NOISE ENVIRONMENTS**

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure (L_{dn} or CNEL, dBA)			
	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Residential – Low Density, Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	50 – 60	55 – 70	70 – 75	75 – 85
Residential – Multiple Family	50 – 65	60 – 70	70 – 75	70 – 85
Transient Lodging – Motel, Hotels	50 – 65	60 – 70	70 – 80	80 – 85
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	50 – 70	60 – 70	70 – 80	80 – 85
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	NA	50 – 70	NA	65 – 85
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports	NA	50 – 75	NA	70 – 85
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	50 – 70	NA	67.5 – 75	72.5 – 85
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	50 – 70	NA	70 – 80	80 – 85
Office Buildings, Business Commercial and Professional	50 – 70	67.5 – 77.5	75 – 85	NA
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	50 – 75	70 – 80	75 – 85	NA

Source: Office of Planning and Research, 2003.

NA = not applicable; L_{dn} = day/night average; CNEL = community noise equivalent level; dBA = A-weighted decibels

Normally Acceptable - Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.

Conditionally Acceptable - New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice.

Normally Unacceptable - New construction or development should be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

Clearly Unacceptable - New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

LOCAL

City of Santa Clarita General Plan Noise Element

The City of Santa Clarita General Plan Noise Element is a comprehensive program for including noise management in the planning process and for providing a tool for planners to use in achieving and maintaining land uses that are compatible with existing and future environmental noise levels. The Noise Element identifies current noise conditions within the planning area and projects future noise impacts resulting from continued growth allowed by the Land Use Element. It adopts the noise/land use compatibility classifications established by the California Government Code noted above and shown in **Table 4.9-5**.

In addition, the Noise Element identifies noise-sensitive land uses and noise sources and defines areas of noise impact for the purpose of developing programs to ensure that residents in the City's planning area will be protected from excessive noise intrusion. The Noise Element of the Santa Clarita General Plan includes the following goals, objectives, and policies related to noise that would be applicable to the Proposed Project:

Noise Environment

- Goal N 1: A healthy and safe noise environment for Santa Clarita Valley residents, employees, and visitors.
 - Objective N 1.1: Protect the health and safety of the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley by the elimination, mitigation, and prevention of significant existing and future noise levels.
 - Policy N 1.1.1: Use the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines [see **Table 4.9-5**], which are consistent with State guidelines, as a policy basis for decisions on land use and development proposals related to noise.
 - Policy N 1.1.2: Continue to implement the adopted Noise Ordinance and other applicable code provisions, consistent with state and federal standards, which establish noise impact thresholds for noise abatement and attenuation, in order to reduce potential health hazards associated with high noise levels.
 - Policy N 1.1.3: Include consideration of potential noise impacts in land use planning and development review decisions.
 - Policy N 1.1.4: Control noise sources adjacent to residential, recreational, and community facilities, and those land uses classified as noise sensitive.

Reduction of Noise from Traffic

- Goal N 2: Protect residents and sensitive receptors from traffic-generated noise.
 - Objective N 2.1: Prevent and mitigate adverse effects of noise generated from traffic on arterial streets and highways through implementing noise reduction standards and programs.
 - Policy N 2.1.1: Encourage owners of existing noise-sensitive uses, and require owners of proposed noise sensitive land uses, to construct sound barriers to protect users from significant noise levels, where feasible and appropriate.
 - Policy N 2.1.4: Reduce significant noise levels related to through-traffic in residential areas by promoting subdivision circulation designs to contain a hierarchy of streets, which efficiently direct traffic to highways.
 - Policy N 2.1.7: Require vehicle owners to properly maintain their equipment to avoid generating excessive noise levels.

Residential Neighborhoods

- Goal N 3: Protect residential neighborhoods from excessive noise.
 - Objective N 3.1: Prevent and mitigate significant noise levels in residential neighborhoods.
 - Policy N 3.1.1: Require that developers of new single-family and multifamily residential neighborhoods in areas where the ambient noise levels exceed 60 CNEL provide mitigation measures for the new residences to reduce interior noise levels to 45 CNEL, based on future traffic and railroad noise levels.

- Policy N 3.1.2: Require that developers of new single-family and multifamily residential neighborhoods in areas where the projected noise levels exceed 65 CNEL provide mitigation measures (which may include noise barriers, setbacks, and site design) for new residences to reduce outdoor noise levels to 65 CNEL, based on future traffic conditions. This requirement would apply to rear yard areas for single-family developments, and to private open space and common recreational and open space areas for multifamily developments.
- Policy N 3.1.3: Through enforcement of the applicable Noise Ordinance, protect residential neighborhoods from noise generated by machinery or activities that produce significant discernable noise exceeding recommended levels for residential uses.
- Policy N 3.1.4: Require that those responsible for construction activities develop techniques to mitigate or minimize the noise impacts on residences and adopt standards that regulate noise from construction activities that occur in or near residential neighborhoods.
- Policy N 3.1.7: Ensure that design of parks, recreational facilities, and schools minimize noise impacts to residential neighborhoods.

Santa Clarita Municipal Code

The Santa Clarita Municipal Code (SCMC) Noise regulations provide the following exterior noise standards within the City, which are applicable to the Proposed Project:

11.44.040 Noise Limits

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person within the City to produce or cause or allow to be produced noise which is received on property occupied by another person within the designated region, in excess of the following levels, except as expressly provided otherwise herein:

Region	Time	Sound Level (dBA)
Residential Zone	Day	65
Residential Zone	Night	55
Commercial and Manufacturing	Day	80
Commercial and Manufacturing	Night	70

At the boundary line between a residential property and a commercial and manufacturing property, the noise level of the quieter zone shall be used.

- B. Corrections to Noise Limits. The numerical limits given in subsection (A) of this section shall be adjusted by the following corrections, where the following noise conditions exist:

Noise Condition	Correction (in dB)
(1) Repetitive impulsive noise	-5
(2) Steady whine, screech or hum	-5
(3) Noise occurring more than 5 but less than 15 minutes per hour	+5
(4) Noise occurring more than 1 but less than 5 minutes per hour	+10
(5) Noise occurring less than 1 minute per hour	+20

11.44.070 Special Noise Sources—Machinery, Fans and Other Mechanical Devices

Any noise level from the use or operation of any machinery, equipment, pump, fan, air conditioning apparatus, refrigerating equipment, motor vehicle, or other mechanical or electrical device, or in repairing or rebuilding any motor vehicle, which exceeds the noise limits as set forth in SCMC Section 11.44.040 at any property line, or, if a condominium or rental units, within any condominium unit or rental unit within the complex, shall be a violation of this chapter.

11.44.080 Special Noise Sources—Construction and Building

No person shall engage in any construction work which requires a building permit from the City on sites within 300 feet of a residentially zoned property except between the hours of seven a.m. to seven p.m., Monday through Friday, and eight a.m. to six p.m. on Saturday. Further, no work shall be performed on the following public holidays: New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Memorial Day, and Labor Day.

Emergency work is permitted at all times. As defined in SCMC 11.44.020: Emergency work shall mean work made necessary to restore property to a safe condition following a public calamity, or work required to protect persons or property from an imminent exposure to danger, or work by private or public utilities when restoring utility service.

The Department of Community Development may issue a permit for work to be done "after hours" provided that containment of construction noises is provided.

4.9.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the noise impacts of the Project are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to noise if it would:

- Threshold 4.9(a): Expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies;***
- Threshold 4.9(b): Expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels;***
- Threshold 4.9(c): Result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project;***
- Threshold 4.9(d): Result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project;***
- Threshold 4.9(e): Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, 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; and/or***
- Threshold 4.9(f): Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, for a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip.***

NOISE IMPACT CRITERIA THRESHOLDS

Significance of Changes in Traffic Noise Levels

An off-site traffic noise impact typically occurs when there is a discernable increase in traffic and the resulting noise level exceeds an established noise standard. In community noise considerations, changes in noise levels greater than 3 dB are often identified as substantial, while changes less than 1 dB will not be discernible to local residents. A 5 dB change is generally recognized as a clearly discernable difference.

As traffic noise levels at sensitive uses likely approach or exceed the City's 60 dBA CNEL clearly compatible standard, a 3.0 dB increase because of the Project is used as the increase threshold for the Project. Thus, the Project would result in a significant noise impact if a permanent increase in ambient traffic noise levels of 3.0 dB occurs upon Project implementation and the resulting noise level exceeds the applicable exterior standard at a noise sensitive use.

Significance of Changes in Cumulative Traffic Noise Levels

A cumulative traffic noise increase would be considered significant when the combined effect exceeds the perception level (i.e., auditory level increase) threshold. The combined effect compares the "cumulative with Project" condition to the "existing" conditions. This comparison accounts for the traffic noise increase from the Project generated in combination with traffic generated by cumulative growth. The following criteria have been utilized to evaluate the combined effect of the cumulative noise increase.

- Combined Effects: The cumulative with project noise level ("Future With Project") would cause a significant cumulative impact if a 3 dBA increase over existing conditions occurs and the resulting noise level exceeds the applicable exterior standard at a sensitive use.

Although there may be a cumulatively significant noise increase due to the Proposed Project in combination with cumulative growth (combined effects), it must also be demonstrated that the Project has a cumulatively considerable incremental effect. In other words, a significant portion of the noise increase must be due to the Proposed Project. The following criteria have been utilized to evaluate the incremental effect of the cumulative noise increase.

- Incremental Effects: The "Future With Project" causes a 1 dBA increase in noise over the "Future Without Project" noise level.

The Project would result in a significant impact only if both the combined and incremental effects criteria have been exceeded and the resulting noise level exceeds the applicable exterior standard at a noise sensitive use.

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts related to the following significance thresholds, as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**); therefore, these are not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.9(e): *Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, 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.*

Threshold 4.9(f): *Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, for a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip.*

4.9.3 METHODOLOGY

Construction noise impacts, operational stationary noise impacts, and construction and operational vibration impacts were analyzed qualitatively, since the specific locations, site plans, and construction details of individual projects associated with implementation of the Proposed Project have not yet been identified.

The RD-77-108 model was used to calculate the noise contours along major roadways within the Project Area, average speeds represented by the posted speed limit, roadway geometry, and site environmental conditions. As a conservative analysis, shielding features, including topography and intervening buildings, were not considered in the model.

4.9.4 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

No Project Design Features are proposed with respect to noise.

4.9.5 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.9(a): *Would the Project result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*

Threshold 4.9(c): *Would the Project result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the Project vicinity above levels existing without the Project?*

Threshold 4.9(d): *Would the Project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the Project vicinity above levels existing without the Project?*

Impact Analysis

Construction

Typical activities associated with construction are a highly noticeable temporary noise source. Noise from construction activities is generated by two primary sources: (1) the transport of workers and equipment/materials to construction sites and (2) the noise related to active construction equipment. These noise sources can be a nuisance to local residents and businesses or, in some cases, unbearable to sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, hospitals, senior centers, schools, day care facilities).

While adoption of the proposed Specific Plan would not directly result in new development, future development building out the Specific Plan Area would generate noise during construction activities. Construction noise levels are dependent upon the specific locations, site plans, and construction details of individual projects, which have not yet been identified. Construction would be localized and would occur intermittently for varying periods of time. Construction of individual developments associated with implementation of the Proposed Project could temporarily increase the ambient noise environment in the vicinity of each individual project. Construction of individual projects could include grading, framing, paving, concrete pouring, demolition, excavation for

subterranean levels, and hauling. Noise from these construction practices could include engine noises from heavy equipment, sawing, hammering, pounding, dropping of materials, banging and clanging of equipment, delivery activities, loading, truck hauling, etc.

The nearest sensitive receptors are the existing multifamily uses (Monticello Apartments) and hotel use (Hyatt Regency Valencia) located approximately 175 feet to the west of Subarea 3—Town Center Drive and Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center, the existing multifamily uses (Portofino Apartments) located approximately 200 feet to the south of the Subarea 4—McBean and Valencia, and the existing multifamily use (Northglen Apartments) located approximately 300 feet to the east of Subarea 2—Town Center East. **Table 4.9-6** provides the anticipated noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptors from typical construction equipment.

Table 4.9-6
MAXIMUM NOISE LEVELS GENERATED BY TYPICAL CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

Type of Equipment	Acoustical Use Factor ¹	L _{max} at 50 Feet (dBA)	L _{max} at 175 Feet (dBA)	L _{max} at 200 Feet (dBA)	L _{max} at 300 Feet (dBA)
Backhoe	40	78	67	66	62
Compressor	40	78	67	66	62
Concrete Mixer Truck	40	79	68	67	63
Concrete Saw	20	90	79	78	74
Crane	16	79	70	69	65
Dozer	40	82	71	70	66
Forklift	40	78	64	63	59
Generator	50	81	70	69	65
Grader	40	85	74	73	69
Loader	40	79	68	67	63
Paver	50	77	66	65	61
Roller	20	80	69	68	64
Tractor	40	84	73	72	68
Welder	40	74	63	62	58

Source: Federal Highway Administration, Roadway Construction Noise Model (FHWA-HEP-05-054), January 2006.

Note:

1. Acoustical Use Factor (percent): Estimates the fraction of time each piece of construction equipment is operating at full power (i.e., its loudest condition) during a construction operation.

Construction activities with multiple pieces of equipment working at the same time could result in substantial temporary noise level increases at nearby sensitive land uses. It should be noted that construction would be localized and would occur intermittently for varying periods of time. As shown in **Table 4.9-6**, construction noise levels would range from approximately 63 dBA L_{max} to 79 dBA L_{max} at 175 feet, approximately 65 dBA L_{max} to 78 dBA L_{max} at 200 feet, and approximately 58 dBA L_{max} to 74 dBA L_{max} at 300 feet. It should be noted that the noise levels identified in **Table 4.9-6** are maximum sound levels (L_{max}), which are the highest individual sound occurring at an individual time period. Although L_{max} is important in evaluating an interference caused by a single noise event, L_{max} could not be totaled into a one-hour or a 24-hour cumulative measure of impact as CNEL or L_{dn} could. Operating cycles for these types of construction equipment may involve one or two minutes of full power operation followed by three to four minutes at lower power settings. It should also be noted that construction noise levels would intermittently occur for a few days when construction equipment is operating closest to these sensitive uses. The remainder of the time, the construction noise levels would be much less because the equipment would be working in a large area farther away from the existing sensitive uses.

In addition, the Project must comply with the SCMC governing hours of construction and noise levels generated by construction equipment. Pursuant to SCMC Section 11.44.080, Special Noise Sources – Construction and Building, construction noise in the City is prohibited between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekdays, 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, and/or any time on Sunday or a federal holiday. Specific construction noise attenuation techniques would be utilized to reduce noise generation to the extent feasible during construction. Given the required compliance with SCMC Section 11.44.080, short-term construction noise impacts would be less than significant.

Long-Term Operational Noise

Mobile Sources

Four future scenarios were analyzed as part of the mobile noise analysis: 1) Future No Project; and 2) Future with Low Buildout; 3) Future with Full Buildout; 4) Future with High Buildout. These four scenarios were compared to evaluate Project-related operational noise impacts. According to **Table 4.9-7**, under the “Future” scenario, noise levels at 100 feet from the roadway centerline would range from 53.4 dBA to 71.2 dBA.

Future with Low Buildout Conditions

Under the “Future with Low Buildout” scenario, noise levels at 100 feet from the roadway centerline would range from 54.1 dBA to 71.3 dBA. **Table 4.9-7** also compares the increase of noise levels between the “Future” scenario to the “Future with Low Buildout” scenario. The increase in ambient noise between the two scenarios would be up to 0.7 dBA. As shown in **Table 4.9-7**, roadway segments modeled would generate noise levels above the 60 dBA CNEL standard. However, the increase in ambient noise would not exceed the 3.0 dB threshold along these roadway segments. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

Future with Full Buildout Conditions

Under the “Future with Full Buildout” scenario, noise levels at 100 feet from the roadway centerline would range from 53.9 dBA to 71.4 dBA. **Table 4.9-8** also compares the increase of noise levels between the “Future” scenario to the “Future with Full Buildout” scenario. The increase in ambient noise between the two scenarios would be up to 0.5 dBA. As shown in **Table 4.9-8**, roadway segments modeled would generate noise levels above the 60 dBA CNEL standard. However, the increase in ambient noise would not exceed the 3.0 dB threshold along these roadway segments. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

Future with High Buildout Conditions

Under the “Future with High Buildout” scenario, noise levels at 100 feet from the roadway centerline would range from 54.3 dBA to 71.4 dBA. **Table 4.9-9** also compares the increase of noise levels between the “Future” scenario to the “Future with High Buildout” scenario. The increase in ambient noise between the two scenarios would be up to 0.9 dBA. As shown in **Table 4.9-9**, roadway segments modeled would generate noise levels above the 60 dBA CNEL standard. However, the increase in ambient noise would not exceed the 3.0 dB threshold along these roadway segments. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

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**Table 4.9-7
FUTURE TRAFFIC WITH LOW BUILDOUT TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS**

Segment	Future (2040)					Future With Low Buildout					Difference in dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway
	ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			
			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour	
Magic Mountain Parkway											
West of McBean Parkway	66,600	71.2	121	260	561	67,700	71.3	122	263	567	0.1
Between McBean Parkway and Auto Center Drive	58,800	69.6	94	202	436	59,600	69.6	95	204	440	0.0
Between Auto Center Drive and Valencia Boulevard	65,000	70.0	100	216	466	65,500	70.1	101	217	468	0.1
East of Valencia Boulevard	56,800	69.2	88	190	410	57,600	69.2	89	192	414	0.2
Valencia Boulevard											
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	62,500	69.9	98	211	454	63,900	70.0	99	214	461	0.1
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Citrus Street	41,400	68.2	76	163	351	41,700	68.2	76	164	353	0.0
Between Citrus Street and Mall Entrance	41,200	68.2	75	162	350	41,200	68.2	75	162	350	0.0
Between Mall Entrance and McBean Parkway	52,500	68.9	85	183	394	53,000	69.0	85	184	397	0.1
South of McBean Parkway	61,500	71.1	118	253	546	62,200	71.1	118	255	550	0.0
McBean Parkway											
South of Valencia Boulevard	43,900	68.3	77	166	357	45,300	68.4	79	169	365	0.1
Between Mall Entrance and Valencia Boulevard	51,700	69.6	95	204	439	52,800	69.7	96	207	446	0.1
Between Town Center Drive and Mall Entrance	62,300	70.5	107	231	498	63,100	70.5	108	233	502	0.0
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Town Center Drive	61,500	70.3	105	226	486	63,200	70.4	107	230	495	0.1
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	62,000	70.5	109	234	504	62,900	70.6	110	236	509	0.1

Segment	Future (2040)					Future With Low Buildout					Difference in dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway
	ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			
			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour	
Citrus Street											
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard	2,800	53.4	-	-	-	3,300	54.1	-	-	-	0.7

Source: Based on traffic data in the Transportation Impact Analysis.
 ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; CNEL = community noise equivalent level; - = Contour located within the roadway right of way.

**Table 4.9-8
FUTURE TRAFFIC WITH FULL BUILDOUT TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS**

Segment	Future (2040)					Future With Full Buildout					Difference in dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway
	ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			
			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour	
Magic Mountain Parkway											
West of McBean Parkway	66,600	71.2	121	260	561	68,600	71.4	123	266	572	0.2
Between McBean Parkway and Auto Center Drive	58,800	69.6	94	202	436	59,500	69.6	95	204	439	0.0
Between Auto Center Drive and Valencia Boulevard	65,000	70.0	100	216	466	66,200	70.1	102	219	472	0.1
East of Valencia Boulevard	56,800	69.2	88	190	410	58,100	69.3	90	193	416	0.1
Valencia Boulevard											
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	62,500	69.9	98	211	454	63,300	69.9	99	213	458	0.0
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Citrus Street	41,400	68.2	76	163	351	41,200	68.2	75	162	350	0.0
Between Citrus Street and Mall Entrance	41,200	68.2	75	162	350	40,800	68.1	75	161	348	-0.1
Between Mall Entrance and McBean Parkway	52,500	68.9	85	183	394	52,600	68.9	85	183	395	0.0
South of McBean Parkway	61,500	71.1	118	253	546	62,200	71.1	118	255	550	0.0
McBean Parkway											
South of Valencia Boulevard	43,900	68.3	77	166	357	45,100	68.4	78	169	364	0.1
Between Mall Entrance and Valencia Boulevard	51,700	69.6	95	204	439	53,000	69.8	96	207	447	0.2
Between Town Center Drive and Mall Entrance	62,300	70.5	107	231	498	64,700	70.6	110	237	510	0.1
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Town Center Drive	61,500	70.3	105	226	486	63,800	70.5	107	231	498	0.2
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	62,000	70.5	109	234	504	63,300	70.6	110	237	511	0.1

Segment	Future (2040)					Future With Full Buildout					Difference in dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway
	ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			
			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour	
Citrus Street											
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard	2,800	53.4	-	-	-	3,100	53.9	-	-	-	0.5

Source: Based on traffic data in the Transportation Impact Analysis.
 Notes: ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; CNEL = community noise equivalent level; - = Contour located within the roadway right of way.

**Table 4.9-9
FUTURE TRAFFIC WITH HIGH BUILDOUT TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS**

Segment	Future (2040)					Future With High Buildout					Difference in dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway
	ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			
			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour	
Magic Mountain Parkway											
West of McBean Parkway	66,600	71.2	121	260	561	69,600	71.4	125	268	578	0.2
Between McBean Parkway and Auto Center Drive	58,800	69.6	94	202	436	59,700	69.7	95	204	440	0.1
Between Auto Center Drive and Valencia Boulevard	65,000	70.0	100	216	466	67,000	70.2	102	221	476	0.2
East of Valencia Boulevard	56,800	69.2	88	190	410	58,600	69.3	90	194	418	0.1
Valencia Boulevard											
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	62,500	69.9	98	211	454	64,000	70.0	99	214	461	0.1
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Citrus Street	41,400	68.2	76	163	351	41,800	68.2	76	164	353	0.0
Between Citrus Street and Mall Entrance	41,200	68.2	75	162	350	41,300	68.2	75	163	350	0.0
Between Mall Entrance and McBean Parkway	52,500	68.9	85	183	394	53,100	69.0	86	184	397	0.1
South of McBean Parkway	61,500	71.1	118	253	546	62,300	71.1	119	255	550	0.0
McBean Parkway											
South of Valencia Boulevard	43,900	68.3	77	166	357	45,400	68.4	79	170	365	0.1
Between Mall Entrance and Valencia Boulevard	51,700	69.6	95	204	439	53,200	69.8	96	208	448	0.2
Between Town Center Drive and Mall Entrance	62,300	70.5	107	231	498	66,400	70.7	112	241	519	0.2
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Town Center Drive	61,500	70.3	105	226	486	64,500	70.5	108	233	502	0.2
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	62,000	70.5	109	234	504	63,700	70.7	111	238	513	0.2

Segment	Future (2040)					Future With High Buildout					Difference in dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway
	ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			ADT	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Distance from Roadway Centerline to: (Feet)			
			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour			70 CNEL Noise Contour	65 CNEL Noise Contour	60 CNEL Noise Contour	
Citrus Street											
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard	2,800	53.4	-	-	-	3,400	54.3	-	-	-	0.9

Source: Based on traffic data in the Transportation Impact Analysis.
 Notes: ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; CNEL = community noise equivalent level; - = Contour located within the roadway right of way.

Stationary Sources

Commercial land uses would be located near sensitive receptor areas. Such uses generate occasional stationary noise impacts. Primary noise sources associated with these facilities are due to customer trips, delivery trucks, machinery, air compressors, generators, outdoor loudspeakers, and gas vents. Residential and recreational uses would create stationary noise, such as children playing, amplified music, and mechanical equipment. Other significant stationary noise sources within the City include construction activity, street sweepers, and gas-powered leaf blowers. It should be noted that stationary noise levels under all three scenarios (low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout) would be expected to be similar. The closest sensitive receptors are located 175 feet from the Project Site boundary, and the distance would be greater when measured from the stationary sources on-site. Stationary sources noise would be attenuated to acceptable levels at this distance.

Residential Uses

Future development of residential uses would create stationary noise typical of any new residential development. Noise that is typical of residential areas includes children playing, pets, amplified music, pool and spa equipment operation, mechanical equipment, woodworking, car repair, and home repair. Noise from residential stationary sources would primarily occur during the “daytime” activity hours assuming noises decrease during nighttime hours (e.g., people go to sleep and/or close their windows). In addition, residential uses would be required to comply with SCMC Section 11.44.040, which prohibits any source of sound at any location exceeding the City’s exterior noise standards when measured on property line.

Residential uses include multifamily residential uses in either mixed-use buildings or apartment/multifamily buildings. Noise sources from such multifamily residential uses could include all the noise sources noted in the previous paragraph, along with noise from any outdoor activity areas included in such projects (e.g., community/association pools, children’s play areas, rooftop decks). The potential noise impacts from such outdoor activity areas would be dependent on various factors, including the type, scale, and intensity of use of such facilities, the orientation of projects in relation to the activity area, the proximity of sensitive receptors, and the background ambient noise level. However, like all residential uses, future projects under the Proposed Specific Plan would be required to comply with SCMC Section 11.44.040, which prohibits any source of sound at any location from exceeding the City’s exterior and interior noise standards when measured on property line. The required compliance with the SCMC would ensure that potential noise impacts from the Project would be less than significant.

Commercial Uses

Under the existing conditions, noise sources associated with commercial uses are typically caused by delivery trucks, trash trucks, air compressors, generators, outdoor loudspeakers, and gas venting. In commercial and business areas, noise sources at loading areas may also include maneuvering and idling trucks, truck refrigeration units, forklifts, banging and clanging of equipment (i.e., hand carts and roll-up doors), noise from public address systems, and voices of truck drivers and employees. However, commercial noise activities currently exist on-site and the implementation of the Proposed Project would not introduce a new noise source. Stationary noise generated from commercial developments would be required to implement specific noise attenuation techniques, if/as necessary, to ensure noise levels do not exceed SCMC Section 11.44.040 requirements. Compliance with SCMC Section 11.44.040, which prohibits any source

of sound at any location exceeding the City’s exterior and interior noise standards when measured on property line, would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Mechanical Equipment

Typical mechanical equipment associated with stationary sources includes heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units. HVAC units typically generate noise levels of approximately 66 dBA L_{eq} at 3 feet from the source.¹ HVAC units could be included on the rooftops of the proposed buildings. The majority of the future developments are anticipated to occur within Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center. Potential HVAC units would be located as close as 175 feet from the nearest sensitive receptors to the west. As shown in **Table 4.9-10**, noise levels from the mechanical equipment would not exceed the City’s exterior daytime (i.e., 65 dBA) and nighttime (i.e., 55 dBA) noise standards for residential uses and noise levels would not be audible above existing ambient noise levels. Therefore, the nearest sensitive receptors would not be directly exposed to substantial noise from on-site mechanical equipment and impacts would be less than significant.

Table 4.9-10
MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT NOISE LEVELS

Subarea/Use	Nearest Sensitive Receptor & Distance ¹	Average Noise Levels (L_{eq})	Measured Ambient Noise Levels (L_{eq}) ²
Subarea 3—Town Center Drive	Hyatt Regency Valencia located approximately 175 feet west	30.7	71.1
Subarea 1—Valencia Town Center; Hotel Use	Monticello apartments located approximately 180 feet west	30.4	72.6
Subarea 2—Town Center East	Northglen apartments located approximately 300 feet east	26.0	52.7
Hotel Use	Portofino apartments located approximately 200 feet south	29.5	69.7

Notes:

- Distances are conservatively measured from the property line of the Proposed Project to the nearest sensitive receptors; however, the distance would be greater when measured from the stationary sources on-site.
- Refer Table 4.9-3, Ambient Noise Measurements

Parking Areas

Implementation of the Proposed Project involves new developments, which would include new parking areas. Traffic associated with parking lots is not of sufficient volume to exceed community noise standards that are based on a time averaged scale, such as the CNEL scale. However, the instantaneous maximum sound levels generated by a car door slamming, an engine starting up, and car passing by may be an annoyance to adjacent sensitive receptors. Conversations in parking areas may also be an annoyance to adjacent sensitive receptors. Estimates of the maximum noise levels associated with some parking lot activities are presented in **Table 4.9-11**.

¹ Berger, Elliott H., Rick Neitzel, and Cynthia A. Kladden, *Noise Navigator Sound Level Database with Over 1700 Measurement Values*, June 26, 2015.

**Table 4.9-11
TYPICAL NOISE LEVELS GENERATED BY PARKING LOTS**

Noise Source	Maximum Noise Levels at 50 Feet from Source
Car door slamming	61 dBA L _{eq}
Car starting	60 dBA L _{eq}
Car idling	53 dBA L _{eq}

Source: Kariel, H. G., "Noise in Rural Recreational Environments," *Canadian Acoustics* 19(5), 3-10, 1991.

As shown in **Table 4.9-11**, parking activities can result in noise levels up to 61 dBA at 50 feet. It is noted that parking lot noise are instantaneous noise levels compared to noise standards in the CNEL scale, which are averaged over time. As a result, average noise levels over time resulting from parking lot activities would be far lower than what is identified in **Table 4.9-11**. The Proposed Project would have intermittent parking activities noise due to the movement of vehicles. The nearest sensitive receptors would be located approximately 175 feet from parking areas associated with potential development on the west portion of the Subarea 3—Town Center Drive. At this distance, noise levels from parking activities would range from 42.1 to 50.1 dBA. As such, parking lot noise levels would not exceed the City's exterior daytime (i.e., 65 dBA) and nighttime (i.e., 55 dBA) noise standards for residential uses and would be lower than existing ambient noise levels near the site; refer to **Table 4.9-3**. Further, parking activity noise currently exists on-site and within the Project vicinity and would not represent a new source of noise. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts related to noise were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts related to noise were determined to be less than significant without mitigation. Therefore, no mitigation measures were required or included, and the impact level remains less than significant.

Threshold 4.9(b): *Would the Project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

Impact Analysis

Construction

Project construction can generate varying degrees of groundborne vibration, depending on the construction procedure and the construction equipment used. Operation of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in amplitude with distance from the source. The effect on buildings located in the vicinity of the construction site often varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and construction characteristics of the receiver building(s). The results from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibration at moderate levels, to slight damage at the highest levels. Groundborne vibrations from construction activities rarely reach levels that damage structures.

The Caltrans *Transportation and Construction Vibration Manual* identifies various vibration damage criteria for different building classes. This evaluation uses the Caltrans architectural damage criterion for continuous vibrations at new residential structures and modern industrial/commercial buildings of 0.5 inch-per-second (inch/second) PPV. The types of construction vibration impacts include human annoyance and building damage. Annoyance is assessed based on levels of perception, with a PPV of 0.01 inch/second being considered “barely perceptible,” 0.04 inch/second as “distinctly perceptible,” 0.1 inch/second as “strongly perceptible,” and 0.4 inch/second as “severe.” Human annoyance occurs when construction vibration rises significantly above the threshold of human perception for extended periods of time.

The potential types of construction vibration impact include human annoyance and building damage. Building damage can be cosmetic or structural. Ordinary buildings that are not particularly fragile would not experience any cosmetic damage (e.g., plaster cracks) at distances beyond 25 feet from most construction vibration sources. This distance can vary substantially depending on the soil composition and underground geological layer between the vibration source and the receiver. In addition, not all buildings respond similarly to vibration generated by construction equipment. Construction activities that may result under the Proposed Project have the potential to generate low levels of ground-borne vibration. **Table 4.9-12** identifies various vibration velocity levels for types of construction equipment that could operate within the Project Area during construction.

Table 4.9-12
TYPICAL VIBRATION LEVELS FOR CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT¹

Equipment	Reference peak particle velocity at 25 feet (inch-per-second)	Reference peak particle velocity at 175 feet (inch-per-second)
Pile Driver (impact)	0.644	0.0897
Large Bulldozer	0.089	0.0124
Loaded Trucks	0.076	0.0106
Jackhammer	0.035	0.0049
Vibratory Roller	0.210	0.0293
Small Bulldozer	0.003	0.0004

Source: California Department of Transportation, *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*, April 2020.

Notes:

1. Calculated using the following formula:

$$PPV_{equip} = PPV_{ref} \times (25/D)^{1.1}$$

where: PPV (equip) = the peak particle velocity in inch-per-second of the equipment adjusted for the distance

PPV (ref) = the reference vibration level in inch-per-second at 25 feet from Table 18 of the Caltrans *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*

D = the distance from the equipment to the receiver

The ground-borne vibration generated during construction activities would primarily impact existing sensitive uses that are located adjacent to or within the immediate vicinity of individual projects. Based upon the information provided in **Table 4.9-12**, vibration levels could reach up to 0.210 inch-per-second PPV for typical construction activities (and up to 0.644 inch-per-second PPV if pile driving activities were to occur) within 25 feet of construction. The nearest structure to the Project Site with sensitive receptors is the Hyatt Regency Valencia Hotel located approximately 175 feet west of the proposed Subarea 3—Town Center Drive. Vibration levels during the operation of construction equipment would range from approximately 0.0004 inch/second PPV to approximately 0.0897 inch/second PPV at 175 feet; refer to **Table 4.9-12**. As a result, construction groundborne vibration would not be capable of exceeding the 0.50

inch/second PPV significance threshold for vibration at the nearest structures and a less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Operation

Implementation of the Proposed Project would not involve land uses that include or require equipment, facilities, or activities that would result in perceptible groundborne vibration. Heavy duty trucks would occasionally travel through the surrounding roadways. However, according to the Federal Transit Administration, it is unusual for vibration from sources, such as buses and trucks, to be perceptible, even in locations close to major roads. As such, it can be reasonably inferred that operations associated with development projects under the Proposed Project would not create perceptible vibration impacts to the nearest sensitive receptors. Therefore, vibration impacts related to building damage and human annoyance during operation would be less-than-significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts related to vibration were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts related to vibration were determined to be less than significant without mitigation. Therefore, no mitigation measures were required or included, and the impact level remains less than significant.

4.9.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The Project, together with future growth, could contribute to cumulative noise impacts. The potential for cumulative noise impacts to occur is specific to the distance between each stationary noise sources along with the cumulative traffic that future growth would add to the surrounding roadway network.

Cumulative Construction Noise

Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project and cumulative growth may overlap, resulting in construction noise in the site vicinity. However, construction noise primarily affects the areas immediately adjacent to a construction site. Due to the distance and intervening structures, cumulative construction noise impacts would not occur. Additionally, the Proposed Project and all cumulative growth projects within the City would be required to comply with the City's noise standards and allowable hours of construction. Therefore, the Project's contribution to cumulative noise impacts would be less than significant.

