



**CITY OF SANTA MARIA
INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
OCTOBER 2024**

PLANES OF FAME AIR MUSEUM, PD2023-0017/U2024-0009

Vacant lot near the southern terminus of Airpark Drive
Santa Maria, CA 93455
APN: 111-231-011

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Description	Planned Development with Conditional Use Permit (PD2023-0017/U2024-0009) for Planes of Fame Air Museum to establish an airplane museum and allow phased construction of four aircraft hangars totaling 119,672 square feet, with 9,290 square feet of office space on a 12.11-acre site in a PD/AS-II and PD/AS-III (Planned Development/Airport Service II & III) district.
Location	Vacant lot near the southern terminus of Airpark Drive, Santa Maria, CA 93455
Assessor's Parcel No.	111-231-011
General Plan Designation	Airport – Airport Service (A – AS)
Zoning	Planned Development/Airport Service II (PD/AS-II) and Planned Development/Airport Service III (PD/AS-III)
Size of Site	A 12.11-acre portion of an approximately 23.8-acre lease area
Present Use	Vacant land
Proposed Uses	An airplane museum, composed of 4 aeronautic hangars, parking, landscaping, and stormwater retention basins.
Access	Direct driveway access to Skyway Drive via Airpark Drive
Surrounding Uses/Zoning	
North	Vacant/Airport Parking, PD/AS-III
South	Airport restricted area/tarmac, row crops/ Airport Service I (AS-I) and Open Space (OS)
East	Vacant disturbed land / PD/AS-III
West	Airport Tarmac / AS-I
Parking	145 spaces provided, of those 20 spaces are EVSE
Setbacks (to lease line or ROW)	72-feet front, 57-feet side, 62-feet side, 110-feet rear

Height	40.5-feet
Building Coverage	20.3-percent
Landscape Area	43,936-square-feet
Storm Water Retardation	Three bioretention basins totaling 4,320 cubic feet
Fencing	Airport Security Fencing, Chainlink
Related files/Actions	Not Applicable
Applicant/Agent/Owner	Planes of Fame, C/O Jane Hinton/ Martin Pehl, Santa Maria Public Airport District
Procedure	Planning Commission 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 located at the southern terminus of Airpark Drive, on Santa Maria Airport land, to the southeast of the Radisson Hotel. A mix of airport-serving uses, such as airport hotels, parking lots, tarmac, etc., as well as row crops, have occurred adjacent to the project area. The project 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 portion of the Santa Maria Public Airport Tarmac area on the westerly portion of the site is the only developed feature on the site. The project is characterized as a vacant 12.11-acre portion of a larger airport/airport service parcel proposed to be developed with an Air Museum project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Project would involve the construction of a new air museum including the construction of four aviation hangars (named Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, and Delta) with a lobby and gift shop (in building Alpha only), restrooms, collection storage, offices, and parking lot over 12.11 acres. The aviation hangars would be approximately 119,672 square feet (sf) total and 9,290 sf for offices. The Project site would include 145 parking spaces, including 11 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant spaces, and twenty parking spaces equipped with electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. The Project would be open to the public Wednesday – Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with monthly educational lectures, flight demonstrations, a veteran's program, and occasional special events. Staff of up to approximately 15 would work on site seven days per week between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

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 and the applicant's consultants, Rincon En (add others as needed). Potentially significant adverse environmental impacts were identified in the areas of Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, and Noise.

Based on the above-mentioned sources, no adverse impacts are associated with Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forest Resources, Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology/Water Quality, Land use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Services Systems, and Wildfire.

IMPACT SUMMARY TABLE

	Proposed Project
Size of Site	12.11-acres
Size of Buildings	119,672 square feet
Water Demand ⁽¹⁾	6.96 acre-feet per year
Sewage Generation ⁽¹⁾	7560 gallons per day
Average Daily Trips ⁽²⁾	87
P.M. Peak Trips ⁽²⁾	9
<u>Unmitigated</u> Long Term Emissions (rounded up): ⁽³⁾ Reactive Organic Compounds Nitrogen Oxides	 3 pounds/day 1 pound/day

(1) Information provided by project applicant.

(2) Traffic Impact Study (Appendix B).

(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 this report.

Biological Resources

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 (CFG Code 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, however 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.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1 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*.

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.

Cultural Resources

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 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, identified below, would ensure potential impacts are avoided and/or minimized; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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.

Geology and Soils

Paleontological resources, or fossils, are the evidence of once-living organisms preserved in the rock record. They include both the fossilized remains of ancient plants and animals and the traces thereof (e.g., trackways, imprints, burrows). Paleontological resources are not found in soil but are contained within the geologic deposits or bedrock that underlies the soil layer. Typically, fossils are greater than 5,000 years old (i.e., older than middle Holocene in age) and are typically preserved in sedimentary rocks. Although rare, fossils can also be preserved in volcanic rocks and low-grade metamorphic rocks under certain conditions (Society of Vertebrate Paleontology [SVP] 2010). Fossils occur in a non-continuous and often unpredictable distribution within some sedimentary units, and the

potential for fossils to occur within sedimentary units depends on several factors. It is possible to evaluate the potential for geologic units to contain scientifically important paleontological resources, and therefore evaluate the potential for impacts to those resources and provide mitigation for paleontological resources if they are discovered during construction of a development project (SVP 2010).

The project site is in the *Santa Maria* quadrangle, which was mapped by Sweetkind et al. (2021), who identified one geologic unit underlying the project site: Holocene alluvial fan and fluvial deposits (Sweetkind et al. 2021). Holocene-aged sediments are generally considered too young (i.e., less than 5,000 years old) to preserve paleontological resources (SVP 2010). Therefore, Holocene alluvial fan and fluvial deposits have low paleontological sensitivity. Furthermore, the project site has been subject to previous ground disturbance from airport-related activities and, therefore, there is low potential for intact paleontological resources to be present within the project site. Construction activities would require excavations up to ten feet deep. Although the site has a low paleontological sensitivity, the possibility remains unanticipated paleontological resources could be discovered during ground-disturbing activities. Therefore, this impact would be *potentially significant*, and Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required to reduce potential impacts.

GEO-1 Unanticipated Discovery of Paleontological Resources. In the event of a fossil discovery by construction personnel, the construction contractor shall halt all construction activities within the immediate vicinity of the fossil, and a Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall be retained to evaluate the find prior to resuming construction activity. If it is determined the fossil(s) is (are) scientifically significant, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall complete the following conditions to mitigate impacts to significant fossil resources:

- **Fossil Salvage.** If fossils are discovered, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall have the authority to halt or temporarily divert construction equipment within 50 feet of the find until the Qualified Professional Paleontologist evaluate the discovery and determine if the fossil may be considered significant. Bulk matrix sampling may be necessary to recover small invertebrates or micro vertebrates from within paleontologically sensitive deposits.
- **Fossil Preparation and Curation.** Once salvaged, significant fossils shall be identified to the lowest possible taxonomic level, prepared to a curation-ready condition, and curated in a scientific institution with a permanent paleontological collection along with all pertinent field notes, photos, data, and maps. Fossils of undetermined significance at the time of collection may also warrant curation at the discretion of the Qualified Professional Paleontologist.
- **Final Paleontological Report.** The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall submit a report describing the results of the paleontological monitoring efforts associated with the project. The report shall include a summary of the field and laboratory methods, an overview of the project geology and paleontology, a list of taxa recovered (if any), an analysis of

fossils recovered (if any) and their scientific significance, and recommendations. The report shall be submitted to the City Community Development Department.

Plan Requirements and Timing. The construction contractor shall stop work immediately within a 50-foot radius if a fossil is discovered. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall carry out fossil salvage, preparation, and curation after discovery of fossils. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall submit the Final Paleontological Report to the City Community Development Department. City staff shall review and approve the report.

Monitoring. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall have the authority to halt or temporarily divert construction equipment within 50 feet during fossil salvage activities.

Noise

The project parcel is immediately surrounded by airport runways/tarmac, airport services, a hotel, and agricultural uses. Development of the project site would result in a temporary increase in noise levels associated with construction activities, equipment, and vehicle trips. Construction noise would be variable, temporary, and limited in nature and duration, but will take place within 50 feet of the adjacent hotel, and therefore would have the potential to exceed City exterior noise thresholds. However, with adherence to City construction work hours, implementation of noise control for stationary equipment, and proper maintenance of all equipment, unnecessary increased noise levels can be avoided. In accordance with the General Plan Noise Element, 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 these City construction work hours, and with the implementation of mitigation measure NOI-1 which includes noise control for construction related tools, regular maintenance of all equipment, and staging areas located at the greatest distance from sensitive receptors as feasible, unnecessary temporary increased noise levels can be reduced to *less than significant with mitigation*.

NOI-1 During construction of any future development within the project parcel, all equipment shall be properly maintained to ensure that no additional noise, due to worn or improperly maintained parts, is generated. Stockpiling and vehicle staging areas shall be located as far as practical from sensitive noise receptors. Every effort shall be made to create the greatest distance between noise sources and sensitive receptors during construction activities.

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 Planes of Fame Air Museum project based upon information contained in PD2023-0017 and U2024-0009.

PREPARED BY:



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10/23/2024

Date

Dana Eady

Dana Eady, Environmental Officer

10/23/24

Date



CITY OF SANTA MARIA
Environmental Checklist / Initial Study
Planes of Fame Air Museum
(PD2023-0017/U2024-0009)

1. Project Title and Location

Planes of Fame Air Museum Planned Development and Conditional Use Permit
Vacant lot near the southern terminus of Airpark Drive
Santa Maria, CA 93455
APN: 111-231-011

2. Lead Agency, Contact and Preparer

Carol Ziesenhenne, Senior Planner
Community Development Department
110 South Pine Street, Suite #101
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805-925-0951, x1607
cziesenhenne@cityofsantamaria.org

3. Project Sponsor's Name and Address

Planes of Fame Air Museum
C/O Jane Hinton
14998 Cal Aero Drive
Chino, CA 91710
909-597-3722
jane@planesoffame.org

4. General Plan Designation

Airport – Airport Service (A – AS)

5. Zoning Designation

Planned Development/Airport Service II (PD/AS-II) and Planned Development/Airport Service III (PD/AS-III)

6. Brief Description of Project

The Project would involve the construction of a new air museum including the construction of four aviation hangars (named Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, and Delta) with a lobby and gift shop (in building Alpha only), restrooms, collection storage, offices, and parking lot over 12.11 acres. The aviation hangars would be approximately 119,672 square feet (sf) total and 9,290 sf for offices. The Project site would include 145 parking spaces, including 11 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant spaces, and twenty parking spaces equipped with electric

vehicle (EV) charging stations. The Project would be open to the public Wednesday – Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with monthly educational lectures, flight demonstrations, a veteran’s program, and occasional special events. Staff of up to approximately 15 would work on site seven days per week between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

7. Surrounding Land Uses And Setting:

The Project site encompasses a 12.11-acre portion of the approximately 23.8-acre lease area within the Santa Maria Airport, west of the Radisson Hotel. The site is currently vacant and is zoned PD/AS-II and PD/AS-III (Airport Service II, Airport Service III, and Planned Development Overlay). Nearby land uses include the Santa Maria Valley YMCA and Cottage Urgent Care – Santa Maria north and west of the Project site, respectively.

8. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required

None.

9. California Native American Tribes Consultation

Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 and 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 projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

In July 2024, the City of Santa Maria sent letters to the local Native American contacts identified by the NAHC. No requests for consultation on this project were received.

Figure 1 Vicinity Map

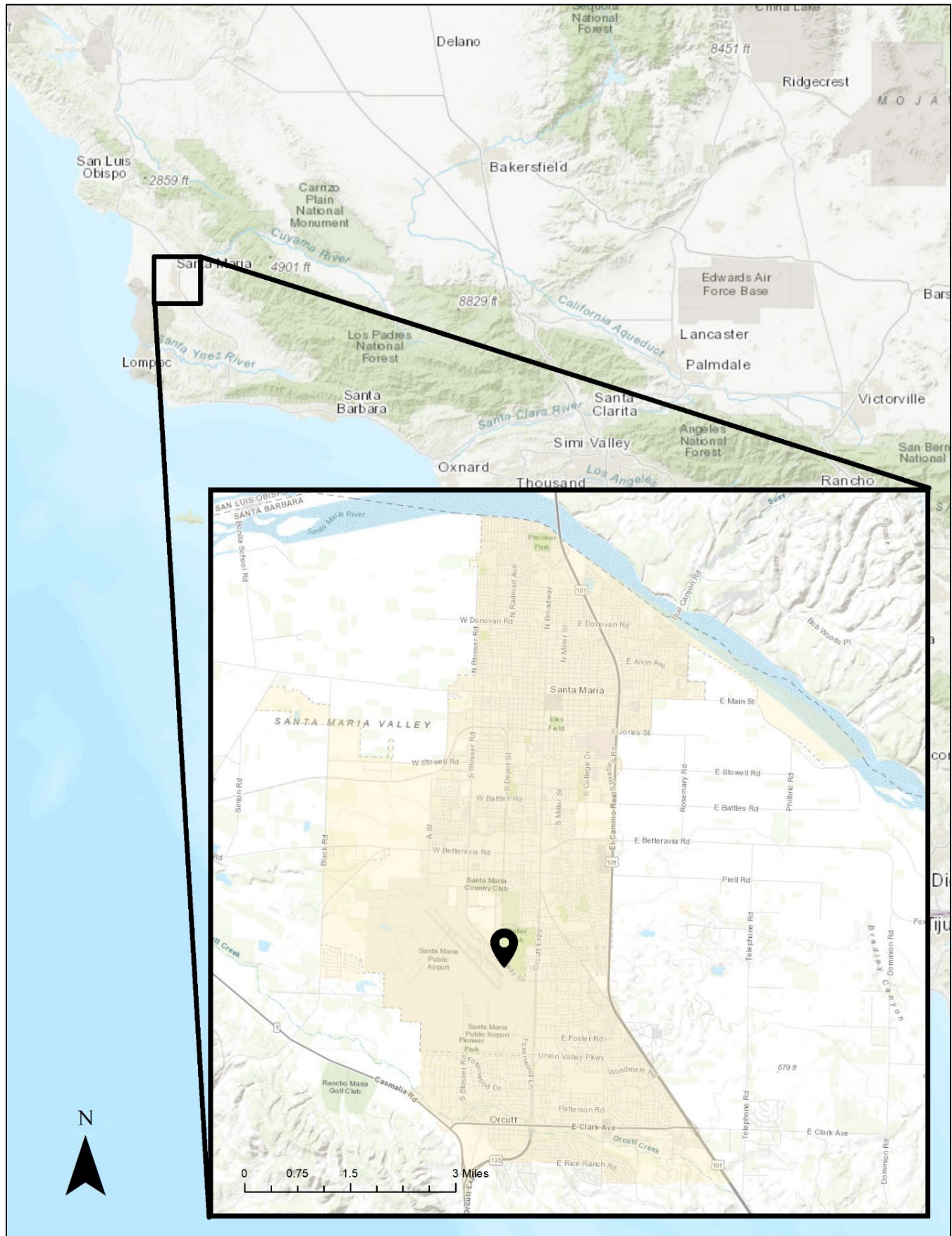


Figure 2 Project Location Map



Planes of Fame Air Museum
PD2023-0017, U2024-0009
Environmental Checklist

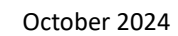
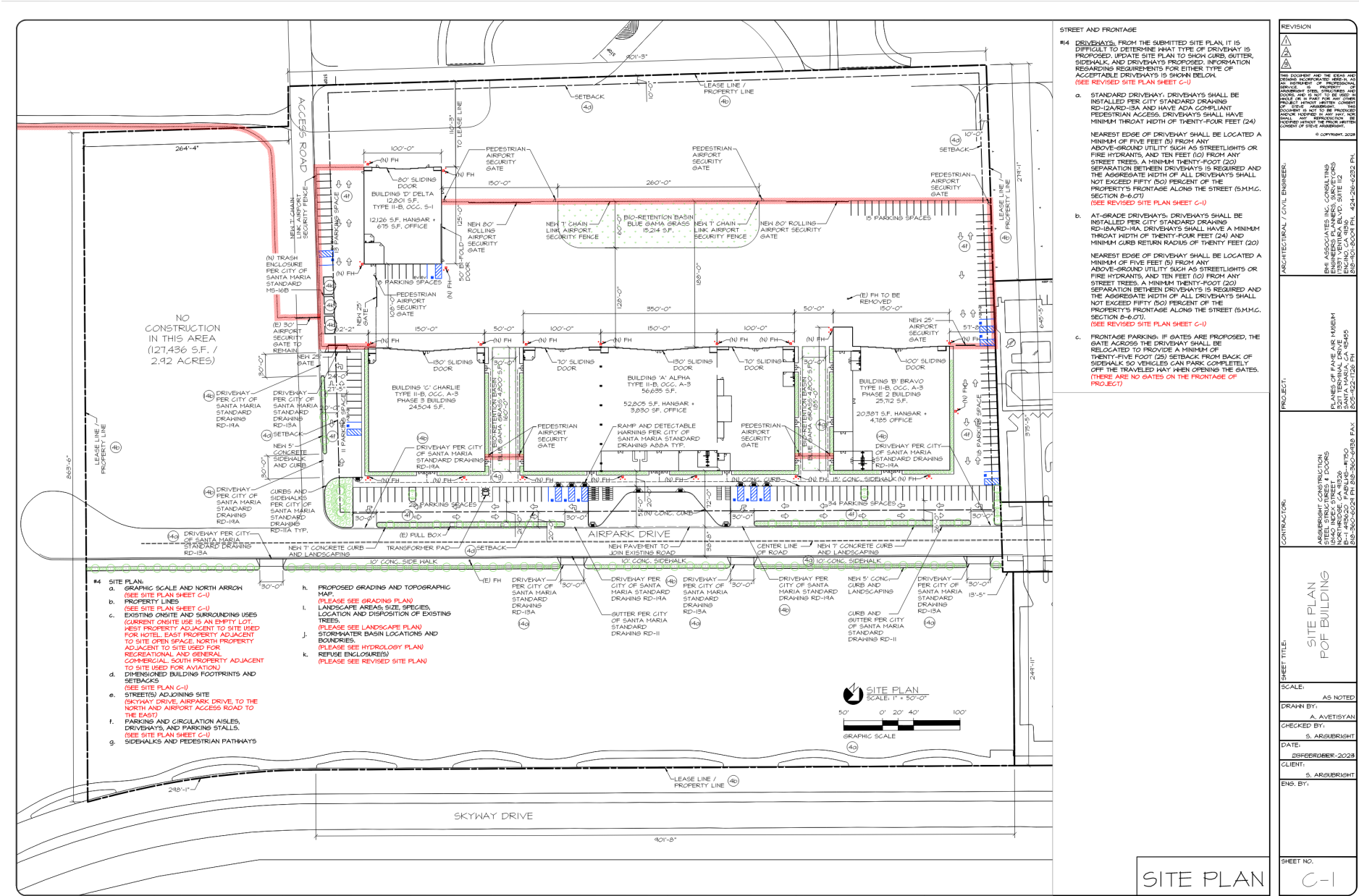


Figure 4 Site Plan



1. AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

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?			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	

Discussion:

- 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 City of Santa Maria General Plan Land Use Element (City of Santa Maria 2011b) and Resources Management Element (City of Santa Maria 2001), the project site is not located within a designated scenic vista.
- The project site is located within the Santa Maria Public airport property. U.S. Route 101 (US 101), an eligible but not officially designated State Scenic Highway, is located approximately 2 miles east of the project site. California Highway 135 is 0.3-miles east of the project site and is not an eligible or officially designated State Scenic Highway. The project site would not be visible to viewers traveling along either roadway due to distance, existing intervening development, and landscaping. No other eligible or officially designated state scenic highways are located within proximity or viewshed to the project site. Therefore, impacts associated with substantial damage to scenic resources within a state scenic highway would be *less than significant*.

- c. The project is located in an urban area of Santa Maria and is considered urbanized pursuant to CEQA Section 21071. The goals and objectives set forth in the Land Use Element are (1) to provide a broad land use category facilitating the airport and airport-related commercial/industrial uses which are not adversely affected by airport operations; (2) to provide specific areas for aircraft operation and navigation aids; and (3) to minimize the hazard to safe landing and take-off of aircraft. The Airport – Airport Service land use provides a full range of uses, including airport operation and support activities. Therefore, as an air museum with proposed aircraft hangar buildings and facilities for airplanes, 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. Outdoor and security lighting typical of airport hangers and other airport service-related uses would be added to the site as a result of the proposed development. The regulations set out for the airport service II zone in the Santa Maria Municipal Code (Chapter 12-21.06) require all lights to be arranged/hooded so as not to create confusion for arriving aircraft or interfere with the observation of aircraft from the control tower at night. These design requirements will be incorporated into the project. As such, the project would not result in or create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area, 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 aesthetic/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. Most 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. There is no active farmland or other agricultural uses on the project site, however there are active agricultural uses directly to the southeast of the project site within a PD/AS-III (Planned Development/Airport Service III) zone district of the Airport Business Park Specific Plan area. Based on the California Williamson Act Enrollment Finder, neither the project site nor surrounding properties are under a Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) contract; therefore, the project would not result in a conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract and *no impacts would occur*.
- c. The project site is partially developed with existing tarmac and roadways and otherwise graded vacant land. No trees exist within the project site area. The project site does not support forest land or timberland. The site is zoned PD/AS-II (Planned Development/Airport Service-II) and located within an urban vicinity 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 zone Timberland Production and *no impacts would occur*.

- d. The project site is partially developed with existing tarmac and roadways and otherwise graded vacant land. The project site is located in an urbanized area of the city and is not located within or adjacent to forest land; 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 development of an air museum on the project site would not directly or indirectly adversely affect agricultural support services 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 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 site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB), which includes all of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties.

Criteria Pollutant Regulation. In accordance with the California Clean Air Act, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulates the emission of airborne pollutants and has established ambient air quality standards for the protection of public health. Local control in air quality management is provided by CARB through multi-county and county-level Air Pollution Control Districts (APCDs). The CARB establishes statewide air quality standards and is responsible for the control of mobile emission sources, while the local APCDs are responsible for enforcing standards and regulating stationary sources. The project site is in the Santa Barbara County portion of the SCCAB and is under jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD). The SBCAPCD administers many programs under the CARB review and permit authority over stationary point sources of air pollution.

