CITY OF SANTA MARIA
INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

A STREET AND FAIRWAY DRIVE GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND REZONE (GPZ2023-0001)

Vacant Lot at the Corner of A Street and Fairway Drive (APN: 111-231-016)

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Description	General Plan Land Use Map Amendment and Zone Change for RRM on behalf of the Santa Maria Public Airport District to change the land use designation on a 6.95-acre site FROM A-AS (Airport -Airport Service) and the zone district of OS (Open Space) TO LI (Light Industrial) land use designation and M-1 (Light Manufacturing) zone district. A total of approximately 100,000 square-feet of floor area would be established at the site from future development.
Location	Vacant Lot at the Corner of A Street and Fairway Drive
Assessor's Parcel No.	111-231-016
General Plan Designation	Airport – Airport Service (A-AS)
Zoning	Open Space (OS)
Size of Site	6.95 acres
Present Use	Vacant land
Proposed Uses	Future industrial or manufacturing development
Access	Not applicable[1]
Surrounding Uses/Zoning	
North	Flood Control & Business Park / OS & Public Facility
South	Flood Control/ OS
East	Agriculture/ OS

[1] No development project application has been submitted for the project site to date. However, the project applicant has provided a conceptual description of a potential development that could be constructed at the site at a future date. A future Planned Development permit will provide site specific information and shall comply with required development standards of the City's Municipal Code.

West	Business Park/Light Manufacturing
Parking	Not applicable
Setbacks	Not applicable
Height	Not applicable
Building Coverage	Not applicable
Landscape Area	Not applicable
Storm Water Retardation	Not applicable
Fencing	Not applicable
Related files/Actions	A future Planned Development permit shall be submitted for the buildout of the site with an industrial or manufacturing use that is enabled by this GPZ.
Applicant/Owner	Pamela A. Ricci, RRM Design Group/Martin Pehl, Santa Maria Public Airport District
Procedure	Planning Commission and City Council consideration and action regarding a Mitigated Negative Declaration of environmental impacts.

GENERAL AREA DESCRIPTION:

The project site is located in the southern area of the City and is directly across from the intersection of A Street and Fairway Drive. A mix of industrial, business park, row crops and airport development has occurred adjacent to the project area. The project site is part of the Santa Maria Public Airport and the proposed project has been reviewed for consistency with the Airport Master Plan, Airport Specific Plan and Airport Land Use Compatibility plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:

The project is located within the City of Santa Maria in Santa Barbara County, approximately 2.5 miles east of US Highway 101. The topography in the project area is flat with no significant features within the project site or surrounding area. A City water well on-site is the only developed feature at the site. The project is characterized as a vacant 6.95-acre open space designated site proposed to be developed in the future as an industrial or manufacturing project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A request by RRM Design Group, on behalf of the Santa Maria Public Airport District, for a General Plan Amendment and rezone (GPZ) to allow for general plan land use designation and zoning ordinance designation change. The project proposes to change the current land use designation from A-AS to Light Industrial (LI), and the current zoning from OS to PD/M-1 (Planned Development/Light Manufacturing). This change would allow for an expanded level of development that would consist of light industrial and

manufacturing uses. Currently the OS zoning primarily only allows open space, natural resource preservation and outdoor recreation development.

The zoning designation PD/M-1 would permit light industrial and manufacturing uses, using the M-1 designation as a guide, and would be subject to the provisions and limitations of the approved planned development permit required by the PD Overlay proposed. No development project application has been submitted for the project site to date. However, the project applicant has provided a conceptual description of a potential development that could be constructed at the site at a future date. The conceptual description included up to 100,000 square-feet of industrial or manufacturing development.

PROJECT REVIEW:

The environmental impacts associated with the development of the site were determined using the City of Santa Maria Staff Project Environmental Checklist (attached), on-site inspection, various computer models, and information provided by the applicant. Potentially significant adverse environmental impacts were identified in the area of Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise and Tribal Cultural Resources.

Based on the sources above, no adverse impacts are associated with Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forest Resources, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems or Wildfire.

IMPACT SUMMARY TABLE

	Proposed Project
Size of Site	6.95 acres
Size of Buildings	100,000 square feet
Water Demand (1)	1,100 gallons per day per acre
Sewage Generation (1)	2,780 gallons per day
Average Daily Trips (2)	579
P.M. Peak Trips (2)	70
<u>Unmitigated</u> Long Term Emissions: (3) Reactive Hydrocarbons Nitrogen Oxides	 3.49 pounds/day 0.71 pound/day

(1) City of Santa Maria 2015 Utility Capacity Study
(2) Traffic Impact Study (Appendix D)
(3) Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Study (Appendix A)

The following discussion of the potential adverse environmental impacts includes mitigation measures which would reduce all identified impacts to a level of insignificance and are recommended to be included in the conditions of approval for the project. If the decision makers wish to delete a mitigation measure which is proposed to mitigate a significant impact, an alternative mitigation measure should be agreed to by the applicant and made part of the project. Verification that these mitigation measures have been implemented will be monitored as described in Section 8 of the City of Santa Maria's Environmental Procedures. The monitoring checklist is included at the end of the final report.

Air Quality

During construction, short term air quality impacts commonly occur. The Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD) has yet to establish a threshold for construction emissions. The construction phase of the project would emit Ozone precursors nitrogen oxides (NOx), reactive organic compounds (ROC) and carbon monoxide (CO) from the use of construction equipment. Additionally, ground disturbing activity including grading and excavation would emit fugitive dust (PM10) particles.

Mitigation has been identified to require implementation of fugitive dust control measures as well as diesel exhaust control measures during construction activities associated with future development onsite.

During the long-term operational phase of the project, air quality impacts would not result in exceedance of the thresholds recommended by SBCAPCD and no mitigation is necessary.

AQ-1 Construction Emissions Control Measures. The project applicant shall install the following air pollutant emissions control measures throughout the construction period:

Dust Control Measures

During construction, the applicant shall implement all of the applicable measures from the following list as standard dust control measures to avoid impacts associated with fugitive dust emissions:

a. Use water trucks or sprinkler systems to keep all areas of vehicle movement damp enough to prevent dust from leaving the site and from exceeding the APCD’s limit of 20% opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. At a minimum, this should include wetting down such areas in the late morning and after work is completed for the day. Increased watering frequency should be required whenever the wind speed exceeds 15 mph. Reclaimed water should be used whenever possible. However, reclaimed water should not be used in or around crops for human consumption.

b. Minimize amount of disturbed area and reduce on site vehicle speeds to 15 mph or less.

c. If importation, exportation and stockpiling of fill material is involved, soil stockpiled for more than two days shall be covered, kept moist, or treated with

soil binders to prevent dust generation. Trucks transporting fill material to and from the site shall be tarped from the point of origin.

d. Gravel pads shall be installed at all access points to prevent tracking of mud onto public roads.

e. After clearing, grading, earth moving or excavation is completed, treat the disturbed area by watering, or revegetating, or by spreading soil binders until the area is paved or otherwise developed so that dust generation will not occur.

f. Schedule clearing, grading, earthmoving, and excavation activities during periods of low wind speed to the extent feasible. During periods of high winds (>25 mph) clearing, grading, earthmoving, and excavation operations shall be minimized to prevent fugitive dust created by onsite operations from becoming a nuisance or hazard.

g. The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons to monitor the dust control program and to order increased watering, as necessary, to prevent transport of dust offsite. Their duties shall include holiday and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the APCD prior to land use clearance for map recordation and land use clearance for finish grading of the structure.

Equipment Emissions Control Measures

During project grading and construction, the applicant shall adhere to the following measures to reduce NO_X and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions from construction equipment:

a. All portable diesel-powered construction equipment shall be registered with the state's portable equipment registration program OR shall obtain an APCD permit.

b. Fleet owners of mobile construction equipment are subject to the CARB Regulation for In-use Off-road Diesel Vehicles (Title 13 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 9, § 2449), the purpose of which is to reduce diesel PM and criteria pollutant emissions from in-use (existing) off-road diesel-fueled vehicles. For more information, please refer to the CARB website at www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/ordiesel/ordiesel.htm.

c. All commercial diesel vehicles are subject to Title 13, § 2485 of the California Code of Regulations, limiting engine idling time. Idling of heavy-duty diesel construction equipment and trucks during loading and unloading shall be limited to five minutes; electric auxiliary power units should be used whenever possible.

d. Diesel construction equipment meeting the CARB Tier 3 or higher emission standards for off-road heavy-duty diesel engines shall be used to the maximum extent feasible.

e. Diesel powered equipment should be replaced by electric equipment whenever feasible.

f. If feasible, diesel construction equipment shall be equipped with selective catalytic reduction systems, diesel oxidation catalysts and diesel particulate filters as certified and/or verified by EPA or California.

g. Catalytic converters shall be installed on gasoline-powered equipment, if feasible.
h. All construction equipment shall be maintained in tune per the manufacturer's specifications.
i. The engine size of construction equipment shall be the minimum practical size.
j. The number of construction equipment operating simultaneously shall be minimized through efficient management practices to ensure that the smallest practical number is operating at any one time.

Fugitive Dust Control

The project applicant shall comply with SBCAPCD's Rule 345: Control of Fugitive Dust from Construction and Demolition Activities including all applicable standards and measures therein.

Diesel-fired Engine Permits

All portable diesel-fired construction engines rated at 50 brake horsepower (bhp) or greater must have either statewide Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) certificates or SBCAPCD permits prior to grading/building permit issuance. Construction engines with PERP certificates are exempt from SBCAPCD permit, provided they will be onsite for less than 12 months.

Permit to Operate

If contaminated soils are found at the project site, SBCAPCD must be contacted to determine if ATC and/or Permit to Operate permits shall be required. (SBCAPCD permits are required for all soil vapor extraction activities. SBCAPCD permits are also required for the excavation, or "dig-and-haul," of more than 1,000 cubic yards of contaminated soils.)

Equipment Idling Requirements

At all times, idling of heavy-duty diesel trucks should be minimized; auxiliary power units should be used whenever possible. State law requires that:

- Drivers of diesel-fueled commercial vehicles shall not idle the vehicle's primary diesel engine for greater than five minutes at any location.
- Drivers of diesel-fueled commercial vehicles shall not idle a diesel-fueled auxiliary power system (APS) for more than five minutes to power a heater, air conditioner, or any ancillary equipment on the vehicle. Trucks with 2007 or newer model year engines must meet additional requirements (verified clean APS label required).

See www.arb.ca.gov/noidle for more information.

Asphalt Paving Requirements

Asphalt paving activities shall comply with APCD Rule 329, Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt Paving Materials.

Biological Resources

Nesting Migratory Birds

Future industrial or manufacturing development on the site that would be allowed under the proposed PD/M-1 zoning may result in the removal of trees. The trees present within the project site may provide suitable foraging and nesting habitat for a variety of bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the California Fish and Game Code. If project construction activities are conducted between February and September, they could result in direct and indirect impacts to nesting birds, if present. Potential direct impacts to nesting birds include injury, mortality, or destruction of nests and/or eggs from the use and movement of construction equipment tree and vegetation removal. Potential indirect impacts to nesting birds include the generation of noise and dust from construction activities and the alteration of suitable nesting habitat. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 is included to minimize potential impacts to nesting migratory birds during future project construction activities.

California Red-legged Frog (CRLF)

The CRLF is a highly aquatic species associated with perennial aquatic habitat for almost its entire lifecycle. The CRLF is known for overland movements between breeding sites during rain or heavy moisture (fog) events. The adjacent County flood control ditches next to the project site have highly variable flows subject to duration and frequency of rainfall events, and at times could support suitable aquatic habitat for breeding and movement upstream and downstream through the ditches. This species may be present within the offsite drainages when water is present, and potentially in the retained mitigation golf course pond adjacent to the FedEx site. The project site lacks suitable upland refuge habitat with vegetation cover limited to herbaceous grassland habitat. No moist refuge such as riparian habitat or downed woody debris occurs on the project site suggesting only the limited probability of overland movements during or immediately after rainstorms. No loss of CRLF habitat would result from project development of the site. No designated critical habitat occurs over the project site, so none would be affected. Potential impacts to this species would occur if individuals were present during construction and were exposed to vehicle and heavy equipment traffic. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 is included to minimize potential impacts to CRLF during future project construction activities.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

BIO-1: Nesting Birds Impact Avoidance and Minimization

The following actions are recommended to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds:

- A nesting bird survey should be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than two weeks prior to the onset of construction activities. The nesting bird survey should be conducted within any and all suitable habitat that occurs within the project site, within 300 feet of its immediate vicinity for raptors, and 100 feet for all other bird species (as is feasible). If no active nests are found, no further mitigation would be required.
- If active bird nests are found, then an appropriately sized avoidance buffer should be established by the biologist and all construction work within the buffer should be delayed until after the nesting season has ended or until the biologist has determined that the adults and young are no longer reliant on the nest site for survival.
- Limits of construction to avoid the nest shall be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing. Construction personnel shall be instructed on the sensitivity of the area.

Plan Requirements and Timing.

The results of the surveys shall be reported to the City Community Development Department prior to issuance of grading permits. No disturbance buffers shall be demarcated in the field (e.g., fencing, flagging) prior to initiation of construction activities in the vicinity of an active nest.

Monitoring.

The City Community Development Department staff will verify that a pre-construction nesting bird survey has been conducted, if required based on construction timing, and shall verify that no disturbance avoidance buffers have been established prior to issuance of a grading permit. The approved biologist shall be responsible for monitoring active nests, if any occur.

BIO-2: California Red-legged Frog Impact Avoidance

The following actions are recommended to avoid potential impacts to CRLF:

- A pre-construction survey of the proposed project site for CLRF shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 48 hours prior to the start of project construction to confirm this species is not present in the work area.
- A qualified biological monitor familiar with CRLF will monitor all initial site disturbance (clearing, grubbing, rough grading).
- In the event the pre-construction survey or the onsite monitor identifies the presence of individuals of CRLF prior to or during construction, then all work shall stop until the CRLF leave the site of their own accord. If CRLF do not move off site on their own, the project proponent shall comply with all relevant requirements of a take authorization under the federal Endangered Species Act prior to resuming project activities.

Plan Requirements and Timing.

The results of the surveys shall be reported to the City Community Development Department prior to issuance of grading permits. No disturbance buffers shall be demarcated in the field (e.g., fencing, flagging) prior to initiation of construction activities in the vicinity of an active nest.

Monitoring.

The City Community Development Department staff will verify that a pre-construction survey has been conducted, if required based on construction timing, and shall verify that no disturbance avoidance buffers have been established prior to issuance of a grading permit. The approved biologist shall be responsible for monitoring all site disturbances.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 and BIO-2 would reduce potential impacts to special-status species to less than significant; *therefore, potential impacts related to special status wildlife would be less than significant with mitigation.*

Cultural Resources

According to the City Resource Management Element, the project site is designated as Archaeological Sensitivity Area 2 – Low Sensitivity. Nevertheless, ground disturbance associated with future construction activities have the potential to result in inadvertent disturbance of previously unknown, buried archeological deposits. Impacts are conservatively considered to be potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1 would ensure potential impacts are avoided and/or minimized. Based on the location and low sensitivity of the project area, future development of the project site would not be expected to disturb buried human remains. In the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains associated with future development of the project site, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 stipulates that no further disturbances shall occur until the County of Santa Barbara (County) Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to CEQA regulations and PRC Section 5097.98. With adherence to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which stipulates the process to be followed when human remains are encountered, as detailed in Mitigation Measure CR-2, impacts related to the disturbance of archaeological resources and human remains would be reduced to less than significant.

CR-1 Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Resources. In the event that any cultural resource is encountered during subsurface earthwork activities associated with development of the project site, all construction activities within a 100-foot radius of the find shall cease and the City shall be notified immediately. Work shall not continue until a qualified archaeologist, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary, determines whether the uncovered resource requires further study. Any previously unidentified resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Series forms and evaluated for significance in terms of CEQA criteria by a qualified archaeologist. Potentially significant cultural resources consist of, but are not limited to, stone, bone, glass, ceramic, wood, or shell artifacts; fossils; or features including hearths, structural remains, or historic dumpsites.

If the resource is determined significant under CEQA, the qualified archaeologist shall prepare and implement a research design and archaeological data recovery plan, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary that will capture those categories of data for which the site is significant. The archaeologist shall also perform appropriate technical analysis, prepare a comprehensive report, and file it with the Central Coast Information Center, located at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and provide for the permanent curation of the recovered materials. These actions would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

CR-2 Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains. In the event that human remains are exposed during subsurface earthwork activities associated with development of the project, an immediate halt work order shall be issued, and the City Community Development Department shall be notified. State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. These protocols shall be detailed on project grading and construction plans for all development on-site. These actions would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Geology and Soils

Future industrial or manufacturing development allowed under the proposed PD/M-1 zoning would result in disturbance to the site. Based on previous site disturbance and manipulation, buried human remains are not expected in the site area. In the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 stipulates that no further disturbances shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to CEQA regulations and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. With adherence to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which stipulates the process to be followed when human remains are encountered.

The project site is underlain by Older Alluvium, which is considered to have high sensitivity for palaeontologic resources (Diblee 1994, U.S. DOT 2004). Fossils that have been historically encountered in formations of this age include tide-pool and rock-cliff mollusks and barnacles in marine deposits (Woodring et al 1950). The project site consists of previously disturbed terrain. Based on the sensitivity of underlying geologic formations, mitigation has been recommended identifying the inadvertent discovery protocol in order to reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources to less than significant; therefore, potential impacts are less than significant with mitigation.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

GEO-1 Inadvertent Discovery of Paleontological Resources. Should any vertebrate fossils or potentially significant finds (e.g., numerous well-preserved invertebrate or plant fossils) be encountered during work on-site, all activities in the immediate vicinity of the find shall cease until a qualified paleontologist evaluates the find for its scientific value. If deemed

significant, the paleontological resource(s) shall be salvaged and deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution where they will be properly curated and preserved. These actions would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The project site does contain an abandoned/remnant well structure as identified in a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment by Rincon Consultants, Inc. The Department of Conservation, California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) regulations prohibit construction of enclosed structures directly over the oil well in the event of leaking or substandard abandonment of the well which would require future re-abandonment. The recommendation in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment is to provide a soil management plan for the future development of the project site. Additionally, mitigation shall be required to minimize oil facility health risks during construction in accordance with CalGem standards.

HAZ-1 Stop Work Procedure. If during construction of a future project enabled by the GPZ, visual contamination or chemical odors are detected, work will be stopped immediately and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department Hazardous Materials Unit (HMU) will be contacted. Resumption of work will require the approval of HMU. In the event that previously unknown oil or gas wells and/or associated equipment is discovered, CalGEM shall be contacted immediately to assess the equipment. Recommendations of CalGEM to address the discovered equipment shall be implemented. At minimum CalGEM shall be notified regarding the oil well identified on the CalGEM GIS website.

Noise

The project is located in an urbanized area surrounded by industrial, office park development, open space, row crops, airport development and a roadway. Proposed construction activities onsite would take place adjacent to noise-sensitive land uses such as industrial spaces and associated offices and therefore would have the potential to exceed City exterior noise thresholds for those land uses.

Mitigation measures NOI-1 and NOI-2 have been recommended to minimize all potential impacts related to construction noise, associated with the future development of the site. These measures include adherence to City construction work hours, implementation of noise control for stationary equipment, and proper maintenance of all equipment to avoid unnecessary increased noise levels. Construction related noise would be limited in duration and nature, and the project does not propose land uses that would generate excessive noise during project operation.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

NOI-1 During construction of any future development within the project parcel, construction activity shall be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays in accordance with the General Plan Noise Element. No construction shall occur on Sundays or federal or state holidays. Construction equipment maintenance shall be limited to the same hours.