Cumulative Mobile Noise

The cumulative mobile noise analysis is conducted in a two-step process. First, the combined effects from both the Proposed Project and other related growth are compared. Second, for combined effects that are determined to be cumulatively significant, the Project's incremental effects then are analyzed. The Project's contribution to a cumulative traffic noise increase would be considered significant when the combined effect exceeds perception level (i.e., auditory level increase) threshold. The combined effect compares the "Future with Project" condition to

“Existing” conditions. This comparison accounts for the traffic noise increase from the Project generated in combination with traffic generated by cumulative growth.

A significant impact would result only if both the combined (including an exceedance of the applicable exterior standard at a sensitive use) and incremental effects criteria have been exceeded. Noise by definition is a localized phenomenon and reduces as distance from the source increases. Consequently, only the Proposed Project and growth due to occur in the Project Site’s general vicinity would contribute to cumulative noise impacts.

Future with Low Buildout

Table 4.9-13 lists the traffic noise effects along roadway segments in the Project vicinity for “Existing,” “Future without Project,” and “Future with Low Buildout” conditions, including incremental and net cumulative impacts.

As indicated in **Table 4.9-13**, the Combined Effects criterion of 3.0 dBA are exceeded along all segments of Magic Mountain Parkway. However, none of the subject roadways exceeded the Incremental Effects criterion of 1.0 dBA. It should be also noted that existing noise levels at the sensitive uses exceeds the exterior noise standards (i.e., 65 dBA CNEL) for all subject roadways with the exception of Citrus Street.² Therefore, the Proposed Project, in combination with cumulative background traffic noise levels, would result in less than significant impacts.

Future with Full Buildout

Table 4.9-14 lists the traffic noise effects along roadway segments in the Project vicinity for “Existing,” “Future without Project,” and “Future with Full Buildout” conditions, including incremental and net cumulative impacts.

As indicated in **Table 4.9-14**, the Combined Effects criterion of 3.0 dBA are exceeded along all segments of Magic Mountain Parkway. However, none of the subject roadways exceeded the Incremental Effects criterion of 1.0 dBA. It should be also noted that existing noise levels at the sensitive uses exceeds the exterior noise standards (i.e., 65 dBA CNEL) for all subject roadways with the exception of Citrus Street.³ Therefore, the Proposed Project, in combination with cumulative background traffic noise levels, would result in less than significant impacts.

Future with High Buildout

Table 4.9-15 lists the traffic noise effects along roadway segments in the Project vicinity for “Existing,” “Future without Project,” and “Future with High Buildout” conditions, including incremental and net cumulative impacts.

As indicated in **Table 4.9-15**, the Combined Effects criterion of 3.0 dBA are exceeded along all segments of Magic Mountain Parkway. However, none of the subject roadways exceeded the Incremental Effects criterion of 1.0 dBA. It should be also noted that existing noise levels at the sensitive uses exceeds the exterior noise standards (i.e., 65 dBA CNEL) for all subject roadways with the exception of Citrus Street.⁴ Therefore, the Proposed Project, in combination with cumulative background traffic noise levels, would result in less than significant impacts.

² The City of Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 11.44.040 Noise Limits for Residential Zone.

³ The City of Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 11.44.040 Noise Limits for Residential Zone

⁴ The City of Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 11.44.040 Noise Limits for Residential Zone

**Table 4.9-13
CUMULATIVE NOISE SCENARIO – LOW BUILDOUT CONDITIONS**

Roadway Segment	Existing	Future Without Project	Future With Low Buildout	Combined Effects	Incremental Effects	Future With Project Noise Level Exceeds City's 65 dBA CNEL Noise Standard for Sensitive Receptors?	Cumulatively Significant Impact?
	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Difference In dBA Between Existing and Future with Low Buildout	Difference In dBA Between Future Without Project and Future Low Buildout		
Magic Mountain Parkway							
West of McBean Parkway	66.4	71.2	71.3	4.9	0.1	Yes	No
Between McBean Parkway and Auto Center Drive	65.3	69.6	69.6	4.3	0.0	Yes	No
Between Auto Center Drive and Valencia Boulevard	65.1	70.0	70.1	5.0	0.1	Yes	No
East of Valencia Boulevard	63.9	69.2	69.2	5.3	0.0	Yes	No
Valencia Boulevard							
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	68.3	69.9	70.0	1.7	0.1	Yes	No
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Citrus Street	67.6	68.2	68.2	0.6	0.0	Yes	No
Between Citrus Street and Mall Entrance	67.6	68.2	68.2	0.6	0.0	Yes	No
Between Mall Entrance and McBean Parkway	67.4	68.9	69.0	1.6	0.1	Yes	No
South of McBean Parkway	69.0	71.1	71.1	2.1	0.0	Yes	No
McBean Parkway							
South of Valencia Boulevard	66.8	68.3	68.4	1.6	0.1	Yes	No
Between Mall Entrance and Valencia Boulevard	68.2	69.6	69.7	1.5	0.1	Yes	No
Between Town Center Drive and Mall Entrance	68.7	70.5	70.5	1.8	0.0	Yes	No
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Town Center Drive	68.8	70.3	70.4	1.6	0.1	Yes	No
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	69.9	70.5	70.6	0.7	0.1	Yes	No

Roadway Segment	Existing	Future Without Project	Future With Low Buildout	Combined Effects	Incremental Effects	Future With Project Noise Level Exceeds City's 65 dBA CNEL Noise Standard for Sensitive Receptors?	Cumulatively Significant Impact?
	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Difference In dBA Between Existing and Future with Low Buildout	Difference In dBA Between Future Without Project and Future Low Buildout		
Citrus Street							
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard	52.0	53.4	54.1	2.1	0.7	No	No

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for ADT assumptions.
 ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; CNEL = community noise equivalent level

**Table 4.9-14
CUMULATIVE NOISE SCENARIO – FULL BUILDOUT CONDITIONS**

Roadway Segment	Existing	Future Without Project	Future With Full Buildout	Combined Effects	Incremental Effects	Future With Project Noise Level Exceeds City's 65 dBA CNEL Noise Standard for Sensitive Receptors?	Cumulatively Significant Impact?
	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Difference In dBA Between Existing and Future with Full Buildout	Difference In dBA Between Future Without Project and Future Full Buildout		
Magic Mountain Parkway							
West of McBean Parkway	66.4	71.2	71.4	5.0	0.2	Yes	No
Between McBean Parkway and Auto Center Drive	65.3	69.6	69.6	4.3	0.0	Yes	No
Between Auto Center Drive and Valencia Boulevard	65.1	70.0	70.1	5.0	0.1	Yes	No
East of Valencia Boulevard	63.9	69.2	69.3	5.4	0.1	Yes	No
Valencia Boulevard							
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	68.3	69.9	69.9	1.6	0.0	Yes	No
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Citrus Street	67.6	68.2	68.2	0.6	0.0	Yes	No
Between Citrus Street and Mall Entrance	67.6	68.2	68.1	0.5	0.1	Yes	No
Between Mall Entrance and McBean Parkway	67.4	68.9	68.9	1.5	0.0	Yes	No
South of McBean Parkway	69.0	71.1	71.1	2.1	0.0	Yes	No
McBean Parkway							
South of Valencia Boulevard	66.8	68.3	68.4	1.6	0.1	Yes	No
Between Mall Entrance and Valencia Boulevard	68.2	69.6	69.8	1.6	0.2	Yes	No
Between Town Center Drive and Mall Entrance	68.7	70.5	70.6	1.9	0.1	Yes	No
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Town Center Drive	68.8	70.3	70.5	1.7	0.2	Yes	No
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	69.9	70.5	70.6	0.7	0.1	Yes	No

Roadway Segment	Existing	Future Without Project	Future With Full Buildout	Combined Effects	Incremental Effects	Future With Project Noise Level Exceeds City's 65 dBA CNEL Noise Standard for Sensitive Receptors?	Cumulatively Significant Impact?
	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Difference In dBA Between Existing and Future with Full Buildout	Difference In dBA Between Future Without Project and Future Full Buildout		
Citrus Street							
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard	52.0	53.4	53.9	1.9	0.5	No	No

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for ADT assumptions.
 Notes: ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; CNEL = community noise equivalent level

**Table 4.9-15
CUMULATIVE NOISE SCENARIO – HIGH BUILDOUT CONDITIONS**

Roadway Segment	Existing	Future Without Project	Future with High Buildout	Combined Effects	Incremental Effects	Future With Project Noise Level Exceeds City's 65 dBA CNEL Noise Standard for Sensitive Receptors?	Cumulatively Significant Impact?
	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Difference In dBA Between Existing and Future with High Buildout	Difference In dBA Between Future Without Project and Future High Buildout		
Magic Mountain Parkway							
West of McBean Parkway	66.4	71.2	71.4	5.0	0.2	Yes	No
Between McBean Parkway and Auto Center Drive	65.3	69.6	69.7	4.4	0.1	Yes	No
Between Auto Center Drive and Valencia Boulevard	65.1	70.0	70.2	5.1	0.2	Yes	No
East of Valencia Boulevard	63.9	69.2	69.3	5.4	0.1	Yes	No
Valencia Boulevard							
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	68.3	69.9	70.0	1.7	0.1	Yes	No
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Citrus Street	67.6	68.2	68.2	0.6	0.0	Yes	No
Between Citrus Street and Mall Entrance	67.6	68.2	68.2	0.6	0.0	Yes	No
Between Mall Entrance and McBean Parkway	67.4	68.9	69.0	1.6	0.1	Yes	No
South of McBean Parkway	69.0	71.1	71.1	2.1	0.0	Yes	No
McBean Parkway							
South of Valencia Boulevard	66.8	68.3	68.4	1.6	0.1	Yes	No
Between Mall Entrance and Valencia Boulevard	68.2	69.6	69.8	1.6	0.2	Yes	No
Between Town Center Drive and Mall Entrance	68.7	70.5	70.7	2.0	0.2	Yes	No
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Town Center Drive	68.8	70.3	70.5	1.7	0.2	Yes	No
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	69.9	70.5	70.7	0.8	0.2	Yes	No

Roadway Segment	Existing	Future Without Project	Future with High Buildout	Combined Effects	Incremental Effects	Future With Project Noise Level Exceeds City's 65 dBA CNEL Noise Standard for Sensitive Receptors?	Cumulatively Significant Impact?
	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	dBA @ 100 Feet from Roadway Centerline	Difference In dBA Between Existing and Future with High Buildout	Difference In dBA Between Future Without Project and Future High Buildout		
Citrus Street							
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard	52.0	53.4	54.3	2.3	0.9	No	No

Source: Refer to **Appendix B** for ADT assumptions.
 ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; CNEL = community noise equivalent level

Cumulative Stationary Noise

Although cumulative growth projects could occur within the Project Area, the noise generated by stationary equipment on-site cannot be quantified due to the speculative nature of each development. Nevertheless, each cumulative project must comply with SCMC Section 11.44.040, which prohibits any source of sound at any location exceeding the City's exterior noise standards when measured on property line. Additionally, as noise dissipates as it travels away from its source, noise impacts from stationary sources would be limited to each of the respective sites and their vicinities. Due to the distance and intervening structures, cumulative stationary noise impacts would not occur. As noted above, the Proposed Project would not result in significant stationary noise impacts that would significantly affect surrounding sensitive receptors. Thus, the Proposed Project and cumulative growth are not anticipated to result in a significant cumulative impact in this regard.

Cumulative Vibration Impacts

As discussed above, Project operational activities would not generate substantial groundborne vibration and Project construction activities would not generate groundborne vibration on-site above the significance criteria (i.e., 0.5 inch/second PPV threshold as established by Caltrans). Groundborne vibration generated from cumulative growth would be isolated to the area immediately surrounding the vibration source. Therefore, the Project's contribution to cumulative vibration impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Cumulative noise impacts were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Cumulative noise impacts were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.10 PUBLIC SERVICES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates the potential for implementation of the Project to impact the provision of public services, including fire protection, police protection, and schools.

4.10.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

FIRE PROTECTION

The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) provides fire protection and life safety services to over four million residents within its jurisdiction of 60 incorporated cities and all 140 unincorporated areas of the County.¹ The LACoFD participates in the California Fire Service and Rescue Emergency Mutual Aid System. In emergency services, mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to provide assistance across jurisdictional boundaries, in cases where an emergency response exceeds capabilities of local resources.²

The City of Santa Clarita and the unincorporated parts of the Santa Clarita Valley receive urban and wildland fire suppression service from the LACoFD. Division III, which consists of Battalions 4, 6, and 22, serves the Cities of La Cañada Flintridge and Santa Clarita. As of 2024, there are 11 fire stations in the City of Santa Clarita.³ These stations include engine companies, ladder trucks, emergency medical service (EMS) paramedic squads, a Hazardous Materials Task Force, Urban Search and Rescue services, helicopters, and other firefighting and emergency transport aircraft.⁴

As described in Section 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, LACoFD Station 126, located at 26320 Citrus Street, is within the boundaries of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) Area. Other LACoFD stations within 3.0 miles in the City include Station No. 111 (26829 Seco Canyon Road), Station No. 73 (24875 N. Railroad Avenue), Station No. 156 (24505 Copper Hill Drive), and Station No. 104 (26901 Golden Valley Road).

POLICE PROTECTION

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) is the lead agency for crisis management, perimeter security, access control, traffic/crowd control, evacuations, notifications, and safeguarding evidence.⁵ The LASD provides general law enforcement services to 42 contract cities and 141 unincorporated communities, as well as to additional facilities, hospitals, colleges, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Authority, and Superior Courts. The LASD also participates in law enforcement mutual aid, which is maintained by the Emergency Operations Bureau.⁶

¹ LACoFD, 2021 County of Los Angeles Fire Department Annual Report, July 2022.

² LACoFD, 2022 Strategic Fire Plan, June 2022.

³ LACoFD, <https://locator.lacounty.gov/fire/Search?find=Fire+Stations&near=24201+Valencia+Boulevard%2C+Valencia%2C+CA%2C+91355&cat=86&tag=&loc=&lat=34.41551245785858&lon=-118.55777478208464>, accessed February 12, 2024.

⁴ City of Santa Clarita, 2021 Santa Clarita Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, October 2021.

⁵ City of Santa Clarita, 2021 Santa Clarita Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, October 2021.

⁶ LASD, Manual of Policy and Procedures, Volume 5—Line Procedures, Chapter 6—Emergency and Disaster, Section 5-06/020.65 - Law Enforcement Mutual Aid.

The City of Santa Clarita is a contract city with the LASD; thus, the station facilities are under the County's jurisdictional authority. In 2022, the Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station's employed 46 professional staff and 210 sworn officers. The station's patrol area is approximately 658.92 square miles, including the City of Santa Clarita, inclusive of the Project Site, and unincorporated areas within Santa Clarita Valley.⁷ In 2022, the patrol area's population included 228,675 residents in the City and 59,376 residents in the unincorporated areas. The Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station is located at 26201 Golden Valley Road, which is approximately 2.8 miles southeast of the Project Site. The Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station is a 46,481-square-foot building on an approximately 12-acre site that opened in 2021 and replaced the former 25,100-square-foot Sheriff's Station on Magic Mountain Parkway within the TCSP area.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

The City of Santa Clarita is served by six school districts. The TCSP Area overlaps with the boundaries of the Saugus Union School District (SUSD) and William S. Hart Union School District (WSHUSD).⁸ The TCSP's Town Center Drive Subarea, Valencia Town Center Subarea, and Town Center East Subarea are located within the attendance boundaries of Bridgeport Elementary School (kindergarten to grade 6), Rio Norte Junior High School (grades 7-8), and Valencia High School (grades 9-12). The TCSP's McBean and Valencia Subarea is located within the attendance boundaries of Bridgeport Elementary School (kindergarten to grade 6), Rancho Pico Junior High School (grades 7-8), and West Ranch High School (grades 9-12). **Table 4.10-1** provides enrollment data for these schools based on data available from the California Department of Education and capacity data for the SUSD and WSHUSD based on their respective fee justification studies. The SUSD and WSHUSD allow intra-district transfer, which refers to transfers from a designated school within attendance boundaries to another school within the same district.⁹

⁷ LASD, Population and Geographic Data, 2022, accessed February 12, 2024, <http://shq.lasdnews.net/crimestats/yir9600/yir2022/dept/89.htm>.

⁸ Saugus Union School District, School Site Locator, accessed February 12, 2024, <https://portal.schoolsitetlocator.com/apps/ssl/?districtcode=00575>; William S. Hart Union High School District, accessed February 12, 2024, <https://www.hartdistrict.org/apps/pages/attendance-boundaries>.

⁹ Saugus Union School District, Transfers, accessed February 16, 2024, <https://www.saugusud.org/Transfers>; William S. Hart Union High School District, Intra District Transfers: 2023-2024, accessed February 16, 2024, https://www.hartdistrict.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=317666&type=d&pREC_ID=2484193&total1y=true.

**TABLE 4.10-1
STUDENT ENROLLMENT OF DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS CURRENTLY SERVING TCSP AREA**

School	Grade	Enrollment ¹	Facilities Capacity ²	Excess or (Shortage) Capacity ³
Saugus Union School District: Elementary Schools	K-6	9,097	11,355	2,258
Bridgeport Elementary School	K-6	803	—	—
William S. Hart Union School District: Junior High Schools	7-8	6,306	6,725	419
Rancho Pico Junior High School	7-8	790	—	—
Rio Norte Junior High School	7-8	1,123	—	—
William S. Hart Union School District: High Schools	9-12	15,783	17,645	1,862
West Ranch High School	9-12	1,865	—	—
Valencia High School	9-12	2,275	—	—

Source: Michael Baker International 2024

Notes:

1. California Department of Education, DataQuest, Enrollment Data 2022-23, William S. Hart Union High School District, accessed February 15, 2024, <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/SearchName.asp?rbTimeFrame=oneyear&rYear=2022-23&cName=hart+union&Topic=Enrollment&Level=District&submit1=Submit>; California Department of Education, DataQuest, Enrollment Data 2022-23, Saugus Union School District, accessed February 15, 2024, <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/SearchName.asp?rbTimeFrame=oneyear&rYear=2022-23&cName=saugus&Topic=Enrollment&Level=District&submit1=Submit>.
2. Saugus Union School District, School Fee Justification Study, September 2, 2020, Table 1; William S. Hart Union School District, Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study, April 24, 2020, Table 1.
3. Existing Facilities Capacity minus Enrollment.

4.10.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administrations (OSHA), as well as California OSHA (Cal/OSHA), enforce the provisions of the federal and State Occupational Safety and Health Acts, respectively, which collectively require safety and health regulations for construction under Part 1926 of Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations. The fire-related requirements of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act are specifically contained in Subpart F, Fire Protection and Prevention, of Part 1926. Examples of general requirements related to fire protection and prevention include maintaining fire suppression equipment specific to construction on-site; providing a temporary or permanent water supply of sufficient volume, duration, and pressure; properly operating the on-site firefighting equipment; and keeping storage sites free from accumulation of unnecessary combustible materials.

National Fire Protection Association Standard 1720

The National Fire Protection Association Standard 1720 is known as the Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations. The LACoFD uses this standard, which contains minimum requirements relating to the organization and deployment of fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and special operations to the public. The standard also addresses functions and outcomes of fire department emergency service delivery, response capabilities, and resources. In accordance with this standard, the LACoFD uses the 5-minute response time for the first

arriving fire department and EMS personnel and 8-minute response time for advanced life support personnel in urban areas, and an 8-minute response time for first arriving fire department and EMS personnel and 12-minute response time for advance life support personnel in suburban areas.

STATE

California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 9 California Fire Code

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, known as the California Building Standards Code, outlines building standards and requirements throughout the state. All occupancies in California are subject to national model codes adopted into Title 24, and occupancies are further subject to amendments adopted by state agencies and ordinances implemented by local jurisdictions' governing bodies. Chapter 9 of Title 24 is known as the California Fire Code, which establishes minimum requirements for fire protection and prevention, and public health and safety, and provides safety and assistance to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. The California Fire Code provides building standards to increase fire resistance and regulates minimum fire safety requirements for new and existing buildings, facilities, storage, and processes, including the storage and handling of hazardous materials.

California Health and Safety Code

Sections 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code set the state regulations for fires and fire protection, which includes building standards, use of fire equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire protection and notification systems, smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire-suppression training.

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Cal/OSHA sets and enforces standards for the protection of worker health and safety. Cal/OSHA has established minimum standards for fire suppression and emergency medical services in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Sections 1270 "Fire Prevention" and 6773 "Fire Protection and Fire Fighting Equipment."

California Senate Bill 50 (Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998)

The Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998 established, through Senate Bill 50, Chapter 407, Statutes of 1998, the School Facility Program. The program provides a per-pupil grant amount to qualifying school districts for purposes of constructing school facilities and modernizing existing school facilities. The Greene Act permits the local district to levy a fee, charge, dedication, or other requirement against any development project within its boundaries, for the purpose of funding the construction or reconstruction of school facilities. The act also sets a maximum level of fees a developer may be required to pay.

California Government Code 65995 and 65996 and the California Education Code Section 17620

California Government Code Section 65995 and California Education Code Section 17620 allow school districts to levy fees on residential and or commercial/industrial construction projects within a school district's boundaries. The purpose of the fees is for funding the construction or reconstruction of school facilities. The State Allocation Board sets the per-square-foot Level I

school impact fees (developer fees) every two years; each school district must then adopt the fee applicable within their district. This is generally implemented through a fee justification study.

In accordance with California Government Code Section 65996, notwithstanding any other provision of state or local law, a state or local agency, the payment of fees as instituted in Government Code Section 65995 are deemed to provide full and complete school facilities mitigation for the purpose of CEQA compliance. Further, a state or local agency may not deny or refuse to approve a legislative or adjudicative act, or both, involving, but not limited to, the planning, use, or development of real property or any change in governmental organization or reorganization, as defined in Section 56021 or 56073, on the basis that school facilities are inadequate.

LOCAL

Los Angeles County Municipal Code, Title 32 Fire Code

Title 32 is a component of the Los Angeles County Municipal Code and is a combination of the California Fire Code and amendments that are specific to the County. The Los Angeles County Fire Code contains more stringent building standards that are deemed necessary due to local climatic, geological, and/or topographical conditions in Los Angeles County. The provisions of Title 32 apply throughout the City of Santa Clarita, as the City contracts with the LACoFD to provide fire protection and emergency medical services.

Santa Clarita Municipal Code, Title 22 City Fire Code

Title 22 of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code, City Fire Code, states the City has adopted by reference the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 9. The Santa Clarita Fire Code was adopted on November 23, 2010, and took effect on January 1, 2011. In relation to the provision of fire services, the code sets forth on a local level the standards to regulate and govern the safeguarding of life and property from fire damage. The purpose of the code is to establish the minimum requirements consistent with nationally recognized good practices to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare from the hazards of fire, explosion, or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures, and premises, and to provide safety and assistance to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.

Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 17.51.010(B): Law Enforcement Facilities Fee

The Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 17.51.010(B) establishes the Law Enforcement Facilities Fee, which states that prior to the issuance of a building or similar permit, the amount of the fee to be imposed on a new residential, commercial, office, and/or industrial development shall not exceed the estimated reasonable cost of providing law enforcement facilities for such residential, commercial, office, and/or industrial development projects.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

The LASD generally prescribes to the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) with the goal to reduce opportunities for criminal activities by employing physical design features that discourage anti-social behavior, while encouraging the legitimate use of the site. The overall tenets of CPTED include defensible space, territoriality, surveillance, lighting, landscaping, and physical security. Some of the design measures that can be applied at the plan level include clear well-lit paths from the street to the development through all parking and

landscape areas and within the development to building entries; avoiding indistinct walkways and entries; providing adequate lighting, width of path, definition of path, and ability to see a destination; and providing obvious physical security techniques such as locks, lights, walls, gates and security signs.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The Safety Element and Land Use Element of the Santa Clarita General Plan include the following goals, objectives, and policies related to public services that would be applicable to the Proposed Project:¹⁰

Safety Element: Fire Hazards

- Goal S 3: Protection of public safety and property from fires.
 - Objective S 3.1: Provide adequate fire protection infrastructure to maintain acceptable service levels as established by the Los Angeles County Fire Department.
 - Policy S 3.1.1: Coordinate on planning for new fire stations to meet current and projected needs.
 - Policy S.3.1.2: Program adequate funding for capital fire protection costs and explore all feasible funding options to meet facility needs.
 - Policy S.3.1.3: Require adequate fire flow and adequate fire protection as a condition of approval for all new development.
 - Objective S 3.3: Maintain acceptable emergency response times throughout the planning areas.
 - Policy S 3.3.1: Plan for fire response times of no more than five minutes in urban areas, eight minutes in suburban areas, and 12 minutes in rural areas.
 - Policy S 3.3.2: Require the installation and maintenance of street name signs on all new development and the posting of address numbers on all homes and businesses that are clearly visible from adjacent streets.

Safety Element: Law Enforcement

- Goal S 5: Protection of public safety through the provision of law enforcement services and crime prevention strategies.
 - Objective S 5.1: Cooperate with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's plans for expansion of facility space to meet current and future law enforcement needs in the Santa Clarita Valley.
 - Policy S 5.1.3: Cooperate on implementation of funding mechanisms for law enforcement services.

¹⁰ City of Santa Clarita, City of Santa Clarita General Plan, Safety Element, June 2022; Land Use Element, June 2011.

- Objective S 5.2: Cooperate with the Sheriff's Department on crime prevention programs to serve residents and businesses.
 - Policy S 5.2.1: Promote and participate in the Business Watch program to assist business owners in developing and implementing crime prevention strategies.
 - Policy S 5.2.2: Promote and support Neighborhood Watch programs to assist residents in establishing neighborhood crime prevention techniques.
 - Policy S 5.2.3: Provide code enforcement services to maintain minimum health and safety standards and as a deterrent to crime.

Land Use Element: Healthy Neighborhoods

- Goal LU 3: Healthy and safe neighborhoods for all residents.
 - Objective LU 3.3: Ensure that the design of residential neighborhoods considers and includes measures to reduce impacts from natural or man-made hazards.
 - Policy LU 3.3.4: Evaluate service levels for law enforcement and fire protection as needed to ensure that adequate response times are maintained as new residential development is occupied.

Land Use Element: Environmental Justice

- Goal LU 8: Equitable and convenient access to social, cultural, educational, civic, medical, and recreational facilities and opportunities for all residents.
 - Objective LU 8.1: Work with service providers to plan for adequate community facilities and services to meet the needs of present and future residents.
 - Policy LU 8.1.1: Coordinate plans for new residential development with affected school districts to ensure adequate mitigation of impacts on school facilities; provision of facilities and programs to promote academic excellence for Santa Clarita Valley students; coordination on joint use of facilities and transportation and long-range planning.
 - Policy LU 8.1.12: The City, County and the school districts should cooperate to identify appropriate land to construct new school facilities throughout the planning area. Annual information and update meetings between the planning agencies and the districts are encouraged.
 - Policy LU 8.1.13: In meeting state law for mitigation, there may be times when additional resources are required in order for the district to fully provide necessary services. Accordingly, Developers are encouraged to reach full mitigation agreements with the appropriate school districts impacted by their proposed project. Other mitigation options may include, but are not limited to, modifications to existing school sites.
 - Policy LU 8.1.14: Developers of infill projects shall be aware of the potential cumulative effect that these smaller projects have on schools. Pre and post construction, infill projects shall be monitored to evaluate student generation rates.

Land Use Element: Public Facilities

- Goal LU 9: Adequate public facilities and services, provided in a timely manner and in appropriate locations to serve existing and future residents and businesses.
 - Objective LU 9.1: Coordinate land use planning with provision of adequate public services and facilities to support development.
 - Policy LU 9.1.1: Ensure construction of adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new development prior to occupancy.
 - Policy LU 9.1.2: Coordinate review of development projects with other agencies and special districts providing utilities and other services.
 - Policy LU 9.1.5: Work with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to expand law enforcement facilities to meet the needs of the Santa Clarita's Valley growing population.

2021 Santa Clarita Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City of Santa Clarita 2021 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) serves the purposes of documenting known hazards and identifying community actions that can be implemented over the short and long term to reduce future risk and loss in the City. The HMP was prepared in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, and the 2021 HMP is a federally mandated update that ensures continuing eligibility for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding. The HMP addresses several key topics, including the following:

- Planning Process: Provides a record of public process and involvement from committee members and stakeholders;
- Community Profile: Presents the history, geography, demographics, and socioeconomics of the City to provide historical contexts of hazards;
- Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment: Provides information on hazard identification, vulnerability, and risk associated with hazards in the City; and
- Mitigation Strategy: Describes existing mitigation and the mitigation process.

In addition, the HMP addresses the process of plan review, evaluation, implementation, and adoption. The HMP provides context and planning for hazard identification, risk, and mitigation strategies for wildfires, earthquakes, energy disruption, drought, severe weather events, pandemics, man-made hazards such as cyber-attacks and terrorism, the release of hazardous materials, landslides, and flooding.

4.10.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to public services are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to public services if it would:

Threshold 4.10(a): *Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:*

- i. Fire protection;*
- ii. Police protection;*
- iii. Schools;*
- iv. Parks; and*
- v. Other public facilities.*

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The proposed Project would not result in significant impacts related to the following significance thresholds, as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**); therefore, they are not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.10(a): *Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:*

- iv. Parks; and*
- v. Other public facilities.*

4.10.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to public services considered the potential future improvements in the TCSP Area, which are envisioned as creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center, thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the TCSP Area, which include programmable gathering spaces and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children's playgrounds, and parks.

The analysis of impacts related to public services is based on a review of planning documents, applicable codes, and available information from appropriate public service providers.

4.10.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

There are no Project Design Features proposed specifically with respect to public services.

4.10.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

FIRE PROTECTION

Threshold 4.10(a.i): Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for fire protection?

Impact Analysis

Construction

Construction activities, including those related to the off-site improvements, have the potential to result in accidental on-site fires by exposing combustible materials to fire risks from machinery and equipment. Therefore, construction activities associated with buildout of the TCSP have the potential to temporarily result in an incrementally increased demand for LACoFD fire protection services. However, all construction activities would be subject to compliance with the regulations enforced by OSHA and Cal/OSHA. Construction-related regulations would include requiring maintaining fire suppression equipment specific to construction on-site; providing a temporary or permanent water supply of sufficient volume, duration, and pressure; and keeping storage sites free from accumulation of unnecessary combustible materials.

In addition, as discussed in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this Draft EIR, although construction activities would involve the limited transport, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, such activities would be temporary in nature. The storage, handling, and disposal of these materials would be regulated by the Department of Toxic Substances Control, US Environmental Protection Agency, OSHA, LACoFD, and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. Furthermore, the LACoFD's Land Development Unit would review specific fire and life safety requirements for the construction phase during its building plan check review.

While development projects during buildout of the TCSP may result in temporary sidewalk and lane closures, emergency access for the LACoFD to the Project Site would be maintained at all times, and construction would not impede the LACoFD from maintaining its response times. Furthermore, construction activities would be temporary in nature and full access to all roadways to and within the Project Site would be restored upon completion of specific development projects under the TCSP. As such, construction-related impacts to fire protection services would be less than significant.

Operation

Buildout of the TCSP would introduce residential and hotel/convention center uses to the Project Site and increase the density of existing commercial and other nonresidential uses on-site. As such, the Project would introduce a residential population and increase the employee population

on-site, increasing the demand for services from the LACoFD. As LACoFD Station 126 is located within the Town Center East Subarea and will remain in place, the LACoFD, through its existing facilities, would be able to provide fire protection services and provide adequate response times for the Project's residents, employees, and patrons.

The Project would be designed in accordance with the California Fire Code, which establishes minimum requirements for fire protection and prevention; the County's Title 32 Fire Code, which contains more stringent building standards related to fire safety; and the City's Title 22 City Fire Code, which establishes fire-related standards at the local level. As discussed in Section 4.13, Utilities and Service Systems, the proposed Specific Plan and development projects building out the Specific Plan would comply with fire flow requirements in accordance with Los Angeles County Fire Code. These would include requirements related to domestic fire flow, fire hydrant locations, and distribution. These water distribution improvements would be designed and implemented in accordance with the LACoFD's and Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency's guidelines, standards, and approved materials. The Project would also comply with all applicable code and ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire flows, and fire hydrants, as required by the LACoFD's Land Development Unit. The Land Development Unit would review the design of development projects during buildout of the TCSP during the building plan check reviews to ensure adequate fire safety and access.

Additionally, the City's HMP, described above in Section 4.10.2, Regulatory and Planning Framework, provides a framework for communications, decisions, and actions by emergency response personnel during emergencies. The command structure would assess local conditions in a dynamic, ongoing manner to identify locations and severity of threats to homes and businesses and any other land uses that are associated with man-made or natural incidents. Based on those assessments, decisions would be made at a local level regarding when and/or where to implement emergency evacuations. The City's existing emergency response system would be sufficient to address emergency evacuation scenarios in the event of natural or man-made incidents, such as a fire in the Project area, that result in a need to evacuate the Project's residents, employees, and patrons. In addition, the TCSP is anticipated to provide for improved circulation patterns and connectivity within the Specific Plan area, which would improve emergency access.

Therefore, with usage of the City's HMP; with compliance with federal, State, and local regulations; and upon approval of required reviews and permits by the LACoFD, buildout of the TCSP would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection. Operation-related impacts to fire protection services from the Project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to fire protection were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to fire protection were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

POLICE PROTECTION

Threshold 4.10(a.ii): Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection?

Impact Analysis

Construction

The Project would require consultation with the LASD during the plan check process before construction. Construction activities would also be subject to compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations to reduce impacts to police protection services, such as the California Building Standards Code, which includes site access requirements and other relevant safety precautions for emergency providers. As discussed above, although construction of individual projects building out the TCSP could result in temporary sidewalk and lane closures that may affect evacuation routes, emergency access to the Project Site for emergency service providers, including the LASD, would be maintained at all times. Therefore, construction would not impede the LASD from maintaining its response times. Furthermore, construction activities are temporary in nature and full access to all roadways to and within the Project Site would be restored upon completion of the Project. As such, construction-related impacts to police protection services would be less than significant.

