Environmental Initial Study

San Juan Apartments Project

City File #: S&A 2022-11 and DB 2023-1

July 2023

Kimley»Horn

MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Project Title: San Juan Apartments

Project Location: The proposed project site is in the City of Hollister, in San Benito County, California. South of San Juan Road located at the address 1550 San Juan Road in Hollister, CA.

Assessor's Parcel No. 052-090-008

Applicant: Laith Agha

449 Alvarado Street, Monterey CA 93940

Initial Study:

An Initial Study of this project was prepared for the purpose of determining whether this project may have a significant effect on the environment. A copy of this study is on file at the City of Hollister, Development Services Department, 339 Fifth Street, Hollister, CA 95023.

Findings and Reasons:

The Initial Study identified potentially significant effects on the environment. However, this project has been mitigated and/or conditioned (see standard conditions and mitigation measures below which avoid or mitigate the effects) to a point where no significant effects will occur with project construction and operation. There is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. The following reasons support these findings:

1. The proposal is a logical extension of the existing land use pattern of this area.
2. Identified adverse impacts are proposed to be mitigated by construction best practices, design modifications, pre-construction surveys and standard conditions.
3. The proposed project is consistent with the adopted goals, policies and land uses of the City of Hollister General Plan and Municipal Code.
4. The proposed project is consistent with the City of Hollister West Gateway plan.
5. With the application of the following mitigation measures, the proposed project will not have any significant impacts on the environment:

Standard Conditions and Mitigation Measures

<u>Standard Condition</u>

Reduce Fugitive Dust

The project applicant shall implement the following measures to minimize nuisance impacts and to significantly reduce fugitive dust emissions, and the project applicant shall require all of the following measures to be shown on grading and building plans:

- Limit grading to 8.1 acres per day, and grading and excavation to 2.2 acres per day.
- Water graded/excavated areas and active unpaved roadways, unpaved staging areas, and unpaved parking areas at least twice daily or apply non-toxic chemical soil stabilization materials

per manufacturer's recommendations. Frequency should be based on the type of operations, soil and wind exposure.

- Prohibit all grading activities during periods of high wind (more than 15 mph).
- Apply chemical soil stabilizers on inactive construction areas (disturbed lands within construction projects that are unused for at least four consecutive days).
- Stabilize all disturbed soil areas not subject to using approved chemical soil binders, jute netting, or gravel for temporary roads and any other methods approved in advance by the APCD.
- Sow exposed ground areas that are planned to be reworked at dates greater than one month after initial grading with a fast germinating, non-invasive grass seed, and water until vegetation is established.
- Plant vegetative ground cover in disturbed areas as soon as possible.
- Use street sweepers, water trucks, or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible.
- Spray dirt stockpile areas daily as needed.
- Place gravel on all roadways and driveways as soon as possible after grading. In addition, construct building pads as soon as possible after grading unless seeding, soil binders, or frequent water application are used.
- Not exceed a 15 mph vehicle speed for all construction vehicles on any unpaved surface at the construction site.
- Cover or maintain at least 2 feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between top of load and top of trailer) on all trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 23114.
- Limit unpaved road travel to the extent possible, for example, by limiting the travel to and from unpaved areas, by coordinating movement between work areas rather than to central staging areas, and by busing workers where feasible.
- Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto streets, or wash off trucks and equipment leaving the site, and inspect vehicle tires to ensure free of soil prior to carry-out to paved roadways.
- Sweep streets at the end of each day, or as needed, if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads. Water sweepers with reclaimed water shall be used where feasible.

Burrowing Owl

MM BIO-1 a. A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey less than 30 days prior to construction within the project site in accordance with the CDFW burrowing owl survey protocol (CDFG 1995). If no burrowing owls or signs of their presence are detected in the vicinity of the project site during the pre-construction survey, a letter report documenting survey methods and findings shall be submitted to the City of Hollister and CDFW, and no further mitigation is required.

b. If unoccupied burrows are detected during the non-breeding season (September through January 31), the applicant may collapse the unoccupied burrows, or otherwise obstruct their entrances to prevent owls from entering and nesting in the burrows.

c. If occupied burrowing owl burrows are detected, impacts on burrows shall be avoided by providing a buffer of 160 feet during the non-breeding season (September 1 through January 31) or 250 feet during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31). The size of the buffer area may be adjusted if a qualified biologist or the CDFW determine the burrowing owl would not likely be affected by the Proposed Project. Project activities shall not commence within the buffer area until a qualified biologist confirms that the burrow is no longer occupied. If the burrow is occupied by a nesting pair, a minimum of 7.5 acres of foraging habitat contiguous to the burrow shall be maintained per pair until the breeding season is finished.

d. If impacts to occupied burrows are unavoidable, onsite passive relocation techniques approved by the CDFW shall be used to encourage burrowing owls to move to alternative burrows outside of the project site. No occupied burrows shall be disturbed during the nesting season unless a qualified biologist verifies through non-invasive methods that juveniles from the occupied burrows are foraging independently and are capable of independent survival. Mitigation for foraging habitat for relocated pairs shall follow the guidelines provided in the California Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines (Burrowing Owl Consortium, 1995). The mitigation for foraging habitat for relocated pairs ranges from 7.5 to 19.5 acres per pair.

San Joaquin Coachwhip

MM BIO-2 If construction activities are to occur between March to October, then a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction San Joaquin whipsnake surveys for active dens (within mammal burrows and stockpiles) before any construction activities occur in or adjacent to suitable den habitat. The surveys shall be conducted within 14 days prior to initiation of construction activities. Should San Joaquin whipsnake be observed within the project site, the biologist shall note the location on a map and resurvey the site prior to commencement of construction activities ensure the snake vacated the area. Should the San Joaquin whipsnake still be present, then a 50-foot buffer around the location shall be established and construction activities shall be prohibited within the buffer zone until the snake has vacated the project site.

Nesting Special Status Birds, Raptors and Other Protected Birds

MM BIO-3 For construction activities occurring during the nesting season (generally February 1 to August 31), surveys for nesting birds covered by the CFGC (including, but not limited to, tricolored blackbird, Cooper's hawk, and white-tailed kite) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than 14 days prior to initiation of construction activities, including construction staging and vegetation removal. The surveys shall include the entire disturbance areas plus a 100-foot area south of the site (where no development exists). If active nests are located, all construction work shall be conducted outside a buffer zone from the nest to be determined by the qualified biologist. The buffer shall be a minimum of 50 feet for non-raptor bird species and at least 150 feet for raptor species. Larger buffers may be required depending upon the status of the nest and the

construction activities occurring in the vicinity of the nest. The biologist shall have full discretion for establishing a suitable buffer. The buffer area(s) shall be closed to all construction personnel and equipment until the adults and young are no longer reliant on the nest site. A qualified biologist shall confirm that breeding/nesting is completed, and young have fledged the nest prior to removal of the buffer.

Special Status Bats

MM BIO-4 a. A qualified wildlife biologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for special-status Townsend's big-eared bat and western red bat in the vicinity of existing trees and shed structure no more than 14 days prior to commencement of construction activities. If no active roosts or evidence of Townsend's big-eared bat and western red bat presence are detected during these surveys, no additional mitigation is required.

b. Should Townsend's big-eared bat or western red bat individuals or their active roosts be detected during the pre-construction survey, the staging area should be situated at least 100 feet from the roost. Construction activities should be carried out in a short timeframe within 100 feet of the roost.

Cultural and Tribal Resources

MM CUL-1 During project construction, if any archeological, paleontological or tribal resources (e.g., evidence of past human habitation or fossils) are found, the project applicant and/or its contractor shall cease all work within 50 feet of the discovery and notify the City of Hollister Planning Division immediately. The project applicant and/or its contractor shall retain a qualified archaeologist, paleontologist and Native American representative to evaluate the finds and recommend appropriate mitigation measures for the inadvertently discovered resources. The City and the applicant shall consider the mitigation recommendations and agree on implementation of the measure(s) that are feasible and appropriate. Such measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, excavation, documentation, curation, or other appropriate measures. (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5)

MM CUL-2 If human remains or cultural resources associated with a burial (i.e. grave goods) are discovered during construction, the project applicant and/or its contractor shall cease all work within 50 feet of the find and notify the City of Hollister Planning Division and the County Coroner, according to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission and shall follow the procedures outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(d) and (e) regarding treatment and disposition of recovered cultural items. The Commission will designate a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) who will be authorized to provide recommendations for management of the Native American human remains and any associated materials or objects (Public Resourced Code Section 5097.98 and Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5).

Final Geotechnical Report

MM GEO-1 Prior to issuance of any grading or building permits for the project, the applicant shall submit a final geotechnical report for review and approval by the City. The project shall conform with all engineering recommendations within the final geotechnical report.

Site Access

MM TRA-1 The project entrance shall align with the existing driveway located across the street (APN 052-360-004 and -005). Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the Applicant for 1550 San Juan Road shall enter into an Agreement, in a form approved by the City, to relocate this existing (off site) driveway with the new driveway at 1550 San Juan Road. The existing driveway shall be relocated prior to Final Occupancy of the project located at 1550 San Juan Road. Final design and alignment shall ensure adequate access into the existing market and gas station.

MM TRA-2 The applicant shall allow for the future extension of the internal road, located between Building 4 and 8 and between Building 6 and 7 (where the road comes to a T intersection). The extension shall be designed through the T intersection to connect to the adjacent property located 1619 4th Street. The parking spaces located in this area shall be temporary until such time that a project is under construction at 1619 4th Street. During the construction of 1619 4th Street the property owner of 1550 San Juan Road shall allow this property owner to connect with the internal road to provide two entrance/exits for 1550 San Juan Road.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Regulatory Guidance

This Initial Study has been prepared to determine and identify the potential environmental effects of construction and operation of the San Juan Apartments in the City of Hollister (City file S&A 2022-11 and DB 2023-1). This study has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, Section 21000, et seq.).

1.2 Lead Agency

The lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over a proposed project. Where two or more public agencies will be involved with a project, CEQA Guidelines Section 15051 provides criteria for identifying the lead agency. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15051(b) (1), "the lead agency will normally be the agency with general governmental powers, such as a city or county, rather than an agency with a single or limited purpose." Based on the criteria above, the City of Hollister (City) is the lead agency for the proposed project.

1.3 Environmental Analysis

This document has been prepared using the City's environmental initial study checklist, together with recently certified environmental documents for nearby projects. The conclusions herein are based on CEQA standards, professional judgement, field review and available public documents. This Initial Study constitutes substantial evidence supporting the conclusion that the project could result in significant adverse environmental impacts unless mitigation measures are implemented to reduce or avoid those impacts.

1.4 Findings and Conclusions

The project, compared to existing conditions, could result in significant adverse environmental impacts as currently proposed. However, these effects could be addressed with specific mitigation measures and design modifications to reduce the significance of these effects. The majority of the environmental effects identified would be temporary, related to project construction, and protections have been put in place to reduce those effects to a less than significant level. While the uses proposed are generally consistent with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other City policies and programs adopted for the purpose of mitigating environmental effects, redesign of the project entrance to create a combined entrance for the project and the existing convenience store would serve to avoid conflicts with turning movements to and from San Felipe Road.

1.5 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

As required by Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 (a)(1), a mitigation monitoring and reporting program has been prepared for the project in order to monitor the implementation of the mitigation measures that have been adopted for the project. Any long-term monitoring of mitigation measures imposed on the overall development will be implemented through the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

2.0 INITIAL STUDY

2.1 Background Information

Project Title:	San Juan Apartments
Lead Agency:	City of Hollister 375 Fifth Street Hollister, CA 95023
Contact Persons:	Erica Fraser, AICP, Consulting Planner, City of Hollister
Date Prepared:	July 2023
Study Prepared by:	Kimley-Horn 10 S. Almaden Boulevard, Suite 1250 San Jose, CA 95113 Tad Stearn, Project Manager
APN/Project Location:	APN: 052-090-008/San Juan Road between Miller Road and Graf Road
General Plan Designation:	West Gateway Commercial and Mixed-Use
Project Sponsor:	Laith Agha
Project Site Address:	1550 San Juan Road, Hollister
Zoning:	West Gateway Mixed-Use (WG)
Project Description:	The project proposes a mix of uses within eight (8) buildings on a 5.5- acre site consisting of 157 apartments, a 3-story community building with 1,665 square feet of community space with apartments above, and a 3-story commercial building with 3,750 square feet of retail commercial space with apartments above. The project also includes a total of 291 parking spaces and landscaping throughout. The project application requests Site & Architectural Review.
Surrounding Land Uses:	The project site is bounded by a mobile home community (Mission Oaks Mobile Home Park) on the east, existing gas station and convenience store adjacent to the north, and light industrial uses to the west. South of the project site are agricultural wastewater ponds near the bed of the San Benito River. San Juan Road is north of the project site with single - family residential north of San Juan Road.
Public Comment Period:	July 21, 2023 to August 21, 2023

2.2 Description of Project and Environmental Setting

Project Location

The proposed project is located at 1550 San Juan Road in the City of Hollister, San Benito County (see **Figure 1**). The project area is located in the western/central portion of the Hollister planning area, south of San Juan Road (also known as SR 156 Business Loop/Fourth Street). The project site is located within the Western Gateway planning area in the western gateway to the City. The Hollister Municipal Airport is located approximately 2.5 miles to the north. The site is located in the Hollister US Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5- minute quadrangle. Specifically, the roughly square project boundaries include the following:

- The northern boundary is defined by San Juan Road and an existing gas station and convenience store (Shop n Save). Across San Juan Road is a grassy field.
- The southern boundary includes several shallow industrial wastewater treatment ponds associated with the City's Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant (IWTP). The ponds are approximately 100 feet south of the project boundary.
- The eastern boundary is a residential (mobile home) community.
- The western boundary includes a former meat packing facility (Del Curto Meat Company, Inc.) which is now rented out to multiple tenants including a trucking company and fencing company. Assorted trucks, trailers and miscellaneous vehicles and equipment are stored on this adjacent property.

Existing Site Conditions

The property is currently vacant and covered with weeds and grasses that appear to be regularly mowed. Besides weeds and grasses onsite, the property has six existing mature trees. There is one existing structure, a metal clad barn or shop building, located in the western portion of the site. Some central portions of the site appear to have been previously paved, including a deteriorated road that provided access to the metal barn and a diesel fueling island. The fueling island is no longer present, and associated underground storage tanks have been abandoned and filed with sand. There are no visible utilities serving the site aside from a single wooden utility pole that is no longer connected by aboveground wires. A vertical PVC pipe which appears to be a test well is located downslope near the southern boundary. The site slopes gently from north to south toward the wastewater ponds and San Benito River riverbed.

The surrounding land uses are shown in **Figure 2**. Photographs of existing site conditions are shown in **Figure 3a and 3b**.

Project Description

The Applicant is proposing a mixed-use residential project on an existing vacant property located south of San Juan Road. The subject parcel, APN 052-090-008, is approximately 5.55 acres in size.

Requested Approvals

The project is expected to require the following approvals:

- Site and Architectural Approval for proposed structures (including signage)
- Approval of a Development/Operating Agreement
- Access agreement with adjacent property owners

The project site is located in an urbanizing area and will utilize municipal water supplies. The project will not result in diversion of surface waters for irrigation, impacts to water bodies or habitat, or other issues that would trigger additional State or federal resource permitting beyond what is already required for water quality conformance.

Physical Improvements

The project would construct a total of eight three-story buildings consisting of six residential buildings totaling approximately 116,995 square feet (sf) of residential space, one community building with 1,665 sf of common community space with apartments above, and one commercial building with approximately 3,750 sf of commercial use. The commercial building would be located at the main entrance of the project along San Juan Road. The community building would be located diagonally across from the commercial building and directly across the future sport courts.

The entire project has 157 units with associated amenities such as open space and an outdoor play area. The project would include 291 parking spaces and 44 bicycle spaces. The project site plan is shown in **Figure 4**.

Unit Mix

As shown in **Table 2-1: Building and Site Summary**, the unit mix would comprise of 157 units, with units ranging from one-bedroom to three-bedrooms. Unit sizes are distributed as follows: one-bedroom units at 525 square feet, two-bedroom units at 800 square feet, and three-bedroom units at 973 square feet.

Table 2-1: Building and Site Summary

Description	Unit/Square Feet (sf)			
Site Details				
Site Area	241,244 sf			
Lot Coverage	68,534 sf			
Landscaped Area	75,219 sf			
Commercial Area	3,750 sf			
Building Details				
Unit Mix and Building Heights	**1-Bedroom**	**2-Bedroom**	**3-Bedroom**	**Height**
Commercial (Building 1)	7 units	--	--	45’
Community Space (Building 2)	--	--	--	39’-11“
Residential (Buildings 3 to 6)	54 units	66 units	30 units	42’-8”
Total Unit Count	157 residential units			

Description	Unit/Square Feet (sf)		
Open Space			
Community Building – Common Community Space	1,665 sf		
Parking			
Vehicle	**Standard**	**Compact**	**Covered**
Provided Parking	178 spaces	17 spaces	96 spaces
Total Vehicle Parking Count	291 spaces		
Total Bicycle Parking Count	44 spaces		
Source: Project Application Materials, 2022			

Affordable Housing Density Bonus and Development Incentives

The proposed project would dedicate 10 percent of the residential units (15 units) as low-income affordable units, distributed across the project site. In compliance with the California Density Bonus Law (CA Government Code Section 65915 P(1)(A) and (B), the applicant is seeking parking reductions in the following ratios:

Residential

- 1 bedroom: 1 on-site parking space per unit
- 2 or 3 bedrooms: 2 on-site parking spaces per unit

Commercial

- 1 space per 250 sf

With the above ratios applied, a total of 268[1] parking spaces would be required for the project to comply with CA Government Code Section 65915 P(1)(A) and (B). As identified in **Table 2-1**, the project would provide 291 spaces, exceeding the aforementioned requirements.

Construction

The site is gently sloping south with the highest point adjacent to the existing gas station/mini mart located off San Juan Road. Construction will require grading with heavy equipment, ground preparation, trenching, staking and flagging, installation and extension of utility systems and typical residential building techniques. Construction will require the use of bulldozers and excavators to level the site and grade the detention basins, compacting machinery, concrete pumpers for pouring foundations, cranes, and paving equipment for parking areas and hardscape. Construction is expected to progress over a 12-month period. The conceptual grading and drainage plan (site plan) is illustrated in **Figure 5**.

Operations

The future commercial uses within the project site are of unknown tenant mix. However, the future tenants are expected to be neighborhood serving uses and would be consistent with the City of Hollister's hours of operation and other regulations. Use of the common areas such as the multi-use building and maintenance/leasing offices would comply with the Municipal Code and/or project-specific covenants and regulations.

1 Total Required Vehicle Parking Spaces = [(1 on-site parking space/unit) * (# of 1-Bedroom units)] + [(2 on-site parking space/unit) * (# of 2-Bedroom units)] + [(2 on-site parking spaces/unit) * (# of 3-Bedroom units)] + [1 parking space/ 250 sf] = (1*61) + (2*96) + (3,750 sf/250 sf) = 61 + 192 + 15 = 268 parking spaces

Circulation and Access

Access to the site would be from a full access, unsignalized driveway directly from San Juan Road. The project's access to San Juan Road will be stop controlled. The proposed access point for the project would be the northern-most portion of the site adjacent to the existing gas station and convenience store (Stop n Save). As currently proposed, the Stop n Save would maintain access from an existing driveway cut directly on San Juan Road, as well as from a new access point from the new project driveway.

An internal circulation road would connect San Juan Road to the eight buildings, surface parking, and sport courts. Emergency vehicles and garbage trucks would also enter and exit from the drive aisle connecting San Juan Road and would be able to access all internal driveways as shown in **Figure 6**.

Landscaping and Open Space

Landscaping proposed onsite would consist of trees and shrubs that would adhere to low water, drought tolerant local and State regulations. The project proposes 190 trees throughout the site along the street frontages as shown in **Figure 7**.

Stormwater

Other improvements include storm drainage and utility systems constructed to local code, landscaping, and fencing. Sewer and water service will be provided by the City of Hollister. A new private 18-inch storm drain is proposed throughout the project as shown in **Figure 5** and **Figure 8**. Pervious pavers are proposed surrounding the project site for collection and capture of stormwater runoff on site.

Dry Utilities

Increased electricity demand to power the project would require additional coordination and approval from PG&E.

2.3 Project Consistency Analysis

CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(d)(5) states that the Initial Study is to examine whether the project would be consistent with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land use controls. This section includes a discussion of the proposed project's consistency with the City of Hollister General Plan (2005) and Zoning Code, the Monterey Bay Air Resources District's Air Quality Management Plan (2016), and the Council of San Benito County Governments' 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (2014).

General Plan and Zoning Code

The property (5.55-acre site) is currently within the jurisdiction of the City of Hollister. The property has been planned for future growth and development under City policies and land use regulations since 2005.

According to the City of Hollister General Plan, the project site has a General Plan land use designation of West Gateway Commercial and Mixed-Use, with a conforming West Gateway zoning designation. Under this designation and zoning, projects are intended to include a mix of community shopping, retail, and offices with residential uses. The General Plan encourages 3-story building forms on the street with architectural themes similar to the surrounding district. The designation is intended to provide convenience services to regional traffic on Highway 156.

The Hollister Municipal Code seeks a coordinated approach to development in the West Gateway area. As such, the Code specifies supplemental design standards (Hollister Municipal Code Section 17.08060) for site development and orientation of land use, plaza/outdoor gathering areas, and parking.

Air Quality Management Plan

Hollister is located in the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB). The Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) is the air pollution control agency for the NCCAB. The MBARD prepared the 2016 update to the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) and continues to prepare triennial updates to the AQMP to attain State and federal ambient air quality standards in the air basin. The AQMP and updates accommodate growth by projecting the growth in emissions based on different indicators. For example, population forecasts adopted by the Association of Monterey Bay Association of Governments (AMBAG) are used to forecast population-related emissions. Through the planning process, emissions growth is offset by basin-wide controls on stationary, area, and transportation sources of air pollution.

Projects that are not consistent with the AQMP or have not been accommodated in the plan and would have a significant cumulative impact on regional air quality unless emissions are completely offset. The MBARD has developed a consistency determination process for local jurisdictions to identify whether proposed residential land uses are consistent with the AQMP. Specifically, the MBARD consistency determination process demonstrates whether the population associated with growth, such as the proposed project, is accommodated because AMBAG's regional forecasts for population and dwelling units are embedded in the emissions inventory projections used in the AQMP. Projects that are consistent with AMBAG's regional forecasts have been accommodated in the AQMP and therefore are consistent with the plan. Buildout of the project's 5.55 acres as West Gateway been anticipated since adoption of the 2005 Hollister General Plan, and therefore have been included in AMBAG's regularly updated regional forecasts.

Regional Transportation Plan

The purpose of the Council of San Benito County Governments' 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is to establish goals, policies, programs, and projects for transportation improvements in the county. In some cases, this means reaffirming existing transportation policy and in others it means establishing policy to address new transportation needs. The Council of San Benito County Governments (COG) is responsible for the development and implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan. The residential project is consistent with the City's planned development pattern and *would not* impact any transportation projects identified in the RTP.

2.4 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

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

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

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

☐ Check here if this finding is not applicable.

FINDING: For the above-referenced topics that are not checked, there is no potential for significant environmental impact to occur from construction, operation, or maintenance of the proposed project. However, discussions are provided for all sections in order to inform responsible agencies, decision makers and the public to the greatest extent possible.

2.5 Determination (to be completed by the lead agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because specific mitigation measures and/or revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

_____ _____

City of Hollister Date

2.6 Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

All answers must take into account the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts. A brief explanation is required for answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources cited in the response following each question.

A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific screening analysis.

If it is determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist responses must indicate whether the impact is "Potentially Significant", "Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated", or "Less Than Significant Impact". "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "potentially significant impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

If all of the potentially significant impacts have been rendered less than significant with mitigation, a Negative Declaration may be prepared. The mitigation measures shall be described in the response, and it shall be explained how the mitigation measure reduces the potential effect to a less than significant level. Mitigation measures may be cross-referenced to other sections when one mitigation measure reduces the effect of another potential impact.

The response for each issue should identify the threshold or criteria, if any, used to determine significance and any mitigation measure, if any, to reduce a potential impact.

Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration (earlier analyses, if any, are cited at the end of the checklist). If an earlier analysis is used, the response should identify the following:

> *Earlier analysis used – Identify and state where the document is available.*
>
> *Impacts adequately addressed – The responses will identify which impacts were within the scope of and were adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.*
>
> *Mitigation Measures – For effects that are "Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated," the response will describe the mitigation measures, which were incorporated or refined from the earlier analysis, and to the extent they address site-specific conditions for the project.*

The checklist responses will incorporate references to inform sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Individuals contacted and other outside supporting sources of information will be cited in the References.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

3.1 Aesthetics

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

Existing Setting

Hollister lies near the southern end of the broad alluvial plain formed by the San Benito River and is surrounded on three sides by mountainous terrain. The City is situated at the focal point of a basin formed by the Gabilan Mountains to the south and west and by the Diablo Range to the east. These mountain ranges provide a rugged, natural backdrop to the highly modified landscape along the plain that is a patchwork of agricultural activity and suburban development.

The 5.55-acre project site is primarily vacant with an abandoned steel-clad barn located on the western portion of the site. The project site has no formal landscaping or existing surface lighting. The site is primarily overgrown with weeds and native grasses. Besides weeds and native grasses, there are six existing mature trees located on the project site. The sloping site provides south and west views over the San Benito River basin toward the Gabilan Mountains.

According to the General Plan EIR and recent field observations, the Westside area is largely composed of scattered vacant lots, rural residential uses, and commercial/industrial businesses. In recent years, however, the area has experienced continued growth and redevelopment, particularly along the San Juan Road corridor. In general, there are few visual cues or significant points of visual interest in this

area. While the General Plan would alter the visual setting of the area as it converts land from agricultural or vacant use to urban development, the plan promotes the preservation, protection, and promotion of the existing aesthetic features of the City and applies these policies to new development projects.

The project site and surrounding area is a built and disturbed environment. Existing buildings and San Juan Road dominate the aesthetic character. Most of the surrounding area is covered with impervious surfaces. The project site is bordered on one side by industrial uses, one side residential, one side a roadway and gas station, and south agricultural wastewater ponds. Overall, except for the modest views of distance hills as seen from the site, the site itself and its surroundings are not remarkable or of high visual or aesthetic quality.