NOI-2 The applicant shall implement the following measures during construction of the project:

- **Mufflers.** Construction equipment shall be properly maintained and all internal combustion engine driven machinery with intake and exhaust mufflers and engine shrouds, as applicable, shall be in good condition and appropriate for the equipment. During construction, all equipment, fixed or mobile, shall be operated with closed engine doors and shall be equipped with properly operating and maintained mufflers, consistent with manufacturers' standards.
- **Electrical Power.** Electrical power, rather than diesel equipment, shall be used to run compressors and similar power tools and to power any temporary structures, such as construction trailers or caretaker facilities.
- **Equipment Staging.** All stationary equipment shall be staged as far away from the adjacent offices as feasible.
- **Equipment Idling.** Construction vehicles and equipment shall not be left idling for longer than five minutes when not in use.
- **Workers' Radios.** All noise from workers' radios shall be controlled to a point that they are not audible at the adjacent offices near construction activity.
- **Smart Back-up Alarms.** Mobile construction equipment shall have smart back-up alarms that automatically adjust the sound level of the alarm in response to ambient noise levels. Alternatively, back-up alarms shall be disabled and replaced with human spotters to ensure safety when mobile construction equipment is moving in the reverse direction.
- **Disturbance Coordinator.** The applicant shall designate a disturbance coordinator who shall be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The noise disturbance coordinator shall determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and shall require that reasonable measures warranted to correct the problem be implemented. A telephone number for the disturbance coordinator shall be conspicuously posted at the construction site.

Tribal Cultural Resources

The City has notified California Native American tribes who have formally requested notification on CEQA projects under Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18. This notification affords California Native American tribes the opportunity for consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21080.3.1. The City was not contacted by any of the notified California Native American tribes after notification from the City. However, the City has added a mitigation measure for a “discovery clause” whereby work would cease and the Tribe would be notified if a tribal cultural resource was inadvertently discovered during ground-disturbing activities.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

TCR-1 Inadvertent Discovery of Tribal Cultural Resource. In the event that a potentially significant tribal cultural resource is encountered during subsurface earthwork activities, all construction activities within a 100-foot radius of the find shall cease and the City shall be notified immediately. Work shall not continue until a qualified archaeologist, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary, determines whether the uncovered resource requires further study. Any previously unidentified resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance in terms of CEQA criteria by a qualified archaeologist. Potentially significant cultural resources consist of, but are not limited to, stone, bone, glass, ceramic, wood, or shell artifacts; fossils; or features including hearths, structural remains, or historic dumpsites.

If the resource is determined significant under CEQA, the qualified archaeologist shall prepare and implement a research design and archaeological data recovery plan, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary that will capture those categories of data for which the site is significant. The archaeologist shall also perform appropriate technical analysis, prepare a comprehensive report, and file it with the CCIC, located at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and provide for the permanent curation of the recovered materials.

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the information available at the time of preparation this report and, without benefit of additional information which may come to light at the public hearing, the Environmental Officer recommends that a Negative Declaration be filed for A Street and Fairway Lane project based upon information contained in GPZ2023-001.

PREPARED BY:

City of Santa Maria
Community Development Department
110 South Pine Street, #101
Santa Maria, CA 93458

Cody Graybehl, Environmental Analyst — Date: 7/10/24

Dana Eady, Environmental Officer — Date: 7/10/24

CITY OF SANTA MARIA
Environmental Checklist / Initial Study
A Street and Fairway Drive GPZ (GPZ2023-0001)

1. **Project Title and Location**

   A Street and Fairway Drive General Plan Amendment and Rezone
   1494 Fairway Drive
   Vacant lot at the corner of A Street and Fairway Drive
   Santa Maria, CA 93455
   APN: 111-231-016

2. **Lead Agency, Contact and Preparer**

   Cody Graybehl, Senior Planner
   City of Santa Maria
   Community Development Department
   110 South Pine Street, #101
   Santa Maria, CA 93458

3. **Project Applicant's Name and Address**

   Pamela A. Ricci
   RRM Design Group
   3765 South Higuera Street, Suite 102
   San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

4. **General Plan Designation**

   Existing: Airport – Airport Service (A-AS)
   Proposed: Light Industrial (LI)

5. **Zoning Designation**

   Existing: Open Space (OS)
   Proposed: Planned Development/Light Manufacturing (PD/M-1)

6. **Brief Description of Project**

   A request by RRM Design Group, on behalf of the Santa Maria Public Airport District, for a General Plan Amendment and rezone (GPZ) to allow for general plan land use designation and zoning ordinance designation changes on a 6.95-acre parcel located in the southern part of the City (Figure 1) within Airport District boundaries. The site was previously a portion of a golf course with managed turfgrass and a man-made decorative water feature, however that golf course has been abandoned and the water feature no longer exists. The project site is currently vacant except for a City water well pump facility and yard are located on the eastern portion of the site (Figure 2), which will remain.

The project proposes to change the current land use classification from A-AS (Airport – Airport Service) to LI (Light Industrial), and the zoning from OS (Open Space) to PD/M-1(Planned Development/Light Manufacturing). This change would allow for an expanded level of development that would consist of light industrial and manufacturing uses. Currently the OS zoning primarily only allows open space, natural resource preservation and outdoor recreation development.

The Planned Development (PD) overlay district is intended to provide for development of land in conformance with the City of Santa Maria General Plan by permitting a flexible design approach to the development of a community environment equal to or better than that resulting from traditional lot by lot development. The PD overlay district is intended to accommodate various types of development and combinations of uses that can be appropriately made a part of a total planned development, in accordance with the general plan. Zoning designation PD/M-1 would permit light industrial and manufacturing uses, using the M-1 designation as a guide, and would be subject to the provisions and conditions of the approved planned development permit.

No development project application has been submitted for the project site to date. However, the project applicant has provided a conceptual description of a potential development that could be constructed at the site at a future date. The conceptual description included up to 100,000 square-feet of industrial or manufacturing development. A future Planned Development permit will provide site specific information and shall comply with required development standards of the City's Municipal Code.

To facilitate potential future California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining when a development project application is submitted for the site, this environmental document analyzes the potential environmental effects of possible future development projects that could be allowed by the proposed GPA and rezone, including the conceptual description for future development of up to 100,000 square-feet of industrial or manufacturing uses. However, this analysis is not conducted on a project-specific level since future development plans and details may change. Therefore, any future changes that are not considered under the scope of the conceptual description of 100,000 square-feet of industrial or manufacturing development could require additional environmental review.

Table 1. General Plan Designation Comparison

Existing Designation: Airport – Airport Service (A-AS)	**Proposed Designation: Light Industrial (LI)**
To provide a broad category facilitating the airport and airport-related commercial and industrial uses not adversely affected by airport operations, to provide for specific areas for aircraft operation and navigation aids, and to minimize the hazard to safe landing and take-off of aircraft.	To accommodate industrial uses which contain the process primarily within the building, do not generate negative environmental impacts, and which are most compatible with adjacent nonindustrial uses.

• Full range of uses, including airport operation and support activities.	• Research facilities • Light assembly plants • Non public oriented offices • Industrial support offices • Tractor sales and display when adjacent to a freeway • Churches on a temporary basis

Table 2. Zone Designation Comparison

	Existing Zoning: OS District[1]	Proposed Zoning: M-1 District
Front Yard Setback	None Specified	20 feet Where parking is provided in the required front yard setback a ten (10) foot landscaped strip shall be provided between the parking and the public right-of-way.
Side Yard Setback	None Specified	No side yard setback is required except for street side yards or when adjacent to an "R" district; then, the required side yard adjacent to the street or "R" district shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet. A corner lot or parcel of land shall have a landscaped side yard of not less than ten (10) feet in width adjoining the street.
Rear Yard Setback	None Specified	No rear yard setback is required, except when adjacent to an "R" district; then, the required rear yard adjacent to the "R" district shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet.
Height	None Specified	35 feet
Landscaping	No Minimum Specified	15% of site area

7. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The project site is currently undeveloped (except for the City water well and yard) and is bordered to the north, south and west by a flood control channel regulated by Santa Barbara County. Beyond the flood control channel to the north is a business park used by VTC Enterprises. Further to the south of the flood control channel is open space designated areas adjacent to the Santa Maria Public Airport runway. To the west of the flood control channel is additional open space used for row crop production. To the east of the site across A Street is a business park with various industrial, warehouse and manufacturing uses. Surrounding land uses, general plan designations, and zoning designations are summarized in Table 3 below and are shown in Figures 3 through 6.

Table 3. Surrounding Land Uses, General Plan Designations, and Zoning Designations

[1] A plot plan is required for OS development which establishes setbacks, height and landscaping per Section 12-4.07 of the City of Santa Maria Municipal Code.

	Land uses	General Plan Designations	Zoning Designations
North	Flood Control Business Park	Secondary Agriculture OS (AOS-II) Community Facilities (CF)	OS Public Facility
South	Flood Control	AOS-II	OS
East	Agriculture	AOS-II	OS
West	Business Park	LI	PD/M-1

8. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

Agency	Permits/Other Approvals
City of Santa Maria Community Development Department	Land use designations change proposed by GPZ2023-0001
Airport Land Use Commission	Review of the proposed change of land use for consistency with the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

9. California Native American Tribes Consultation

AB 52 and SB 18 requires public agencies to consult with California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of avoiding, protecting and/or mitigating impacts to tribal cultural resources as defined for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) projects. The City sent letters to the local Native American contacts identified on the list of tribes provided by the NAHC. The City received no requests for consultation in response to the City's December 27, 2023 letter.