Operation

As previously described, buildout of the TCSP would introduce residential and hotel/convention center uses to the Project Site and increase the density of existing commercial and other nonresidential uses on-site. As such, the Project would introduce a residential population and increase the employee population on-site, which would increase the demand for services from the LASD. However, as discussed in Section XIV, Population and Housing, of the Initial Study (refer to **Appendix A** of this Draft EIR), the Project would not induce unplanned population growth in the Project area. Specifically, the TCSP would not increase the currently allowable density of housing units per acre (50 units per acre) when compared with existing zoning. The City's General Plan already plans for a density of 50 dwelling units per acre in the Specific Plan Area. In short, while buildout of the Specific Plan would result in population growth and expansion of commercial spaces within the Specific Plan Area, this growth is not unplanned. Furthermore, with the opening of the new Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station in 2021, the LASD nearly doubled its facilities capacity to serve the Santa Clarita Valley into the future. Therefore, the Project would not cause a need for new or expanded police facilities.

In addition, as required by the County and the City's Law Enforcement Facilities Fee, the Project would be required to pay all applicable development and law enforcement mitigation fees prior to

the issuance of a building or similar permit. The payment of such fees would ensure that the LASD has sufficient funding for future personnel, assets, and facility space. Furthermore, development projects during buildout of the TCSP would require consultation with the LASD prior to approval of building plans and permits.

With approval of required reviews and permits by the LASD, buildout of the TCSP would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for police protection. Operation-related impacts to police protection services from the Project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to police protection were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to police protection were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

SCHOOLS

Threshold 4.10(a.iii): Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for schools?

Impact Analysis

As described above, buildout of the TCSP would introduce residential and hotel/convention center uses to the Project Site and increase the density of existing commercial and other nonresidential uses on-site. As such, buildout of the TCSP would directly generate students through construction of the residential uses, and the nonresidential components could also generate students as employees may relocate to the vicinity of the TCSP area. To provide a conservative estimate of students generated by the TCSP, the proposed High Buildout Scenario is considered in this analysis. As provided in Table 2-2 of Chapter 2, Project Description, of this EIR, the Project's High Buildout Scenario would result in an increase of 266,416 square feet of commercial and other nonresidential uses, 364,780 square feet of hotel/convention center uses, and 2,563 housing units when compared to existing conditions. As shown in **Table 4.10-2**, the High Buildout Scenario would generate a total of approximately 1,480 students, consisting of 854 elementary school age students, 224 junior high age students, and 402 high school age students.

**TABLE 4.10-2
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF STUDENTS GENERATED BY THE HIGH-BUILDOUT PROJECT SCENARIO¹**

Land Use	Size	Students Generated ^{2,3}			
		Elementary (K-6)	Junior High (7-8)	High School (9-12)	Total
Housing Units	2,563 du	695	159	285	1,139
Commercial, Other Nonresidential Uses	266,416 sf	96	37	67	200
Hotel Lodging	250,130 sf	22	12	21	55
Hotel Convention Center	114,650 sf	41	16	29	86
Total Students Generated		854	224	402	1,480 stu

Source: Michael Baker International, 2024

du = dwelling units; sf = square feet; stu = students

Notes:

- As provided in Table 2-2 of Chapter 2, Project Description, of this EIR, the High Buildout Scenario would result in an increase in 266,416 square feet of commercial and other nonresidential uses, 364,780 square feet of hotel/convention center uses, and 2,563 residential units when compared to existing conditions. Therefore, as a conservative estimate, this table considers the student generation based on the Project's High Buildout Scenario.
- Based on the Saugus Union School District, School Fee Justification Study, September 2, 2020. For residential uses, the following student generation rate was applied: 0.2710 students per multifamily household (grades K-6). For the nonresidential, convention center, and hotel uses, the following student generation rates were applied: 0.0003570 students per sf for "Commercial Offices (Standard)" uses; 0.0000844 students per sf for "Hospitality (Lodging)" uses.
- Based on the William S. Hart Union High School District, Residential and Commercial/Industrial Developer School Fee Justification Study, April 24, 2020. The following generation factors were applied: 0.0618 students per multifamily household (grades 7-8); 0.1109 students per multifamily household (grades 9-12); 0.0034965 employees per square foot for "Office" uses; 0.0011325 employees per square foot for "Hotel/Motel" uses; and 0.6426 dwelling units per employee.

As described above, the TCSP Area is located within the attendance boundaries of schools within both the SUSD and WSHUSD. Enrollment data for the schools is from the California Department of Education; however, capacity data is only readily available for the SUSD overall and WSHUSD overall based on their respective fee justification studies. Thus, for the purposes of this analysis, it is understood that SUSD and WSHUSD allow intra-district transfers, which refer to transfers from a designated school within attendance boundaries to another school within the same district. With buildout of the TCSP, enrollment of SUSD elementary school students would increase from 9,097 to 9,951 students; enrollment of WSHUSD junior high students would increase from 6,306 to 6,530 students; and enrollment of WSHUSD high school students would increase from 15,783 to 16,185 students. With buildout of the TCSP, there would still be excess school capacity, with remaining capacities of 1,404 elementary school students, 195 junior high students, and 1,460 high school students.

The number of Project-generated students who could attend schools serving the TCSP Area would likely be less than the above estimate because this analysis does not include school district options that would allow students generated by the Project to enroll at other schools outside of their home attendance area, or students who may enroll in private schools or participate in home-schooling. In addition, this analysis does not account for Project residents who may already reside in the school attendance boundaries and would move to the TCSP Area.

In addition, pursuant to SB 50, the development projects during buildout of the TCSP would be required to pay development fees for schools to the districts prior to the issuance of the building permits. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65995, the payment of these fees is considered full and complete mitigation of TCSP-related school impacts. Therefore, payment of the applicable

development school fees to SUSD and WSHUSD would offset the potential impact of additional student enrollment at schools serving the Project Site.

Therefore, buildout of the TCSP would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives for schools, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to schools were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to schools were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.10.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts to public services is the service areas of the LACoFD and LASD and attendance boundaries of SUSD and WSHUSD. Development of the Project, in combination with anticipated cumulative growth, has the potential to increase demand in services for the LACoFD, LASD, and SUSD/WSHUSD. However, other cumulative growth projects would be subject to all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for fire protection and emergency services. Project developers would be required to consult with the LACoFD, LASD, or any other emergency response agency during the review development projects or land use entitlement applications. The plans for cumulative growth projects would be reviewed by the City and LACoFD to determine specific requirements applicable to the development (e.g., fire hydrant spacing, sprinkler requirements, safe vehicular access for evacuation or response, and ensuring the development would not negatively impact response times) and to ensure compliance with all applicable requirements as discussed. Similarly, cumulative growth projects would be reviewed by the City and LASD and would be expected to integrate design concepts to enhance safety and security and comply with applicable regulatory requirements related to security and safety during construction and operation. As for schools, the potential number of students generated by the TCSP would not result in an overall shortage of capacity within the relevant school districts. As with development projects during buildout of the TCSP, cumulative growth projects would also be required to pay school development fees to the SUSD and WSHUSD prior to the issuance of building permits, pursuant to SB 50. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65995, the payment of these fees would be considered full and complete mitigation of school impacts generated by the related projects.

Therefore, with full compliance with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, rules, and regulations, as well as implementation of site-specific design features, the City's HMP and the County and City emergency plans for the Project and cumulative growth projects, significant cumulative impacts related to public services would not occur. As such, the TCSP's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Cumulative impacts related to public services were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Cumulative impacts related to public services were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.11 TRANSPORTATION

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzes the potential impacts of the Santa Clarita Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP), also referred to as the Project or Proposed Project, as it relates to transportation. The analysis was prepared pursuant to the City's *Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita* (TAU), which establish the City's transportation impact thresholds and provide guidance on conducting transportation studies in the City, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, which require transportation impacts to be evaluated based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rather than level of service (LOS) or any other measure of a project's effect on automobile delay.

4.11.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

EXISTING STREET SYSTEM

ROADWAY NETWORK

The planning area is bordered by Magic Mountain Parkway in the east-west direction, McBean Parkway in the north-south direction, and Valencia Boulevard in the northeast-southwest direction. McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard meet near the southwestern corner of the planning area, forming a roughly triangular planning area with Magic Mountain Parkway to the north. All three of these streets are classified as Major Highways in the City's Circulation Element. Citrus Street, a local road, bifurcates the planning area, connecting Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard. Town Center Drive, a private street, provides internal circulation within the planning area and connects to each of the major arterials at signalized driveway intersections, which are shown as driveways in **Figure 4.11-1**. Interstate 5 (I-5) lies about 1 mile west of the planning area. Existing condition roadway characteristics, including roadway classifications and driveways providing access to the planning area, are also shown in **Figure 4.11-1**.

Average Daily Traffic

Table 4.11-1 and **Figure 4.11-2** shows the existing average daily traffic (ADT) on the public streets bordering and traversing the Project Area. The ADT data is estimated based on traffic counts collected at intersections in the study area in May 2022. The highest daily volumes occur on McBean Parkway, which carries 54,000 vehicles north of the planning area and 31,000 vehicles south of the planning area. The daily traffic volume on Valencia Boulevard ranges from 36,000 on the segments adjacent to the planning area to 44,000 north of the planning area. Magic Mountain Parkway carries approximately 20,000 vehicles per day.

Figure 4.11-1. Roadway Network

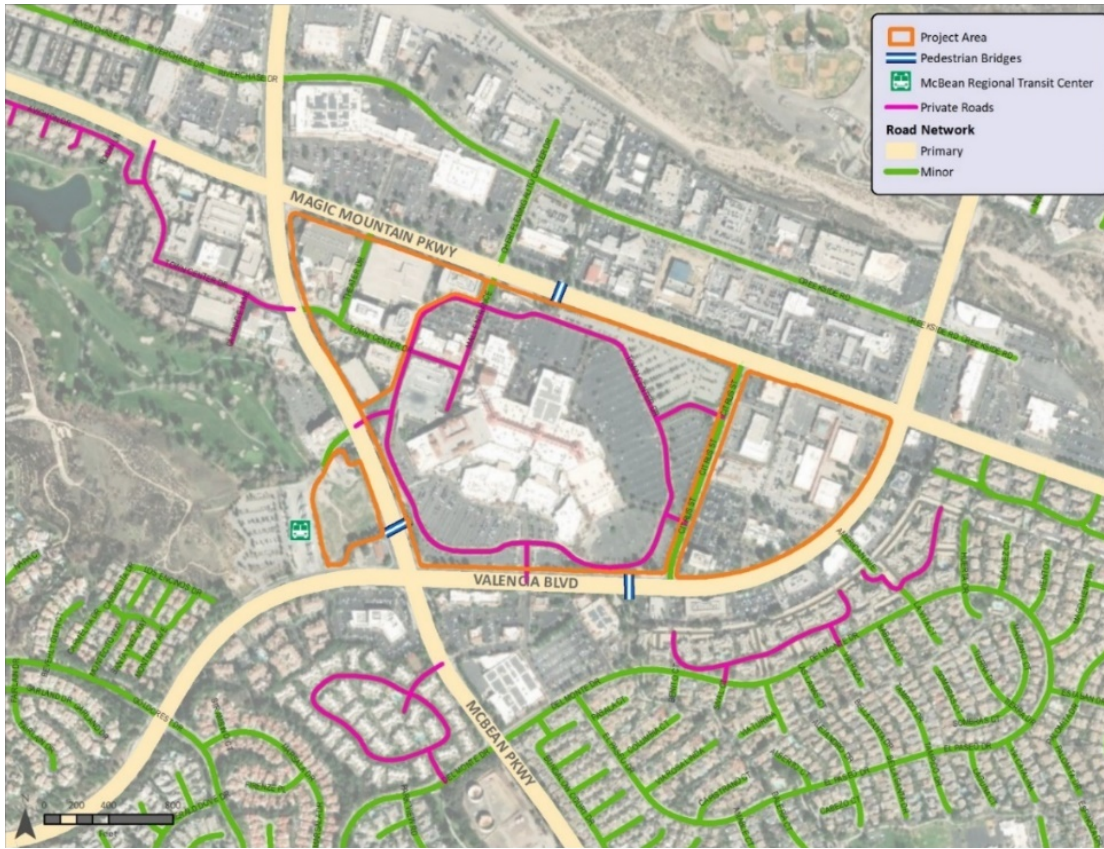


TABLE 4.11-1
EXISTING AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC

Roadway Segment	Average Daily Traffic (ADT)
<i>Magic Mountain Parkway</i>	
West of McBean Parkway	22,000
Between McBean Parkway and Auto Center Drive	22,000
Between Auto Center Drive and Valencia Boulevard	21,000
East of Valencia Boulevard	17,000
<i>Valencia Boulevard</i>	
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	44,000
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Citrus Street	36,000
Between Citrus Street and Mall Entrance	36,000
Between Mall Entrance and McBean Parkway	37,000
South of McBean Parkway	38,000
<i>McBean Parkway</i>	
South of Valencia Boulevard	31,000
Between Mall Entrance and Valencia Boulevard	37,000
Between Town Center Drive and Mall Entrance	42,000
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Town Center Drive	44,000
North of Magic Mountain Parkway	54,000
<i>Citrus Street</i>	
Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard	2,000

Figure 4.11-2. Existing Average Daily Traffic



PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, AND TRANSIT FACILITIES

Pedestrian Facilities

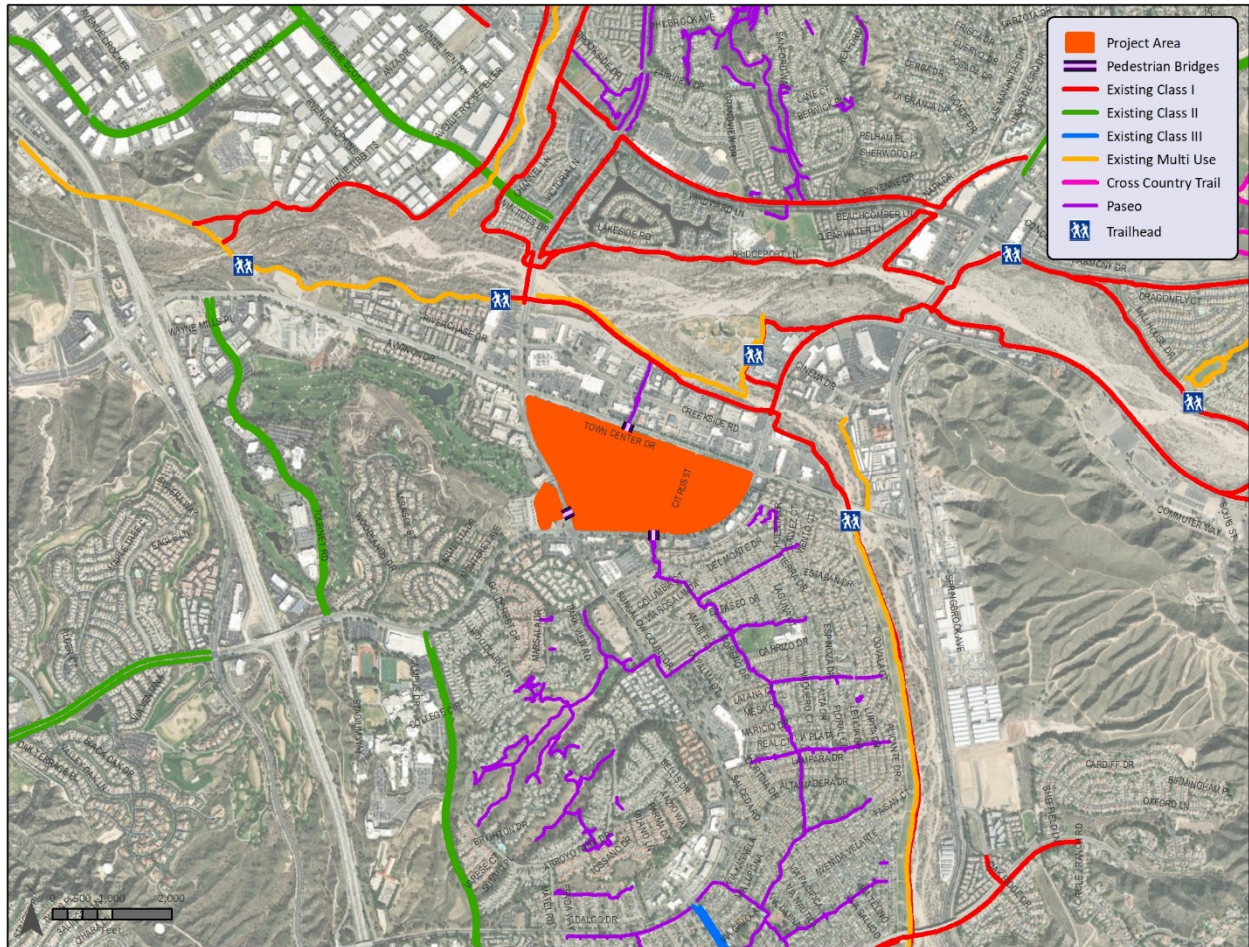
Existing pedestrian facilities are provided on the perimeter of the planning area with sidewalks present on both sides of the streets. Sidewalks are generally comfortable for pedestrian circulation with landscaping, adequate clear sidewalk area, and curb ramps. Pedestrian crossings are provided at controlled intersections and pedestrian bridges. Three pedestrian bridges currently provide access to the planning area: the Magic Mountain pedestrian bridge, the McBean Parkway pedestrian bridge, and the Valencia Boulevard pedestrian bridge. The existing pedestrian facilities, including bridges, are shown in **Figure 4.11-3**.

The existing pedestrian facilities within the planning area are mostly limited to sidewalks leading into the planning area at the signalized driveways, and a raised pedestrian walkway adjacent to the mall building. In Specific Plan Subarea 3, Town Center Drive between McBean Parkway and Carousel Lane (i.e., leading up to the mall entrance) provides sidewalks and textured crosswalks through a pedestrian-friendly environment with sidewalk-engaging shops and restaurants. The Patios area of the mall contains paseos that provide pedestrian circulation between stores and restaurants. Most of the internal planning area consists of surface parking spaces, through which pedestrians walk to access the mall.

Bicycle Facilities

On-street bicycle facilities are currently not provided in the planning area. However, the planning area is connected to the existing regional bicycle network by paseos. Paseos are paved paths that provide pedestrian and bicycle connections outside of the street network. There are two paseos that terminate at the planning area—one to the north connecting to the Magic Mountain Parkway pedestrian bridge and one to the south connecting to the Valencia Boulevard pedestrian bridge. These paseos connect bicyclists to Class I off-street bicycle paths that traverse north–south and east–west across the City. The existing bicycle facilities and trails are shown in **Figure 4.11-3**.

Figure 4.11-3. Existing Pedestrian Bridges, Bicycle Facilities, and Trails



Public Transit Facilities

The study area is served by Santa Clarita Transit, and the bus routes are shown in **Figure 4.11-4**. Route frequencies range from 15 minutes to one-hour headways. Below is a list of the bus route frequencies during weekday morning and afternoon peak periods that serve the site.

- Route 1: 50 minutes to 1 hour
- Route 2: 50 minutes to 1 hour
- Route 3: Greater than 1 hour
- Route 4: Every hour
- Route 5: Every hour
- Route 6: Every 30 minutes
- Route 7: Greater than 1 hour
- Route 12: 15 to 30 minutes
- Route 14: Every hour
- Route 501: 40 minutes to greater than 1 hour (three trips in morning, two trips in afternoon)
- Route 636: Two per day in the morning and afternoon
- Route 757: 30 minutes to 1 hour
- Route 791: 40 minutes (two trips in morning peak and one in afternoon peak)
- Route 792: 15 to 40 minutes (three trips in morning peak, one in afternoon peak)
- Route 794: 40 minutes (one in morning peak and one in afternoon peak)

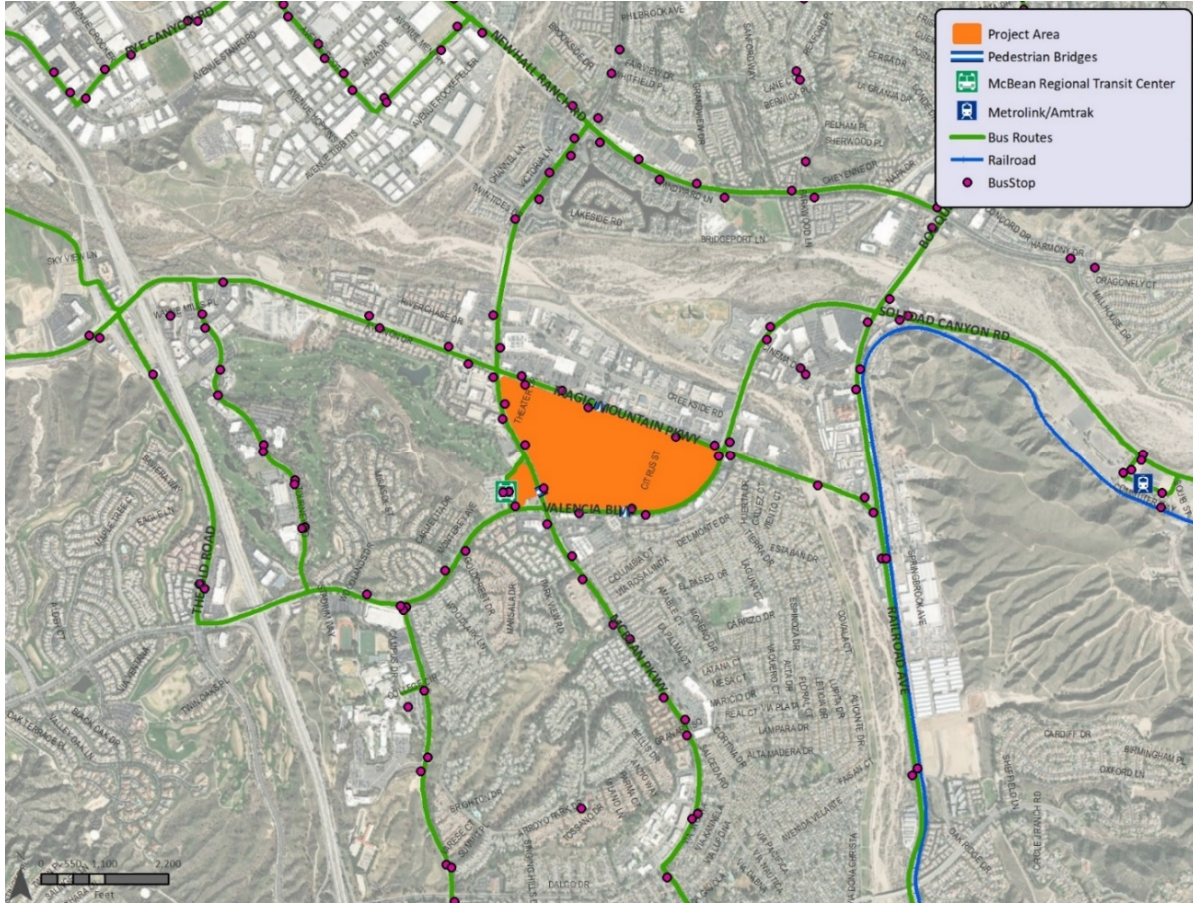
Below is a list of the corridors surrounding the planning area and the bus routes that provide service to and around the planning area:

- Magic Mountain Parkway – Between McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard, there are seven bus stops adjacent to the planning area serving Santa Clarita Transit Bus Routes 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, and 501.
- McBean Parkway – Between Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard, there are five bus stops adjacent to the planning area serving Santa Clarita Transit Bus Routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 14, 636, 791, 792, and 794.
- Valencia Boulevard – Between Magic Mountain Parkway and McBean Parkway, there are five bus stops adjacent to the planning area serving Santa Clarita Transit Bus Routes 5, 6, 12, 501, and 757.

In addition to the bus stops along the planning area perimeter, the area is served by the McBean Regional Transit Center, located near the northwest corner of the intersection of McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard. The McBean Regional Transit Center is a transfer station where passengers can transfer between multiple bus routes, including Santa Clarita Transit local routes serving the Santa Clarita Valley, Santa Clarita Transit commuter routes serving downtown Los Angeles, Century City, Warner Center, and North Hollywood, and regional transit operator routes serving Bakersfield and Kern County. It is also a park-and-ride location with 289 parking spaces.

Regional rail transit is provided by the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line. The nearest station is the Santa Clarita station, approximately 1.5 miles east of the planning area. Santa Clarita Transit Bus Routes 5, 6, 501, 796, 797, and 799 connect the planning area to the Metrolink station.

Figure 4.11-4. Transit Service



4.11.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Titles I, II, III, and V of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) have been codified in Title 42 of the United States Code, beginning at Section 12101. Title III prohibits discrimination based on disability in “places of public accommodation” (businesses and nonprofit agencies that serve the public) and “commercial facilities” (other businesses). The regulation includes Appendix A through Part 36 (Standards for Accessible Design), establishing minimum standards for ensuring accessibility when designing and constructing a new facility or altering an existing facility. Examples of key guidelines include detectable warnings for pedestrians entering traffic where there is no curb, a clear zone of 48 inches for the pedestrian travel way, and a vibration-free zone for pedestrians.

STATE

Complete Streets Act (Assembly Bill 1358)

Assembly Bill 1358, the Complete Streets Act (Government Code Sections 65040.2 and 65302), was enacted in September 2008. As of January 1, 2011, the law requires cities and counties to ensure that plans account for the needs of all roadway users when updating the part of a local general plan that addresses roadways and traffic flows. Specifically, the legislation requires cities and counties to ensure that local roads and streets adequately accommodate the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists.

At the same time, the California Department of Transportation, which administers transportation programming for the State, unveiled a revised version of Deputy Directive 64 (DD-64-R1 October 2008), an internal policy document that now explicitly embraces Complete Streets as the policy covering all phases of State highway projects, from planning to construction to maintenance and repair.

Senate Bill (SB) 743

On September 27, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 743, which went into effect in January 2014. SB 743 added Section 21099 to the Public Resources Code, which directed the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to prepare guidelines establishing criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts that promote the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses. SB 743 and Public Resources Code Section 21099 further require that, upon certification of such guidelines, “automobile delay, as described solely by level of service or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment” pursuant to CEQA.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3

Recent changes to the CEQA Guidelines include the adoption of Section 15064.3, *Determining the Significance of Transportation Impacts*. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 establishes VMT as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. Generally, land use projects within 0.5 miles of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high quality transit corridor should be presumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact.¹ Projects that decrease VMT in the Project Area compared to existing conditions should be presumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact. A lead agency has discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology to evaluate VMT, including whether to express the change in absolute terms, per capita, per household, or in any other measure. A lead agency may also use models to estimate VMT and may revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence.

¹ “Major transit stop” is defined in PRC Section 21064.3 as a site containing an existing rail transit station, a ferry terminal served by either a bus or rail transit service, or the intersection of two or more major bus routes with a frequency of service interval of 15 minutes or less during the morning and afternoon peak commute periods. “High-quality transit corridors” are defined in PRC Section 21155 as a corridor with fixed-route bus service with service intervals no longer than 15 minutes during peak commute hours.

REGIONAL**Southern California Association of Governments**

The City of Santa Clarita is located within the jurisdiction of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). In September 2020, the SCAG Regional Council adopted the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2020-2045 RTP/SCS), a long-range visioning plan that incorporates land use and transportation strategies to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern while meeting GHG reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board.

The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS's "Core Vision" prioritizes the maintenance and management of the region's transportation network, expanding mobility choices by co-locating housing, jobs, and transit and increasing investment in transit and complete streets. Strategies to achieve the "Core Vision" include, but are not limited to, Smart Cities and Job Centers, Housing Supportive Infrastructure, Go Zones, and Shared Mobility. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS intends to create benefits for the SCAG region by achieving regional goals for sustainability, transportation equity, improved public health and safety, and enhancement of the region's overall quality of life. These benefits include, but are not limited to, a 5 percent reduction in VMT per capita, a 9 percent reduction in vehicle hours traveled, and a 2 percent increase in work-related transit trips.

LOCAL**Transportation Analysis Guidelines**

In response to SB 743 and in compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 discussed above, the City adopted new transportation impact thresholds and guidance for preparing transportation assessments in the City (i.e., the TAU). This guidance includes a set of VMT screening criteria for projects in the City. These VMT screening criteria are consistent with those identified in OPR's Technical Advisory,² which was developed specifically to help aid lead agencies with SB 743 implementation. The City's methodology and thresholds are further discussed in Section 4.11.3, Thresholds of Significance, below.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan Circulation Element

The Circulation Element plans for the continued development of transportation systems that are consistent with regional plans, local needs, and the community's character. The Circulation Element identifies and promotes a variety of techniques for improving mobility, including development of alternative travel modes and support facilities; increased efficiency and capacity of existing systems through management strategies; and coordination of land use planning with transportation planning by promoting concentrated, mixed-use development near transit facilities. The Circulation Element identifies the following seven areas with specific goals, objectives, and policies that define the City's transportation priorities:

1. Multi-Modal Circulation Network

² Governor's Office of Planning and Research, *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*, 2018.

2. Street and Highway System
3. Vehicle Trip Reduction
4. Rail Service
5. Bus Transit
6. Bikeways
7. Pedestrian Circulation

The Circulation Element further enumerates a number of objectives, goals, and policies in support of each area.

Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (NMTP)

The NMTP was adopted in September 2020 and guides future pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, policy, and planning in the City. It designates an ambitious 237-mile active transportation system and introduces policies, programs, projects, and other recommendations to create an environment that increases, improves, and enhances active transportation in the City and makes walking and biking a safe, healthy, and enjoyable means of transportation and recreation. Among the elements of the NMTP are several innovations in active transportation planning for Santa Clarita, including recommendations for Bicycle Boulevards and Class IV Separated Bikeways. The NMTP includes an implementation strategy that details the sequencing and priorities for the selection and installation of new pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

4.11.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to transportation are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. A project would have a significant impact related to transportation if it would:

Threshold 4.11(a): *Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; or*

Threshold 4.11(b): *Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b); or*

Threshold 4.11(c): *Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment); or*

Threshold 4.11(d): *Result in inadequate emergency access.*

SANTA CLARITA VMT IMPACT THRESHOLD

Threshold 4.11(b) above pertains to a project's VMT impact. The City adopted the OPR Technical Advisory recommended thresholds of significance for land use projects as part of the City Guidelines. The City's VMT thresholds compare the existing, or baseline, City VMT to a project's VMT. Specifically, the City compares the City VMT to a project's VMT to determine if the project

is generating VMT that is more or less efficient (i.e., lower or higher) than the average citywide VMT under existing conditions. For a land use project or plan, a VMT impact would occur if:

- The plan’s generated Total VMT per Service Population exceeds a level of 15 percent below existing Total VMT per Service Population in the City.

The City Baseline VMT and VMT impact thresholds for land use plans in Santa Clarita are presented in **Table 4.11-2**. The VMT impact threshold of 32.7 Total VMT per Service Population represents a 15 percent reduction from the City Baseline VMT. If the proposed Project results in a Total VMT per Service Population above 32.7, this would indicate a significant VMT impact.

**TABLE 4.11-2
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA VMT & VMT IMPACT THRESHOLD FOR LAND USE PLANS**

VMT Metrics	Year 2023	
	City Baseline VMT	VMT Impact Threshold ¹
<i>Total VMT per Service Population</i>	38.5	32.7

Note:

1. The VMT Impact Threshold is 15% below the City Baseline VMT.

CUMULATIVE VMT THRESHOLD

A project that reports VMT on a per capita basis (residential projects), on a per employee basis (office projects), or on a per service population basis (land use plans) and does not have a significant VMT impact compared to baseline conditions, would also not have a cumulative impact as long as it is aligned with long-term environmental goals and relevant plans. Conversely, a project that is found to have a significant VMT impact under baseline conditions would also have a cumulative VMT impact.

4.11.4 PROJECT TRANSPORTATION DESIGN FEATURES

The Santa Clarita Town Center Specific Plan is a long-range land use plan that establishes the City’s vision for the Specific Plan Area as a regional destination incorporating a balanced mix of uses. The Specific Plan proposes the redevelopment of the existing Valencia Town Center into a mixed-use development composed of multifamily residential, commercial, office, retail, dining, and entertainment uses. The Project also includes accessibility improvements to the adjacent Santa Clarita McBean Regional Transit Center and provides greater connectivity to Santa Clarita’s bicycle facilities, also referred to as paseos. The following subsections describe the design features of the roadway, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure proposed for the site.

Roadway Design Features

The Project proposes the construction of a new “central spine unification” roadway through the center of the site connecting McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard, via an easterly extension of Town Center Drive. On Magic Mountain Parkway, the Project would utilize the two existing un-signalized entrances and one signalized entrance at Town Center Drive and would also introduce one additional signalized entrance between Town Center Drive and Citrus Street. The new entrance point would form a north–south/southwest connection to the “central spine unification” roadway. The existing entrance points on Valencia Boulevard and McBean Parkway would also continue to be used.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Design Features

The Project would leverage and expand existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure around the Project Site. The existing pedestrian bridges across Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard would be used as entrance points to the site’s internal pedestrian and bicycle network. The existing pedestrian bridge on McBean Parkway is envisioned to be either relocated to the south to improve access to the McBean Regional Transit Center or a second pedestrian bridge could be constructed to provide such improved access. The Project also includes at-grade pedestrian access points at the signalized driveways, including one on Valencia Boulevard to the southern-most area of the site, and one on McBean Parkway directly adjacent to the proposed internal “central spine unification” roadway. This new roadway and Citrus Street would also include pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to provide internal circulation and access for those traveling through the site. Additional pedestrian and bicycle circulation is dispersed throughout the site to form connections between the different areas and uses.

4.11.5 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

The following analyses were conducted in response to the four thresholds listed in Section 4.11.3.

Threshold 4.11(a): *Would the Project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?*

Impact Analysis

The proposed Project plans for the redevelopment of an existing commercial mall and surrounding area into a mixed-use town center, with multifamily residential and various commercial uses. The site is served by existing transportation networks and services and governed and planned according to a wide range of transportation plans, policies, regulations, and programs. Analysis of the consistency of the Project with State, regional, and local plans addressing the circulation system is provided below. As described below, the Santa Clarita Town Center Specific Plan is consistent with State, regional, and local adopted plans and programs.

State

The Project’s goals are creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City’s General Plan and implements the Housing Element. These goals are in alignment with SB 375, SB 743, and AB 1358 which seek to reduce the number of trips made by driving, reduce GHG emissions, encourage alternative modes of travel, and ensure the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists are met.