Federal and state standards have been established for six criteria pollutants: ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulates less than 10 and 2.5 microns in diameter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), and lead (Pb) (Table 4). California air quality standards are identical to or stricter than federal standards for all criteria pollutants.

Table 1. Current Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Federal Standard	California Standard
Ozone (O ₃)	0.070 ppm (8-hr avg)	0.09 ppm (1-hr avg) 0.070 ppm (8-hr avg)
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	9.0 ppm (8-hr avg) 35.0 ppm (1-hr avg)	9.0 ppm (8-hr avg) 20.0 ppm (1-hr avg)
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	0.053 ppm (annual avg)	0.18 ppm (1-hr avg) 0.030 ppm (annual avg)
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	0.030 ppm (annual avg) 0.14 ppm (24-hr avg) 0.5 ppm (3-hr avg)	0.04 ppm (24-hr avg) 0.25 ppm (1-hr avg)
Lead (Pb)	1.5 µg/m ³ (calendar quarter)	1.5 µg/m ³ (30-day avg)
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	150 µg/m ³ (24-hr avg)	20 µg/m ³ (annual avg) 50 µg/m ³ (24-hr avg)
Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	12 µg/m ³ (annual avg) 35 µg/m ³ (24-hr avg)	12 µg/m ³ (annual avg)
Sulfates	No National Standards	25 µg/m ³ (24-hr avg)
Hydrogen Sulfide		0.03 ppm (1-hr avg)
Vinyl Chloride		ppm (24-hr avg)

Notes: ppm= parts per million, µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter

Source: CARB 2016a.

The SBAPCD monitors air pollutant levels to assure that air quality standards are met and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards. Depending on whether or not the standards are met or exceeded, the SCCAB is classified as being in “attainment” or “nonattainment.” 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 2001 Clean Air Plan

(2002) was the first plan prepared by SBCAPCD and established specific planning requirements to maintain the state one-hour O₃ standard. In 2006, CARB revised the CAAQS and added an 8-hour average to the O₃ standard. Both components of the standard must now be met before CARB can designate an area to be in attainment. The most recent 2022 Ozone Plan was adopted by SBCAPCD in December 2022 and was the seventh update to the 2001 Clean Air Plan. The 2022 Ozone Plan addresses the state O₃ standards only because SBCAPCD is designated “attainment” for the federal 8-hour O₃ standards, including the most recent standard of 0.070 ppm promulgated by the United States EPA in 2015.

To minimize potential impacts from Project emissions, the SBCAPCD implements rules and regulations for emissions that may be generated by various uses and activities. The rules and regulations detail pollution-reduction measures that must be implemented during construction and operation of Projects. Rules and regulations relevant to the Project include the following:

- Rule 345 (Control of Fugitive Dust from Construction and Demolition Activities). This rule establishes fugitive dust control requirements for any activity associated with construction or demolition of a structure or structures.
- Rule 323.1 (Architectural Coatings). This rule establishes volatile organic content limits for architectural coatings that are manufactured, blended, repackaged, supplied, sold, or offered for sale within the SBCAPCD.
- Rule 323.1 limits the volatile organic content to 50 grams per liter for flat coatings and 100 grams per liter for nonflat coatings and traffic marking coatings.
- Rule 329 (Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt Paving Materials). This rule establishes ROC content limits pertaining to the manufacture, application, and sale of cutback and emulsified asphalt materials for paving, construction, and maintenance of streets, highways, parking lots, and driveways.

Methodology

Air pollutant emissions generated by Project construction and operation were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2022.1.28, attached as Appendix A. CalEEMod is a statewide land use emissions computer model designed to provide a uniform platform for government agencies, land use planners, and environmental professionals to quantify potential criteria pollutant and GHG emissions associated with both construction and operations from a variety of land use projects. CalEEMod allows for the use of standardized data (e.g., emission factors, trip lengths, meteorology, source inventory) provided by the various California air districts to account for local requirements and conditions, and/or user-defined inputs. The calculation methodology and input data used in CalEEMod can be found in the CalEEMod User’s Guide Appendices C, D, and G (California Air Pollution Control Officers Associated CAPCOA 2022). The analysis reflects the construction and operation of the proposed Project as described in the project summary.

Construction

Project construction would primarily generate temporary criteria pollutant emissions from construction equipment operation on-site, construction worker vehicle trips to and from the site, and import of materials off-site. Construction of the proposed Project was analyzed based on the land use type and square footage described provided by the applicant, which includes 119,672 square feet of hanger space and 145 parking spaces. Construction of Phase One of the proposed Project was assumed to begin in March 2025 through February 2026. In addition, the construction of Phases Two and Three would occur over approximately 11 months in 2027 and 2030, respectively. Based on the applicant-provided land uses, the CalEEMod provides assumptions for construction schedule, equipment lists, and vehicle trips. CalEEMod estimates construction would occur over approximately 11 months with 1,947 cubic yards of soil imported. In addition, approximately 75,400 square feet of existing 4" asphalt ramp would be pulverized in place. This Asphalt would be recycled and used as base material for new paving. No asphalt materials would be removed from the Project site. It is assumed that construction equipment used would be diesel powered and the Project would comply with applicable regulatory standards, such as SBCAPCD fugitive dust control measures and Rule 323.1 Architectural Coating.

Operation

Operational emissions modeled include mobile source emissions, energy emissions, and area source emissions. Mobile source emissions are generated by vehicle trips to and from the Project site. Daily vehicle trips were sourced from the Trip Generation Analysis prepared by Associated Transportation Engineers for the proposed Project (Associated Transportation Engineers 2023, Appendix B). The trip generation rates in CalEEMod were adjusted to be consistent with the average 87 daily vehicle trips estimate. Emissions attributed to energy use do not include natural gas consumption by appliances or space and water heating. In addition, area source emissions are generated by landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products, and architectural coatings.

Discussion:

- a. The SBCAPCD Guidelines state that a Project is consistent with the Clean Air Plan if its direct and indirect emissions have been accounted for in the Clean Air Plan's emissions forecast assumptions and if it would incorporate the standard fugitive dust control measures recommended by SBCAPCD during construction activities. The 2022 Ozone Plan's direct and indirect emissions inventory for the County is reliant on population projections provided by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG). SBCAG generates population projections based on local General Plans. In this case, SBCAG utilized population projections contained in the City of Santa Maria General Plan, which are based on existing and anticipated land uses in the city.

The 2022 Ozone Plan is based on countywide employment data provided by the California Department of Finance. The 2022 Ozone Plan also states that its growth projections are like

that of the 2019 SBCAG Regional Growth Forecast 2050, in which assumptions about future land development patterns were used to generate future population and jobs forecasts for Santa Barbara County (SBCAG 2019).

The proposed Project would involve the construction and operation of an air museum hanger. The proposed Project has no residential or commercial uses and would not directly or indirectly increase population growth. However, the proposed Project could potentially increase the number of new employees in Santa Maria. The Project is estimated to add approximately 15 new employees. Although, Project employees would likely be drawn from the existing labor pool in the region and may not relocate to the city, the analysis conservatively assumes that all 15 new employees would become new residents. SBCAG's growth forecast projects population in Santa Maria to increase from 111,900 population in 2020 to 121,900 by 2025 and 127,600 by 2030. In addition, the growth forecast for jobs would increase from 43,270 jobs in 2020 to 46,040 by 2025, and 47,310 by 2030. The addition of 15 employees and new residents to the City of Santa Maria would not exceed SBCAG's growth forecasts of population and jobs for the City (SBCAG 2019). Projects are expected to manage fugitive dust emissions such that emissions do not exceed SBCAPCD's visible emissions limit (Rule 302), create a public nuisance (Rule 303), and are in compliance with the SBCAPCD's requirements and standards for visible dust (Rule 345). The following standard SBCAPCD fugitive dust control measures would be required for project implementation:

- During construction, water trucks or sprinkler systems shall be used to keep all areas of vehicle movement damp enough to prevent dust from leaving the site and from exceeding SBCAPCD's limit of 20 percent opacity for greater than three minutes in any 30-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 shall be required whenever the wind speed exceeds 15 mph. Reclaimed water shall be used whenever possible. However, reclaimed water shall not be used in or around crops for human consumption.
- The amount of disturbed area shall be minimized.
- On-site vehicle speeds shall be no greater than 15 mph when traveling on unpaved surfaces.
- A track-out prevention device shall be installed and operated where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto paved streets. The track-out prevention device can include any device or combination of devices that are effective at preventing track out of dirt such as gravel pads, pipe-grid track-out control devices, rumble strips, or wheel washing systems.
- If stockpiling of material is involved, soil stockpiled for more than one day shall be covered, kept moist, or treated with soil binders to prevent dust generation.
- After clearing, grading, earth moving or excavation is completed, the disturbed area shall be treated by watering, or using roll-compaction, or revegetating, or by spreading soil

binders until the area is paved or otherwise developed so that dust generation will not occur. All driveways and sidewalks to be paved/surfaced shall be completed as soon as possible.

- 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 off-site. 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 SBCAPCD prior to grading/building permit issuance and/or map clearance.
- The Project applicant shall comply with SBCAPCD Rule 345: Control of Fugitive Dust from Construction and Demolition Activities, including all applicable standards and measures therein.

Therefore, the proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable air quality plan, and *impacts would be less than significant.*

- b. **Construction.** Construction activities would generate temporary air pollutant emissions associated with fugitive dust (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), exhaust emissions from heavy construction vehicles, and ROG that would be released during the drying phase after application of architectural coatings. Table 2 below summarizes emissions that would be generated under Project construction. As shown therein, construction emissions generated under construction would not exceed the SBCAPCD threshold of 25 tons per year for ROG or NO_x.

Table 2 Estimated Annual Construction Emissions

Construction Year	Maximum Emissions (tons/year)					
	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
2025	<1	1	2	< 1	<1	<1
2026	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
2027	<1	1	1	<1	<1	<1
2030	<1	1	1	<1	<1	<1
<i>SBCAPCD Thresholds</i>	25	25	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

ROG = reactive organic compounds, NO_x = nitrogen oxides, CO = carbon monoxide, SO₂ = sulfur dioxide, PM₁₀ = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less, PM_{2.5} = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

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) and Project design features.

Operations. Table 3 summarizes the Project's operational emissions by emission source (area and mobile) under Project operation. The Project site would not consume natural gas; therefore, energy emissions would not be directly emitted on-site. As shown in Table 3, operational emissions from the Project would not exceed SBCAPCD thresholds. Therefore, *impacts would be less than significant.*

Table 3 Estimated Daily Operational Emissions

Emissions Source	Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)					
	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Area	3	<1	0	0	0	0
Mobile	<1	<1	4	<1	1	<1
Energy	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	<1	4	<0.05	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, SO₂ = sulfur dioxide, PM₁₀ = 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.