Discussion

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less than Significant Impact. According to the Hollister General Plan (2005), there are no designated scenic vistas in the project area. Scenic vistas are typically described as areas of natural beauty with features such as dramatic topography, watercourses, rock outcrops, and/or natural vegetation that contribute to the landscape's quality. The City's topography is relatively flat, with low foothills beyond the San Benito River. Distant views of the mountains are available from the project site and surrounding areas, and from many vantage points within the City limits. However, the views are not particularly unique, and the visual landscape is already influenced by nearby development (industrial and residential) on adjacent property and across San Juan Road. The introduction of new construction of eight 3-story buildings (e.g., six residential buildings, one commercial building, and one community building) in this location will be a prominent visual feature; however, the project's location will not result in a substantial adverse effect to a defined scenic vista from public viewpoints. For these reasons, and because there are no designated scenic vistas in the area, impacts are considered less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. According to the Caltrans Scenic Highway Program SR 156 is designated as a scenic highway between SR-1 Castroville to SR-152 in Prunedale. The project site is located approximately 1.5 miles east of SR 156, and is not located near the scenic segment. SR 25 is designated as a California scenic highway between SR 198 and SR 156, and is located approximately 1.4 miles east of the project site. The project site is not located along a state scenic highway or designated scenic corridor. The project site would not be visible from these eligible State Scenic highway segments, and does not contain significant visual resources. For these reasons, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The project site is surrounded by a combination of commercial and residential buildings along a major roadway serving as a gateway to Hollister's downtown area. Implementation of the proposed project would alter the visual character of the project site; however,

introduction of the project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the area as seen from public viewpoints. In this case, the only public viewpoints with a visual vantage point are along San Juan Road itself. Views from the road are fleeting, of low quality, and compromised by existing development. With the exception of Building 1, the majority of the site and location of future development does not front San Juan Road, and is significantly set back from the roadway, on topography that slopes away from the road and public vantage points.

The proposed buildings would range in heights from 39 feet to 45 feet. Specifically, the six residential three-story buildings would have a height up to 42 feet and 8 inches, the community building would have a height up to 39 feet and 11 inches, and commercial building would have a height up to 45 feet. These proposed buildings would represent a noticeable visual change from the existing conditions.

"Size", "scale" and "mass" are terms often used when describing how a building or project "fits" in relationship to its surroundings or neighboring properties. For this project, relative size and scale is best represented in the elevation (profile) illustrations from San Juan Road (see **Figures 9a, 9b, and 9c**). Whether or not a project or structures are too large (or too small for that matter) is often a matter of opinion, as CEQA thresholds do not specifically speak to size as a significant impact. These issues are addressed by CEQA in terms of "visual character" from public viewpoints, as described in Impact (a) above, and also if the project is consistent with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

In term of local regulations, the project site is located in the City's West Gateway area. The General Plan includes policies to improve the major entrances into the City with "landmark entry features, signs and gateways". San Juan Road is one of the major entrances into Hollister and was originally built to function as part of SR 156. Today the corridor is transitioning to a new mixed-use designation. The City approved the West Gateway Streetscape beautification project to convert the former interstate roadway to a more pedestrian friendly "complete street" concept with a roundabout entry, landscaped median and the addition of on-street parking and a Class II bike path. The City is in the process of implementing this plan as the area redevelops, including plans to replace the signalized intersection of Graf Road with a roundabout and undergrounding utilities.

The project would result in eight three-story structures at a size and scale that would not be a significant deviation from the surrounding land uses and development pattern, including recent nearby projects that are 2 and 3 stories in size. The proposed architecture and articulation of building details is similar in variation and style to the residential development directly across San Juan Road. The building massing would be similar in size compared to its surroundings. The project would be required to comply with the Streetscape Beautification Plan along the project frontage.

Per Section 17.08.050 (Mixed Use Zoning District supplemental standards) of the Hollister Municipal Code, the maximum height allowed in West Gateway Mixed Use District is 50 feet. The proposed building would have a height up to 42 feet and 8 inches, which would be consistent with the height limitations for the project site outlined in Section 17.08.050 of the Hollister Municipal Code. Because the visual character of the site would be similar to the existing surrounding area and the proposed buildings would be within the allowed height limitations, the project would not conflict with adopted zoning. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with the City's design and development standards as outlined in the General Plan Land Use and Community Design Element and the Municipal Code. With compliance with

the City's design and development standards and design review process, visual impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would include outdoor lighting on the site typical of a mixed-use, multi-unit residential development. Hollister Municipal Code Section 17.16.090 outlines illumination standards that provide adequate lighting for safety and security; reduce light trespass, glare, skyglow impacts, and offensive light sources; prevent inappropriate, poorly designed or installed outdoor lighting; encourage quality lighting design, light fixture shielding, uniform light intensities, maximum lighting levels within and on property lines, and lighting controls; and promote efficient and cost-effective lighting to conserve energy. These lighting standards require that lighting be shielded with full cutoffs or recessed to reduce light bleed to adjoining properties, public rights-of-way, and the night sky by requiring the following: ensuring that the light source (bulb, etc.) is not visible from off the site; confining glare and reflections within the boundaries of the property; and requiring each light fixture to be directed downward and away from adjoining properties and public rights-of-way.

Although the project would result in development that would introduce new sources of nighttime lighting at the project site, compliance with the Hollister Municipal Code requirements result render any potential impacts less than significant.

The project, at 42 feet and 8 inches in height, may result in additional shade and shadow at adjacent land uses (mini mart and mobile home park). While the commercial use would not be sensitive to shadow, mobile home residents would likely be aware of increased shade and shadow caused by the project's buildings, particularly in the late afternoon as the sun sets in the west. While this is not a specific CEQA topic with specific significance criteria, the effects of shadow could result in a noticeable environmental change, particularly in late afternoon.

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
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))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X

Existing Setting

The project area is identified as urban and built-up land on the State of California Important Farmland Map. Urban and built-up land is defined as land occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to a 1.5-acre parcel (or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel). Residential, industrial, institutional facilities, cemeteries, and sanitary landfills are common examples of Urban Built-Up Land.

There is no designated farmland on or adjacent to the project site. The project site is also not subject to a Williamson Act contract.[2]

Discussion

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

No Impact. The proposed project site and surrounding areas are not designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance on the State of California Important Farmland Map. In addition, the project site is not located on prime agricultural land as identified in Map 15: Prime Farmland Areas of the Hollister General Plan.[3] Therefore, no impact would occur with respect to conversion of documented agricultural lands to non-agricultural use.

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

No Impact. The proposed project site is not currently zoned for agricultural use and is not under a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. The project site is not currently zoned for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned for production. Therefore, improvements planned as part of the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning of any such land. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

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

No Impact. According to the US Forest Service Interactive Visitor Map, the project site and City of Hollister do not contain forest land.[4] Therefore, no impact would occur with respect to changing forest land to a non-forest use.

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

No Impact. No designated agricultural or forest land is located within the project site. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

[2] California, State of, Department of Conservation, Williamson Act/Land Conservation Act. Available at http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/lca. Accessed March 28, 2022.
[3] City of Hollister. Hollister General Plan - Open Space and Agriculture Element.
[4] US Forest Service, Interactive Visitor Map. Available at https://www.fs.fed.us/ivm/. Accessed March 28, 2022.

3.3 Air Quality

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

Existing Setting

The City of Hollister is located in the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCAAB). The NCCAB comprises a single air district, the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD), which encompasses Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey counties.

Pollutants in the air can cause health problems, especially for children, the elderly, and people with heart or lung problems. Healthy adults may experience symptoms during periods of intense exercise. Pollutants can also cause damage to vegetation, animals, and property. Sensitive populations are more susceptible to the effects of air pollution than the general population. Sensitive receptors in proximity to localized sources of toxics are of particular concern. Land uses considered sensitive receptors include residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes.

The proposed project site is located along San Juan Road in the City of Hollister. The surrounding land uses are predominantly industrial, with residences to the east. **Table 3-1: Sensitive Receptors** lists the distances and locations of nearby sensitive receptors, which primarily include mobile home residences.

Table 3-1: Sensitive Receptors

Receptor Description	Distance and Direction from the Project Site
Mobile Home Residential Community	15 feet to the east
Single Family Residential Community	220 feet to the northeast
Single Family Residential Community	370 feet to the north
Single Family Residential Community	430 feet to the northwest
Source: Google Earth Pro, 2022	

Discussion

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

Less than Significant Impact. The MBARD's 2008 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines provides criteria for determining cumulative impacts and consistency. The CEQA Air Quality Guidelines note that a project which is inconsistent with an Air Quality Plan would have a significant cumulative impact on regional air quality. The proposed project's construction and operation emissions would not exceed MBARD thresholds as noted below. The NCCAB is currently in non-attainment for State ozone and PM_{10} standards which represents an existing cumulatively significant impact within the NCCAB. Ozone precursors include reactive organic gases (ROG) and NO_X. The project would not exceed quantitative thresholds for either of these ozone precursors. Similarly, PM_{10} thresholds also would not be exceeded for construction or operation of the project. The project is consistent with the Air Quality Management Plan for the Monterey Bay Region. Therefore, the project would not make a considerable contribution to this existing, cumulatively significant impact. This is a less than significant impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Land use activities associated with project implementation would introduce additional construction, mobile, and stationary sources of emissions, which would adversely affect regional air quality.

Construction Emissions

Emissions produced during grading and construction activities are "short-term" because they would cease following completion of the initial development. Construction emissions would include the generation of fugitive dust, onsite generation of construction equipment exhaust emissions, and the off-site generation of mobile source emissions related to construction traffic.

Construction for the proposed project is anticipated to begin in the Summer 2022 and last approximately 23 months. Demolition, site preparation, and grading would occur first. The project would require approximately 272 tons of demolition for the existing building and pavement onsite. The proposed project would require grading of the entire project site over a period of approximately one month. Earthwork is estimated to be approximately 7,270 cubic yards (cy) of exported soil material. California Emissions

Estimator Model (CalEEMod) estimates that the project would generate up to 163 worker trips and 36 vendor trips per day for building construction. For grading, the model estimates approximately 909 hauling trips over 34 days which would result in approximately 27 daily hauling trips. During the grading phase there would be approximately 15 daily worker trips. Therefore, a total of 42 daily trips would occur during the grading phase. Fugitive dust emissions are associated with land clearing, ground excavation, cut-and-fill operations, demolition, and truck travel on unpaved roadways. Dust emissions also vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity, the specific operations, and weather conditions. Fugitive dust emissions that may have a substantial, temporary impact on local air quality. In addition, fugitive dust may be a nuisance to those living and working in the project vicinity.

Fugitive dust from grading and construction is expected to be short-term and would cease following completion of the initial development. Additionally, most of this material is inert silicates and is less harmful to health than the complex organic particulates released from combustion sources. Dust (larger than ten microns) generated by such activities usually becomes more of a local nuisance than a serious health problem. Of particular health concern is the amount of PM_{10} generated as a part of fugitive dust emissions.

Particulate Matter

MBARD CEQA Guidelines state that construction activities (e.g., excavation, grading, on-site vehicles), which emit 82 pounds per day or more of PM_{10}, would have a significant impact on local air quality when they are located nearby and upwind of sensitive receptors. Based on this emission threshold, construction activity occurring on more than 2.2 acres per day may result in significant PM_{10} emissions. The Basin is currently in non-attainment of the State PM_{10} standard. The Basin designation of non-attainment is based on exceedances measured at the Davenport, Moss Landing, Salinas, and King City monitoring stations.

As shown in **Table 3-2: Construction-Related Emissions**, construction emissions associated with the project would not exceed the 82 lbs/day threshold of significance for PM_{10} during the mass grading phase of construction activities.

Table 3-2: Construction-Related Emissions

Construction Year	Pollutant (pounds/day)					
	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
2022	3.23	33.13	21.51	0.47	10.16	5.84
2023	2.15	16.58	20.92	0.05	2.22	1.08
2024	50.36	16.87	23.08	0.05	2.45	1.13
MBARD Threshold	---	---	---	---	82	---
Exceed MBARD Threshold?	NA	NA	NA	NA	No	NA

Notes:
1. The reduction/credits for construction emission mitigations are based on mitigation included in CalEEMod and as typically required by the MBARD (Basic Control Measures). The mitigation includes the following: replace ground cover on disturbed areas quickly, water exposed surfaces twice daily, and proper loading/unloading of mobile and other construction equipment.

Source: CalEEMod v. 2020.4.0 and Appendix A

Given the proximity of sensitive receptors to the project site, implementation of the following standard conditions per MBARD CEQA guidelines would further ensure impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level for all construction activities on the project site. Impacts would be less than significant.

Standard Condition:

Reduce Fugitive Dust

The project applicant shall implement the following measures to minimize nuisance impacts and to significantly reduce fugitive dust emissions, and the project applicant shall require all of the following measures to be shown on grading and building plans:

- Limit grading to 8.1 acres per day, and grading and excavation to 2.2 acres per day.
- Water graded/excavated areas and active unpaved roadways, unpaved staging areas, and unpaved parking areas at least twice daily or apply non-toxic chemical soil stabilization materials per manufacturer's recommendations. Frequency should be based on the type of operations, soil and wind exposure.
- Prohibit all grading activities during periods of high wind (more than 15 mph).
- Apply chemical soil stabilizers on inactive construction areas (disturbed lands within construction projects that are unused for at least four consecutive days).
- Stabilize all disturbed soil areas not subject to using approved chemical soil binders, jute netting, or gravel for temporary roads and any other methods approved in advance by the APCD.
- Sow exposed ground areas that are planned to be reworked at dates greater than one month after initial grading with a fast germinating, non-invasive grass seed, and water until vegetation is established.
- Plant vegetative ground cover in disturbed areas as soon as possible.
- Use street sweepers, water trucks, or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible.
- Spray dirt stockpile areas daily as needed.
- Place gravel on all roadways and driveways as soon as possible after grading. In addition, construct building pads as soon as possible after grading unless seeding, soil binders, or frequent water application are used.
- Not exceed a 15 mph vehicle speed for all construction vehicles on any unpaved surface at the construction site.
- Cover or maintain at least 2 feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between top of load and top of trailer) on all trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 23114.
- Limit unpaved road travel to the extent possible, for example, by limiting the travel to and from unpaved areas, by coordinating movement between work areas rather than to central staging areas, and by busing workers where feasible.

- Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto streets, or wash off trucks and equipment leaving the site, and inspect vehicle tires to ensure free of soil prior to carry-out to paved roadways.
- Sweep streets at the end of each day, or as needed, if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads. Water sweepers with reclaimed water shall be used where feasible.

Operational Emissions

Operational emissions for mixed-use developments are typically generated from mobile sources (burning of fossil fuels in cars); energy sources (cooling, heating, and cooking); and area sources (landscape equipment and household products). **Table 3-3: Operational Emissions** shows that the proposed project's maximum emissions would not exceed MBARD operational thresholds.

Table 3-3: Operational Emissions

Emissions Source	Pollutant (maximum pounds per day)[1]				
	ROG	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	SO_x
Area	4.44	0.15	12.98	0.07	0.001
Energy	0.04	0.33	0.14	0.03	0.002
Mobile	3.11	5.86	27.05	5.90	0.06
Total Project Emissions	**7.60**	**6.34**	**40.17**	**6.00**	**0.07**
MBARD Significance Threshold[2]	*137*	*137*	*550[1]*	*82*	*150*
MBARD Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes:
Area source emissions include natural gas fuel combustion, landscape fuel combustion, consumer products, and architectural coatings.
(1) Applies to Area Source (Direct) emissions of Carbon Monoxide only.

Source: Refer to the CalEEMod outputs provided in Appendix A.

Area Source Emissions. Area source emissions are generally a function of land use (e.g., number of single-family residential units), activity (e.g., fuel use per residential unit), and emission factor (e.g., mass of pollutant emitted per fuel usage). These include the following:

- Hearth fuel combustion. This source includes wood stoves, wood fireplaces, and natural gas-fired stoves. The proposed project does not include any of these sources.
- Landscape fuel combustion. This source includes exhaust and evaporative emissions from landscaping equipment including lawnmowers, rototillers, shredders/grinders, trimmers, chain saws, and hedge trimmers, used in residential and commercial applications.
- Consumer products. This source category comprises a wide range of products including air fresheners, automotive products, household cleaners, and personal care products.
- Architectural coatings. This source includes ROG emissions resulting from the evaporation of solvents contained in paints, varnishes, primers, and other surface coatings, from residential and nonresidential structures.

Energy Source Emissions. Energy source emissions would be generated as a result of electricity and natural gas (non-hearth) usage associated with the proposed project. The primary use of electricity and natural gas by the project would be for space heating and cooling, water heating, ventilation, lighting, appliances,

and electronics. Electric-power generating plants are distributed throughout the Basin, and their emissions contribute to the total regional pollutant burden.

Mobile Sources Emissions. Mobile sources are emissions from motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions. Depending upon the pollutant being discussed, the potential air quality impact may be of either regional or local concern. For example, ROG, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ are all pollutants of regional concern (NO_X and ROG react with sunlight to form O_3 [photochemical smog], and wind currents readily transport PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). However, CO tends to be a localized pollutant, dispersing rapidly at the source.

Project-generated vehicle emissions have been estimated using CalEEMod. Trip generation rates associated with the proposed project were based on the proposed project Transportation Analysis prepared by Kimley-Horn (2022) see Appendix H. Based on the Transportation Analysis, the proposed project would result in a gross total of 915 daily vehicle trips. However, with applicable trip reductions including internal capture and pass-by reduction the proposed project would result in a net of 868 new trips.

Total Operational Emissions. As indicated in **Table 3-3**, project operational emissions would not exceed MBARD thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project would not violate any air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation and no criteria pollutant health impacts would occur. Project operational emissions would be less than significant.

Cumulative Short-Term Emissions

The Basin is currently in non-attainment for State ozone and PM_{10} standards which represents an existing cumulatively significant impact within the Basin. As discussed above, the Project's construction-related emissions by themselves would not have the potential to exceed the MBARD significance thresholds for criteria pollutants.

Since these thresholds indicate whether an individual project's emissions have the potential to affect cumulative regional air quality, it can be expected that the Project-related construction emissions would be cumulatively considerable. The Project would implement SC AQ-1 to reduce PM_{10} emissions consistent with MBARD recommendations. With implementation of MBARD construction-related mitigation requirements, Project emissions would be below thresholds and would not result in cumulative impacts at a Basin-wide level. As a result, construction emissions associated with the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative air quality impacts.

Cumulative Long-Term Impacts

MBARD has not established separate significance thresholds for cumulative operational emissions. The nature of air emissions is largely a cumulative impact. As a result, no single project is sufficient in size, by itself, to result in nonattainment of ambient air quality standards. Instead, a project's individual emissions contribute to existing cumulatively significant adverse air quality impacts. MBARD developed the operational thresholds of significance based on the level above which a project's individual emissions would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the Basin's existing air quality conditions. Therefore, a project that exceeds MBARD operational thresholds would also be a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact.

As shown in **Table 3-3**, the proposed project's operational emissions would not exceed MBARD thresholds. As a result, operational emissions associated with the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative air quality impacts.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than Significant Impact. Sensitive land uses are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples of these sensitive receptors are residences, schools, hospitals, and daycare centers. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are the adjacent residences approximately 15 feet to the east. A complete list of nearby sensitive receptors is detailed in **Table 3-1**.

Construction-Related Diesel Particulate Matter

Construction would result in the generation of DPM emissions from the use of off-road diesel equipment required. The amount to which the receptors are exposed (a function of concentration and duration of exposure) is the primary factor used to determine health risk (i.e., potential exposure to TAC emission levels that exceed applicable standards). Health-related risks associated with diesel-exhaust emissions are primarily linked to long-term exposure and the associated risk of contracting cancer.

The use of diesel-powered construction equipment would be temporary and episodic. The duration of exposure would be short and exhaust from construction equipment dissipates rapidly. Current models and methodologies for conducting health risk assessments are associated with longer-term exposure periods of 9, 30, and 70 years, which do not correlate well with the temporary and highly variable nature of construction activities. The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment has not identified short-term health effects from DPM. Construction is temporary and would be transient throughout the site (i.e., move from location to location) and would not generate emissions in a fixed location for extended periods of time which would limit the exposure of any proximate individual sensitive receptor to TACs.

Additionally, construction is subject to and would comply with California regulations (e.g., California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections 2485 and 2449), which reduce diesel PM and criteria pollutant emissions from in-use off-road diesel-fueled vehicles and limit the idling of heavy-duty construction equipment to no more than five minutes. These regulations would further reduce nearby sensitive receptors' exposure to temporary and variable DPM emissions. Given the temporary and intermittent nature of construction activities likely to occur within specific locations in the Project site (i.e., construction is not likely to occur in any one location for an extended time), the dose of DPM of any one receptor is exposed to would be limited.

Therefore, considering the distance to sensitive receptors, the relatively short duration of DPM-emitting construction activity at any one location, and the highly dispersive properties of DPM, sensitive receptors would not be exposed to substantial concentrations of construction-related TAC emissions. Impacts would be less than significant.

Toxic Air Contaminants

The proposed project will not create a significant hazard to surrounding residents and other sensitive receptors through exposure to substantial pollutant concentrations such as particulate matter during construction activities and/or other toxic air contaminants (TACs).

Sensitive land uses are generally defined as locations where people reside or where the presence of air emissions could adversely affect the use of the land. Typical sensitive receptors include residents, schoolchildren, hospital patients, and the elderly. The nearest residential uses are located approximately 15 feet east of the project site. However, the project would not produce concentrations of TACs; therefore, there will be no impact regarding stationary or mobile TACs.

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

Local air quality is a major concern along roadways. CO is a primary pollutant, and unlike ozone, is directly emitted from a variety of sources. For this reason, CO concentrations are usually indicative of the local air quality generated by a roadway network and are used as an indicator of its impacts upon the local air quality. Areas of vehicle congestion have the potential to create “pockets” of CO called “hot spots.” These pockets have the potential to exceed the 1-hour CAAQS of 20 parts per million (ppm) and/or the 8-hour CAAQS of 9 ppm.

To identify CO hotspots, MBARD criterion recommends performing a CO hotspot analysis when:

- Intersections or road segments that operate at LOS D or better that would operate at LOS E or F with the project's traffic,
- Intersections or road segments that operate at LOS E or F where the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio would increase 0.05 or more with the project’s traffic,
- Intersections that operate at LOS E or F where delay would increase by 10 seconds or more with the project’s traffic,
- Unsignalized intersections which operate at LOS E or F where the reserve capacity would decrease by 50 or more with the project’s traffic. This criterion is based on the turning movement with the worst reserve capacity, or
- Project would generate substantial heavy duty truck traffic or generate substantial traffic along urban street canyons or near a major stationary source of CO.

According to the Transportation Impacts Analysis (2022) for the proposed project, the project would generate a net of 868 daily trips. The traffic analysis includes three scenarios. For all three scenarios the only intersection that shows a decrease in LOS is San Juan Road and Project Driveway at the worst approach. In the Cumulative scenario the LOS would decrease from LOS C in the AM and PM to LOS D in the AM and E in the PM peak. However, in all cases the inadequate queue lengths are not associated with the project, but are a result of pre-existing deficiencies. Since the project did not increase the queue by at least one vehicle length (i.e., 25 feet) it is not considered a new deficiency. Therefore, impacts related to carbon monoxide would be less than significant.

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

Construction

Less than Significant Impact. According to the BAAQMD, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include wastewater treatment plants, landfills, confined animal facilities, composting stations, food manufacturing plants, refineries, and chemical plants. The proposed project does not include any uses identified by the MBARD as being associated with odors.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project may generate detectable odors from heavy duty equipment (i.e., diesel exhaust), as well as from architectural coatings and asphalt off-gassing. Odors generated from the referenced sources are common in the man-made environment and are not known to be substantially offensive to adjacent receptors. Any construction-related odors would be short-term in nature and cease upon project completion. As a result, impacts to existing adjacent land uses from construction-related odors would be short-term in duration and therefore would be less than significant.

Operational

Less than Significant Impact. The occurrence and severity of odor impacts depends on numerous factors, including the nature, frequency, and intensity of the source; wind speed and direction; and the sensitivity of the receptors. While offensive odors rarely cause physical harm, they can still be unpleasant, leading to considerable distress among the public and often generating citizen complaints to local governments and regulatory agencies. Projects with the potential to frequently expose members of the public to objectionable odors would be deemed to violate the MBARD standards.

MBARD enforces permit and nuisance rules to control odorous emissions from stationary sources. For instance, MBARD Rule 402 (Nuisances) prohibits the discharge of air contaminants or other materials that cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable numbers of persons. Given these regulations there would be a less than significant impact.

With respect to odor impacts from adjacent and nearby properties that could affect project guests, land uses typically producing objectionable odors include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment facilities, waste-disposal facilities, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. Agricultural and automotive-repair uses are located near the project site, including nearby agricultural wastewater ponds. The ponds, according to City staff, are subject to an active discharge permit that limits the potential for odors. As the project would include uses consistent with surrounding area and would be required to comply with MBARD Rules, impacts would be less than significant.

3.4 Biological Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?		X		
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
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?		X		
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

Existing Setting

Kimley-Horn staff conducted field observations of the project site on June 29, 2020 to characterize the biological baseline on and adjacent to the proposed project. The evaluation involved a reconnaissance-level survey of site conditions and informal tree survey. Studies for nearby projects were also reviewed to

obtain baseline habitat and species data that may potentially be present. No formal plant or wildlife surveys were conducted.

The project site is located in the Central Coast bioregion. The site is currently vacant and covered in native and non-native grasses, low shrubs, and approximately six mature trees, which include a mix of eucalyptus, pepper tree, and oak. The six trees are located in the southern portion of the project site, more specifically the trees are along the fence of the neighboring property to the southwest and on the southeastern portion of the project site.

The dominant habitat type is ruderal. Ruderal areas have had visible disturbance of soil or vegetation and are mostly bare and colonized by weeds and disturbance-tolerant non-natives, such as fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* sp.), wild radish (*Raphanus sativa*), field mustards (*Hirschfeldia* spp., *Brassica* spp.), cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), annual grasses and filaree (*Erodium cicutatium*). No special status plants are expected to occur in the project area based on the findings of nearby biological resource studies.