Figure 1. Project Vicinity Map

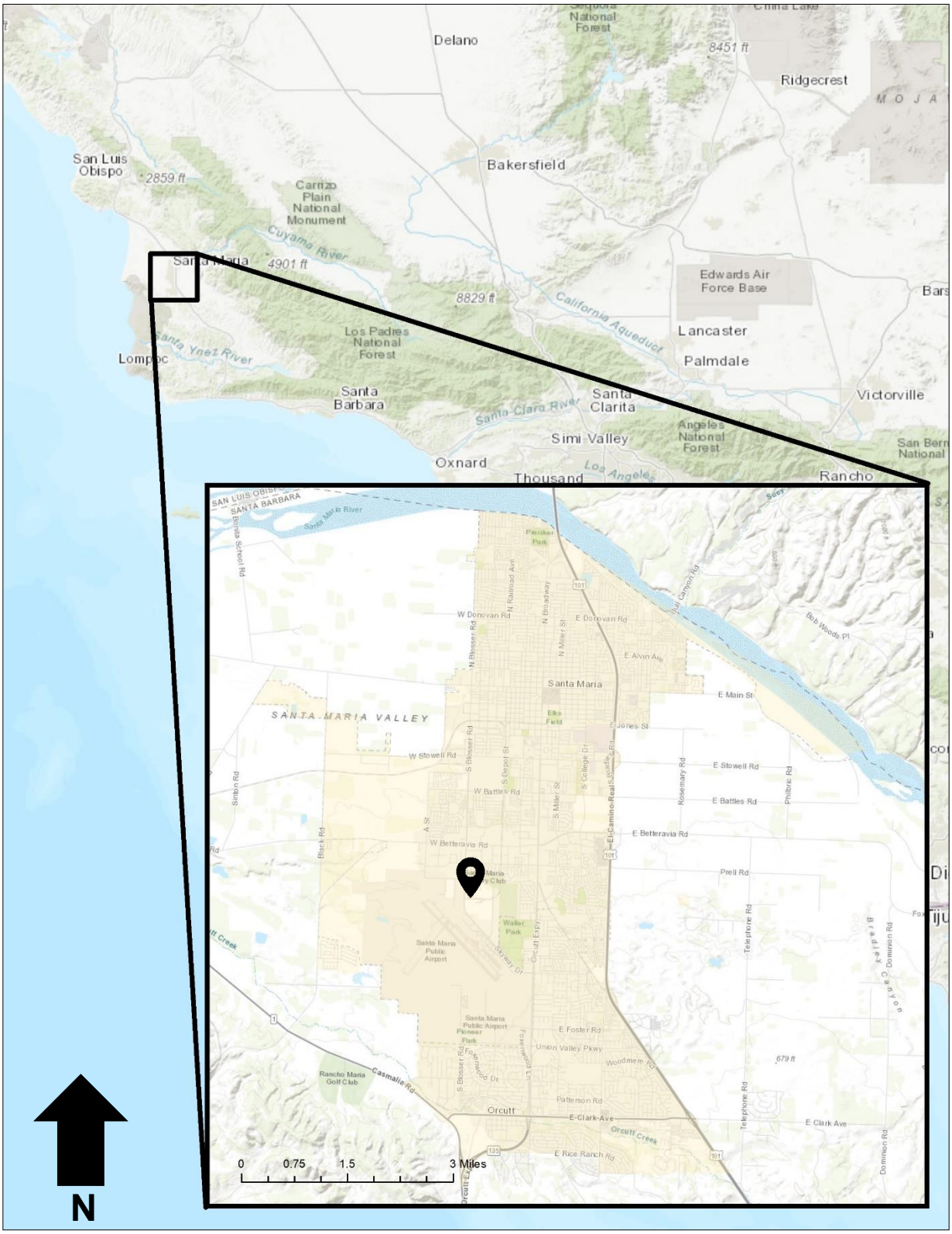


Figure 2. Project Location Map

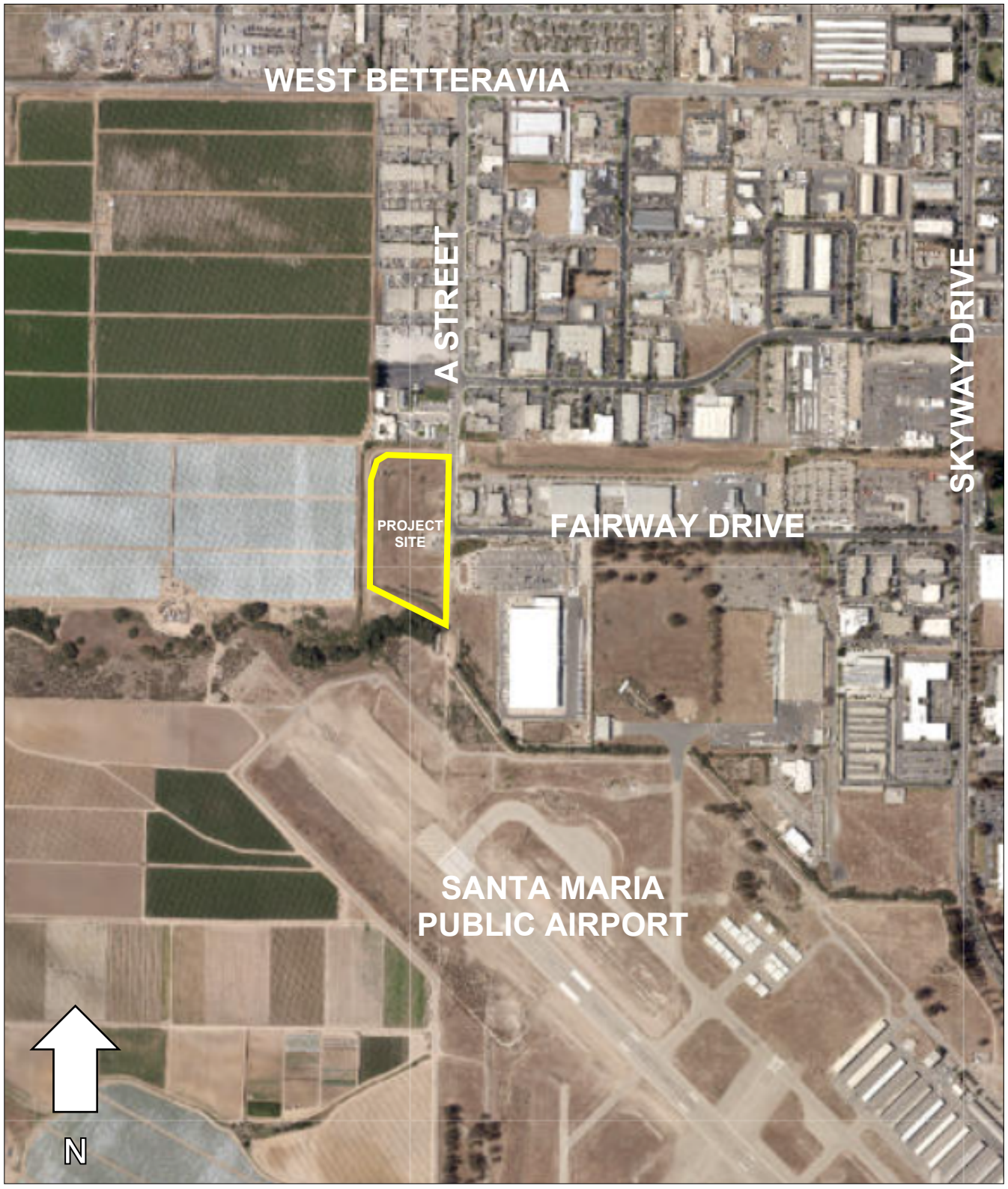


Figure 3. Existing General Plan Land Use Designation Map

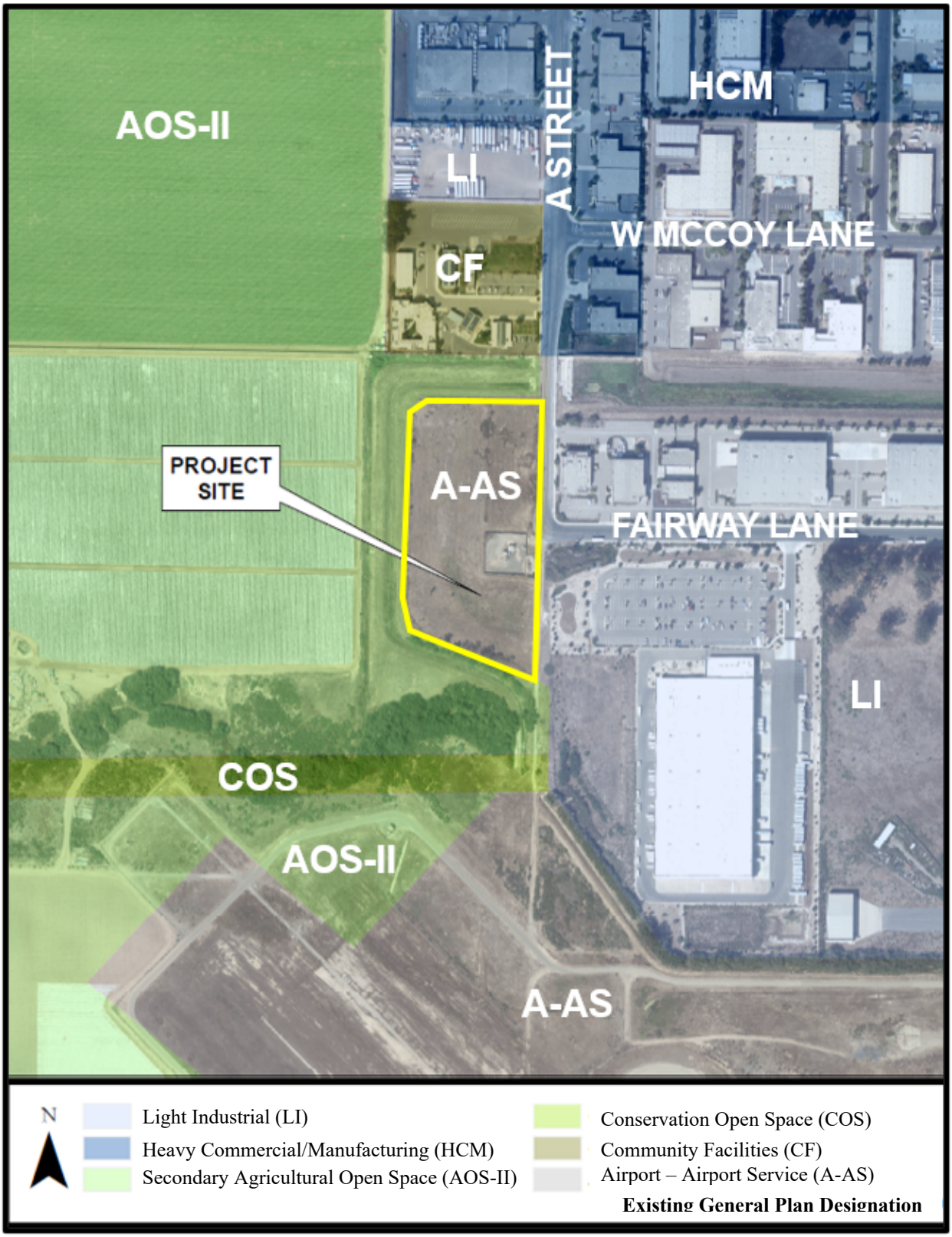


Figure 4. Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations Map

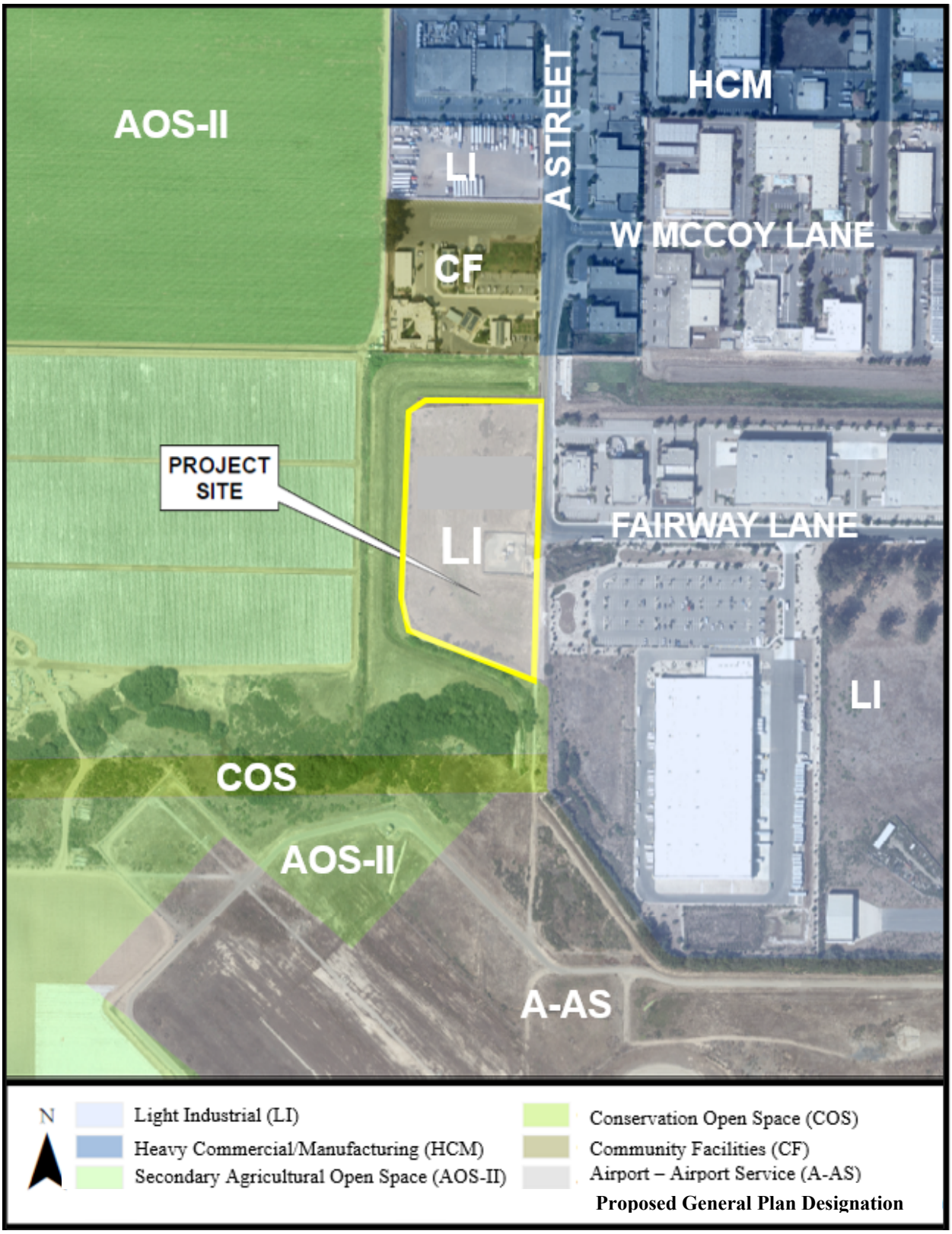


Figure 5. Existing Zoning Designation Map

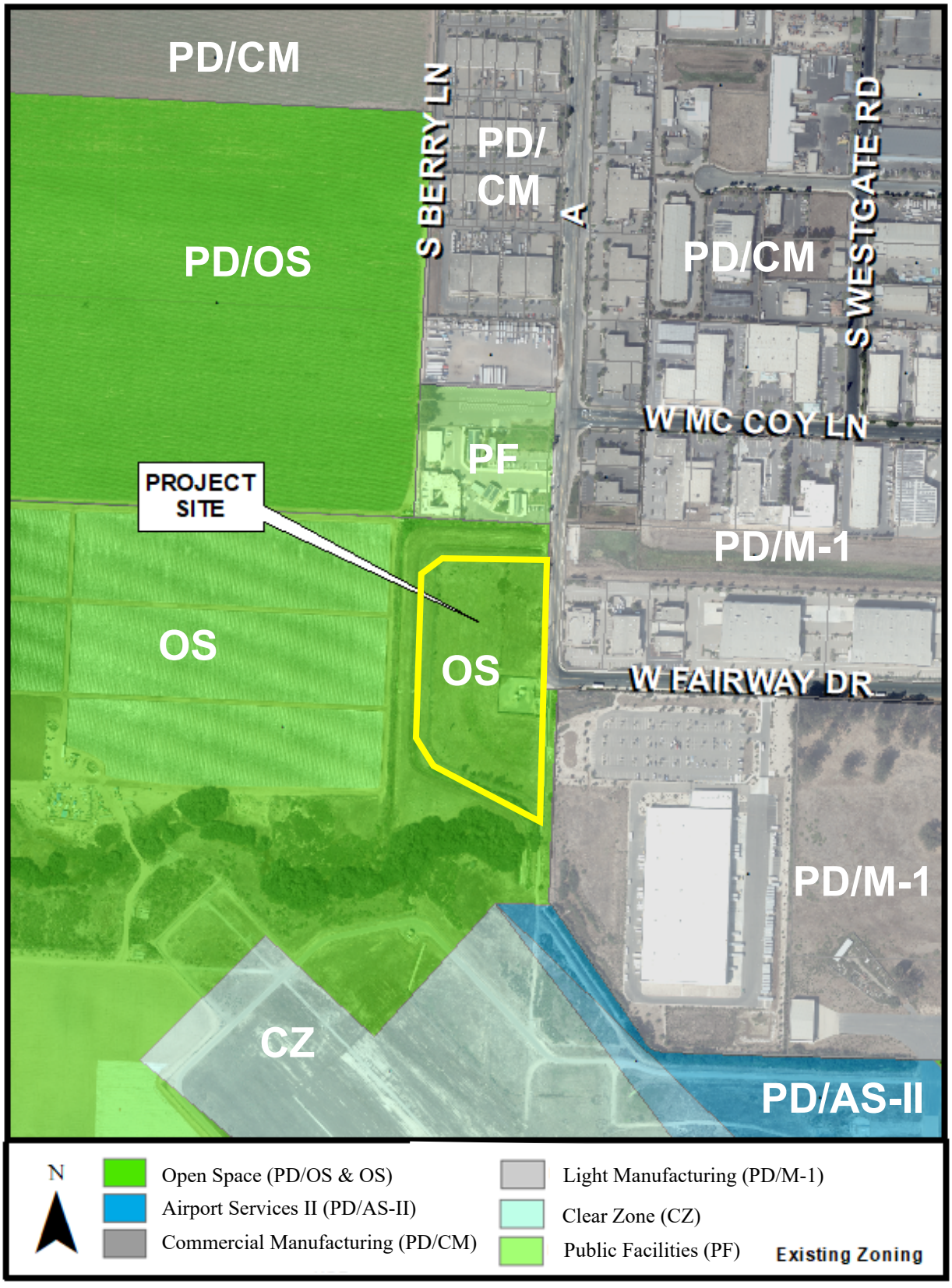
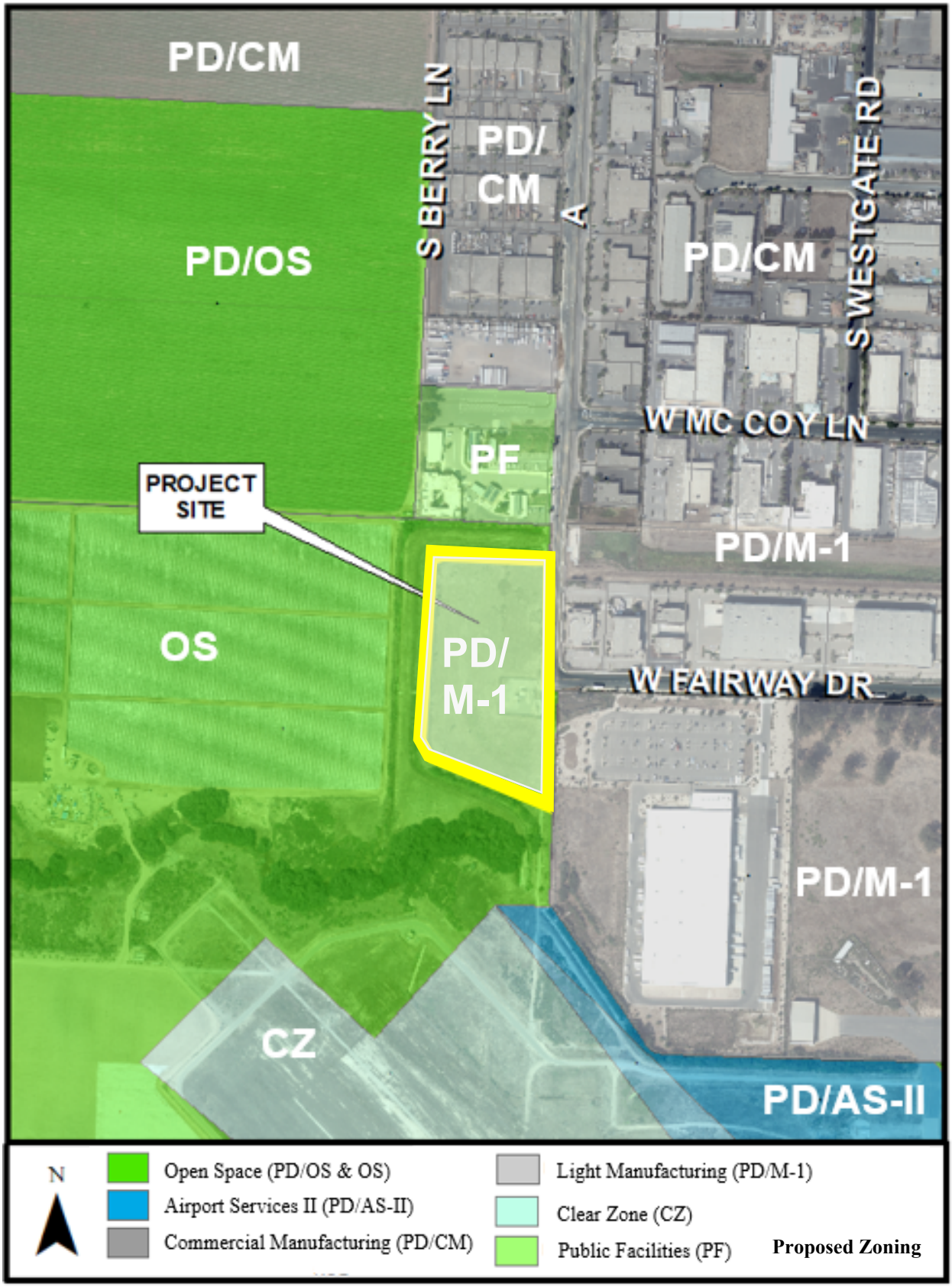


Figure 6. Proposed Zoning Designation Map



1. AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 corridor?				X
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?			X	
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

Setting:

The project site is located within the southwestern area of the city of Santa Maria to the east of the intersection of Roemer Way and North Broadway. The site is 6.95 acres and is mostly undeveloped. A City water well pump facility and yard are located on the site. The site is primarily flat and open with ruderal non-native grassland. A flood control channel maintained by the County of Santa Barbara borders the site to the north, south and east. The site is surrounded by urbanized development to the north and east of the site. The Santa Maria Public Airport borders the site to the south and west. Development in the project vicinity includes multiple business parks and industrial uses, and airport runways and related airport infrastructure.

Discussion:

a. For purposes of determining significance under CEQA, a scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. According to the General Plan Resources Management Element, there are no designated scenic vistas identified in the project vicinity. The project site is relatively level and is located in an urban area within Santa Maria that is generally surrounded by existing industrial and airport development. Views from the project area are not expansive, do not portray a highly valued landscape, and would not be considered a scenic vista. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista and impacts would be *less than significant.*

b. U.S. Route 101 (US Highway 101) and State Route 166, are identified as an eligible but not officially designated State Scenic Highway, is located approximately two miles east and north of the project site respectively. The project site would not be visible to viewers traveling along these roadways due to distance and existing intervening development. A future industrial or manufacturing development that would be enabled by the proposed land use designation and zone district change would not introduce any new structures that would obstruct views because of the distance and buildings already

constructed within the viewshed. No other eligible or officially designated state scenic highways are located within proximity or viewshed to the project site. Therefore, the project would have *no impact* to scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

c. The project is located in an urban area of Santa Maria and is considered urbanized pursuant to CEQA Section 21071. The proposed GPZ of the parcel would allow for the development of a future industrial or manufacturing use by the proposed PD/M-1 zoning designation that were not previously allowed at this location due to the existing OS zoning regulations and A-AS general plan designation. The proposed rezone of the parcel to PD/M-1 would require front setback distances and landscaping requirements. The new zoning would limit the building height of a future industrial or manufacturing building to 35 feet. All architectural elevations, site plans, and landscape plans would be reviewed by the designated review authority for compliance with the adopted plans, policies, and ordinances of the City prior to project approval. Further, there are no notable scenic resources in close proximity to the site of which a structure of such size would block views. Therefore, the project would not result in a conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality and impacts would be *less than significant.*

d. The project includes the GPZ to allow for the development of a industrial or manufacturing use in the proposed PD/M-1 zoning designation. A future industrial or manufacturing development will include outdoor lighting fixtures including wall sconces, parking lot poles and walkway lighting. This future project will be conditioned to comply with standard lighting requirements per the Santa Maria Municipal Code, which require that light and glare onto any adjacent properties be minimized, including Section 12-32.20. Building materials and design would be reviewed by the designated review authority for compliance with the adopted plans, policies, and ordinances of the City associated with reflectivity and glare prior to project approval. Additionally, any future project will be subject to compliance with aviation lighting limits due to the site's proximity to airport runways. Therefore, impacts to substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to aesthetics or visual resources; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

2. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				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

Setting:

Agriculture has historically played an important role in the economy and development of Santa Maria and the Santa Maria Valley. Soil quality, water supply, year-round growing season, and level topography have made the Santa Maria Valley one of the most productive agricultural regions in the country. A majority of the land under agricultural production within the project vicinity is located in the unincorporated areas surrounding the city. Land under agricultural production within city limits includes a small area near the Santa Maria Regional Landfill and several acres recently annexed to the City. The project site is located within a developed portion of the city that is not currently used, and has not historically been used, for agricultural purposes.

According to California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 12220(g), forest land is defined as land that can support 10% native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. Timberland is defined as land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. The project site does not support any forest land or timberland.

Discussion:

a. According to the California Department of Conservation (DOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Important Farmland Map for Santa Barbara County (DOC 2016), the site is mapped as Urban and Built-up Land. Urban and Built-up Land is defined as land that is occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to 1.5-acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel. In addition, the project site does not lie within the area identified in the General Plan Resources Management Element as having prime agricultural soils. The project site does not include any land that is designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as designated by the FMMP; therefore, no conversion of these lands would result from implementation of the project and *no impacts would occur.*

b. According to the City's General Plan, the project site's land use is designated as A-AS and the site is currently zoned OS. The A-AS designation is meant to provide a broad category facilitating the airport and airport-related commercial and industrial uses not adversely affected by airport operations, to provide for specific areas for aircraft operation and navigation aids, and to minimize the hazard to safe landing and take-off of aircraft. The project site was formerly used as part of a golf course and does not have a history of agricultural use. The project site is not under a Williamson Act contract nor is the adjacent agricultural land. The project would not result in a conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract; therefore, *no impacts would occur.*

c. The site is zoned OS and the project site currently is designated to support the existing airport. The former use of the site was a golf course with a water feature and currently contains ruderal non-native plants and seven ornamental pine trees associated with the prior golf course use. Given that the site is located within an urban area and is not within close proximity to forest land or timberland resources; therefore, implementation of the project would not result in a conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production and *no impacts would occur.*

d. The proposed project would change the General Plan Land Use designation and Zone District to industrial designations to allow the future construction of an industrial or manufacturing development. The project site is located in an urbanized area of the city and is not located within or adjacent to forest land. Future development of uses on-site resulting from the project would likely result in the removal of existing pine trees on-site; however, these trees do not meet the criteria to meet the definition of forest land or timberland. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use and *no impacts would occur.*

e. As discussed above, the project site does not include active agriculture, farmland designated by the FMMP, land under active Williamson Act contract, or land designated or zoned for agricultural use, forest land, or timber land. The proposed GPZ enabling the future development of a industrial or manufacturing use on the project site would not directly or indirectly adversely affect agricultural land in the vicinity; therefore, *no impacts to agriculture or forest resources would occur.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to agriculture and forest resources; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

3. AIR QUALITY

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:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			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	

Setting:

The project includes the GPZ to allow for the future development of a manufacturing or industrial use under the Light Manufacturing zoning. The GPZ would enable the project site to be developed with up to 100,000 square-feet of building area. The project site is located in the City of Santa Maria in northern Santa Barbara County. The climate in and around Santa Maria, as well as most of southern California, is dominated by the strength and position of the semi-permanent high-pressure center over the Pacific Ocean near Hawaii. It creates cool summers, mild winters, and infrequent rainfall. It drives the cool daytime sea breeze and maintains a comfortable humidity range and ample sunshine after the frequent morning clouds dissipate. However, the same atmospheric processes that create the desirable living climate combine to restrict the ability of the atmosphere to disperse the air pollution generated by the population attracted in part by the desirable climate.

Air pollutant emissions are generated primarily by stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources can be divided into two major subcategories:

- Point sources occur at a specific location and are often identified by an exhaust vent or stack. Examples include boilers or combustion equipment that produce electricity or generate heat.
- Area sources are widely distributed and include such sources as residential and commercial water heaters, painting operations, lawn mowers, agricultural fields, landfills, and some consumer products.

Mobile sources refer to emissions from motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions, and can also be divided into two major subcategories:

- On-road sources that may be legally operated on roadways and highways.
- Off-road sources include aircraft, ships, trains, and self-propelled construction equipment.