The Project also complies with two State parking requirements. The first, AB 1317 enacted in October 2023, requires the owner of a qualifying residential property to unbundle parking from the price of rent. Unbundled parking is defined as “the practice of selling or leasing parking spaces separate from the lease of the residential use” (AB-1317, Chapter 757, 2023). Any multifamily housing units built to implement the Specific Plan are considered a “qualifying residential property”

because 1) they would be issued a certificate of occupancy on or after January 1, 2025, 2) they are expected to consist of 16 or more residential units in each multifamily housing complex, and 3) the site is located in Los Angeles County. The second State parking requirement, AB 2097 enacted in September 2022, prohibits a public agency from imposing parking minimums for projects located within one-half mile of public transit. As discussed in further detail in Threshold 4.11(b), the Project Site is located within one-half mile of the McBean Regional Transit Center. Therefore, the Project does not impose any minimum parking requirements on future development.

Regional

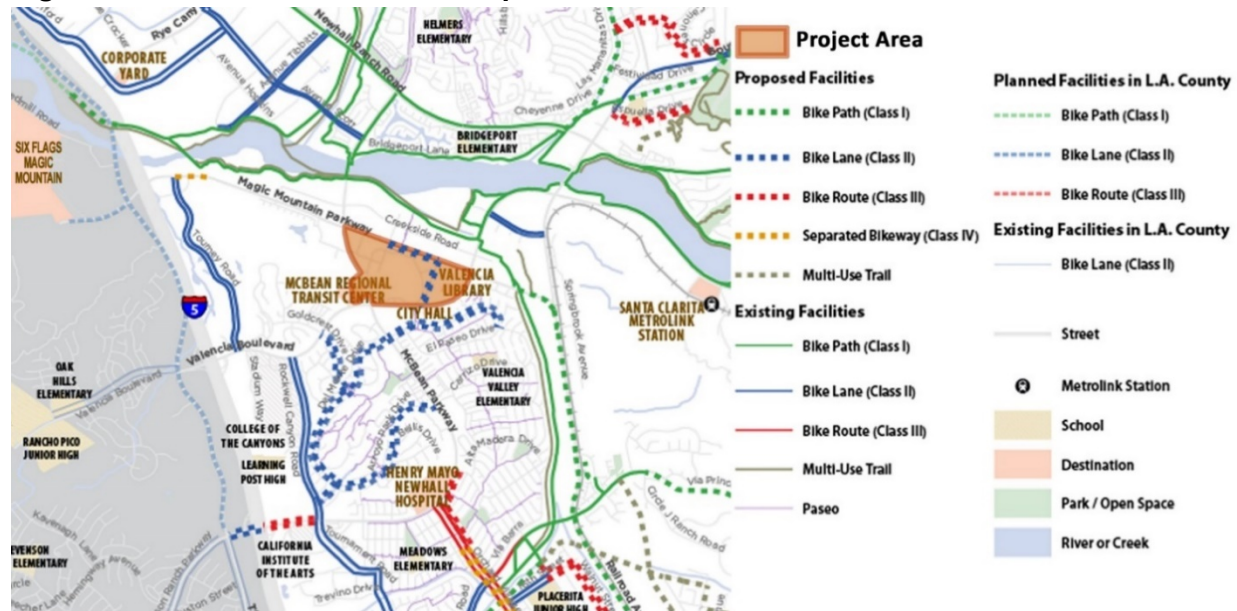
Similar sustainability goals are embedded in SCAG's 2020-20245 RTP/SCS. The plan's "Core Vision" prioritizes the maintenance and management of the region's transportation network, expanding mobility choices by co-locating housing, jobs, and transit and increasing investment in transit and complete streets. The Project proposes high-density housing and employment opportunities near the McBean Regional Transit Center which connects Santa Clarita to the greater Los Angeles region. This centrally located site in the City would help to meet the regional goals set out by the SCAG RTP/SCS.

Local

The Santa Clarita General Plan's Circulation Element lists goals to reduce VMT and policies dedicated to the improvement of the City's Multi-Modal Circulation Network, Bus Transit, Bikeways, And Pedestrian Circulation. Additionally, the NMTP has recommendations to create an environment that increases, improves, and enhances active transportation in the City and makes walking and biking a safe, healthy, and enjoyable means of transportation and recreation. The NMTP recommends the installation of Class II Bike Lanes on Citrus Street through the Specific Plan Area and on Magic Mountain Parkway along a portion of the northern boundary of the Specific Plan Area (see **Figure 4.11-5**). The proposed Specific Plan would accomplish the intent of the NMTP in the Specific Plan area by providing bicycle connections through the site within the alignment shown in the NMTP or by providing a more direct alignment through the property, thus improving the regional connection to the Project Area for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Project proposes connectivity improvements to the City's Multi-Modal Circulation Network and identifies potential future bus stop locations to serve the Project Site and reduce VMT.

Since the Proposed Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, the Project would result in a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

Figure 4.11-5. Non-Motorized Transportation Plan



Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to conflicts with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system per Threshold 4.11(a) were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to conflicts with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system per Threshold 4.11(a) were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4.11(b): *Would the Project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?*

Impact Analysis

The following subsections describe the evaluation of potential VMT impacts as required by the CEQA Guidelines and the City's TAU.

Screening Criteria for VMT Analysis

As a first step in determining the potential impact to VMT, the City has adopted screening criteria that can be used to “screen” out projects from VMT analysis. Projects meeting the VMT screening criteria are deemed to have a less than significant impact and no further VMT analysis is necessary. The screening criteria for projects is described below in **Table 4.11-3**. For a mixed-use project where only one land use component meets the screening criteria (e.g., locally serving retail or affordable housing), only those components of the project are screened from VMT analysis and the other components of the project must be analyzed. For land use projects, screening criteria numbers one and four in **Table 4.11-3** apply to the entire project, whereas numbers two, three, and five apply only to the relevant land use component.

**TABLE 4.11-3
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA PROJECT SCREENING CRITERIA**

Screening Categories	Project Requirements to Meet Screening Criteria
1. Project Size	A project that generates 110 or fewer daily trips.
2. Locally Serving Retail	A project that has locally serving retail uses that are 50,000 square feet or less, including specialty retail, shopping center, grocery store, pharmacy, financial services/banks, fitness center or health club, restaurant, and café. If the project contains other land uses, those uses need to be considered under other applicable screening criteria.
3. Project Located in a Low VMT Area	A residential or office project that is located in an area that is already 15% below the City's Baseline VMT.
4. Transit Proximity	<p>A project that is located within a half-mile of a Major Transit Stop or within a half-mile of a bus stop with service frequency of 15 minutes or less during commute periods. In addition, the project should have the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.75 or greater - Is consistent with the applicable SCAG SCS (as determined by the City) - Does not provide more parking than required by the City - Does not replacing affordable housing units
5. Affordable Housing	A residential project that provides affordable housing units; if part of a larger development, only those units that meet the definition of affordable housing satisfy the screening criteria.
6. Transportation Facilities	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.

Source: Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita, City of Santa Clarita, May 2020.

Screening Evaluation

The VMT screening criteria were applied to the proposed TCSP to determine if the Project would potentially have a VMT impact. The screening criteria and their applicability to the Project are described below.

Screening Criteria 1: Project Size

Land uses that generate fewer than 110 daily trips are presumed to have a less than significant VMT impacts absent substantial evidence to the contrary. Since the daily trip generation of the proposed TCSP exceeds the number of daily trips (up to 110 trips), the Proposed Project does not meet this screening criteria.

Screening Criteria 2: Locally Serving Retail

The retail portion of commercial or mixed-use projects with locally serving retail uses, defined as retail uses less than 50,000 square feet, are presumed to have less than significant VMT impacts, absent substantial evidence to the contrary. Since the retail uses on the Project Site exceed 50,000 square feet, the Proposed Project does not meet this screening criteria.

Screening Criteria 3: Low VMT Area

Residential and office projects located within a low VMT generating area may be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. Since this screening criteria only applies to residential and office projects and the Project is proposing a mix of land uses, the Project does not meet this screening criteria.

Screening Criteria 4: Transit Proximity

Projects located in a transit priority area (TPA) may be screened out from conducting a VMT analysis because they are presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. TPAs are defined in the OPR Technical Advisory as a one-half mile radius around an existing or planned major transit stop or an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor.

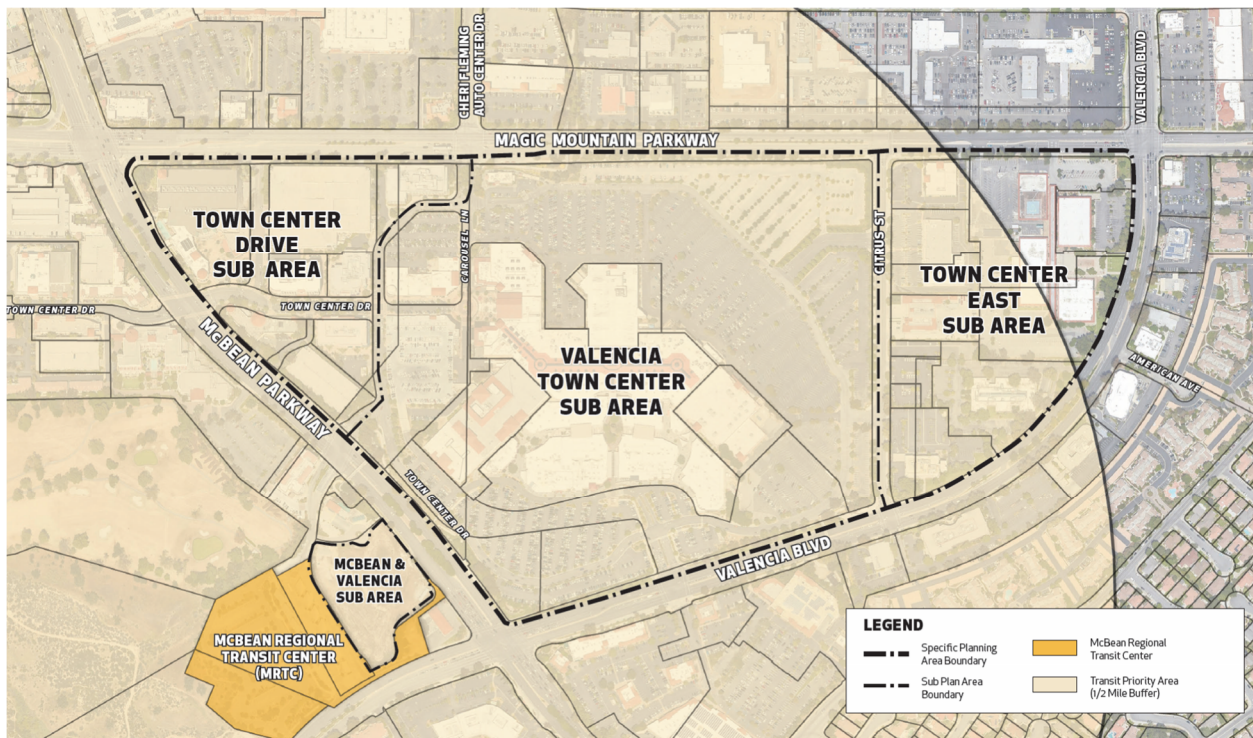
The City of Santa Clarita identified and adopted areas of the City that meet the criteria of a TPA as part of their TAU. The City's TAU identified the McBean Regional Transit Center as a major transit stop resulting in the area within a one-half mile radius of the Transit Center to qualify as a TPA. As shown in **Figure 4.11-6**, the substantial majority of the TCSP is within a one-half mile radius of the McBean Regional Transit Center. Therefore, and since the TCSP promotes multi-modal transportation and circulation with improved access to the Transit Center, the City has determined that the Proposed Project meets the definition of being located in a TPA pursuant to the City's TAU. Furthermore, the only portion of the TCSP that is beyond the one-half mile radius is a part of the existing Los Angeles County government center, which is currently a high-volume trip generator serving the northern Los Angeles County region; should this area redevelop at some point in the future, it is likely that the future use would generate more local travel demand, thus resulting in shorter travel distances than the current uses.

For a project to qualify for transit proximity screening, several additional criteria need to be met. Each of these additional criteria are summarized below.

- First, the project must have a FAR that is greater than 0.75. For the Proposed Project, all three potential buildout scenarios exceed this FAR minimum. The low buildout scenario has a FAR of 0.8, the full buildout scenario has a FAR of 0.97, and the high buildout scenario has a FAR of 1.07. Therefore, the Project meets this requirement.
- Second, the Project must be consistent with the SCAG RTP/SCS as determined by the City. Table 4.8-1, 2020-2024 RTP/SCS Consistency Analysis, in Section 4.8, Land Use and Planning, provides a detailed analysis of the Project's consistency with the SCAG RTP/SCS. In summary, and as discussed under Threshold 4.11(a), the Project proposes high density housing and employment opportunities near the McBean Regional Transit Center which connects Santa Clarita to the greater Los Angeles region. This centrally located site in the City would help to meet the regional goals set out by the SCAG RTP/SCS to promote active transportation and increase transit accessibility. In addition, the Project would meet the SCS goal of providing more affordable housing in the region. Therefore, the Project meets this requirement.

- Third, the Project cannot provide more parking than required by the City. As discussed under Threshold 4.11(a), the Project is complying with State parking requirements that require qualifying residential properties to unbundle parking from the price of rent (AB 1317) and does not impose parking minimums (AB 2097). Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan does not provide more parking than currently required by the City of Santa Clarita. Therefore, the Project meets this requirement.
- Finally, the Project cannot replace affordable housing units with market-rate units. The Project Site currently has no residential units. In addition, the proposed TCSP includes provisions for 20 percent of the future residential uses within the Project Area to qualify as affordable housing. Therefore, the Project meets this requirement.

Figure 4.11-6: McBean Regional Transit Center Transit Priority Area



Since the Project Site qualifies as a TPA and the Project design features and land use characteristics meet the additional criteria required to qualify for transit proximity screening, the Project meets this screening criteria.

Screening Criteria 5: Affordable Housing

Affordable housing units proposed as part of a project may be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. Twenty percent of the housing units proposed by the Project are anticipated to qualify as affordable housing units. Therefore, the affordable housing component of the Project meets this screening criteria.

Screening Criteria 6: Transportation Facilities

Transportation facilities 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), may be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. As discussed under Threshold 4.11(a), the transportation design features of the Project would provide multimodal connections through the site, thus improving the regional connection to the Project Area for pedestrians and cyclists. Therefore, the proposed transportation facilities would result in reducing VMT and the Project meets this screening criteria.

The Proposed Project meets three VMT screening criteria: transit proximity for the entire Project Site, affordable housing for the affordable housing portion of the Project, and transportation facilities for the transportation improvements and new multimodal connections being proposed. Therefore, based on the City's adopted screening criteria, the Project is presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact and is screened out from further VMT analysis.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to VMT per Threshold 4.11(b) were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to VMT per Threshold 4.11(b) were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4.11(c): Would the Project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Threshold 4.11(c) considers whether a project would increase roadway hazards. An increase could result from existing or proposed uses or geometric design features. In part, the analysis reviews these and other relevant factors to determine if there is a conflict with applicable federal, State, and City Engineering Design Standards or other applicable roadway standards. The following subsections describe the potential hazards from the Project's design features and potential hazards from project construction.

Project Design Features and Potential Hazards

The Project would introduce new geometric design features to the existing roadway network, including an extended internal roadway and an additional signalized entrance between Town Center Drive and Citrus Street on Magic Mountain Parkway providing access to the Specific Plan Site. The proposed transportation network within the Project Site and proposed access points are consistent with the nature of the transportation network and roadways, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities in the study area. In addition, the proposed improvements would be designed in compliance with the applicable Engineering Design Standards and, per standard City procedures, would be reviewed and approved by the City of Santa Clarita Public Works Department prior to their construction. Since the Proposed Project would not result in an increase in roadway hazards

due to geometric design features, the Project would result in a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

Project Design Features and Potential Hazards from Project Construction

Temporary impacts to the traffic safety environment can occur during construction when heavy haul trucks, cement trucks, materials and equipment delivery trucks, construction worker vehicles, and other construction-related vehicles travel along freeways and the local transportation network. These construction-related trips can cause disruptions in traffic flows, reduced lane capacity, slowing in traffic movement, or otherwise interfere with traffic, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation. For projects in urban areas, such as this Project, construction activities can require the temporary or extended closure of adjacent traffic lanes, bicycle lanes, and/or sidewalks on surrounding streets to accommodate the operation of construction equipment, demolition, grading, excavation for utilities, and other activities. Additionally, construction activities in more urban areas often involve idling, parking, and/or queueing of construction vehicles within the public right-of-way which could potentially obstruct visibility and result in vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian safety issues. As a result, temporary construction-related impacts in rural and more urban areas could result in potentially significant impacts.

Preparation and implementation of the Construction Traffic and Access Management Plans would avoid construction-related safety hazards. The plan would be prepared by the individual project owners/applicants or their representatives and would be approved by the City of Santa Clarita Public Works to address construction traffic routing (e.g., detours and/or lane closures) and traffic control (e.g., with signage and construction flaggers), as well as vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian safety. The Construction Traffic and Access Management Plan would also be required to identify designated haul routes and construction staging areas, construction crew parking, emergency access provisions, traffic control procedures, and avoidance of traffic safety impacts during construction. Thus, the Construction Traffic and Access Management Plans would address temporary traffic impacts that could occur during construction of the TCSP. With the implementation of Construction Traffic and Access Management Plans, construction-related hazards would be a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to roadway hazards due to geometric design features were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to roadway hazards due to geometric design features were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4.11(d): Would the Project result in inadequate emergency access?

Threshold 4.11(d) considers any changes to emergency access resulting from a project. To identify potential impacts, the analysis reviews any proposed roadway design changes and determines if they would potentially impede emergency access vehicles.

The Project's proposed roadway design changes would not result in a significant transportation impact to emergency access; rather the proposed roadway network is expected to improve access by providing additional access points to the Project Site and an internal roadway network connecting that would connect McBean Parkway and Citrus Avenue, and potentially to Valencia Boulevard. The proposed transportation facilities would improve circulation and access within the Specific Plan Area, allowing emergency vehicles to navigate more easily. In addition, the proposed improvements would be designed in compliance with the applicable Engineering Design Standards, which consider the turning radii required for emergency access vehicles and reviewed and approved by City of Santa Clarita Public Works prior to their construction. Since the Proposed Project would not result in impacts to emergency access due to roadway design changes, the Project would result in a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to emergency access were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to emergency access were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.11.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

As described in OPR's Technical Advisory, VMT analyses are cumulative analyses by nature in that they evaluate impacts in terms of a change in citywide or regional VMT efficiency. A project that does not exceed VMT significance thresholds and is aligned with long-term environmental goals and relevant plans would have no cumulative impact distinct from the project impact. As discussed in Section 4.11.5, the Project would meet the City's VMT screening criteria and, thus, would have a less than significant VMT impact. In addition, the proposed TCSP is aligned with long-term environmental goals and relevant plans in that it provides for a mixed-use pedestrian friendly environment with a variety of multimodal transportation opportunities, including improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not considerably contribute to any significant cumulative impacts related to transportation.

Mitigation Measures

Cumulative impacts related to transportation were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Cumulative impacts related to transportation were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

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4.12 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates potential impacts to tribal cultural resources that may result from implementation of the Project. The analysis in this section is based on the results of consultation with the Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians conducted by the City of Santa Clarita (City) for the Project, pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as amended by Assembly Bill (AB) 52.

4.12.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

As described in Section 4.3, Cultural Resources, of this Draft EIR, prehistoric human land use for the Southern California region potentially dates as far back as approximately 12,000 years ago.

Horizon I, described as the Early Man Period, began with the arrival of the first inhabitants of the region approximately 12,000 BP to 6,000 BP. This period is characterized by the presence of nomadic and semi-nomadic hunter-gatherer groups who exploited coastal and inland environments for food and shelter. Many early sites were located on the shorelines of ancient lakes and marshes as well as along stream channels and estuaries. These groups appeared to be primarily big game hunters who followed large and medium-sized animals during seasonal rounds.

Horizon II, also known as the Millingstone Period (approximately 6,000 BP–1,000 BC) is based on the presence of utilized culinary tools. The hallmarks of the Millingstone Period are (1) extensive use of millingstone implements, such as portable manos and metates suggestive of hard seed processing and (2) core tools. The Millingstone period reflects increased sedentism, long-term habitation within an established settlement, and cultural adaptation toward the coastal and water perimeters along lakes, streams, lagoons, and estuaries. Subsistence strategies are diverse, such as seasonal rounds-based residential camps, during this period; some sites evince a greater reliance upon shellfish, small mammals, and birds, as well as plant resources, and less emphasis upon hunting and fishing.

Circa 5,000–4,500 BP, new forms of subsistence procurement and technology, increasing societal changes, and growing core settlements began to emerge throughout Southern California. Many Native American settlements were located in transitional ecological zones, which provided these groups with a broad spectrum of subsistence (e.g., land and sea mammals, fish, and acorns) without extensive migration, resulting in village-style communities surrounded by peripheral settlements.¹

Horizon III is identified as the Intermediate Period, a subsistence strategy shift within the Millingstone period that lasts from approximately 1,000 BC to 750 AD. During the latter part of

¹ Claude Warren, *Archaic Prehistory in the Western United States: Cultural Tradition and Ecological Adaptation on the Southern California Coast*, 1968, pp. 1-14; William Wallace, "Suggested Chronology for Southern California Coastal Archaeology," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 1955; Joseph Chertkoff & Kerry Kona Chertkoff, *The Archaeology of California*, 1984; Michael Moratto, *California Archaeology with New Introduction*, 2004.

the Millingstone period and throughout the Intermediate period, the mortar and pestle appear extensively in the archaeological record suggesting increased reliance upon the acorn as a dietary staple and a noticeable shift away from the hard seed exploitation of the earlier Millingstone period. Additionally, projectile point and faunal remains indicate increased land and sea exploitation as well as seasonal hunting and gathering subsistence strategies. The artifact assemblages of this period are diverse and include broad leaf-shaped blades, heavy stemmed projectile points in association with terrestrial and aquatic bone, antler and bone tools, asphaltum, steatite, the bow and arrow, and arrow shaft straighteners. These artifact types are suggestive of possible Shoshonean influence and immigration, as well as possible Hokan displacement or replacement or increasing socio-cultural complexity, such as trade.

Horizon IV, considered the Late Prehistoric period, began approximately 750 AD and terminated at the time of European contact. This period is characterized by greater population density and socio-cultural complexity. Beginning approximately 1500 BP, there is an increased use of the bow and arrow, bedrock mortars, and milling slicks, indicative of the transition from the Intermediate to the Late Prehistoric period, which continued to the contact period.

Since the bow and arrow was widely used during this period, there was a greater reliance upon fishing and sea mammal hunting. The artifact assemblages of this period tend to be more diverse and elaborate and include evidence of trade goods, which is indicative of increasing intricacy with respect to trade networks and social contact with other groups. The evidence includes small bird points, mortars and pestles, steatite ornaments, cogged stones, stone discs, perforated stone discs, circular shell fish hooks (nearer the coast), bone tools, bone and shell ornaments, asphaltum, steatite and shell beads, fire affected rock, and elaborate mortuary customs.

During the Late Prehistoric era (1,000–400 BP), regional differences throughout California fully developed, resulting in the tribal groups that are currently known.² Populations of these culturally distinct groups continued to rise along with territorially defined, sedentary settlement patterns. Resource exploitation, including fishing, intensified while large-scale hunting and gathering operations provided varied sources of subsistence. With growth and the development of trade networks, societies became highly stratified with hierarchies based upon wealth, occupation, and/or lineage. The increased subsistence intensification, sedentism, and complexity are documented in the archaeological record of the Gabrieleño people and their linguistically distinct Chumash neighbors to the west.³ Other Native American groups with similar advances of recorded complexity included the Gabrieleno Tongva, the Kizh people, the Kitnanemuk people, the Tataviam people, and the Vanyume people; the latter two groups, which have closer associations with the Project Area, are discussed in more detail below.

Historic

European explorers made sporadic visits into the general Los Angeles area during the sixteenth century. Extensive Spanish interaction with the Gabrieleño began in 1769, when Gaspar de Portolá led an overland expedition from San Diego across Southern California. The expedition party traveled through the San Fernando Valley to Newhall, the Castaic Junction area, down the

² William Wallace, "Suggested Chronology for Southern California Coastal Archaeology," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 1955.

³ Joseph Chertkoff & Kerry Kona Chertkoff, *The Archaeology of California*, 1984; Michael Moratto, *California Archaeology with New Introduction*, 2004.

Santa Clara River, and north to Monterey. The trail became known as the El Camino Viejo (The Old Road).⁴

The goal of the Spanish colonization effort was not only to create local populations of settling peasants and merchants but also to include native peoples who already occupied the region into those populations. In order to incorporate the indigenous tribes, efforts were made to educate them and convert them to Christianity, which led to religious missions in becoming the cornerstone of colonization.⁵ To support the Spanish settlements, missions did not just attempt to convert California Indians but also used them to work on the farms and ranches present on mission grounds. Many of the Gabrieleño were gradually forced to move to the San Gabriel or San Fernando Missions to provide labor, and many of the Native Americans living on the coastal plains and inland valleys at the time were also transported here, though small groups did escape this confinement.⁶

The forced interaction with the Spanish marked the beginning of the decline of the indigenous population, especially as the local population suffered from the European epidemics. By 1800, the original Gabrieleño villages were empty and the Gabrieleños and other Native Americans provided much of the labor for the European ranches, farms, and communities.⁷ During this time, only fragmentary ethnographic information was recorded.⁸

The Mexican period began when Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, and, at the same time, the mission system began to break down. Around 1834, the mission system of Alta California began to undergo secularization; although the goal was to return land to the Native Americans that occupied the mission properties, in actuality, most Native Americans were put to work on ranchos or dispersed to interior lands of the state.

California experienced a period of thriving ranchos between the years of 1821 through 1848.⁹ In 1939, the San Fernando Mission, which consisted of the western Santa Clarita Valley and portions of Ventura County, was granted by the governor to Lieutenant Antonio del Valle—a decision that angered the Native Americans (stated in local literature as the Tataviam) who were expecting this land to be returned to their ownership.

American military forces were present within California during the summer of 1846 as a result of the Mexican American War. Mexican resistance deteriorated, and the United States occupied Mexico City in 1848, marking the beginning of the American period (1848 to present).¹⁰

In 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican American War. Although the treaty required the U.S. to grant citizenship to the Native Americans of former Mexican territories, the state of California refused to grant Native American protections, and did not declare Native Californians to be citizens until 1917.

⁴ City of Santa Clarita, One Valley One Vision Draft Program EIR, September 2010

⁵ Joseph Chartkoff and Kerry Kona Chartkoff, *The Archaeology of California*, 1984.

⁶ Lowell J. Bean & Charles R. Smith, *Handbook of North American Indians* Vol. 8: *California*, 1978, pp. 538-549.

⁷ Lowell J. Bean & Charles R. Smith, *Handbook of North American Indians* Vol. 8: *California*, 1978, pp. 538-549.

⁸ Blake Gumprecht, *The Los Angeles River: Its Life, Death, and Possible Rebirth*, 1999.

⁹ Kevin Starr, *California: A History*, 2005; R.J. Wlodarski, "A Phase 1 Archaeological Study for the New Studio Project Subsequent EIR," Culver City, County of Los Angeles, California, 1998.

¹⁰ U.S. Congress, *The Statutes at Large, Treaties, and Proclamations, of the United States of America* from December 5, 1859 to March 3, 1863, Acts of the Thirty-seventh Congress of the United States, Statute II—1861-62, 1863.

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Since physical borders did not exist between tribes and other entities, the Santa Clarita Valley and surrounding areas included many tribal groups, including the Tataviam and the Vanyume. When the Spanish arrived, the Tataviam occupied various locations in the Santa Clarita Valley, including the Santa Clara River Valley and areas northward to the southern Antelope Valley. However, other Native American culture groups, including the Chumash to the west and the Gabrieliño/Tongva/Kizh Nation to the south and southeast, also consider this area as part of their territory.

At the time of European contact, Tataviam territory may have ranged east of Piru, within the entire upper Santa Clara River region, northwards to Pastoria Creek and east to Mount Gleason. Studies show that the Tataviam lived in socially complex hunter-gatherer groups and were in close contact with their Chumash neighbors to the east and Gabrieleño/Tongva neighbors to the south.¹¹ As with many Californian culture groups known as hunter/gatherers, the Tataviam lived in small villages and satellite camps near water sources originating in the local mountains, foothills, and adjacent desert areas—namely, within the upper regions of the Santa Clara River, extending over the Sawmill Mountains to the north, the southwestern areas of the Antelope Valley, and where Saugus, Agua Dulce, and Lake Elizabeth are located today. More specifically, Newhall is the general location of the Tataviam village *Tochonanga*, a name linguistically associated with the Late Prehistoric era Gabrieliño territories.¹²

Hunter/gatherer subsistence consisted primarily of plants and animals found in the foothills, such as acorns, seeds, berries, deer and rabbit. Seasonal settlement and resource exploitation rounds may have included natural spring areas, as well as the foothill creeks that drain into the Santa Clara River. These groups were also prolific lithic tool manufacturers and basket makers.

The Tataviam have been described as a remnant Takic language group, and the group in the Antelope Valley has been identified as a Serrano division of the Shoshonean. Originally, the anthropological literature referenced these groups as using the name that the Hokan-speaking Chumash people used: *Alliklik* or *l'alliklik*. Early twentieth century ethnographer Alfred Kroeber (1925) states that at some later point in their history, the name *Alliklik* was changed to the name Tataviam.¹³

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Project Site Conditions

As discussed in Section 2.2, Project Description, of this EIR, nearly the entire Specific Plan Area is completely urbanized. Ornamental vegetation exists throughout the Specific Plan Area in the form of planted street trees, landscaping, and maintained grass lawns and dividers. The only undeveloped portion of the Specific Plan Area is within Subarea 4. This area was previously developed with uses that have since been demolished/removed, and is entitled for a five-story hotel and freestanding restaurant.

¹¹ Harrick Eugene Hanks, *The Archaeology of the Vasquez Rocks: A Site Locality in the Upper Santa Clara River Valley, Los Angeles County, California*, 1971; Thomas Blackburn & John Bean Lowell, *Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 8: California, Kitanemuk*, 1978; Michael Moratto, *California Archaeology*, 1984.

¹² Bernice Eastman Johnston, *California's Gabrielino Indians*, 1962.

¹³ Alfred Kroeber, *A Handbook of the Indians of California*, 1925, republished 1976.

Background Research

As identified in Section 4.3, Cultural Resources, of this Draft EIR, a records search was conducted at the South Central Coastal Information Center for the Westfield Valencia Town Center Patios Connection Project in January 2019. The records search included the Patios Connection Project Site and a half-mile radius, which covers the entirety of the Specific Plan area. Based on that records search, no archaeological sites are recorded within the Specific Plan Area.

Assembly Bill 52 Consultation

Pursuant to the requirements of AB 52, as further described below, in January 2024, the City of Santa Clarita notified the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) of the Project. The FTBMI responded with information regarding the Project Area and requested mitigation measures for the inadvertent discovery of tribal cultural resources. According to the tribe's representative, the Specific Plan Area is within the ancestral territory of the FTBMI. Based on this information, the Specific Plan Area has been determined to be potentially sensitive for tribal cultural resources.

4.12.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

National Register of Historic Places

In federal law, historic property means any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. This term includes artifacts, records, and remains that are related to and located within such properties. In addition, the term includes properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization, and that meet the National Register criteria (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36 Section 800.16[[1]]). A NRHP eligible resource is a historic resource that meets the criteria of a historical resource but is not listed on the NRHP.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

The discovery of human remains is always a possibility during construction-related disturbances. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) was enacted November 16, 1990. It states that the "ownership or control of Native American cultural items," which include human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony, that are "excavated or discovered on Federal or tribal lands" after the law went into effect is held by the lineal descendants of the Native American (or Hawaiian) to whom the objects originally belonged. If the lineal descendants cannot be found, then their ownership is conferred to the "Indian" tribe or Native Hawaiian organization on whose land the objects or remains were discovered or that has the closest cultural affiliation.

STATE

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), similar in nature to the NRHP, is “an authoritative listing and guide to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens in identifying the existing historical resources of the state and to indicate which resources deserve to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change.”¹⁴ The CRHR was enacted in 1992 and its regulations are administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). The criteria for eligibility for the CRHR are based upon NRHP criteria but are specific to California’s history and cultural heritage. Certain resources are determined to be automatically included in the CRHR, including California properties formally determined eligible for listing, or already listed in, the NRHP.

A resource eligible for the CRHR must meet one of the four criteria and retain enough of its historic character or appearance (integrity) to be recognized as a historical resource and convey the reason for its significance. These four criteria, which are similar to those of the NRHP for considering a resource to be significant, are as follows:

- 1) If the resource is associated with events which have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and historical heritage;
- 2) If the resource is associated with the lives of persons significant in California’s past;
- 3) If the resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value; or
- 4) If the resource yields, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

A historic resource that may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR. Additionally, the CRHR consists of resources that are listed automatically and those that must be nominated through an application and public hearing process. The CRHR automatically includes the following:

- California properties listed on the NRHP and those formally determined eligible for the NRHP;
- California Registered Historical Landmarks from No. 770 onward; and
- California Points of Historical Interest that have been evaluated by the OHP and have been recommended to the State Historical Resources Commission for inclusion on the CRHR.

Assembly Bill 52

Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 5097.94, 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3 require consultation with California Native American tribes early in the environmental review process. Among other things, these PRC sections establish a category of resources related to Native Americans, known as tribal cultural resources, that require consideration under CEQA. AB 52 requires the lead agency to notify any

¹⁴ California Public Resources Code, Section 5024.1(a).

California Native American tribes, who have requested notification and are traditionally or culturally affiliated with the project site's geographic area, of the project.

California Public Resources Code

Section 21074

PRC Sections 21074(a)(1) and (2) define tribal cultural resources as “sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe” that are either included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR or included in a local register of historical resources, or a resource that is determined to be a tribal cultural resource by a lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence. A tribal cultural resource is further defined by PRC Section 20174(b) as a cultural landscape that meets the criteria of PRC Section 20174(a) to the extent that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape. PRC Section 20174(c) provides that a historical resource described in PRC Section 21084.1, a unique archaeological resource as defined in PRC Section 21083.2(g), or a “nonunique archaeological resource” as defined in PRC Section 21083.2(h) may also be a tribal cultural resource if it conforms with the criteria of PRC Section 20174(a).