There are no creeks, rivers, or water bodies located on or directly adjacent to the project site. The closest water body is the San Benito River, approximately 0.25 miles to the southwest. As described in more detail below, special status wildlife species that have the potential to be present in the habitats of the nearby San Benito River area include: California tiger salamander, California red legged frog, Western spadefoot, Burrowing Owl, San Joaquin Coachwhip, Western Pond turtle, American badger, Pallid bat, Townsend's big-eared bat, western mastiff bat, and western red bat, Coast range newt and nesting migratory birds, raptors and other protected birds.[5] However, no sensitive natural communities were observed at the project site.

The "Hollister Industrial Ponds" (i.e. the Hollister Water Reclamation Facility) is listed as a hot spot on ebird, with 112 species observed (2019). Along the San Benito River, species recently observed included northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), and red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*).

Special-Status Species

Candidate, sensitive, or special-status species are commonly characterized as species that are at potential risk or actual risk to their persistence in a given area or across their range. These species have been identified and assigned a status ranking by governmental agencies such as the CDFW, the USFWS, and nongovernmental organizations such as the CNPS. The degree to which a species is at risk of extinction is the determining factor in the assignment of a status ranking. Some common threats to a species or population's persistence include habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation, as well as human conflict and intrusion. For the purposes of this biological review, special-status species are defined by the following codes:

- Listed, proposed, or candidates for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 17.11 – listed; 61 Federal Register [FR] 7591, February 28, 1996, candidates)

[5] To identify special status species in the vicinity of the project site, this analysis referenced the *Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration for the San Benito River Greenway Project* (SCH #2008121118) for special species to potentially occur in the vicinity of the San Benito River.

- Listed or proposed for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code [FGC] 1992 Section 2050 et seq.; 14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 670.1 et seq.)
- Designated as Species of Special Concern by the CDFW
- Designated as Fully Protected by the CDFW (FGC Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, 5515)
- Species that meet the definition of rare or endangered under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (14 CCR Section 15380) including CNPS List Rank 1B and 2

As noted previously, no special status plants are expected to be present in this location. The discussion of special status species therefore focused on wildlife.

Discussion

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The biological resource assessment for the San Benito River Greenway trail project (2018) identified fifteen special status wildlife species have potential to occur within the immediate area based upon known ranges, habitat preferences, species occurrence records in the vicinity, and presence of suitable habitat. However, the river trail project is located along the bank of and immediately adjacent to the San Benito River. The ruderal habitat of the San Juan apartments project site, by comparison, lacks several of the habitat types and characteristics that would support wetland-dependent special status species or quality upland habitat. The site does not contain or is adjacent to pools, riparian areas, ponds or other undisturbed habitats that would support species such as California Tiger Salamander (CTS) or California red legged frog (CRLF). The site is a disturbed field surrounded by urban uses on three sides, and industrial and agricultural wastewater ponds on the fourth side. According to the biological assessment for the river trail project, these ponds are frequently disturbed, do not present quality habitat for special status species, and serve as a barrier for movement of species such as CTS.

Despite the disturbed condition of the site, there is the potential for several other species to be present. Based on known regional occurrences and potential special status wildlife species known to occur in the San Benito River area, Burrowing Owl, San Joaquin Coachwhip, local bat species and nesting special status species of birds, raptors and other protected birds could have the potential to occur on the project site given the site's proximity to the San Benito River. To avoid potential impacts associated with project construction the following mitigation measures would be required to reduce impacts to special status species in the San Benito River area to a less than significant level.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

Burrowing Owl

MM BIO-1 a. A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey less than 30 days prior to construction within the project site in accordance with the CDFW burrowing owl survey

protocol (CDFG 1995). If no burrowing owls or signs of their presence are detected in the vicinity of the project site during the pre-construction survey, a letter report documenting survey methods and findings shall be submitted to the City of Hollister and CDFW, and no further mitigation is required.

b. If unoccupied burrows are detected during the non-breeding season (September through January 31), the applicant may collapse the unoccupied burrows, or otherwise obstruct their entrances to prevent owls from entering and nesting in the burrows.

c. If occupied burrowing owl burrows are detected, impacts on burrows shall be avoided by providing a buffer of 160 feet during the non-breeding season (September 1 through January 31) or 250 feet during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31). The size of the buffer area may be adjusted if a qualified biologist or the CDFW determine the burrowing owl would not likely be affected by the Proposed Project. Project activities shall not commence within the buffer area until a qualified biologist confirms that the burrow is no longer occupied. If the burrow is occupied by a nesting pair, a minimum of 7.5 acres of foraging habitat contiguous to the burrow shall be maintained per pair until the breeding season is finished.

d. If impacts to occupied burrows are unavoidable, onsite passive relocation techniques approved by the CDFW shall be used to encourage burrowing owls to move to alternative burrows outside of the project site. No occupied burrows shall be disturbed during the nesting season unless a qualified biologist verifies through non-invasive methods that juveniles from the occupied burrows are foraging independently and are capable of independent survival. Mitigation for foraging habitat for relocated pairs shall follow the guidelines provided in the California Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines (Burrowing Owl Consortium, 1995). The mitigation for foraging habitat for relocated pairs ranges from 7.5 to 19.5 acres per pair.

San Joaquin Coachwhip

MM BIO-2 If construction activities are to occur between March to October, then a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction San Joaquin whipsnake surveys for active dens (within mammal burrows and stockpiles) before any construction activities occur in or adjacent to suitable den habitat. The surveys shall be conducted within 14 days prior to initiation of construction activities. Should San Joaquin whipsnake be observed within the project site, the biologist shall note the location on a map and resurvey the site prior to commencement of construction activities ensure the snake vacated the area. Should the San Joaquin whipsnake still be present, then a 50-foot buffer around the location shall be established and construction activities shall be prohibited within the buffer zone until the snake has vacated the project site.

Nesting Special Status Birds, Raptors and Other Protected Birds

MM BIO-3 For construction activities occurring during the nesting season (generally February 1 to August 31), surveys for nesting birds covered by the CFGC (including, but not limited to, tricolored blackbird, Cooper's hawk, and white-tailed kite) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than 14 days prior to initiation of construction activities, including construction staging and vegetation removal. The surveys shall include the

entire disturbance areas plus a 100-foot area south of the site (where no development exists). If active nests are located, all construction work shall be conducted outside a buffer zone from the nest to be determined by the qualified biologist. The buffer shall be a minimum of 50 feet for non-raptor bird species and at least 150 feet for raptor species. Larger buffers may be required depending upon the status of the nest and the construction activities occurring in the vicinity of the nest. The biologist shall have full discretion for establishing a suitable buffer. The buffer area(s) shall be closed to all construction personnel and equipment until the adults and young are no longer reliant on the nest site. A qualified biologist shall confirm that breeding/nesting is completed, and young have fledged the nest prior to removal of the buffer.

Special Status Bats

MM BIO-4 a. A qualified wildlife biologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for special-status Townsend's big-eared bat and western red bat in the vicinity of existing trees and shed structure no more than 14 days prior to commencement of construction activities. If no active roosts or evidence of Townsend's big-eared bat and western red bat presence are detected during these surveys, no additional mitigation is required.

b. Should Townsend's big-eared bat or western red bat individuals or their active roosts be detected during the pre-construction survey, the staging area should be situated at least 100 feet from the roost. Construction activities should be carried out in a short timeframe within 100 feet of the roost.

Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed above, the project site is currently a vacant and previously disturbed, adjacent to development on three sides. The project site is not located within any designated critical habitat areas and does not contain any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community as identified in any local or regional plans, policies or regulations. Impacts with respect to riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities are less than significant.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological?

No Impact. No wetlands or other jurisdictional waters were observed on the site during the June 2020 field reconnaissance. There are no tributaries or water bodies on the property that meet the technical criteria for a wetland. Based on the reconnaissance-level survey and historical aerials reviewed, jurisdictional waters appear to be absent from the site. The nearby industrial and agricultural wastewater ponds do not constitute suitable wetland habitat. Therefore, the project would have no impact to federally protected wetlands.

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?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Wildlife corridors refer to established migration routes commonly used by resident and migratory species for passage from one geographic location to another. Movement corridors may provide favorable locations for wildlife to travel between different habitat areas, such as foraging sites, breeding sites, cover areas, and preferred summer and winter range locations. They may also function as dispersal corridors allowing animals to move between various locations within their range. The project site is vacant and consists of ruderal habitat that is isolated by development and agriculture from other areas of natural habitats occurring on all sides.

There are approximately six trees located on the project site. While use of the trees for raptor nesting is unlikely due to the size of the trees and limited cover provided, migratory birds could use the trees for nesting. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503 and 3503.5 protects raptors and their nests. The species could be potentially disturbed during tree removal and construction activities. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-3 provided above, the project's impact to nesting birds and raptors would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The project would result in the removal of the six existing trees on site. These trees may provide temporary cover or foraging habitat for common bird species and are subject to the City's tree care guidelines and tree removal regulations. The project would plant 190 trees throughout the site as shown in **Figure 6**. The project's landscaping plan would establish replacement trees of similar type or from the City's Master Tree List to offset the loss of existing trees caused by the project. The overall plant palette would be comprised of plant materials and trees known to thrive in the local climate and soil conditions. The proposed project would not conflict with the Hollister Municipal Code, nor would it conflict with any of the policies described in the Hollister General Plan that protect biological resources. The project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. As such, a less than significant impact would occur.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. There are currently no other adopted or proposed habitat conservation plans, natural community conservation plans, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans that affect the proposed project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

3.5 Cultural Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to in § 15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?		X		
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?		X		

A cultural resources assessment was prepared for the project (Dudek 2020). The assessment includes a records search of the California Historical Resource Information system (CHRIS) for known cultural resources, a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search through the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), outreach to local Native American groups and local historical societies, and an intensive pedestrian survey of the project location for evidence of unknown cultural resources. The cultural resources assessment is provided in Appendix B and information from the report is summarized throughout this subsection.

Existing Setting

In order to identify cultural resources potentially affected by the project, Dudek defined a records search study area that included the project area and a 0.25-mile buffer for resources and cultural studies.

Historical period resources identified within the project area include one agricultural ancillary building (P-35-000564) located in the west central portion of the project site. The structure identified on the project site was recorded in 2013 and was found not eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHP). In addition, the structure is not listed in the California (San Benito County) Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) and does not have a local historic resource designation under City Municipal Code Chapter 15.16 (Historic Resources). This building is currently abandoned and appears to be in same condition as it was in 2013.

Resources identified in proximity to the project site include one single-family building (P-35-000534) located approximately 200 feet north of the project site. This resource is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and/or California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), and therefore was not recommended as eligible as a historical property for either the CRHR or NRHP.

Discussion

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to in § 15064.5?

Less than Significant Impact. The project site is primarily vacant except for an existing abandoned metal clad barn structure on the western portion of the site. According to the CHRIS results, the structure is recorded as an agricultural ancillary building with a gabled roof and metal frame structure. The site record notes the age of the building as approximately 1930s. The structure is not eligible for the CRHR, not listed in the County's BERD database or listed as a local historic resource in the City Municipal Code resources. In addition, the structure is unused and in need of structural repairs. For these reasons, demolition and removal of the structure to construct the project would have a less than significant impact on historic structures.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The project would involve excavation for development of eight 3-story buildings with commercial, residential, and community space. **.** According to Figure 15, Zones of Archaeological Sensitivity in the General Plan EIR, the project site is located within an area of greater sensitivity. However, the intensive pedestrian survey conducted as part of the Cultural Resources Assessment in August 2020 found no evidence for previously unknown cultural resources. Specifically, no archaeological soil evidence or material commonly used as raw materials for prehistoric tool manufacture such as chert and obsidian were observed.

Based on the results of the cultural resource assessment, there is a low potential for encountering cultural resources in the project area. However, there is always a possibility that previously unknown unrecorded archaeological resources could be inadvertently discovered during ground disturbing construction operations. Therefore, the project could have a significant impact on archaeological resources. Pursuant to Public Resource Code (PRC) Section 21083.2, should any cultural resources be encountered during construction, all work would cease until the find has been evaluated and Mitigation Measure MM CUL-1 is implemented to protect any cultural find. Compliance with PRC Section 21083.2 and corresponding mitigation measures below would ensure the project would mitigate this potential impact.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

Cultural and Tribal Resources

MM CUL-1 During project construction, if any archeological, paleontological or tribal resources (e.g., evidence of past human habitation or fossils) are found, the project applicant and/or its contractor shall cease all work within 50 feet of the discovery and notify the City of Hollister Planning Division immediately. The project applicant and/or its contractor shall retain a qualified archaeologist, paleontologist and Native American representative to evaluate the finds and recommend appropriate mitigation measures for the inadvertently discovered resources. The City and the applicant shall consider the mitigation recommendations and agree on implementation of the measure(s) that are feasible and appropriate. Such measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, excavation,

documentation, curation, or other appropriate measures. (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5)

Implementation of MM CUL-1 would reduce impacts to archaeological resources to a less than significant level.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Based on the Cultural Resource Assessment, no evidence suggests that any prehistoric or historic-era marked or un-marked human interments are present within or in the immediate vicinity of the project area. However, there is the remote possibility that previously unknown Native American or other graves could be present and be inadvertently uncovered during construction activities. California law recognizes the need to protect historic-era and Native American human burials, skeletal remains, and grave-associated items from vandalism and inadvertent destruction and any substantial change to or destruction of these resources would be a significant impact. Therefore, the City would require the project to comply with all applicable regulatory programs pertaining to subsurface cultural resources including the above-mentioned MM CUL-1 and following MM CUL-2 for avoiding and reducing impacts if human remains are encountered.

Mitigation Measures

Cultural and Tribal Resources

MM CUL-2 If human remains or cultural resources associated with a burial (i.e. grave goods) are discovered during construction, the project applicant and/or its contractor shall cease all work within 50 feet of the find and notify the City of Hollister Planning Division and the County Coroner, according to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission and shall follow the procedures outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(d) and (e) regarding treatment and disposition of recovered cultural items. The Commission will designate a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) who will be authorized to provide recommendations for management of the Native American human remains and any associated materials or objects (Public Resourced Code Section 5097.98 and Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5).

Implementation of MM CUL-1 and CUL-2 would reduce impacts on human remains to a less than significant level by requiring that work cease immediately and ensuring the appropriate procedures are followed in the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains during project construction.

3.6 Energy

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?			X	
e) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?			X	

Existing Setting

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) is the City's energy utility provider, furnishing both natural gas and electricity for residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal uses. PG&E generates or buys electricity from hydroelectric, nuclear, renewable, natural gas, and coal facilities. In 2022, PG&E's electric power was produced by renewable sources (50 percent - including solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, and small hydroelectric), nuclear plants (39 percent), natural gas facilities (7 percent), and large hydroelectric plants (4 percent).[6]

Discussion

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

Construction

Less Than Significant Impact. The energy consumption associated with construction of the proposed project includes primarily diesel fuel consumption from on-road hauling trips and off-road construction diesel equipment, and gasoline consumption from on-road worker commute and vendor trips. Temporary electric power for as-necessary lighting and electronic equipment (such as computers inside temporary construction trailers, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) would be powered by a generator. The amount of electricity used during construction would be minimal; typical demand would stem from the use of electrically powered hand tools and several construction trailers by managerial staff during the hours of construction activities. The majority of the energy used during construction would be from petroleum. This analysis relies on the construction equipment list and operational characteristics, as stated in Section 3.3, Air Quality and Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, as well as Appendix A and C of this Initial Study. **Table 3-4: Project Energy Consumption During Construction** quantifies the

[6] Pacific Gas and Electric, Exploring Clean Energy Solutions, https://www.pge.com/en_US/about-pge/environment/what-we-are-doing/clean-energy-solutions/clean-energy-solutions.page?WT.mc_id=Vanity_cleanenergy, Accessed April 19, 2022.

construction energy consumption are provided for the proposed project, followed by an analysis of impacts based on those quantifications.

Table 3-4: Project Energy Consumption During Construction

Source	Project Construction Usage	San Benito County Annual Energy Consumption	Percentage Increase Countywide
Electricity Use	**Megawatt Hours (MWh)**		
Water Use[1]	6.98	390,671	0.002%
Diesel Use	**Gallons**		
On-Road Construction Trips [2]	18,286	**23,255,605**	0.079%
Off-Road Construction Equipment [3]	59,172		0.254%
Construction Diesel Total	**77,458**		**0.333%**
Gasoline	**Gallons**		
On-Road Construction Trips [2]	25,606	27,611,047	0.093%

1. Construction water use based on acres disturbed per day per construction sequencing and estimated water use per acre.
2. On-road mobile source fuel use based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) from CalEEMod and fleet-average fuel consumption in gallons per mile from EMFAC2021 in San Benito County for construction year 2022.
3. Off-road mobile source fuel usage based on a fuel usage rate of 0.05 gallons of diesel per horsepower (hp)-hour from USEPA.
Abbreviations:
CalEEMod: California Emission Estimation Model; EMFAC: Emission Factor Model 2017
Sources: **Appendix C**: Energy Calculations

In total, construction of the proposed project would consume approximately 77,458 gallons of diesel and 25,606 gallons of gasoline. The proposed project's fuel from the entire construction period would increase fuel use in the County by approximately 0.33 percent for diesel and 0.09 percent for gasoline.

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. In addition, some incidental energy conservation would occur during construction through compliance with State requirements that equipment not in use for more than five minutes be turned off. Project construction equipment would also be required to comply with the latest EPA and CARB engine emissions standards. These engines use highly efficient combustion engines to minimize unnecessary fuel consumption.

The CEQA Guideline Appendix G and Appendix F criteria requires the proposed project's effects on local and regional energy supplies and on the requirements for additional capacity to be addressed. A 0.40 percent increase in construction fuel demand is not anticipated to trigger the need for additional capacity. Fuel consumption is based on a conservative construction phasing and conservative estimates for annual construction fuel consumption. Longer phases would result in lower construction intensity and a lower annual fuel consumption, resulting in lower annual demand on energy supplies. Additionally, use of construction fuel would cease once the proposed project is fully developed. As such, project construction would have a nominal effect on the local and regional energy supplies. Therefore, it is expected that construction fuel consumption associated with the proposed project would not be inefficient, wasteful,

or unnecessary. The proposed project would not substantially affect existing energy or fuel supplies, or resources and new capacity would not be required. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Operational

Less Than Significant Impact. The energy consumption would include building electricity, water, and natural gas usage, as well as fuel usage from on-road vehicles. Note that this energy resources analysis is consistent with the analysis presented in Section 3.3, Air Quality, and Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gases. Quantifications of operational energy consumption are provided for the project in **Table 3-5: Annual Energy Consumption During Operations** below.

Table 3-5: Annual Energy Consumption During Operations

Source		Project Operational Usage	San Benito County Annual Energy Consumption	Percentage Increase Countywide
Electricity Use	**Megawatt Hour/Year (MWh/year)**			
Area [1]		688	390,671	0.18%
Water		80		0.02%
Total Electricity		768		0.20%
Natural Gas Use	**Therms/year**			
Area [1]		13,250	15,012,815	0.09%
Diesel Use	**Gallons/Year**			
Mobile [2]		81,145	23,071,011	0.35%
Gasoline Use	**Gallons/Year**			
Mobile [2]		101,082	27,486,528	0.37%
	Notes: 1. The electricity and natural gas usage are based on project-specific estimates and CalEEMod defaults. 2. Calculated based on the mobile source fuel use based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and fleet-average fuel consumption (in gallons per mile) from EMFAC2021 for operational year 2024. Abbreviations: CalEEMod: California Emission Estimation Model; EMFAC2017: California Air Resources Board Emission Factor Model			

Operation of uses implemented pursuant to the proposed project would annually consume approximately 768 MWh of electricity, 13,250 therms of natural gas, 81,145 gallons of diesel, and 101,082 gallons of gasoline.

PG&E provides electricity to the proposed project area. The proposed project site is expected to continue to be served by the existing PG&E electrical facilities. Total electricity demand in PG&E's service area is forecast to increase by approximately 12,000 GWh—or 12 billion kWh—between 2016 and 2028.[7] The proposed project's anticipated electricity demand (approximately 1,215 MWh) would be nominal compared to overall demand in PG&E's service area. Therefore, the projected electrical demand would not significantly impact PG&E's level of service.

7 California Energy Commission, California Energy Demand 2018-2030 Revised Forecast, Figure 49 Historical and Projected Baseline Consumption PG&E Planning Area, https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/getdocument.aspx?tn=223244, Accessed April 19, 2022.

Regarding natural gas, San Benito County is projected to consume 15,012,815 therms of natural gas in 2024. Therefore, the proposed project's operational energy consumption for space and water heating would represent 0.09 percent of the natural gas consumption in the County.

In 2022, Californians are estimated to consume approximately 15,355,377,116 gallons of gasoline and approximately 3,683,414,417 gallons of diesel fuel.[8] San Benito County annual gasoline fuel use in 2024 is anticipated to be approximately 27,486,528 gallons and diesel fuel use is anticipated to be 23,071,011 gallons. Expected project operational use of gasoline and diesel would represent 0.37 percent of the anticipated gasoline use and 0.35 percent of anticipated diesel use in the County.

It should also be noted that the proposed project design and materials would comply with the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which went into effect on January 1, 2020, and/or future 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards depending on when construction permits are issued. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the City of Hollister would review and verify that the proposed project plans demonstrate compliance with the current version of the Building and Energy Efficiency Standards. Title 24 standards require energy conservation features in new construction (e.g., high- efficiency lighting, high-efficiency heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems, thermal insulation, double-glazed windows, water conserving plumbing fixtures).

Although the proposed project does not include on-site renewable energy resources, the proposed building would conform to the City's Green Building Measures. Additionally, the proposed project would also be required adhere to the provisions of CALGreen, which establishes planning and design standards for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants. The insulation and design code requirements would minimize wasteful energy consumption.

None of the project energy uses exceed one percent of San Benito County use. Therefore, project operations would not substantially affect existing energy or fuel supplies or resources. The proposed project would comply with applicable energy standards and new capacity would not be required. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. As stated above, the project would be required to be built to renewable energy and energy efficiency standards such as the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan, California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24), and CALGreen. The proposed project would be required to comply with existing regulations, including applicable measures from the City's General Plan, or would be directly affected by the outcomes (vehicle trips and energy consumption would be less carbon intensive due to statewide compliance with future low carbon fuel standard amendments and increasingly stringent Renewable Portfolio Standards). As such, the proposed project would not conflict with any other state-level regulations pertaining to energy. The 2019 Title 24 standards are more than 30 percent more efficient than previous standards for residential development. Additionally, the 2019 Title 24 standards will promote photovoltaic systems in newly constructed residential buildings, which will use about 53 percent less energy than residential buildings constructed

8 California Air Resources Board, EMFAC Emissions Inventory, 2022.

under the 2019 standards. Adherence to the CPUC's energy requirements would ensure conformance with the state's goal of promoting energy and lighting efficiency. The proposed infill project would reduce single-occupancy traffic trips and include green design measures to promote energy efficiency. Therefore, the project would comply with existing State energy standards and would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and impacts would be less than significant.

3.7 Geology and Soils

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
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?		X		
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?			X	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	

Soil Surveys Group, Inc. prepared a preliminary geotechnical report for the proposed project in February 2020. The study is included in Appendix D and information from the report is summarized throughout this subsection.

Existing Setting

Soils and Groundwater

The project site is in Hollister Valley within the greater Central Valley, which is flanked on the west by the Gabilan Range, on the east by the Diablo Range, and the City of Gilroy to the north. The mountain ranges to the east and west consist of older Franciscan and related rocks and overlying sedimentary rocks ranging in age from the Cretaceous through Tertiary time. The valley's basin contains alluvial deposits derived from the San Benito River.

The northern half of the project site is relatively flat and then slopes to 15 to 20 percent down to the property line in the southern half. Soil conditions at the proposed project site consist of fine to medium grained, sandy silty soils. The Geotechnical Report prepared for the project includes six borings throughout the site. Some of the borings found fine grained, sandy silty soils at the surface and moderately plastic and moderately expansive soils at lower depths. However, other borings discovered non-plastic and non-expansive at deeper depths. The Geotechnical Report found no unsuitable or unstable soil conditions at the boring locations except for soft/loose soil in the upper three to ten feet and slightly to moderately expansive soils at higher deeps where the footings would be constructed.

Seismicity and Seismic Hazards

According to the General Plan, a substantial portion of central and south east Hollister lie within the Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zones for the Hayward/Calaveras and Tres Pinos Faults. Sensitive institutional uses such as schools and hospitals are precluded from development within the Special Study Zones, while geological fault investigations must be performed by a State registered geologist for any other development within them. Four fault zones traverse San Benito County: the San Andreas Fault, the Quien Sabe Fault, the Tres Pinos, and the Calaveras Faults. The San Andreas Fault is located approximately 0.5 mile west of the City or 3 miles southwest of the project site.[9] The Calaveras Fault is located approximately 1.2 miles east of the project site and bisects the downtown area. The project site is not within a designated Landslide and Liquefaction Zone.[10]

Development in the City is likely to be exposed to strong ground shaking within the useful lifetime of new development. The General Plan found seismic hazards in the Hollister Planning Area would expose people and structures to potential substantial adverse seismic effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death from seismic-related ground failures of liquefaction, lateral spreading, lurching, differential settlement, and flow failures.

Discussion

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

[9] California, State of, Department of Conservation. Regulatory Maps. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/fam/. Accessed April 6, 2022.
[10] California, State of, Department of Conservation. Regulatory Maps. http://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=regulatorymaps. Accessed April 6, 2022.

other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

Less than Significant Impact. According to the General Plan, the project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. As discussed above portions of central and southeast Hollister are located within Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zones for the Hayward/Calaveras and Tres Pinos Faults. There are no known active or potentially active faults trending towards or through the project site; however, the project site lies within the region affected by the active San Andreas Fault system, which influences faults throughout the region, including the Hayward and Calaveras faults. Although the project is located within a seismically active region, there is no known fault mapped on or proximate to the project site. Therefore, the possibility of significant fault rupture on the project site would be less than significant.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than Significant Impact. The project site is located within a seismically active region and strong seismic ground shaking could occur. The California Department of Conservation maps show multiple faults within 10 miles of the City of Hollister. The project would be required to be in conformance with the California Building Code, City regulations, and other applicable seismic construction standards. Conformance with these standard engineering practices and design criteria would reduce the effects of seismic ground shaking. Furthermore, the project would be required to be built and maintained in accordance with a site-specific geotechnical report. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than Significant Impact. Liquefaction generally occurs as a “quicksand” type of ground failure caused by strong ground shaking. The primary factors influencing liquefaction potential include groundwater, soil type, relative density of the sandy soils, confining pressure, and the intensity and duration of ground shaking. As shown in California Department of Conservation maps, the project site is not located in a State seismic hazard zone specific to liquefaction. The Geotechnical Report prepared for the project found that the potential risk for occurrence of damaging liquefaction or lateral spreading is low to moderate during a strong seismic event, considering the deeper, dense, fine to coarse grained, sandy clays and the lack of shallow groundwater. All structures and foundations requiring building permits would be required to meet California Building Code requirements to withstand ground shaking, minimizing potential impacts resulting from liquefaction. Adherence to the California Building Code would ensure that the seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction impacts would be less than significant.

iv. Landslides?