Air pollutants can also be generated by the natural environment, such as when high winds suspend fine dust particles. Both summer and winter air quality in the project area is generally very good. The closest air monitoring station to the project site is the Santa Maria-906 South Broadway monitoring station, located in

downtown Santa Maria. This station measures ozone (O_3), particulate matter with diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM_{10}), and sulfur dioxide.

Regulatory Framework

The federal and State Clean Air Acts (CAA) mandate the control and reduction of certain air pollutants. Under these laws, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for "criteria pollutants" and other pollutants. Some pollutants are emitted directly from a source (e.g., vehicle tailpipe, an exhaust stack of a factory, etc.) into the atmosphere, including carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds (VOC)/reactive organic compounds (ROC), nitrogen oxides (NO_X), PM_{10}, particulate matter of 2.5 microns or less ($PM_{2.5}$), sulfur dioxide, and lead. Other pollutants are created indirectly through chemical reactions in the atmosphere, such as O_3, which is created by atmospheric chemical and photochemical reactions primarily between ROC and NO_X. Secondary pollutants include oxidants, O_3, and sulfate and nitrate particulates (smog). By law, the federal standards may be exceeded not more than once per year, while the California standards may not be exceeded at all.

Air Quality Standards and Attainment

The project site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB), which encompasses San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties and is under the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD). As the local air quality management agency, the SBCAPCD is required to monitor air pollutant levels to ensure that the NAAQS and CAAQS are met and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards. Depending on whether the standards are met or exceeded, the SCCAB is classified as being in "attainment" or "nonattainment." In areas designated as non-attainment for one or more air pollutants, a cumulative air quality impact exists for those air pollutants, and the human health impacts associated with these criteria pollutants, presented in Table 4 are already occurring in that area as part of the environmental baseline condition. Under state law, air districts are required to prepare a plan for air quality improvement for pollutants for which the district is in non-compliance. The project site is within Santa Barbara County, which currently meets the NAAQS for all criteria air pollutants. Santa Barbara County is classified as attainment/maintenance area under the CAAQS for CO, and attainment for PM2.5. Santa Barbara County is currently classified as a nonattainment area under the CAAQS for O3, and PM10 (SBCAPCD 2023). These nonattainment statuses are a result of several factors, including mobile and stationary sources in the SCCAB.

Table 4. Health Effects Associated with Non-Attainment Criteria Pollutants

Pollutant	Adverse Effects
Ozone	(1) Short-term exposures: (a) pulmonary function decrements and localized lung edema in humans and animals and (b) risk to public health implied by alterations in pulmonary morphology and host defense in animals; (2) long-term exposures: risk to public health implied by altered connective tissue metabolism and altered pulmonary morphology in animals after long-term exposures and pulmonary function decrements in chronically exposed humans; (3) vegetation damage; and (4) property damage.
Suspended particulate matter (PM_{10})	(1) Excess deaths from short-term and long-term exposures; (2) excess seasonal declines in pulmonary function, especially in children; (3) asthma exacerbation and possibly induction; (4) adverse birth outcomes including low birth weight; (5) increased infant mortality; (6) increased respiratory symptoms in children such as cough and bronchitis; and (7) increased hospitalization for both cardiovascular and respiratory disease (including asthma).[1]

Air Quality Management

Because Santa Barbara County is designated nonattainment for the state O_3 and PM_{10} standards, the SBCAPCD is required to implement strategies to reduce pollutant levels to achieve attainment of the NAAQS and CAAQS. The 2022 Ozone Plan is the current SBCAPCD Board-adopted air quality management plan for the County. The 2022 Ozone Plan incorporates and builds upon the prior Clean Air Plans and predominantly focuses on achieving attainment of the state O_3 standards, in addition to the federal O_3 standard. The 2022 Ozone Plan focuses on reducing O_3 precursor emissions through implementation of transportation control measures that serve to reduce mobile source emissions, which

are the primary source of ROC and nitrogen oxides emissions in the county (SBCAPCD 2022). The major sources of O_3 precursor emissions in Santa Barbara County, which includes the City of Santa Maria, are motor vehicles, the petroleum industry, and solvent usage (paints, consumer products and certain industrial processes). Sources of PM_{10} include mineral quarries, grading, demolition, agricultural tilling, road dust, and vehicle exhaust (County of Santa Barbara 2021a).

Sensitive Receivers

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, depending on the population groups and the activities involved. CARB has identified the following typical groups who are most likely to be affected by air pollution: children under 14 years of age; elderly over 65 years of age; and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Land uses typically associated with sensitive receivers include schools, parks, playgrounds, childcare centers, retirement homes, convalescent homes, hospitals, and clinics (CARB 2005). The nearest sensitive receptors are single-family homes approximately 2,170 feet north of the project site and single-family homes approximately 3,340 feet east of the project site.

Significance Thresholds

The City of Santa Maria and SBCAPCD have not adopted quantitative significance criteria for temporary construction emissions associated with conventional land development projects. However, SBCAPCD recommends quantification of construction-related emissions from construction activities and uses 25 tons per year for ROC and NO_X as a guideline for determining the significance of construction impacts. For other construction projects involving standard grading and building activities, SBCAPCD (2022) notes that consistency with the Air Quality Attainment Plan requires the implementation of mitigation measures to minimize dust generation. This analysis uses 25 tons per year as a significance threshold for construction-related emissions.

Long-term air quality impacts occur during project operation and include emissions from equipment or processes used in the project. These emissions must be summed to determine the significance of the project's long-term impact on air quality. Based on the criteria suggested by the SBCAPCD (2022) a project would not have a significant air quality effect on the environment if operation of the project would:

- Emit (from all project sources, mobile and stationary), less than the daily trigger (Currently 240 pounds per day for NO_X and ROC, 80 pounds per day for PM_{10}, and 240 pounds per day for attainment pollutants (except $PM_{2.5}$ and carbon monoxide) for offsets set in the APCD New Source Review Rule, for any pollutant; and
- Emit less than 25 pounds per day of oxides of nitrogen (NO_X) or reactive organic compounds (ROC) from motor vehicle trips only; and
- Not cause or contribute to a violation of any California or National Ambient Air Quality Standard (except O_3); and
- Not exceed the APCD health risk public notification thresholds adopted by the APCD Board; and
- Be consistent with the adopted federal and state Air Quality Plans.

Methodology

An Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Study was completed in August 2023 and was prepared for the proposed project by Rincon Consultants, Inc. The purpose of this analysis is to estimate the criteria pollutants that would be emitted by the proposed project and compare the estimate to the SBCAPCD air quality regulations. The complete analysis is attached in the initial study within the appendix (Appendix A).

Impact Discussion:

a. Vehicle use, energy consumption, and associated air pollutant emissions are directly related to population and housing growth. A project may be inconsistent with the applicable air quality plan if it would result in population, housing, or employment growth that exceeds growth estimates included in the applicable air quality plan. Such growth would generate emissions not accounted for in the applicable air quality plan emissions budget. Therefore, projects need to be evaluated to determine whether they would generate population, housing, or employment growth and, if so, whether that growth would exceed the growth rates included in the applicable air quality plan. The most recent and applicable adopted air quality plan is the 2022 Ozone Plan. The 2022 Ozone Plan, prepared by the

SBCAPCD in December 2022, is the tenth triennial update to the initial state Air Quality Attainment Plan that was adopted by the SBCAPCD Board of Directors in 1991. The 2022 Ozone Plan describes the air quality setting for the Santa Barbara County region, including the regional climate and meteorology, current and projected air quality, and the regulatory framework for the management of air quality. To be determined to be consistent with the current air quality attainment plan (2022 Ozone Plan), the project's direct and indirect emissions must be accounted for in the growth assumptions in the 2022 Ozone Plan and the project must be consistent with the policies adopted in the 2022 Ozone Plan.

The Ozone Plan relies primarily on the land use and population projections provided by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) and CARB on-road emissions forecast as a basis for vehicle emission forecasting (SBCAPCD 2022). Populations that remain within the 2022 Ozone Plan and SBCAG forecasts are accounted for with regard to SBCAPCD emissions inventories. When population growth exceeds these forecasts, emission inventories could be surpassed, affecting attainment status. The project includes the GPZ to allow for the future development of up to 100,000 square-feet of manufacturing or industrial use permitted under the M-1 zoning. The proposed project is estimated to add approximately 38 new employees. Project employees would likely be drawn from the existing labor pool in the region who are not anticipated to relocate to the city. However, to demonstrate compliance with the 2022 Ozone Plan, the analysis conservatively assumes that all 38 new employees would become new households; therefore, based on the Department of Finance persons per household estimate in Santa Maria, the project would add 138 new residents. The addition of 138 residents and 38 employees to the City of Santa Maria would not exceed SBCAG's growth forecasts of population and jobs for the City (SBCAG 2019). Therefore, the project would not result in near-term increases in population that would exceed year 2025 population projections or exceed year 2035 projections and the project would be overall consistent with the growth assumptions in the 2022 Ozone Plan (the applicable air quality plan). Potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

Further, the development of the site would be required to comply with all SBCAPCD rules and regulations for construction and operation. The project would be consistent with the SCAPCD 2022 Ozone Plan and thus, would not obstruct its implementation. This impact would also be *less than significant*.

b. The project would result in temporary construction emissions and long-term operational emissions, however none of the emissions would exceed SBCAPCD thresholds. Construction activities such as the use of construction vehicles and equipment over unpaved areas, grading, trenching, and disturbance of stockpiled soils have the potential to generate fugitive dust (PM_{10}) through the exposure of soil to wind erosion and dust being drawn into the air by turbulent air currents. Exhaust emissions associated with heavy construction equipment would potentially degrade regional air quality. Long-term emissions associated with operational impacts would include emissions from vehicle trips (mobile sources); natural gas use (energy sources); landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products, and architectural coating associated with on-site development (area sources); and forklifts (off-road sources). Air pollutant emissions associated with project construction and operation are discussed in the following subsections.

Construction Emissions.

Temporary air quality impacts generally occur during project construction. However, the SBCAPCD recommends lead agencies to use a 25 tons/year significance threshold for construction emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG) and oxides of nitrogen (NOX; SBCAPCD 2017), as well as other criteria emissions with the exception of carbon monoxide. A comparison of estimated construction emissions and applicable SBCAPCD-recommended thresholds are provided in Table 5, below. Ozone precursors NO_X and ROG, as well as CO, would be emitted by the operation of construction equipment. Fugitive dust (PM_{10}) would be emitted by activities that disturb the soil, such as grading and excavation, and roadway and project construction. Project construction emissions were estimated using CalEEMod. For full modeling results refer to Appendix A.

Table 5. Estimated Annual Construction Emissions

	Annual Emissions (tons per year)					
Construction Year	**ROC**	**NO_x**	**CO**	**SO_2**	**PM_{10}[1]**	**$PM_{2.5}$[1]**
2025	<1	1	1	<1	<1	<1
2026	1	1	1	<1	<1	<1
SBCAPCD Thresholds	25	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

ROC = reactive organic compounds, NO_x = nitrogen oxides, CO = carbon monoxide, SO_2 = sulfur dioxide, PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less, $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

[1]Total PM_{10} fugitive dust and exhaust.

Notes: All emissions modeling was completed using CalEEMod. See Appendix A for modeling results. Some numbers may not add up due to rounding. Emission data is pulled from "mitigated" results, which account for compliance with regulations (including SBCAPCD Rules 345, 323.1, and 329).

As shown in

Table 5, annual emissions of all criteria pollutants would be below SBCAPCD's 25 tons per year threshold for the project construction. However, because the Santa Barbara County portion of the SCCAB is a nonattainment area for the state PM_{10} standard, construction emissions control measures are required for all projects involving earthmoving activities regardless of size or duration. Therefore, Mitigation Measure AQ-1 has been identified to reduce construction emissions in accordance with local regulatory policies. *With the inclusion of this measure, impacts from construction emissions would be less than significant*.

Operational Emissions.

Operational emissions would include emissions associated with mobile sources (vehicle trips); energy sources (natural gas use); area sources (landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products, and architectural coating associated with on-site operational activities); and off-road sources (forklifts).

The emissions from project operations, assuming the conceptual development of 100,000 square-feet of an industrial or manufacturing use, were estimated using CalEEMod. Table 6 summarizes the operational emissions that would result from the project and compares the emissions with the SBCAPCD significance criteria for evaluating air emissions impacts.

Table 6. Estimated Average Daily Operational Emissions

Emissions Source	Average Daily Emissions (pounds per day)					
	ROC	NO_x	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Area	3	<1	4	<1	<1	<1
Energy	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Mobile	1	1	4	<1	1	<1
Total	**4**	**1**	**8**	**<1**	**1**	**<1**
Threshold (area + energy + mobile)	240	240	N/A	N/A	80	N/A
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	N/A	N/A	No	N/A
Threshold (mobile only)	25	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

ROC = reactive organic compounds, NO_x = nitrogen oxides, CO = carbon monoxide, SO_2 = sulfur dioxide, PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less, $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter; lbs/day = pounds per day

Notes: All emissions modeling was completed using CalEEMod. See Appendix A for modeling results. Some numbers may not add up due to rounding. Emission data is pulled from "mitigated" results, which account for compliance with regulations (including SBCAPCD Rule 323.1) and project design features. Emissions presented are the highest of the winter and summer modeled emissions.

The project's operational emissions would not exceed SBCAPCD criteria for defining a significant air quality impact. Construction emissions would not exceed SBCAPCD thresholds for criteria pollutants and no mitigation is required. Operational emissions would not exceed SBCAPCD thresholds for a criteria pollutant and would comply with SBCAPCD criteria pollutant thresholds. The project would not result in individually or cumulatively significant impacts to air quality. This impact would be *less than significant.*

c. Sensitive receptors are people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants, such as the elderly, children, people with asthma or other respiratory illnesses, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, due to the population that occupies the uses and the activities involved. Sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residences.

The closest sensitive receptors to the project site are single-family residences approximately 2,170 feet north of the project site and single-family residences approximately 3,340 feet east of the project site. While the GPZ would not trigger any direct air pollutant emissions, future development of a manufacturing or industrial project would be enabled by the GPZ. That future project could indirectly lead to temporary air pollutant emissions during the construction phase in close proximity to sensitive receptors.

Construction-related activities would result in temporary project-generated emissions of Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM) exhaust emissions from off-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment for site preparation, grading, building construction, and other construction activities. CARB's Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective (2005) recommends against siting sensitive receptors within 500 feet of a freeway, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles/day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles/day. While these siting distances are not particular to construction activities, the

primary source of Toxic Air Contaminants (TAC) emissions from both freeways and construction equipment is DPM. Therefore, for projects within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors, a refined health risk assessment should be conducted. However, as the nearest receptors to the project site are 2,170 feet north and 3,340 feet east, construction TAC emissions would have a negligible impact on the closest sensitive receptors.

Heavy equipment performing construction activities would generate fugitive dust, resulting in substantial temporary impacts. Fugitive dust emissions would result from land clearing, excavation, and equipment traffic over temporary dirt roads. Impacts from fugitive dust emissions could be significant because they could adversely affect nearby sensitive receptors. The SBCAPCD requires dust control measures for all discretionary construction activities; therefore, the SBCAPCD's standard fugitive dust control measures have been incorporated as Mitigation Measure AQ-1 to reduce fugitive dust generated during construction and to require diesel-idling control measures during construction of the project to reduce emissions of NOx and ROC in proximity to sensitive receptors. Therefore, potential impacts associated with exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial air pollutant concentrations would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

d. The proposed project includes a GPA and rezone to allow for the future development of land uses permitted under the proposed PD/M-1 zoning designation. Future development of the project site could generate odors from heavy diesel machinery, equipment, and/or materials during the construction phase. The generation of odors during the construction period would be temporary, consistent with odors commonly associated with construction, and would dissipate within a short distance from the active work area. The project would generate oil and diesel fuel odors during construction from equipment use. The odors would be limited to the construction period and would be intermittent and temporary. Furthermore, these odors would dissipate rapidly with distance from in-use construction equipment, and the nearest sensitive receptors to project development are located approximately 2,170 feet away from the project site. Accordingly, project construction would not result in other emissions, such as those leading to odors, that would adversely affect a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than significant.

Potential sources that may emit odors during operation of the proposed project would include diesel fuel odor emissions from the delivery truck emissions. However, trucks would be required to comply with California Code of Regulations Title 13, Section 2485, which limits delivery truck idling times to five minutes or less. Limiting truck idling times would reduce the potential for nuisance odors associated with diesel exhaust emissions in the vicinity of the project site. Furthermore, the project would be required to comply with the requirements of SBCAPCD Rule 303, which prohibits the discharge of air contaminants or other material that would cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons. In addition, the nearest sensitive receptors are located approximately 2,170 feet north of the project site, and odors disperse rapidly with distance. Therefore, due to the distance of the nearest sensitive receptors from the project site and compliance with SBCAPCD Rule 303, project operation would not result in other emissions, such as those leading to odors, adversely affecting a substantial number of people, and impacts would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

AQ-1 **Construction Emissions Control Measures.** The project applicant shall install the following air pollutant emissions control measures throughout the construction period:

Dust Control Measures

During construction, the applicant shall implement all of the applicable measures from the following list as standard dust control measures to avoid impacts associated with fugitive dust emissions:

a. Use water trucks or sprinkler systems to keep all areas of vehicle movement damp enough to prevent dust from leaving the site and from exceeding the APCD's limit of 20% opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. At a minimum, this should include wetting down such areas in the late morning and after work is completed for the day. Increased watering frequency should be required whenever the wind speed exceeds 15

mph. Reclaimed water should be used whenever possible. However, reclaimed water should not be used in or around crops for human consumption.

b. Minimize amount of disturbed area and reduce on site vehicle speeds to 15 mph or less.

c. If importation, exportation and stockpiling of fill material is involved, soil stockpiled for more than two days shall be covered, kept moist, or treated with soil binders to prevent dust

generation. Trucks transporting fill material to and from the site shall be tarped from the point of origin.

d. Gravel pads shall be installed at all access points to prevent tracking of mud onto public roads.
e. After clearing, grading, earth moving or excavation is completed, treat the disturbed area by watering, or revegetating, or by spreading soil binders until the area is paved or otherwise developed so that dust generation will not occur.
f. Schedule clearing, grading, earthmoving, and excavation activities during periods of low wind speed to the extent feasible. During periods of high winds (>25 mph) clearing, grading, earthmoving, and excavation operations shall be minimized to prevent fugitive dust created by onsite operations from becoming a nuisance or hazard.
g. The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons to monitor the dust control program and to order increased watering, as necessary, to prevent transport of dust offsite. Their duties shall include holiday and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the APCD prior to land use clearance for map recordation and land use clearance for finish grading of the structure.

Equipment Emissions Control Measures

During project grading and construction, the applicant shall adhere to the following measures to reduce NO_X and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions from construction equipment:

a. All portable diesel-powered construction equipment shall be registered with the state's portable equipment registration program OR shall obtain an APCD permit.
b. Fleet owners of mobile construction equipment are subject to the CARB Regulation for In-use Off-road Diesel Vehicles (Title 13 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 9, § 2449), the purpose of which is to reduce diesel PM and criteria pollutant emissions from in-use (existing) off-road diesel-fueled vehicles. For more information, please refer to the CARB website at www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/ordiesel/ordiesel.htm.
c. All commercial diesel vehicles are subject to Title 13, § 2485 of the California Code of Regulations, limiting engine idling time. Idling of heavy-duty diesel construction equipment and trucks during loading and unloading shall be limited to five minutes; electric auxiliary power units should be used whenever possible.
d. Diesel construction equipment meeting the CARB Tier 3 or higher emission standards for off-road heavy-duty diesel engines shall be used to the maximum extent feasible.
e. Diesel powered equipment should be replaced by electric equipment whenever feasible.
f. If feasible, diesel construction equipment shall be equipped with selective catalytic reduction systems, diesel oxidation catalysts and diesel particulate filters as certified and/or verified by EPA or California.
g. Catalytic converters shall be installed on gasoline-powered equipment, if feasible.
h. All construction equipment shall be maintained in tune per the manufacturer's specifications.
i. The engine size of construction equipment shall be the minimum practical size.
j. The number of construction equipment operating simultaneously shall be minimized through efficient management practices to ensure that the smallest practical number is operating at any one time.

