# COUNTY OF MONTEREY

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Planning – Building – Housing
1441 Schilling Place, South 2nd Floor
Salinas, California 93901-4527
(831) 755-5025

# *INITIAL STUDY*

## *BACKGROUND INFORMATION*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Project Title:** | Castroville Self Storage LLC |
| **File No.:** | PLN220122 |
| **Project Location:** | 10520 Tembladera Street, Castroville |
| **Name of Property Owner:** | Castroville Self Storage LLC |
| **Name of Applicant:** | Barbara French |
| **Assessor's Parcel Number(s):** | 030-156-004-000 |
| **Acreage of Property:** | 3.03 acres |
| **General Plan Designation:** | North County \| Castroville Community Plan |
| **Zoning District:** | Mixed-Use \| Resource Conservation |
| **Lead Agency:** | Monterey County Housing and Community Development |
| **Prepared By:** | Mary Israel, Planner, County of Monterey; administrative draft by Denise Duffy & Associates, Inc. |
| **Date Prepared:** | October 2024 |
| **Contact Person:** | Kayla Nelson, Associate Planner, nelsonk@countyofmonterey.gov |
| **Phone Number:** | (831) 796-6408 |

# *II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING*

## A. Description of Project:

The Castroville Self Storage Project, herein referred to as the "Proposed Project" or "Project," would be located at 10520 Tembladera Street, Castroville, California 95012, Assessor's Parcel Number ("APN") 030-156-004-000; see **Figure 1. Regional Map** and **Figure 2. Vicinity Map**. The Proposed Project consists of a Use Permit and Design Approval for the construction of a 54,409 square-foot ("sf") mini-warehouse storage facility with an attached two-story mixed-use building consisting of a 1,294 sf office on the first floor and a 1,294 sf residential unit on the second floor, see **Figure 3. Site Plan**.

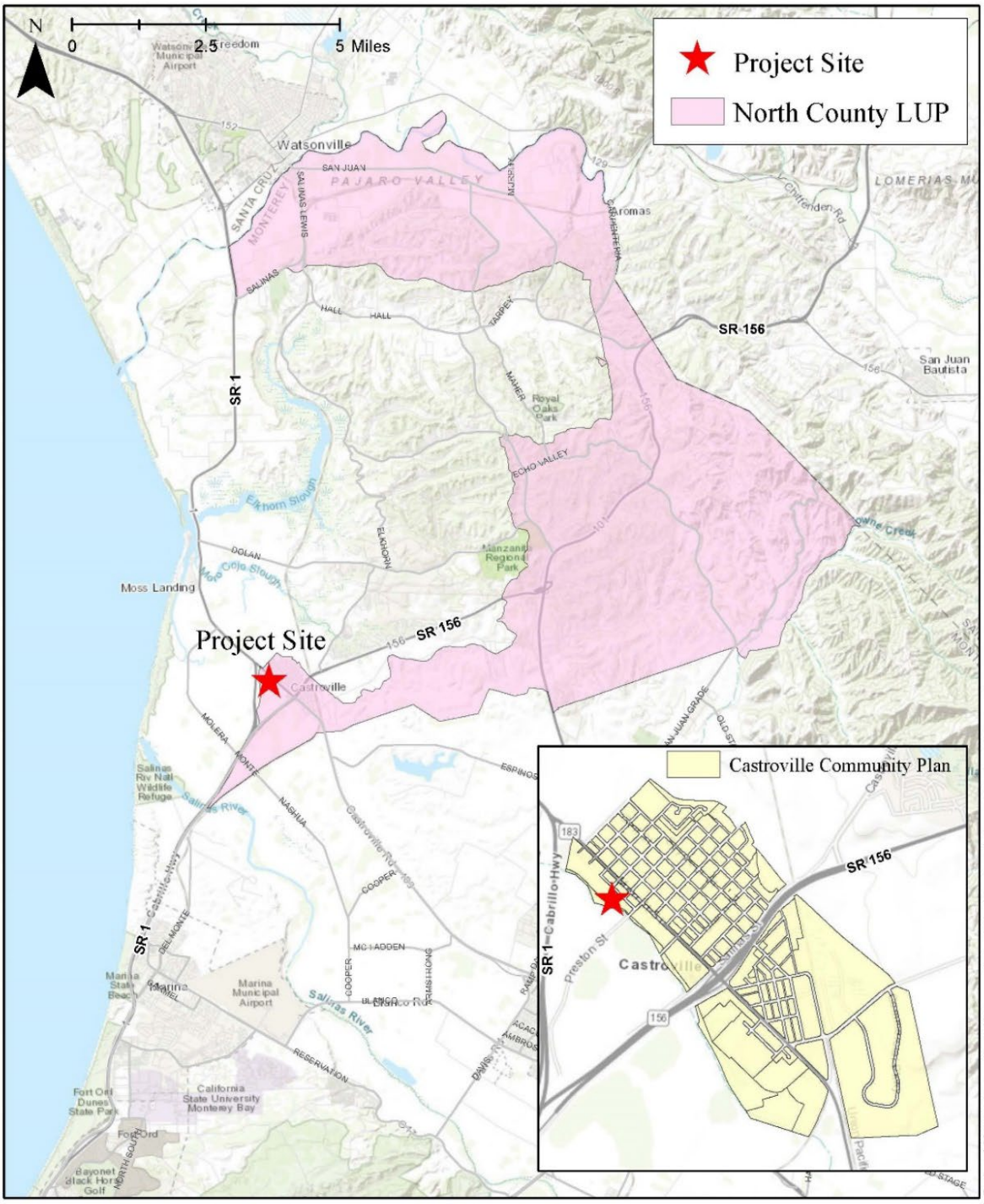
The mini-warehouse storage facility would consist of nine single-story buildings, which would accommodate a total of 500 storage units, see **Table 1** below.