- c. 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 1,250 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*.
- d. 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 receptor is located approximately 1,250 feet northeast 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:

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

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 Wildlife 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means			X	
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

Setting:

The approximately 24-acre lease property is located along the north and south sides of Airpark Drive to the south of and directly abutting the Radisson Hotel and Airport Operating Area (AOA), extending to near the end of the Airpark Drive cul-de-sac on the south. The western portion of the lease property is within the AOA with access to taxiways and runways, with the remainder outside the AOA extending to Skyway Drive to the east. There are two existing paved access roads from Airpark Drive to AOA gates, the southern most of which abuts a stand of eucalyptus

trees and a portion of an active agriculture field. The extent of the project area stops at the southern-most driveway and would not intrude into the stand of eucalyptus trees or beyond. The lease property is vacant and partially paved. Vegetation on the property is limited to non-native vegetation. The site has been utilized as a parking lot associated with the annual air show held at the Airport.

A Phase I Biological Assessment of the project site was prepared on August 19, 2024, by David Wolff Environmental, LLC (DWE), see Appendix C for the full report. According to the report, the vacant lease property is typically mowed twice annually, and dragged to smooth and remove surface vegetation, and watered/compacted, for airshow parking annually (David Wolff Environmental, LLC personal communication with Ric Tokoph, SMX Manger of Operations and Maintenance). The proposed project initially will develop the Planes of Fame Museum and appurtenant facilities on the lease property inside and outside the AOA west of Airpark Drive from the Radisson Hotel to the south access road. While within the lease property, no development is currently proposed east of Airpark Drive or to the south of the access road in the eucalyptus trees and active agricultural operations.

Existing Conditions

The 12.11-acre project site is composed mostly of disturbed non-native annual grassland with paved areas, and roads. The non-native annual grassland inside and outside the AOA is dominated by Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), bur clover (*Medicago polymorpha*), and cut leaf plantain (*Plantago coronopus*) that are typical of regularly disturbed areas. Other species observed scattered in the disturbed non-native annual grassland included short podded mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), brome grasses (*Bromus* spp.), ryegrass (*Festuca* sp.), Australian saltbush (*Atriplex semibaccata*), and wild radish (*Raphanus sativus*). Abundant gopher activity (mounds) and ground squirrels were observed throughout the grassland areas. No wetlands or riparian habitat or other waters of the U.S./State occur on the lease property or the project site. The lease property and the project site itself is an infill site surrounded by development and agriculture on all sides with no connectivity to any natural habitat areas.

Discussion:

- a. Special-status species are those plants and animals listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as threatened or endangered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA); those considered “species of concern” by the USFWS; those listed or proposed for listing as rare, threatened, or endangered by the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA); animals designated as “Species of Special Concern” by the CDFW; and plants occurring as a rank 1B, 2, and 4 of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. Natural Communities of Special Concern are habitat types considered rare and worthy of tracking in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) by the CNPS and CDFW because of their limited distribution or historic loss over time.

Search and review of the CNDDDB for recorded occurrences of special-status plant and wildlife taxa occurring in the region included records from the *Santa Maria* 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle containing and surrounding the site. The CNDDDB results output is based on reported occurrences of special-status taxa and does not constitute a comprehensive inventory of biological resources for any given area. Other database search results included the CNPS Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2024). Based on the results of these queries, there are 13 special-status plant species, 21 special-status animal species and one natural community of special concern with recorded occurrences in the region of the proposed project site, within the quadrangle search area (CDFW 2024a, CNPS 2024). A field survey conducted on the Project site established existing conditions of the proposed project site as partially paved or disturbed non-native annual grassland. This biological resource 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 CNDDDB identified 13 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. No wetlands occur on the project site. None of the special-status plant species identified in the quadrangle search area are state or federally listed, however several species are CNPS California Rare Plant Ranked 1B (plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere). All the plants constituting California Rare Plant Rank 1B meet the definitions of the California Endangered Species Act of the California Fish and Game Code and are eligible for state listing. These species include La Purisima manzanita (*Arctostaphylos purissima*; CNPS Rank 1B.1), mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* var. *puberula*; CNPS Rank 1B.1), Blochmans leafy daisy (*Erigeron blochmaniae*; CNPS Rank 1B.2), blushing layia (*Layia erubescens*; CNPS Rank 1B.2), San Luis Obispo monardella (*Monardella undulata* ssp. *Undulata*; CNPS Rank 1B.2), and dune larkspur (*Delphinium parryi* ssp. *Blochmaniae*; CNPS Rank 1B.2). The remaining six special-status plant species were ranked 4.2 or 4.3 (Watch List: Plants of limited distribution/moderately threatened or not very threatened in California). These species include paniculate tarplant, spring lessingia, Blochmans ragwort, suffrutescent wallflower, large-flowered leptosiphon, and elegant wild buckwheat.

According to the SMX Airport Operations and Maintenance Manager, the project site is mowed twice annually and regularly dragged to smooth and remove surface vegetation, and watered/compacted, for airshow parking. Plant species observed by the biologist are typical of highly disturbed areas with no native plant species were observed. As such, no special-status botanical resources are expected to occur, and none were observed during the DWE field survey. The CNDDDB 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 Resources:

The search and review of the CNDDDB identified 21 special-status wildlife species with recorded observations within a five-mile radius of the project site. The project site is mowed twice annually and regularly dragged to smooth and remove surface vegetation, and watered/compacted, for airshow parking. As a result, there is no suitable habitat for any special-status wildlife resources, none were observed during the DWE field survey, and none are expected to occur.

Aquatic/Riparian Species:

The project site is an entirely upland area and does not support aquatic species identified in and around the Airport or Airport vicinity and identified to be within the project area quadrangle by the CNDDDB search. Some of the special-status species identified include the southwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys pallida*, federally listed as proposed threatened), vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*; federally listed as threatened), California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*; CTS; federally listed as endangered in Santa Barbara County; state listed as threatened), western spadefoot (toad) (*Spea hammondi*, federally listed as proposed threatened), California red-legged frog (*Rana drayonii*; CRLF; federally listed as threatened) and steelhead – southern California DPS (fish) (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus* pop. 10; federally listed as endangered, state listed as candidate endangered).

A Biology Resource Assessment, referenced above, was prepared by David Wolff Environmental, LLC on August 19th, 2024, to identify potential impacts to CTS and other special-status species in the project area and vicinity. According to the report, there are known seasonal breeding ponds for the CTS and western spadefoot (SAMA-6 and SAMA-7) on Airport lands to the east of Blosser Road approximately 1.2 miles from the nearest edge of the project site. Currently, intervening lands from the project site to Blosser Road are developed Airport, Airport Mobile Home Park (4000 S Blosser Rd), or active strawberry fields that are not CTS habitat and represent barriers to both CTS and western spadefoot upland dispersal. The western spadefoot 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.

The California tiger salamander spends most of its life in upland underground refuges in small mammal burrows and can disperse upwards of 1.3 miles from their temporary (seasonal) breeding ponds. Known breeding ponds SAMA-6 and SAMA-7 are approximately 1.2 miles west of the lease property on airport lands. As noted above the site is surrounded by development and active agriculture that is not CTS habitat and separates the lease property from these known breeding ponds representing a barrier to any CTS dispersal to the site. The former CTS breeding pond SAMA-10 that was closer to the lease

property to the south was destroyed ca. 2020-2021 in the process of converting the prior grazing lands between the site and Blosser Road to agriculture (USFWS, 2022). According to the Biological Resource Assessment, the active agriculture is not suitable CTS habitat (DWE, 2024). 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 the development of the project site.

Upland Species:

The northern legless lizard (*Anniela pulchra*; CDFW Species of Special Concern (SSC)) is known from the vicinity of the lease property and lives mostly underground associated with sandy or very friable loamy soils under coastal scrub or woodland vegetation with soil moisture and vegetative cover being essential. The Blainvilles's (coast) horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*; CDFW SSC) occurs in a wide variety of habitats with sandy soils, abundant ant colonies for food, open areas for sunning, and shrubs for needed cover. While the observed sandy nature of the onsite soils is suitable for these species, the regular vegetation removal and soil compaction render the site uninhabitable for either species.

The American badger (*Taxidea taxus*; CDFW SSC) is a grassland species needing abundant small mammal prey and are easily detected by their distinctive half-moon shaped burrows. While abundant gopher and ground squirrel activity was observed (prey species), there was no evidence of badger use observed on the project site during the DWE field survey. Further, the regular vegetation removal and soil compaction render the site uninhabitable for the American badger.

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 (CFG Code 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, however 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. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 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. The CNDDDB identified one natural community of special concern, Southern Vernal Pool, within a five-mile radius of the project site. However, 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, based on findings from the database review and the biologist field survey, implementation of the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat, other sensitive natural communities, or state or federally protected wetlands. Potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

- 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/non-native grassland habitat that is dragged/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 Airpark Drive and the urban land uses to the north and west. Therefore, implementation of the project would have a *less than significant impact*.
- e. The graded and regularly cleared project site does not contain suitable habitat for protected biological resources as discussed in section a. above. The future air museum hangars and associated improvements would not require clearing of any trees, as there are no existing trees on the project site. The project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as 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:

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.

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 dedicated cemeteries?			X	

Setting:

The Santa Maria Valley was historically occupied by the 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:

- 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*.
- 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 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, 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, 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 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, impacts related to the disturbance of archaeological resources and human remains would be less than significant; therefore, potential impacts related to disturbance of human remains remain at a less than *less than significant* level.

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.

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	

Discussion:

a. Construction Impacts

During project construction, energy would be consumed in the form of petroleum-based fuels used to power off-road construction vehicles and equipment on the project site, construction worker travel to and from the project site, and vehicles used to deliver materials to the site. Energy use during construction would be temporary in nature, and construction equipment used would be typical of similar-sized construction projects in the region. In addition, construction contractors would be required to comply with the provisions of California Code of Regulations Title 13 Sections 2449 and 2485, which prohibit off-road diesel vehicles and diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles, respectively, from idling for more than five minutes and would minimize unnecessary fuel consumption. Construction equipment would be subject to the United States Environmental Protection Agency Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard, and trucks would be subject to the CARB Advanced Clean Trucks regulation, both of which would also minimize inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary fuel consumption (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2004). These regulations would result in the efficient use of energy necessary to construct the project. Therefore, project construction would not result in potentially significant effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, and this impact would be *less than significant*.

Operational Impacts

Operation of the project would require energy use in the form of electricity, natural gas, and gasoline fuel consumption. Natural gas and electricity would be used for heating and cooling systems, lighting, appliances, water use, off-road equipment operation, and overall operation of the project. Gasoline consumption would be attributed to vehicular travel from residents and employees traveling to and from the project site. The project would be required to comply with standards set forth in the California Building Code (CBC) Title 24, which would minimize the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during operation. The California Green Building Standards Code requires implementation of energy-efficient light

fixtures and building materials into the design of new construction projects. The Building Energy Efficiency Standards requires newly constructed buildings to meet energy performance standards set by the California Energy Commission. These standards are specifically crafted for new buildings to achieve energy efficient performance. The standards are updated every 3 years, and each iteration increases energy efficiency standards. In addition to these requirements, the use of nonrenewable energy resources would be further reduced as the percentage of electricity generated by renewable resources provided by 3CE continues to increase in compliance with state requirements through Senate Bill (SB) 100, which requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 60 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2045. With adherence to existing regulatory requirements, project operation would not result in potentially significant environmental effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy. This impact would be *less than significant*.