Less than Significant Impact. Landslides are mass movements of the ground that include rock falls, relatively shallow slumping and sliding of soil, and deeper rotational or transitional movement of soil or rock. The northern portion of the project site is relatively flat, while the southern portion contains slopes of 15 to 20 percent. This slope is short from top to toe, does not present any identifiable landslide hazard, and is not located in an area mapped as an earthquake-induced landslide hazard area. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed above, the northern portion of the project site is generally flat while the southern portion contains slopes of 15 to 20 percent. The project would involve demolition of the existing structures (e.g., metal barn and utility pole), excavation, site grading and foundations associated with the construction of new buildings, infrastructure, and roads. During construction activities, the project would move an estimated 7,270 cubic yard (CY) of exported soil material. Grading during the construction phase of the project would displace soils and temporarily increase the potential for soils to be subject to wind and water erosion. However, erosion and loss of topsoil can be controlled using standard construction practices, as described in required erosion control plans for the project as required by Section 17.16.040 of the City's Zoning Code. Implementation of this approved erosion control plan would reduce impacts associated with soil erosion compatibility to a less than significant level.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed above, the project site is not within a designated Landslide and Liquefaction Zone. While the project is not located in an area mapped as liquefaction hazard, all structures and foundations requiring building permits would still be required to meet California Building Code requirements to withstand ground shaking, minimizing potential impacts resulting from liquefaction. Adherence to the California Building Code, the project's Geotechnical Report, City regulations, and other applicable standards would ensure that the seismic and liquefaction impacts are less than significant.

According to the Geotechnical Report, no unsuitable or unstable soil conditions were encountered at the boring locations except for soft/loose soil in the upper three to ten feet and slightly to moderately expansive soils at higher deeps where the footings would be constructed. While the site does contain some soil conditions that require engineering solutions for this project, the Geotechnical Report concluded that the site is suitable for the proposed development with the recommendations of recompaction of any soft/loose soils and the mitigation of any expansive soils. The project site is generally flat on the northern portion with a slight slope to the southern project boundary. The site does not include any embankments or hills; therefore, earthquake-induced land sliding is unlikely. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would require the applicant to prepare a final geotechnical report for City review and approval and fully address all construction-level geotechnical recommendations and compliance with all applicable codes and regulations to reduce impacts related to the site's soil constraints. Potential impacts and risk based on these standards are considered less than significant. However, to document the importance of incorporating all final geotechnical recommendations, the follow measure is provided.

Mitigation Measure

MM GEO-1 **Final Geotechnical Report.** Prior to issuance of any grading or building permits for the project, the applicant shall submit a final geotechnical report for review and approval by the City. The project shall conform with all engineering recommendations within the final geotechnical report.

Implementation of MM GEO-1 would ensure that impacts related to soil and geotechnical constraints are less than significant.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation. The proposed project would be required to conform to the California Building Code, City regulations, and other applicable standards. Six borings conducted as part of the Geotechnical Study indicated the presence of soft/loose soil in the upper three to ten feet and slightly to moderately expansive soils at footing depths. Structures on expansive soil require special attention during construction. The Geotechnical Report recommended foundation design criteria such as spread footings at a minimum depth of 18 inches for one- and two- story portions and a depth of 24 inches for the three- and four- story buildings. Specific grading recommendations for recompaction of soil at the site would be included in a design-level study submitted with any future building plans. Implementation of MM GEO-1 would require the project conform with standard engineering practices, recommendations provided in the Geotechnical Study, and design criteria to reduce impacts related to expansive soil potential to a less than significant level and minimize risk to life or property from expansive soils.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact. The project would connect to the City sewer system and would not include the implementation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. A search of cultural resource studies completed in the immediate area, which included the project site, revealed no paleontological resources that have been previously recorded.[11] Given the overall low sensitivity for paleontological resources in the immediate area, there is only a remote possibility that unidentified buried deposits are present within the project area. The potential exists for inadvertent discovery of paleontological resources during ground-disturbing activities. Implementation of MM CUL-1 would reduce impacts on paleontological resources to a less than significant level.

11 To identify paleontological resources in the vicinity of the project site, this analysis referenced the Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration for the San Benito River Greenway Project (SCH #2008121118) for paleontological resources that have been previously recorded given its proximity to the proposed project.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

Existing Setting

Certain gases in the earth's atmosphere classified as greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in determining the earth's surface temperature. Solar radiation enters the earth's atmosphere from space. A portion of the radiation is absorbed by the earth's surface and a smaller portion of this radiation is reflected toward space. This absorbed radiation is then emitted from the earth as low-frequency infrared radiation. The frequencies at which bodies emit radiation are proportional to temperature. Because the earth has a much lower temperature than the sun, it emits lower-frequency radiation. Most solar radiation passes through GHGs; however, infrared radiation is absorbed by these gases. As a result, radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is instead "trapped," resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon, known as the greenhouse effect, is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate on earth.

The primary GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), and nitrous oxide (N_2O). Fluorinated gases also make up a small fraction of the GHGs that contribute to climate change. Examples of fluorinated gases include chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6), and nitrogen trifluoride (NF_3); however, it is noted that these gases are not associated with typical land use development. Human-caused emissions of GHGs exceeding natural ambient concentrations are believed to be responsible for intensifying the greenhouse effect and leading to a trend of unnatural warming of the Earth's climate, known as global climate change or global warming.

GHGs are global pollutants, unlike criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants (TACs), which are pollutants of regional and local concern. Whereas pollutants with localized air quality effects have relatively short atmospheric lifetimes (approximately one day), GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes (one to several thousand years). GHGs persist in the atmosphere for long enough time periods to be dispersed around the globe. Although the exact lifetime of a GHG molecule is dependent on multiple variables and cannot be pinpointed, more CO_2 is emitted into the atmosphere than is sequestered by ocean uptake, vegetation, or other forms of carbon sequestration.

Addressing GHG generation impacts requires an agency to make a determination as to what constitutes a significant impact. The CEQA Guidelines specifically allow lead agencies to determine thresholds of significance that illustrate the extent of an impact and are a basis from which to apply mitigation measures. This means that each agency is left to determine if a project's GHG emissions would have a significant impact on the environment. The guidelines direct that agencies are to use "careful judgment" and "make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate" the development's GHG emissions (14 CCR Section 15064.4[a]). Determining a threshold of significance for climate change impacts poses a special difficulty for lead agencies. Much of the science in this area is new and is evolving constantly. At the same time, neither the State nor local agencies are specialized in this area, and there are currently no local, regional, or state thresholds for determining whether a residential development has a significant impact on climate change. The CEQA Amendments do not prescribe specific significance thresholds but instead leave considerable discretion to lead agencies to develop appropriate thresholds to apply to projects within their jurisdiction.

Assembly Bill (AB) 32 is a legal mandate requiring that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. In adopting AB 32, the legislature determined the necessary GHG reductions for the State to make to sufficiently offset its contribution to cumulative climate change to reach 1990 levels. AB 32 is the only legally mandated requirement for the reduction of GHGs. As such, compliance with AB 32 is the adopted basis on which the agency can base its significance threshold for evaluating GHG impacts.

SB 32 (SB 32), signed into law in September 2016, codifies a GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and authorizes CARB to adopt an interim GHG emissions level target to be achieved by 2030 and to adopt rules and regulations in an open public process to achieve the maximum, technologically feasible, and cost-effective GHG reductions. With SB 32, the California Legislature passed companion legislation AB 197, which provided additional direction for developing an updated Scoping Plan. CARB released the second update to the Scoping Plan to reflect the 2030 target set by SB 32 in November 2017.

Additionally, signed into Law in September 2018, SB 100 increased California's renewable electricity portfolio from 50 to 60 percent by 2030. SB 100 also established a further goal to have an electric grid that is entirely powered by clean energy by 2045.

As discussed in Section 3.3 Air Quality, the MBARD has primary responsibility for developing and implementing rules and regulations to maintain the national ambient air quality standards and attain the California ambient air quality standards, permitting new or modified sources, developing air quality management plans, and adopting and enforcing air pollution regulations for all projects in the North Central Coast Air Basin. The AB 32 Scoping Plan does not specify an explicit role for local air districts with respect to implementing AB 32, but it does state that CARB will work actively with air districts in coordinating emissions reporting, encouraging and coordinating GHG reductions, and providing technical assistance in quantifying reductions. The ability of air districts to control emissions (both criteria pollutants and GHGs) is provided primarily through permitting, but also via their role as a CEQA lead or commenting agency, the establishment of CEQA thresholds, and the development of analytical requirements for CEQA documents. The MBARD drafted potential quantitative thresholds for projects undergoing CEQA review in February 2014. The draft thresholds include an annual threshold of 10,000 metric tons for stationary sources and a tiered approach for land use projects, whereby one of the following is applied: a bright-line

(numeric) threshold of 2,000 metric tons annually; or compliance with an adopted climate action plan. However, the MBARD has not formally adopted these thresholds, and they remain in draft form.

Discussion

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

Short-Term Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Less than Significant Impact. Construction of the proposed project would result in direct emissions of CO_2, N_2O, and CH_4 from the operation of construction equipment and the transport of materials and construction workers to and from the proposed project site. MBARD does not have a threshold for construction GHG emissions, which are one-time, short-term emissions and therefore would not significantly contribute to long-term cumulative GHG emissions impacts of the proposed Project. However, the construction GHG emissions are disclosed and a determination on the significance of construction GHG emissions in relation to meeting AB 32 GHG reduction goals should be made. Total GHG emissions generated during all phases of construction were combined and are presented in **Table 3-6: Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions**. The CalEEMod outputs are contained within the Appendix E.

Table 3-6: Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Year	$MTCO_2e$[1]
2022	155
2023	535
2024	322
Total	**1,012**

1. Due to Rounding, Total $MTCO_2e$ may be marginally different from CalEEMod output. $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.
Source: CalEEMod version 2020.4.0. Refer to Appendix E for model outputs.

As shown in **Table 3-6**, project construction-related activities would generate approximately 1,012 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$) of GHG emissions over the course of construction. One-time, short-term construction GHG emissions are typically summed and amortized over the project's lifetime (assumed to be 30 years).[12] It is reasonable to look at a 30-year time frame for buildings since this is a typical interval before a new building requires the first major renovation.[13] The amortized project emissions would be 33.7 $MTCO_2e$ per year. Once construction is complete, the generation of construction-related GHG emissions would cease. The project would comply with SC-1 highlighted in Section 3.3 Air Quality, which include various dust, particulate matter, and construction equipment exhaust control measures. As a result, construction GHG emissions would be less than significant.

12 The project lifetime is based on the standard 30-year assumption of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast Air Quality Management District, Minutes for the GHG CEQA Significance Threshold Stakeholder Working Group #13, August 26, 2009).
13 International Energy Agency, Energy Efficiency Requirements in Building Codes, Energy Efficiency Policies for New Buildings, March 2008.

Long-Term Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Less than Significant Impact. Operational or long-term emissions would occur over the proposed project's life. GHG emissions would result from direct emissions such as project-generated vehicular traffic, on-site combustion of natural gas, and operation of any landscaping equipment. Operational GHG emissions would also result from indirect sources, such as off-site generation of electrical power over the life of the proposed project, the energy required to convey water to, and wastewater from the project site, the emissions associated with solid waste generated from the proposed project site, and any fugitive refrigerants from air conditioning or refrigerators. **Table 3-7: Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions** summarizes the total GHG emissions associated with the proposed project.

Table 3-7: Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Category	$MTCO_2e$[1]
Area Source	3
Energy	135
Mobile	1,066
Waste	19
Water and Wastewater	18
Total Project[2]	**1,241**
Threshold	***2,000***
Exceeds Threshold?	**No**

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2016.3.2.
2. Emissions may not total due to rounding.
Source: CalEEMod version 2020.4.0. Refer to Appendix E for model outputs.

Below is a description of the primary sources of operational emissions:

Area Sources. Area source emissions occur from hearths (i.e., natural gas fireplaces), architectural coatings, landscaping equipment, and consumer products. Landscaping is anticipated to occur throughout the proposed project site. Additionally, the primary emissions from architectural coatings are volatile organic compounds, which are relatively insignificant as direct GHG emissions. The proposed project would result in 3 $MTCO_2eq/yr$ (refer to **Table 3-7**).

Energy Consumption. Energy consumption consists of emissions from project consumption of electricity and natural gas. The proposed project would result in approximately 135 $MTCO_2e/yr$ from energy consumption (refer to **Table 3-7**).

Mobile Sources. Mobiles sources from the proposed project were calculated with CalEEMod based on the trip generation from the proposed project Transportation Impact Analysis (2022) see Appendix H. The mobile source emissions from the proposed project would be approximately 1,066 $MTCO_2e/yr$ (refer to **Table 3-7**).

Solid Waste. Solid waste releases GHG emissions in the form of methane when these materials decompose. The proposed project would result in approximately 19 $MTCO_2e$/yr from solid waste (refer to **Table 3-7**).

Water and Wastewater. GHG emissions from water demand would occur from electricity consumption associated with water conveyance and treatment. Existing water efficiency regulations require the project to limit the use of turf. The proposed project would result in approximately 18 $MTCO_2e$/yr from water and wastewater conveyance and treatment (refer to **Table 3-7**).

Table 3-7 shows that operational emissions from the proposed project would generate approximately 1,241 $MTCO_2e$ per year.

It should be noted that the operational emissions incorporate adjustments for project energy consumption based on the 2019 Title 24 Part 6 (Building Energy Efficiency Standards). The standards also require updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to exterior and vice versa), residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements, and nonresidential lighting requirements that would cut residential energy use by more than 50 percent (with solar) and nonresidential energy use by 30 percent. The standards also encourage demand responsive technologies including battery storage and heat pump water heaters and improve the building's thermal envelope through high performance attics, walls and windows to improve comfort and energy savings (California Energy Commission, March 2018). The proposed project would also comply with the appliance energy efficiency standards in Title 20 of the California Code of Regulations. The Title 20 standards include minimum levels of operating efficiency, and other cost-effective measures, to promote the use of energy- and water-efficient appliances. The proposed project would be constructed according to the standards for high-efficiency water fixtures for indoor plumbing and water efficient irrigation systems required in 2019 Title 24, Part 11 (CALGreen).

At the State and global level, improvements in technology, policy, and social behavior can also influence and reduce operational emissions generated by a project. The state is currently on a pathway to achieving the Renewable Portfolio Standards goal of 33 percent renewables by 2020 and 60 percent renewables by 2030 per SB 100. Despite these goals, the majority of the proposed project's emissions would still be from mobile and energy sources. Future mobile source emissions are greatly dependent on changes in vehicle technology, fuels, and social behavior, which can be influenced by policies to varying degrees. Due to these external factors, average emissions from transportation in 2050 would mostly still generate GHG emissions, but the quantity is uncertain in light of potential changes in technology and policy over the next 30 years.

The majority of project emissions (approximately 96 percent) would occur from mobile and energy sources. As noted above, energy and mobile sources are targeted by statewide measures such as low carbon fuels, cleaner vehicles, strategies to promote sustainable communities and improved transportation choices that result in reducing VMT, continued implementation of the Renewable Portfolio Standard (the target is now set at 60 percent renewables by 2030), and extension of the Cap and Trade program (requires reductions from industrial sources, energy generation, and fossil fuels). The Cap and Trade program covers approximately 85 percent of California's GHG emissions as of January 2015. The statewide cap for GHG emissions from the capped sectors (i.e., electricity generation, industrial sources, petroleum refining, and cement production) commenced in 2013 and will decline approximately three

percent each year, achieving GHG emission reductions throughout the program's duration. The passage of AB 398 in July 2017 extended the duration of the Cap and Trade program from 2020 to 2030. With continued implementation of various statewide measures, the proposed project's operational energy and mobile source emissions would continue to decline in the future.

Project construction emissions are shown in **Table 3-6** and operational emissions are shown in **Table 3-7**. Construction and operational impacts would be less than significant. Project-related GHG emissions would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant cumulative impact of climate change.

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

Less than Significant Impact. While California has adopted several policies and regulations for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, the City of Hollister does not currently have an adopted Climate Action Plan. The project's potential impacts and mitigation in response to current plans and policies are described above. There would be no impact beyond the assessment in this section. Impacts would be less than significant.

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
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?			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
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?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				X

ATC Associates Inc. prepared a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for the project site in March 2006. The study is included in Appendix F and information from the report is summarized in this section. In addition to the Phase I ESA, a preliminary hazardous materials review was prepared for the project by Kimley-Horn on August 24, 2020. The initial assessment of the site was intended to analyze the likelihood

of the presence of hazardous substances or petroleum products on the site under conditions indicative of an existing release, past release, or a material threat of a release that could affect the site, based on a review of regulatory agency databases (e.g. Department of Toxic Substances Control's Envirostor database and State Water Resources Control Board's Geotracker database). A site reconnaissance of the site was conducted by Kimley-Horn staff on June 29, 2020 to characterize the baseline conditions on and adjacent to the proposed project. The Phase I ESA and preliminary hazardous materials review is provided in Appendix F and information from this review is summarized throughout this subsection.

Existing Setting

The 5.55-acre project site is located within an urban area and is predominantly surrounded by industrial and residential uses.

Onsite Sources of Contamination

According to the Phase I ESA, two diesel underground storage tanks were previously abandoned in place at 1555 San Juan Road, which was previously operated as Sanchez Trucking Yard [14]. These underground storage tanks (USTs) were not identified in the regulatory databases. The potential contaminant of concern at this site is diesel and was considered a recognized environmental concern (REC). In June 2006, soil borings around the perimeter of the site were conducted to sample for the presence of BTEX, MTBE, TPH (motor oil), and lead. The San Benito County Health and Human Services Agency - Public Health Services Department found non-detect levels for all these contaminants were below the maximum contaminant level. The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Board determined no further action be required for this site. See Appendix F for letter from San Benito County Public Health Services Department.

A subsequent records search of the Regional Water Quality Control Board's Geotracker database and Department of Toxic Substances Control's Envirostor database found no records of the project site pertaining to open cases of a leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs), toxic releases, or site cleanup requirements.[15]

Off-Site Sources of Contamination

A search of regulatory agency databases found the nearest offsite LUST cleanup site to be located at 1615 San Juan Road, approximately 140 feet west of the project site, which is operated as Shop N Save (formerly Victory Gas & Food). The potential contaminant of concern on this site is gasoline. Remedial action was taken from 2001 to 2004. The case has been closed as of 2004. The next closest offsite LUST cleanup site (Roadrunner) is located at 905 San Juan Road, approximately 0.36 miles to the east of the project site. The potential contaminant of concern on this site is gasoline and the potential media of concern is listed under investigation. This case has been closed as of 1998.

Approximately 640 feet across the street at 1300 San Juan Road is a permitted underground storage tank (UST) operated at a Quik Stop Market.

14 The property is physically signed as 1555 San Juan Road, but the City of Hollister Assessor's Office verified that 1550 San Juan Road is the correct legal address for the project site.
15Geotracker. 1550 San Juan Road Hollister. Available at: https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/?CMD=runreport&myaddress=1550+san+juan+road+hollister. Accessed on August 31, 2020.

Airports

The Hollister Municipal Airport is located approximately 2.6 miles northeast of the project site.

Wildland Fire Hazards

The project site is not located within a Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zone for wildland fires.[16]

Discussion

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would use limited amounts of common hazardous materials and substances such as cleaners, paints, solvents, fertilizers and pesticides for site landscaping. Operation of the residential and commercial uses would include the use and storage of cleaning supplies and maintenance chemicals in small quantities similar to other businesses nearby and would not generate substantial hazardous emissions or chemical releases that would affect surrounding uses. All materials and substances would be subject to applicable health and safety requirements. Compliance with applicable federal, local, and state requirements would ensure no significant hazard to the public or the environment are created through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less than Significant Impact. The project is not anticipated to result in a release of hazardous materials into the environment. The proposed facility would be expected to use limited hazardous materials and substances such as cleaners, paints, solvents, and fertilizers and pesticides for site landscaping. All materials and substances would be subject to applicable health and safety requirements. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

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

No Impact. The closest school to the project site is Calaveras Elementary School, located approximately 0.4-mile northeast at 1151 Buena Vista Road. Because the project site would be located more than one-quarter mile from this school, emissions and hazardous materials handling at the site, during construction and operations, would not pose a significant health risk to nearby schools. Thus, no impacts would occur.

[16] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. FHSZ Viewer. Available at https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/. Accessed August 20, 2020.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. No records of the project site were found pertaining to open cases of Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST), toxic releases, or site cleanup requirements. Potential onsite sources of contamination were found to be below the maximum contaminant level, and as such no further action is required for the site. The nearest offsite LUST cleanup site is located approximately 140 feet west of the project site, but has been remediated and the case is closed. While no open records of LUSTs were found in the hazardous materials assessment, potential environmental concerns (e.g., auto repair/wrecking yard and wastewater pools) for the project site were identified to the east of the property and at the existing metal barn on site. While little history is known about the existing barn on site, it is possible the barn was previously used for agricultural storage or automotive repairs given similar uses in the surrounding area. During construction, project implementation could potentially encounter residual concentrations of contaminants in the soil and groundwater from the barn, auto repair/wrecking yard and wastewater pools and, if found, the contaminants could potentially exceed the environmental screening levels. However, soil and groundwater sampling conducted in June 2006 determined the soils located on site were below maximum level contaminant level. As such, no further action is required or the site. The project site is clean for development. Impacts in this regard are less than significant.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or private airstrip. The project site is located approximately 2.5 miles southwest of Hollister Municipal Airport. The northeastern portion of the project site is located within the "Airport Influence Area" defined by the San Benito County Airport Land Use Commission's Land Use Compatibility Plan. However, the project site is not located within the Safety Zones for the Hollister Airport as shown in Map 3 in the County's Land Use Compatibility Plan. Thus, no impacts would occur.

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

No Impact. The project would design roadways and emergency access according to City standards and would not encroach on or obstruct any existing evacuation routes. All new development in the City is required to comply with existing fire codes and ordinances regarding emergency access, such as widths, surfaces, vertical clearance, brush clearance, and allowable grades. The City would implement emergency response measures to address emergency management, including notifications, evacuations, and other necessary measures in the event of an emergency.

Primary access to all major roads would be maintained during construction of the proposed project, and no detours would be required in the event of an emergency. Additionally, during the building permit stage, the project would be reviewed for conformance with all applicable Fire Code and Building Code requirements. Thus, there would be no impact.

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

No Impact. CAL FIRE identifies Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) and designates State of Local Responsibility Areas within the State of California. New developments located in 'Very High' Fire Hazard Severity Zones are required to comply with exterior wildfire design and construction codes as well as vegetation clearance and other wildland fire safety practices for structures. As discussed above, the project is not located within a Very High Hazard Severity Zone on CAL FIRE's FHSZ Viewer. In addition, the project site is in a developed urban area and is not a wildland interface area or directly adjacent to a wildland interface area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			X	
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- o ii. r off-site?			X	
iii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?			X	
iv. 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?			X	
v. Impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?			X	
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?			X	

Existing Setting

Hollister is located in the Pajaro River watershed. The watershed covers approximately 1,300 square miles and spans four counties: San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Monterey. The watershed is bounded by the Santa Cruz Mountains to the north and the Gabilan Range to the south. Its main tributaries are

Corralitos, Uvas, Llagas, San Benito, Pacheco, and Santa Ana creeks. These tributaries and many others converge and provide water to the Pajaro River, which drains into Monterey Bay.

There are two significant surface water features within the City of Hollister planning area—the San Benito River and Santa Ana Creek. The San Benito River flows from southeast to northwest in the southern portion of the Hollister planning area. Much of the planning area drains northerly to Santa Ana Creek, which flows into San Felipe Lake, located approximately 7 miles north of Hollister Municipal Airport.

The project site is located in an urban area with connections to the City's water and sewer infrastructure. The Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) shows the project site outside of any flood hazard zone.[17] No surface water is present on the project site. The closest waterway to the project site is the San Benito River, which is located approximately 0.25-miles southwest of the project site, and ultimately flows into the Monterey Bay.

No specific groundwater data is available for the project site. However, according to the Phase I ESA, groundwater monitoring at the nearby gas station located at 1615 San Juan Road indicated shallow groundwater occurrence at an approximate depth of 33 bgs along the roadway. At the former Chevron gas station located approximately 1-mile east of the project site, groundwater was detected at a depth of approximately 50 bgs. Estimated groundwater levels in the area may vary due to seasonal fluctuations in precipitation, local usage demands, geology, underground structures, or dewatering operations. The nearby industrial wastewater ponds may affect the local shallow groundwater flow beneath the project site and surrounding areas.

The project site is approximately 2 percent impervious (5,500 square feet).

Discussion

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

Less than Significant Impact. The City of Hollister provides wastewater services to the project site and manages stormwater quantity and quality.

Construction

Construction impacts could result from dirt and sediment leaving the site and entering the storm drain system from construction equipment and haul trucks, by runoff from exposed earth and stockpile areas during rainy periods, and from wind-blown dirt and dust from stockpiles. Construction runoff can also result from cleaning solvents and leaking fluids from construction equipment.

Section 17.16.140(C)(2) of the City of Hollister Municipal Code requires the project applicant to prepare a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) for approval by the City. The SWPPP is required to list best management practices (BMPs), which specify how the applicant would protect water quality during the course of construction. BMPs typically include, but are not limited to, scheduling earthwork to occur during the dry season to prevent runoff erosion, protecting drainages and storm drain inlets from

17 Federal Emergency Management Agency. FEMA Flood Map Service Center: Search by Address. Accessed at https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search#searchresultsanchor. Accessed on April 1, 2022.

sedimentation with berms or filtration barriers, and installing gravel entrances to reduce tracking of sediment onto adjoining streets. Implementation of the project's SWPPP would reduce impacts to less than significant through compliance with existing standards. No additional mitigation measures would be required.