Section 21080

PRC Section 21080.3.1 requires that, within 14 days of a lead agency determining that an application for a project is complete, or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency provide formal notification to the designated contact, or a tribal representative, of California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project (as defined in PRC Section 21073) and who have requested in writing to be informed by the lead agency of projects within their geographic area of concern.¹⁵ Tribes interested in consultation must respond in writing within 30 days from receipt of the lead agency's formal notification and the lead agency must begin consultation within 30 days of receiving the tribe's request for consultation.¹⁶

PRC Section 21080.3.2(a) identifies the following as potential consultation discussion topics: the type of environmental review necessary; the significance of tribal cultural resources; the significance of the project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources; project alternatives or appropriate measures for preservation; and mitigation measures. Consultation is considered concluded when either (1) the parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect on a tribal cultural resource if a significant effect exists; or (2) a party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached.¹⁷

In addition to other CEQA provisions, the lead agency may certify an EIR for a project with a significant impact on an identified tribal cultural resource, only if a California Native American tribe has requested consultation pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1 and has failed to provide comments to the lead agency, or requested a consultation but failed to engage in the

¹⁵ Public Resources Code, Section 21080.3.1(b) and (c).

¹⁶ Public Resources Code, Sections 21080.3.1(d) and 21080.3.1(e).

¹⁷ Public Resources Code, Section 21080.3.2(b).

consultation process, or the consultation process occurred and was concluded as described above, or if the California Native American tribe did not request consultation within 30 days.¹⁸

PRC Section 21082.3(c)(1) states that any information, including, but not limited to, the location, description, and use of the tribal cultural resources, that is submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the lead agency or any other public agency to the public without the prior consent of the tribe that provided the information. If the lead agency publishes any information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the consultation or environmental review process, that information shall be published in a confidential appendix to the environmental document unless the tribe that provided the information consents, in writing, to the disclosure of some or all of the information to the public.

Confidentiality does not apply to data or information that are, or become publicly available, already in lawful possession of the project applicant before the provision of the information by the California Native American tribe, are independently developed by the applicant or the applicant's agents, or are lawfully obtained by the project applicant from a third party that is not the lead agency, a California Native American tribe, or another public agency.¹⁹

Section 5097.98

PRC 5097.98 provides procedures in the event human remains of Native American origin are discovered during project implementation. PRC Section 5097.98 requires that no further disturbances occur in the immediate vicinity of the discovery, that the discovery is adequately protected according to generally accepted cultural and archaeological standards, and that further activities take into account the possibility of multiple burials. PRC Section 5097.98 further requires the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), upon notification by a County Coroner, designate and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) regarding the discovery of Native American human remains. Once the MLD has been granted access to the site by the landowner and inspected the discovery, the MLD then has 48 hours to provide recommendations to the landowner for the treatment of the human remains and any associated grave goods. In the event that no descendant is identified, or the descendant fails to make a recommendation for disposition, or if the landowner rejects the recommendation of the descendant, the landowner may, with appropriate dignity, reinter the remains and burial items on the property in a location that will not be subject to further disturbance.

California Health and Safety Code

California Health and Safety Code Sections 8010 and 8011 establish a state repatriation policy that is consistent with and facilitates implementation of NAGPRA. NAGPRA requires that museums and federal agencies document all Native American human remains within their collections, or uncovered on projects, as well as their cultural ties. These agencies must then notify any tribe that may be affiliated with the remains and provide the opportunity for their repatriation along with any associated cultural items (grave goods). The state version of the law, California NAGPRA, mandates publicly funded agencies and museums to repatriate human remains and associated cultural items to California Native American tribes, not just federally recognized tribes within California, and establishes penalties for noncompliance.

¹⁸ Public Resources Code, Section 21082.3(d)(2) and (3).

¹⁹ Public Resources Code, Section 21082.3(c)(2)(B).

LOCAL

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the Santa Clarita General Plan includes the following goals, objectives, and policies related to tribal cultural resources that would be applicable to the Proposed Project:

- Goal CO 5: Protection of historically and culturally significant resources that contribute to community identity and a sense of history.
 - Objective CO 5.3: Encourage conservation and preservation of Native American cultural places, including prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial sites on both public and private lands, throughout all stages of the planning and development process.
 - Policy CO 5.3.1: For any proposed general plan amendment, specific plan, or specific plan amendment, notify and consult with any California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the California Native American Heritage Commission that have traditional lands located within the City's jurisdiction, regarding any potential impacts to Native American resources from the proposed action, pursuant to State guidelines.
 - Policy CO 5.3.2: For any proposed development project that may have a potential impact on Native American cultural resources, provide notification to California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission that have traditional lands within the City's jurisdiction, and consider the input received prior to a discretionary decision.
 - Policy CO 5.3.3: Review and consider a cultural resources study for any new grading or development in areas identified as having a high potential for Native American resources and incorporate recommendations into the project approval as appropriate to mitigate impacts to cultural resources.

4.12.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Proposed Project related to tribal cultural resources are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. In accordance with these thresholds, a project would have a significant impact related to tribal cultural resources if it would:

Threshold 4.12(a): Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

- (i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or*
- (ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.*

4.12.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to tribal cultural resources considered the potential future improvements in the TCSP Area which are envisioned as creating a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes in the TCSP area which include programmable gathering spaces and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children's playgrounds, and parks.

The evaluation of the Project's potential to result in a significant impact on tribal cultural resources is based, in part, on previous studies conducted in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area, desktop review of the Specific Plan Area, and AB 52 consultation. As discussed in Section 4.12.1 above, tribal consultation between the City and the FTBMI occurred in January 2024. Appropriate mitigation measures were identified to avoid significant impacts to tribal cultural resources. These mitigation measures are presented below.

4.12.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

No Project Design Features are proposed with respect to tribal cultural resources.

4.12.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Threshold 4.12(a.i): Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is 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)?

Threshold 4.12(a.ii): Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is 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?

IMPACT ANALYSIS

As described in Section 4.12.1, Environmental Setting, above, the Specific Plan Area is fully developed, except for Subarea 4, which was previously developed and is entitled for development of a hotel and restaurant. Additionally, based on the records search, no archaeological resources have been recorded in the Project Site. However, based on AB 52 consultation with the FTBMI, the Specific Plan Area is potentially sensitive for tribal cultural resources. Future development within the Specific Plan Area could require ground-disturbing activities at greater depths than existing foundations, which has the potential to disturb previously unidentified tribal cultural resources. Therefore, without mitigation, ground-disturbing activities have the potential to result in significant impacts to tribal cultural resources.

MITIGATION MEASURES

To reduce potentially significant impacts to tribal cultural resources, the following mitigation measures are proposed for the Project:

- MM-TCR-1** In the Event of an Inadvertent Discovery: If cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior Professional Qualification Standards retained by the project applicant shall assess the find. Work on the portions of the project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA, the Project applicant shall retain a professional tribal monitor procured by the FTBMI to observe all remaining ground-disturbing activities including, but not limited to, clearing, grading, excavating, digging, trenching, plowing, drilling, tunneling, quarrying, leveling, driving posts, auguring, blasting, stripping topsoil or similar activity, and archaeological work.
- MM-TCR-2** Disposition and Treatment of Inadvertent Discoveries: The Lead Agency and/or Project applicant shall, in good faith, consult with the FTBMI on the disposition and treatment of any tribal cultural resource encountered during all ground disturbing activities.
- MM-TCR-3** In the Event of Inadvertent Discovery, Human Remains: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the

Project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code shall be enforced for the duration of the Project.

- a) Inadvertent discoveries of human remains and/or funerary object(s) are subject to California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and the subsequent disposition of those discoveries shall be decided by the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), as determined by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), should those findings be determined as Native American in origin.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-TCR-1 through MM-TCR-3 would reduce potential impacts to tribal cultural resources to a less than significant level.

4.12.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The Project’s impacts on tribal cultural resources were determined to be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-TCR-1 through MM-TCR-3. The mitigation measures reflect the City’s required compliance with AB 52 and the results of tribal consultation with the FTBMI. Additionally, given that impacts to tribal cultural resources are typically site-specific, impacts do not combine with the impacts of other projects to result in cumulative impacts unless there is a substantial resource that extends beyond the Project Site to adjoining land. Therefore, the Project’s impacts to tribal cultural resources would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant with mitigation.

MITIGATION MEASURES

As set forth above, the Project would implement Mitigation Measures MM-TCR-1 through MM-TCR-3 related to tribal cultural resources to reduce the Project’s impacts to less-than-significant levels.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

With the implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-TCR-1 through MM-TCR-3, the Project would not considerably contribute to cumulative impacts associated with archaeological resources, and such cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

4.13 UTILITIES AND SERVICES SYSTEMS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the existing conditions and capacities for utilities and service systems related to water, wastewater, dry utilities (electric, gas, and telecommunications), and solid waste. This section also analyzes the adequacy of existing supplies and infrastructure to meet Project demand and describes relevant plans and regulations.

Information and analyses presented in this section are based, in part, on the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency's (SCV Water) 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts' response letter to the Project's Notice of Preparation, dated December 20, 2023.

4.13.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

WATER

Water Supply

Water service to the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) Area would be provided by SCV Water, which was formed in January 2018, through the merger of the Castaic Lake Water Agency and its Santa Clarita Water Division, Newhall County Water District, and the Valencia Water Company. Following the merger, SCV Water now comprises three divisions, namely the Santa Clarita Water Division, the Newhall Water Division, and the Valencia Water Division, which have separate but interconnected distribution systems. These three divisions encompass nearly the entire City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County. The TCSP Area is specifically located in the Valencia Water Division water service area.¹

In total, SCV Water's service area has a population of 286,300 and covers approximately 195 square miles.² SCV Water also serves as a wholesale water provider to Los Angeles County Waterworks District (LACWWD) No. 36, which includes the unincorporated communities of Hasley Canyon and Val Verde. SCV Water's current service area includes a mix of residential, commercial, and light industrial land uses, mostly comprising single-family homes, apartments, condominiums, and several local shopping centers and neighborhood commercial developments. SCV Water serves approximately 73,542 municipal service connections.³

SCV Water's existing water resources include imported supplies, local groundwater, recycled water, and water from existing groundwater banking programs. Planned supplies include new groundwater production and additional banking programs. Imported water supplies consist primarily of State Water Project (SWP) supplies and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The sole source of local groundwater in the Santa Clarita Valley is the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin's East Subbasin, which is composed of two aquifer systems, the Alluvium and the Saugus Formation.⁴

The demand projections for the SCV Water service area have been estimated through 2050 in SCV Water's 2020 UWMP. SCV Water applied a land use-based approach, including information from a population-based approach, to reflect future planned development and evolving water

¹ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021, Figure 1-1, SCV Water Service Area.

² SCV Water, Your Water Agency, accessed January 23, 2024, <https://yourscvwater.com/who-we-are>.

³ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

⁴ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

usage patterns. The land use-based estimates were also determined in a land use analysis that compiled data from planned development contracts and the City’s One Valley, One Vision General Plan. **Table 4.13-1** summarizes the existing and planned supplies and projected demand in the service area (including agricultural, manufacturing, and industrial uses) during average/normal years, **Table 4.13-2** shows during single-dry years, and **Table 4.13-3** shows during multiple-dry years.⁵ The 2020 UWMP concluded that there are adequate existing and planned water supplies to meet the demands within the SCV Water service area under average/normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year conditions through 2050.⁶

**TABLE 4.13-1
EXISTING AND PLANNED SUPPLIES AND DEMANDS WITHIN THE SERVICE AREA
IN AVERAGE/NORMAL YEARS (ACRE-FEET)^a**

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Existing Supplies						
Groundwater	23,340	15,290	14,410	14,410	14,410	14,410
Recycled Water	450	450	450	450	450	450
Imported Water	67,220	64,310	64,017	62,107	62,107	62,107
Banking/Exchange Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Total Existing Supply</i>	<i>91,010</i>	<i>80,050</i>	<i>78,877</i>	<i>76,967</i>	<i>76,967</i>	<i>76,967</i>
Planned Supplies						
Groundwater	15,540	22,660	26,280	26,280	26,280	26,280
Recycled	1,849	3,696	5,091	6,498	7,499	8,511
Banking Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Total Planned Supply</i>	<i>17,389</i>	<i>26,356</i>	<i>31,371</i>	<i>32,778</i>	<i>33,779</i>	<i>34,791</i>
Total Existing and Planned Supplies	108,399	106,406	110,248	109,745	110,746	111,758
Total Projected Demand^b	76,400	81,700	88,700	93,600	97,500	101,000

Source: SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021, Table 7-2.

^a LACWWD #36 is included for purposes of providing regional completeness.

^b Demands include savings from plumbing code/standards and active conservation. Demands account for estimated increase from climate change.

**TABLE 4.13-2
EXISTING AND PLANNED SUPPLIES AND DEMANDS WITHIN THE SERVICE AREA
IN SINGLE-DRY YEARS (ACRE-FEET)^a**

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Existing Supplies						
Groundwater	23,930	22,960	22,220	22,220	22,220	22,220
Recycled Water	450	450	450	450	450	450
Imported Water	22,820	20,440	22,047	22,047	22,047	22,047
Banking/Exchange Programs	15,000	15,000	19,950	19,950	19,950	19,950
<i>Total Existing Supply</i>	<i>62,200</i>	<i>58,850</i>	<i>64,667</i>	<i>64,667</i>	<i>64,667</i>	<i>64,667</i>
Planned Supplies						
Groundwater	22,060	32,940	36,420	36,420	36,420	36,420
Recycled	1,849	3,696	5,091	6,498	7,499	8,511
Banking Programs	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<i>Total Planned Supply</i>	<i>23,909</i>	<i>46,636</i>	<i>51,511</i>	<i>52,918</i>	<i>53,919</i>	<i>54,931</i>
Total Existing and Planned Supplies	86,109	105,486	116,178	117,585	118,586	119,598
Total Projected Demand^{b,c}	81,000	86,600	94,000	99,200	103,400	107,100

Source: SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021, Table 7-3.

^a LACWWD #36 is included for purposes of providing regional completeness.

^b Demands include savings from plumbing code/standards and active conservation. Demands account for estimated increase from climate change.

^c Demands assume a 6 percent increase above normal demand during dry years.

⁵ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

⁶ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

**TABLE 4.13-3
EXISTING AND PLANNED SUPPLIES AND DEMANDS WITHIN THE SERVICE AREA
IN MULTIPLE-DRY YEARS (ACRE-FEET)^A**

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Existing Supplies						
Groundwater	25,180	24,330	23,500	23,200	23,200	23,200
Recycled Water	450	450	450	450	450	450
Imported Water	40,620	39,770	40,774	41,467	41,467	41,347
Banking/Exchange Programs	15,550	15,550	17,970	19,950	19,879	16,809
<i>Total Existing Supply</i>	<i>81,800</i>	<i>80,100</i>	<i>82,694</i>	<i>85,067</i>	<i>84,996</i>	<i>81,806</i>
Planned Supplies						
Groundwater	17,680	24,330	27,820	28,520	28,520	28,520
Recycled	1,823	3,603	5,045	6,498	7,499	8,389
Banking Programs	0	6,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<i>Total Planned Supply</i>	<i>19,503</i>	<i>33,933</i>	<i>42,865</i>	<i>45,018</i>	<i>46,019</i>	<i>46,909</i>
Total Existing and Planned Supplies	101,303	114,033	125,559	130,085	131,015	128,715
Total Projected Demand^{b,c}	77,830	83,620	90,570	95,780	99,670	102,870

Source: SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021, Table 7-4.

^a LACWWD #36 is included for purposes of providing regional completeness.

^b Demands include savings from plumbing code/standards and active conservation. Demands account for estimated increase from climate change.

^c Demands are weather adjusted for dry hydrology from 1988-1992.

Imported Water Supply

SCV Water's imported water supply consists primarily of SWP supplies, which were first delivered to SCV Water (Castaic Lake Water Agency at the time) in 1980. From the SWP, SCV Water also has access to water from Flexible Storage Accounts in Castaic Lake, which are planned for dry-year use but are not strictly limited as such. In addition to its SWP supplies, SCV Water has an imported supply from the Buena Vista Water Storage District and Rosedale Rio-Bravo Water Storage District in Kern County. Moreover, Newhall Land and Farming Company (also referred to as Five Point) has a water transfer supply from a source in Kern County that, for planning purposes, is anticipated to be available beginning in 2035.⁷

State Water Project Supplies

The SWP is the largest State-built, multipurpose water project in the country. It was authorized by the California State legislature in 1959, with the construction of most of the initial facilities completed by 1973. Today, the SWP includes 28 dams and reservoirs, 26 pumping and generating plants, and approximately 660 miles of aqueducts. The primary water source for the SWP is the Feather River, a tributary of the Sacramento River. Storage released from Oroville Dam on the Feather River flows down natural river channels to the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. While some SWP supplies are pumped from the northern Delta into the North Bay Aqueduct, the vast majority of SWP supplies are pumped from the southern Delta into the 444-mile-long California Aqueduct, which conveys water along the west side of the San Joaquin Valley to Edmonston Pumping Plant, where water is pumped over the Tehachapi Mountains, and the aqueduct then divides into the East and West Branches. SCV Water takes delivery of its SWP water at Castaic Lake, a terminal reservoir of the West Branch. From Castaic Lake, SCV Water delivers its SWP supplies to its customers through an extensive transmission pipeline system.⁸

⁷ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

⁸ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

The total planned annual delivery capability of the SWP was originally 4.23 million acre-feet (AF). The initial SWP storage facilities were designed to meet SWP contractors' water demands in the early years of the SWP, with the construction of additional storage facilities planned as demands increased. However, according to the 2020 UWMP, essentially no additional SWP storage facilities have been constructed since the early 1970s. SWP conveyance facilities were generally designed and have been constructed to deliver maximum amounts to all contractors. Today, the maximum SWP contractors' demands total approximately 4.17 million AF, of which 9,200 AF is contracted to SCV Water.⁹

Groundwater

The sole source of local groundwater for urban water supply in the Santa Clarita Valley is the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin, East Subbasin. The unadjudicated Basin comprises two aquifer systems, the Alluvium and the Saugus Formation. The Alluvium generally underlies the Santa Clara River and adjacent areas, including its several tributaries, to maximum depths of about 200 feet; the Saugus Formation underlies practically the entire Upper Santa Clara River area, to depths of at least 2,000 feet. There are also some scattered outcrops of Terrace deposits in the Basin that likely contain limited amounts of groundwater. However, since these deposits are located in limited areas situated at elevations above the regional water table and are also of limited thickness, they are of no practical significance as aquifers for municipal water supply; consequently, they have not been developed for any significant water supply in the Basin and are not included as part of the existing or planned groundwater supplies. The Basin is bordered on the north by the Piru Mountains, on the west by impervious rocks of the Modelo and Saugus Formations and a constriction in the alluvium, on the south by the Santa Susana Mountains, and on the south and east by the San Gabriel Mountains. The extent of the basin generally coincides with the outer extent of the Alluvium and Saugus Formation.¹⁰

Transfers and Exchanges

An opportunity available to SCV Water to increase water supplies is to participate in voluntary water transfer programs. Since the drought of 1987-1992, the concept of water transfer has evolved into a viable supplemental source to improve supply reliability. Up to 27 million AF of water are delivered for agricultural use every year. Over half of this water use is in the Central Valley, and much of it is delivered by, or adjacent to, SWP and Central Valley Project conveyance facilities. This proximity to existing water conveyance facilities could allow for the voluntary transfer of water to many urban areas, including SCV Water, via the SWP. Such water transfers can involve water sales, conjunctive use, groundwater substitution, and water sharing.¹¹

Water System

SCV Water also provides and maintains the water system throughout its service area. The SCV Water Zone 2A water pressure zone system currently serves the Project area. A 12-inch pipeline is located in Magic Mountain Parkway along a large portion of the northern boundary of the Project Site, and a 10-inch pipeline is located in Magic Mountain Parkway along the northeastern boundary of the Project Site. A 27-inch pipeline is located in Valencia Boulevard along the southern and eastern boundaries of the Project Site, and a 24-inch pipeline and 12-inch pipeline

⁹ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

¹⁰ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

¹¹ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

are located along the southern portion of the Project Site. A 24-inch pipeline and two 12-inch pipelines are located in McBean Parkway along the western portions of the Project Site. Additional pipelines are located throughout the Project Site.¹²

WASTEWATER

The City's Public Works Department manages the sanitary sewer collection system, which serves a population of approximately 213,000 residents and consists of about 450 miles of gravity sewer lines and 3 pump stations.¹³ The City contracts with the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (CSMD), managed by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (LACDPW), for the maintenance of its sanitary sewer system and field operations. The CSMD provides sewage collection services to over 2 million customers in unincorporated County areas, 37 member cities, and 2 contracted cities. The CSMD system includes over 4,600 miles of sanitary sewers, 155 pump stations, and 4 wastewater treatment plants.¹⁴

The City's local sewers discharge into the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD) facilities for conveyance, treatment, and disposal. The LACSD consists of 24 independent special districts serving about 5.5 million people in Los Angeles County. The LACSD's service areas cover approximately 850 square miles, containing 78 cities and unincorporated areas in the County. The LACSD operates and maintains the regional wastewater collection system, which includes approximately 1,400 miles of sewers, 49 pumping plants, and 11 wastewater treatment plants that transport and treat about half the wastewater in Los Angeles County.¹⁵

The Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District owns, operates, and maintains the wastewater conveyance system for the Santa Clarita Valley, which consists of a 34-mile long, interconnected network of trunk sewers and two pumping plants. The system conveys wastewater and wastewater solids from the local sewer lines to the Saugus and Valencia Water Reclamation Plants (WRPs). These facilities are interconnected to form a regional treatment system known as the Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System, which has an overall capacity of 28.1 million gallons per day (mgd) and currently processes an average recycled flow of 18.4 mgd.¹⁶ Local lines are sewers that, typically, convey wastewater from a user's property line to the trunk sewers. The City of Santa Clarita owns the local sewers within its borders, and Los Angeles County owns the majority of the local sewers located in unincorporated areas. The Los Angeles County CSMD operates and maintains these local sewers.¹⁷

The Saugus WRP is located at 26200 Springbrook Avenue in the City of Santa Clarita and provides primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment for 6.5 mgd of wastewater and serves approximately 80,000 people.¹⁸ The Valencia WRP is located at 28185 The Old Road in the

¹² Based on Google Earth imaging of SCV Water pipeline shape files.

¹³ City of Santa Clarita, Sewer System Management Plan, 2020.

¹⁴ Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Sewer Maintenance, About Us, accessed January 23, 2024, https://pw.lacounty.gov/SMD/SMD/Page_08.cfm.

¹⁵ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, "Our Agency," accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www.lacsd.org/about-us/who-we-are/our-agency>.

¹⁶ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, NOP Response to Town Center Specific Plan, dated December 20, 2023. See **Appendix A** of this Draft EIR.

¹⁷ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, "Wastewater Collection Systems, Santa Clarita Valley Collection System," accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www.lacsd.org/services/wastewater-sewage/facilities/wastewater-collection-systems#scvwrp>.

¹⁸ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, "Saugus Water Reclamation Plant," accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www.lacsd.org/services/wastewater-sewage/facilities/saugus-water-reclamation-plant>.

community of Valencia, in Los Angeles County unincorporated area, and provides primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment for 21.6 mgd of wastewater and serves approximately 200,000 people. The Valencia WRP also has solids processing facilities and processes all wastewater solids generated in the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (i.e., Saugus and Valencia WRPs).¹⁹

According to the LACSD, local sewer lines in the vicinity of the Project Site convey materials to LACSD trunk sewers. This includes the Valencia Trunk sewer in McBean Parkway north of Valencia Boulevard, which is 21 inches in diameter and has a capacity of 8.4 mgd and existing peak flow of 4.5 mgd (i.e., a remaining capacity of 3.9 mgd). In addition, the District #32 Main Trunk sewer in Magic Mountain Parkway at Valencia Boulevard is 21 inches in diameter and has a capacity of 5.4 mgd and an existing peak flow of 3.4 mgd (i.e., a remaining capacity of 2.0 mgd). Also, the District #32 Main Relief Trunk sewer in Magic Mountain Parkway at Citrus Drive is 36 inches in diameter and has a capacity of 34.8 mgd and an existing peak flow of 6.5 mgd (i.e., a remaining capacity of 28.3 mgd).²⁰

DRY UTILITIES

Electric Power

Southern California Edison (SCE) provides electric service to the City of Santa Clarita. SCE provides electric power to 15 million people in 50,000 square miles across Central, Coastal, and Southern California, including 180 incorporated cities and 15 counties. SCE monitors and maintains a vast electricity system that contains 125,000 miles of distribution and bulk transmission lines, 91,375 miles of distribution lines, and 1.4 million electric poles.²¹

SCE operates seven substations in the City. The nearest substation to the Project Site is the SCE Saugus substation, located 0.78 miles northwest along Magic Mountain Parkway. As the Project Site is currently developed, the Project Site is served by electricity infrastructure.

Natural Gas

The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) provides natural gas services to the City of Santa Clarita. SoCalGas provides natural gas to 21.1 million consumers with a service area of approximately 24,000 square miles throughout Central and Southern California.²²

SoCalGas manages the Honor Rancho Natural Gas Storage Facility, at 28300 Brady Parkway, located in the northwestern corner of the City, north of Newhall Ranch Road and east of I-5. Honor Rancho, which is composed of naturally occurring underground storage reservoirs, provides natural gas all year, especially during peak periods. SoCalGas operates numerous wells, natural gas compressors, a dehydration system, pipelines and various buildings, and ancillary equipment at the facility.²³ Within the City, SoCalGas service lines range in size from 2- to 34-inch mains. A 30-inch gas line runs along the Santa Clara River in the eastern portion of the City, while a 34-

¹⁹ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, "Valencia Water Reclamation Plant," accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www.lacsd.org/services/wastewater-sewage/facilities/valencia-water-reclamation-plant>.

²⁰ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, NOP Response to Town Center Specific Plan, dated December 20, 2023. See **Appendix A** of this Draft EIR.

²¹ SCE, "Who We Are," accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www.sce.com/about-us/who-we-are>.

²² SoCalGas, "Company Profile," accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www.socalgas.com/about-us/company-profile>.

²³ SoCalGas, "Honor Rancho Natural Gas Storage Facility," accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www.socalgas.com/stay-safe/pipeline-and-storage-safety/storage-facility-safety/honor-rancho>.

inch and a 22-inch main cross the river in the western portion of the City.²⁴ The nearest gas pipelines to the Project Site include a transmission line that runs along Magic Mountain Parkway just north of the Project Site.²⁵ As the Project Site is currently developed, the Project Site is served by natural gas infrastructure.

Telecommunication Facilities

Internet services that serve the Project Site and vicinity include AT&T and Comcast.

SOLID WASTE

The City of Santa Clarita's commercial franchised waste hauler is Burrtec Waste Industries. Burrtec provides waste collection services, including organics recycling, mixed recycling, and organic waste collection to all commercial and industrial locations within the City.²⁶ As of July 1, 2023, Burrtec is the waste services provider for all residential and commercial waste services in the City.

4.13.2 REGULATORY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

WATER

State

Urban Water Management Planning Act

In 1983, the California legislature enacted the Urban Water Management Planning Act. The requirements for UWMPs are found in California Water Code Sections 10610-10656 and 10608. Every urban water supplier that either provides over 3,000 AF of water annually or serves more than 3,000 urban connections is required to submit a UWMP. In the UWMPs, urban water suppliers must assess the reliability of water sources over a 20-year planning time frame, describe demand management measures and water shortage contingency plans, and discuss the use and planned use of recycled water. The Urban Water Management Planning Act states that every urban water supplier should make every effort to ensure the appropriate level of reliability in its water service sufficient to meet the needs of its various categories of customers during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. It is the act's intention to permit levels of water management planning commensurate with the numbers of customers served and the volume of water supplied.

Senate Bill 610

Senate Bill (SB) 610 (Water Code Section 10910[c][2]) makes changes to the Urban Water Management Planning Act to require additional information in UWMPs if groundwater is identified as a source available to the supplier. Required information includes a copy of any groundwater management plan adopted by the supplier, a copy of the adjudication order or decree for adjudicated basins, and if non-adjudicated, whether the basin has been identified as being overdrafted or projected to be overdrafted in the most current California Department of Water

²⁴ City of Santa Clarita, One Valley One Vision General Plan EIR, 2012.

²⁵ SoCalGas, Gas Transmission Pipeline Interactive Map, accessed January 23, 2024, <https://socalgas.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c85ced1227af4c8aae9b19d677969335>.

²⁶ City of Santa Clarita, "Commercial Waste Services," accessed January 23, 2024, <https://greensantaclarita.com/trash-and-recycling/commercial-trash-and-recycling/commercial-waste-services/>.

Resources (DWR) publication on that basin. If the basin is in overdraft, the plan must include current efforts to eliminate any long-term overdraft.

Assembly Bill 901

Assembly Bill (AB) 901 requires UWMPs to include information relating to the quality of existing sources of water available to an urban water supplier over given time periods and the manner in which water quality affects water management strategies and supply.

Assembly Bill 1420

Effective January 1, 2009, AB 1420 amended the Urban Water Management Planning Act to require that water management grants or loans made to urban water suppliers and awarded or administered by DWR, the State Water Resources Control Board, or the California Bay-Delta Authority or its successor agency be conditioned on implementation of the water demand management measures.

Senate Bill X7-7 (Chapter 4, Statutes of 2009)

SB X7-7, the Water Conservation Act of 2009, required the State to achieve a 20 percent reduction in urban per capita water use by December 31, 2020. The responsibility for this conservation falls to local water agencies, which must increase water use efficiency through promotion of water conservation standards that are consistent with the California Urban Water Conservation Council's best management practices. Each urban retail water supplier was also required to develop urban water use targets and an interim urban water use target by July 1, 2011, based on the alternative methods set out in the 2009 act. The agencies were required to meet those targets by the 2020 deadline. Based on its 2020 UWMP, SCV Water complied with its target reduction by December 31, 2020.²⁷

California Water Plan

The California Water Plan is the State's strategic plan for sustainably managing and development water resources. As required by Water Code Section 10005(a), the plan is updated every five years by the DWR and presents the status and trends of the State's water-dependent natural resources; water uses and supplies; and future agricultural, urban, and environmental water demands and supplies for a range of plausible climate and socioeconomic scenarios. The plan is intended to guide State investments in innovation and infrastructure and advance integrated watershed management. The DWR is finalizing the California Water Plan Update 2023 following a public review of the draft through October 19, 2023.²⁸

California Plumbing Code

Title 24, Part 5 of the California Code of Regulations establishes the California Plumbing Code, which sets efficiency standards, such as maximum flow rates, for all new federally regulated plumbing fittings and fixtures, including showerheads and lavatory faucets.

²⁷ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

²⁸ California Department of Water Resources, California Water Plan Update 2023, accessed January 23, 2024, <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/California-Water-Plan/Update-2023>.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014 comprised several Assembly and Senate Bills (AB 1739, SB 1168, and SB 1319), and requires local agencies to adopt groundwater management plans that are tailored to the resources and needs of their communities. The act requires formation of local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA) to assess local water basin conditions and adopt locally based management plans. Local GSAs were required to be formed by June 30, 2017. Over 260 GSAs in over 140 basins were formed by the SGMA's initial planning milestone. However, as the SGMA continues to be implemented and the priorities and boundaries of some basins change, new GSAs will be formed, and existing GSAs may want to reorganize, consolidate, or withdraw from managing in all or part of a basin.

Under Water Code Section 10720.7, GSAs responsible for high- and medium-priority basins that are subject to critical conditions of overdraft were required to adopt groundwater sustainability plans by January 31, 2020. Plans for high- and medium-priority basins that are not in critical overdraft were required to be adopted by January 31, 2022. The SGMA gives GSAs 20 years to implement plans and achieve long-term groundwater sustainability, and protect existing surface water and groundwater rights. The SGMA provides local GSAs with the authority to require registration of groundwater wells, measure and manage extractions, require reports, assess fees, and revise groundwater basin boundaries.

To meet the SGMA requirements, the Santa Clarita Valley GSA was formed in 2017 and developed a groundwater sustainability plan in 2022.²⁹

State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance

The State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) promotes the efficient use of water in new or retrofitted landscapes by establishing irrigation system efficiency standards, which include greywater usage, on-site stormwater capture, limiting the percentage of turf planted in new landscapes, and reporting on the implementation and enforcement of the ordinance by local agencies. The MWELo is also referenced by Title 24, Part 11, Chapters 4 and 5 of the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code. Local agencies are required to either adopt the MWELo or adopt a local ordinance, which must be at least as effective in conserving water as MWELo. Santa Clarita Municipal Code (SCMC) Section 17.51.030, as discussed below, implements the provisions of the MWELo at the local level.

Assembly Bill 1572

In October 2023, AB 1572 was approved to prohibit the use of potable water for the irrigation of non-functional turf on commercial, industrial, and institutional properties. Non-functional turf includes turf areas that are decorative and have no other functions, such as recreation. The prohibition also includes turf located on road medians and outside businesses that are not used for recreation. Areas that are exempt from the ban include functional grass, such as sports fields, picnic areas, cemeteries, and areas irrigated with recycled water. The ban will occur in stages for specific properties:

- 2027: Properties owned by local governments

²⁹ Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency, Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan, January 2022.

- 2028: Commercial and industrial properties
- 2029: Common areas of homeowners' associations
- 2031: Properties owned by local governments in disadvantaged communities or when state funding for turf replacement is available

The law can be enforced directly by the state or by any local public agency. Also, water suppliers are required to incorporate the irrigation limitations into their own local regulations, and can enforce the turf irrigation ban the same way they enforce other water use limitations or water service requirements.

Local

Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency 2020 Urban Water Management Plan

SCV Water adopted its 2020 UWMP in June 2021. The 2020 UWMP provides a broad perspective on a number of water supply issues and is a planning tool that generally guides water supply and resource management in the Santa Clarita Valley. The 2020 UWMP provides a detailed summary of present and future water resources and demands within the Santa Clarita Valley service area and assesses its water resource needs. The 2020 UWMP includes water supply and demand forecasts that are based on the population projections in the general plans of the jurisdictions within the SCV Water service area. Specifically, the 2020 UWMP provides water supply planning for a 30-year planning period in five-year increments and identifies water supplies needed to meet existing and future demands. In order to estimate demand through 2050, population and water use projections were made based upon existing land uses and planned land use development compiled for the service area, including the City of Santa Clarita and County of Los Angeles land use plans. The 2020 UWMP also discusses supply reliability planning, drought risk assessment, and the implementation of water conservation and recycling measures.