- b. The project would involve the consumption of electricity and natural gas. However, new structures would be required to comply with Title 24 Building, Energy, and Green Buildings Standards (California Building Code, Title 24, Parts 4, 6 and 11) which address efficiency of buildings, appliances, insulation and roofing, lighting, and water and space heating and cooling equipment. Accordingly, the project would not conflict with state regulations designed to promote energy efficiency. Furthermore, with implementation of applicable state regulations designed to achieve energy efficiency, the project would be consistent with the City General Plan Objective 6.1.b(2) to encourage site design which maximizes energy efficiency in private facilities (City of Santa Maria 2001). Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. This impact 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	
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?			X	
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of 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 offshore) 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.

Discussion:

- a.i. Several active and potentially active faults exist within the region, including the Santa Maria and Casmalia Faults, located approximately 2.2 miles and 3.6 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 airplane hangar and museum development within the project site would be 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*.
- a. 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 future airplane hangar and museum development within the project site 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*.

- a.iii. Based on the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps and related information available from the DOC, the city of Santa Maria is not located within a designated liquefaction hazard area. According to the Safety Element, a portion of the project site may contain shallow perched groundwater. Future development within the project site 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*.
- a. iv. Landslides typically occur in areas with steep slopes or in areas containing escarpments. Based on the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps and related information available from the DOC, the city 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. 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 Betteravia loamy sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes. A future construction phase activity for the project may result in wind and water driving soil erosion and loss of topsoil if stockpiled or exposed. The project site is located within a nearly-level infill site. Future development of the project site would be subject to the City's Landscape and Irrigation Standards to provide soil erosion control on-site. As the proposed development exceeds 1 acre or more of ground disturbance, the development requires 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:
- Liquefaction or collapse: According to the Safety Element, a portion of the project site may contain shallow perched groundwater. Future airplane hangar and museum development within the project site 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*.
- 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 development 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 *less 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 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 project 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. Paleontological resources, or fossils, are the evidence of once-living organisms preserved in the rock record. They include both the fossilized remains of ancient plants and animals and the traces thereof (e.g., trackways, imprints, burrows). Paleontological resources are not found in soil but are contained within the geologic deposits or bedrock that underlies the soil layer. Typically, fossils are greater than 5,000 years old (i.e., older than middle Holocene in age) and are typically preserved in sedimentary rocks. Although rare, fossils can also be preserved in volcanic rocks and low-grade metamorphic rocks under certain conditions (Society of Vertebrate Paleontology [SVP] 2010). Fossils occur in a non-continuous and often unpredictable distribution within some sedimentary units, and the potential for fossils to occur within sedimentary units depends on several factors. It is possible to evaluate the potential for geologic units to contain scientifically important paleontological resources, and therefore evaluate the potential for impacts to those resources and provide mitigation for paleontological resources if they are discovered during construction of a development project (SVP 2010).

The project site is in the *Santa Maria* quadrangle, which was mapped by Sweetkind et al. (2021), who identified one geologic unit underlying the project site: Holocene alluvial fan and fluvial deposits (Sweetkind et al. 2021). Holocene-aged sediments are generally considered too young (i.e., less than 5,000 years old) to preserve paleontological resources (SVP 2010). Therefore, Holocene alluvial fan and fluvial deposits have low paleontological sensitivity. Furthermore, the project site has been subject to previous ground disturbance from airport-related activities and, therefore, there is low potential for intact paleontological resources to be present within the project site. Construction activities would require excavations up to ten

feet deep. Although the site has a low paleontological sensitivity, the possibility remains unanticipated paleontological resources could be discovered during ground-disturbing activities. Therefore, this impact would be *potentially significant*, and Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required to reduce potential impacts.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

GEO-1 Unanticipated Discovery of Paleontological Resources. In the event of a fossil discovery by construction personnel, the construction contractor shall halt all construction activities within the immediate vicinity of the fossil, and a Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall be retained to evaluate the find prior to resuming construction activity. If it is determined the fossil(s) is (are) scientifically significant, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall complete the following conditions to mitigate impacts to significant fossil resources:

- **Fossil Salvage.** If fossils are discovered, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall have the authority to halt or temporarily divert construction equipment within 50 feet of the find until the Qualified Professional Paleontologist evaluate the discovery and determine if the fossil may be considered significant. Bulk matrix sampling may be necessary to recover small invertebrates or micro vertebrates from within paleontologically sensitive deposits.
- **Fossil Preparation and Curation.** Once salvaged, significant fossils shall be identified to the lowest possible taxonomic level, prepared to a curation-ready condition, and curated in a scientific institution with a permanent paleontological collection along with all pertinent field notes, photos, data, and maps. Fossils of undetermined significance at the time of collection may also warrant curation at the discretion of the Qualified Professional Paleontologist.
- **Final Paleontological Report.** The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall submit a report describing the results of the paleontological monitoring efforts associated with the project. The report shall include a summary of the field and laboratory methods, an overview of the project geology and paleontology, a list of taxa recovered (if any), an analysis of fossils recovered (if any) and their scientific significance, and recommendations. The report shall be submitted to the City Community Development Department.

Plan Requirements and Timing. The construction contractor shall stop work immediately within a 50-foot radius if a fossil is discovered. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall carry out fossil salvage, preparation, and curation after discovery of fossils. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall submit the Final Paleontological Report to the City Community Development Department. City staff shall review and approve the report.

Monitoring. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall have the authority to halt or temporarily divert construction equipment within 50 feet during fossil salvage activities.

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	

Discussion:

a-b. Climate change is the observed increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans along with other substantial changes in climate (such as wind patterns, precipitation, and storms) over an extended period. Climate change is the result of numerous, cumulative sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions contributing to the warming of Earth's surface. GHG emissions occur both naturally and as a result of human activities, such as fossil fuel burning, decomposition of landfill wastes, raising livestock, deforestation, and some agricultural practices. GHGs produced by human activities include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane, NO_x, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

The majority of individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to directly influence climate change. However, physical changes caused by a project can contribute incrementally to cumulative effects that are significant, even if individual changes resulting from a project are limited. The issue of climate change typically involves an analysis of whether a Project's contribution towards an impact would be cumulatively considerable. "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064[h][1]).

According to the *CEQA Guidelines*, projects can tier from a qualified GHG reduction plan, which allows for project-level evaluation of GHG emissions through the comparison of the proposed project's consistency with the GHG reduction policies included in a qualified GHG reduction plan. This approach is considered by the Association of Environmental Professionals (2016) in its white paper, *Beyond 2020 and Newhall*, to be the most defensible approach presently available under CEQA to determine the significance of a project's GHG emissions.

The City of Santa Maria has not adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing impacts related to GHG emissions. Neither the SBCAPCD, the California Office of Planning

and Research, CARB, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, or any other state or applicable regional agency has adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing GHG emissions that is applicable to the project. In the absence of any applicable adopted numeric threshold, the significance of the project's GHG emissions is evaluated as consistent with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.4(b) by considering whether the project complies with applicable plans, policies, regulations and requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. For this project, the most directly applicable adopted regulatory plans to reduce GHG emissions are the California Air Resources Board 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan), and SBCAG 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). GHG emissions from the construction and operation of the project are provided for informational purposes.

Consistency With Applicable Plans and Policies

2022 Scoping Plan. The principal state plans and policies are Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, and the subsequent legislation, SB 32. The quantitative goal of AB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The goal of SB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and to Net Zero by 2045. Pursuant to these targets, the 2022 Scoping Plan was created to outline goals and measures for the state to achieve the reductions. The 2022 Scoping Plan focuses on outcomes needed to achieve carbon neutrality by assessing paths for clean technology, energy deployment, natural and working lands, and others, and is designed to meet the state's long-term climate objectives and support a range of economic, environmental, energy security, environmental justice, and public health priorities. The project would be consistent with these goals through project design. The project would be all-electric, and the project would be required to implement the mandatory requirements for non-residential projects in the Title 24 Green Building Code and Building Efficiency Energy Standards which, in part, help fulfill 2022 Scoping Plan goals. The project also meets the most ambitious voluntary standard (Tier II, discussed in the Operational Emissions Section below) in the California Green Building Standard Codes for Transportation Electrification. The project would be provided electricity by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) which would increase its renewable energy procurement in accordance with SB 100, which requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 60 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2045. In addition, as described further in Environmental Checklist Section 17, TRANSPORTATION, the project would generate or attract less than 110 average daily trips, therefore would not generate substantial GHG emissions associated with mobile trips. Because the project would comply with state regulations designed to reduce GHG emissions consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan, the project would not conflict with the 2022 Scoping Plan. This impact would be *less than significant*.

SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS. SBCAG has incorporated a sustainable community strategy into its RTP/SCS, which is designed to help the region achieve its SB 375 GHG emissions reduction targets. The SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS demonstrates that the SBCAG region would achieve its regional emissions reduction targets for the 2020 and 2035 target years (SBCAG 2021). The SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS achieves these targets through implementation of goals that include reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), preserving open space, agricultural land, and sensitive biological resources, and promoting transit use. As described further in Environmental Checklist Section 17, *TRANSPORTATION*, the project would generate or attract 87 daily trips, which is less than 110 average daily trips identified as one of Santa Maria’s thresholds of significance for transportation impacts, and therefore would not generate substantial VMT. The project would not result in the loss of existing open space or agricultural land. As described in Environmental Checklist Section 4, *BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES*, the project, with the implementation of mitigation measures, would not result in substantial impacts related to sensitive biological resources. The project would be located within approximately one-half mile from two transit stops and would have ample loading/parking areas for buses or other high occupancy vehicles in front of the main building “Alpha”. The project would therefore provide transit options to the project site. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Quantified GHG Emissions

GHG emissions from the construction and operation of the project are provided for informational purposes. GHG emissions associated with project construction and operation were estimated using CalEEMod, with the assumptions described in Environmental Checklist Section 2 *AIR QUALITY*. CalEEMod modeling outputs are included in Appendix B. For the purposes of this GHG analysis, it was assumed the project would have a 30-year lifetime. Construction emissions were amortized over the project’s estimated 30-year lifetime, because construction emissions are confined to a relatively short period of time in relation to the overall life of the project. As shown in Table 4, construction of the project would generate approximately 622 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent.¹ Amortized over a 30-year period construction of the Project would generate an estimated total of 21 MT of CO₂e per year.

Table 4 Estimated GHG Emissions during Construction

Year	Annual Emissions (MT of CO ₂ e)
2025	311
2026	18.6
2027	147
2030	145
Total	622
Amortized over 30 years	21
<i>MT = metric tons; CO₂e = carbon dioxide equivalents See Appendix A for modeling results.</i>	

¹ Carbon dioxide *equivalent* is a unit of measurement used to standardize the climate effects of various GHGs in terms of the amount of CO₂ that would create the same amount of global warming.