Fugitive Dust Control

The project applicant shall comply with SBCAPCD's Rule 345: Control of Fugitive Dust from Construction and Demolition Activities including all applicable standards and measures therein.

Diesel-fired Engine Permits

All portable diesel-fired construction engines rated at 50 brake horsepower (bhp) or greater must have either statewide Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) certificates or SBCAPCD

permits prior to grading/building permit issuance. Construction engines with PERP certificates are exempt from SBCAPCD permit, provided they will be onsite for less than 12 months.

Permit to Operate

If contaminated soils are found at the project site, SBCAPCD must be contacted to determine if ATC and/or Permit to Operate permits shall be required. (SBCAPCD permits are required for all soil vapor extraction activities. SBCAPCD permits are also required for the excavation, or "dig-and-haul," of more than 1,000 cubic yards of contaminated soils.)

Equipment Idling Requirements

At all times, idling of heavy-duty diesel trucks should be minimized; auxiliary power units should be used whenever possible. State law requires that:

- Drivers of diesel-fueled commercial vehicles shall not idle the vehicle's primary diesel engine for greater than five minutes at any location.
- Drivers of diesel-fueled commercial vehicles shall not idle a diesel-fueled auxiliary power system (APS) for more than five minutes to power a heater, air conditioner, or any ancillary equipment on the vehicle. Trucks with 2007 or newer model year engines must meet additional requirements (verified clean APS label required).
- See www.arb.ca.gov/noidle for more information.

Asphalt Paving Requirements

Asphalt paving activities shall comply with APCD Rule 329, Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt Paving Materials.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measure: With implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, potential impacts from air pollutant emissions and odors would be reduced and impacts would be *less than significant*.

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
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 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not				X

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			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

Setting:

The project site is 6.95-acre and a portion of the site (approximately 0.42 Acres) is developed as a City water well pump facility and concrete pad yard. The site is otherwise vacant ruderal (disturbed) herbaceous vegetation with seven small non-native pine trees located along its southern boundary, and scattered coyote brush shrubs and fan palms. No wetlands or other waters of the U.S./State or riparian habitat occurs on the project site. The site is bounded on the north, west and south perimeters by existing Santa Barbara County (County) flood control channels that flow into the east to west trending "Green Canyon" drainage. Open Space zoned Airport property is beyond to the west under annual crop agricultural use. The project site is abutted by 'A' Street, urban industrial development to the east and north. The General Plan Resources Management Element identifies sensitive habitats within the City boundaries including Central Coast Riparian Scrub and the Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh. Based on Figure RME-3 of the Resources Management Element, the project site is located within close proximity of these designated habitat areas. According to the National Wetlands Inventory from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services, the project side is adjacent to freshwater emergent wetland and riverine area.

Discussion:

a. David Wolff Environmental (DWE) conducted the review of available background data including City environmental review of nearby projects, and a biological and botanical field survey on the project site on August 28, 2023 as part of the Biological Resources Assessment (Appendix B). The purpose of the field survey and this biological resources assessment is to document the existing conditions of the project site, determine the presence/absence of suitable habitat for rare plant or wildlife species, and to evaluate the potential for any direct or indirect significant impacts on biological or wetland resources, or adverse effects on any rare, threatened, or endangered plant or wildlife species (special-status species). The search and review of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) revealed 19 special-status species composed of six special-status plants, 12 special-status wildlife species, and one natural community of special concern with recorded occurrences in the region of the proposed project site. A field survey conducted on the Project site established existing conditions of the proposed project site as disturbed/developed ruderal habitat. This biological resources assessment concludes the site does not support suitable habitat for any special-status plant or wildlife species or the potential to occur, or any significant biological resources within the project site.

Special-Status Botanical Resources

The search and review of the CNDDB identified six special-status plant species with recorded occurrences within an approximately five-mile radius of the project site. None have been recorded on the project site. The La Graciosa thistle (Cirsium scariosum var. loncholepis), a state threatened, federally endangered, and California Rare Plant Rank 1B.1 species, is a wetland species. No wetlands occur along the project site. Five upland special-status plant species (none formally listed) known from the region were identified in the CNDDB search that includes the black-flowered figwort (Scrophularia atrata; CNPS Rank 1B.2), Blochman's leafy daisy (Erigeron blochmaniae; CNPS Rank 1B.2), dune larkspur (Delphinium parryi ssp. blochmaniae; CNPS Rank 1B.2), Kellogg's horkelia (Horkelia cuneata var. sericea; CNPS Rank 1B.2), and San Luis Obispo monardella (Monardella undulata ssp. crispa; CNPS Rank 1B.2). The prior golf course use and regular discing/mowing weed control make the project site unsuitable for these species and they are not expected to occur at the site.

The CNDDB identified one natural community of special concern, Southern Vernal Pool, within a five-mile radius of the project site. No vernal pools occur on the project site. Based on the findings from database review and the DWE field survey, no designated critical habitat occurs over the project site, and no impacts to special-status botanical resources or natural communities of special concern would result from the proposed project.

Special-Status Wildlife

The search and review of the CNDDB identified 12 special-status wildlife species with recorded observations within a five-mile radius of the project site. Only the California red-legged frog (CRLF; Rana draytonii), a federally threatened species and California Species of Special Concern (SSC), has recorded observations within the County flood control ditches near the project site. In the past, two of the former golf course ponds supported CRLF on the site that is now the adjacent FedEx facility. One of the former golf course ponds at the intersection of 'A' Street and Fairway Drive has been retained with site development as mitigation for CRLF habitat (See Figure 2). Current CRLF use in this pond is undetermined.

The CRLF is a highly aquatic species associated with perennial aquatic habitat for almost its entire lifecycle. The CRLF is known for overland movements between breeding sites during rain or heavy moisture (fog) events. The County flood control ditches have highly variable flows subject to duration and frequency of rainfall events, and at times could support suitable aquatic habitat for breeding and movement upstream and downstream through the ditches. This species may be present within the offsite drainages when water is present, and potentially in the retained mitigation golf course pond adjacent to the FedEx site. The project site lacks suitable upland refuge habitat with vegetation cover limited to herbaceous grassland habitat. No moist refuge such as riparian habitat or downed woody debris occurs on the project site suggesting only the limited probability of overland movements during or immediately after rainstorms. No loss of CRLF habitat would result from project development of the site. No designated critical habitat occurs over the project site, so none would be affected. Potential impacts to this species would occur if individuals were present during construction and were exposed to vehicle and heavy equipment traffic. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would be required to reduce impacts to CRLF to less than significant. Therefore, the potential for the project to result in impacts to candidate, sensitive or special status plants on site or habitat modifications would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

The project site existing conditions and proximity to USFWS identified known and potential breeding pond data were assessed for the potential of the site to support breeding or upland dispersal for the California tiger salamander (Ambystoma californiense; CTS), a federally listed endangered and state threatened species. The CTS is a lowland species that breeds in temporary pools with sufficient duration for metamorphosis (greater than 90-days) and seeks upland refuge (before/after aquatic breeding and metamorphosis, etc.) in small mammal burrows during most of its lifecycle. They can be found primarily in grasslands and low foothill and oak woodland habitats within a USFWS predicted maximum upland habitat dispersal of 1.3 miles from a breeding pond. CTS breed in long-lasting rain pools (e.g., seasonal ponds, vernal pools, rarely in slow-moving streams), and occasionally in permanent ponds lacking fish or other large predators. During the nonbreeding season and most of their lifecycle, adults and juveniles (up to five years for breeding maturity) occur in upland habitats and occupy ground squirrel (Otospermophilus beecheyi) or pocket gopher (Thomomys bottae) burrows.

They migrate nocturnally to aquatic sites to breed during relatively warm winter or spring rains. Juveniles emigrate at night from the drying pools to upland refuge sites, such as rodent burrows and cracks in the soil.

No known CTS breeding pools have been documented within the USFWS maximum predicted 1.3-mile CTS upland dispersal distance from the project site. However, two potential breeding pools, SAMA-11 and SAMA-12 have been identified by the USFWS approximately 1.2 miles and 0.72 mile respectively to the southwest of the project site (See Figure 1 in Appendix B). The intervening active agricultural fields are an impediment to CTS movement with the agricultural irrigation ditches, flood control ditches, and "Green Canyon" drainage representing positive barriers to CTS movement to the project site. As such, the project site does not represent suitable upland dispersal/refuge habitat, and no breeding habitat for the CTS occurs on the project site. Therefore, there would be no impact to this species from future development following the rezoning of the project site.

The offsite willow riparian habitat along "Green Canyon" and the County flood control ditches when flowing could provide suitable habitat to support the western pond turtle (Emys marmorata) that is a highly aquatic species. Upland movement into the mowed/disced project area and developed urban land uses is unlikely. The western spadefoot (Spea hammondii) is a toad that requires temporary pools for breeding and uplands for dry season refuge. No suitable breeding pools are within the project area or surrounding areas so this species would not be expected to occur. Similarly, no suitable seasonally ponded habitat occurs for the vernal pool fairy shrimp (Branchinecta lynchi).

The previous golf course use, lack of shrub cover, and discing/mowing weed control renders the site as unsuitable for the northern legless lizard (Anniella pulchra), Blainville's (coast) horned lizard (Phrynosoma blainvillii), American badger (Taxidea taxus), and burrowing owl (Athene cunicularia), all designated as species of special concern. No evidence of badger dens were observed during the DWE field survey. The Lompoc grasshopper (Trimerotropis occulens) requires gravelly/rocky undisturbed habitat, and the monarch butterfly (Danaus plexippus) requires stands of trees neither of which occur on the project site. The peregrine falcon (Falco peregrinus) is a coastal species not expected to use the small urbanized inland site for foraging as no nesting habitat occurs onsite or nearby in the agricultural and urban landscape.

Nesting Birds

Potential but very low quality nesting habitat for ground nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC Sections 3503/3503.5) occurs in the ruderal grassland habitat on the project site. Project construction may result in direct impacts to nesting bird species, should active nests be present at the time of vegetation clearance. In addition, potentially suitable nesting habitat for a wide range of birds exists within 500 feet of the site. No direct impacts to nesting birds or their habitat outside of the site are expected. Potential impacts to nesting birds could occur only if individuals were to be present during construction and be exposed to potential disruption of nesting activities from construction activities. The project would involve removal of existing trees on the site. In addition, disturbance from project demolition and construction activities may affect protected nesting birds in existing trees near the site. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would be required to reduce impacts to nesting birds to less than significant. Therefore, the potential for the project to result in impacts to candidate, sensitive or special status plants on site or habitat modifications would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

b, c. The project site is graded and regularly cleared of vegetation. According to the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (Wetlands Mapper), the project site does not contain riparian habitat, state or federally protected wetlands, or any other sensitive natural community (USFWS 2018b). Additionally, the Biological Resources Assessment completed by David Wolff environmental, LLC for the project determined that no wetlands or other waters of the U.S./State or riparian habitat occurs on the project site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have *no impact* on riparian habitat, other sensitive natural communities, or state or federally protected wetlands.

d. The project area does not support any surface water resources, migratory corridors, or nursery sites. As discussed in the Biological Resources Assessment completed by David Wolff environmental, LLC for the project, the project site is developed/ruderal non-native grassland habitat that is disced/mowed annually provides minimal quality wildlife habitat likely only for locally common wildlife species that have become adapted to the urban edge. The developed/ruderal habitat on the project site does not

support a significant amount of wildlife habitat, and does not represent any movement corridor for wildlife as it is abutted to 'A' Street and the urban land uses to the north and east. The site was previously a golf course of managed turfgrass that has returned to the ruderal uplands disced/mowed that reduces habitat value for wildlife. Only evidence of gophers and ground squirrels were observed on the project site. A row of non-native pine trees exist at the southern boundary of the site. There are no wildlife movement corridors across the site that is surrounded by agricultural lands and abutted to urban development. The network of nearby County flood control ditches may provide wildlife dispersal and migration corridors for a variety of local wildlife species adapted to the agricultural/urban setting (i.e., racoons, opossum, skunk). However, as noted above, no ditches are on the project site and no project activities are proposed within the highly maintained ditches. This site does not contain any features which would provide a native wildlife nursery site that would attract animals or other migratory species. Implementation of the proposed project would not significantly restrict the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or the use of native wildlife nursery sites. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have *a less than significant impact* to the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

e. The graded and regularly cleared project site does not contain suitable habitat for protected biological resources as discussed in section a. above. A future industrial or manufacturing project that would be enabled at the site by the proposed GPZ would be designed to preserve the trees. If preservation is infeasible, the trees shall be replaced according to the City's Landscape Ordinance requirements listed in Section 12-44.04 (n)The project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Therefore, implementation of the project would have *a less than significant impact*.

f. There are no habitat conservation plans, natural community conservation plans, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans applicable to the project site. The project would comply with the City's General Plan and local ordinances pertaining to the protection of biological resources. *Therefore, no impacts would occur.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

The following mitigation measure would be required to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds as a result of the project.

BIO-1: California Red-legged Frog Impact Avoidance

The following actions are recommended to avoid potential impacts to CRLF:

- A pre-construction survey of the proposed project site for CLRF shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 48 hours prior to the start of project construction to confirm this species is not present in the work area.
- A qualified biological monitor familiar with CRLF will monitor all initial site disturbance (clearing, grubbing, rough grading).
- In the event the pre-construction survey or the onsite monitor identifies the presence of individuals of CRLF prior to or during construction, then all work shall stop until the CRLF leave the site of their own accord. If CRLF do not move off site on their own, the project proponent shall comply with all relevant requirements of take authorization under the federal Endangered Species Act prior to resuming project activities.

BIO-2: Nesting Birds Impact Avoidance and Minimization

The following actions are recommended to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds:

- A nesting bird survey should be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than two weeks prior to the onset of construction activities. The nesting bird survey should be conducted within any and all suitable habitat that occurs within the project site, within 300 feet of its immediate vicinity for raptors, and 100 feet for all other bird species (as is feasible). If no active nests are found, no further mitigation would be required.

- If active bird nests are found, then an appropriately-sized avoidance buffer should be established by the biologist and all construction work within the buffer should be delayed until after the nesting season has ended or until the biologist has determined that the adults and young are no longer reliant on the nest site for survival.

- Limits of construction to avoid the nest shall be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing. Construction personnel shall be instructed on the sensitivity of the area.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measures: With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2, potential impacts to biological resources would be avoided and impacts would be less than significant.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §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 formal cemeteries?		X		

Setting:

The Santa Maria Valley was historically occupied by Chumash people until European contact in the mid-eighteenth century. Areas within close proximity to perennial water sources tend to have higher archeological sensitivity; the project site is not located within close proximity to any blue-line streams or bodies of water. According to the General Plan Resources Management Element, the project site is located in an area designated to have low sensitivity for archeological resources.

The establishment of Mission San Luis Obispo to the north and Mission La Purisima Concepción near the city of Lompoc was the beginning of development and settlement in the Santa Maria area. Industrialization and the connection of the Pacific Coast Railroad to Santa Maria further stimulated commercial and residential growth in the area. Historical resources in Santa Maria consist of several landmarks and structures. The City has officially designated 10 historic structures and landmarks, with additional sites designated by the Landmark Committee, none of which are located on-site.

Discussion:

a. The project site does not contain, nor is it located near, any historic resources identified in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR). The project site is not identified on the City's Landmark Map or on the City's Objects of Historic Merit Map; therefore, potential impacts to historical resources would be *less than significant*.

b. According to the Resources Management Element, the Santa Maria Valley is not a major archaeological or paleontological resource area, as only a few sites have been recorded or discovered in the area. The Resources Management Element delineates high, moderate, low, and negligible archaeological sensitivity areas within the city; the project site is designated as Archaeological

Sensitivity Area 2 – Low Sensitivity. Nevertheless, ground disturbance associated with construction activities of a future manufacturing or industrial project enabled by the GPZ could have the potential to result in inadvertent disturbance of previously unknown, buried archeological deposits. Impacts are conservatively considered to be potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1, identified below, would ensure potential impacts are avoided and/or minimized; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

c. Based on the location and low sensitivity of the project area, development of the project site from construction activities related to a future manufacturing or industrial project enabled by the GPZ would not be expected to disturb buried human remains. In the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains associated with development of the future project, California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 stipulates that no further disturbances shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to CEQA regulations and PRC Section 5097.98. With adherence to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which stipulates the process to be followed when human remains are encountered, as detailed in Mitigation Measure CR-2, impacts related to the disturbance of archaeological resources and human remains would be reduced to less than significant; therefore, potential impacts are *less than significant with mitigation*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

CR-1 **Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Resources.** In the event that any cultural resource is encountered during subsurface earthwork activities associated with development of the project site, all construction activities within a 100-foot radius of the find shall cease and the City shall be notified immediately. Work shall not continue until a qualified archaeologist, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary, determines whether the uncovered resource requires further study. Any previously unidentified resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Series forms and evaluated for significance in terms of CEQA criteria by a qualified archaeologist. Potentially significant cultural resources consist of, but are not limited to, stone, bone, glass, ceramic, wood, or shell artifacts; fossils; or features including hearths, structural remains, or historic dumpsites.

If the resource is determined significant under CEQA, the qualified archaeologist shall prepare and implement a research design and archaeological data recovery plan, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary that will capture those categories of data for which the site is significant. The archaeologist shall also perform appropriate technical analysis, prepare a comprehensive report, and file it with the Central Coast Information Center, located at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and provide for the permanent curation of the recovered materials. These actions would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

CR-2 **Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains.** In the event that human remains are exposed during subsurface earthwork activities associated with development of the project, an immediate halt work order shall be issued, and the City Community Development Department shall be notified. State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. These protocols shall be detailed on project grading and construction plans for all development on-site. These actions would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measures: With implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2, potential impacts to archaeological resources and undiscovered buried human remains would be avoided and impacts would be less than significant.

6. ENERGY

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

Setting:

In January 2021, Santa Maria customers began to receive their electricity from Central Coast Community Energy (3CE; previously known as Monterey Bay Community Power [MBCP]), which is a community choice energy agency that has committed to providing its customers with 100% carbon-free sourced energy by 2030. Community choice energy agencies allow local governments to procure power on behalf of their residents, businesses, and municipal accounts from an alternative supplier while still receiving transmission and distribution service from their existing utility provider (in this case, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company [PG&E]). Per Public Utilities Code Section 366.2, customers have the right to opt out of the community choice energy program and continue to receive service from the incumbent utility (PG&E) if they so choose (City of Santa Maria 2020a). Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) is the primary provider of natural gas for development within the city. SoCalGas has committed to replacing 20% of its traditional natural gas supply with renewable natural gas by 2030 (Sempra Energy 2022). Renewable natural gas is generated from waste and agricultural byproducts and is carbon-neutral/carbon-negative, which means it can take more greenhouse gas emissions out of the atmosphere than it emits as an energy source.

The California Building Code (CBC) contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvement to real property. The CBC includes mandatory green building standards for residential and nonresidential structures, the most recent version of which are referred to as the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (effective January 1, 2023). These standards focus on four key areas: smart residential photovoltaic systems, updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to the exterior and vice versa), residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements, and non-residential lighting requirements.

The General Plan Resources Management Element includes goals for achieving increased energy conservation use within the city through increasing the energy efficiency of buildings, appliances, and buildings, as well as encouragement for development and the use of alternative forms of energy. Current measures applied in the city include energy-conserving building standards, recycling, and transportation system improvements. The Resources Management Element also identifies energy conservation policies, including encouraging the use of innovative site and building orientation and landscaping to maximize energy efficiency, fuel efficiency standards, and encouraging development of alternative energy sources.