City of Santa Clarita Municipal Code Chapter 9.38, Water Conservation

SCMC Sections 9.38.010 through 9.38.050 establish water use guidelines and restrictions which reinforce the water use reduction goals established in the adopted Water Shortage Contingency Plan (1991). This chapter outlines both the appropriate water use restrictions in response to drought conditions and the continual water use practices that incorporate measures for efficient use of water in irrigation and indoor plumbing, including drought-tolerant landscaping and low-flow fixtures.

City of Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 17.51.030, Development Standards – Landscaping and Irrigation Standards

SCMC Section 17.51.030 sets forth the landscaping and irrigation standards for all new development in the City and codifies the implementation of the State MWEL. Specifically, the purpose of this section is to encourage the efficient use of water through appropriate low water-using plant materials, water-conserving irrigation design, and regular maintenance of landscaped areas. Furthermore, the intent of this section is to encourage the appropriate design, installation, maintenance, and management of landscapes so that water demand can be decreased, runoff can be retained, and flooding can be reduced without a decline in the quality or quantity of landscapes. Lastly, this section is intended to promote the conservation of potable water by

maximizing the use of recycled water and other water-conserving technology for appropriate applications.

City of Santa Clarita Plumbing Code

The City has adopted, by reference, the 2022 California Plumbing Code. Specifically, Title 20 of the SCMC sets forth the City's Plumbing Code with amendments to portions of the State Code.³⁰

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The applicable goals, objectives, and policies from the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element and Land Use Element are listed below.³¹

Conservation and Open Space Element – Water Resources

Goal CO 4: An adequate supply of clean water to meet the needs of present and future residents and businesses, balanced with the needs of natural ecosystems.

- Objective 4.1: Promote water conservation as a critical component of ensuring adequate water supply for Santa Clarita Valley residents and businesses.
 - Policy 4.1.3: Require low water use landscaping in new residential subdivisions and other private development projects, including a reduction in the amount of turf-grass.
 - Policy 4.1.5: Promote the use of low-flow and/or waterless plumbing fixtures and appliances in all new non-residential development and residential development of five or more dwelling units.
 - Policy 4.1.7: Apply water conservation policies to all pending development projects, including approved tentative subdivision maps to the extent permitted by law. Where precluded from adding requirements by vested entitlements, encourage water conservation in construction and landscape design.
- Objective CO 4.2: Work with water providers and other agencies to identify and implement programs to increase water supplies to meet the needs of future growth.
 - Policy 4.2.2: Require new development to provide the infrastructure needed for delivery of recycled water to the property for use in irrigation, even if the recycled water main delivery lines have not yet reached the site, where deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority.
 - Policy 4.2.6: Require that all new development proposals demonstrate a sufficient and sustainable water supply prior to approval.

Land Use Element – Environmentally Responsible Development

Goal LU 7: Environmentally responsible development through site planning, building design, waste reduction, and responsible stewardship of resources.

³⁰ The 2022 California Plumbing Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 5) is effective January 1, 2023.

³¹ City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Land Use Element, 2011; Conservation and Open Space Element, 2011.

- Objective LU 7.2: Ensure an adequate water supply to meet the demands of growth.
 - Policy 7.2.3: Require that all new development proposals demonstrate a sufficient and sustainable water supply prior to approval.
- Objective LU 7.4: Promote water conservation through building and site design.
 - Policy 7.4.1: Require the use of drought tolerant landscaping, native California plant materials, and evapotranspiration (smart) irrigation systems.
 - Policy 7.4.2: Require the use of low-flow fixtures in all non-residential development and residential development with five or more dwelling units, which may include but are not limited to water conserving shower heads, toilets, waterless urinals and motion-sensor faucets, and encourage use of such fixtures in building retrofits as appropriate.

Land Use Element – Public Facilities

Goal LU 9: Adequate public facilities and services, provided in a timely manner and in appropriate locations to serve existing and future residents and businesses.

- Objective LU 9.1: Coordinate land use planning with provision of adequate public services and facilities to support development.
 - Policy 9.1.1: Ensure construction of adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new development prior to occupancy.
 - Policy 9.1.2: Coordinate review of development projects with other agencies and special districts providing utilities and other services.

WASTEWATER

Federal

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit system was established as part of the Clean Water Act to regulate discharges from all point sources. Through this system, point sources of pollution must obtain a discharge permit from the proper authority, often a state, federal agency (e.g., US Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA]), a tribe, or a territory. The NPDES permits cover industrial and municipal discharges, storm sewer discharges in larger cities, stormwater associated with industrial activity, runoff from construction sites disturbing more than one acre, mining operations, and animal feedlots and aquaculture facilities above certain thresholds. For point source discharges, such as municipal sewage plants and industrial uses, each NPDES permit contains limits on allowable concentrations and mass emissions of pollutants contained in the discharge. Indirect dischargers, those that send wastewater into municipal sewer systems that flow into a sewage treatment plant, are not required to obtain NPDES permits. These indirect discharges are covered by another Clean Water Act program, called pretreatment.

State

California State Water Resources Control Board

The State Water Resources Control Board is responsible for ensuring the highest reasonable quality of waters of the State, while allocating those waters to achieve the optimum balance of

beneficial uses. As established by Title 23, Part 26 of the California Code of Regulations, the board oversees the Wastewater Treatment Plant Classification, Operator Certification, and Contract Operator Registration Program, which is designed to protect public health and the environment by providing for the effective operation of wastewater and water recycling treatment plants through the certification of wastewater treatment plant operators.

California Green Building Standards Code

The CALGreen Code is set forth in California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 11, and establishes voluntary and mandatory standards pertaining to the planning and design of sustainable site development and water conservation, among other issues. Section 4.303 of the CALGreen Code provides flow rates for indoor water fixtures. For example, all flush toilets are limited to 1.28 gallons per flush, wall-mounted urinals are limited to 0.125 gallons per flush, and all other urinals are limited to 0.5 gallons per flush. In addition, the maximum flow rate for showerheads is 1.8 gallons per minute (gpm) at 80 pounds per square inch (psi); the maximum flow rate for a residential lavatory faucet is 1.2 gpm at 60 psi; and the maximum flow rate for kitchen faucets is 1.8 gpm at 60 psi.

Local

City of Santa Clarita Sewer System Management Plan

On May 2, 2006, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements and Monitoring and Reporting Program (WDRs) by issuing Order No. 2006-0003. The WDRs have two requirements: owners and operators of publicly owned collection sewer systems a mile long or greater must apply for coverage under the WDRs, and these owners and operators must develop and implement a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP). The City's SSMP seeks to minimize sanitary sewer overflows (SSO) to the greatest extent practicable throughout the City's sanitary sewer collection system. The SSMP contains specific goals and actions to address the adequate maintenance and operation of the City's sewer system and to prevent SSOs or manage SSOs if they occur. As the CSMD provides operation and maintenance services for the City's sewer facilities, the City's SSMP is similar to the CSMD's SSMP.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The applicable goals, objectives, and policies from the City of Santa Clarita General Land Use Element are listed below.³²

Land Use Element – Public Facilities

Goal LU 9: Adequate public facilities and services, provided in a timely manner and in appropriate locations to serve existing and future residents and businesses.

- Objective LU 9.1: Coordinate land use planning with provision of adequate public service and facilities to support development
 - Policy LU 9.1.1: Ensure construction of adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new development prior to occupancy.

³² City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Land Use Element, June 2011.

- Objective 9.2: Coordination of City and County sewer master planning and sewer mitigation to support future development and avoid fiscal impacts to local government or the existing community.
 - Policy 9.2.2: Require that all new development mitigates its impact on existing sewer capacity by upgrading facilities when warranted or payment of a fee to allow construction of new facilities when needed.
 - Policy 9.2.4: Facilitate the efficient construction of sewer infrastructure by sizing facilities to accommodate anticipated future sewer flows within the sewershed.
 - Policy 9.2.5: Cooperate with the development community to allow reimbursement for the cost of constructed sewer facilities with a capacity that exceeds what would be required to mitigate a project's own sewer impact.
 - Policy 9.2.6: Coordinate to ensure that new development projects have agreed to mitigate both City and County sewer impacts prior to project approval.

DRY UTILITIES

State

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)

The CPUC establishes policies and rules for electricity and natural gas rates provided by private utilities in California, such as SCE and SoCalGas. Publicly owned utilities do not fall under the CPUC's jurisdiction. The Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act of 2006, which took effect January 1, 2007, established the CPUC as the sole cable/video TV franchising authority in the State of California.

The CPUC is overseen by five commissioners appointed by the governor and confirmed by the State Senate. The CPUC's responsibilities include regulating electric power procurement and generation, infrastructure oversight for electric transmission lines and natural gas pipelines, and permitting of electrical transmission and substation facilities.

California Energy Commission (CEC)

The CEC is a planning agency that provides guidance on setting the State's energy policy. Responsibilities include forecasting electricity and natural gas demand, promoting and setting energy efficiency standards throughout the State, developing renewable energy resources, and permitting thermal power plants 50 megawatts and larger. The CEC also has specific regulatory authority over publicly owned utilities to certify, monitor, and verify eligible renewable energy resources procured.

California Code of Regulations, California Building Standards Code (Title 24)

The California Energy Efficiency Standards for residential and nonresidential development are included as Title 24, Parts 6 and 11 of the California Code of Regulations. These standards mandate certain energy efficiency measures and include standards for utilities such as lighting and water heating.

Local

Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 17.51.070

SCMC Section 17.51.070, Road Dedication, Improvements, and Other Requirements, states that “a building or structure shall not be used on any lot or parcel of land any portion of which abuts upon an alley, street or highway unless the one-half (1/2) of the alley, street or highway ... has been dedicated and improved” with curbs, gutters, sidewalks, base pavement, streetlights, street trees, and drainage structures. This section also specifies that all new and existing utilities shall be located underground, including along project street frontage. When locating utilities underground is not possible, they shall be screened from view to the satisfaction of the City Engineer.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The applicable goals, objectives, and policies from the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Land Use Element are listed below.³³

Land Use Element – Community Appearance

Goal LU 6: A scenic and beautiful urban environment that builds on the community’s history and natural setting.

- Objective LU 6.3: Beautify streetscapes and gateways to the community.
 - Policy LU 6.3.4: Require undergrounding of utilities lines for new development where feasible and plan for undergrounding of existing utility lines in conjunction with street improvement projects where economically feasible.

Land Use Element – Public Facilities

Goal LU 9: Adequate public facilities and services, provided in a timely manner and in appropriate locations to serve existing and future residents and businesses.

- Objective LU 9.1: Coordinate land use planning with provision of adequate public services and facilities to support development.
 - Policy LU 9.1.1: Ensure construction of adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new development prior to occupancy.

SOLID WASTE

State

Assembly Bill 939

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939), as amended, was enacted to reduce, recycle, and reuse solid waste generated in the State. AB 939 requires city and county jurisdictions to divert 50 percent of the total waste stream from landfill disposal. AB 939 also requires each city and county to promote source reduction, recycling, and safe disposal or transformation. AB 939 further requires each city and county to conduct a Solid Waste Generation Study and to prepare a Source Reduction and Recycling Element to describe how it would reach

³³ City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Land Use Element, June 2011.

these goals. The Source Reduction and Recycling Element contains programs and policies for fulfillment of the goals of AB 939, including the above-noted diversion goals, and must be updated annually to account for changing market and infrastructure conditions. As projects and programs are implemented, the characteristics of the waste stream, the capacities of the current solid waste disposal facilities, and the operational status of those facilities are upgraded, as appropriate. California cities and counties are required to submit annual reports to the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to update their progress toward the AB 939 goals.³⁴ CalRecycle is a department in the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) that administers and provides oversight for all of California’s State-managed non-hazardous waste handling and recycling programs.

Assembly Bill 1826

AB 1826 requires jurisdictions to implement an organic waste recycling program for businesses, including outreach, education, and monitoring of affected businesses. Additionally, each jurisdiction is to identify a multitude of information, including barriers to siting organic waste recycling facilities, as well as closed or abandoned sites that might be available for new organic waste recycling facilities. AB 1826 defines “organic waste” as food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, non-hazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed in with food waste. It also defines a “business” as a commercial or public entity, including but not limited to a firm, partnership, proprietorship, joint stock company, corporation, or association that is organized as a for-profit or nonprofit entity, or a multifamily residential dwelling consisting of five or more units. As of January 1, 2017, businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of organic waste per week are subject to this requirement. Commencing January 1, 2019, businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of commercial solid waste per week also were required to arrange for organic waste recycling services. In September 2020, CalRecycle reduced this threshold to 2 cubic yards of solid waste (i.e., total of trash, recycling, and organics) per week generated by covered businesses.

Senate Bill 1383

SB 1383 establishes organic waste reduction targets and builds on AB 1826, above. Adopted in 2020 and effective in 2022, SB 1383 aims to divert 50 percent of organic waste from landfills below 2014 levels by 2020 and 75 percent by 2025. CalRecycle is implementing the regulations and has established an additional target that not less than 20 percent of currently disposed edible food is recovered for human consumption by 2025. SB 1383 also requires that jurisdictions conduct education and outreach on organics recycling to all residents, businesses (including those that generate edible food that can be donated), haulers, solid waste facilities, local food banks, and other food recovery organizations. CalRecycle began assessing noncompliance and penalties in 2022, while local jurisdictions will have the ability to assess and issue penalties beginning in 2024.

California Green Building Standards Code

The CALGreen Code sets standards for new structures to minimize the State’s carbon output. California requires that new buildings reduce water consumption, increase building system efficiencies, divert construction waste from landfills, and install low pollutant-emitting finish

³⁴ California Public Resources Code Section 41821.

materials. Each local jurisdiction retains the administrative authority to exceed the new CALGreen Code. The 2022 CALGreen Code went into effect January 1, 2023.

Regional

Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan

Pursuant to AB 939, each county is required to prepare and administer a countywide integrated waste management plan (CoIWMP), including preparation of an annual report. The CoIWMP is to include the various counties' and cities' solid waste reduction planning documents, plus an integrated waste management summary plan and a countywide siting element. The summary plan describes the steps to be taken by local agencies to achieve the mandated State diversion rate by integrating strategies aimed toward reducing, reusing, recycling, diverting, and marketing solid waste generated within the County. The LACDPW is responsible for preparing and administering the summary plan and the countywide siting element.

The County continually evaluates landfill disposal needs and capacity as part of the preparation of the CoIWMP Annual Report. In each annual report, future landfill disposal needs over the next 15-year planning horizon are addressed in part by determining the available landfill capacity. The most recent annual report, the CoIWMP 2021 Annual Report, published in December 2022, provides disposal analysis and facility capacities for 2020, as well as projections to the CoIWMP's horizon year of 2036. As stated in the CoIWMP 2021 Annual Report, the County is not anticipating a solid waste disposal capacity shortfall within the next 15 years under current conditions. To meet disposal capacity needs during the planning period, jurisdictions in the County must further increase their waste reduction and diversion efforts, continue to encourage the development of alternative technologies, support the exportation of waste to out-of-County facilities, utilize the Waste-by-Rail system to Mesquite Regional Landfill, and, if found to be environmentally sound and technically feasible, expand in-County Class III landfill capacity.³⁵

Local

Construction and Demolition Recycling Ordinance

The City of Santa Clarita has a Construction and Demolition Ordinance that requires all demolition projects, all commercial projects valued over \$200,000, all new commercial projects over 1,000 square feet, all new residential construction projects, and all residential additions and improvements that increase building area, volume, or size to recycle a minimum of 65 percent of all inert materials and 65 percent of all other materials.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The applicable goals, objectives, and policies from the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element are listed below.³⁶

4.13.2.1.1.1 Conservation and Open Space Element – Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Goal CO 8: Development designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

³⁵ LACDPW, Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan: 2021 Annual Report, December 2022.

³⁶ City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element, 2011.

- Objective CO 8.4: Reduce energy consumption for processing raw materials by promoting recycling and materials recovery by all residents and businesses throughout the community.
 - Policy CO 8.4.4: Promote commercial and industrial recycling, including recycling of construction and demolition debris.
 - Policy CO 8.4.5: Develop and implement standards for refuse and recycling receptacles and enclosures to accommodate recycling in all development.

4.13.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project related to utilities and service systems are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. A project would have a significant impact on utilities and service systems if it would:

Threshold 4.13(a): Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Threshold 4.13(b): Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Threshold 4.13(c): Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Threshold 4.13(d): [Not] Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed.

Threshold 4.13(e): Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it [does not have] adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

Threshold 4.13(f): [Not] Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the Project's solid waste disposal needs.

Threshold 4.13(g): [Not] Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The proposed Project would not result in significant impacts related to the following significance thresholds, as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**); therefore, they are not evaluated further in this Draft EIR:

Threshold 4.13(c): Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Threshold 4.13(g): *[Not] Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.*

4.13.4 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of impacts related to utilities and service systems considered the potential future improvements in the TCSP Area, which are envisioned as creating a balance of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses; creating a distinct sense of place; creating a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and creating a practical, timeless, and buildable plan. In general, the Specific Plan would encourage mixed-use development and promote a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, integrating different land uses and creating a walkable community. The Specific Plan would also emphasize improved access to the McBean Regional Transit Center, thereby increasing housing choices for people who prefer convenient access to transit services. In addition, the Specific Plan envisions the development of nodes within the TCSP Area, which include programmable gathering space and other smaller gathering spaces such as public plazas, courtyards, amphitheaters, pedestrian streets, parklets, children’s playgrounds, and parks.

WATER

The analysis of the Project’s impacts relative to water supply is based on the SCV Water’s 2020 UWMP and the anticipated water demand from buildout of the proposed Specific Plan, which is estimated by applying water generation rates to the projected land uses. The resulting demand for water associated with the proposed Specific Plan is then analyzed relative to SCV Water’s existing and planned future water supplies to determine if SCV Water would be able to accommodate the increased water demand during average, single-dry, and multiple-dry years hydrologic conditions.

The analysis of the Project’s impacts relative to water infrastructure is based on a review of existing infrastructure and compliance with code requirements.

WASTEWATER

The analysis of impacts related to wastewater treatment is based on a review of planning documents, applicable requirements, and consultation with the LACSD, the appropriate public service provider. The LACSD’s letter in response to the Project’s Notice of Preparation can be found in **Appendix A**.

DRY UTILITIES

Analysis of potential Project impacts was based on anticipated availability of existing off-site utility infrastructure and the potential for disruptions of utility services, or potential for additional impacts of other kinds to those connections during Project construction of those connections.

4.13.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

No Project Design Features are proposed with respect to water, wastewater, stormwater facilities, solid waste, and dry utilities.

4.13.6 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACTS

WATER

Threshold 4.13(b): *Would the Project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effect?*

Impact Analysis

Water service to the Project would be provided through the SCV Water Zone 2A water pressure zone system. The Project would connect to existing water pipelines in Magic Mountain Parkway, Valencia Boulevard, McBean Parkway, and throughout the Project Site in order to provide domestic and fire protection water services to the Project. In addition, the proposed Specific Plan and development projects building out the Specific Plan would comply with fire flow requirements in accordance with Los Angeles County Fire Code. These would include requirements related to domestic fire flow, fire hydrant locations and distribution. These water distribution improvements would be designed and implemented in accordance with the Los Angeles County Fire Department's and SCV Water's guidelines, standards, and approved materials. The Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities that would cause significant environmental effects, and, as such, impacts to water infrastructure would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to water facilities were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to water facilities were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4.13(d): *Would the Project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?*

Impact Analysis

As the TCSP Area builds out, construction activities would utilize water for dust control, cleaning of equipment, and other related activities; however, such water demand would be temporary and intermittent. Water for construction-related purposes could be provided by water trucks and/or through connections to nearby water distribution lines. The amount of water required during construction activities would be well below the total water demand of the fully developed Specific Plan.

To provide a conservative analysis of operational water demand from buildout of the TCSP, **Table 4.13-4** shows the Project's water demand based on the proposed High Buildout Scenario without incorporation of water conservation features. As provided in Table 2-2 of Chapter 2, Project Description, of this EIR, the Project's High Buildout Scenario would result in an increase of 266,416 square feet of commercial and other nonresidential uses, 364,780 square feet of

hotel/convention center uses, and 2,563 housing units when compared to existing conditions. The Project would also result in water demand for irrigation of up to 20 acres. As shown in **Table 4.13-4**, the High Buildout Scenario would result in an estimated net water demand of 691 acre-feet per year (AFY) in an average year, 733 AFY in a single-dry year, and 705 AFY in multiple-dry years.

As described above in Subsection 4.13.1, SCV Water demand projections are based on a land use-based approach, including information from a population-based approach, to reflect future planned development and evolving water usage patterns. Based on the SCV Water UWMP projections shown in **Tables 4.13-1** through **4.13-3**, there are adequate existing and planned water supplies to meet the demands within the SCV Water service area under average/normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year conditions through 2050.³⁷

**TABLE 4.13-4
HIGH BUILDOUT PROJECT SCENARIO: ESTIMATED NET WATER DEMAND^a**

Land Use	Size	Demand Factor ^b	Net Demand
Commercial, Other Nonresidential Uses	266,416 sf	0.000287 AFY/sf	77 AFY
Housing Units - Apartments	1,281 du	0.143 AFY/du	184 AFY
Housing Units - Condominiums	1,282 du	0.210 AFY/du	270 AFY
Hotel Rooms	431 rm	0.143 AFY/du	62 AFY
Hotel Convention Center	114,650 sf	0.000287 AFY/sf	33 AFY
Irrigated Areas	20 acres	3.26 AFY/acre	65 AFY
Project Net Total Demand for Average Year			691 AFY
Project Net Total Demand for Single-Dry Year^c			733 AFY
Project Net Total Demand for Multiple-Dry Years^d			705 AFY

Source: Michael Baker International, 2024.

sf = square feet

du = dwelling units

AFY = acre-feet per year

rm = rooms

^a As provided in Table 2-2 of Chapter 2, Project Description, of this EIR, the High Buildout Scenario would result in an increase in 266,416 square feet of commercial and other nonresidential uses, 364,780 square feet of hotel/convention center uses, and 2,563 residential units when compared to existing conditions. Therefore, as a conservative estimate, this table considers the net increase in water demand as a result of the Project's High Buildout Scenario.

^b Based on SCV Water demand factors.

^c Water demand for the Project at buildout may increase by approximately 6 percent in a single dry year, consistent with projections from SCV Water's 2020 UWMP.

^d Water demand for the Project at buildout may increase by approximately 2 percent in multiple dry years, consistent with projections from SCV Water's 2020 UWMP.

Within the proposed Specific Plan Area, the existing Regional Commercial (CR) zoning allows for a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2:1 (87,120 square feet of floor area per acre) and the provision for residential densities between a minimum of 18 units and a maximum of 50 units per acre. As described in Chapter 2, Project Description, the proposed Specific Plan would maintain this FAR of 2:1 and the residential densities of up to 50 units per acre. The Project's water demand of up to 733 AFY would be accounted for in overall service area projections during normal, dry, and multiple-dry years over the 30-year planning period. The existing and planned supplies are able to meet projected demands and the Project's demand during average/normal years, single-dry years, and multiple-dry years.

³⁷ SCV Water, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, June 2021.

Therefore, the Project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the proposed uses from existing water resources and entitlements. As such, Project impacts related to water supply would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to water supplies were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to water supplies were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

WASTEWATER

Threshold 4.13(a): *Would the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?*

Threshold 4.13(b): *Would the Project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effect?*

Threshold 4.13(e): *Would the Project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

Impact Analysis

Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan Area would result in the generation of the same constituents typically found in residential and commercial wastewater discharge; therefore, the Project would not generate atypical discharge such as industrial or agricultural effluent. As such, the Project's wastewater would not require any unique types of treatment processes. Wastewater from the Project Site would ultimately be conveyed and treated at the Saugus and Valencia WRPs. Both WRPs operate under an NPDES permit issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board to regulate volumes of wastewater flows, treatment methods, and the water quality and disposal of the treated effluent.³⁸ As the wastewater treatment facilities are designed to treat domestic sewage, the Project would not conflict with wastewater treatment requirements.

The estimate of wastewater generated by the Project is based on the High Buildout Scenario of the proposed TCSP and LACSD wastewater generation factors. As shown in **Table 4.13-5**, the Project's High Buildout Scenario would generate approximately 630,415 gallons per day (gpd), or 0.631 mgd. According to the LACSD, the Saugus and Valencia WRPs currently treat a total of approximately 18.4 mgd of wastewater; however, these facilities have the combined capacity to

³⁸ California Regional Water Quality Control Board—Los Angeles Region, Order R4-2022-0174, NPDES Number CA0054216, Waste Discharge Requirements for the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District, Valencia Water Reclamation Plant, expires June 30, 2027; California Regional Water Quality Control Board—Los Angeles Region, Order R4-2022-0175, NPDES Number CA0054313, Waste Discharge Requirements for the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District, Saugus Water Reclamation Plant, expires June 30, 2027.

treat 28.1 mgd of wastewater at the primary, secondary, and tertiary level.³⁹ As such, the remaining wastewater treatment capacity of the WRPs is 9.7 mgd. The Project’s wastewater generation of 0.631 mgd would account for approximately 6.5 percent of the WRPs’ remaining capacity to treat wastewater. Based on the Project’s projected wastewater generation, the LACSD has remaining capacity between the two WRPs to treat the Project’s wastewater generation. As such, the WRPs have adequate capacity to serve the Project in addition to existing commitments.

**TABLE 4.13-5
HIGH BUILDOUT PROJECT SCENARIO: ESTIMATED NET WASTEWATER GENERATION^A**

Land Use	Size	Generation Factor ^b	Net Generation
Commercial, Other Nonresidential Uses	266,416 sf	0.325 gpd/sf	86,586 gpd
Housing Units - Apartments	1,281 du	156 gpd/du	199,836 gpd
Housing Units - Condominiums	1,282 du	195 gpd/du	249,990 gpd
Hotel Rooms	431 rm	125 gpd/rm	53,875 gpd
Hotel Convention Center	114,650 sf	0.350 gpd/sf	40,128 gpd
Project Net Total Wastewater Generation			630,415 gpd

Source: Michael Baker International, 2024.

sf = square feet; du = dwelling units; gpd = gallons per day; rm = rooms

^a As provided in Table 2-2 of Chapter 2, Project Description, of this EIR, the High Buildout Scenario would result in an increase in 266,416 square feet of commercial and other nonresidential uses, 364,780 square feet of hotel/convention center uses, and 2,563 residential units when compared to existing conditions. Therefore, as a conservative estimate, this table considers the net increase in wastewater generation as a result of the Project’s High Buildout Scenario.

^b Based on wastewater generation factors provided by Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts.

According to the LACSD, the wastewater flow originating from the Project Site would discharge to local sewer lines for conveyance to one or more LACSD trunk sewers. This includes the Valencia Trunk sewer in McBean Parkway north of Valencia Boulevard, which is 21 inches in diameter and has a capacity of 8.4 mgd and existing peak flow of 4.5 mgd (i.e., a remaining capacity of 3.9 mgd). In addition, the District #32 Main Trunk sewer in Magic Mountain Parkway at Valencia Boulevard is 21 inches in diameter and has a capacity of 5.4 mgd and an existing peak flow of 3.4 mgd (i.e., a remaining capacity of 2.0 mgd). Also, the District #32 Main Relief Trunk sewer in Magic Mountain Parkway at Citrus Drive is 36 inches in diameter and has a capacity of 34.8 mgd and an existing peak flow of 6.5 mgd (i.e., a remaining capacity of 28.3 mgd).⁴⁰ Therefore, based on their remaining capacities, the three trunk sewers, separately and collectively, would be able to accommodate the Project’s wastewater generation of 0.631 mgd.

In addition, individual developments under the Specific Plan would be required to submit sewer area studies for review and would be subject to payment of connection fees before developments are permitted to discharge to the sewer system and wastewater utility infrastructure. Accordingly, the Project would not require the relocation or construction of a new or expanded wastewater treatment as the LACSD has adequate capacity to process and treat wastewater generated by the Project.

Therefore, the Project’s wastewater impacts would be less than significant.

³⁹ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, NOP Response to Town Center Specific Plan, dated December 20, 2023. See **Appendix A** of this Draft EIR.

⁴⁰ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, NOP Response to Town Center Specific Plan, dated December 20, 2023. See **Appendix A** of this Draft EIR.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to wastewater were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to wastewater were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

DRY UTILITIES

Threshold 4.13(b): Would the Project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Impact Analysis

Electricity

The Project Site includes connections to the existing electrical energy infrastructure maintained by SCE. Projects building out the proposed Specific Plan would be required to coordinate with SCE regarding the connection of such projects to electrical infrastructure and comply with site-specific requirements set forth by SCE. Project contractors would notify and coordinate with SCE to identify the locations and depth of power lines and avoid disruption of electric service to other properties. Furthermore, the Project would implement any necessary connections and upgrades required by SCE to ensure that SCE would be able to adequately serve the Project. As such, operation of the Project is not anticipated to adversely affect the electrical infrastructure serving the surrounding uses or utility system capacity and would not result in the relocation or construction of new energy facilities or expansion of existing facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.

Natural Gas

The Project Site includes connections to the existing natural gas infrastructure maintained by SoCalGas. The Project would require not any major reconstruction or relocation of off-site natural gas infrastructure. Future projects building out the proposed Specific Plan would be required to coordinate with SoCalGas regarding the connection of such projects to the natural gas distribution system. Given the existing and projected trends of reducing natural gas usage in buildings in California and Los Angeles County, buildout of the proposed TCSP would not result in an increase in demand for natural gas that would affect available supply or distribution infrastructure capabilities and would not result in the relocation or construction of new energy facilities or expansion of existing facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.

Telecommunications

The Project site is currently connected to telecommunications services from AT&T and Comcast. The expansion of existing internet, telephone, or cable service infrastructure is not anticipated as a result of the buildout of the proposed TCSP, other than to construct connection points to serve future buildings in the Specific Plan Area. Thus, the Project would not require the construction of new telecommunications infrastructure or expansion of existing facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to electric power, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities per Threshold 4.13(b) were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to electric power, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities per Threshold 4.13(b) were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

SOLID WASTE

Threshold 4.13(f): Would the Project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the Project's solid waste disposal needs?

Impact Analysis

According to the most recently available information from CalRecycle, in 2019, the City of Santa Clarita disposed of approximately 206,278 tons of solid waste at a solid waste facility, 16 tons at the Southeast Resource Recovery Facility (a transformation facility), and 812 tons of alternative daily cover.⁴¹ Of the 16 facilities that received waste from the City, six facilities that accept both construction and demolition waste and municipal solid waste received more than 1,000 tons of waste, including those within and outside Los Angeles County: Antelope Valley Public Landfill, Chiquita Canyon Sanitary Landfill, El Sobrante Landfill, Lost Hills Environmental Waste Facility, Simi Valley Landfill & Recycling Center, and Sunshine Canyon City/County Landfill.⁴² Based on the latest available remaining permitted disposal capacity information, as provided by the ColWMP 2021 Annual Report, the Antelope Valley Public Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of 9.24 million tons; Chiquita Canyon Sanitary Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of 51.63 million tons; El Sobrante Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of 134 million tons; Lost Hills Environmental Waste Facility has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of 1.5 million tons; Simi Valley Landfill & Recycling Center has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of 47 million tons; and Sunshine Canyon City/County Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of 52.22 million tons.⁴³

Construction, demolition, and remodel activities occurring within the City generate a significant volume of debris that could be destined for landfills. In order to preserve available landfill space and promote waste reduction, pursuant to the City's Construction and Demolition Ordinance 05-09, the City requires that all demolition projects, all commercial projects valued over \$200,000, all new commercial projects over 1,000 square feet, all new residential construction projects, and all residential additions and improvements that increase building area, volume, or size must recycle a minimum of 65 percent of all inert materials and 65 percent of all other materials. Accordingly,

⁴¹ CalRecycle, Jurisdiction Disposal by Facility and Alternative Daily Cover Tons by Facility, Year 2019, Los Angeles–Santa Clarita, accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/DisposalReporting/Destination/DisposalByFacility>; alternative daily cover refers to cover material other than earthen material placed on the surface of the active face of a municipal solid waste landfill at the end of each operating day to control vectors, fires, odors, blowing litter, and scavenging.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Los Angeles County, Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan 2021 Annual Report, Appendix E-2, Table 4, and Appendix E-5.

projects building out the proposed TCSP would be required to prepare a Construction and Demolition Materials Management Plan pursuant to SCMC Chapter 15.46 to identify the type of materials that would be used and estimate the weight of materials to be recycled during construction, as well as indicate the vendor or facility that has been commissioned to collect, divert, reuse, or receive the construction and demolition materials. The plan would be approved by the City prior to issuance of a permit.

Table 4.13-6 estimates solid waste generated from demolition of existing uses and construction of uses proposed by the Project's High Buildout Scenario, in order to provide a conservative analysis. As shown therein, the Project would generate 41,995 tons of construction waste. After accounting for a 65 percent diversion rate, the Project would dispose of approximately 14,698 tons of waste to landfills.

During operation, solid waste generated from the Specific Plan Area would consist of typical waste from residential and commercial uses. As provided in Table 2-2 of Chapter 2, Project Description, of this EIR, the Project's High Buildout Scenario would result in an increase in 266,416 square feet of commercial and nonresidential uses, 364,780 square feet of hotel/convention center uses, and 2,563 housing units when compared to existing conditions. Therefore, as shown in **Table 4.13-7**, operation of the TCSP's High Buildout Scenario would generate up to approximately 11,475 net tons of solid waste per year.⁴⁴ To provide a conservative analysis, this estimate does not account for the diversion of solid waste during operation. It is anticipated that waste generated from uses in the Specific Plan Area would continue to be accepted by the same multiple refuse disposal facilities that currently receive the City's municipal solid wastes, including those identified above.

Based on the total capacity of 295.59 million tons from the six aforementioned landfills, the Project would be served by landfills with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the Project's construction and operational waste disposal needs, and impacts would be less than significant.

⁴⁴ Based on residential and commercial solid waste generation factors provided by CalRecycle, CalRecycle, Estimated Solid Waste Generation Rates, accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/wastecharacterization/general/rates>.