Operation of the proposed Project would generate GHG emissions associated with area sources (e.g., landscape maintenance), energy and water usage, vehicle trips, wastewater and solid waste generation. The analysis uses CalEEMod assumptions for energy, and area sources for the air museum hanger and parking lot. Mobile emissions were estimated by the Associated Transportation Engineers' Trip Generation Analysis. The Project would meet the California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 11, (CALGreen) Tier II for EV charging infrastructure for non-residential projects to include 57 electric vehicle capable spaces (EVCS), twenty of which would be equipped with electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) installed, which would reduce GHG emissions annually through encouraging the use of electric vehicles over gasoline-powered vehicles.

Table 5 Combined Annual GHG Emissions

Emission Source	Annual Emissions (MT of CO₂e per year)
Construction	21
Operational	297
Area	2
Energy	143
Mobile	86
Solid Waste	35
Water	31
Total Emissions	318

As shown in Table 5, total combined annual GHG emissions generated by the project would be approximately 318 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent. As described above, these quantified GHG emissions are provided for informational purposes only. Because the project would be consistent with applicable GHG emissions reduction plans, the 2022 Scoping Plan and SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS, the project would have a less than significant impact related to GHG emissions.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to Greenhouse Gases; therefore, 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	
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).

Discussion:

- a-b. Project construction activities would involve the use of potentially hazardous materials such as fuels, oils and lubricants, solvents and cleaners, cements and adhesives, paints and thinners, degreasers, cement and concrete, and asphalt mixtures, which are all commonly used in construction. The transport, use, and storage of hazardous materials during construction of the project would be conducted in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws, such as the Hazardous Transportation Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the California Hazardous Materials Management Act, and the California Code of Regulations Title 22. Furthermore, if hazardous materials are transported on state highways and routes, Caltrans regulates the safe transportation of hazardous materials on state highways and routes, as described in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations. With adherence to applicable regulatory requirements, project construction would not result in substantial hazards due to routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or risk upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Operation of the project as an aircraft museum may occasionally result in the transport, use and disposal of hazardous materials, primarily for the basic maintenance of the aircraft, consistent with other aircraft hangar uses in the airport vicinity. These materials are each stored in 55-gallon retail containers and include acetone, paint stripper, hydraulic fluid, oil and coolant, as well as compressed gases such as oxygen, acetylene, argon, and nitrogen used for maintenance and welding. These materials are not used in large quantities or for long periods of time and are ordered as needed for various projects on the aircraft. Waste oil from aircraft oil changes are temporarily stored onsite until a waste disposal company collects the oil for proper disposal. Waste disposal is done routinely throughout the year. Most of the aircraft on display are not fueled.

Santa Barbara County is certified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) as the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for the County of Santa Barbara (County). As the CUPA, the County implements the Hazardous Materials Plan Program, which requires businesses handling, using, or storing reportable amounts of hazardous materials to submit inventories, site maps, and other documentation relating to those materials, and to develop appropriate employee training and emergency procedures. Underground storage tanks are not proposed with the project.

While allowed uses onsite may result in the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, storage and repair of aircraft for museum display does not represent an unusually dangerous land use. Compliance with existing regulations would reduce the potential for the project to result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment following construction activities. Therefore, the project's potential impacts associated with the use, transport, disposal or accidental release of hazardous materials would be *less than significant*.

- c. The nearest school to the project site is Joe Nightingale Elementary School, which is approximately 0.39-mile to the northeast of the project site. The project site is not located within 0.25-mile of an existing or proposed school facility; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.
- d. The following databases were reviewed in June 2024 for known hazardous materials contamination at the project site:
 - SWRCB's GeoTracker database (SWRCB 2024)
 - The California Department of Toxic Substances Control's EnviroStor database (California Department of Toxic Substances Control 2024)

Based on a review of these databases, and consultation with the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (CCRWQCB), there is an open Cleanup Program Site (Case no. T10000012770) on other portions of the nearly 2,000-acre Santa Maria Airport property. However, the areas of oversight and site investigation work are not within or immediately adjacent to the project boundaries. Therefore, the project would not be located on a hazardous materials site that would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. This impact would be *less than significant*.

- e. The project site is located within the airport property fronting the southernmost end of Terminal Road, which runs diagonally from the northwest to the southeast, parallel to the airport runways of the Santa Maria Airport (SMX). According to the Santa Maria Airport Master Plan (Santa Maria Public Airport District, 2019) the easternmost portion of the project site is within the Airport Operation Area (AOA) occupying the Cargo Apron and a portion of transient apron located at the southeast end of the airfield near the Runway 30 threshold. One aircraft hangar is proposed within this area, which according to the Santa Maria Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (SBCAG, 2023) is in Safety Zone 5. The majority of the project buildings are located outside of the AOA but within SMX Airport Safety zone 6. All the project site is within Airport Influence Area (AIA), Review Area 1. The project includes an outdoor aircraft display component on the apron areas, which would be enclosed with an airport security fence to separate the public from the rest of the Airport Operation Areas.

Given the project location is within Safety Zones 5 and 6, the Santa Maria Airport Safety Compatibility Criteria (Table 3-2) listed in the Santa Maria Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan would apply to the air museum project. Cultural institutions and facilities are considered Compatible within Safety Zone 6, and Conditionally Compatible within Safety Zone 5.

Conditionally Compatible uses are subject to density limitations, with a maximum intensity of 150 people per acre sitewide, and maximum lot coverage by a building footprint to no more than 70% of the site size. The portion of the site within Safety Zone 5 is approximately 265,000-square-feet (or approximately 6 acres), and the single hangar (Building Delta) proposed in this same area is 12,800-square-feet or a little less than 5% of the site area. The maximum concentration of people allowed on the site within the 6-acre Safety Zone 5 area would be 900 people. This maximum concentration is well over the 155 average daily weekend visitors and 57 average daily weekday visitors, plus 10 to 15 staff members expected over the entire 12-acre project site, according to the Trip Generation Analysis by Associated Transportation Engineers (ATE, 2023). Therefore, impacts related to a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area would be *less than significant*.

The project area is within two exterior noise exposure contours. The majority of the buildings (Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie) are outside of the CNEL 60-65 dB contour, which is characterized by Table 3-1 of the Santa Maria Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan as <60 dB CNEL; however, Building Delta is within the 60-65 dB contour. Museums are recreational uses and exterior noise exposure to recreational buildings is considered compatible in areas with exposure to less than 65 dB CNEL. Therefore, the project would not result in excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area and impacts 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. Future development of new access driveways would be required to be developed in compliance with state and local safety regulations and all 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 airport service, airport runway uses, and transportation infrastructure; it is not located adjacent to a wildland fire area. Based on the City's 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 Rance and Solomon Hills south of the city. The project is located approximately 2 miles north of these areas and located within an urbanized area; therefore, impacts related to wildland fires 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 hazards or hazardous materials; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

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 a 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

Discussion:

- a. Project demolition and construction activities, including on-site operation of heavy equipment during grading, would temporarily disturb surface and subsurface soils, which could result in erosion and sedimentation. The project site is relatively flat, so the potential for slope-based soil erosion is low. However, stormwater runoff could result in short-term erosion in areas of

exposed soils. As described in Environmental Checklist Section **Error! Reference source not found.**, **Error! Reference source not found.**, construction would be required to comply with the Construction Stormwater General Permit, which mandates preparation and implementation of a SWPPP and associated BMPs to control stormwater run-on and runoff from construction work sites. In addition, Section 8-12A.08 of the City's Municipal Code requires BMPs to be implemented during construction activities. BMPs may include, but would not be limited to, physical barriers to reduce erosion and sedimentation, construction of sedimentation basins, limitations on work periods during storm events, use of infiltration swales, protection of stockpiled materials, and a variety of other measures to be identified by a qualified SWPPP developer that would substantially reduce erosion from occurring during construction. With adherence to these regulations, project construction would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

During operation, the project would be required to comply with the standards and requirements of the City's Public Works Department Engineering Division, Section 8-12A.04 of the City's Municipal Code, which sets forth prohibited discharges, as well as the Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast Region (Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board [CCRWQCB], Resolution No. R3-2013-0032). To fulfill the post-construction requirements of the CCRWQCB, the project would include three stormwater bioretention basins. The stormwater retention basins would be designed to filter stormwater and minimize the number of pollutants in stormwater runoff from the project site. To demonstrate compliance with these requirements, a Stormwater Control Plan would be required for the project. By complying with the existing state and local regulations and incorporating design provisions to reduce stormwater pollutants, the project would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

- b. Future uses on-site 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 project would receive water from the City of Maria, which sources water, in part, from the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin (City of Santa Maria 2021). The Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin was adjudicated in 2008, and as part of the adjudication agreement, the city is entitled 14,300 acre-feet per year of groundwater from the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin (City of Santa Maria 2021). Even with these management restrictions, the City anticipates having sufficient supply to reliably meet projected water demands in Santa Maria through 2045 (City of Santa Maria 2021). Based on the type of potential future development to be allowed onsite, such as development of air museum facilities, 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. As described in Threshold 10(a), project construction would be required to adhere to the requirements of the Construction Stormwater General Permit and Section 8-12A.08 of the City's Municipal Code, which requires implementation of BMPs to reduce erosion during construction. During operation, the project would not include ongoing activities that would have the potential to result in substantial erosion. Operation of the project would be required to adhere to the CCRWQCB's Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements and implement a Stormwater Control Plan to demonstrate compliance with stormwater management requirements, including erosion minimization. With adherence to these regulatory requirements, the project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. This impact would be *less than significant*.
- c.ii The project would add impervious surfaces to the project site. However, the project would involve construction of three stormwater retention basins, located along the west of the site, between buildings Alpha and Bravo, and between Buildings Alpha and Charlie, respectively. These stormwater control features would accommodate stormwater from a 100-year storm event. As shown in the Hydrology Report and Calculations (Appendix D), pre-development flows for a 100-year storm event on the project site are 20 cubic feet per second. With implementation of the proposed stormwater control infrastructure, the post-developed 100-year storm event flows on the project site would be reduced to below pre-development flows. Therefore, the project would reduce the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site. This impact would be *less than significant*.
- c.iii As described in Threshold 10(a), project construction would be required to adhere to the requirements of the Construction Stormwater General Permit and Section 8-12A.08 of the City's Municipal Code, which requires implementation of BMPs to reduce stormwater pollutants during construction. Operation of the project would be required to adhere to the CCRWQCB's Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements and implement a Stormwater Control Plan to demonstrate compliance with stormwater management requirements, including minimizing stormwater pollutants and flows. In addition to the stormwater management areas, the project would include landscaped areas and other open space which would allow for groundwater percolation. With adherence to these regulatory requirements, the project would not 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. This impact would be *less than significant*.
- c.iv-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 8 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 11 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, *no impacts would occur*.

- e. As discussed in the threshold analysis above, the project would not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. The project includes 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

Discussion:

a-b. The project site is in an area planned and zoned for the specified air museum development. The project site is surrounded by airport-related land uses. The proposed air museum development of airplane hangars, tarmac displays, and ancillary infrastructure would be consistent with and supportive of the surrounding land uses; the AS-I (Airport Service I) and AS-II (Airport - Airport Service II) zoning districts; and applicable General Plan policies pertaining to development of the site. Therefore, the project would not conflict with any local programs, plans, or ordinances, or divide an established community. 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 and 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	

Discussion:

a.-b. The project parcel is located in an urban area of Santa Maria. The California Department of Conservation Well Finder (Cal GEM 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 the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		X		
b. Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne 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 (Leq) 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.