Discussion:

a. The project includes the GPZ to allow for a future manufacturing or industrial project and would not result in any immediate energy use. During construction of a future project, fossil fuels, electricity, and natural gas would be used by construction vehicles and equipment. The energy consumed during construction would be temporary in nature and would be typical of other similar construction activities in the county. Federal and state regulations in place require fuel-efficient equipment and vehicles and prohibit wasteful activities, such as diesel idling.

The future manufacturing or industrial project would be required to be designed and constructed in compliance with the CBC, which requires that the project achieves high energy efficiency, including, but not limited to, use of low-flow, energy-efficient appliances, light emitting diode (LED) lighting, insulation and building material standards, etc. Development on the site would rely on local electricity service provider 3CE, which would provide a 100% carbon-free energy mix by 2030, unless they choose to opt-out and be served by PG&E, which provides 50% renewable energy and 89% greenhouse gas (GHG)-free energy (Pacific Gas and Electric Company 2023). Development on the site would rely on SoCalGas as a service provider for natural gas, which is committed to replacing 20% of its traditional natural gas supply with renewable natural gas by 2030. Therefore, the future development project would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources and impacts would be *less than significant.*

b. Development on the project site to establish a future manufacturing or industrial project enabled by the GPZ will be required to be designed in full compliance with the CBC, including applicable green building standards. The proposed GPZ would not allow for the development of a project that could potentially result in a conflict with a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to energy; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with 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	

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 most recent 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 wastewater?				X
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		X		

Setting:

The proposed project is located within the Santa Maria Valley, an east–west trending alluvial valley bounded to the north by the San Rafael Range and to the south by the Casmalia Range and the Solomon Hills. The Santa Maria River traverses the valley from east to west, emptying into the Pacific Ocean just west of the town of Guadalupe. The Santa Maria River is formed by the convergence of the Cuyama and the Sisquoc Rivers at Fugler Point near Garey.

The Santa Maria basin is a significant hydrocarbon-producing (i.e., oil and gas) coastal (and off-shore) basin in California. The basin lies at the juncture between the north–west-trending southern Coast Range province and the east–west-trending Transverse Range province. The basin contains a relatively thick Miocene through Holocene age sequence of sedimentary rocks, some of which are prolific petroleum producing formations and others that are highly productive groundwater aquifers.

The Santa Maria Valley is located within a structural fold and thrust fault area; the axes of most of the structural elements in the region run northwest–southeast, parallel to the valley. The Santa Maria basin and adjacent southern Coast Ranges have been subjected to considerable uplift during the last 2 to 5 million years and are considered to be seismically active. Relatively little direct evidence of active faulting (such as offset of bedding or structures observed at a surface fault) has been observed in the region; however, broad bands of seismicity unrelated to surface faults and other evidence indicate the region is seismically active.

According to the City of Santa Maria General Plan Safety Element, several active, potentially active, and inactive faults exist within the basin and region, and generally trend north–west. The major faults include the Santa Maria, Santa Maria River, and Casmalia Faults. None of these faults qualify for Earthquake Fault Zone status as identified by the State Geologist under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones Act.

Based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2023), the project site is underlain by the following soil type:

- **Narlon sand hardpan variant, 2 to 9 percent slopes.** Narlon soils are light brownish gray and pale brown, medium and strongly acid, loamy sand.

Discussion:

a. i. Several active and potentially active faults exist within the region, including the Santa Maria and Casmalia Faults, located approximately 2.5 miles and 4.0 miles away from the project site, respectively. However, based on the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps and information available from the DOC, the city is not located within an identified Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Hazard Zone. Future development within the project site is subject to standard construction standards and the CBC to ensure buildings are constructed to withstand the magnitude of earthquakes that could potentially occur in that zone; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

ii. Seismic ground shaking is influenced by the proximity of the site to an earthquake fault, the intensity of the seismic event, and the underlying soil composition. The DOC Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Maps indicate that the entire Santa Maria Valley is located in a lower hazard area. Potential effects of seismic ground shaking on the future development of a manufacturing or industrial building enabled by the GPZ would be minimized through the implementation of the seismic requirements specified by the CBC and applicable City standards for earthquake-resistant construction; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

iii. According to the City's General Plan Safety Element, the project site does contain shallow perched groundwater. Development within the project site enabled by the proposed GPZ would be required to comply with CBC requirements and the City's building regulations to reduce risk associated with seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; therefore, potential impacts related to liquefaction *would be less than significant.*

iv. According to the City's General Plan Safety Element, the project site is not located within an area where landslide movements are anticipated to occur. The project site is generally flat and is not located near slopes that would be susceptible to landslides; therefore, the potential for impacts related to landslides would be *less than significant.*

b. According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service's Web Soil Survey, the primary soil type underlying the project site is Narlon sand hardpan variant, 2 to 9 percent slopes. A future construction phase activity enabled by the GPZ project may result in wind and water driven soil erosion and loss of topsoil if soil is stockpiled or exposed. Future development of the project site would be subject to the City's Landscape and Irrigation Standards to provide soil erosion control on-site. The future development would require preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would be administered through project construction. The SWPPP would be required to incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure that potential water quality impacts during construction from soil erosion would be reduced to *less than significant levels.* Therefore, impacts related to soil erosion and loss of topsoil would be *less than significant.*

c. The following analysis is based on the Safety Element in the City's General Plan (1995):

Liquefaction or collapse: The soil conditions present at the project site are not susceptible to liquefaction if substantial ground shaking events were to occur. Standard construction techniques would be employed during construction of a future project enabled by the GPZ to ensure no significant risk to human life would occur; therefore, impacts related to liquefaction would be *less than significant.*

Landslide: Landslides typically occur in areas with steep slopes or containing escarpments. Based on the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps and related information available from the DOC, Santa Maria is not located within a designated landslide hazard zone. According to the Safety Element, the project site is not located within an area where landslide movements are anticipated to occur; therefore, the potential for impacts related to landslides would be *less than significant.*

Lateral Spreading: The project site is not located within an area known to contain expansive soils. Additionally, all future building development enabled by the GPZ would be required to comply with the most recent CBC requirements, which would ensure protection of structures and occupants from seismic hazards, such as expansive soils; therefore, impacts related to seismic soils would be *less than significant.*

Subsidence: Santa Maria area has not had significant subsidence issues despite historical oil drilling in the area. Although subsidence could occur, it is perceived to be an insignificant risk due to the absence of reported incidences (City of Santa Maria 1995); therefore, impacts related to subsidence would be l*ess than significant.*

d. According to the Safety Element, the project site is not located within an area known to contain expansive soils. Additionally, all future development enabled by the GPZ would be required to comply with the most recent CBC requirements, which would ensure protection of structures and occupants from geologic hazards, such as expansive soils; therefore, impacts related to seismic soils would be *less than significant.*

e. The proposed future development project enabled by the GPZ would include installation of a new service connection to existing City's wastewater treatment facilities and would not include the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems; therefore, *no impacts would result from the use of an onsite septic system*.

f. While there are no unique geologic features on the project site, the site is underlain by Older Alluvium, which is considered to have high sensitivity for paleontological resources (Diblee 1994; U.S. Department of Transportation [DOT] 2004). Fossils that have been historically encountered in formations of this age include tidepool and rock-cliff mollusks and barnacles in marine deposits (Woodring et al. 1950). Based on the sensitivity of the underlying geologic formation, future development on-site enabled by the GPZ may have the potential to disturb previously unknown paleontological resources. Mitigation measure GEO-1 has been included to address inadvertent discovery protocol in order to reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources to less than significant; therefore, potential impacts are *less than significant with mitigation.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

GEO-1 **Inadvertent Discovery of Paleontological Resources.** Should any vertebrate fossils or potentially significant finds (e.g., numerous well-preserved invertebrate or plant fossils) be encountered during work on-site, all activities in the immediate vicinity of the find shall cease until a qualified paleontologist evaluates the find for its scientific value. If deemed significant, the paleontological resource(s) shall be salvaged and deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution where they will be properly curated and preserved. These actions would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measures: With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 potential impacts to paleontological resources would be avoided and impacts would be less than significant.

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	

Setting:

Regulatory Framework:

In response to climate change, California implemented Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the "California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006." AB 32 required the reduction of statewide GHG emissions to 1990 emissions levels (essentially a 15% reduction below 2005 emission levels) by 2020 and the adoption of rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions. On September 8, 2016, the Governor signed Senate Bill (SB) 32 into law, extending AB 32 by requiring the State to further reduce GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 (the other provisions of AB 32 remain unchanged). On December 14, 2017, the CARB adopted the 2017 Scoping Plan, which provides a framework for achieving the 2030 target. The 2017 Scoping Plan relies on the continuation and expansion of existing policies and regulations, such as the Cap-and-Trade Program and the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, and implementation of recently adopted policies and legislation, such as SB 1383 (aimed at reducing short-lived climate pollutants including methane, hydrofluorocarbon gases, and anthropogenic black carbon) and SB 100 (discussed further below). The 2017 Scoping Plan also puts an increased emphasis on innovation, adoption of existing technology, and strategic investment to support its strategies. As with the 2013 Scoping Plan Update, the 2017 Scoping Plan does not provide project-level thresholds for land use development. Instead, it recommends local governments adopt policies and locally-appropriate quantitative thresholds consistent with a statewide per capita goal of six metric tons (MT) of CO2e by 2030 and two MT of CO2e by 2050 (CARB 2017).

2022 Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan

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

Other relevant state laws and regulations include:

- **SB 375**: The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375), signed in August 2008, enhances the state's ability to reach AB 32 goals by directing the CARB to develop regional GHG emission reduction targets to be achieved from passenger vehicles by 2020 and 2035. Metropolitan Planning Organizations are required to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which allocates land uses in the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). On March 22, 2018, CARB adopted updated regional targets for reducing GHG emissions from 2005 levels by 2020 and 2035.
- **SB 100**: Adopted on September 10, 2018, SB 100 supports the reduction of GHG emissions from the electricity sector by accelerating the state's Renewables Portfolio Standard Program. SB 100 requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 % of total retail sales by 2020, 60% by 2030, and 100% by 2045.
- **California Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations Title 24)**: The California Building Standards Code (CBC) consists of a compilation of several distinct standards and codes related to building construction including plumbing, electrical, interior acoustics, energy efficiency, and handicap accessibility for persons with physical and sensory disabilities. The current iteration of the CBC is the 2022 Title 24 standards. Part 6 of the CBC is the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which establishes energy efficiency standards for residential and non-residential buildings in order to reduce California's energy demand. Part 11 of the CBC is the CALGreen, which includes mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up new construction of residential and non-residential structures.

SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS

SBCAG adopted its 2050 RTP/SCS (titled Connected 2050) in August 2021. This plan shows how the region will achieve the required SB 375 targets and demonstrates the co-benefits of reducing criteria pollutants. The 2050 RTP/SCS explores the region's land use and travel patterns, accounts for the demographic growth that will force new demands on both and presents a vision for how they can work together to satisfy the goals

important to the region while also meeting the State's greenhouse gas reduction targets. The 2050 RTP/SCS preferred scenario is a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)/Infill plan in that it strives to accommodate future growth within existing urban areas along transit corridors. The intent of these proposed changes is to shorten trip distances and reduce vehicle miles traveled and emissions by; directly addressing regional jobs/housing imbalance by providing more housing on the jobs-rich South Coast and more jobs in the North County; and promoting more trips, both local and inter-city, by alternative transportation modes, including by foot, bike, or transit. The 2050 RTP/SCS meets and exceeds the California Air Resources Board -17 percent per capita targets for reduction of GHG emissions from passenger vehicles for target year 2035 (SBCAG 2021).

Methodology:

Rincon Consultants, Inc. completed a greenhouse gas emissions study in August 2023 for the project which is attached to this document as Appendix A. The purpose of this analysis is to estimate the greenhouse gas emissions that would be emitted by the proposed project manufacturing or industrial project (up to 100,000 square feet of development) that would be enabled by the GPZ and compare the estimate to the SBCAPCD greenhouse gas regulations. The complete analysis is attached in the initial study within the appendix.

Discussion:

a-b. Construction and operational GHG emissions associated with the future project enabled by the GPZ were quantified using CalEEMod. Complete CalEEMod results and assumptions are provided in Appendix A. Calculations of N_2O, CH_4 and CO_2 emissions are provided to identify the magnitude of potential project effects. The analysis focuses on CO_2, CH_4 and N_2O because these make up 98.9 % of all GHG emissions by volume and are the GHG emissions that the project would emit in the largest quantities (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] 2014).

Future project construction would generate GHG emissions from the operation of heavy equipment, motor vehicles, and worker trips to and from the site. The Association of Environmental Professionals (2016) has recommended amortizing construction-related emissions over a 30-year period in conjunction with the proposed project's operational emissions since construction emissions occur for a limited period of a project's lifetime. As shown in Table 7, project construction would emit approximately 17 MT of CO_2e per year.

Table 7. Estimated GHG Emissions during Construction

Year	Annual Emissions (MT of CO_2e)
2025	309
2026	191
Total	500
Amortized over 30 years	**17**

MT = metric tons; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents
See Appendix A for modeling results.

In addition to future construction emissions, future project operation of a 100,000 square foot manufacturing or industrial project would generate GHG emissions from new vehicle trips, electricity and natural gas usage, area sources, and off-road equipment usage. The amortized emissions from construction were added to the operational emissions to determine the total combined annual emissions. Table 8 summarizes combined annual GHG emissions generated by project construction and operation based on the CalEEMod output files in Appendix A. The combined annual GHG emissions from the project would be approximately 365 MT of CO_2e per year.

Table 8. Estimated Project Construction and Operational GHG Emissions

Emission Source	Annual Emissions (MT of CO_2e per year)
Construction	17
Operational	348
Mobile	142
Area	1
Energy	149
Water	26
Waste	29
Total Emissions	365

MT = metric tons; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents

Notes: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

See Appendix A for modeling results.

The future proposed project operations enabled by the GPZ would include numerous energy and water efficiency measures, as required by CALGreen. Additionally, the SBCAG has incorporated a sustainable community strategy into its 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (Connected 2050 RTP/SCS), which is designed to help the region achieve its SB 375 GHG emissions reduction target. The Connected 2050 RTP/SCS includes strategies intended to increase jobs within the City of Santa Maria. The future project would increase employment within the city which would improve the City's jobs-housing ratio and therefore reduce vehicle emissions. The future project would also be required to comply with existing State regulations, which include increased energy conservation measures and other actions adopted to achieve the overall GHG emissions reduction goals identified in SB 32. Although there is no locally adopted GHG Reduction Plan to reduce emissions from new development, the future project would not conflict with any State regulations intended to reduce GHG emissions statewide and would be generally consistent with local plans and programs designed to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions; therefore, the project would have *less than significant impact* and mitigation is not necessary.

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	

Setting:

In the City of Santa Maria, the use and storage of hazardous materials is primarily regulated by the Uniform Fire Code. Transport of hazardous materials and waste on public streets is primarily regulated by the California Vehicle Code and the SMMC. Storage and disposal of hazardous wastes is primarily regulated by the Santa Barbara County Environmental Health Services Division (EHS) through their Hazardous Waste Generator Program as authorized by the State Health and Safety Code. Any business that stores hazardous materials in accordance with Article 80 of the Uniform Fire Code must provide either a hazardous materials inventory statement (HMIS) or a hazardous materials management plan (HMMP) to the Fire Chief of the City of Santa Maria and the County of Santa Barbara. In addition, the City of Santa Maria Fire Department and the County EHS require a Business Plan in accordance with State regulations for businesses that store and use hazardous waste (City of Santa Maria 1995).

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (Appendix C) was completed by Rincon Consultants, Inc. on August 22, 2023. The assessment meets the guidelines outlined in the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process (ASTM Standard E1527-21). Based on the findings of this Phase I ESA, it is Rincon Consultants, Inc. opinion that that no recognized environmental conditions (RECs), historical recognized environmental

conditions (HRECs), or controlled recognized environmental conditions (CRECs) were identified for the subject property. However, there are environmental concerns in connection with the subject property as follows:

- The subject property is located within the Santa Maria Airport Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Investigation site, but is outside of a one-mile radius of identified PFAS sources and impacts.
- An abandoned/remnant water well structure is located in the southeastern portion of the subject property.
- Historical use of the subject property as part of a military base and a golf course may be associated with unidentified subsurface debris and/or structures.
- The former Santa Maria oil field is located between 0.5 and 1.5 miles north and east of the subject property.

There is no evidence indicating that the subject property has been impacted by hazardous materials or petroleum products, no additional assessment is recommended. However, based on the notable findings above, Rincon recommends preparation of a soil management plan prior to activities that will disturb soil at the subject property. We also recommend proper abandonment of the water well structure observed in the southeastern portion of the subject property.

Discussion:

a. Future development of the project site enabled by the GPZ would include the temporary use and storage of limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc. during construction. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws. Additionally, the construction contractor would be required to implement BMPs for the storage, use, and transportation of hazardous materials during all construction activities. During operation it is not anticipated that the warehouse would store or handle fuels or hazardous materials. The project would not involve the routine transport of hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts related to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be *less than significant*.

b. Construction of a proposed project enabled by the GPZ would require the use of some hazardous materials such as fuels, oils, paints, solvents, and glues. All potentially hazardous materials used during construction of the proposed project would be handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturers' specifications and applicable regulations.

   The project site contains an abandoned/remnant water well structure located in the southeastern portion of the subject property as identified by Rincon Consultants, Inc. during completion of the Phase I ESA. The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment recommendation is to properly abandon the water well structure. Additionally, mitigation shall be required to minimize oil facility health risks during construction in accordance with CalGem standards if any oil well is inadvertently discovered.

   Historical use of the subject property as part of a military base and a golf course may be associated with unidentified subsurface debris and/or structures. A soil management plan shall be submitted prior to future development of an industrial or manufacturing building that would be enabled by this GPZ. *Therefore, the impacts to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.*

c. No existing or proposed schools are located within a quarter mile of the proposed project. Construction of a future industrial or manufacturing project enabled by the GPZ would include the temporary use and storage of limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc. during construction. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws. Additionally, the construction contractor would be required to implement BMPs for the storage, use, and transportation of hazardous materials during all construction activities. During operation it is not anticipated that the future industrial or manufacturing development enabled by the GPZ would store or handle fuels or hazardous materials. The project would not involve the routine transport of hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts related to hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous materials, substances or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school would be *less than significant*.

d. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires various state agencies to compile lists of hazardous waste disposal facilities, unauthorized release from underground storage tanks, contaminated drinking water wells and solid waste facilities from which there is known migration of hazardous waste and submit such information to the Secretary for Environmental Protection on at least an annual basis. As discussed above, the project site does not contain a hazardous waste disposal facility, a known underground storage tank, a contaminated drinking water well or a solid waste facility from which there is known migration of hazardous waste. The proposed zoning and development of a future industrial or manufacturing use would not create any conditions that would lead to the project location being listed as a hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, *no impacts* related to significant hazards to the public or the environment from hazardous materials pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 would occur.

e. There are no private airstrips within or in the vicinity of the project site. The project site is located within the airport property boundary along the northern edge. Based on the Santa Maria Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Santa Barbara County 2023), the project site would not be located within the airport's noise contours, therefore no specific noise mitigation related to airport related noise is necessary. The site is located in Zone 3 of the airport safety zones, and within airport influence area review 1. A future industrial or manufacturing building enabled by the project would be limited in height to the requirements of the M-1 zone as well as 14 CFR Part 77.