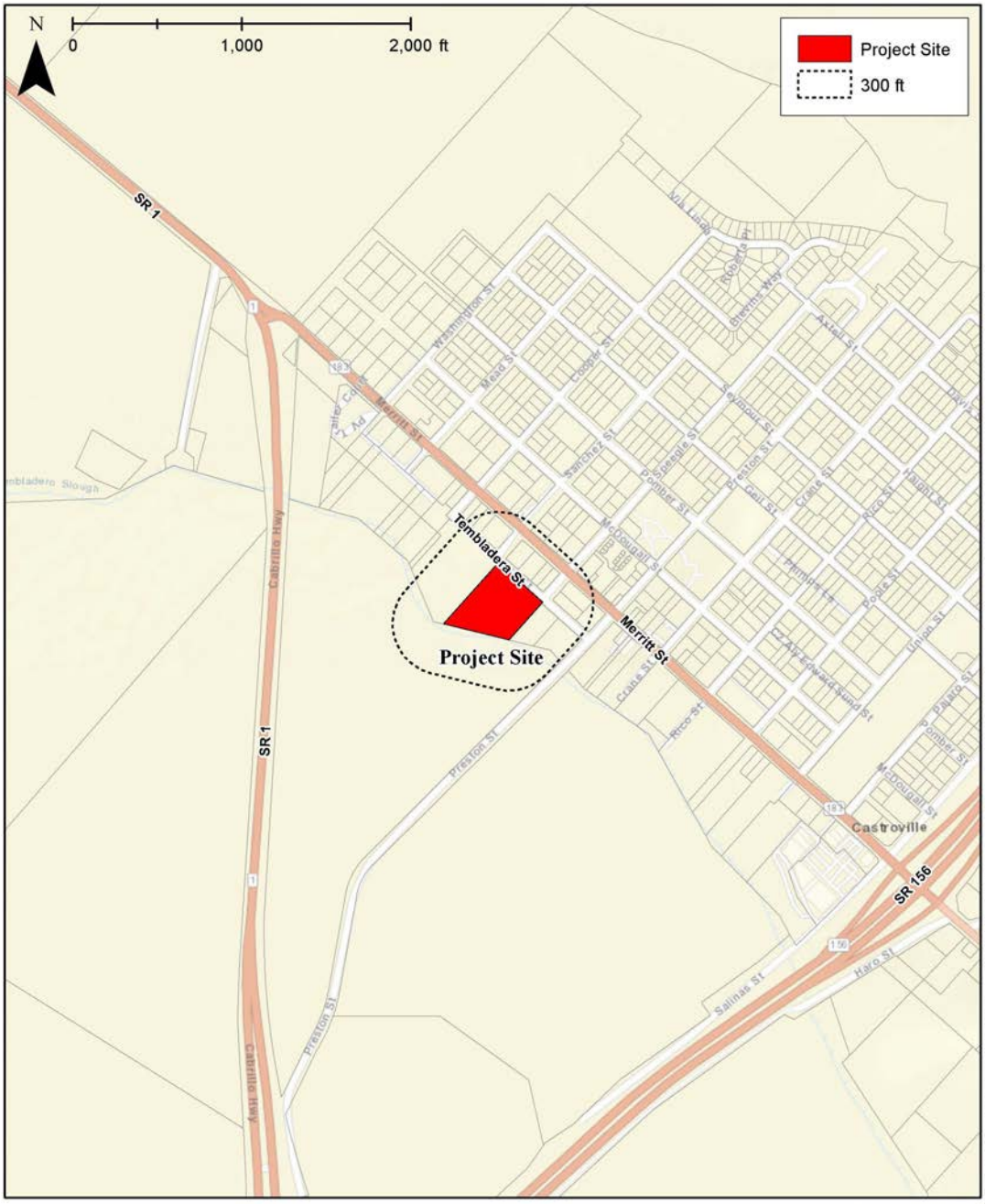
**Table 1**
**Mini-warehouse Storage Facility Buildings**

| Building # | Square Footage |
|---|---|
| A | 6,100 |
| B | 5,426 |
| C | 6,058 |
| D | 7,255 |
| E | 8,288 |
| F | 8,355 |
| G1 | 1,554 |
| G2 | 5,065 |
| H | 6,308 |
| **Total** | **54,409** |

Source: Mehringer Construction & Desing. Castroville Self Storage, LLC. Site Plans October 16, 2023.