Operational

On-site sources of polluted runoff associated with urban uses typically include surface parking areas and driveways, garbage areas, and planting areas where pesticides and fertilizers are used. Pollutants from these areas can wash into the storm drain system or natural drainage areas during storm events, thereby affecting downstream surface water quality. To meet Regional Water Quality Control Board permit requirements, all stormwater will be required to be retained on site. Stormwater treatment and retention is beneficial for both surface water quality and groundwater recharge. The stormwater detention and infiltration system would ultimately be designed in accordance with the California Stormwater Best Management Practices Handbook and the City's NPDES permit. The proposed drainage system is intended to pre-treat detained stormwater, allow for percolation, and control the rate and volume of outflow to existing facilities. The project will be required to comply with all existing State and local stormwater quality requirements.

The City of Hollister Domestic Water Reclamation Facility would treat wastewater flows generated by the municipal use. No septic systems are proposed. The residential uses proposed would not violate any waste discharge requirements, and compliance with existing State and local standards would not degrade surface or groundwater quality.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The City uses groundwater to augment public water supply. According to the 2020 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report approximately 40 percent of the City's drinking water is from groundwater wells.[18] The San Benito County Water District (SBCWD), formed by a special act of the State, has regional responsibility and authority to manage groundwater. As part of its management activities, the district provides recharge to the basin, explores expanded groundwater banking, monitors water levels and water quality, and reports annually on groundwater conditions in the basin. The 2015 Hollister Urban Area Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) includes a detailed discussion of the groundwater basin, along with all appropriate figures (Todd Groundwater, 2016).

The project is subject to the post-construction stormwater management requirements outlined in Central Coast RWQCB Resolution No. R3-2013-0032, which requires site-specific design measures and water quality treatment and percolation measures for projects that create and/or replace 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface.

As discussed further in Section 3.20, Utilities and Service Systems, the project would not decrease groundwater supplies in a manner that impedes with the sustainable groundwater management. Further,

[18] City of Hollister, 2019 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report, 2019. Available at: http://hollister.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/COH-CCR-2020.pdf

the project site is not located within a natural groundwater recharge area where precipitation would infiltrate into soils, moving down to the water table. As the developed site would be approximately 31 percent landscaped, the project would incorporate design measures directing runoff onto vegetated areas, biofiltration systems and low impact development treatment systems. Rainwater and excess irrigation water would be directed toward vegetated areas and/or treatment systems. These measures would effectively reduce impacts regarding groundwater recharge.

The project would be served by the City's managed water system and would not require any direct groundwater withdrawals. Therefore, the project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Less than Significant Impact. The project site does not include any streams or rivers, which could be altered by the proposed project. The closest waterway to the project site is San Benito River, which is located approximately 0.25-mile southwest of the project site. In addition, the proposed on-site bioretention areas would limit the release of storm water from the project site; therefore, minimizing the potential for substantial erosion or siltation to occur on site or off site. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?

Less than Significant Impact. As shown in **Table 3-8**, the project site currently has approximately 12,635 square feet of impervious surface area. Development of the proposed project would result in approximately 125,060 square feet of impervious surface area. This would be a net addition of approximately 112,425 square feet of impervious surface area from existing conditions.

Table 3-8: Impervious and Pervious On-Site Surface Area

Site Surface	Existing Surface Area SF	Proposed Surface Area SF
Impervious Surfaces Total	12,635	125,060
Pervious Surfaces Total	211,306	51,496
Note: Impervious Surface Area represents site specific conditions and accounts for public streets Source: RRM Design Group, 2021		

Hollister Municipal Code Section 17.16.140(A) requires all development projects in the City to be designed to detain stormwater runoff on-site to prevent contaminated stormwater from entering the City's storm drain system. Specifically, 17.16.140 (A)(4) calls for underground stormwater infiltration basins (instead of open ponds) wherever feasible. Project applicants are required to submit a stormwater drainage plan that incorporates measures designed to retain stormwater on-site consistent with the most current requirements. In accordance with the Municipal Code, specific measures to be incorporated into the plan may include, but are not limited to:

1) Drainage from roof gutters from residential, commercial, industrial, public, and other buildings including accessory structures shall be directed to rain gardens, landscape areas, vegetative swales, or retention or detention ponds approved by the City Engineering Department.

2) The use of multi-use stormwater management facilities, including recreation areas, and permeable paving in interior pedestrian areas, patios, or plazas is encouraged.

The project's impervious surface coverage would be approximately 2.87 acres, or 56 percent of the project site. The project's conceptual grading and drainage plan incorporates pervious pavers surrounding the project site and a new private 18-inch storm drain throughout the project as shown in **Figure 5**. Storm drain management areas and catch basins are located on site and would flow into the City's stormwater drainage system.

As described in the proposed project's site plan runoff would be captured in landscaped areas and the pervious pavers surrounding the project boundary. Implementation of the project's on-site stormwater drainage plan would reduce the risk of on-site or off-site flooding to a less than significant level.

iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Less than Significant Impact. Where development or redevelopment results in an increase in impervious surfaces, increased runoff could exceed the capacity of local storm drain systems. As discussed above, 6 percent of the project site is currently impervious. The proposed project would increase the current amount of impervious surfaces on site to 56 percent, which would result in a net increase of 112,425 square feet of impervious surface area.

The project would be required to comply with the C.3 Provision of the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP) which provides specific design requirements for capacity including: the implementation of stormwater BMPs, volume control design, flow hydraulic design, and combination flow and volume design. As required by the C.3 Provision of the MRP, a Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) would be reviewed and approved by the City of Hollister Public Works Department.

The project includes site design measures such as directing runoff from roofs, sidewalks, patios to landscaped areas and planting trees adjacent to pervious areas. Pavers would self-retain, and impervious surfaces would be minimized. Source control measures include beneficial landscaping, efficient use of water in irrigation systems, good housekeeping, labeling storm drains, connecting to the sanitary sewer with covered trash enclosures, and covered loading docks.

Compliance with the C.3 Provision of the MRP and applicable City policies (e.g., Hollister General Plan Policies CSF3.1, CSF 3.7, CSF.LL) would ensure that the proposed project would not exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Impacts would be less than significant.

iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?

Less than Significant Impact. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (2014) Flood Map FIRM Panel 06069C0185D shows the City of Hollister, including the project site. According to this map, the

project site is located in Zone X (unshaded). Most of the site is in Zone X, which FEMA describes as an "area of minimal flood hazard, usually depicted on FIRMs as above the 500-year flood level." City of Hollister Municipal Code Chapter 15.20, Flood Damage Prevention, identifies standards to minimize public and private losses due to flooding. Section 15.20.130 specifies standards of construction for buildings in flood zones. Section 15.20.130(C)(1) requires that all new development have the lowest floor, including the basement, elevated to or above the base flood elevation. Because the project site is located in Zone X, the potential to be impacted by flooding is minimal. The project is not located within a stream setback zone and would not alter the course of a stream or river. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Seiches and tsunamis are the result of waves of bodies of water created by earthquakes or landslides. The project site is located approximately 21 miles east of the ocean and as discussed above, not within a flood zone. Therefore, due to the geographic location of the project, there is minimal risk of inundation and therefore minimal risk of release of pollutants due to inundation. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Water quality impacts other than those described in response 3.10(a) above are not anticipated with implementation of the proposed project. As discussed above, any future project would be required to submit a project-specific SWPPP for review and approval by the City's Engineering Division. The SWPPP is required to list best management practices (BMPs), which specify how the applicant would protect water quality during the course of construction. Additionally, Hollister Municipal Code requires all development projects in the City to be designed to detain stormwater runoff on-site, consistent with the most current requirements, in order to prevent stormwater from entering the storm drain system.

As discussed above, current groundwater storage is sufficient to accommodate water demand in the short term and any proposed future development would not impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Ultimately, the project would result in residential development. This development would increase the amount of impervious surface on the site. Any future site plans would be reviewed by the City to include site specific design measures that would allow for groundwater recharge. The project would not substantially contribute to the depletion of groundwater supplies, would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge and therefore would not conflict with water quality control plans or groundwater management efforts. Impacts would be less than significant.

3.11 Land Use and Planning

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?			X	
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?			X	

Existing Setting

The project site is a vacant property located in a developing sector of the City. The project site is adjacent to an industrial use to the west and a mobile home community to the east. Immediately to the north of the project site is San Juan Road and a gas station/convenience store. Further north of San Juan Road is a single-family residential community. Immediately to the south of the project site are agricultural wastewater ponds.

Existing Land Use Designation and Zoning

The project site has a General Plan land use designation of West Gateway Commercial and Mixed-Use, with a conforming West Gateway Mixed Use zoning designation. According to the General Plan, the West Gateway District is intended to create an entry feature on San Juan Road as it crosses the San Benito River. The district provides the opportunity to develop a mixed-use district with medium to high-density houses and neighborhood-serving retail with public plazas. Under this designation and zoning, projects are intended to include community shopping, retail, and offices with residential uses. The General Plan encourages 3-story building forms on the street with architectural themes similar to the surrounding district. The designation is intended to provide convenience services to regional traffic on Highway 156.

Discussion

a) Physically divide an established community?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would include residential and commercial uses and is consistent with the General Plan land use designation, and would comply with all applicable West Gateway guidelines, City policies, actions, and ordinances. The project would be located in an urban area with similar surrounding land uses and would generally blend in with the mix of surrounding uses and would not physically divide an established community. The proposed buildings would not result in the physical division of the established community.

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Less than Significant Impact. The City's General Plan land use designation for the project site is West Gateway Commercial and Mixed Use (WG). Per Section 17.04.040 of the Hollister Municipal Code, open space requirements for the West Gateway Mixed Use zoning designation require a minimum of 500 sf of combined total private and common open space per unit. The City refers to common open space as a centralized, contiguous area for passive or active space that encourages community interaction. This space may include recreation facilities, such as a gym or pool, or rooftop gardens. For developments with 25 or more units proposed, major amenities and facilities provided can be in the form of recreation buildings, swimming pools with eating areas, tennis, baseball, and handball courts, child care facilities, and other amenities appropriate to serve the residents as determined by the City to foster a sense of place and community. Two major amenities must be provided for projects with 200 or more units.

Given 157 residential units are proposed, the project would require a minimum of 78,500 sf of open space to meet these open space requirements. Consistent with the West Gateway Mixed Use zoning designation, the project would provide amenities and facilities, such as one community building with 1,655 sf of common community space and a sports court, which would be accessible to all residents in the development to meet the City's open space requirements.

The West Gateway District in the General Plan is encouraged to have three-story building forms on the street, stepping down to the north and south. All proposed buildings would all be 3-stories and constructed on the slope stepping down towards the south. See Section 3.1 Aesthetics for discussion on the project's conformance in respect to building height.

Per the landscaping guidance in the General Plan for the West Gateway District, developments are required to install a double row of trees, one at the street and one closer to the building edge. The project would plant a row of trees along the street and more trees throughout the project site and would be generally consistent with West Gateway District's landscape guidelines and Beautification Plan.

The City's Development standards for the West Gateway Mixed Use zoning designation applies to the proposed project site and allows up to a height of 50 feet[19]. As discussed in Section 3.1 Aesthetics, the project would have a height up to 42 feet and 8 inches, which would be consistent with the height limitations for the project site. There are no specific setback requirements for the project, however the Site and Architectural Review process shall assure the buildings are designed and oriented on lots to provide adequate light and air, assure sufficient distances between adjoining uses, and promote excellence of development. As such, the proposed project would be consistent with uses allowed within the West Gateway Mixed Use zoning designation and comply with its development standards. Impacts would be less than significant.

19 The Planning Commission may approve a maximum building height of 60 feet in the West Gateway Mixed Use District if the additional height is required for a roof garden, plaza, restaurant, or mechanical equipment concealed by an attractive architectural element (section 17.08.050(A)(2)(c))

3.12 Mineral Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
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?				X

Existing Setting

The California Department of Conservation has designated portions of the Hollister planning area as having construction aggregate deposits (sand, gravel, and crushed rock) of regional significance, pursuant to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (Public Resources Code Section 2710 et seq.). These resources remain available near the San Benito River and are needed to meet future demands in the region.

Discussion

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?

No Impact. San Benito County also identifies areas surrounding Hollister that are considered mineral resource areas. These areas are identified with a Mineral Resource (MR) zoning designation. Based on a review of the City of Hollister General Plan and the San Benito County zoning designations, the project site is not located in an area known to contain mineral resources. Thus, no impacts would occur.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No Impact. The project site is not located in an area that has been identified by the City of Hollister as a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Thus, no impacts would occur.

3.13 Noise

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

Existing Setting

The City of Hollister is impacted by various noise sources. Mobile sources of noise, especially cars and trucks, are the most common and significant sources of noise in most communities. Other sources of noise are the various land uses (i.e., residential, commercial, institutional, and recreational and parks activities) throughout the City that generate stationary-source noise.

Existing Mobile Noise

According to the Noise Contour Map located in the General Plan EIR San Juan Road had a traffic noise level of 60 dBA CNEL in 2004.

Existing roadway noise levels were calculated for the roadway segments in the proposed project vicinity. This task was accomplished using the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-108) and existing traffic volumes from the proposed project Transportation Impact Analysis (Kimley-Horn 2022) see Appendix H. The noise prediction model calculates the average noise level at specific locations based on traffic volumes, average speeds, roadway geometry, and site environmental conditions. The average vehicle noise rates (also referred to as energy rates) used in the FHWA model have been modified to reflect average vehicle noise rates identified for California by Caltrans. The Caltrans data indicates that California automobile noise is 0.8 to 1.0 dBA higher than national levels and that medium and heavy truck noise is 0.3 to 3.0 dBA lower than national levels. The

average daily noise levels along roadway segments in proximity to the proposed project site are included in **Table 3-9: Existing Traffic Noise**.

Table 3-9: Existing Traffic Noise

Roadway Segment	ADT	dBA L_{dn}[1]
San Juan Road		
Between SR-156 and Graf Road	8,520	60.7
Between Graf Road and Project Driveway	8,900	60.9
Between Project Driveway and Miller Road	9,410	61.1
Between Miller Road and Westside Boulevard	12,850	62.5
ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; Ldn = day-night noise level		
[1] Traffic noise levels are at 100 feet from the roadway centerline.		
Source: Based on traffic data provided by Kimley-Horn, 2022. Refer to Appendix G for traffic noise modeling assumptions and results.		

The proposed project site is primarily surrounded by industrial and a mobile home community. Residential uses exist east of the proposed project site. The existing mobile noise in the proposed project area is generated along San Juan Road, which is north of the proposed project site.

Existing Stationary Noise

The primary sources of stationary noise in the proposed project vicinity are those associated with the operations of nearby residential uses to the east of the site and existing industrial uses west of the proposed project site. The noise associated with these sources may represent a single-event noise occurrence, short-term noise, or long-term/continuous noise.

Sensitive Receptors

Noise exposure standards and guidelines for various types of land uses reflect the varying noise sensitivities associated with each of these uses. Residences, hospitals, schools, guest lodging, libraries, and churches are treated as the most sensitive to noise intrusion and therefore have more stringent noise exposure targets than do other uses, such as manufacturing or agricultural uses that are not subject to impacts such as sleep disturbance. Sensitive receptors near the proposed project site include mobile home residences adjacent to the eastern boundary, approximately 15 feet from the proposed project site property line (see Appendix G). Across San Juan Road, approximately 220 feet northeast of the proposed project site are single-family residences. These distances are from the proposed project site to the sensitive receptor property line.

Discussion

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Construction

Less than Significant Impact. Construction noise typically occurs intermittently and varies depending on the nature or phase of construction (e.g., land clearing, grading, excavation, paving). Noise generated by construction equipment, including earth movers, material handlers, and portable generators, can reach high levels. During construction, exterior noise levels could affect the residential neighborhoods surrounding the construction site. Project construction would occur approximately 15 feet from existing residences to the east of the project site. However, construction activities would occur throughout the site and would not be concentrated at a single point near sensitive receptors. Noise levels typically attenuate (or drop off) at a rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance from point sources, such as industrial machinery. During construction, exterior noise levels could affect the residential neighborhoods near the construction site.

Construction activities associated with development of the proposed project would include demolition, site preparation, grading, paving, building construction, and architectural coating. Such activities would require graders, scrapers, and tractors during site preparation; graders, dozers, and tractors during grading; cranes, forklifts, generators, tractors, and welders during building construction; pavers, rollers, mixers, tractors, and paving equipment during paving; and air compressors during architectural coating. Grading and excavation phases of project construction tend to be the shortest in duration and create the highest construction noise levels due to the operation of heavy equipment required to complete these activities. It should be noted that only a limited amount of equipment can operate near a given location at a particular time. Equipment typically used during this stage includes heavy-duty trucks, backhoes, bulldozers, excavators, front-end loaders, and scrapers. 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. Other primary sources of noise would be shorter-duration incidents, such as dropping large pieces of equipment or the hydraulic movement of machinery lifts, which would last less than one minute. The analysis assumes that no pile driving would be required for construction.

Noise generated by construction equipment, including earth movers, material handlers, and portable generators, can reach high levels. Typical noise levels associated with individual construction equipment are listed in **Table 3-10: Typical Construction Noise Levels**.

Table 3-10: Typical Construction Noise Levels

Equipment	Typical Noise Level (dBA) at 50 feet from Source[1]
Air Compressor	80
Backhoe	80
Compactor	82
Concrete Mixer	85
Concrete Pump	82
Concrete Vibrator	76
Crane, Derrick	88
Crane, Mobile	83
Dozer	85
Generator	82
Grader	85
Impact Wrench	85
Jack Hammer	88
Loader	80
Paver	85
Pneumatic Tool	85
Pump	77
Roller	85
Saw	76
Scraper	85
Shovel	82
Truck	84

Note:
[1] Calculated using the inverse square law formula for sound attenuation: $dBA_2 = dBA_1 + 20Log(d_1/d_2)$
Where: dBA_2 = estimated noise level at receptor; dBA_1 = reference noise level; d_1 = reference distance; d_2 = receptor location distance
Source: Federal Transit Administration, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, September 2018.

As shown in **Table 3-10***,* noise maximum levels are below 88 dBA at 50 feet. The highest anticipated construction noise level of 88 dBA at 50 feet is expected to occur during the demolition phase. Noise impacts for mobile construction equipment are typically assessed as emanating from the center of the equipment activity or construction site.[20] For the proposed project, this center point would be approximately 185 feet from the nearest sensitive receptor, the mobile home residences to the east. These sensitive uses may be exposed to elevated noise levels during project construction.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) was used to calculate noise levels during construction activities; refer to Appendix G: Acoustical Data. RCNM is a computer program used to assess construction noise impacts and allows for user-defined construction equipment and user-defined noise limit criteria. Noise levels were calculated for each construction phase and are based on the equipment used, distance to the nearest property/receptor, and acoustical use factor for equipment.

20 For the purposes of this analysis, the construction area is defined as the center of the project site per the methodology in the FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual (September 2018). Although some construction activities may occur at distances closer than 185 feet from the nearest properties, construction equipment would be dispersed throughout the project site during various construction activities. Therefore, the center of the project site represents the most appropriate distance based on the sporadic nature of construction activities.

The City of Hollister does not have construction noise standards. The FTA Noise and Vibration Manual establishes construction noise standards of 80 dBA L_{eq} (8-hour) for residential uses and 90 dBA L_{eq} (8-hour) for commercial and industrial uses.[21] **Table 3-11: Project Construction Noise Levels**, show estimated exterior construction noise at the closest receptors. Based on calculations using the RCNM model, construction noise levels would range from approximately 56.3 dBA L_{eq} and 75.7 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest sensitive receptors and nearest off-site uses.

Table 3-11: Project Construction Noise Levels

Construction Phase	Receptor Location			Modeled Exterior Noise Level (dBA L_{eq}) [2]	Noise Threshold (dBA L_{eq}) [3]	Exceeded ?
	Land Use	Direction	Distance (feet) [1]			
Demolition	Residential	East	185	73.2	80	No
	Commercial	North	240	71.0	90	No
	Industrial	West	370	67.2		No
Site Preparation	Residential	East	185	70.7	80	No
	Commercial	North	240	68.4	90	No
	Industrial	West	370	64.6		No
Grading	Residential	East	185	73.9	80	No
	Commercial	North	240	71.9	90	No
	Industrial	West	370	67.8		No
Building Construction	Residential	East	185	75.7	80	No
	Commercial	North	240	73.4	90	No
	Industrial	West	370	69.7		No
Paving	Residential	East	185	65.3	80	No
	Commercial	North	240	63.0	90	No
	Industrial	West	370	59.3		No
Architectural Coating	Residential	East	185	62.3	80	No
	Commercial	North	240	60.1	90	No
	Industrial	West	370	56.3		No

Notes:
1. Distance is from the nearest receptor to the main construction activity area on the project site. Not all equipment would operate at the closest distance to the receptor.
2. Modeled noise levels conservatively assume the simultaneous operation of all pieces of equipment.
3. The FTA Noise and Vibration Manual establishes construction noise standards of 80 dBA $L_{eq(8\text{-}hour)}$ for residential uses and 90 dBA $L_{eq(8\text{-}hour)}$ for commercial and industrial uses.

Source: Federal Highway Administration, *Roadway Construction Noise Model,* 2006. Refer to Appendix G: Acoustical Data for noise modeling data.

As shown in **Table 3-11**, the loudest noise levels would be 75.7 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest sensitive receptor and 73.4 and 69.7dBA L_{eq} at the nearest commercial and industrial uses, which would not exceed the FTA's construction noise standards of 80 dBA L_{eq} and/or 90 dBA L_{eq}. In addition, all construction equipment would be equipped with functioning mufflers as mandated by the State and project construction would comply the General Plan Construction Noise Policy (HS3.3) limits typical construction activities to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. These permitted hours of construction are included in the code in recognition that construction activities undertaken during daytime hours are a typical part of living in an urban environment and do not cause a significant disruption.

[21] Federal Transit Administration, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact* Assessment *Manual*, Table 7-2, Page 179, September 2018.

The highest anticipated construction noise level for the adjoining residential uses are jack hammers during demolition phase and cranes during the building construction phase. The loudest construction phases are also typically the shortest and construction activities would also be spread out throughout the project site. Based on the anticipated construction schedule, the loudest construction phases, demolition, site preparation, grading, and paving, would last slightly shorter than three months. The remaining phases, building construction and architectural coating typically use lighter equipment and hand tools and do not use the heavy equipment listed in **Table 3-10**.

As noted above, construction activities would be limited to daytime hours when people would be out of their houses and would conform to the time-of-day restrictions of the City's Municipal Code. With adherence to construction time restrictions as outlined in the City's Municipal Code, construction noise impacts would less than significant

Construction Traffic Noise

Construction noise may be generated by large trucks moving materials to and from the proposed project site. Large trucks would be necessary to deliver building materials as well as remove dump materials. Excavation and cut and fill would be required. Soil hauling would be required as approximately 7,270 cubic yards (cy) of soil would be exported during grading. Based on the CalEEMod default assumptions for this Project, as analyzed in Section 3.3 Air Quality, the proposed project would generate the highest number of daily trips during the building construction and grading phases. The model estimates that the proposed project would generate up to 163 worker trips and 36 vendor trips per day for building construction. For grading, the model estimates approximately 909 hauling trips over 34 days which would result in approximately 28 daily hauling trips. During the grading phase there would be approximately 15 daily worker trips. Therefore, a total of 43 daily trips would occur during the grading phase. Because of the logarithmic nature of noise levels, a doubling of the traffic volume (assuming that the speed and vehicle mix do not also change) would result in a noise level increase of 3 dBA. San Juan Road between Graf Road to Project Driveway has an average daily trip volume of 8,900 vehicles (**Table 3-9**). The 242 daily construction trips would not double the existing traffic volume per day. Construction related traffic noise would not be noticeable and would not create a significant noise impact.

California establishes noise limits for vehicles licensed to operate on public roads using a pass-by test procedure. Pass-by noise refers to the noise level produced by an individual vehicle as it travels past a fixed location. The pass-by procedure measures the total noise emissions of a moving vehicle with a microphone. When the vehicle reaches the microphone, the vehicle is at full throttle acceleration at an engine speed calculated for its displacement.

For heavy trucks, the State pass-by standard is consistent with the federal limit of 80 dB. The State pass-by standard for light trucks and passenger cars (less than 4.5 tons gross vehicle rating) is also 80 dB at 15 meters from the centerline. According to the FHWA, dump trucks typically generate noise levels of 77 dBA and flatbed trucks typically generate noise levels of 74 dBA, at a distance of 50 feet from the truck (FHWA, Roadway Construction Noise Model, 2006).

Operations

Implementation of the proposed project would create new sources of noise in the project vicinity. The major noise sources associated with the proposed project that would potentially impact existing and future nearby residences include the following:

- Off-site traffic noise;
- Residential area noise;
- Mechanical equipment (i.e., trash compactors, air conditioners, etc.);
- Delivery trucks on the project site, and approaching and leaving the loading areas;
- Activities at the loading areas (i.e., maneuvering and idling trucks, loading/unloading, and equipment noise);
- Parking areas (i.e., car door slamming, car radios, engine start-up, and car pass-by); and
- Landscape maintenance activities.

As discussed above, the closest sensitive receptors are mobile homes residences located 15 feet to the east of the project site. The City of Hollister exterior Noise Standards for residential areas is 60 dBA L_{eq} (Policy HS3.1 in General Plan).

Traffic Noise

Implementation of the proposed project would generate increased traffic volumes along study roadway segments. The project is expected to generate a net of 868 average daily trips, which would result in noise increases on project area roadways. In general, a traffic noise increase of less than 3 dBA is barely perceptible to people, while a 5-dBA increase is readily noticeable (Caltrans, 2013). Generally, traffic volumes on project area roadways would have to approximately double for the resulting traffic noise levels to increase by 3 dBA. Therefore, permanent increases in ambient noise levels of less than 3 dBA are considered to be less than significant.

As shown in **Table 3-12**, the existing traffic-generated noise level on project area roadways is between 60.7 dBA L_{dn} and 62.5 dBA L_{dn} at 100 feet from the centerline. As previously described, L_{dn} is 24-hour average noise level with a 10 dBA "weighting" added to noise during the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. to account for noise sensitivity in the evening and nighttime, respectively.