Table 6. 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
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 Community Noise Equivalent Level (“CNEL”) and Day-Night Average Level (“Lnd”) 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 the time-varying sound over a 24-hour period. The Noise Element of the City's General Plan includes compatibility standards for noise exposure by land use (City of Santa Maria. 2009).

The federal government establishes noise standards for aircraft and conducts research on aircraft noise abatement techniques and noise compatibility associated with aviation operations. Through the Federal Aviation Administration, the federal government sponsors special studies, Federal Regulations (FAR) Part 150, of local aviation noise conditions and works with the airport to develop a comprehensive approach to the noise problem. A FAR Part 150 Airport Noise Compatibility Study was conducted for the Santa Maria Public Airport in 1986, although the information in the report was updated in the Airport Master Plan. In addition, the State of California has Title 21, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 2.5, Subchapter 6, section 5000 et seq., which prescribes the acceptable level of aircraft noise for persons living in the vicinity of airports at 65 dB CNEL.

The Santa Barbara County Airport Land Use Commission, who has Countywide responsibilities for land use compatibility with respect to airport noise, safety, and height requirements in the vicinity of airports, uses the 65 dB CNEL criteria established in Title 4, subchapter 6 of the Administrative Code of California. The Airport Land Use Commission's (ALUC's) noise policy objective is to assure that new land uses in the airport environs are compatible with aircraft generated noise. In addition to the Title 25 noise insulation standards. The specific features of the ALUC's policy are:

- The urban threshold for evaluation is the projected 55 dB CNEL contour. All land uses located outside these contours are consistent with the noise compatibility policies. b)
- The maximum airport-related noise level considered compatible for new residential development in the environs of the urban Airports is 65 dB CNEL. (See, e.g., Handbook, pp. xi, 4-4 to 4-12)
- The compatibility of new nonresidential development with Airport-related noise levels is indicated in Table 3-1.
 - Land uses not specifically listed shall be evaluated using criteria for similarly listed uses, as determined by the ALUC

The project site is located within 50 feet of an existing hotel, located to the northwest of the project site. No other sensitive receptor locations occur within 1,000 feet of the project site.

Discussion:

- a. The project parcel is immediately surrounded by airport runways/tarmac, airport services, a hotel, and agricultural uses. Development of the project site would result in a temporary increase in noise levels associated with construction activities, equipment, and vehicle trips. Construction noise would be variable, temporary, and limited in nature and duration, but will take place within 50 feet of the adjacent hotel, and therefore would have the potential to

exceed City exterior noise thresholds. However, with adherence to City construction work hours, implementation of noise control for stationary equipment, and proper maintenance of all equipment, unnecessary increased noise levels can be avoided. In accordance with the General Plan Noise Element, 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 these City construction work hours, and with the implementation of mitigation measure NOI-1 which includes noise control for construction related tools, regular maintenance of all equipment, and staging areas located at the greatest distance from sensitive receptors as feasible, unnecessary temporary increased noise levels can be reduced to *less than significant with mitigation*.

Development of the project site would include phased construction of four prefabricated metal hangar buildings in a developed area generally surrounded by airport/airport service and agricultural uses. Following construction, project uses would not result in a significantly noticeable increase over existing vehicle and airport noise in the area. Noise from idling vehicles would be temporary in nature and would not result in a significant increase in ambient noise levels in the area. Therefore, impacts related to generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in local plans would be *less than significant*.

- b. The project does not propose pile-driving or other high impact activities that would generate substantial groundborne noise or groundborne vibration during construction. Construction activities may generate groundborne vibration; however, these activities would be limited in duration and consistent with other standard construction activities and would very likely not be substantial enough to be detected by occupants of surrounding land uses. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.
- c. The project is located within Santa Maria Airport property, adjacent to the southeast boundary of the Airport. Based on the ALUP and the City of Santa Maria General Plan, Figure N-2, portions of the proposed air museum site are located within the Airport 65 dB noise contour, with the remainder of the site located outside the airport noise contours. Buildings Alpha, Bravo and Charlie would be mostly outside the 65 dB noise contour, but Building Delta would be within the 65 dB noise contour. The land uses that best apply to the air museum operations, include recreational uses such as recreation buildings, gymnasiums, club houses; commercial uses such as movie theaters, office areas of industrial facilities, and warehouses. According to the Santa Maria Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Table 3-1, each of the above uses are all considered Compatible Uses in both the 65 dB and <60 dB noise corridors. This is interpreted to mean that for indoor uses, standard construction methods will sufficiently attenuate exterior noise to an acceptable indoor community noise equivalent level (CNEL); and for outdoor uses, activities associated with the land use may be carried out with essentially no interference from aircraft noise. Therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, and potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

NOI-1 During construction of any future development within the project parcel, all equipment shall be properly maintained to ensure that no additional noise, due to worn or improperly maintained parts, is generated. Stockpiling and vehicle staging areas shall be located as far as practical from sensitive noise receptors. Every effort shall be made to create the greatest distance between noise sources and sensitive receptors during construction activities.

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:

- The proposed project would develop an air museum with four airplane hangars for the preservation and display of historic aircraft in an area of the city zoned for AS-I (Airport Service I) and AS-II (Airport Service II) zone district uses. The museum facility would create 15 new jobs which would not induce substantial unplanned population growth. The proposed project would be located in an urbanized portion of the city with existing infrastructure and the new jobs that would be created are likely to be filled by the existing employment base. Therefore, the impacts related to the inducement of substantial unplanned population growth, directly or indirectly, would be *less than significant*.
- The project is in an area planned and zoned for airport service-related uses and development. The project site is neither suitable nor appropriately zoned to allow for residential development and would not displace existing people or housing or necessitate the construction of additional housing. Therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to Population and 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	

Discussion:

a.i-iv. The project site is located within an existing developed area of the City that can accommodate the proposed development with the existing public services that have been established. The new project facilities would be required to be outfitted with a fire suppression system and would be subject to the City and State Fire Safety and Building codes. The project would not result in the need for expanded fire or police services. The impacts to fire and police response times or performance objectives would be minimal, and these services would remain in place to respond in the event of an emergency at the project site. The project would not be growth-inducing, it would not result in a significant increase in school-aged children in the area. The proposed project would not induce population growth or contribute significantly to the demand on park facilities. The project would not significantly impact schools, parks, roads or other public facilities. Therefore, the impact on public services (Fire protection, Police protection, Schools, Parks and other public facilities) in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in potentially significant environmental impacts 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 the air museum project 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 would not significantly increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. Development of the air museum project 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 § 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 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.

Screening criteria are as follows:

- **Project Size:** Projects that are consistent with the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or General Plan and generate or attract fewer than 110 daily trips.
- **Proximity to High Quality Transit:** Residential or office projects within one-half mile of an existing major transit station or stop along an existing high-quality transit corridor can be presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact.
- **Affordable Housing Development:** Projects where a minimum of 20% of the units are deed restricted for low or very low-income residents.
- **Local Serving Retail** typically less than 50,000 square feet

- Infrastructure: Projects that would not likely lead to a substantial or measurable increase the vehicle travel are presumed to be VMT neutral and generally presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact (i.e., induced VMT). These include Roadway Maintenance and Rehab Projects; Signal Timing/Synchronization/Adaptive Signal Control/Signal Preemption Improvements; Intersection Control Type and Turn Lane Channelization Improvements; Widening for Local or Local Collector Streets; and Transit/Bicycle/Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvements.
- Projects that fall within an identified location that demonstrated VMT per Capita for residential projects below 85 % of the countywide average for that metric.

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 residential uses. The city threshold based on 85% of the countywide average would be 12.34 VMT.

Discussion:

- a-b. The project applicant has provided a site plan for the development of an air museum with four airplane hangars and ancillary infrastructure. The project meets the screening criteria to screen out VMT impacts because the project would generate fewer than 110 daily trips (per CEQA). Trip generation estimates were provided by Associated Transportation Engineers (ATE 2023). Trip generation estimates for developments are typically calculated using the rates published in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual. The ITE manual does not, however, contain rates for uses like the Planes of Fame Air Museum. Trip generation estimates for the Project were developed based on operational data provided by the applicant for the anticipated weekday staff and visitor levels. The data includes the number of employees, visitors, deliveries, employee schedules, hours of operations, etc. The visitor estimates were based on attendance data collected at the existing Planes of Fame Air Museum located in Chino. It is noted that the Chino Museum is larger than the proposed Santa Maria Museum and is in an area with significantly higher population levels than Santa Maria. The trip generation estimates developed for the Santa Maria Museum based on the Chino attendance data are considered conservative. The Santa Maria air museum would result in approximately 87 average daily trips, including 9 trips in the AM peak hour and 9 trips during the PM peak hour. Therefore, the proposed project would be covered by this screening threshold and would not require VMT analysis pursuant to City Guidelines or SB 743. Further, the project would not exceed the city threshold for VMT per capita, 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. 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 project would be provided from Terminal Drive to the east. The proposed 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

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or			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 § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				X

Setting:

Pursuant to AB 52, 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 California Register of Historical Resources; or
 - b) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code 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 Public Resources Code 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 regarding 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.

In compliance with the requirements of AB 52, the City sent letters to the following Tribes in July 2024:

- Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians
- Chumash Council of Bakersfield
- Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation
- Northern Chumash Tribal Council
- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
- yak tityu tityu yak tilhini – Northern Chumash Tribe

No Tribes have requested further consultation.

Discussion:

i.-ii. No tribal cultural resources were identified as a result of the AB 52 consultation process, as no Tribe requested consultation nor identified resources of concern. Therefore, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource. These 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 tribal cultural resources; therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

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. The project also proposes three stormwater catchment basins to reduce stormwater runoff. 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 telecommunications would be provided by Verizon.

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. 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 2021). The City's UWMP includes population projections through 2045 and estimates a service population of 135,411 in 2045 (City of Santa Maria 2021). The project would account for approximately 15 employees. Since employees for the air museum project would likely be from the existing labor pool within the city and surrounding areas and would not result in additional population within the city, there would be sufficient water supply to meet projected water demands of the proposed project. 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 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 current population of the city is approximately 107,445 (DOF 2021). Employees for the air museum project would likely be from the existing labor pool within the city and surrounding areas and would not result in additional population within the city. According to the City's UWMP, the per capita wastewater generation for the city service area is approximately 68 gallons per day (City of Santa Maria 2021). Based on the projected population in the City and this wastewater generation rate, the City has determined that the existing facilities for wastewater management will continue to be adequate for future wastewater demands. 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 development would not result in the need for new or expanded solid waste facilities. To the extent possible, all materials used onsite for demonstrations would be recycled and waste would be minimized. 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
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 potential for wildland fire in the Santa Maria Planning Area is characterized by limited grassland and brush fires due to the absence of extensive tracts of mountainous and brush covered terrain. The most significant wildland fire hazards in the Planning Area are associated with the coastal sage scrub and grass covered slopes in the Casmalia and Solomon Hills to the south of the city. The oak savannah hillsides to the east of U.S. 101 and north of Clark Avenue represent another wildland fire hazard area. The Santa Maria Valley Oil Field represents another type of fire risk. The project site is a flat space that primarily contains seasonally cut grasses and does not contain a prior oil production facility.