**TABLE 4.13-6
HIGH BUILDOUT PROJECT SCENARIO: CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION SOLID WASTE**

Land Use	Size	Generation Rate ^a (lb/unit)	Total Solid Waste (tons)
Existing Uses to be Demolished			
Valencia Town Center Mall subarea	358,878 sf	158 lb/sf	28,351
Town Center East subarea	48,200 sf	158 lb/sf	3,808
<i>Subtotal</i>			32,159
Proposed Uses to be Constructed^b			
Regional Mall and Retail	623,466 sf	4.34 lb/sf	1,353
Other Retail	199,642 sf	4.34 lb/sf	433
Office	1,117,731 sf	4.34 lb/sf	2,425
Civic Uses	20,800 sf	4.34 lb/sf	45
Theater	182,700 sf	4.34 lb/sf	396
Restaurants	80,200 sf	4.34 lb/sf	174
Hotel/Convention Center	364,780 sf	4.34 lb/sf	792
Housing	1,921,087 sf	4.39 lb/sf	4,217
<i>Subtotal</i>			9,836
Total Waste Prior to Diversion			41,995
Total Waste After 65% Diversion			14,698

Source: Michael Baker International, 2024.

lb = pounds; sf = square feet; 1 ton = 2,000 pounds

^a USEPA, Estimating 2003 Building-Related Construction and Demolition Materials Amounts, Report No. EPA530-R-09-002, March 2009, Tables 2-1, 2-2, and 2-4.

^b Based on construction of the Project's High Buildout Scenario.

**TABLE 4.13-7
HIGH BUILDOUT PROJECT SCENARIO: OPERATIONAL NET SOLID WASTE^A**

Land Use	Size	Generation Rate ^b	Total Net Solid Waste (tons/year)
Commercial, Other Non-Residential Uses	266,416 sf	0.05 lb/sf/day	2,431
Housing Units	2,563 du	2.23 tons/du/year	5,715
Hotel/Convention Center	364,780 sf	0.05 lb/sf/day	3,329
Total Project Net Operational Waste			11,475 tons/year

Source: Michael Baker International, 2024.

lb = pounds; sf = square feet; 1 ton = 2,000 pounds; 1 year = 365 days

^a As provided in Table 2-2 of Chapter 2, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, the Project's High Buildout Scenario would result in an increase in 266,416 square feet of commercial and other nonresidential uses, 364,780 square feet of hotel/convention center uses, and 2,563 residential units when compared to existing conditions. Therefore, this table considers the net increase in solid waste as a result of the High Buildout Scenario.

^b Based on a residential and commercial solid waste generation factors provided by CalRecycle, CalRecycle, Estimated Solid Waste Generation Rates, accessed January 23, 2024, <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/wastecharacterization/general/rates>.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts with regard to landfill capacity were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts with regard to landfill capacity were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

4.13.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

WATER

Impact Analysis

The geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts related to water supply is the SCV Water service area. As previously described, SCV Water demand projections are based on a land use-based approach, including information from a population-based approach, to reflect future planned development and evolving water usage patterns. The land use-based estimates were also based on data from planned development contracts and the City's One Valley, One Vision General Plan. Based on the SCV Water UWMP projections, there are adequate existing and planned water supplies to meet the demands within the SCV Water service area under average/normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year conditions through 2050. As discussed above, the Project's water demand of up to 733 AFY would be accounted for in projections over the 30-year planning period, and Project impacts would be less than significant and not cumulatively considerable. As other development projects and anticipated growth have been accounted for in the City's General Plan and thus the SCV Water projections, cumulative impacts related to water supply would be less than significant.

The geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts related to water infrastructure is the vicinity of the Project Site (i.e., the water infrastructure that would serve both the Project and related projects). As with the Project, other new development projects would be subject to SCV Water review to ensure that the existing public infrastructure would be adequate to meet the domestic and fire water demands of each project, and individual projects would be subject to SCV Water and City requirements regarding infrastructure improvements needed to meet respective water demands, flow, and pressure requirements, etc. As detailed above, Project impacts related to water infrastructure would be less than significant. Furthermore, in accordance with City requirements, prior to ground disturbance, the related projects would be required to coordinate with SCV Water to identify the locations and depths of all lines, and SCV Water would be notified in advance of proposed ground disturbance activities to avoid disruption of water services associated with the related projects. SCV Water would also review and approve appropriate connection requirements, pipe depths, and locations associated with the related projects. Therefore, Project impacts related to water infrastructure would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Cumulative impacts with regard to water supply and infrastructure were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Cumulative impacts with regard to water supply and infrastructure were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

WASTEWATER

Impact Analysis

The geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts related to wastewater treatment is the Saugus and Valencia WRPs' service areas. Similar to the Project, related projects in the City and greater Los Angeles County would be required to ensure that WRPs within the LACSD have capacity to treat wastewater generated by a Project. Furthermore, the LACSD and/or the City would review each future development project on a case-by-case basis to ensure sufficient sewer infrastructure is available to accommodate wastewater generation. As described in the City's SSMP, a sewer area study is required to be prepared and submitted by developers to assess adequate sizing of any new portion or connection to the sanitary sewer, prior to the City's approval for projects. The completed study would analyze the capacity in the existing system and set forth requirements for developers to ensure adequate capacity and flow. The study would also justify the sizing of the proposed lines to accommodate the base, peak, and wet weather flows from all tributary lines to the mainline sewer under consideration, now or in the future. All proposals for a new connection to an existing sewer must also comply with Los Angeles County CSMD's policies for managing sewer capacity. As stated in the City's SSMP, it is the responsibility of the City to ensure that the sewer area studies are checked and the sanitary sewer infrastructure is properly constructed.⁴⁵

As discussed above, with adherence to applicable regulations, the Project's potential impacts to wastewater treatment during construction and operation would be less than significant. For related projects, the City and/or LACSD would also review site-specific development sewer area studies to determine potential impacts on the wastewater system and require payment of any necessary connection fees. Therefore, the Project's contribution to wastewater treatment impacts would not be cumulatively considerable during construction and operation, and as such, cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Cumulative impacts with regard to wastewater treatment were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Cumulative impacts with regard to wastewater treatment were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

DRY UTILITIES

Impact Analysis

The geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts to dry utilities is the service area of the individual utility provider. Similar to the Project, related projects in the City and greater Los Angeles County would be required to ensure that SCE, SoCalGas, and telecommunication providers have sufficient capabilities to serve a project's needs. Furthermore, the City and/or SCE, SoCalGas, and telecommunication providers would review each future development project on a

⁴⁵ City of Santa Clarita, Sewer System Management Plan, 2020.

case-by-case basis to ensure sufficient dry utility infrastructure is available to accommodate demand.

With adherence to applicable regulations, the Project's potential impacts to dry utilities and infrastructure during construction and operation would be less than significant. Therefore, the Project's contribution to dry utilities and infrastructure impacts would not be cumulatively considerable during construction and operation, and as such, cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Cumulative impacts with regard to dry utilities and infrastructure were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Cumulative impacts with regard to dry utilities and infrastructure were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

SOLID WASTE

Impact Analysis

The geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts to solid waste is dependent on the remaining capacities of landfills serving the City. Operation of the Project, in conjunction with forecasted growth in the City and County through 2036, would generate municipal solid waste and result in a cumulative increase in the demand for waste disposal capacity at accepting landfills. As previously stated, the countywide demand for landfill capacity is continually evaluated by the County through preparation of the CoIWMP Annual Reports. Each annual report assesses future landfill disposal needs over a 15-year planning horizon. Based on the County's analysis and incorporation of waste reduction and landfill capacity strategies, the County is not anticipating a solid waste disposal capacity shortfall within the next 15 years. Per the 2021 Annual Report, the forecasted 2036 waste generation volume for the County is approximately 34.6 million tons. The estimated Project generation net increase of approximately 11,475 tons of waste per year would represent only 0.03 percent of the forecasted County waste generation. Therefore, the Project's contribution to the County's estimated cumulative waste stream would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Cumulative impacts with regard to solid waste were determined to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Cumulative impacts with regard to solid waste were determined to be less than significant without mitigation.

5.0 ALTERNATIVES

5.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) states that

“an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of 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. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. An EIR is not required to consider alternatives which are infeasible.”

In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b) states that because

“an EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment, 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.”

Environmental impacts that could occur as a result of the Project are identified in Sections 4.1 through 4.13 of this Draft EIR. The analyses presented in those sections determined that the Project would have significant and unavoidable impacts related to air quality during operations. In addition, the Draft EIR identified potentially significant impacts that are mitigable to a less than significant level related to the following environmental topics: archaeological resources, paleontological resources, tribal cultural resources, and hazards and hazardous materials.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, this Draft EIR contains a comparative impact assessment of alternatives, including the “No Project Alternative,” as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e), that would reduce the significant impacts of the Project while still attaining most of the basic objectives of the Project. This section also briefly discusses alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but rejected from further analysis in this Draft EIR.

As identified in Section 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, the Vision and Goals of the proposed Specific Plan together constitute the Project objectives, and are as follows:

The Vision Statement for the Proposed Specific Plan is:

The Santa Clarita Town Center is a lively hub that embodies a spirit of community, inviting people from all walks of life to live, work, shop, play, and socialize. It features a balance of retail, office, restaurants, recreational, hospitality, and residential spaces, seamlessly integrated with a pedestrian and bike friendly setting. The Town Center features an efficient multimodal transportation system, providing easy connectivity to regional and local trail systems. The Town Center provides a community identity and is a vibrant place for people to gather, socialize, and celebrate in the City of Santa Clarita.

The primary goals of the proposed Specific Plan are:

- Create a balanced mix of uses within the TCSP Area that combines commercial and service opportunities with a residential environment that creates a more livable and pedestrian oriented space.
- Further establish and enhance the Specific Plan Area as a regional destination for employment, entertainment, dining, retail, and services.
- Provide a long-term vision for development within the most intensive commercial and residential district of the City of Santa Clarita that facilitates the goals, objectives and policies of the General Plan including, but not limited to, the creation of a robust jobs-to-housing balance, and implements the City's Housing Element.

5.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c) states that an EIR should identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination; factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from consideration include the alternative's (a) failure to meet most of the project objectives, (b) infeasibility, or (c) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts. In addition, according to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f), alternatives shall be limited to ones that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The alternatives that were considered but rejected are discussed below.

5.2.1 REDUCED RESIDENTIAL DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The Reduced Residential Density Alternative consists of a version of the TCSP that decreases the currently allowable residential density of 18-50 units per acre. While this alternative has the potential to reduce the significant air quality impacts of the proposed Project by reducing the residential buildout of the Specific Plan Area, it would be inconsistent with the City's Housing Element. In particular, this alternative would be inconsistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of City's Housing Element related to identifying and maintaining adequate sites for housing to accommodate the City's regional housing need. Portions of the TCSP Area are identified in the City's Housing Element as housing opportunity sites and reducing the allowable residential density would have an adverse effect on the City's ability to meeting its Regional Housing Needs Allocation obligations.

In addition, reducing the allowable residential density is prohibited by various recent amendments to California law, including Senate Bill (SB) 330 (which amended Public Resources Code Section 66300), which prohibits a city from enacting a policy, standard, or condition that would have the effect of reducing the intensity of land use within an existing general plan land use designation or zoning district. Consequently, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f), this alternative is infeasible and was rejected from further consideration.

5.2.2 COMMERCIAL-INTENSIVE ALTERNATIVE

A Commercial-Intensive Alternative in which commercial land uses would be prioritized over residential land uses was considered as an option for the TCSP. However, commercial uses generate more vehicle trips than residential uses per square foot. Accordingly, developing more

commercial uses in lieu of residential uses would not reduce the significant and unavoidable air quality impacts of the Project. In addition, like the Reduced Residential Density Alternative, the Commercial-Intensive Alternative would be inconsistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of City's Housing Element related to identifying and maintaining adequate sites for housing to accommodate the City's regional housing need, as portions of the TCSP Area are identified in the City's Housing Element as housing opportunity sites. Finally, the Commercial-Intensive Alternative would not satisfy the basic project objectives of the Project related to creating a balanced mix of uses within the TCSP Area. Therefore, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f), this alternative was rejected from further consideration.

5.2.3 ENHANCED RESIDENTIAL USES ALTERNATIVE

The Enhanced Residential Uses Alternative consists of prioritizing residential land uses over commercial land uses. While reducing commercial land uses could reduce the Project's trip generation and, as a result, reduce the Project's significant and unavoidable air quality impacts, this alternative would not satisfy the basic objectives of the Project related to creating a vibrant place and a balanced mix of uses within the TCSP Area. In addition, the Enhanced Residential Uses Alternative would adversely affect the City's jobs-to-housing ratio which would conflict with the goals, objectives, and policies of the City's General Plan, related to job growth, including Policy LU 4.2.2: *Achieve a balanced ratio of jobs to housing through business expansion and economic development programs, with a goal of at least 1.5 jobs per household.* Therefore, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f), this alternative was rejected from further consideration.

5.2.4 OTHER LAND USES

Land uses other than a mix of residential, commercial, and hospitality uses were rejected from consideration because they would not meet any of the basic Project objectives of creating a vibrant place and a balanced mix of uses or enhancing the Specific Plan Area as a regional destination for employment, entertainment, dining, retail, and services.

5.2.5 ALTERNATIVE SITES

Alternative sites were rejected from consideration, as the intention of the TCSP is to develop a land use plan for the subject site. Therefore, establishing a Specific Plan for an alternative site would not satisfy the basic Project objective of providing a long-term vision for development within the most intensive commercial and residential district of the City of Santa Clarita.

5.3 ALTERNATIVES SELECTED FOR EVALUATION

The intent of the alternatives is to avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of a project while still feasibly obtaining most of the basic project objectives. Based on the analyses provided in Chapter 4.0, Environmental Impact Analysis, of this Draft EIR, implementation of the Project would result in significant and unavoidable air quality impacts during operation that cannot be feasibly mitigated. The Project would result in potentially significant impacts that are mitigable to a less than significant level related to the following environmental topics: archaeological resources, paleontological resources, tribal cultural resources, and hazards and hazardous materials.

Based on the significant environmental impacts identified for the Project, the basic objectives established for the Project (see above as well as Chapter 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR), and the feasibility of the alternatives considered, the following alternatives to the Project were selected for evaluation:

- Alternative 1: No Project/No Build Alternative
- Alternative 2: No Project/Infill Development and Redevelopment Under Existing Zoning and General Plan Designations Alternative
- Alternative 3: Reduced Scale Specific Plan Alternative

5.3.1 CONSIDERATIONS OF THE NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A), when a proposed project revises an existing land use or regulatory plan, as with the proposed Specific Plan,

“the ‘no project’ alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan, policy or operation into the future. Thus, the projected impacts of the proposed plan or alternative plans would be compared to the impacts that would occur under the existing plan.”

Here, if the proposed TCSP is not approved, it is uncertain whether the Specific Plan Area would remain mostly unchanged from its current configuration or if portions of the Specific Plan would be redeveloped or further built out with additional uses and increased density in accordance with the existing zoning regulations. Thus, as described below, this EIR evaluates two “no project” alternatives: Alternative 1: No Project/No Build; and Alternative 2: No Project/Infill Development and Redevelopment Under Existing Zoning and General Plan Designations.

5.3.2 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT/NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Project/No Build Alternative, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Individual building tenants might change over time, but the overall mix of uses in the TCSP Area would remain, primarily consisting of various commercial, retail, restaurant, office, and civic uses.

5.3.3 ALTERNATIVE 2: NO PROJECT/INFILL DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT UNDER EXISTING ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS ALTERNATIVE

Under Alternative 2, the TCSP Area would be further built out in accordance with the existing applicable zoning regulations and General Plan land use designation criteria. The entire approximately 111-acre Specific Plan Area is zoned Regional Commercial (CR) and has an equivalent General Plan Land Use designation of Regional Commercial (CR). The density standards in the CR zone are 18-50 units per acre for residential uses and a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2:1 for non-residential uses. The proposed Specific Plan would not change these density standards. Consequently, buildout under Alternative 2 is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of non-residential uses, i.e., the Project’s low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. However, the primary difference between the Project and Alternative 2 is that the Project would implement a Specific Plan that would regulate the buildout of the TCSP Area in a cohesive and coordinated

manner to create a variety of community benefits, including a pedestrian-friendly environment, circulation improvements, parks/plazas, trails/paseos, and monumental architecture. Without these regulations, buildout of the TCSP Area would be expected to occur largely on a parcel-by-parcel basis without a governed unified approach.

5.3.4 ALTERNATIVE 3: REDUCED SCALE SPECIFIC PLAN ALTERNATIVE

Under Alternative 3, the Los Angeles County government center in Subarea 2 (Town Center East) would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. In this alternative, the remaining portions of Subarea 2 would continue to be within the Specific Plan Area, including the existing 31,000-square-foot retail/commercial center along Citrus Street, the two private office buildings near Valencia Boulevard, and the City-owned land. Subarea 1 (Valencia Town Center), Subarea 3 (Town Center Drive), and Subarea 4 (McBean and Valencia) would also remain within the Specific Plan Area. Under Alternative 3, buildout of Subareas 1, 3, and 4 would be the same as buildout under the proposed Project. Except for the Los Angeles County government center—which would remain—buildout of Subarea 2 would be similar to buildout of the Project. Given the reduction in acreage, total buildout projections of Alternative 3 would be less than those of the proposed Project. Buildout of Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios, but is not expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario.

As a reduced-scale alternative, Alternative 3 is intended to potentially reduce the overall impacts of the Project, including its significant air quality impacts. In addition, as there are no current plans to end the operations of the Los Angeles County government center, Alternative 3 is intended to evaluate a scenario in which Los Angeles County continues to utilize its government center into the future indefinitely.

5.4 COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

The following assessment compares the impacts of the Project, as evaluated in Sections 4.1 through 4.13 of this Draft EIR, with the impacts of Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 defined above. This provides a comprehensive comparative assessment and recognizes that there can be benefits or disadvantages concerning certain environmental issue areas even if the impact topics do not involve a significant impact.

5.4.1 AESTHETICS

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain and no new development or redevelopment would occur. This alternative would eliminate the less-than-significant impacts of the Project related to visual character or quality of public views and applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality.

Impacts related to aesthetics under this alternative would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, the TCSP Area would be further built out in accordance with the existing applicable zoning regulations and General Plan land use designation criteria. The entire

approximately 111-acre site is zoned CR and has an equivalent General Plan Land Use CR. Buildout under Alternative 2 would be able to achieve the same density as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, as proposed by the low, full, and high buildout scenarios. However, without the regulations in the proposed TCSP, buildout under Alternative 2 would be expected to occur largely on a parcel-by-parcel basis without a governed unified approach. As described in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, of this Draft EIR, the existing visual character of the Project area lacks cohesion and dedicates a substantial amount of space to nonpermeable surface parking lots. As Alternative 2 would not establish new zoning regulations, development standards, and design requirements for the TCSP Area as established by the Project, Alternative 2 would not be anticipated to enhance the visual character of the Specific Plan Area to the same extent as the Project. Notwithstanding, under Alternative 2, individual developments would be expected to comply with Santa Clarita Municipal Code requirements including, without limitation, those related to heights, scale, and setbacks.

Therefore, impacts related to aesthetics under this alternative would be less than significant but greater when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

As described in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, of this Draft EIR, pursuant to Public Resources Code 21099(d), aesthetic and parking impacts of a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project on an infill site within a transit priority area (TPA) shall not be considered significant impacts on the environment. The City has identified the McBean Regional Transit Center as a major transit stop resulting in the area within a one-half mile radius of the Transit Center to qualify as a TPA. The City has determined that the proposed Project meets the definition of being located in a TPA pursuant to the City's *Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita*. Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Like the Project, Alternative 3 would also meet the definition of being located in a TPA. As such, aesthetic impacts under Alternative 3 would not be considered significant impacts on the environment pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21099. Nonetheless, the following discussion of potential aesthetic impacts is provided for informational purposes.

Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. However, Alternative 3 would establish zoning regulations, development standards, and design requirements for the TCSP Area as established by the Project, and Alternative 3 would be anticipated to enhance the visual character of the Specific Plan Area to a similar extent as the Project.

Therefore, impacts related to aesthetics under this alternative would be less than significant and similar when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

5.4.2 AIR QUALITY

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Accordingly, this alternative would not generate construction emissions and would not increase the generation of operational emissions

from the site. This alternative would eliminate the significant and unavoidable air quality impacts that would occur during Project operations.

Therefore, impacts related to air quality under this alternative would be less when compared to the significant and unavoidable impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, buildout is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, i.e., the Project's low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. Accordingly, similar to the Project, air quality impacts under Alternative 2 construction activities would be anticipated to result in emissions below applicable South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) significance thresholds, and (during construction) this alternative would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment.

During operations, similar to the Project, air quality impacts under Alternative 2 would exceed the regional thresholds of significance established by the SCAQMD for volatile organic compounds (VOC) during the full buildout scenario and VOC and PM₁₀ during the high buildout scenario. Unlike the Project, since Alternative 2 would not involve adoption of a Specific Plan with a corresponding CEQA document, Alternative 2 would not be subject to the mitigation measures included in this EIR which require implementation of emission reduction features. Thus, emissions from Alternative 2 would be greater than those of the Project after mitigation.

Therefore, operational air quality impacts under both the Project and Alternative 2 would be significant and unavoidable, with the impacts under Alternative 2 being greater than those of the Project after mitigation.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Accordingly, similar to the Project, air quality impacts under Alternative 3 during construction activities would be anticipated to result in emissions below applicable SCAQMD significance thresholds, and (during construction) the alternative would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment.

As Alternative 3 would be within the range of the full buildout scenario, it would still exceed the regional thresholds of significance established by the SCAQMD for VOC, as with the Project, but would avoid the Project's exceedance in regional thresholds for PM₁₀ under the high buildout scenario. Like the Project, Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1 of this EIR would be required for Alternative 3, which would require implementation of emission reduction features. However, as described for the Project, since implementation of the development would introduce land use intensification in the Specific Plan Area, it cannot be determined with certainty that mitigation would reduce impacts below SCAQMD's thresholds in all cases.

Therefore, while operational air quality impacts under Alternative 3 may be less than those of the Project, impacts under Alternative 3 would remain significant and unavoidable.

5.4.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. No ground-disturbing activities would be proposed. Accordingly, this alternative would not result in potential impacts related to cultural resources, specifically archaeological resources within the Project Site. This alternative would eliminate the Project's less-than-significant impacts with mitigation as related to archaeological resources.

As such, no impacts related to cultural resources would occur under this alternative, and impacts would be less when compared to the Project's less-than-significant impacts with mitigation.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, without a specific plan, buildout of the TCSP Area would be expected to occur largely on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Future developments under Alternative 2 within the TCSP Area would likely involve ground-disturbing activities, which could reach greater depths than existing foundations and, thus, have the potential to damage or destroy previously unidentified archaeological resources. The Project's impacts related to the accidental discovery of previously unidentified archaeological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level with the implementation of Mitigation Measure MM-CR-1. As Alternative 2 would not involve adoption of a Specific Plan with an accompanying CEQA document, an equivalent mitigation measure would not apply comprehensively to future development activity under Alternative 2. While certain future individual development projects under Alternative 2 may require project-specific CEQA evaluations with mitigation imposed to protect archaeological resources, it is expected that certain future development projects would be exempt from CEQA (e.g., ministerial). As a result, specific mitigation measures under CEQA may not be implemented. Nevertheless, any such exempt projects would still be subject to California law governing discovery of human remains; archaeological discoveries; and Native American artifacts. Consequently, while it cannot be assumed that future grading activities on-site under Alternative 2 would not encounter, and potentially damage or destroy, previously unidentified archaeological resources, the contrary is equally valid, i.e., by complying with applicable law such resources would be adequately protected.

Therefore, potential impacts under Alternative 2 on archaeological resources would be less than significant and substantially similar to that of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Nonetheless, as with the Project, based on anticipated ground-disturbing activities, Mitigation Measure MM-CR-1 would be imposed on Alternative 3, which would reduce potential impacts related to archaeological resources to a less-than-significant level, similar to the Project.

5.4.4 ENERGY

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Accordingly, this alternative would not generate an increased demand for electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel. This alternative would eliminate the less-than-significant impacts of the Project related to energy. As such, impacts related to energy under this alternative would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, buildout is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, i.e., the Project's low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. The Project's energy analysis considered three relevant energy sources—electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel—for vehicle trips and off-road equipment associated with Project construction and operations. Based on a comparison of the various buildout scenarios' net increase in energy consumption with Los Angeles County's energy consumption, the scenarios were shown to result in a nominal energy consumption increase over the County's existing consumption. Therefore, the Project would not result in a significant increase in construction or operational energy consumption, and related impacts would be less than significant. The Project's uses do not propose any unusual features that would result in excessive long-term automotive fuel consumption (see also Section 4.4, Energy). The Project would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of building energy during operation, or preempt future energy development or future energy conservation.

Therefore, similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would comply with Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, which includes the CALGreen standards, and would result in less-than-significant energy impacts.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Therefore, as Alternative 3 would implement the same energy conservation features as the Project, this alternative would similarly result in less-than-significant energy impacts.

Therefore, due to the reduced scaled of development under Alternative 3, impacts would be less when compared to the Project.

5.4.5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. No ground-disturbing activities would be proposed. Accordingly, this alternative would not result in potential impacts related to geology and

soils specifically with regard to paleontological resources. This alternative would remove the Project's less-than-significant impacts with mitigation as related to paleontological resources.

Therefore, no impacts related to paleontological resources would occur under this alternative, and impacts would be less when compared to the Project's less-than-significant impacts with mitigation.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, without a specific plan, buildout of the TCSP Area would be expected to occur largely on a parcel-by-parcel basis. As such, future developments under Alternative 2 within the TCSP Area would likely involve ground-disturbing activities, which could reach greater depths than existing foundations. The Project's impacts related to the accidental discovery of previously unidentified paleontological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level with the implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-1 through MM-GEO-5. As Alternative 2 would not involve adoption of a Specific Plan with an accompanying CEQA document, an equivalent mitigation measure would not apply comprehensively to future development activity under Alternative 2. While certain future individual development projects under Alternative 2 may require project-specific CEQA evaluations with mitigation imposed to protect paleontological resources, it is expected that certain future development projects would be exempt from CEQA (e.g., ministerial). As a result, specific mitigation measures under CEQA may not be implemented. Nevertheless, any such exempt projects would still be subject to California law governing discovery of human remains, paleontological discoveries, and Native American artifacts. Consequently, while it cannot be assumed that future grading activities on-site under Alternative 2 would not encounter, and potentially damage or destroy, previously unidentified paleontological resources, the contrary is equally valid, i.e., by complying with applicable law such resources would be adequately protected.

Therefore, potential impacts under Alternative 2 on paleontological resources would be less than significant and substantially similar to that of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Nonetheless, based on anticipated ground-disturbing activities, Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-1 through MM-GEO-5 would be imposed on Alternative 3, which would reduce potential impacts related to paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level, similar to the Project.

5.4.6 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Accordingly, this alternative would not increase the generation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the site. This alternative would eliminate the less-than-significant impacts of the Project related to GHG emissions. As such,

impacts related to GHG emissions under this alternative would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, buildout is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, i.e., the Project's low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. As with the Project, Alternative 3 would generate GHG emissions from construction (the operation of construction equipment on-site, as well as from vehicles transporting construction workers to and from the Project Site and heavy trucks to transport building materials) and operation (associated with area sources, energy and water usage, vehicle trips, and solid waste generation). Alternative 2 would not put in place a Specific Plan that would provide additional regulations and provisions to guide the buildout of the TCSP Area, including those related to reducing GHG emissions, including the enhancement of multi-modal transportation opportunities, improving access to the McBean Regional Transit Center, providing for affordable housing, and requiring the installation of EV charging stations at the highest voluntary CALGreen standards. As a result, Alternative 2 would be less consistent with the plans, policies, regulations, and GHG emissions reduction actions/strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan, 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, and the Santa Clarita General Plan than the Project. The incremental increase in GHG emissions under Alternative 2 as described above would be a potentially significant impact on the environment.

Therefore, impacts related to GHG emissions under Alternative 2 may be greater than the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Due to the reduced scale of development under Alternative 3, operational emissions would typically be reduced proportionally when compared to the Project. Assuming that Alternative 3 would implement the same sustainability features as the Project and comply with GHG reduction requirements, this alternative would similarly result in less-than-significant GHG impacts.

Therefore, due to the reduction in GHG emissions, impacts related to GHG emissions under Alternative 3 would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

5.4.7 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Two open leaking underground storage tank (LUST) cases were identified: a gasoline LUST is located at the former Los Angeles County Sheriff Station at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway within the TCSP Area; and a contaminated site with hydrocarbon-contaminated soil associated with the Newhall Land and Farm Company is located at 24375 Valencia Boulevard, which is adjacent to and outside the TCSP Area (see Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials). Remediation for both cases is ongoing and would

be required to be completed at these sites to the satisfaction of the oversight agency even if there is no new redevelopment or redevelopment under Alternative 1.

Therefore, impacts related to significant hazards to the public or the environment under Alternative 1 would be less than significant, and similar to the mitigable impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, the TCSP Area would be further built out in accordance with the existing applicable zoning regulations and General Plan land use designation criteria. The proposed Specific Plan would not change the existing density standards and, thus, buildout under Alternative 2 is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses. Two open LUST cases were identified: a gasoline LUST is located at the former Los Angeles County Sheriff Station at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway within the TCSP Area; and a contaminated site with hydrocarbon-contaminated soil associated with the Newhall Land and Farm Company is located at 24375 Valencia Boulevard, which is adjacent to and outside the TCSP Area. Although the latter case is located outside the Specific Plan Area, the contamination has the potential to affect future development inside the Specific Plan Area (e.g., through potential soil vapor in Subarea 4—McBean and Valencia). Given that both cases are open and currently subject to oversight agency review, as with the Project, any future development resulting from Alternative 2 on or adjacent to these sites would be required to address contamination issues at these sites to the satisfaction of the oversight agency.

Therefore, impacts related to significant hazards to the public or the environment under Alternative 2 would be less than significant, and similar to the mitigable impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. As described above, an open LUST case is located at the former Los Angeles County Sheriff Station at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway within the TCSP Area. As Alternative 3 would not propose development at the Sheriff Station's location in the government center, the Project's mitigation related to this LUST case would not be required under Alternative 3. As Alternative 3 would propose development in Subarea 4, this alternative would be required to mitigate the contaminated site associated with the Newhall Land and Farm Company located at 24375 Valencia Boulevard.

Therefore, although Alternative 3 would still require mitigation at one address to reduce hazards impacts to a less-than-significant level, overall impacts under this alternative would be less when compared to the Project, which would require mitigation at the sites of both known open LUST cases.

5.4.8 LAND USE AND PLANNING

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under the No Project/No Build Alternative, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Individual building tenants might change over time, but the overall mix of uses in the TCSP Area would remain, primarily consisting of various commercial, retail, restaurant, office, and civic uses. Since

Alternative 1 would not physically divide a community or conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, the land use impacts of Alternative 1 would be less than significant. However, Alternative 1 would not provide housing in a transit-rich area, result in circulation improvements, or create a more livable and pedestrian oriented space within the 111-acre site, portions of which have been identified as housing opportunity sites by the City's Housing Element.

Therefore, while impacts under Alternative 1 would be less than significant, Alternative 1 would not implement the City's land use plans to the same extent as the Project. Impacts under Alternative 1 related to land use would be greater than the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, the TCSP Area would be further built out in accordance with the existing applicable zoning regulations and General Plan land use designation criteria. The entire approximately 111-acre site is zoned CR and has an equivalent General Plan Land Use CR. Buildout under Alternative 2 would be able to achieve the same density as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, as proposed by the low, full, and high buildout scenarios. However, without the regulations and provisions of the proposed TCSP, buildout under Alternative 2 would be expected to occur largely on a parcel-by-parcel basis without a governed unified approach. Alternative 2 would not provide or achieve the same community benefits as the Project (e.g., pedestrian-friendly environment, circulation improvements, parks/plazas, trails/paseos). Nonetheless, Alternative 2 would result in a mixed-use development in a transit-rich area and would not conflict with the applicable plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Therefore, the impacts under Alternative 2 would be less than significant and would be similar when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. However, most aspects of the Project would remain the same, including the types of uses and amenities proposed by the TCSP, as well as the improvements to circulation and pedestrian connectivity within the proposed mixed-use community. Accordingly, this alternative's consistency with land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect would be similar to the Project.

Therefore the impacts under Alternative 3 would be less than significant and would be similar when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

5.4.9 NOISE

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Accordingly, this alternative would not add any noise to the existing ambient levels. This alternative would eliminate the less-than-significant impacts of the Project related to noise. Impacts related to noise under this alternative would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, buildout is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, i.e., the Project's low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. Accordingly, construction under this alternative would result in the same intensity of noise from site preparation and construction activities would be the same as the Project on peak construction days. As with the Project, short-term construction noise impacts under this alternative would be less than significant. For the analysis of long-term operation noise impacts from mobile sources, in all buildout scenarios, the increase in ambient noise would not exceed the 3.0 dB threshold along the identified roadway segments. Project impacts related to stationary sources, residential and commercial uses, mechanical equipment, and parking areas were determined to be less than significant, which would also be the case for Alternative 2.

Therefore, noise impacts under this alternative would be less than significant and similar when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Construction activities under Alternative 3, including the amount of grading and excavation and the types of uses and amenities, would be less than the maximum envelope proposed by the Project's high buildout scenario. However, since the intensity of noise from site preparation and construction activities would be the same as the Project on peak construction days, construction noise levels would be the same as those of the Project. As Alternative 3 would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario, this alternative's operational noise impacts related to stationary sources, residential and commercial uses, mechanical equipment, and parking areas would remain less than significant, as with the Project.