   Given the project location is within Zone 3, the Santa Maria Airport Safety Compatibility Criteria (Table 3-2) listed in the Santa Maria Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan would apply to a future industrial or manufacturing project enabled by the GPZ. Limited industrial is a compatible use based upon Table 3-2, and manufacturing is conditionally compatible. The maximum intensity of people/acre allowed is 150 and the maximum lot coverage is 60% for all conditionally compatible industrial, manufacturing and warehouse uses. The Santa Maria Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan provides example calculations in Appendix E to determine the concentration of people for a project. One example calculation recommends using the City's Parking Ordinance (Section 12-32.03) and the spaces required. Staff utilized the manufacturing parking demand of one space per 520 square feet of gross area and assumed 1.5 people occupy a car. A future 100,000 square-foot manufacturing development enabled by the GPZ would require 192 parking spaces. 288 people represent the maximum concentration of people at the site. Over the 6.95-acre project area that equates to 42 people per acre. This concentration of people per acre is well under the maximum number allowed of 150. The future development would also be limited in size to 60% of the site as also required by Table 3-2. Therefore, impacts related to a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area would be *less than significant.*

f. The proposed project does not include any characteristics or features that would interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The project would not result in the closure of any roads. Development of the project site would utilize new access driveways that would be developed in compliance with local and state safety regulations. All access improvements would be required to comply with applicable CBC and California Fire Code requirements pertaining to emergency access. Therefore, impacts related to interference with an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan would be *less than significant.*

g. The project site is surrounded by industrial development. The project site is not located adjacent to a wildland fire area. Based on the Safety Element, the most significant wildland fire hazards for development within the city are associated with the coastal sage scrub and grass-covered slopes in the Casmalia and Solomon Hills south of the city. The project site is located approximately 11 miles north of these areas and is located within a heavily urbanized area; therefore, impacts related to wildland fires would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

HAZ-1 Stop Work Procedure. If during construction of a future project enabled by the GPZ, visual contamination or chemical odors are detected, work will be stopped immediately and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department Hazardous Materials Unit (HMU) will be contacted. Resumption of work will require the approval of HMU. In the event that previously unknown oil or gas wells and/or associated equipment is discovered, CalGEM shall be contacted immediately to assess the equipment. Recommendations of CalGEM to address the discovered equipment shall be implemented. At minimum CalGEM shall be notified regarding the oil well identified on the CalGEM GIS website.

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or 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- or off-site;			X	
ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;			X	
iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or			X	
iv. 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	

Setting:

The proposed project would enable the future construction of a 100,000 square-foot industrial or manufacturing building that would require on-site grading, which could result in the erosion of onsite soils and sedimentation during heavy wind or rain events. The future construction would be required to comply with all local, state, and federal requirements, including a state Construction General Permit, which requires the preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP would include BMPs to control the discharge of pollutants, including sediment from erosion, into local surface water drainages. The construction project would further be required to comply with the adopted standards contained within the City of Santa Maria's Municipal Code, Section 8-12 (wastewater) and 8-12A (stormwater). Section 8-12A.04 also incorporates the Post-

Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast Region (Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Resolution No. R3-2013-0032). By incorporating these design provisions and permit review and procedures by the City, the future project enabled by the GPZ would not violate water quality standards and waste discharge requirements.

The project site is located within the Santa Maria Watershed, one of the largest coastal drainage basins in California, and includes all areas tributary to the Cuyama, Siquoc, and Santa Maria Rivers. The Santa Maria Watershed overlies the Santa Maria Valley Groundwater Basin, covering more than 280 square miles in the southwestern corner of San Luis Obispo County and the northwestern corner of Santa Barbara County. Historically, the City pumped water from the Santa Maria Valley Groundwater Basin as its sole water supply until the City began receiving State Water Project (SWP) water from the Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) in 1997. The Santa Maria Valley Groundwater Basin is currently under a 2008 court-ordered stipulation that allows the City to derive its water supply from local groundwater, associated return flows from imported SWP water that may be recaptured in the basin, and a share of the yield of Twitchell Reservoir operations.

The stipulation divided the Santa Maria Valley Groundwater Basin into three management areas, the largest being the Santa Maria Valley Management Area (SMVMA), which overlies the city. Since the late 1960s, the basin has alternately experienced significant recharge (recovery) and decline, which, collectively, reflect a general long-term stability as groundwater levels in both aquifer zones have fluctuated between historical-low and near historical-high levels over alternating 5- to 15-year periods. Groundwater levels throughout the SMVMA have shown this trend, but with different ranges of fluctuation and groundwater levels have repeatedly recovered to near or above previous historical-high levels, most recently in 2002 (Luhdorff and Scalmaninin Consulting Engineers 2018).

The provisions of the 2008 court-ordered stipulation require that an annual assessment be prepared for the Santa Maria Valley Management Area. According to the 2017 Annual Report (Luhdorff and Scalmaninin Consulting Engineers 2018), the conditions in the SMVMA do not satisfy all the criteria delineated in the Stipulation for defining a severe water shortage as a result, it was concluded that there is no finding of severe water shortage conditions in the SMVMA in 2017.

In 2016, groundwater resource planning and data reporting requirements under the California Department of Water Resource (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management Program (SGMA) commenced. Since the SMVMA is part of an adjudicated basin, the DWR considers it already managed by the court and, thus, SGMA groundwater resource planning requirements do not apply (Luhdorff and Scalmaninin Consulting Engineers 2018).

The closest body of water to the project site is the Santa Maria River, located approximately 5 miles northeast of the project site. According to the National Wetlands Inventory from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services, the project side is adjacent to freshwater emergent wetland and riverine area. Based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) Viewer, the project site is not located within a 100-year floodplain. Based on the DOC Santa Barbara County Tsunami Inundation Maps, the project site is not located within an area with the potential for tsunami inundation.

Discussion:

a. Development of a future industrial or manufacturing project enabled by the GPZ would be required to comply with all federal, state, and local requirements, including a state Construction General Permit, which requires the preparation of a SWPPP. The SWPPP would include BMPs to control the discharge of pollutants, including sediment from erosion, into local surface water drainages. Future development of the industrial or manufacturing project would also be required to comply with the adopted standards contained within the City's Municipal Code, Section 8-12 (wastewater) and 8-12A (stormwater). Section 8-12 incorporates the Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast Region (Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board [RWQCB] Resolution No. R3-2013-0032). By incorporating these design provisions and permit review and approval procedures by the City, the future industrial or manufacturing project would not violate water quality standards and waste discharge requirements, and *impacts would be less than significant.*

b. Future uses of industrial or manufacturing on-site enabled by the GPZ would require new connections to the City's water services. The City utilizes the following available water supply sources: local groundwater, purchased water from the SWP, associated return flows recaptured from the SMGB,

assigned rights to water from the SMGB, and assigned rights to augmented yield from Twitchell Reservoir. The City's water supply is expected to reliably meet the projected city water demands and have an available supply in excess through 2040, with the majority of this demand being met by imported state water (City of Santa Maria 2016). Based on the type of potential future development to be allowed onsite, such as development of a industrial or manufacturing use, and the sources of future water supply, the project would not result in a substantial decrease of groundwater supplies or substantial interference with groundwater recharge, and impacts would be *less than significant.*

c. i-iv. The future industrial or manufacturing project enabled by the GPZ would be required to provide landscaped open area to address infiltration and water quality requirements. By incorporating these design provisions, and permit review and procedures by the City, the project would not violate water quality standards and waste discharge requirements. Based on the FEMA NFHL Viewer, the project site is not located within a 100-year floodplain. However, the project site is adjacent to a County of Santa Barbara flood control channel. A future site plan for the industrial or manufacturing development enabled by the GPZ shall be designed to consider the easements and avoid any encroachment into the adjacent flood control channel. Therefore, the project would not have the potential to result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site, create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, or impede or redirect flood flows; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

d. In 2017, the City of Santa Maria prepared a Hazard Mitigation Plan (an annex to the Santa Barbara County Operational Area Hazard Mitigation Plan) which describes specific hazard prevention measures and floodplain development requirements for projects that could be subject to flooding. Principally, the Santa Maria River levee, built by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, has been designed to protect the city from a "100-year" flood event. Further, all potential development occurring within a floodplain would be required to follow an established development review process and may be subject to additional federal, state, and local review and permits as required by the Floodplain Administrator and the Santa Maria Municipal Code. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) indicates that the project area is located entirely within an area of minimal flood hazard. No potential impacts from flood hazards are expected.

   Twitchell Dam is the closest potential source of dam inundation in the City of Santa Maria, located approximately 9 miles northeast of the project site. The dam was constructed by the Bureau of Reclamation in 1958 and is primarily used for groundwater recharge and flood control. Twitchell Dam is not used for perennial water storage. In the event of dam or levee failure, a significant portion of the city would be inundated by flooding. However, the probability of total dam failure and levee failure is remote, and the dam only periodically holds water and is not a reservoir. Therefore, potential impacts from dam failure are considered to be *less than significant*.

   The project site is approximately 10 miles east from the Pacific Ocean and would not be at risk of inundation by a tsunami. There are no bodies of water in the vicinity of the project site that are large enough to produce a seiche and the project site is not located in an area prone to landslides, mud slides, soil slips, or slumps; therefore, *impacts would be less than significant*.

e. As discussed in the threshold analysis above, the project would not deplete groundwater supplies, or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. A future industrial or manufacturing project shall be required to include stormwater treatment and storage facilities and would not conflict with the Central Coastal Basin Plan, or other water quality control plans. The project would not conflict with SGMA, or other local or regional plans or policies intended to manage water quality or groundwater supplies; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to hydrology or water quality; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	

Setting:

The project site is currently undeveloped and is bordered to the north, south and west by a flood control channel regulated by Santa Barbara County. Beyond the flood control channel to the north is a business park used by VTC Enterprises. Further to the south of the flood control channel is open space area adjacent to the Santa Maria Public Airport runway. To the west of the flood control channel is more open space that is also adjacent to the Santa Maria Public Airport runway. To the east of the site across A Street is a business park with various industrial, warehouse and manufacturing uses.

The project site has an A-AS general plan land use designation and OS zoning designation. The purpose of the A-AS general plan designation is to provide a broad category facilitating the airport and airport-related commercial and industrial uses not adversely affected by airport operations, to provide for specific areas for aircraft operation and navigation aids, and to minimize the hazard to safe landing and take-off of aircraft. Typical uses within the A-AS general plan designation include a full range of uses, including airport operation and support activities.

Discussion:

a. The project does not propose project elements or components that would physically divide the site from surrounding areas and uses because the project site already is separated from the adjacent airport by a drainage channel. The project would allow for the development of a future industrial or manufacturing use and would not conflict with the surrounding industrial development adjacent to the project site. The project has been reviewed for compatibility with surrounding uses and would not create, close or impede any existing public or private roads, or create any other barriers to movement or accessibility within the community. Therefore, the proposed project would not physically divide an established community and would have *no impact.*

b. The project proposes to change the current land use designation from A-AS to LI, and the current zoning from OS to PD/M-1. This change would allow a range of light industrial and design research facilities, including manufacturing within a parcel where previously only open space uses were allowed. Examples of potential industrial land uses that could be established at the site include scientific research labs, warehousing/wholesaling, light assembly or other uses permitted under the proposed LI general plan designation. While the project site is currently zoned for open space uses including natural resource preservation and outdoor recreation, the surrounding development has already established industrial zoning and development of a similar intensity to the proposed project's concept. Therefore, introducing a new industrial use on the project site would not conflict with surrounding land uses in the project vicinity.

   The proposed changes have been reviewed for consistency with the Airport's Master Plan, Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and Airport Specific Plan and no conflicts would be created from the project. The future development of the site would require a Planned Development permit reviewed by

the Planning Commission reviewed for conformance with City development standards and policies and procedures. No future Planned Development project would be approved by the Planning Commission and introduced into the project area that is contrary to the City's Zoning Code and General Plan. The future industrial or manufacturing project would undergo review for consistency with the proposed LI general plan designation and PD/M-1 zoning standards, as well as the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and shall not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding compatibility issues or mitigating environmental effects. *Impacts would be less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to land use or planning; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

12. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?			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	

Setting:

Santa Maria's primary mineral resources are sand, rock, and oil. The Santa Maria River channel is considered to be a valuable mineral resource. The river contains the largest resources of Portland Cement Concrete-grade aggregate and almost 90% of the available alluvial sand and gravel resources in the Santa Barbara/San Luis Obispo County region. The Santa Maria Basin is also a significant hydrocarbon (i.e., oil and gas) producing basin in California, historically allowing for the development of the oil industry throughout the region. Many of the areas oil wells have since been capped and abandoned due to the development and urbanization of the city. Based on the General Plan Resources Management Element, the project site is located within the City's area where the significance of mineral deposits cannot be evaluated from available data. (City of Santa Maria 2001). A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (Appendix C) was completed by Rincon Consultants, Inc. on August 22, 2023, and an abandoned/remnant well structure was identified during a site inspection in the southeastern portion of the project site.

Discussion:

a-b. The project parcel is located in an urban area of Santa Maria. The California Department of Conservation Well Finder (CalGEM GIS) confirms that there are no active oil wells within the project site. The potential for impacts to occur to mineral resources is insignificant considering the project site is located within a developed area of the City and is not a conducive location for mineral resource extraction or mining. Therefore, the impact on known mineral resources of value to the region and to residents of the state or 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 would be *less than significant.* The area within the project vicinity has been entirely built out with urban and airport uses within.

Therefore, the potential for future mining uses at the site is very low and potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to mineral resources; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

13. NOISE

Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels 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	

Setting:

Community noise levels are typically measured in terms of A-weighted decibels (dBA). A-weighting is a frequency correction that correlates overall sound pressure levels with the frequency response of the human ear. Equivalent noise level (L_{eq}) is the average noise level on an energy basis for a specific time period. The duration of noise and the time of day at which it occurs are important factors in determining the impact of noise on communities. The CNEL and Day-Night Average Level (L_{dn}) account for the time of day and duration of noise generation. These indices are time-weighted average values equal to the amount of acoustic energy equivalent to a time-varying sound over a 24-hour period. The Noise Element includes noise compatibility standards for noise exposure by land use, including interior and exterior noise standards.

Table 9. Interior and Exterior Noise Standards

Land Use Categories		Standard dB CNEL	
Category	**Uses**	**Interior**	**Exterior**
Residential	Single Family, Duplex, Multiple Family, Mobile Home	45	60
Noise-Sensitive Land Uses	Motel, Hospital, School, Nursing Home, Church, Library, and Other	45	60
Commercial	Retail, Restaurant, Professional Offices	55	65

Land Use Categories		Standard dB CNEL	
Category	**Uses**	**Interior**	**Exterior**
Industrial	Manufacturing, Utilities, Warehousing, Agriculture	65	70
Open Space	Passive Outdoor Recreation	--	65

Source: City of Santa Maria General Plan Noise Element, Table N-4.

The nearest sensitive receptors are single-family homes approximately 2,170 feet north of the project site and single-family homes approximately 3,340 feet east of the project site.

Discussion:

a. The project site is currently undeveloped and is bordered to the north, south and west by a flood control channel regulated by Santa Barbara County. Beyond the flood control channel to the north is a business park used by VTC Enterprises. Further to the south of the flood control channel is open space area adjacent to the Santa Maria Public Airport runway. To the west of the flood control channel is more open space that is also adjacent to the Santa Maria Public Airport runway. To the east of the site across A Street is a business park with various industrial, warehouse and manufacturing uses.

Proposed construction activities onsite and associated construction-related noise would be temporary but will take place adjacent to industrial areas and support offices and therefore would have the potential to exceed City exterior noise thresholds. In accordance with the General Plan Noise Element, during any future development within the project parcel, construction activity shall be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No construction shall occur on Sundays or federal or state holidays. Construction equipment maintenance shall be limited to the same hours. With adherence to City these construction work hours, and with the implementation mitigation measure NOI-1, which includes noise control for construction related tools and equipment , and requirements for proper maintenance of all equipment, unnecessary temporary increased noise levels can be reduced to *less than significant with mitigation.*

Following construction, future development uses would not result in a significantly noticeable increase over existing vehicle noise in the area. The project site is surrounded by some noise generating uses such as industrial development. However, the industrial development likely under the proposed M-1 zone designation is not heavy in nature but would likely be a light industrial type of use. The daily operations do not include noisy elements that generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels. Therefore, impacts related to generation of permanent operational noise levels in excess of standards established in local plans would be *less than significant.*

b. Potential future development of the project parcel would include the construction of an industrial or manufacturing building and installation of new utility connections. The future development of the site will not include pile driving or other high impact activities that would generate substantial groundborne noise or groundborne vibration during construction. Heavy equipment used during construction would generate groundborne noise and vibration, but these activities would be limited in duration and consistent with other standard construction activities. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

c. There are no private airstrips within or in the vicinity of the project site. The project site is located within the airport property boundary along the northern edge. Based on the Santa Maria Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Santa Barbara County 2023), the project site would not be located within the airport's noise contours. Therefore, no specific noise mitigation related to airport related noise is necessary, and impacts associated with future development of an industrial or manufacturing use and the project workers or occupants exposure to excessive noise levels from aircraft would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

NOI-1 The applicant shall implement the following measures during construction of the project:

- **Mufflers.** Construction equipment shall be properly maintained and all internal combustion engine driven machinery with intake and exhaust mufflers and engine shrouds, as applicable, shall be in good condition and appropriate for the equipment. During construction, all equipment, fixed or mobile, shall be operated with closed engine doors and shall be equipped with properly operating and maintained mufflers, consistent with manufacturers' standards.
- **Electrical Power.** Electrical power, rather than diesel equipment, shall be used to run compressors and similar power tools and to power any temporary structures, such as construction trailers or caretaker facilities.
- **Equipment Staging.** All stationary equipment shall be staged as far away from the adjacent offices as feasible.
- **Equipment Idling.** Construction vehicles and equipment shall not be left idling for longer than five minutes when not in use.
- **Workers' Radios.** All noise from workers' radios shall be controlled to a point that they are not audible at the adjacent offices near construction activity.
- **Smart Back-up Alarms.** Mobile construction equipment shall have smart back-up alarms that automatically adjust the sound level of the alarm in response to ambient noise levels. Alternatively, back-up alarms shall be disabled and replaced with human spotters to ensure safety when mobile construction equipment is moving in the reverse direction.
- **Disturbance Coordinator.** The applicant shall designate a disturbance coordinator who shall be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The noise disturbance coordinator shall determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and shall require that reasonable measures warranted to correct the problem be implemented. A telephone number for the disturbance coordinator shall be conspicuously posted at the construction site.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measures: Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 and NOI-2 would reduce overall noise levels from construction activity and would reduce residual impacts to less than significant.

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

Setting:

Santa Maria consistently has been the fastest growing city in Santa Barbara County over the last two decades. From Census 2000 to Census 2010, 90% of the county's population growth occurred in the City of Santa Maria. It is anticipated that this trend will continue throughout the current decade as Santa Maria continues to be the hub for Northern Santa Barbara County.

Discussion:

a. The project includes the GPZ to allow for the construction of an industrial or manufacturing use that would be permitted or conditionally permitted under the proposed PD/M-1 zoning designation. The future industrial or manufacturing project estimated to add approximately 38 new employees which would not induce substantial unplanned population growth and would not result in the need for development of new housing. Lastly, future development of the project site would not result in the extension of roads or other infrastructure to a previously undeveloped area. Therefore, the project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth and impacts would be *less than significant.*

b. The project site is undeveloped, and no housing currently exists on the site. Therefore, the project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing. *No impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to population or housing; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES

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

Setting:

Fire and police protection services are provided by the city. The city is served by six fire stations, where emergency services, public education programs, fire prevention, and life safety services are provided to the city's residents by the Santa Maria City Fire Department (SMFD). The Santa Maria Police Department (SMPD) provides law enforcement services for the city. SMPD provides a full range of professional police services, including civil order, preventative patrol, investigations, traffic control and enforcement, criminalistics, crime prevention, drug enforcement and drug abuse prevention. The city's elementary and junior high schools are within the Santa Maria-Bonita School District, and the city's high schools are within the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District.