Traffic noise levels for roadways primarily affected by the project were calculated using the FHWA's Highway Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-108). Traffic noise modeling was conducted for conditions with and without the project, based on traffic volumes (Kimley-Horn, 2022). As noted in **Table 3-12: Existing and Project Traffic Noise**, project noise levels 100 feet from the centerline would range from 60.7 dBA to 62.6 dBA. The project would have the highest increase of 0.2 dBA on San Juan Road between SR-156 and Graf Road; Graf Road and Project Highway; and Project Highway and Miller Road. However, the 0.2 dBA increase is under the perceptible 3.0 dBA noise level increase. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a significant impact on existing traffic noise levels.

Table 3-12: Existing and Project Traffic Noise

Roadway Segment	Existing Conditions		With Project		Project Change from Existing Conditions	Significant Impact?
	ADT	dBA L_{dn}[1]	ADT	dBA L_{dn}[1]		
San Juan Road						
Between SR-156 and Graf Road	8,520	60.7	8,880	60.9	0.2	**No**
Between Graf Road and Project Highway	8,900	60.9	9,260	61.1	0.2	**No**
Between Project Highway and Miller Road	9,410	61.1	9,840	61.3	0.2	**No**
Between Miller Road and Westside Boulevard	12,850	62.5	13,210	62.6	0.1	**No**

ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; Ldn= day-night noise levels
1.Traffic noise levels are at 100 feet from the roadway centerline.
Source: Based on a Transportation Impact Analysis provided by Kimley-Horn, 2022. Refer to Appendix G for noise modeling assumptions and results.

Table 3-13: Background Year and Background Year Plus Project Traffic Noise, shows the Background Year and Background Year Plus Project traffic conditions. Per the Transportation Analysis, Background Year includes the approved/pending projects provided by the City that were added to the existing 2022 volumes.

As shown in **Table 3-13**, Background Year roadway noise levels with the proposed project would range from 61.7 dBA to 63.4 dBA. Noise levels along San Juan Road would increase by 0.2 dBA with the proposed project. This level is below the perceptible noise level change of 3.0 dBA. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3-13: Background Year and Background Year Plus Project Traffic Noise

Roadway Segment	Background Year		With Project		Project Change from Existing Conditions	Significant Impact?
	ADT	dBA L_{dn}[1]	ADT	dBA L_{dn}[1]		
San Juan Road						
Between SR-156 and Graf Rd	10,820	61.7	11,180	61.9	0.2	**No**
Between Graf Rd and Project Dwy	11,220	61.9	11,570	62.0	0.1	**No**
Between Project Dwy and Miller Rd	11,730	62.1	12,160	62.2	0.1	**No**
Between Miller Road and Westside Blvd	15,650	63.3	16,010	63.4	0.1	**No**

ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; Ldn= day-night noise levels
1. Traffic noise levels are at 100 feet from the roadway centerline.
Source: Based on traffic data provided by Kimley-Horn, 2022. Refer to Appendix G for noise modeling results.

As shown in **Table 3-14: Cumulative Year and Cumulative Year Plus Project Traffic Noise**, cumulative year roadway noise levels with the proposed project would range from 62.6 dBA to 64.2 dBA. Noise levels along San Juan Road would increase by 0.1 dBA with the proposed project. This level is below the perceptible noise level change of 3.0 dBA. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3-14: Cumulative Year and Cumulative Year Plus Project Traffic Noise

Roadway Segment	Future Year		With Project		Project Change from Existing Conditions	Significant Impact?
	ADT	dBA L_{dn}[1]	ADT	dBA L_{dn}[1]		
San Juan Road						
Between SR-156 and Graf Rd	13,210	62.6	13,570	62.7	0.1	**No**
Between Graf Road and Project Dwy	13,700	62.8	14,050	62.9	0.1	**No**
Between Project Dwy and Miller Rd	14,210	62.9	14,640	63.0	0.1	**No**
Between Miller Road and Westside Blvd	18,690	64.1	19,050	64.2	0.1	**No**

ADT = average daily trips; dBA = A-weighted decibels; Ldn= day-night noise levels
1. Traffic noise levels are at 100 feet from the roadway centerline.
Source: Based on the Transportation Impact Analysis provided by Kimley-Horn, 2022. Refer to Appendix G for noise modeling results.

Project traffic would traverse and disperse over project area roadways, where existing ambient noise levels already exist. Future development associated with the proposed project would result in additional traffic on adjacent roadways, thereby increasing vehicular noise near existing and proposed land uses. This level is below the perceptible noise level change of 3.0 dBA. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Stationary Noise Sources

Implementation of the proposed project would create new sources of noise in the project vicinity from residential sources, mechanical equipment, truck loading areas, parking lot noise, and landscape maintenance.

Residential Areas

Noise that is typical of lodging areas includes group conversations, pet noise, vehicle noise (see discussion below) and general maintenance activities. Noise from residential stationary sources would primarily occur during the "daytime" activity hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Furthermore, the residences would be required to comply with the noise standards set forth in the City's General Plan and Municipal Code.

The Project area may include some crowd noise due to residents and visitors at the proposed outdoor exercise and common space areas. Crowd noise is dependent on several factors including vocal effort, impulsiveness, and the random orientation of the crowd members. Crowd noise is estimated at 60 dBA at one meter (3.28 feet) away for raised normal speaking. This noise level would have a +5 dBA adjustment for the impulsiveness of the noise source, and a -3 dBA adjustment for the random orientation of the crowd members. Therefore, crowd noise would be 62 dBA at one meter from the source. Noise has a decay rate due to distance attenuation, which is calculated based on the Inverse Square Law for sound propagation. Based upon the Inverse Square Law, sound levels decrease by 6 dBA for each doubling of distance from the source. As a result, crowd noise would be 56.0 dBA at 6.56 feet and 52.3 dBA at 10 feet. Therefore, crowd noise at the closest existing sensitive receptors (located 15 feet away) would not exceed the City's 60 dBA standard. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Mechanical Equipment

Regarding mechanical equipment, the proposed project would generate stationary-source noise associated with heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units. HVAC units typically generate noise levels of approximately 52 dBA at 50 feet.[22] The nearest existing sensitive receptor's lines are located approximately 15 feet from the closest potential proposed living area of the site. However, the mechanical equipment would be located approximately 85 feet from the nearest sensitive receptors to the east. At 85 feet, mechanical equipment noise levels would be 47.4 dBA. Therefore, noise levels from the mechanical equipment would not be audible from the nearest sensitive receptors. The mechanical equipment could also be roof mounted, however this would be centrally located, shielded by parapets, and more than 50 feet from the nearest sensitive receptor. Therefore, the noise level is below the City's 60 dBA exterior standard. The proposed project would not place mechanical equipment near residential uses, and noise from this equipment would not be perceptible at the closest sensitive receptor (existing residences 15 feet from the proposed project site). Impacts from mechanical equipment would be less than significant.

Loading Area Noise

The proposed project is a mixed-use development that would necessitate occasional deliveries of vans and light trucks and not heavy-duty trucks. The primary noise associated with deliveries is the arrival and departure of trucks. Normal deliveries typically occur during daytime hours. During loading and unloading activities, noise would be generated by the trucks' diesel engines, exhaust systems, and brakes during low gear shifting braking activities; backing up toward the docks/loading areas; dropping down the dock ramps; and maneuvering away from the docks. The proposed project is not anticipated to require a significant number of truck deliveries. The majority of deliveries for the commercial uses would consist of vendor deliveries in vans and would be infrequent and irregular. The closest that the proposed project could be located to sensitive receptors would be approximately 15 feet away. However, the proposed truck activities would occur approximately 300 feet from the sensitive receptors near the proposed commercial use. While there would be temporary noise increases during truck maneuvering and engine idling, these impacts would be of short duration and infrequent. Typically, heavy truck operations generate a noise level of 64 dBA at a distance of 50 feet.[23] At the nearest sensitive receptors approximately 15 feet, noise levels would attenuate to 74.5 dBA. Since the nearest loading areas would be approximately 300 feet from the nearest sensitive receptors, noise levels would reduce to 48.4 dBA. Noise levels would be further attenuated by intervening terrain and structures. As noise levels associated with trucks and loading/unloading activities would be infrequent and irregular, impacts would be less than significant.

Trash enclosures would be positioned in the northeastern corner adjacent to the existing gas station. Trash and recycling trucks would conduct weekly trash/recycling pickups at these locations on the project site. Trash and recycling truck operations are considered part of standard operations in the area, and noise from these trucks would be short-term and irregular. As such, a less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

22 Elliott H. Berger, Rick Neitzel, and Cynthia A. Kladden, Noise Navigator Sound Level Database with Over 1700 Measurement Values, July 6, 2010.
23 Elliott H. Berger, Rick Neitzel, and Cynthia A. Kladden. Noise Navigator Sound Level Database with Over 1700 Measurement Values, July 6, 2010.

Parking Areas

Traffic associated with parking areas is typically not of sufficient volume to exceed community noise standards, which are based on a time-averaged scale such as the CNEL scale. However, the instantaneous maximum sound levels generated by a car door slamming, engine starting up and car pass-bys may be an annoyance to adjacent noise-sensitive receptors. Parking lot noise can also be considered a "stationary" noise source.

The instantaneous maximum sound levels generated by a car door slamming, engine starting up, and car pass-bys range from 53 to 61 dBA at 50 feet[24] and may be an annoyance to noise-sensitive receptors. Conversations in parking areas may also be an annoyance to sensitive receptors. Sound levels of speech typically range from 33 dBA at 48 feet for normal speech to 50 dBA at 50 feet for very loud speech.[25] It should be noted that parking lot noise are instantaneous noise levels compared to noise standards in the DNL scale, which are averaged over time. As a result, actual noise levels over time resulting from parking lot activities would be far lower. The closest adjacent residential uses would be approximately 65 feet from the parking lot activities. Based on this distance, the vehicle related noise levels would be approximately 58.7 dBA, L_{eq}. Therefore, the noise levels would not exceed the City's 60 dBA exterior noise standards. In addition, parking lot noise would also be partially masked by the background noise from traffic along San Juan Road and noise associated with the existing gas station adjacent to the project site. Noise associated with parking lot activities is not anticipated to exceed the City's Noise Standards during operation. Therefore, noise impacts from parking lots would be less than significant. .

Landscape Maintenance Activities

Development and operation of the proposed project includes new landscaping that would require periodic maintenance. Noise generated by a gasoline-powered lawnmower is estimated to be approximately 70 dBA at a distance of 5 feet. Landscape Maintenance activities would be 58 dBA at the closest sensitive receptor approximately 20 feet away. Maintenance activities would operate during daytime hours for brief periods of time as allowed by the City Municipal Code and would not permanently increase ambient noise levels in the project vicinity and would be consistent with activities that currently occur at the surrounding uses. Therefore, with adherence to the City's Municipal Code, impacts associated with landscape maintenance would be less than significant.

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

Construction

Less than Significant Impact. Increases in groundborne vibration levels attributable to the proposed project would be primarily associated with construction-related activities. Construction on the proposed project site would have the potential to result in varying degrees of temporary groundborne vibration, depending on the specific construction equipment used and the operations involved. Ground vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes in magnitude with increases in distance. 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

24 Kariel, H. G., Noise in Rural Recreational Environments, Canadian Acoustics 19(5), 3-10, 1991.
25 Elliott H. Berger, Rick Neitzel, and Cynthia A. Kladden. Noise Navigator Sound Level Database with Over 1700 Measurement Values, July 6, 2010.

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 FTA has published standard vibration velocities for construction equipment operations. In general, depending on the building category of the nearest buildings adjacent to the potential pile driving area, the potential construction vibration damage criteria vary. For example, for a building constructed with reinforced concrete with no plaster, the FTA guidelines show that a vibration level of up to 0.50 inch per second (in/sec) peak particle velocity (PPV) is considered safe and would not result in any construction vibration damage. In general, the FTA architectural damage criterion for continuous vibrations (i.e., 0.2 in/sec) appears to be conservative. The types of construction vibration impacts include human annoyance and building damage. Human annoyance occurs when construction vibration rises significantly above the threshold of human perception for extended periods of time. Building damage can be cosmetic or structural. Ordinary buildings that are not particularly fragile would not experience cosmetic damage (e.g., plaster cracks) at distances beyond 30 feet. This distance can vary substantially depending on soil composition and underground geological layer between vibration source and receiver.

Table 3-15 lists vibration levels at 25 feet for typical construction equipment. Groundborne vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes in magnitude with increases in distance. As indicated in the table, based on FTA data, vibration velocities from typical heavy construction equipment operations that would be used during project construction range from 0.003 to 0.089 in/sec PPV at 25 feet from the source of activity. The nearest sensitive receptors are the residences directly to the east of the project site approximately 15 feet from the active construction zone.

Table 3-15: Typical Construction Equipment Vibration Levels

Equipment	Peak Particle Velocity at 25 Feet (in/sec)	Peak Particle Velocity at 15 Feet (in/sec) [1]
Large Bulldozer	0.089	0.1915
Loaded Trucks	0.076	0.1635
Rock Breaker	0.059	0.1269
Jackhammer	0.035	0.0753
Small Bulldozer/Tractors	0.003	0.0065

1. Calculated using the following formula: $PPV_{equip} = PPV_{ref} \times (25/D)^{1.5}$, where: PPV_{equip} = the peak particle velocity in in/sec of the equipment adjusted for the distance; PPV_{ref} = the reference vibration level in in/sec from Table 7-4 of the Federal Transit Administration, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, 2018; D = the distance from the equipment to the receiver.
Source: Federal Transit Administration, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, September 2018.

The highest vibration levels are achieved with the large bulldozer operations. This construction activity is expected to take place during grading. Project construction would be more than 50 feet from the closest residential (e.g., mobile home residences) and nonresidential structure (e.g., Shop N Save). Therefore, construction equipment vibration velocities would not exceed the FTA's 0.20 PPV threshold. In general, other construction activities would occur throughout the proposed project site and would not be concentrated at the point closest to the nearest residential structure. Therefore, vibration impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

Operations

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not generate groundborne vibration that could be felt at surrounding uses. Project operations would not involve railroads or substantial heavy truck operations, and therefore would not result in vibration impacts at surrounding uses. As a result, impacts from vibration associated with project operation would be less than significant.

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The nearest airport to the proposed project site is the Hollister Municipal Airport located approximately 2.6 miles northeast of the project site. The proposed project is not within 2.0 miles of a public airport or within an airport influence zone. Additionally, there are no private airstrips located within the proposed project vicinity.

3.14 Population and Housing

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

Existing Setting

The 2021 population of the City of Hollister was approximately 41,386 persons as of January 1, 2021.[26] According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), the City has 12,168 housing units and 3.48 persons per household. Data from the Employment Development Department for February 2022 shows the Hollister labor force is approximately 19,700 people with an unemployment rate of approximately 6.8 percent.[27] The unemployment rate for San Benito County is approximately 6.1 percent.

According to the General Plan Housing Element, approximately 80 percent of homes in the City are single-family development. The Housing Element states that the City needs more duplexes, condominiums, and apartments in order to provide a variety of housing types to fit all income levels. In November 2002 Hollister voters enacted a growth cap initiative that limits new residential development to 244 homes per year. However, there is pressure in communities throughout California coming from the State to plan, permit and construct additional housing, with an emphasis on more affordable housing, to meet the State's acute housing shortage.

[26] California Department of Finance. Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, 1/1/2021. Available at: http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/e-5/. Accessed April 5, 2022.
[27] California Employment Development Department. Monthly Labor Force Data for Cities and Census Designated Places February 2022. Available at: https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/labor-force-and-unemployment-for-cities-and-census-areas.html. Accessed April 5, 2022 .

Discussion

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)?

Less than Significant Impact. Development of the proposed project would potentially increase population in the City. While some of the new residents to the project would likely come from the existing population of Hollister, the actual number of these persons cannot be determined. Thus, it is assumed for the analysis of this Initial Study that all future residents of the proposed project are new to Hollister.

Based on the number of proposed dwelling units (157) with the project and 3.5 persons per household 3.50 for the City, as identified by the DOF, the project would increase the City's population by 550 people (157 dwelling units x 3.48 persons per household = 546 persons). This could be considered substantial population growth in any location. However, the 2005 Hollister General Plan included population projections though the year 2023. By 2023, Hollister was projected to have a population of 55,192. The General Plan EIR considered this growth to be a significant and unavoidable impact. The General Plan also anticipated the 2010 population of Hollister to be approximately 44,790. Current population estimates of 41,386 are substantially short of the 2010 General Plan projected population. The addition of 546 persons as a result of the development of the project would not increase the population of the City beyond the anticipated 2023 population or even the 2010 population. The persons per household figure of 3.48 is also representative of the City's inventory of single-family homes. The multi-family apartments proposed by the project would likely have fewer persons per household, consistent with housing statistics throughout the State.

The Commercial and Mixed-Use land use designation is intended to accommodate a mix of residential and commercial uses with an emphasis on residential activity as the primary use and commercial activity allowed in a secondary role. During construction of the project, temporary construction jobs would be created. In addition, the commercial component of the proposed project would create a small number of employment opportunities. Overall, however, the project would create more housing than jobs within the City, further affecting the imbalance of the City's jobs/housing ratio, which has more housing than employment. This information is of interest to the City but is strictly for informational purposes and is not an issue typically subject to CEQA review.

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

No Impact. The 5.55-acre project site is currently vacant with an existing metal barn on the western portion of the site. Implementation of the project would not result in the removal of any residential units or displacement of people such that construction of replacement housing would be required elsewhere. Thus, no impacts would occur.

3.15 Public Services

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

Existing Setting

Fire Protection Services

Fire protection services within the City limits are provided by the Hollister Fire Department (HFD). The Hollister Fire Department has four fire stations.[28] The nearest fire station to the project site is Station 1 located at 110 5th Street, approximately 1.4-mile east of the project site. The next closest fire station to the project site is Station 3, located at the Hollister Municipal Airport, approximately 2.5 miles north of the project site. The Hollister Fire Department provides first responder emergency medical services and responds to all automatic aid areas as the first responder for emergency medical services incidents. The HFD's response time goal is 3 minutes.[29]

28 City of Hollister. Contacts. Available at: http://hollister.ca.gov/contact/. Accessed on April 6, 2022.
29 City of Hollister. Briggs 17 Unified Cannabis Cultivation Park, Hollister CA– Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, page 80. July 2019.

Police Protection

Police protection services are provided to the project site by the Hollister Police Department (HPD). Headquarters are located at 395 Apollo Way, approximately 4.3 miles northeast of the project site. The HPD service ratio is one officer per 1,000 residents.

Schools

The project is located within the Hollister School District (HESD) for grades K-8 and San Benito High School District for grades 9-12.

The Hollister School District serves a student population of about 5,415 students with five elementary schools (K–6), a K–8 school, two middle schools (7–8), a Dual Language Immersion Academy (K–6, Spanish/English), and an Accelerated Achievement Academy (4–8). The district employs approximately 495 staff members, including certificated and classified employees, substitutes, and others (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022a).

The San Benito High School District has two schools that served a student population of 3,285 students in the 2020/2021 school year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022b). In the 2020/2021 school year, the school had 128 teachers.

Students in the project area would attend R.O. Hardin Elementary School (grades K-5), Rancho San Justo Middle School (grades 6-8), and San Benito High School (grades 9-12).[30]

Other Public Facilities, Libraries

The San Benito County Free Library System in Hollister is located at 470 5th Street, approximately 1 mile east of the project site.[31] According to the 2020 Annual Report, approximately 43,242 people have a library card and the library is supported by nine full-time staff members.[32]

Discussion

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

i. Fire protection?

Less than Significant Impact. Development of the proposed project may incrementally increase the demand for fire protection services; however, not to a substantial level considering the site's urbanized location. The nearest fire station to the project site is the Station 1, located approximately 1.4-miles east of the project site. The HFD's response time goal is 3 minutes. The project site can be served within the 3-minute goal from Station 1.

[30] My School Location. Hollister School District. Available at: https://www.myschoollocation.com/hollistersd/. Accessed on April 6, 2022.
[31] San Benito County Free Library. Available at: http://sbcfl.org/. Accessed on April 6, 2022.
[32] San Benito County Free Library. Annual Report 2020. Available at: https://sbcfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2019-20-Infographic.pdf

The project would intensify development on the project site by adding 157 residential units. This would result in an additional population of up to 546 people. As a result, project development would incrementally increase the number of residents in the City (and this specific location) and cause an incremental, concentrated increase in demand for fire protection services and facilities.

According to the General Plan EIR, buildout of the General Plan would likely increase medical calls and fire alarms given the increased number of residents and employees in the City. While the General Plan EIR does not indicate a specific need to construct new fire stations or significantly expand existing stations or other facilities, it does acknowledge that additional fire staffing would be required. The General Plan contains a number of policies and programs to address adequate services and facilities including emergency services such as police and fire.

The General Plan found with implementation of Policy LU2.3, there would be a less than significant impact to police and fire services. In addition, the project would be subject to development impact fees and as a standard condition of project approval, the applicant would be required to pay the City's impact fees at the time of project approval. Furthermore, the proposed project is within the requirements of the General Plan designation and would be constructed in accordance with current Building codes, Fire Codes, and City policies to avoid unsafe building conditions and promote public safety. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

ii. Police protection?

Less than Significant Impact. Police protection services would be provided by the HPD. Although a new mixed-use building with retail/commercial and residential uses would be constructed on the project site, the project would be located in an urbanized area and would not result in a substantial increase in demand on police services. It is not anticipated to increase response times to the project site or vicinity. The project does not propose or require new or physically altered police protection facilities. The project would be subject to development impact fees and as a standard condition of project approval, the applicant would be required to pay the City's impact fees at the time of project approval to offset the financial burden new development would cause the HPD. In addition, the project would be constructed in accordance with current Building codes and City policies to avoid unsafe building conditions and promote public safety. Furthermore, the potential growth resulting from the proposed project is accounted for in the planned growth for the City. The project is only a small fraction of the total growth identified in the General Plan. Compliance with the General Plan policies would help to ensure that the HPD meets and maintains the City's response time objectives over the long-term. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

iii. Schools?

Less than Significant Impact. The project site is located within the HESD and SBHSD boundaries. According to Table 8 of the 2015 Housing Element, the age range 6–13 represented approximately 14.0 percent of the city population, while age range 14– 17 represented 6.8 percent of the population in 2008. Based on an anticipated project resident population of 546 people, the project could increase student population in the elementary/middle school ages by 76 students and in the high school ages by approximately 37 students.

While the proposed project would increase the student population in the City, which in turn could affect the capacity of existing school facilities, Section 65995(h) of the California Government Code has been

adopted by the state to mitigate any school facilities impacts. Section 65995(h) states that the payment of statutory fees "is deemed to be full and complete mitigation of the impacts of any 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 provision of adequate school facilities." For this reason, development of the project would have a less than significant impact related to school facilities. New facilities, if and when required by the school districts, would be developed and analyzed independent of this project review.

iv. Parks?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project includes 1,665 sf (0.04 acres) of shared open space in the form of a 3-story community building for the project residents. It is assumed this component of the plan is not considered formal public space and would be intended for use by project residents.

An update to the Park Facility Master Plan (last updated in 2002) for the City was adopted in May 2019 and the parks level of service standard increased from "4 acres per 1,000 residents" to "5 acres per 1,000 residents". According to the 2019 Park Master Facility Plan, the City has approximately 15 pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks. The City also includes seven school parks and two county parks. Currently, the City has approximately 84 acres of park with approximately 2.3 acres per 1,000 residents. The City would need approximately 62 more acres to meet the prior level of standard of "4 acres per 1,000 residents". To better reach this goal and provide adequate levels of public recreation amenities, the City increased the parks ratio to 5 acres per 1,000 residents.

According to Section 16.55.040(2)(a) of the Hollister Municipal Code, parkland dedication for multi-family development is determined using a ratio of 0.0172 acres per unit. The project would therefore require 2.70 acres of parkland/open space to meet this ratio. The City imposes park impact fees for all new residential development in the City. Per Section 16.55.050 of the City Municipal Code, the project would be required to comply with the payment of in-lieu fees, or parkland dedication, or a combination of both. As the open space component does not meet this standard, the project will likely require a combination of physical improved park and open space area and in-lieu fees.

The construction of any park or open space facilities would occur with project construction. As such, no additional environmental effects from construction would occur beyond those already anticipated.

The City collects a parks development impact fee to offset the financial burden new development would cause to the City's parkland. Additionally, the proposed project has approximately 0.04 acres of common open space. This open space in combination with impact fees, as determined by the City, would reduce impacts to parkland facilities to less than significant.

v. Other public facilities?

Less than Significant Impact. The project proposes the construction of 157 residential units which could lead to a demand on other public facilities such as libraries within the City. According to the General Plan, the library system in the City has experienced funding problems and has reduced the hours of operation for the library facilities. However, projects consistent with the General Plan and complying with programs and policies within the General Plan would have less than significant impacts (such as CSF4.9 Library Services). Therefore, the project would not require the construction of other public facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment and there would be a less than significant impact.

3.16 Recreation

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

Existing Setting

The City of Hollister manages a total of 84 acres of regional and neighborhood/community serving parkland. According to the 2019 Park Master Facility Plan, the City has approximately 15 pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks. The City also includes seven school parks and two county parks. The closest park to the project site is newly developed Brigantino Park located at 2100 San Juan Road, approximately 0.3 miles southwest of the project site. Brigantino Park includes acres of green grass and future soccer and softball fields. Other parks located within the same distance to the project site are John Z. Hernandez Memorial Park and Tony Aguirre Memorial Park, both located northwest of the project site.

Discussion

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

Less than Significant Impact. The project would increase the City's population by approximately 546 persons, as discussed in Section 3.15, Population and Housing, would result in a greater demand for park and recreation facilities. The increase in park and recreation users may increase the potential for deterioration to existing facilities. However, this number of people, combined with the City's on-going park operation and maintenance plans (for which this proposed project would contribute to by way of property taxes) would not be expected to result in a substantial physical deterioration to parks or other recreation facilities because the project would be required to pay all park impact fees, which are used to assist in the development and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities. As such, the proposed project would have a less than physical impact on park facilities.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact. Refer to Section 4.16 Public Services, Discussion Impact A (iii). As discussed above, the project includes shared open space areas for the project residents. However, as discussed throughout this document the project would be subject to mitigation measures to reduce potential environmental impacts related to construction and operation of the site. Therefore, the project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment and there would be no impact.