Therefore, due to the reduced scale in development, overall noise impacts would be less than significant and less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

5.4.10 PUBLIC SERVICES

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Accordingly, this alternative would not generate a residential population and increase the service population for police and fire protection services. In addition, this alternative would not generate a change in the student population within the school districts serving the TCSP Area. Therefore, this alternative would eliminate the less-than-significant impacts of the Project related to public services. Impacts related to public services under this alternative would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, buildout is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, i.e., the Project's low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. Accordingly, similar to the Project, future development projects under Alternative 2 would be required to comply with federal, State, and local regulations and acquire approval of reviews and permits by the Los Angeles County Fire District (LACoFD), such as those related to domestic fire flow and provision of fire hydrants. As LACoFD Station 126 is located within the Town Center East Subarea and will remain in place, the LACoFD, through its existing facilities, would be able to provide fire protection services and provide adequate response times for the Project's residents, employees, and patrons. As Alternative 2 would not change existing the density standards of the CR General Plan Land Use designation, the resulting growth would not be unplanned. Furthermore, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) nearly doubled its facility capacity when it opened a new Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station in 2021. That station will serve the Santa Clarita Valley for the foreseeable future. With regard to impacts on school facilities, Alternative 2 would generate the same number of estimated students, and there would continue to be remaining excess school capacity. Moreover, pursuant to SB 50, development projects in the TCSP Area must pay development fees for schools to the districts before the City issues building permits. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65995, payment of these fees is deemed full and complete mitigation of TCSP-related school impacts.

Therefore, under Alternative 2, impacts related to police protection, fire protection, and schools would be less than significant and similar to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Alternative 3 would generate a reduced police service population when compared to the Project's maximum estimate resulting from the high buildout scenario. Furthermore, LASD nearly doubled its facility capacity when it opened a new Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station in 2021. That station will serve the Santa Clarita Valley for the foreseeable future. Under Alternative 3, LACoFD Station 126 within the Town Center East Subarea would also remain in place and would be able to provide fire protection services and

provide adequate response times for the Project's residents, employees, and patrons. Similar to the Project, Alternative 3 would be required to comply with federal, State, and local regulations and acquire approval of reviews and permits by the LACoFD, such as those related to domestic fire flow and provision of fire hydrants. With regard to impacts on school facilities, Alternative 3 would generate a reduced student population when compared to the Project's maximum estimate resulting from the high buildout scenario. Thus, as with the Project, there would continue to be remaining excess school capacity under development of Alternative 3. As described above, pursuant to SB 50, development projects in the TCSP Area would be still required to pay development fees for schools to the districts prior to the issuance of the building permits; the payment of these fees is considered full and complete mitigation of TCSP-related school impacts.

Therefore, under Alternative 3, impacts related to police protection, fire protection, and schools would be less than significant and less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

5.4.11 TRANSPORTATION

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Accordingly, this alternative would not generate an increase in trips or vehicle miles traveled (VMT). This alternative would eliminate the less-than-significant impacts of the Project related to transportation. Impacts related to transportation under this alternative would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, buildout is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, i.e., the Project's low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. Accordingly, as with the Project, Alternative 2 would be screened out from a full VMT analysis and would have a less than significant VMT impact. In addition, as with the Project, any proposed improvements under Alternative 2 would be designed in compliance with the applicable Engineering Design Standards and, per standard City procedures, would be reviewed and approved by the City of Santa Clarita Public Works Department prior to their construction. Alternative 2 would also require preparation and implementation of Construction Traffic and Access Management Plans to avoid construction-related safety hazards.

Therefore, Alternative 2 would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature.

As Alternative 2 would not put in place a Specific Plan that would provide additional regulations and provisions to guide the buildout of the TCSP Area in a cohesive and coordinated manner (to create a pedestrian-friendly environment, circulation improvements, etc.), it is anticipated that Alternative 2 would be consistent with the plans, policies, regulations to a lesser degree than the Project, which would provide more connectivity and transportation facilities in the City's Multi-Modal Circulation Network.

Therefore, overall impacts related to transportation under Alternative 2 would be less than significant but greater when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Like the Project, Alternative 3 would be screened out from a full VMT analysis and is anticipated to have a less than significant VMT impact. In addition, as with the Project, any proposed improvements under Alternative 3 would be designed in compliance with the applicable Engineering Design Standards and, per standard City procedures, would be reviewed and approved by the City of Santa Clarita Public Works Department before construction begins. Alternative 3 would also require preparation and implementation of Construction Traffic and Access Management Plans to avoid construction-related safety hazards. As such, Alternative 3 would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature.

Despite the reduced scale, Alternative 3, similar to the Project, would provide bicycle connections through the site within the alignment shown in the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan or a more direct alignment through the property, thus improving the regional connection to the area for pedestrian and cyclists. Like the Project, Alternative 3 would propose connectivity improvements to the City's Multi-Modal Circulation Network and identify potential future bus stop locations to serve the project site and reduce VMT.

Therefore, overall impacts related to transportation under Alternative 3 would be less than significant and similar when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

5.4.12 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. No ground-disturbing activities would be proposed. Accordingly, this alternative would not result in potential impacts to related to tribal cultural resources. This alternative would eliminate the Project's less-than-significant impacts with mitigation as related to tribal cultural resources. No impacts related to tribal cultural resources would occur under this alternative, and impacts would be less when compared to the Project's less-than-significant impacts with mitigation.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, without a specific plan, buildout of the TCSP Area would be expected to occur largely on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Future developments under Alternative 2 within the TCSP Area would likely involve ground-disturbing activities, which could reach greater depths than existing foundations and, thus, have the potential to impact previously unidentified tribal cultural resources. The Project's impacts related to the accidental discovery of previously unidentified tribal cultural resources would be reduced to a less than significant level with the implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-TCR-1, MM-TCR-2, and MM-TCR-3. As Alternative 2 would not involve adoption of a Specific Plan with an accompanying CEQA document, equivalent mitigation measures would not apply comprehensively to future development activity

under Alternative 2. While certain future individual development projects under Alternative 2 may require project-specific CEQA documentation with mitigation imposed to protect tribal cultural resources, it is expected that certain future development projects would be exempt from CEQA (e.g., ministerial). As a result, specific mitigation measures under CEQA may not be implemented. Nevertheless, any such exempt projects would still be subject to California law governing discovery of human remains and Native American artifacts. Consequently, while it cannot be assumed that future grading activities on-site under Alternative 2 would not encounter, and potentially impact, previously unidentified tribal cultural resources, the contrary is equally valid, i.e., by complying with applicable law such resources would be adequately protected.

Therefore, potential impacts under Alternative 2 on tribal cultural resources would be less than significant and substantially similar to that of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Nonetheless, based on anticipated ground-disturbing activities, Mitigation Measures MM-TCR-1, MM-TCR-2, and MM-TCR-3 would be imposed on Alternative 3, which would reduce potential impacts related to tribal cultural resources to a less-than-significant level, similar to the Project.

5.4.13 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, the buildings and other improvements in the TCSP Area would remain, and no new development or redevelopment would occur. Accordingly, this alternative would not result in an increase in water consumption, wastewater and solid waste generation, or change in the demand for dry utilities. This alternative would eliminate the less-than-significant impacts of the Project related to utilities and service systems. Impacts related to utilities and service systems under this alternative would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, buildout is assumed to be the same as the Project in terms of the future number of residential units and square footage of nonresidential uses, i.e., the Project's low, full, and high buildout scenarios also apply to Alternative 2. This alternative would result in the same water demand, wastewater and soil waste generation, and demand for dry utilities as the Project. The Project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the proposed uses from existing water resources and entitlements, and wastewater infrastructure would have adequate capacity to serve the proposed uses (see Section 4.13, Utilities and Service Systems). Like the Project, individual developments under Alternative 2 would be required to submit sewer area studies for review and would be subject to payment of connection fees before developments are permitted to discharge to the sewer system and wastewater utility infrastructure. Furthermore, operation of Alternative 2 would not be anticipated to adversely affect the electrical infrastructure serving the surrounding uses or utility system capacity and would not result in the construction of new energy or telecommunications facilities or expansion of existing facilities.

Therefore, overall impacts related to utilities and service systems would be less than significant and similar when compared to the less than significant impacts of the project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternative 3, the size of the TCSP would be reduced and the Los Angeles County government center would be excluded from the Specific Plan Area. Alternative 3 would be within the range of the Project's low and full buildout scenarios and would not be expected to achieve the Project's high buildout scenario. Due to the reduced scale of development under Alternative 3, the proposed water consumption, wastewater and solid waste generation, and demand for dry utilities would be reduced proportionally. Accordingly, impacts related to utilities and service systems under this alternative would be less than significant and would be less when compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the Project due to the reduction in water demand, wastewater and solid waste generation, and dry utility demand.

5.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Table 5-1 summarizes determinations concerning the comparison of impacts between the proposed Project and the three alternatives.

Based on the preceding analysis, Alternative 1 (No Project/No Build Alternative) would have the least impact as it would not alter the existing conditions. Alternative 1 is the only alternative that would not result in any new significant and unavoidable impacts and would not require any of the mitigation measures proposed by the Project. Consequently, Alternative 1 would be considered the environmentally superior alternative.

Based on CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2), if the environmentally superior alternative is the "no project" alternative, the EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Accordingly, comparative impact evaluation of Alternative 2 (No Project/Infill Development and Redevelopment Under Existing Zoning and General Plan Designations Alternative) and Alternative 3 (Reduced Scale Specific Plan Alternative) indicates that Alternative 3 is identified as the environmentally superior alternative. As demonstrated in Table 5-1, Alternative 3 would reduce the Project's significant and unavoidable air quality impact, whereas Alternative 2 would generate additional significant and unavoidable impacts. Specifically, Alternative 3 would not eliminate the Project's significant and unavoidable air quality impacts during operation related to VOC; however, as the high buildout scenario would not apply to Alternative 3, the corresponding PM₁₀ air quality impacts would not occur under Alternative 3. For Alternative 2, since a Specific Plan with a corresponding CEQA document would not be adopted, Alternative 2 would not be subject to the mitigation measures included in this EIR which require implementation of emission reduction features. Thus, operational emissions from Alternative 2 would be greater than those of the Project after mitigation.

In addition, as a reduced-scale TCSP, Alternative 3 would reduce the extent of the less-than-significant impacts related to energy, GHG emission, noise, public services, and utilities and service systems. In contrast, Alternative 2 would result in greater impacts related to aesthetics and air quality.

Therefore, Alternative 3 is identified as the environmentally superior alternative, other than the No Project/No Build Alternative (Alternative 1).

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**TABLE 5-1
SUMMARY COMPARISON OF THE IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES**

Impact Topic	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/ No Build Alternative	Alternative 2: No Project/Infill Development and Redevelopment Under Existing Zoning and General Plan Designations Alternative	Alternative 3: Reduced Scale Specific Plan Alternative
Aesthetics	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Air Quality	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater than the Project After Mitigation (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)
Cultural Resources	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Energy	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)
Geology and Soils (Paleontological Resources)	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Potentially Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Land Use and Planning	Less Than Significant	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Noise	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)
Public Services	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)
Transportation	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Tribal Cultural Resources	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Utilities and Service Systems	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)

Source: Michael Baker International

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6.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) describe any significant impacts which cannot be avoided. Specifically, Section 15126.2(c) states:

Describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.

As evaluated in Sections 4.1 through 4.13 of this EIR, all impacts associated with the Project, with the exception of air quality impacts during operation, would be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Specifically, as detailed in Section 4.2, Air Quality of this EIR, operation of the built-out Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) would generate air pollutants that exceed regional thresholds of significance established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) for volatile organic compounds (VOC) during the full buildout scenario and VOC and particulate matter (PM₁₀) during the high buildout scenario. As a result, given the total volume of air pollutants attributable to buildout of the proposed Project, operational impacts related to the increase of criteria pollutants for which the South Coast Air Basin is non-attainment are conservatively considered significant and unavoidable. Likewise, given this exceedance of the SCAQMD's regional thresholds of significance, the Project's impact related to consistency with the AQMP is also considered significant and unavoidable.

6.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

According to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15126(c) and 15126.2(d), an EIR is required to address any significant irreversible environmental changes that would occur should the Project be implemented. As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d):

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter likely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irrecoverable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

6.2.1 USE OF NONRENEWABLE RESOURCES

Buildout of the Project would necessarily consume limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources. This consumption would occur during the construction phases of future development or redevelopment under the Project and continue throughout its operational lifetime. Construction of future development under the Project would require a commitment of resources that are non-replenishable or may renew so slowly as to be considered nonrenewable. These resources would include the following construction supplies: certain types of lumber and other forest products; aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt, such as sand, gravel and stone; metals, such as steel, copper, and lead; petrochemical construction materials, such as plastics; and water.

Nonrenewable fossil fuels, such as gasoline and oil, would also be consumed in the use of construction vehicles and equipment, as well as the transportation of goods and people to and from future project sites with the Specific Plan Area. However, use of such resources would not be unusual compared to other construction projects and would not substantially affect the availability of such resources.

As analyzed in Section 4.4, Energy, of this EIR, construction of the Project would consume energy in two general forms: (1) the fuel energy consumed by construction vehicles and equipment and (2) bound energy in construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass. Fuel energy consumed during construction would be temporary and would not represent a significant demand on energy resources. Some energy conservation would occur through compliance with State requirements that heavy-duty diesel equipment not in use for more than five minutes must be turned off. Project construction equipment would also be required to comply with the latest US Environmental Protection Agency and California Air Resources Board engine emissions standards. In addition, the Project-related incremental increase in the use of energy bound in construction materials would not substantially increase demand for energy compared to overall local and regional demand for construction materials. During operation, the Project does not propose any unusual features that would result in excessive long-term fuel consumption. The proposed surface parking lots and parking structures would be required to comply with 2022 Title 24 standards pertaining to electric vehicle (EV) capable spaces and parking stalls with EV chargers. The Specific Plan also requires parking costs to be unbundled from the costs to rent or own a residential unit and includes provisions for inclusion of affordable housing. The Project is surrounded by various bus stops and would include short- and long-term bicycle parking, which would encourage alternative modes of transportation. The Project would be consistent with the California Energy Commission's energy consumption forecasts and would not require additional energy capacity or supplies. The Project would also consume energy during the same time periods as other surrounding residential and commercial developments. As such, the Project would not result in unique or more intensive peak or base period electricity demand. Further, the Project would be required to comply with the most current and applicable version of the 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. As concluded in Section 4.4, Energy, the Project would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of building energy.

Water, an important natural resource, is not considered to be a nonrenewable resource. Water is regularly replenished by the natural hydrological cycle. Because the Santa Clarita Valley and most of California are subject to recurring drought cycles, water is regarded as a limited resource that requires strong conservation measures to maintain adequate water supplies for normal and emergency applications. As evaluated in Section 4.13, Utilities and Service Systems, of this EIR, the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency's existing and planned water supplies are sufficient to meet the estimated water demands of construction and operation of future buildout of the Project during average/normal years, single-dry years, and multiple-dry years. Moreover, future buildout of the Project would be required to comply with the California Green Building Standards Code (part 11 of Title 24), which specifies mandatory measures for water efficiency and conservation.

6.2.2 EXTENSION OF ROADS AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

As discussed in Section 4.11, Transportation, of this Draft EIR, the Specific Plan proposes accessibility improvements to the adjacent Santa Clarita McBean Regional Transit Center and provides greater connectivity to Santa Clarita's bicycle facilities, also referred to as paseos. The Specific Plan proposes design features such as the construction of a new "central spine unification" roadway through the center of the Specific Plan Area connecting McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard and the expansion of existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to provide internal circulation and access throughout the Specific Plan Area. Although the construction of a roadway is identified in the proposed TCSP, the roadway would be built on-site and within an area that is already developed and served by existing roadway infrastructure. Therefore, the proposed construction of the roadway would not provide access to areas previously inaccessible.

As evaluated in Section 4.13, Utilities and Service Systems, of this EIR, and as determined in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**), buildout under the Project would require connections to existing water, wastewater, stormwater, and dry utilities infrastructure. Therefore, none of the required infrastructure connections would lead to new or expanded infrastructure service systems.

6.2.3 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACCIDENTS

The use of hazardous materials during buildout of the Project is evaluated in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this EIR, and in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**). As discussed in the Initial Study, future development projects under the Project would include both residential and nonresidential uses. Given the nature of residential uses and the limited application of hazardous materials in residential settings (e.g., household cleaners, commercially available pesticides and fertilizers), future residential development would not result in significant impacts involving the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or wastes. Future commercial development that replaces or expands existing commercial uses in the Specific Plan Area could require the routine transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, similar to existing uses. All such future development would be required to comply with existing regulations regarding the use of hazardous materials and wastes and would continue to be subject to oversight by the Los Angeles County Fire Department and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

In addition, with regard to the potential for accidental releases of hazardous substances, numerous existing regulations are in place at the federal, State, and local levels to require precautionary measures in the design of vehicles that transport hazardous substances; the routes they are allowed to travel; design, operations, and monitoring of facilities that use large quantities of hazardous substances; proper disposal of hazardous materials and wastes; and oversight by federal, State, and local regulatory agencies to ensure adherence to these regulations. The Specific Plan would not affect those existing regulatory standards and would not authorize any kinds of activities that are more likely than existing activities in the City of Santa Clarita to be at risk for an accidental release of hazardous substances or wastes.

Based on the above, buildout of the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public through the normal use of these materials or through a reasonably foreseeable upset or accident. The materials used on-site would not release hazardous emissions that would significantly impact surrounding uses. Therefore, it is not expected that buildout of the Project would cause irreversible damage from environmental accidents associated with buildout of the Project.

6.2.4 JUSTIFICATION FOR IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Development under the Project would require an investment of both renewable and nonrenewable resources. The amount of resources that would be committed to buildout of the Project would be typical of similar developments of this size and scale. However, as analyzed in Section 4.4, Energy, of this EIR, the Project would not involve wasteful or inefficient energy consumption during construction or long-term operation. Furthermore, none of the building materials anticipated for buildout of the Project would be unique, rare, in short supply, or require creation of new resource extraction sites or new manufacturing and delivery channels. Buildout of the Project would also satisfy the Project objectives identified in Section 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, which include objectives that are beneficial to the growth and prosperity of the City. In particular, the Project would create a mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses with a robust jobs-to-housing balance; create a distinct sense of place; create a flexible framework for future development that fosters the potential for numerous development possibilities; and create a practical, timeless, and buildable plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan and implements the Housing Element. Based on these considerations, the irretrievable commitment of renewable and nonrenewable resources is justified.

6.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(e) requires an EIR to discuss the ways a proposed project could foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Growth-inducing impacts include the removal of obstacles to population growth (e.g., the expansion of a wastewater treatment plant allowing more development in a service area) and the development and construction of new service facilities that could significantly affect the environment individually or cumulatively. In addition, pursuant to CEQA, growth must not be assumed as beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment. Growth can be induced by (1) direct growth associated with a project, and (2) indirect growth created by demand not satisfied by a project or the creation of surplus infrastructure not utilized by a project.

As discussed in Section 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, the proposed Specific Plan is intended to guide future development within the Specific Plan Area, and the Specific Plan has identified three potential buildout scenarios representing low buildout, full buildout, and high buildout scenarios (refer to Table 2-2 of Section 2.0, Project Description). These estimates are for planning and analysis purposes only and do not compel the construction or redevelopment of any individual property.

As discussed in the Initial Study (**Appendix A**), implementation of the Project would allow for development of both housing and commercial uses, which may induce population growth in the Specific Plan Area. However, the Specific Plan would not increase the currently allowable density of housing units per acre (50 units per acre) when compared with existing zoning. Further, the City's 2021-2029 Housing Element, adopted in June 2023, identifies the Regional Commercial (CR) zone, and the Town Center Area specifically, in the Housing Element's Sites Inventory. Buildout of the Project would result in population growth and expansion of commercial spaces within the Specific Plan Area. However, this growth is not unplanned given the City's interest in development within this area in existing planning documents and because implementation of the Specific Plan would not increase the allowable density of the Specific Plan Area. Therefore,

buildout of the Project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the Specific Plan Area.

In addition, the area surrounding the Specific Plan Area is already developed with a mix of commercial, public, and residential uses. As such, buildout of the Project would not remove impediments to growth. As discussed above, future development under the Project would require connections to the existing water, wastewater, stormwater, and dry utilities infrastructure in the area. However, such improvements would be intended to meet the demand of future Project buildout and would not necessitate regional utility infrastructure improvements that have not otherwise been accounted for and planned on a City or regional level. Moreover, the proposed “central spine unification” roadway through the center of the Specific Plan Area would connect the existing McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard but would not further extend roadways in the City to provide access to areas previously inaccessible. Therefore, the Project would not result in growth-inducing impacts.

6.4 POTENTIAL SECONDARY EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(a)(1)(D) requires the effects of mitigation measures to be discussed, albeit in less detail than the significant effects of the Project, if the mitigation measure(s) would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by implementation of the Project as proposed.

6.4.1 AIR QUALITY

The analysis of the Project’s impacts related to air quality, which is addressed in Section 4.2, Air Quality, of this EIR, resulted in the following recommended mitigation measure:

MM-AQ-1: To reduce emissions at the site-specific level, prior to issuance of a building permit for each project implementing the Town Center Specific Plan and to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita, the applicant must develop and commit to implementing a list of project-specific/building-specific emission reduction features. Such features must include, without limitation:

- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program Plans will be required by the following projects:
 - Multi-family residential developments with 100 or more units
 - Any mixed use or commercial project that generates 50 full-time employees or more.

TDM Program Plans must meet the satisfaction of the City’s Traffic and Transportation Planning Division (or future iteration thereof) prior to the issuance of a building permit.

- Consideration of energy-efficient design features beyond those required by Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and the CALGreen Code, as adopted by the Santa Clarita Municipal Code.
- Consideration of electric landscape maintenance equipment.

Implementation of **Mitigation Measure MM-AQ-1** would support the reduction of emissions during operations and would not include the construction of physical improvements or other actions that would result in additional physical impacts on the environment. Accordingly, this mitigation measure to reduce air quality impacts would not result in significant secondary impacts.

6.4.2 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The analysis of the Project's impacts related to archaeological resources, which is addressed in Section 4.3, Cultural Resources, of this EIR, resulted in the following recommended mitigation measure:

MM-CR-1 Treatment of previously unidentified archaeological deposits: If suspected prehistoric or historical archaeological deposits are discovered during construction, all work within 60 feet of the discovery must be redirected and a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards must assess the situation and make recommendations regarding the treatment of the discovery.

For significant cultural resources meeting the definition of a historical resource per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) or a unique archaeological resource per PRC Section 21083.2(g) as determined by the City of Santa Clarita, if avoidance and preservation-in-place is not feasible, a Research Design and Data Recovery Program to mitigate impacts must be prepared by the consulting archaeologist and approved by the City of Santa Clarita before being implemented using professional archaeological methods. Before construction activities are allowed to resume in the affected area, the Data Recovery Program must be completed to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita. Work may continue on other parts of the construction site while consultation and treatment are concluded. All significant archaeological resources collected must be taken to a properly-equipped archaeological laboratory, where they must be cleaned, analyzed, and prepared for curation. At a minimum, and unless otherwise specified in any treatment plans prepared for the development, all resources must be identified, analyzed, catalogued, photographed, and labeled. At the close of construction, the collection must be donated to a public institution with a research interest in the materials and the capacity to care for the materials in perpetuity. Accompanying notes, maps, and photographs must also be filed at the repository, as appropriate. The cost of curation is assessed by the repository and is the responsibility of the project applicant. All costs must be borne by the project applicant.

The treatment of previously unidentified archaeological deposits as part of **Mitigation Measure MM-CR-1** could potentially require targeted excavations to unearth additional archaeological resources if such is the recommendation of the qualified archaeologist. In addition, in the event that grading and excavation activities are temporarily halted, construction activities could be delayed and the duration of construction could be extended. However, even if the duration of construction is extended, the same construction activities evaluated throughout this EIR would continue to occur. Extending the duration of construction would not result in new or increased activities not already evaluated in this EIR. Accordingly, these mitigation measures to reduce impacts related to archaeological resources would not result in significant secondary impacts.

6.4.3 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The analysis of the Project's impacts related to paleontological resources, which is addressed in Section 4.5, Geology and Soils, of this Draft EIR, resulted in the following recommended mitigation measures:

- MM-GEO-1** Before starting construction for development projects in the TCSP area, the applicant must retain a qualified professional paleontologist as defined by Society for Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) (2010) standards. The paleontologist must create a Worker's Environmental Awareness Program pamphlet that is provided as training to construction personnel to understand regulatory requirements for the protection of paleontological resources. Additionally, the paleontologist must conduct training class(es) that include examples of paleontological resources to look for and protocols to follow if discoveries are made. The paleontologist must develop Project-specific training and supply any supplemental materials necessary to execute the training
- MM-GEO-2** Paleontological resources monitoring must be conducted under the guidance of a qualified professional paleontologist and by a qualified paleontological resource monitor(s) as defined by SVP (2010) standards during grading/excavation activities for development projects building out the TCSP area, unless it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita that such grading/excavation activities would be limited to engineered fill materials and/or the younger Quaternary Alluvium that makes up the surface layer. Monitoring must include the visual inspection of excavated or graded area and trench sidewalls. The monitor has the authority to temporarily halt or divert construction equipment in order to investigate and salvage finds. The paleontological monitor has the authority to take sediment samples and test for microfossils at the discretion of the qualified professional paleontologist. If no significant fossils are exposed or the qualified professional paleontologist otherwise finds that the scientific value of the resource has been exhausted, the qualified professional paleontologist may determine that full-time monitoring is no longer necessary or, with the approval of the City, may reduce or eliminate monitoring.
- MM-GEO-3** Should a paleontological resource be encountered when a monitor is not on-site or a potentially significant resource is encountered that requires additional investigation or cannot be quickly salvaged by the paleontological monitor, all construction must cease within 50 feet of the discovery and the qualified professional paleontologist must be immediately notified. If the monitor is present at the time of discovery, then the monitor may temporarily divert the construction equipment around the find and notify the qualified professional paleontologist. The qualified professional paleontologist must then visit the site and assess the resource for its scientific significance. Project excavations may continue elsewhere, monitored by a paleontological resource monitor. The qualified professional paleontologist must evaluate the find and contact the City as soon as possible with recommendations as to the significance and potential

treatment of the find. Depending on the nature of the find, the determination of significance may require additional excavation, potentially including the preparation and execution of a Paleontological Testing Plan. If significant, depending on the nature of the resource, treatment may require the preparation and execution of a Paleontological Treatment Plan. The City, acting with the advice of the qualified professional paleontologist, must determine the significance and treatment of the discovered resources.

MM-GEO-4 All significant fossils collected must be prepared in a properly-equipped paleontology laboratory to a point ready for permanent curation to the satisfaction of the City. Preparation must include the careful removal of excess matrix from fossil materials and stabilizing and repairing specimens, as necessary. Any fossils encountered and recovered must be prepared to the point of identification. Following the initial laboratory work, all fossil specimens must be identified to the lowest taxonomic level, analyzed, photographed, and catalogued, before being delivered to an accredited local museum repository for permanent curation and storage. All costs must be borne by the project applicant.

MM-GEO-5 At the conclusion of laboratory work and preparation for museum curation, a final report must be prepared describing the results of the paleontological monitoring efforts and submitted to the City of Santa Clarita. The report must include a summary of the field and laboratory methods, an overview of the geology and paleontology in the Project vicinity, a list of taxa recovered (if any), an analysis of fossils recovered (if any) and their scientific significance, and recommendations. If the monitoring efforts produced fossils, then a copy of the report must also be submitted to the designated museum repository. Accompanying notes, maps, and photographs must also be filed at the repository. The cost of curation is assessed by the repository and is the responsibility of the Project applicant.

Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-1, MM-GEO-4, and MM-GEO-5 are procedural actions and requirements that would be beneficial to the protection of paleontological resources. Implementation of these mitigation measures would not result in physical changes to the environment, and thus would not result in adverse secondary impacts. The paleontological resources monitoring as part of **Mitigation Measures MM-GEO-2 and MM-GEO-3** could potentially require excavations to unearth additional paleontological resources, if recommended by the qualified paleontologist. In addition, in the event that grading and excavation activities are temporarily diverted due to the discovery of a paleontological resource, construction activities could be delayed and the duration of construction could be extended. However, even if the duration of construction is extended, the same construction activities evaluated throughout this EIR would continue to occur. Extending the duration of construction would not result in new or increased activities not already evaluated in this EIR. Accordingly, these mitigation measures to reduce impacts related to paleontological resources would not result in significant secondary impacts.

6.4.4 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The analysis of the Project's impacts related to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment, which is addressed in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this EIR, resulted in the following recommended mitigation measure:

MM-HAZ-1 Prior to development approval for future development within 200 feet of the leaking underground storage tank (Case # T0603704904) site associated with the Los Angeles County Sheriff Station, located at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway, a letter of completion for remediation actions or letter indicating contamination would not exceed applicable thresholds for occupancy from the applicable oversight agency (e.g., Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board) shall be submitted to the City of Santa Clarita.

Prior to development approval for future development within 100 feet of the western boundary of Subarea 4 (McBean and Valencia), a letter of completion for remediation actions (Case # SL2048Y1711), located at 24375 Valencia Boulevard, or letter indicating contamination would not exceed applicable thresholds for occupancy from the applicable oversight agency (e.g., Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board) shall be submitted to the City of Santa Clarita.

Mitigation Measure MM-HAZ-1 is a procedural action and requirement that would be beneficial for the prevention of creation of a significant hazard to the environment. Implementation of this mitigation measure would not result in physical changes to the environment and, thus, would not result in adverse secondary impacts.

6.4.5 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The analysis of the Project's impacts related to tribal cultural resources, which is addressed in Section 4.12, Tribal Cultural Resources, of this EIR, resulted in the following recommended mitigation measures:

MM-TCR-1 In the Event of an Inadvertent Discovery: If cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior Professional Qualification Standards retained by the project applicant shall assess the find. Work on the portions of the Project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA, the project applicant shall retain a professional Tribal Monitor procured by the FTBMI to observe all remaining ground-disturbing activities including, but not limited to, clearing, grading, excavating, digging, trenching, plowing, drilling, tunneling, quarrying, leveling, driving posts, auguring, blasting, stripping topsoil or similar activity, and archaeological work.

MM-TCR-2 Disposition and Treatment of Inadvertent Discoveries: The Lead Agency and/or Project applicant shall, in good faith, consult with the FTBMI on the disposition and treatment of any tribal cultural resource encountered during all ground disturbing activities.

MM-TCR-3

In the Event of Inadvertent Discovery, Human Remains: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the Project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code shall be enforced for the duration of the Project.

- a) Inadvertent discoveries of human remains and/or funerary object(s) are subject to California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and the subsequent disposition of those discoveries shall be decided by the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), as determined by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), should those findings be determined as Native American in origin.

Mitigation Measure MM-TCR-2 is a procedural action and requirement that would be beneficial to the protection of tribal cultural resources. Implementation of this mitigation measure would not result in physical changes to the environment, and thus would not result in adverse secondary impacts. The actions to be taken in the event of inadvertent discovery as part of **Mitigation Measures MM-TCR-1 and MM-TCR-3** could potentially require excavations to unearth additional tribal cultural resources, if recommended by the Native American monitor or archaeologist, or additional human remains, if recommended by the County Coroner or Most Likely Descendant. In addition, in the event that grading and excavation activities are temporarily diverted due to the discovery of a tribal cultural resource or human remains, construction activities could be delayed and the duration of construction could be extended. However, even if construction were extended, the same construction activities evaluated throughout this Draft EIR would continue to occur. Extending the duration of construction would not result in new or increased activities not already evaluated in this Draft EIR. Accordingly, these mitigation measures to reduce impacts related to tribal cultural resources and human remains would not result in significant secondary impacts.

6.5 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR shall contain a brief statement indicating reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and not discussed in detail in the Draft EIR. Pursuant to Section 15128, such a statement may be contained in an attached copy of an Initial Study. An Initial Study was prepared for the Project and is included as **Appendix A** of this Draft EIR, which provides a detailed discussion of the issue and reasons why each topical area was found not to be significant.

The significance thresholds used to evaluate the impacts of the Project are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Initial Study Checklist. The City of Santa Clarita determined that the Project would result in less than significant or no impacts related to:

AESTHETICS

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, primary/secondary ridgelines, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

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

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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

AIR QUALITY

- e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?
- e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, including oak trees?
- f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plans, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?
- g) Affect a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) or Significant Natural Area (SNA) as identified on the City of Santa Clarita ESA Delineation Map?

CULTURAL RESOURCES

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?
- c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

ENERGY

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

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.
 - ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?
 - iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
 - iv) Landslides?
- b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?
- c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?
- d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?
- e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?
- f) Result in a change in topography or ground surface relief features?
- g) Result in earth movement (cut and/or fill) of 10,000 cubic yards or more?
- h) Involve development and/or grading on a slope greater than 10% natural grade?
- i) Result in the destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical feature?

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

- c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
- e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?
- f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?
- g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?
- i) Expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards (e.g., electrical transmission lines, gas lines, oil pipelines)?

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?
- b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?
- c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?
- d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of 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 on- or off-site?
- e) 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?
- f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?
- g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?
- h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?
- i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?
- j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

- k) Result in changes in the rate of flow, currents, or the course and direction of surface water and/or groundwater?
- l) Other modification of a wash, channel creek, or river?
- m) Impact stormwater management in any of the following ways:
 - i) Potential impact of project construction and project post-construction activity on stormwater runoff?
 - ii) Potential discharges from areas for materials storage, vehicle or equipment fueling, vehicle or equipment maintenance (including washing), waste handling, hazardous materials handling or storage, delivery areas or loading docks, or other outdoor work areas?
 - iii) Significant environmentally harmful increase in the flow velocity or volume of stormwater runoff?
 - iv) Significant and environmentally harmful increases in erosion of the Project Site or surrounding areas?
 - v) Stormwater discharges that would significantly impair or contribute to the impairment of the beneficial uses of receiving waters or areas that provide water quality benefits (e.g., riparian corridors, wetlands, etc.)?
 - vi) Cause harm to the biological integrity of drainage systems, watersheds, and/or water bodies?
 - vii) Does the proposed Project include provisions for the separation, recycling, and reuse of materials both during construction and after project occupancy?

LAND USE AND PLANNING

- a) Physically divide an established community?
- c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, and/or policies by agencies with jurisdiction over the project?

MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES

- a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?
- b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?
- c) Use nonrenewable resources in a wasteful and inefficient manner?

NOISE

- e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?

- f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

POPULATION AND HOUSING

- a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?
- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere (especially affordable housing)?
- c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

PUBLIC SERVICES

- a) 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:
- iv) Parks?
 - v) Other Public Facilities?

RECREATION

- a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

TRANSPORTATION

- c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?
- d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

- a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

- b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?
- c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?
- d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

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