Discussion:

- 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. All access and circulation routes to and from the project site would be developed in compliance with local and state safety regulations and all improvements would be required to comply with applicable California Fire and Building Code requirements

pertaining to emergency access. Therefore, the project would *not impact* an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan.

- b. According to the Safety Element in the City's General Plan, the Santa Maria Valley is not susceptible to high wildland fire risks (City 1995). This conclusion is further supported by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire and Resource Assessment Program Fire Hazard Sensitivity Zone Viewer. This map indicates that the project site is not located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The proposed project is not located in or near a state responsibility area or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones. Therefore, the project would not be exposed to risks from wildland fires and impacts would be *less than significant*.
- c. The site is in an urban area, with adjacent airport related development and farming operations. Connections to existing utilities will be required of the project, and these connections will be sized to adequately serve the facility. These improvements will not exacerbate fire risk therefore the project would cause *no impact*.
- d. The project site is relatively flat. The project site is not located within an area that has been identified by the State of California as being potentially susceptible to seismically induced landslides, nor is the site within a flooding hazard zone. The proposed project would not expose people or structures to significant downstream flooding impacts as a result of runoff or drainage changes. Implementation of the proposed project would not exacerbate the existing downslope or downstream flooding or landslides. 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 environment impacts to wildfire. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

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CONSULTATION AND DATA SOURCES

CONSULTATION SOURCES

City Departments Consulted

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

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

County Agencies/Departments Consulted

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

State/Federal Agencies Consulted

☐	Army Corps of Engineers
☐	Caltrans
☐	CA Fish and Game
☐	Federal Fish and Wildlife
☐	FAA
☒	Regional Water Quality Control Bd.
☐	Integrated Waste Management Bd.

DATA SOURCES

General Plan

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

Other

	Agricultural Preserve Maps
X	Archaeological Maps/Reports

X	Architectural Elevations
X	Biology Reports
	CA Oil and Gas Maps
X	FEMA Maps (Flood)
X	Grading Plans
X	Site Plan
	Topographic Maps
X	Aerial Photos
	Traffic Studies
X	Trip Generation Manual (ITE)
X	CALEEMOD Air Quality Model
X	Zoning Maps

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 air museum within the project site has the potential to result in temporary construction related impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, and noise. However, mitigation measures have been identified to reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level, including but not limited to, nesting bird avoidance, inadvertent discovery of archaeological and paleontological resources protocol, soil management and noise control measures. Therefore, these potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.
- Cumulative impacts consider the cumulative effects of reasonably foreseeable projects within Santa Maria. Cumulatively considerable impacts could occur if the construction or operation of other projects coincides with the proposed project in the

same vicinity of the project site, such that similar impacts of multiple projects combine to expose a resource to greater levels of impacts than what would occur as a result of the project. As described in Environmental Checklist Sections 1 through 20, with respect to all environmental issues, the project would either have no impact, a less-than-significant impact, or impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of required mitigation. The project would have no impact on agriculture and forestry resources, and energy, and therefore would not contribute to cumulative impacts to these environmental issue areas. Certain environmental issue areas (e.g., cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, and tribal cultural resources) are by their nature specific to a project location such that impacts at one location do not add impacts at other locations and therefore would not result in cumulative impacts. In addition, other issue areas (e.g., air quality, GHG emissions), address cumulative impacts. Therefore, the discussion of cumulative impacts is limited to the following issue areas:

- **Aesthetics.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative impacts to aesthetics is Santa Maria. Projects within Santa Maria have the potential to result in cumulative changes to the city's visual environment by introducing development that blocks scenic views, is visually inconsistent with its surroundings, or introduces substantial light and glare. However, these projects would be subject to the City's applicable regulations related to scenic quality, height limitations, and minimum setback requirements established within the City's General Plan and Municipal Code. These projects would implement City lighting standards to shield lighting from adjacent sites. With adherence to City regulations related to aesthetics, cumulative development would have a less-than-significant impact related to aesthetics. The project would be consistent with surrounding development at the project site and would introduce lighting in accordance with City requirements such that lighting would not considerably contribute to cumulative impacts associated with substantial increases in lighting.
- **Biological Resources.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative impacts to biological resources is Santa Maria. Cumulative development could result in impacts to biological resources, including nesting birds. Cumulative development would be subject to similar regulatory requirements as the project, including the federal Endangered Species Act, California Endangered Species Act, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act. However, existing regulatory requirements alone cannot guarantee species loss, habitat loss, or other impact to biological resources due to cumulative development. As such, cumulative biological resources impacts would be potentially significant. The project would incorporate Mitigation Measure BIO-1 to reduce project-level impacts to less than significant. As a result, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative biological resources impacts.

- **Hydrology and Water Quality.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative impacts to surface water is Santa Maria. The geographic areas used to assess cumulative impacts to groundwater is land overlying the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin. A cumulative impact could occur if projects in Santa Maria discharge pollutants to the City's stormwater drainage system and violate water quality standards, or if these projects would result in substantially decreased groundwater supplies. Cumulative projects would be required to comply with federal, state, and City water quality requirements, such as the Construction Stormwater General Permit, CCRWQCB Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements, and Section 8-12A.04 of the City's Municipal Code. These regulations would require implementation of BMPs to treat stormwater flows. Cumulative impacts to hydrology and surface water quality would be minimized with adherence to these regulations. Therefore, cumulative impacts to surface water would be less than significant. Cumulative development could result in increased water demand from the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin supplied by the City. However, the City is subject to adjudication regulations that would ensure the City does not increase groundwater extraction beyond their permitted allocation. As a result, cumulative development would not receive groundwater in excess of the City's permitted allocation. Cumulative impacts related to sustainable groundwater management would be less than significant.
- **Mineral Resources.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative impacts to surface water is Santa Maria. A cumulative impact could occur if cumulative projects would result cumulative losses of a known mineral resource or locally important mineral resource recovery site. According to the City's major development list, cumulative projects are located in developed areas of Santa Maria which are not used for mineral extraction (City of Santa Maria 2024f). Accordingly, cumulative development would not have the potential to result in the cumulative loss of substantial mineral deposits or mineral resource extraction areas. No cumulative impacts to mineral resources would occur.
- **Noise.** Construction and operational noise and vibration are localized and rapidly attenuate. Cumulative construction impacts could occur if cumulative development in Santa Maria is located proximate to the project site such that overlapping construction schedules or operational noise, or vibration-generating sources could result in increased noise and vibration at the same sensitive receptors. As the Elements Apartment project has concluded grading and construction activities requiring heavy equipment, the closest cumulative development to the project site is the Santa Maria Airport Foxenwood Self Storage development, located approximately 0.7 mile southeast of the project site (City of Santa Maria 2024f). Active agricultural uses and a roadway separate the project site from this development. Due to the distance between the two projects, cumulative noise and vibration impacts would not occur.

- **Population and Housing, Public Services, and Recreation.** Cumulative residential projects in Santa Maria would increase the total population in Santa Maria, currently at 109,477, which could result in cumulative growth. However, the City has planned for approximately 139,461 residents in the General Plan. There are 17 cumulative residential projects in Santa Maria, consisting of 2,804 proposed units (City of Santa Maria 2024f). Using the DOF estimate of 3.61 persons per household in Santa Maria, the additional 2,804 units would generate approximately 10,122 new residents and would not increase the city's population to 139,461. The project does not propose to add any new housing or added population, as the employees of the air museum would largely be sourced from the local workforce. Therefore, cumulative population and housing impacts would be less than significant. Furthermore, because cumulative development would not exceed the City's planning projections, the City has planned for public services and recreational needs from cumulative development. Therefore, cumulative impacts to public services and recreation would be less than significant.
- **Transportation.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative transportation impacts is Santa Maria. Cumulative development could result in a greater number of vehicle trips in Santa Maria compared to existing conditions and therefore increase citywide VMT, which would be a significant cumulative impact. The project would not exceed the City's VMT per capita threshold and therefore would not contribute considerably to cumulative transportation impacts.
- **Utilities and Service Systems.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative Utilities and Service Systems is Santa Maria. Cumulative development could result in increased water demand in excess of existing supplies, wastewater generation and solid waste generation in excess of existing facilities' capacity and increased electric and natural gas demand requiring substantial infrastructure. The City's UWMP estimates a service population of 135,411 in 2045. As described above, cumulative development is anticipated to increase the population of Santa Maria by 10,122 people to 119,599 people and does not exceed UWMP projections. According to the City's UWMP, the City's water supply would meet projected water demands through 2045 (City of Santa Maria 2021). Therefore, cumulative impacts related to water demand would be less than significant.

The City's Wastewater Treatment Plant has a current capacity of 13.5 million gallons per day, allowing the City to serve a population of up to 120,000 people. Because population growth anticipated from cumulative development would increase Santa Maria's population to 119,599 people, cumulative development would be able to be served by the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant. The project would not generate wastewater flows exceeding the capacity of existing sewer infrastructure and, therefore, would not contribute considerably to cumulative sewer impacts.

Cumulative development would increase solid waste generation in Santa Maria; however, the Santa Maria Regional Landfill would be able to receive solid waste

through 2028 and the Santa Maria IWMF would be able to receive solid waste from the city beyond 2028 through 2152. Therefore, cumulative solid waste impacts would be less than significant. Cumulative development would receive power from 3CE via PG&E infrastructure and natural gas from SoCalGas. Existing electric and natural gas infrastructure is present throughout Santa Maria and cumulative development would only require minor connections to existing natural gas and electric infrastructure. Therefore, cumulative impacts to electric and natural gas infrastructure would be less than significant.

- **Wildfire.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative wildfire impacts is Santa Maria. Cumulative development in Santa Maria could result in wildfire hazards that could potentially expose residents and employees within Santa Maria to wildfire or pollutants associated with wildfire smoke. Cumulative development, similar to the project, would be required to adhere to applicable regulations to minimize fire risk, including the California Fire Code, California Public Resources Code Regulations, and SMFD regulations. These regulations would ensure cumulative development would minimize the potential for wildfire to occur within Santa Maria. Therefore, cumulative wildfire impacts would be less than significant.

Based on the above, the project would not have impacts that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.

3. Adverse effects on human beings are typically associated with air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, and wildfire impacts. As discussed in detail in these sections, the project would not result in substantial adverse impacts related to hazardous materials and wildfire. With incorporation of mitigation measures identified in this Initial Study for Noise, 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/Visual Resources	☐	Land Use and Planning
☐	Agriculture and Forest Resources	☐	Mineral Resources
☐	Air Quality	☒	Noise
☒	Biological Resources	☐	Population and Housing
☒	Cultural Resources	☐	Public Services
☐	Energy	☐	Recreation
☒	Geology and Soils	☐	Transportation
☐	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐	Tribal Cultural Resources
☐	Hazards and Hazardous Materials	☐	Utilities and Service Systems
☐	Hydrology/Water Quality	☐	Wildfire

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 legal 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 potentially 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.

Carol Ziesenhenne

Carol Ziesenhenne
Environmental Analyst

10/24/2024

Date

Dana Eady

Dana Eady
Environmental Officer

10-23-24

Date



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