3.17 Transportation

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

A transportation impact analysis (TIA) was prepared to determine potential deficiencies related to the project based on standards and methodologies set forth by the City of Hollister (City) and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and addresses potential impacts on vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As this study is intended to assist the City in making findings under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), it should be noted that recent changes to CEQA now recognize VMT as the primary standard of review for project impacts. Therefore, intersection level of service (LOS) and delay results will be referred as deficiencies. This study includes LOS and queuing analyses of the AM and PM peak hour traffic conditions for six (6) intersections. This study also addresses the potential transportation effects of the proposed project to assist the City with project planning and the identification of potential conditions of approval for the project.

This initial study summarizes key findings from the TIA to support the Initial Study Checklist. For the complete TIA and all related assumptions and information, please see Appendix H.

The TIA analyzed the project's potential effects to the following six intersections in the City:

1. San Juan Road/4th Street and SR 156
2. San Juan Road/4th Street and SR 156
3. San Juan Road/4th Street and Graf Road
4. San Juan Road/4th Street and Project Driveway
5. San Juan Road/4th Street and Miller Road
6. San Juan Road/4th Street and Westside Boulevard

All six intersection currently operate at LOS A or B (acceptable).

The study used the following scenarios to determine the project's effect on the six intersections.

- **Existing Conditions**
- **Existing Plus Project**
- **Background Conditions**
- **Background Plus Project Conditions**
- **Cumulative Conditions**
- **Cumulative Plus Project Conditions**

Although CEQA now recognizes VMT as the primary analysis methodology for transportation impacts, intersection LOS and queuing were also analyzed to determine the operational effects of nearby study intersections due to the proposed project. LOS is a qualitative description of operating conditions based on an alphabetic scale. The scale ranges from LOS A, or free flow conditions with little or no delay, to LOS F, or jammed conditions with excessive delays. The LOS standard for intersections under the jurisdictions of the City of Hollister and Caltrans is LOS C. The LOS standard for intersections under the jurisdiction of San Benito County is LOS D.

Existing Setting

Regional and Local Access

The following roadway network provide access to the project site:

4th Street/San Juan Road is a two-lane, east-west roadway with discontinuous two-way left-turn lanes (TWLTL) within the study area. It begins as San Juan Road/4th Street/SR 156B at State Route 156 (SR 156) to the west and transitions into Meridian Street at McCray Street.

Graf Road is a two-lane, north-south roadway within the study area. It connects to Central Avenue to the north and San Juan Road to the south.

Miller Road is a two-lane, north-south roadway within the study area. It connects to Buena Vista Road to the north and San Juan Road to the south. Miller Road is a collector that provides access to residential and commercial land uses as well as access to the Calaveras Elementary School just east of the roadway.

State Route 156 (SR 156) is a two-lane, north-south State Route within the study area. It connects to SR 152 to the north and US-101 to the south, providing access to the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista and unincorporated areas within the County. SR 156 is classified as a major thoroughfare in the City of Hollister General Plan.

Westside Boulevard is a two-lane, north-south roadway within the study area. It connects to Westside Road to the north and Nash Road to the south and provides access to residential land uses.

Pedestrian Facilities

There are few sidewalks and crosswalks provided near the project site since the study area is less developed and consists of more industrial uses in comparison to east of the study area consisting of more residential and commercial uses. Near the project site, sidewalks are provided along both sides of Graf Road and along both sides of San Juan Road/4th Street, beginning 460 feet east of Graf Road with continuous sidewalks up to Sally Street. There are gaps in the pedestrian facility along San Juan Road/4th Street, west of the Shop N Save with no sidewalks provided adjacent to the project site.

Bicycle Facilities

There are no existing Class I bicycle paths near the project site. Class II bicycle facilities currently exist on San Juan Road, just east of the project site. A future Class II bicycle path is proposed adjacent to the project site extending bicycle lanes to SR-156.

Transit Service

The San Benito County Express (County Express) provides transit services within the City of Hollister and the nearby cities of Gilroy and San Juan Bautista. The County Express provides multiple fixed routes near the project site within the City.

Discussion

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

Less than Significant Impact. The information below summarizes the effects of the project on the local roadway network as a method of determining potential conflicts with plans, programs or policies related to circulation, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Existing Plus Project Conditions

The number of net new project trips anticipated to be added to the roadway system surrounding the project site was estimated based on data published in the Institute of Transportation Engineer's (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition*. In addition, a five (5) percent internal capture reduction and a 15 percent pass-by reduction were applied for the proposed project based on the *Caltrans Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies*. The proposed project is anticipated to generate a total net new 868 daily trips, a net new +66 trips in the AM peak hour (18 trips in and 48 trips out) and a net new +78 trips in the PM peak hour (42 trips in and 32 trips out).

The addition of project traffic does not trigger any LOS deficiencies and therefore is consistent with programs, plans and policies that rely on LOS as a standard.

Background Plus Project Intersection Analyses

The results of the intersection level of service under background plus project conditions are summarized in Table 6 of the TIA. The results indicate Intersection #4 – San Juan Road/4th Street & Project Driveway is projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS D during PM peak hour, but does not meet the thresholds that warrant signalization under background conditions. Thus, the project does not create a deficiency at the study intersection. The remaining study intersections would continue to operate at acceptable levels of service during both the AM and PM peak hours under background conditions plus project.

Cumulative Conditions

Cumulative conditions represent a summary of the traffic conditions that would occur with the full development of currently proposed projects in the City. The TIA analyzed cumulative transportation improvements, traffic volume, and volumes at study intersections.

Approved and pending projects for the City of Hollister were provided by the City, and projects within the County were derived from a previous traffic study with a list of pending and approved project provided by the County of San Benito. In addition, to account for Cumulative growth along SR 156, a growth rate derived from historical counts was applied to the northbound and southbound through volumes at Intersection #1 (SR 156 and San Juan Road/4th Street). The Cumulative year was assumed to be 2035.

The results of cumulative conditions plus project traffic conditions at study intersections are summarized in Table 8 of the TIA. The results indicate Intersection #4 – San Juan Road/4th Street & Project Driveway is projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS D during AM peak hour under cumulative conditions plus project traffic and LOS E during PM peak hour under cumulative conditions plus project traffic, but does not meet the thresholds that warrant signalization under cumulative conditions. Since the peak hour signal warrants were not met in the Background Plus Project Conditions and Cumulative Plus Project Conditions, the project does not create a deficiency at the study intersection. The remaining study intersections would continue to operate at acceptable levels of service during both the AM and PM peak hours under cumulative conditions plus project.

Project Traffic Conclusions

The project will need to pay any established fair share development impact fees for common and planned improvements, and include coordinated roadway planning consistent with West Gateway District design guidelines. No program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be impacted by the proposal. This is a less than significant impact.

The impacts of the project on key study intersections were identified based on City, San Benito County, and Caltrans level of service standards. Based on the TIA, the project would not create any significant deficiencies at any of the study intersections under existing plus project conditions, background plus project conditions, or cumulative conditions. As the intersection at San Juan Road/4th Street & Project Driveway is already in place, the project will result in a less than significant impact at this intersection. No mitigation is necessary.

Public Transit, Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The project would create additional demand for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities in the project area. For those taking transit, the Blue and Green Lines operate within the vicinity of the project site with the nearest bus stop located at the intersection of Graf Road and Central Avenue and is less than 0.25-mile walking distance from the project site. The nearest bus stop for the Intercounty Service routes is located at the intersection of San Juan Road/4th Street and Miller Road and is located approximately 970 feet east of the project site. Bus stops for the Blue and Green Lines are located close to nearby schools which provide access for students between the schools and the project site.

As noted in Existing Setting, there are existing sidewalks along both sides of San Juan Road/4th Street, beginning 460 feet east of Graf Road with continuous sidewalks up to Sally Street. There are also sidewalks along Miller Road and Central Avenue for pedestrians to access Calaveras Elementary School and

Calaveras Park located northeast of the project site. Pedestrians accessing other nearby schools such as RO Hardin Elementary School and Sacred Heart School can use the existing sidewalks along San Juan Road/4th Street and Westside Boulevard. However, there are missing gaps in the pedestrian facility along San Juan Road/4th Street, west of the Shop N Save driveway, including missing sidewalks along the frontage of the project site which would provide difficulty for pedestrians to access the bus stop located at Graf Road and Central Avenue as well as the community parks located along Central Avenue northwest of the project site.

As part of the West Gateway Beautification Project for Phase 1, which consists of roadway improvements along San Juan Road/4th Street, sidewalks are proposed to be constructed on San Juan Road/4th Street from the project site to Graf Road. Crosswalks are also proposed on all five legs of the roundabout at Graf Road and San Juan Road/4th Street. Therefore, with the proposed Phase 1 improvements of the West Gateway Beautification project that are estimated to be in place in Background Plus Project Conditions, pedestrians will be able to access the bus stop at Graf Road and Central Avenue and the community parks located northwest of the project site. Within the project site, pedestrians can access the project site using the pedestrian pathway and sidewalk located on the west side of the driveway aisle which the connects to the stairs that provide access to the parking garage.

Currently, there are existing Class II bicycle lanes just east of the project site and provides access to the commercial uses located at San Juan Road/4th Street and Miller Road. Bicyclists are able to access nearby schools long San Juan Road/4th Street and Westside Boulevard. Similar to pedestrian facilities, there are no bicycle facilities along San Juan Road/4th Street west of the project site and therefore access to the community parks located along Central Avenue northwest of the project site could be challenging. However, with Phase 1 of the West Gateway Beautification project, which is estimated to be in place in Background Plus Project Conditions, Class II bicycle lanes would be constructed from the project site to Graf Road and therefore bicyclists can access the community parks northwest of the project site.

For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with goals, policies, and programs adopted by the City for encouraging alternative transportation modes and increasing the safety and performance of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. With the proposed Phase 1 improvements of the West Gateway Beautification project that are estimated to be in place in Background Plus Project Conditions, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less than Significant Impact. A VMT analysis was completed for the proposed mixed-use development project. With the passage of SB 743, VMT has become an important indicator for determining if a new development would result in a "significant transportation impact". Because the City of Hollister has not yet adopted its thresholds for determining a significant impact, draft values of these thresholds were used for this analysis.

To determine whether a project would result in CEQA transportation impacts related to VMT, a qualitative VMT analysis completed only for the proposed 157 multi-family residential units. The guidelines provided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) state that "*Lead agencies can evaluate each*

component of a mixed-use project independently and apply the significance threshold for each project type included (e.g., residential and retail)...Combining different land uses and applying one threshold to those land uses may result in an inaccurate impact assessment." Therefore, when considering the evaluation of the commercial component of the proposed project the guidelines further state that, "*By adding retail opportunities into the urban fabric and thereby improving retail destination proximity, local-serving retail development tends to shorten trips and reduce VMT…retail development including stores larger than 50,000 square feet might be considered regional-serving, and so lead agencies should undertake an analysis to determine whether the project might increase or decrease VMT*." Because the proposed project only includes 3,750 square-feet of commercial space, the development can be assumed as "regionally serving" and therefore can be excluded from a quantitative VMT analysis, and also presumed to have a less than significant impact on VMT with respect to CEQA.

Travel Demand Models (TDMs) were also used to evaluate VMT for the project. The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments Regional (AMBAG) Travel Demand Model was determined to be the best fit for this project considering the geographic location of the project and the detailed roadway network in the model for the City of Hollister/San Benito County region.

Using the AMBAG TDM to determine the average daily VMT for the residential component of the proposed project required determining the average VMT per capita for the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) that the project was located in. Using the address of the proposed project, it was determined that the proposed project was located in TAZ 1464. Based on the AMBAG TDM and project's address, it was determined that this TAZ resulted in an average VMT per capita of 10.64 daily vehicle-miles. The regional average VMT per capita is 14.4 vehicle-miles with the draft threshold being 15 percent below the regional average, resulting in a threshold of 12.2 daily vehicle-miles. Therefore, the average VMT per capita of 10.64 daily vehicle-miles for the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact with respect to CEQA.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. A review of the project site plan was conducted (see Appendix H) to determine if adequate site access and on-site circulation is provided and to identify any access issues that should be improved. The review, summarized below, was based on the current site plans, and in accordance with generally accepted traffic engineering standards and City requirements.

Site Access

The project as current proposed creates a misalignment with the north leg of the intersection which provides access to the Vista de Oro Apartments across the road. Future development is also proposed on the north side of San Juan Road with access through this north leg. Realigning the north and south leg would reduce potential hazards for conflicting vehicular movements such as vehicles making a westbound left into the project site may drive into the eastbound left-turn pocket and conflict with vehicles making an eastbound left-turn into the Vista de Oro Apartments. Realigning this intersection is required to comply with Section 17.18.120 (A) of the City's Municipal Code and to avoid this conflict.

The site plan proposes one driveway/access along San Juan Road/4th Street. It is assumed that the project driveway will be an unsignalized, full access driveway. The project driveway will be located adjacent to

the existing Shop N Save driveway located to the east of the project site. As proposed, the driveways for the Shop N Save and the project site are closely spaced and present potential vehicular hazards. The existing Shop N Save gas station's driveway is located at the edge of the curb return located to the east of the project's driveway and does not meet the minimum 150 feet distance required in the City's Municipal Code, Section 17.18.120 (B). Additionally, vehicles making a westbound left-turn into the Shop N Save driveway may not have sufficient sight distance to observe oncoming eastbound through vehicles if they are behind a queue of vehicles waiting to make a westbound left-turn into the proposed project. Therefore, it is recommended that the project entrance be redesigned to provide safe access for both land uses and for the new driveway to align with the north leg of the intersection to avoid conflicts.

Vehicular Queuing

The queuing analysis indicated that several existing turn bays storage lengths are exceeded under each analysis scenario. In all cases the inadequate queue lengths are not associated with the project but are a result of pre-existing deficiencies. Because the results are pre-existing deficiencies not associated with the project, the result is not a new deficiency since the project did not increase the queue by at least one vehicle length (i.e., 25 feet) under project conditions.

To avoid potential impacts associated with site access and safety/design hazards, the following MM TRA-1 would be required to reduce impacts to site access to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures

Site Access

MM TRA-1 The project entrance shall align with the existing driveway located across the street (APN 052-360-004 and -005). Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the Applicant for 1550 San Juan Road shall enter into an Agreement, in a form approved by the City, to relocate this existing (off site) driveway with the new driveway at 1550 San Juan Road. The existing driveway shall be relocated prior to Final Occupancy of the project located at 1550 San Juan Road. Final design and alignment shall ensure adequate access into the existing market and gas station.

Implementation of MM TRA-1 would reduce the impact to a less than significant level by consolidating the two driveways to avoid conflicts turning in and out of the project site.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed above, a review of the project site plan was performed as part of the traffic analysis to determine whether adequate site access would be provided. The site plan proposes one unsignalized full-access entrances along San Juan Road/4th Street.

The site layout allows for continuous traffic circulation. Based on the site plan, there are no site improvements, such as raised medians or restricted movements that would limit emergency vehicles access to all project buildings. However, the design of future development on the project site is subject to the California Building Code and review and approval by the Hollister Fire Department, to ensure the proposed project is adequately designed to minimize risks associated with fire consistent with General Plan Policies CSF 4.12 and HS2.4. Based on this review, the City has determined that a second (future) emergency access point is required. Implementation of the MM TRA-2 would address this issue.

MM TRA-2 The applicant shall allow for the future extension of the internal road, located between Building 4 and 8 and between Building 6 and 7 (where the road comes to a T intersection). The extension shall be designed through the T intersection to connect to the adjacent property located 1619 4th Street. The parking spaces located in this area shall be temporary until such time that a project is under construction at 1619 4th Street. During the construction of 1619 4th Street the property owner of 1550 San Juan Road shall allow this property owner to connect with the internal road to provide two entrance/exits for 1550 San Juan Road.

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
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				
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)?		X		
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?		X		

Existing Setting

As described in Section 3.5, Cultural Resources, a cultural resources assessment was prepared in August 2020 (Dudek, 2020). As part of that investigation, Dudek requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search through the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and conducted field investigation. The NAHC found positive results for the SLF search and directed Dudek to contact Amah Mutsun Tribal Band for more information. The NAHC also provided a list of tribal representatives to contact for information regarding known and recorded sites. Dudek conducted direct outreach to representatives of the Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, and Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista tribes (the tribes). The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band provided a response on August 6, 2020. All correspondence is available in Appendix B.

Discussion

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:

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)?

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?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. As described in Section 3.5, Cultural Resources, a cultural resources assessment was prepared in August 2020 (Dudek). As part of that investigation, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) search was positive for tribal cultural resources, with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band listed as the contact. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista and Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan were also listed as contacts. During the outreach effort, the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band recommended monitoring by an Amah Mutsun Tribal Band member during construction. During the pedestrian survey of the project site conducted by Dudek, no evidence of potentially significant cultural resources were found. Results were determined to be negative.

However, given the archeological sensitivity of the project site, previously unknown unrecorded archeological deposits could be discovered during ground disturbing construction activities. Project implementation activities such as project site clearing, preparation, excavation, grading, trenching, boring etc. could potentially encounter buried tribal resources. Should this occur, the ability of the deposits to convey their significance, either as containing information about prehistory or history, as possessing traditional or cultural significance to the Native American or other descendant communities, would be materially impaired. Mitigation Measures MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2 provide contingencies in the event that any such resources are discovered during construction. These measures would adequately mitigate this potential impact to a less than significant level.

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 requires lead agencies to conduct formal consultations with California Native American tribes during the CEQA process to identify tribal cultural resources that may be subject to significant impacts by a project. Where a project may have a significant impact on a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency's environmental document must discuss the impact and whether feasible alternatives or mitigation measures could avoid or substantially lessen the impact. This consultation requirement applies only if the tribes have sent written requests for notification of projects to the lead agency. Notification was conducted by the City with applicable tribal representatives identified by the NAHC in compliance with AB 52. At the time of preparation of this Initial Study, no other Native American

tribes that are or have been traditionally culturally affiliated with the project vicinity have requested notification from the City of Hollister.

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

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

Existing Setting

The project site is located within the Urban Service Area of the City of Hollister and is currently served by City services. Utilities and services are furnished to the project site by the following providers:

Wastewater Treatment: Wastewater treatment and disposal is provided by the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Domestic Water Reclamation Facility. Sanitary sewer lines are maintained by the City of Hollister.

Water Service: City of Hollister Community Services Utilities Division.

Storm Drainage: City of Hollister.

Solid Waste: Hollister Disposal Company.

Natural Gas & Electricity: Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E).

Telecommunications: AT&T, Comcast, and Spectrum.

Discussion

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Water Supply

Less than Significant Impact. The City of Hollister Utilities Division–Water owns, operates, and maintains a water distribution system providing retail potable and non-potable water service to residents and businesses within or near the city limits. Hollister has two sources of potable water supply: purchased surface water from the San Benito County Water District (SBCWD) and groundwater from eight City owned and operated wells (two wells are currently offline). Hollister also has emergency interties with the Sunnyslope County Water District that allow water to flow between the two systems such that strict accounting of each individual system may result in unaccounted for or excess water (Todd Engineers 2016).

The City receives Central Valley Project (CVP) water from the SBCWD, treated at the Lessalt Water Treatment Plant (WTP). In 2015, the Lessalt WTP was retrofitted and can treat up to 2.5 million gallons (7,672,163 acre-feet per year [afy]) of surface water per day. The West Hills WTP was completed in 2017 and has a capacity to treat 4.5 million gallons (13,809,894 afy) of surface water per day (SBCWD, 2020). Combined, the two treatment plants can meet all the City of Hollister and Sunnyslope County Water District needs through 2025.The SBCWD has a 40-year contract (extending to 2027) for a maximum of 8,250 afy of municipal and industrial water and 35,550 afy of agricultural water. According to the 2015 Hollister Urban Area Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), potable water supply for a normal water year was 4,880 afy in 2015 and is projected to be 10,170 AFY in 2035.

The 2015 Hollister UWMP estimated that the total water demand for the Hollister Urban Area (HUA) could reach approximately 10,170 afy by 2035. However, the base demand is approximately 5,996 afy. The project would have a water demand of approximately 85,722 gpd or approximately 96.02 afy.[33] Water usage associated with the proposed project represent a 2.0 percent increase over the systems wide 2015 water production of 4,880 afy.

In addition, implementation of the General Plan policies, existing regulations and local programs would ensure that the proposed project would reduce water consumption including expansion of the recycled water system and implementation of water conservation measures. Thus, relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities would not be needed and there would be no impact.

[33] According to the Urban Water Management Plan the per capita daily demand was 157 gpcd for the entire HUA regional alliance (Todd 2016). With an estimated population of approximately 546 people*(157 gpcd) = 85,722 total project gallons per day.

Wastewater

Less than Significant Impact. The City's wastewater treatment facilities include the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant (IWTP) and the Domestic Water Reclamation Facility (DWRF). The IWTP primarily treats waste from the tomato cannery located in the City. It also collects a portion of the City's stormwater runoff. The DWRF treats domestic, commercial, and industrial wastewater in Hollister and produces Title 22 reclaimed water for park irrigation, airport greenery, and groundwater recharge.

The DWRF is currently capable of treating up to 4 million gallons per day (mgd) for dry weather flow conditions and 5 mgd for we weather flow conditions (Wallace Group 2018). The 4-year average daily flow is approximately 2.2 mgd. Thus, the domestic wastewater treatment facility has approximately 1 mgd of unused capacity, as well as the optional expansion capacity of an additional 1 mgd. In 2019, the average wastewater flow per housing unit to the facility was 184.6 gallons per day (gpd) per unit.[34]

The project would connect to an existing sewer line adjacent to the project site and therefore would not require the extension of City sewer pipelines except to service the property. All sewer pipelines on the project site would be installed in the project roadways during construction and are the responsibility of the project applicant. The project would generate approximately 28,982 gpd of wastewater (184.6 gpd x 157 units). The addition of combined wastewater estimated from the project's proposed uses would not cause an exceedance of the operational or permitted capacity at the Domestic Water Reclamation Facility. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on wastewater facilities.

Stormwater

Less than Significant Impact. Storm drainage facilities would be provided by the City of Hollister. The City's storm drainage system comprises multiple networks of inlets, pipes, and basins that flow to the San Benito River, to Santa Ana Creek, or to terminal (retention) basins. The storm drainage system includes over 59 miles of piping flowing into one of the 20 river outfalls or to one of the five terminal basins. The City's system does not include any stormwater pumping stations (Todd Engineers 2011).

As discussed in Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, implementation of the proposed project would increase impervious surfaces on-site. The project is including a stormwater detention and infiltration system. The storm drainage system would be designed to comply with Section E.12.e(ii)(d) of the NPDES General Permit for Waste Discharge Requirements for Storm Water Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (Order No. 2013-0001-DWQ). This requires the site design to achieve an 85 percent capture rate. As currently designed, storm drainage will be retained and percolated on site. Because the project would construct an internal drainage and capture system to serve the project, and would include infiltration facilities for water quality, sized according to City standards, the project would not require new or the expansion of existing storm drainage facilities. With implementation of a Stormwater Control Plan consistent with RWQCB and compliance with the City's regulatory policies pertaining to stormwater runoff, operation of the proposed project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new stormwater drainage and there would be a less than significant impact.

[34] Based on an average of 2.2 mgd of wastewater divided by 11,917 housing units in 2019 in the City (DOF estimates).

Electric Power, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications Facilities

Less than Significant Impact. As the project site is currently located in a developed area of the City and is surrounded by urban uses, infrastructure on the project site is already established. Buildout of the project would increase demand for telecommunication and electrical services and would likely require new hookups to existing infrastructure, but not create a need for new physical facilities. As discussed above, PG&E is the main electricity and natural gas provider for the City of Hollister. PG&E would continue to provide these services for the project. Telecommunications would continue to be provided by AT&T, Comcast, and Spectrum. Therefore, the proposed project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities and there would be no impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed above, water service is provided by the City of Hollister. The proposed project would generate a water demand of approximately 86,000 gpd, which is within the supply and delivery capacity of the existing system that connects to the project. Cumulatively, water demand could exceed water supply with implementation of the General Plan during dry and multiple dry years after 2020. Implementation of the General Plan policies, existing regulations and local programs would ensure that the proposed project would reduce water consumption including expansion of the recycled water system and implementation of water conservation measures. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

b) 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?

Less than Significant Impact. The project's wastewater would be treated by the City's Domestic Water Reclamation Facility, which has sufficient capacity as noted in threshold question a), above. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on wastewater facilities.

c) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

And,

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

Less than Significant Impact. Recology San Benito County provides garbage and recycling collection service in Hollister. The collection program includes curbside recycling, garbage, yard waste, used motor oil, and used oil filters (Recology 2022). The San Benito County Integrated Waste Management Regional Agency oversees landfill operations and the San Benito County garbage and recycling services contract and is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal and state waste regulations. The agency also implements the countywide household hazardous waste program and hosts household hazardous waste collection events every month in the city. The John Smith Road Landfill is the only permitted waste disposal facility serving the City. It is owned by the County of San Benito and operated by Waste

Connections, Inc. The maximum permitted capacity of the landfill is 9,797,000 cubic yards. According to the CalRecycle Solid Waste Facility Permit (35-AA-0001), as of April 30, 2021, John Smith Landfill is estimated to have a remaining capacity of 1,921,000 cy, with a projected closing date of 2032. The proposed project is expected to be fully built out before the closing date. The estimated closure date for the landfill is 2025 at 850 tons per day (tpd) or 2032 at 500 tpd (CalRecycle 2022).

The proposed project would generate approximately 857.18[35] pounds per day (ppd) or approximately 0.43 tpd of solid waste. The General Plan FEIR concluded that the increase in solid waste generated by full buildout under the General Plan would not cause the City to exceed the capacities of the operating landfills that serve the City. Compliance with the General Plan policies, existing regulations, and local programs would ensure that the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to landfill capacities to accommodate the City's increased service population. The project's additional solid waste would not increase the tonnage beyond the landfill's permitted amount or result in the closure of the landfill prior to the anticipated 2032 date. As a result, the project would have a less than significant impact on solid waste disposal.

35 Estimated solid waste generation rates were obtained from CalRecycle. Total ppd generated by proposed project = 3,750 SF of commercial*(5 lb/1000 sf/day) + 157 residential units*(5.4 lbs/day/dwelling unit) = 857.18 ppd

3.20 Wildfire

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
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?				X
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?				X
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?				X

Existing Setting

The 5.55-acre site is located within an urban area and is predominately surrounded by residential and industrial uses. The proposed project is within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) unzoned on the "Fire Hazard Severity Zone" on the map dated October 2007[36] and "LRA Incorporated" on the Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA Map dated November 2007.[37] The nearest Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone is approximately 2.5 miles southwest of the project site.