Discussion:

a. i. Future development of the project site with industrial or manufacturing uses enabled by the GPZ would be served by the SMFD. The nearest fire station is Fire Station #6, located at 3339 Terminal Drive, approximately 1.50 miles southeast of the project site. The proposed change in general plan designation and zoning to LI and PD/M-1 would not substantially increase demand on fire services. Any future development permit applications submitted for development on the project site would be reviewed by the SMFD for conformance with applicable regulations and standards. Development impact fees would be collected at the time of approval of development permits for the provision of capital facilities for fire services. No new or physically altered public service facilities or personnel would be required as a result of the proposed project; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

ii. Future development of the project site of industrial or manufacturing uses enabled by the GPZ would be served by the SMPD, located at 1111 West Betteravia Road, approximately 0.80 miles northeast of the project site. Any future development at the project site would not propose a new use or activity that would require additional police services above what is normally provided for similar surrounding industrial and manufacturing uses. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

iii. The project site is located within the Santa Maria-Bonita and Santa Maria Joint Union High School Districts. Under the proposed PD/M-1 zoning, future development on the project site would be for an industrial or manufacturing use up to 100,000 square-feet in size. The future development is estimated to add approximately 38 new employees. Project employees would likely be drawn from the existing labor pool in the region who are not anticipated to relocate to the city. However, the analysis conservatively assumes that all 38 new employees would become new households; therefore, based on the Department of Finance persons per household estimate in Santa Maria, the project would add 138 new residents. The number of school aged residents potentially introduced to the area by the future development can be adequately serviced by the existing school facilities. Therefore, the project would not result in a need for new or physically altered school facilities, and impacts would be *less than significant.*

iv. The City's recreation system is comprised of several local parks and recreational facilities. The nearest public park to the project site is Marilyn Stanly, located approximately 1.20 miles to the east. Future development of the site into an industrial or manufacturing project enabled by the GPZ would not result in an increased demand on existing park facilities in the vicinity and would not result in the need for new or physically altered park facilities; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

v. As discussed above, the proposed future development project would be subject to applicable fees to offset negligible increased demands on public facilities; therefore, impacts related to other public facilities would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to public services; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

16. RECREATION

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			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	

Setting:

The City's recreation system is comprised of several local parks and recreational facilities, which are managed by the City Department of Recreation and Parks. The department operates 234 acres of developed parkland in 27 neighborhood and community parks.

Discussion:

a-b. The City's recreation system is comprised of several local parks and recreational facilities. Future development of an industrial or manufacturing use enabled by the GPZ would not result in increased usage of existing park facilities in the vicinity to the point that would result in the need for new or physically altered park facilities. The proposed project and future development would not significantly increase use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. Future development of the project site would include a industrial or manufacturing use that does not include, and would not require development or expansion of existing recreational facilities; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to recreation; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

17. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?			X	
b. 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

Setting:

The CEQA Guidelines use Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the basis for determining significant impacts unless the Guidelines provide specific exceptions. Based on the City of Santa Maria's adopted VMT Thresholds, transportation impacts are considered significant if the proposed project would result in a VMT per capita or office VMT per employee above 85% of the countywide average, consistent with technical guidance published by the Office of Planning and Research (OPR). OPR's Technical Advisory lists the following screening thresholds for land use projects. These types of development projects are presumed to have a less than significant impact on VMT and therefore, a less than significant adverse impact on transportation. OPR's Technical Advisory suggests that lead agencies may screen out VMT impacts using project size, maps, transit accessibility, and provision of affordable housing. The City's Environmental Procedures include screening criteria consistent with OPR and are as follows:

- A discretionary retail development project that is 50,000 square feet or less. Does not apply to regional shopping centers that predominately serve customers that live outside of the City limits.
- Affordable housing projects where a minimum of 20 percent of the units are deed restricted for low or very low income residents.
- Small discretionary development projects that would generate or attract fewer than 110 daily trips (per CEQA). Examples include a project with 11 or fewer single family residential units, 20 or fewer multi-family units, or an office of 6,800 square feet or less.

- Residential and non-residential land uses located in the green Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) areas of the Countywide Average Home-Based VMT per Capita and per Employee Maps are expected to generate VMT at 85 percent or less of the baseline average rate and are presumed to have less than significant VMT impacts.
- Infrastructure projects

The City of Santa Maria's adopted threshold is 85% of the existing countywide baseline VMT per capita, as calculated within the City of Santa Maria for non-residential uses. The City threshold based on 85% of the countywide average would be 9.41 VMT (one-way trip). The applicant has provided a transportation impact study titled A Street at Fairway General Plan Amendment and Rezone (Study) completed by Central Coast Transportation Consulting in September 2023 which is summarized below. The complete Study is attached to this document in the appendices (Appendix D).

Discussion:

a-b. The project includes a GPZ to allow for the future development of an industrial or manufacturing use permitted under the proposed M-1 zone district. The project applicant has provided a project description for the future development of a industrial or manufacturing use and estimates the maximum square footage would be up to 100,000. The VMT analysis addresses the project by applying the Technical Memo for VMT Thresholds and Procedures in the City of Santa Maria which divides the city into Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) and illustrates the mean VMT per employee for each TAZ. The project area is mapped showing that VMT per employee is less than or equal to 85 percent of the area-wide average. Therefore, the anticipated development facilitated by this GPZ project has been prescreened and is not expected to have a significant impact on VMT.

The City is required to review projects for policy consistency with the City's General Plan Circulation Element to determine if the additional traffic generated by the project will result in a delay in intersection operations or excessive queuing into adjacent upstream intersections. This analysis uses a Level of Service (LOS) metric, which is a different analysis than the VMT analysis used to determine a potential environmental impact under CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b). If an intersection or roadway segment deteriorates to a LOS "E" or worse as a result of the project, the project will need to improve the operational deficiency to maintain roadway operations at a LOS "D" or better. This is required on a case-by-case basis as determined by the City and the operational implications of projects shall be reviewed through the submittal of a Local Traffic Study specific to the individual project. Since the LOS analysis and improvements are distinct from the VMT metric identified by the CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b), as 'the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts', actions necessary to correct the operational deficiencies may be addressed through the City's project entitlement process as conditions of approval and not as CEQA impacts. The project's traffic and circulation analyzed the following intersections: A Street/Betteravia Road (Traffic Signal), A Street/McCoy Lane (Stop Controlled) and the Skyway Drive/Fairway Drive (Traffic Signal). The study determined that with the additional trips generated by the project, including cumulative levels of traffic with existing surrounding development, that the area intersections would operate at or above LOS D for the a.m. and p.m. peak hours, which is an acceptable LOS. This determination is based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 11th edition trip rates for manufacturing. *Therefore, the project does not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and impacts would be less than significant.*

c. The project would be developed on an existing parcel and would not alter or affect existing street and intersection networks. The project would be required to comply with City design standards for vehicular access and circulation, including construction and remediation haul trips, and the current Fire Code. A future industrial or manufacturing development shall be required to meet City standards as a requirement of the future conditions of approval of a PD permit. Compliance with these standards would prevent hazardous design features and would ensure adequate and safe site access and circulation. The project would not introduce incompatible uses, including vehicles or equipment, to the site or the surrounding area. There would be *no impact*.

d. Access to the future industrial or manufacturing project enabled by the GPZ would be provided from A Street. The future project would be required to comply with all building, fire, and safety codes and development plans would be subject to review and approval by the City's Municipal Code. Required review by these departments would ensure the circulation system for the project site would provide adequate emergency access. In addition, the proposed project would not require temporary or permanent closures to roadways and would result in *no impacts*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to transportation; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place or cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or		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, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.		X		

Setting:

Approved in 2014, AB 52 added tribal cultural resources to the categories of resources that must be evaluated under CEQA. Tribal cultural resources are defined as either of the following:

1) Sites, features, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
    a) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR; or
    b) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k).
2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in PRC Section 5024.1(c). In applying these criteria for the

purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

Recognizing that tribes have expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, AB 52 requires lead agencies to provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if they have requested notice of projects proposed within that area. If the tribe requests consultation within 30 days upon receipt of the notice, the lead agency must consult with the tribe regarding the potential for adverse impacts on tribal cultural resources as a result of a project. Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the presence and/or significance of tribal cultural resources, the level of significance of a project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources, and available project alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe to avoid or lessen potential impacts on tribal cultural resources.

Passed in 2004, Senate Bill (SB) 18 requires cities and counties to consult with Native American tribes to help protect traditional tribal cultural places as part of a general plan adoption or amendment. Unlike AB 52, SB 18 is not an amendment to, or otherwise associated with, CEQA. Instead, SB 18 requires that, prior to the adoption or amendment of a city or county's general plan, the city or county must conduct consultations with California Native American tribes for the purpose of preserving specified places, features, and objects that are located within the city or county's jurisdiction. Under SB 18, cities and counties must notify the appropriate Native American tribe(s) of intended adoption or amendments to general plans and offer the opportunity for the tribe(s) to consult regarding traditional tribal cultural places within the proposed plan area.

The City sent letters to the local Native American contacts identified by the NAHC on December 27, 2023. The City did not receive any requests for consultation from local tribes regarding the proposed project.

Discussion:

a-b. The project site does not contain any known tribal cultural resources that have been listed, or are eligible for listing, in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k). The potential for the existence of buried archaeological materials within the project area is considered low based on the historic physical setting and extent of previous disturbance. In addition, the City provided notification to local tribes regarding the proposed project and received no requests for consultation. Despite the low sensitivity of the site, discovery of unknown subsurface resources during future earthmoving activities associated with future development of the project site is always a possibility. Unknown significant subsurface resources, as described in Section 5, Cultural Resources, would be considered significant tribal cultural resources, as well. Standard mitigation has been proposed to ensure impacts to any unknown resources that may be encountered during project development would be avoided and/or minimized; therefore, potential project impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

TCR-1 Inadvertent Discovery of Tribal Cultural Resource. In the event that a potentially significant tribal cultural resource is encountered during subsurface earthwork activities, all construction activities within a 100-foot radius of the find shall cease and the City shall be notified immediately. Work shall not continue until a qualified archaeologist, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary, determines whether the uncovered resource requires further study. Any previously unidentified resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance in terms of CEQA criteria by a qualified archaeologist. Potentially significant cultural resources consist of, but are not limited to, stone, bone, glass, ceramic, wood, or shell artifacts; fossils; or features including hearths, structural remains, or historic dumpsites.

If the resource is determined significant under CEQA, the qualified archaeologist shall prepare and implement a research design and archaeological data recovery plan, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary that will capture those categories of data for which the site is significant. The archaeologist shall also perform appropriate technical analysis, prepare a comprehensive report, and file it with the CCIC, located at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and provide for the permanent curation of the recovered materials.

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	

Setting:

The City operates its own wastewater collection and treatment system. The City's wastewater collection system consists of eight wastewater basins with associated trunk sewers and one treatment plant. The Department of Utilities is responsible for delivering water, treating wastewater, refuse collection, recycling, operating the Santa Maria Regional Landfill and its Household Hazardous Waste Facility, street sweeping, and regulatory compliance. The Water Resources Operation and Maintenance Section is responsible for supplying residents with potable water for domestic, industrial, and fire protection purposes. Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Services consist of six distinct areas: refuse collection/residential, refuse collection/commercial, landfill disposal operations, street sweeping, recycling operations, and regulatory compliance. PG&E is the primary electricity provider and SoCalGas is the primary natural gas provider for the city.

Discussion:

a. The project site is located in a fully urbanized area with existing utility infrastructure in place. The City provides water, wastewater treatment, and solid waste services to the City of Santa Maria. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) provides electricity to the project site. Additionally, natural gas on the project site would be provided by the Southern California Gas Company (SoCal Gas), and the City has access to multiple telecommunications providers including Verizon, T-Mobile, AT&T, etc. that would provide service.

The existing infrastructure noted above has adequate capacity to support the proposed project. Therefore, no additional facilities would be required as a result of project implementation and this impact would be *less than significant*.

b. The City's 2015 Utility Capacity Study provides zoning demand factors for estimated water usage. The site's existing OS Zone designation was estimated to use 1,500 gallons per day per acre (gpd/acre) and the proposed M-1 zone designation was estimated to use 1,100 gpd/acre. Additionally, according to the City's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), the City's water supply would meet projected water demands through 2045 (City of Santa Maria 2020). Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

c. The City Utilities Department owns and operates the wastewater system for the City of Santa Maria. Currently, the City disposes of all of its treated wastewater through percolation ponds under its Waste Discharge Requirements permit. The City's wastewater treatment plant was expanded in 2009 and has a current capacity of 13.5 million gallons per day, allowing the City to serve a population of up to 120,000 people. The future light industrial manufacturing project enabled by the GPZ is not expected to trigger impacts to the capacity constrained sewer segments identified in the 2012 Utilities Study. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

d-e. The City currently disposes of solid waste at the Santa Maria Regional Landfill, located at 2065 East Main Street in Santa Maria. The City has also initiated development of a new landfill—the Santa Maria Integrated Waste Management Facility (Los Flores Ranch Landfill; Facility No. 42-AA-0076), located in the Solomon Hills approximately 8 miles southwest of the city and 0.5 mile east of US 101 in an unincorporated portion of Santa Barbara County. The new facility will have a design capacity of approximately 131 million cubic yards of waste with an estimated closure date of 2105. The permit for the new facility is consistent with the Santa Barbara County Integrated Waste Management Plan, which was approved by the California Department of Resource Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) on October 18, 2011, as well as the standards adopted by CalRecycle, pursuant to PRC Section 44010. In addition, the design and planned operation of the facility is consistent with the State Minimum Standards for Solid Waste Handling and Disposal as determined by the enforcement agency based on review of the January 11, 2011, Joint Technical Document, pursuant to PRC Section 44009.

The project would rely on the City's solid waste collection services and facilities. Based on the existing and projected available capacity, the proposed future industrial or manufacturing development enabled by the GPZ would not result in the need for new or expanded solid waste facilities. Therefore, potential impacts associated with generation of solid waste in excess of local infrastructure capacity and compliance with state and local solid waste regulations would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to utilities and service systems; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

20. WILDFIRE

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

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	

Setting:

The project is located in an urban area within Santa Maria. The Integrated Regional Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Plan for the Cities of Santa Maria and Guadalupe was established in order to clearly delineate the planning areas procedures and policies when responding to a major emergency event. This includes any significant threat or potential disaster which could impact the health, safety, and property of the public within the planning area. The objectives of this plan include, but are not limited to, identifying authorities and their respective responsibilities for planning and response activities, establishing the policies for providing emergency information to the public, and describing the resources available to support emergency response activities.

The urbanized areas of Santa Maria are generally protected from most aspects of grassland and brush fires. However, accumulating weeds along roadsides and in vacant lots make even urban locations potentially hazardous from a wildland fire standpoint. For these reasons, an enforceable weed abatement program was established in 2017 to reduce these risks whenever structures are present.

The California Fire Code provides minimum standards for many aspects of fire prevention and suppression activities. These standards include provisions for emergency vehicle access, water supply, fire protection systems, and the use of fire-resistant building materials.

Discussion:

a. Implementation of a future industrial or manufacturing building from the proposed project would not result in a significant temporary or permanent impact on any adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. No breaks in utility service or road closures would occur as a result of project implementation; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

b. The project site is located within a developed site located within an urban area of Santa Maria. Future development of the project site would not substantially change the existing topography of the project site. Future development would be required to meet all applicable standards for fire prevention within the CBC and California Fire Code, including having adequate access to water for fire protection purposes, provision of fire detection equipment, fire sprinklers, etc. Future development would also be required to comply with the City weed abatement program. Therefore, the project would not exacerbate

wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire, and potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

c. The future development project would include the installation of new electricity, water, wastewater, stormwater, and natural gas infrastructure and connections to City infrastructure. These proposed infrastructure components would occur within existing developed land and would be required to be installed in full compliance with applicable CBC and California Fire Code regulations; therefore, potential impacts associated with exacerbation of fire risk from installation of new infrastructure would be *less than significant.*

d. The project site is generally flat and would not be located near a hillslope or in an area subject to downstream flooding or landslides. A future industrial or manufacturing development shall not include any design elements that would 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. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to wildfire; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

CONSULTATION AND DATA SOURCES

CONSULTATION SOURCES

City Departments Consulted

	Administrative Services
	Attorney
X	Fire
	Library
	City Manager
	Police
X	Public Works
X	Utilities
X	Recreation and Parks

County Agencies/Departments Consulted

X	Air Pollution Control District
	Association of Governments
X	Flood Control District
	Environmental Health
	Fire (Hazardous Materials)
	LAFCO
	Public Works
	Planning and Development
	Other (list)

Special Districts Consulted

	Santa Maria Public Airport
	Airport Land Use Commission
	Cemetery
	Santa-Maria Bonita School District
	Santa Maria Joint Union High School
	Laguna County Sanitation District
	Cal Cities Water Company

State/Federal Agencies Consulted

	Army Corps of Engineers
	Caltrans
X	CA Fish and Game
X	Federal Fish and Wildlife
	FAA
	Regional Water Quality Control Bd.
	Integrated Waste Management Bd.
	Other (list)

DATA SOURCES

General Plan

X	Land Use Element
X	Circulation Element
X	Safety Element
X	Noise Element
	Housing Element
X	Resources Management Element

Other

X	Agricultural Preserve Maps
X	Archaeological Maps/Reports
X	Architectural Elevations
X	Biology Reports
X	CA Oil and Gas Maps
X	FEMA Maps (Flood)
	Grading Plans
	Site Plan
	Topographic Maps
X	Aerial Photos
X	Traffic Studies
X	Trip Generation Manual (ITE)
X	URBEMIS Air Quality Model
X	Zoning Maps
X	Other: Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

Appendix

A - August 2023 Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Study - Rincon Consultants, Inc

B- October 2023 Biological Resources Assessment – David Wolff Environmental, LLC

C - August 2023 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment - Rincon Consultants, Inc

D- September 2023 Transportation Impact Study – Central Coast Transportation Consulting

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MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		X		
2. 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		
3. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		X		

Discussion:

Proposed development of the land uses permitted under the proposed PD/M-1 zoning designation within the project site have the potential to result in temporary construction related impacts to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, and tribal cultural resources. However, mitigation measures have been identified to reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level, including but not limited to, fugitive dust controls, diesel-idling minimization, nesting bird avoidance, California Red-Legged Frog avoidance, inadvertent discovery of archaeological and paleontological resources protocol, soil management and noise control measures.

When a project's impacts are considered along or in combination with other reasonably foreseeable impacts, a project's potential *cumulative impacts* may be found to be significant. However, in this case, mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project to reduce project-related impacts to a less-than-significant level. Based on implementation of identified project-specific mitigation measures and the relatively limited number and extent of potential impacts, the cumulative effects of the proposed project would not be cumulatively considerable and would be *less than significant*.

With incorporation of mitigation measures identified in this Initial Study, potential environmental effects of the project would not directly or indirectly result in any substantial adverse effects on human beings and this impact would be *less than significant*.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

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

DETERMINATION

On the basis of the Initial Study, the staff of the Community Development Department:

- Finds that the proposed project is a Class ___ **CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION** and no further environmental review is required.

- Finds that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

X Finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

- Finds that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

- Finds 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 acceptable standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on the attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)/SUBSEQUENT EIR/SUPPLEMENTAL EIR/ADDENDUM** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

- Finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to acceptable 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.

Cody Graybehl
Environmental Analyst

7/10/24
Date

Dana Eady
Environmental Officer

7/10/24
Date

City of Santa Maria
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