[36] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Draft Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA. Available at: https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6773/fhszl06_1_map35.pdf. Accessed on April 6, 2022.
[37] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. VHFHSZ in LRA. Available at: https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6771/fhszs_map35.pdf. Accessed on April 6, 2022.

Discussion

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

No Impact. The San Benito County Emergency Services Department is the lead agency for emergency situations in the City. The Department has adopted an Emergency Operations Plan (August 2015), which include standard operating procedures for hazards, including urban/wildland interface fires. Because the project site is zoned in the "Non-Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone" and outside of the Wildland Urban Interface Fire Area, the proposed project would not substantially impair the County's Emergency Operations and Evacuation Plan. Thus, no impacts would occur.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No Impact. The project site is zoned in the "Non-Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone". In addition, the project site is relatively flat and in an urbanized area with residential and commercial buildings. The nearest Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone is approximately 2.5 miles southwest of the project site. Thus, no impacts would occur.

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No Impact. As previously discussed, all proposed project components (including infrastructure, roads, etc.) would be located within the boundaries of the project site, and impacts associated with the development of the project within this footprint area analyzed throughout this document. Additionally, as part of the City's process, the City will review all plans for adequate fire suppression, fire access, and emergency evacuation. Adherence to standard City policies would result in no impacts.

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No Impact. As discussed above, the project site is zoned in the "Non-Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone". In addition, the project site is relatively flat and the proposed on-site detention/percolation pipes and facilities would limit the release of stormwater from the site; therefore, the proposed project site would not expose people to flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability or drainage changes. Thus, no impacts would occur.

3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

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

Discussion

a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less than Significant with Mitigation. As discussed in the individual sections, the proposed project would not degrade the quality of the environment with the implementation of identified City policies and mitigation measures. As discussed in Section 3.4, Biological Resources, based on known regional occurrences and potential special status wildlife species known to occur in the San Benito River area, Burrowing Owl, San Joaquin Coachwhip, local bat species and nesting special status species of birds,

raptors and other protected birds could have the potential to occur on the project site given the site's proximity to the San Benito River. However, mitigation measures MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-4 would avoid potential impacts associated with project construction and reduce impacts to sensitive habitat or species to a less than significant level.

As identified Section 3.5, Cultural Resources, the potential for the project to disturb important examples of California history or prehistory would be low. However, mitigation measures MM CUL-2 and MM CUL-2 would ensure that if unknown cultural or tribal resources are discovered during construction activities, the proposed project does not adversely affect any cultural resources or human remains. Implementation of these mitigation measures would ensure that the proposed project does not eliminate examples of major periods of California history and prehistory, which would reduce potential impacts to less than significant.

As described in the environmental topic sections of this Initial Study, impacts were found to be less than significant, and the proposed project would not have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Under Section 15065(a)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency shall find that a project may have a significant effect on the environment where there is substantial evidence that the project has potential environmental effects "that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable." As defined in Section 15065(a)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, 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 addition, under Section 15152(f) of the CEQA Guidelines, where a lead agency has determined that a cumulative effect has been adequately addressed in a prior EIR, the effect is not treated as significant for purposes of later environmental review and need not be discussed in detail.

The proposed project would result in temporary air quality, water quality, biology, and noise impacts during construction. With the implementation of the identified mitigation measures, Conditions of Project Approval, and Standard Permit Conditions, and consistency with adopted City policies, the construction impacts would be mitigated to a less than significant level. As the identified impacts are temporary and would be mitigated, the project would not have cumulatively considerable impacts on air quality, water quality, biology, and noise impacts in the project area.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the demolition of the existing ancillary building on site. The project would also contribute to the continued urbanization of the project area.

The proposed project would have a less than significant impact on aesthetics, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, population and housing, recreation, and utilities, and would not contribute to cumulative impacts to these resources. The proposed project would not impact agricultural and forest resources or mineral resources. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact on these resources.

The proposed project's contribution to a cumulative impact on public services and transportation were analyzed in the General Plan FEIR. The proposed project would not result in a more significant cumulative impact related to these issues than disclosed within these documents.

The project would contribute to the significant cumulative transportation impact that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan FEIR. The project would not, however, result in any new or more significant cumulative impacts than the approved projects. Mitigation measures were adopted where feasible and statements of overriding considerations have been adopted for both plans.

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than Significant Impact. Consistent with Section 15065(a)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency shall find that a project may have a significant effect on the environment where there is substantial evidence that the proposed project has the potential to cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Under this standard, a change to the physical environment that might otherwise be minor must be treated as significant if people would be significantly affected. This factor relates to adverse changes to the environment of human beings generally, and not to effects on particular individuals. While changes to the environment that could indirectly affect human beings would be represented by all of the designated CEQA issue areas, those that could directly affect human beings include construction impacts related to air quality, hazardous materials and noise. However, implementation of mitigation measures and General Plan policies would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level. No other direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings have been identified.

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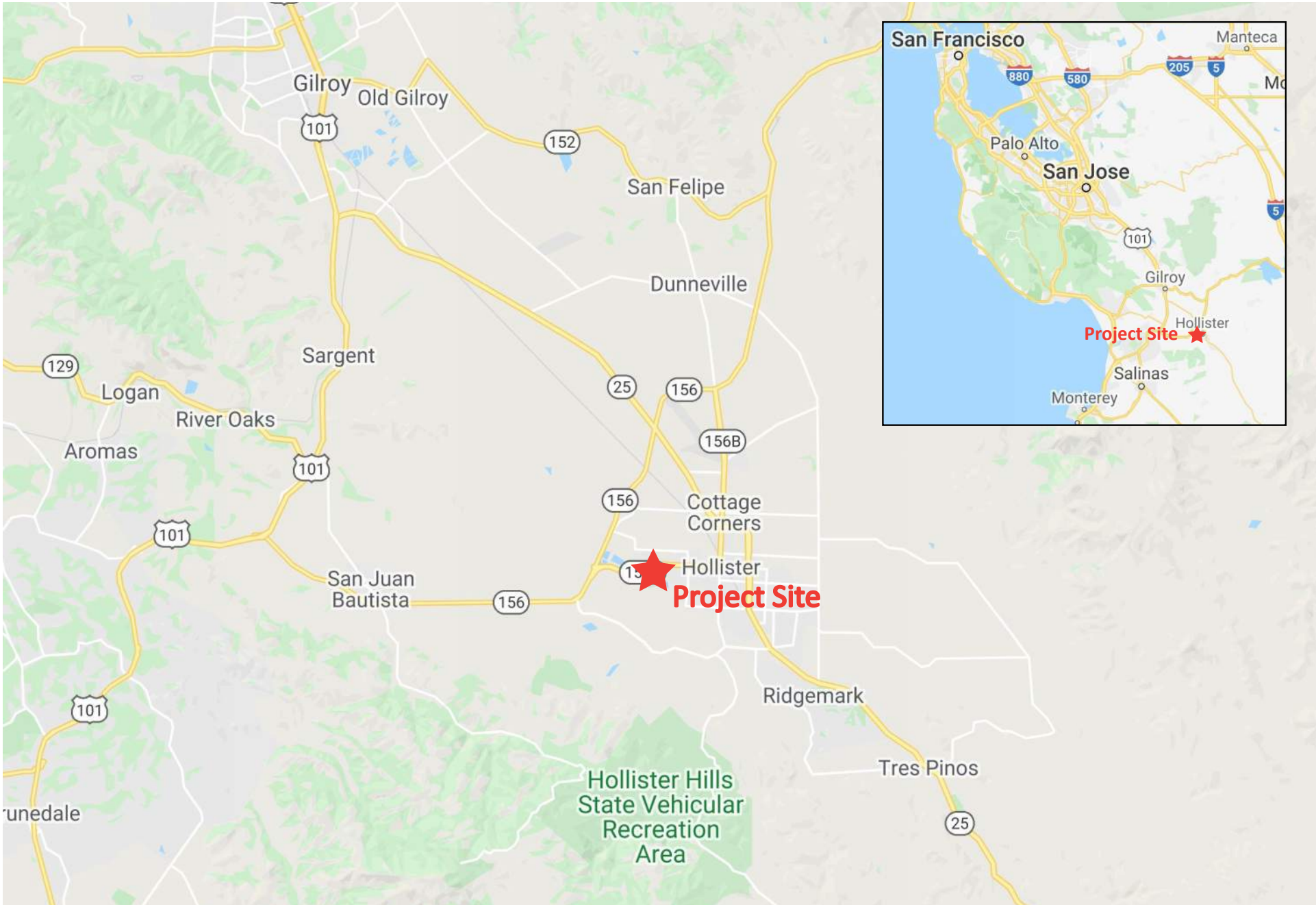
Supporting Figures

San Juan Apartments Project

City File #: S&A 2022-11 and DB 2023-1

July 2023

Kimley»Horn



Source: Google Earth, 2020

Figure 1: Regional and Local Vicinity Map

San Juan Apartments Project
Initial Study

Not to scale

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Source: Google Earth, 2022

Figure 2: Surrounding Land Uses

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Initial Study

Not to scale

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Views into the property and into the adjacent properties.

Source: Kimley-Horn 2020

Figure 3a: Site Photos

San Juan Apartments Project
Initial Study

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Views into the property and along State Route 156B.

Source: Kimley-Horn 2020

Figure 3b: Site Photos

San Juan Apartments Project
Initial Study

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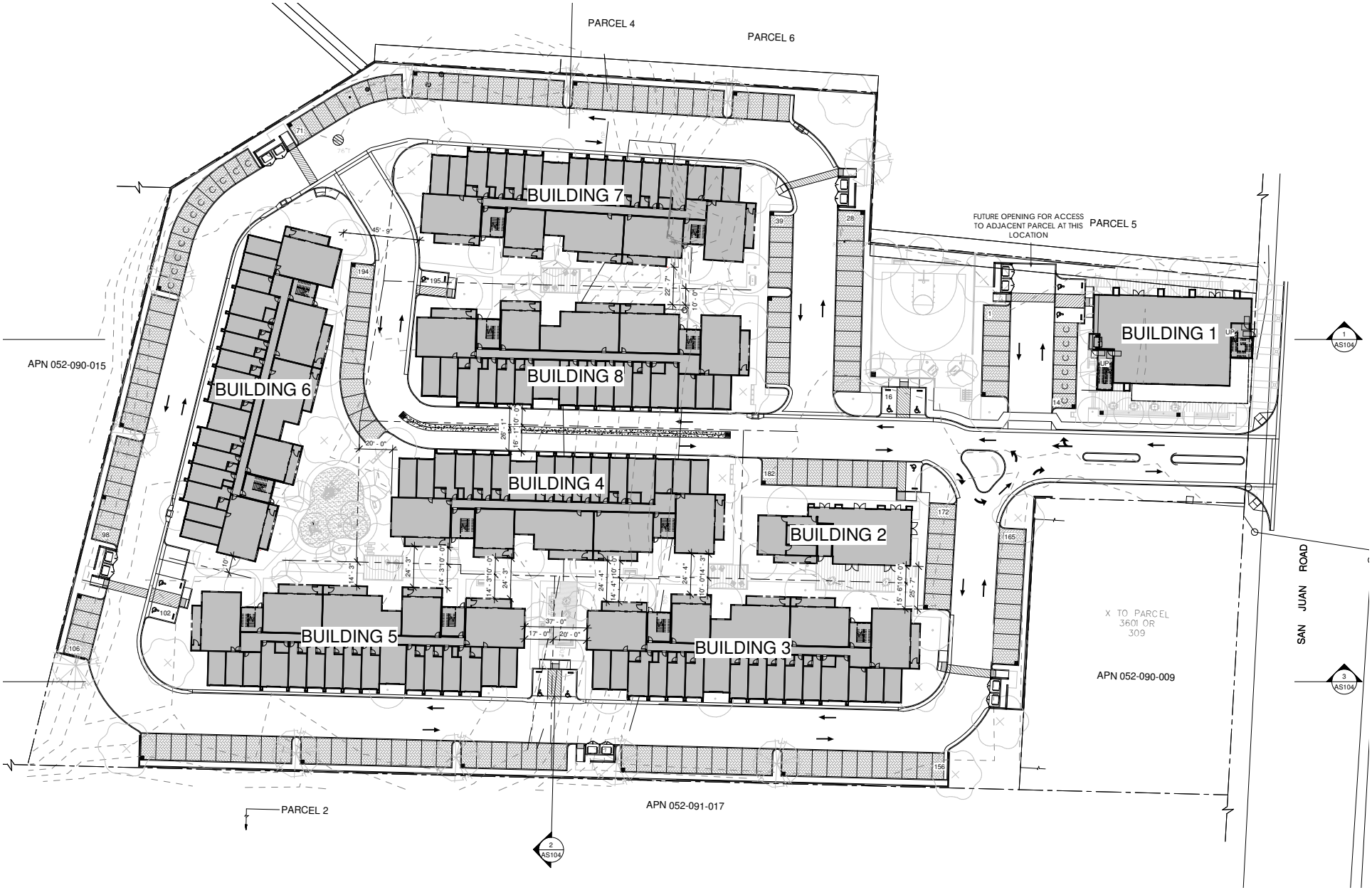

Source: Project Application Materials, 2022

Figure 4: Site Plan

San Juan Apartments Project
Initial Study

Not to scale

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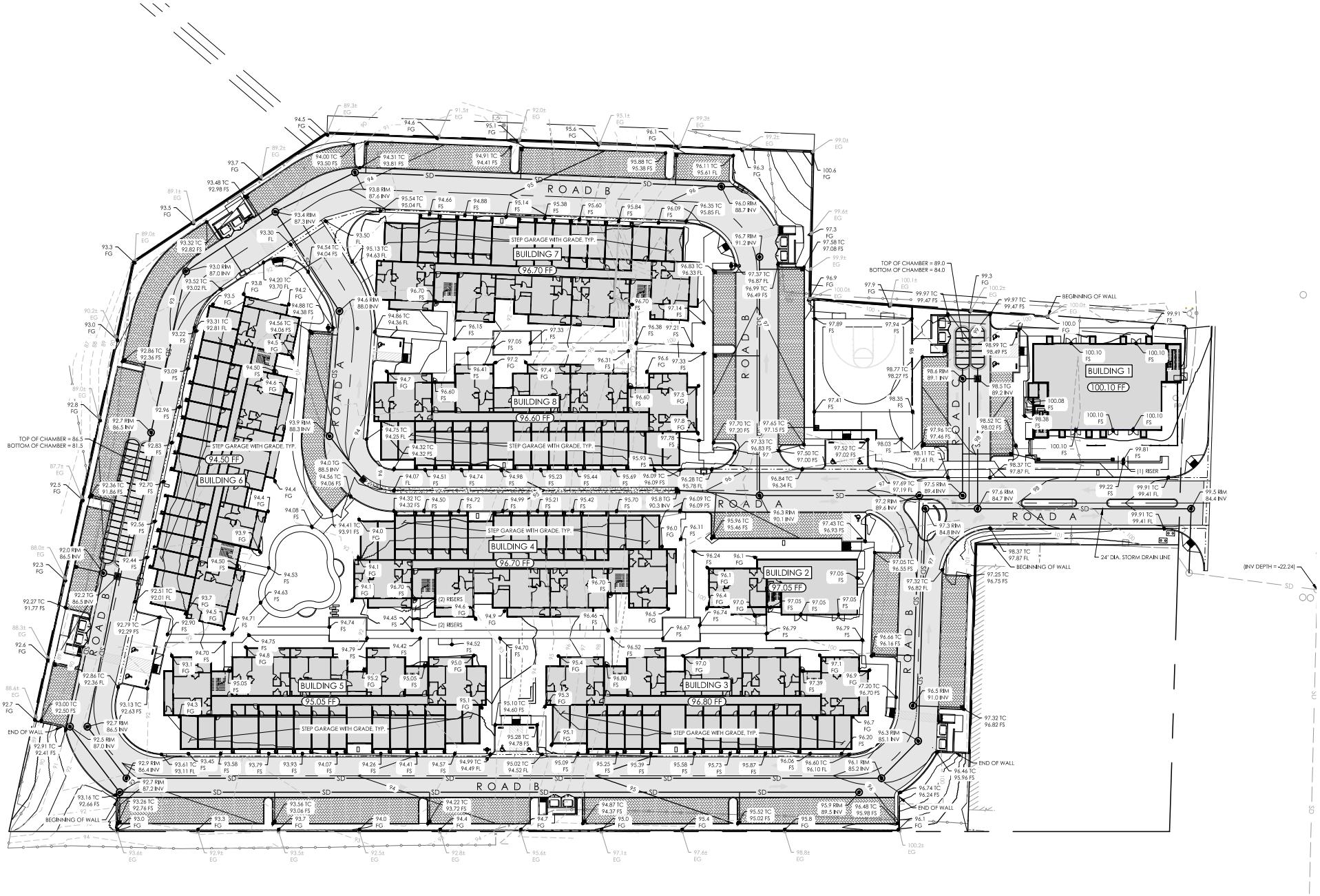

Source: Project Application Materials, 2022

Figure 5: Grading and Drainage Plan

San Juan Apartments Project
Initial Study

Not to scale

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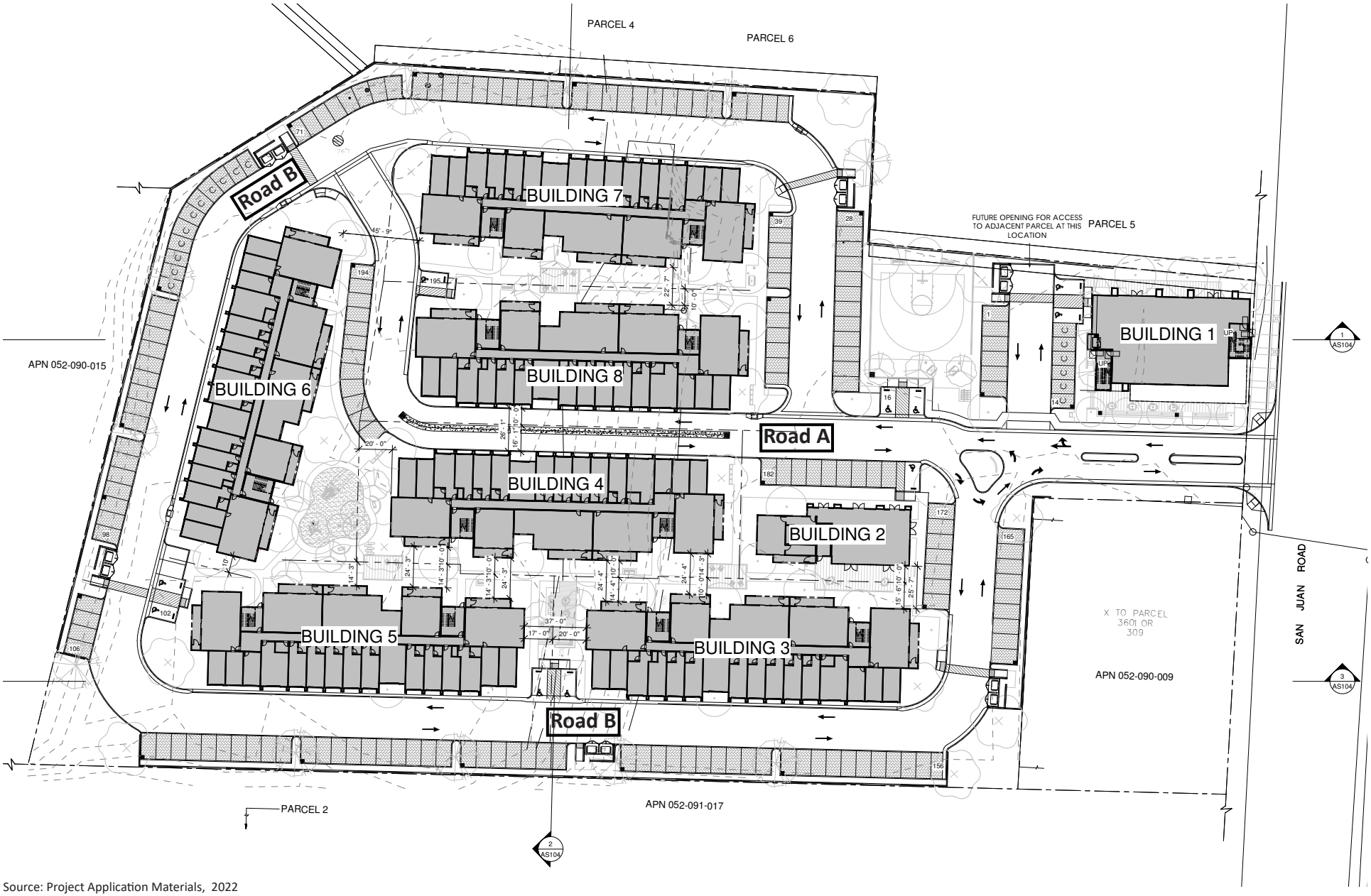

Source: Project Application Materials, 2022

Figure 6: Traffic Circulation

San Juan Apartments Project
Initial Study

Not to scale

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Source: Project Application Materials, 2022

Figure 7: Landscape Plan

San Juan Apartments Project
Initial Study

Not to scale

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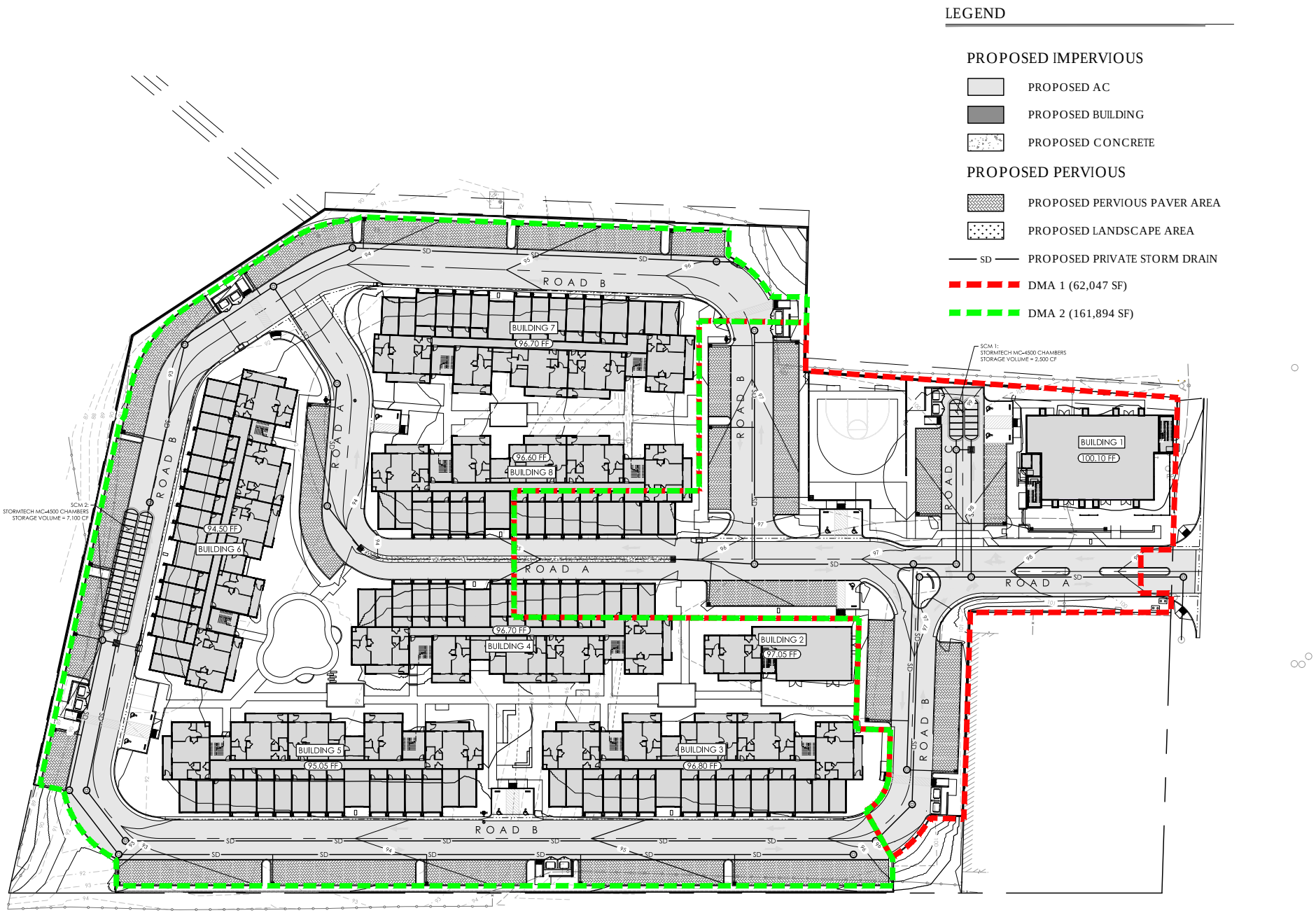

Source: Project Application Materials, 2022

Figure 8: Stormwater Control Plan

San Juan Apartments Project
Initial Study

Not to scale

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1 DRIVE-AISLE ELEVATION-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
1/8 = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

2 FRONT ELEVATION-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
1/8 = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

3 RIGHT ELEVATION-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
1/8 = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

4 LEFT ELEVATION-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

Source: Project Application Materials, 2022

Figure 9a: Building Elevations - Residential

San Juan Apartments Project

Initial Study

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1 FRONT ELEVATION-COMMUNITY BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

2 LEFT ELEVATION-COMMUNITY BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

3 REAR ELEVATION-COMMUNITY BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

4 RIGHT ELEVATION-COMMUNITY BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

Source: Project Application Materials, 2022

Figure 9b: Building Elevations -- Community Building

San Juan Apartments Project

Initial Study

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1 FRONT ELEVATION-COMMERCIAL BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

2 RIGHT ELEVATION-COMMERCIAL BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

3 DRIVE AISLE ELEVATION-COMMERCIAL BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

4 LEFT ELEVATION-COMMERCIAL BUILDING
1/8" = 1'-0" (24 X 36 SHEET)

Source: Project Application Materials, 2022

Figure 9c: Building Elevations - Commercial Building

San Juan Apartments Project

Initial Study

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