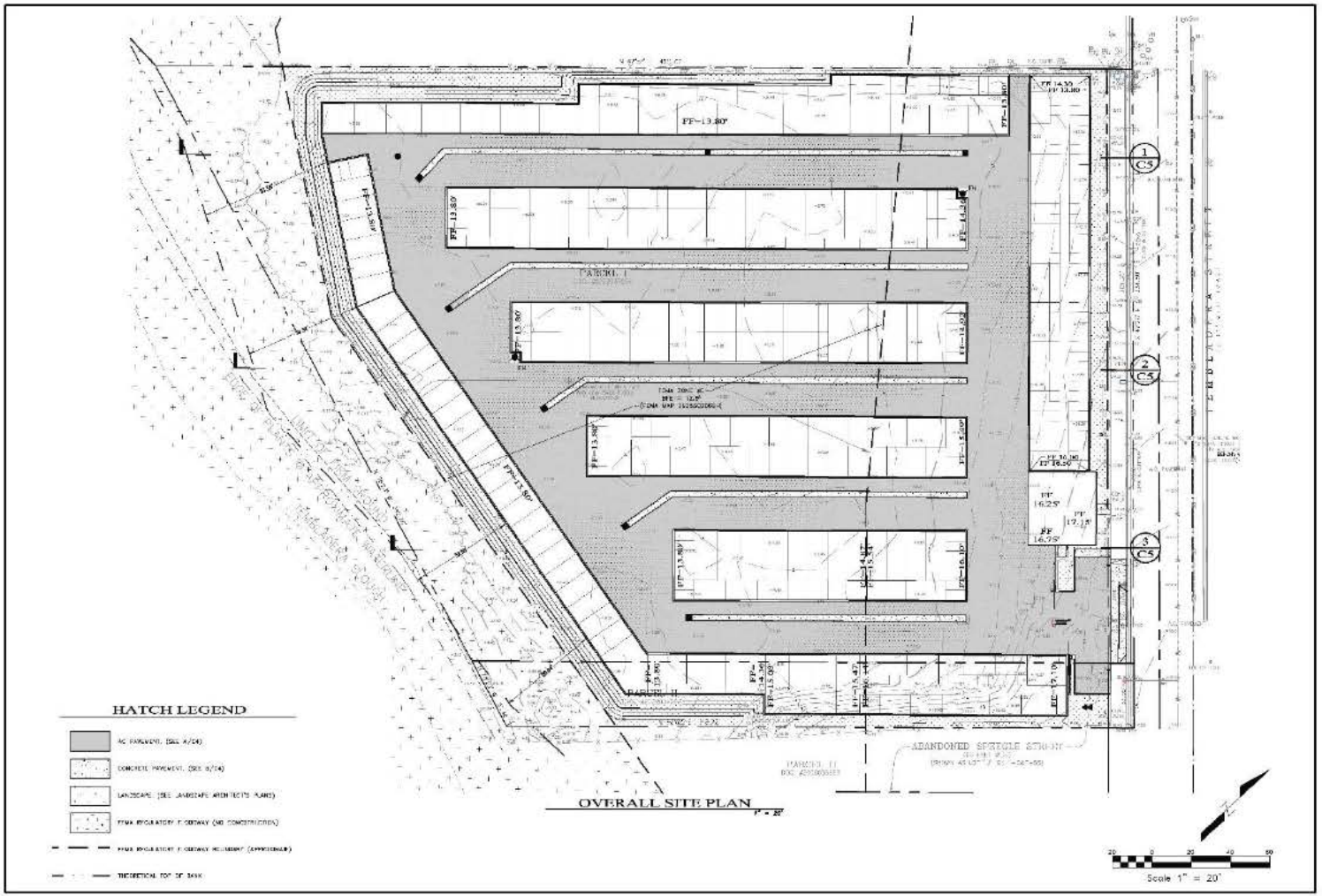
The mini-warehouse storage facility will be constructed with materials that include steel siding, concrete masonry units ("CMU") block walls, standing seam metal roof, and sectional metal roll-up doors. The two-story mixed-use building would include an office on the first floor with one restroom, and a two bedroom, two bath residential unit on the second floor. Similar in architectural design, the office and residential unit will be constructed using stucco, metal door and window frames, and sectioned roll-up garage doors. In addition to the buildings described above, the Proposed Project would improve the site with parking, site access, security, utilities, and landscaping, as detailed below.


N
0
2.5
5 Miles
Project Site
North County LUP
Watsonville
SAN JUAN
PAJARO VALLEY
SANTA CRUZ
MONTEREY
SALINAS
SR 1
SR 156
Moss Landing
Project Site
Castroville
Elkhorn Slough
Moro Cojo Slough
Salinas River
Marina
Marina Municipal Airport
Fort Ord Dunes State Park
California State University Monterey Bay
Castroville Community Plan
SR 1 Cabrillo Hwy
Preston St
Castroville Blvd
Pajaro River
Watsonville Municipal Airport
San Juan Bautista
Royal Oaks Park
Manzanita Regional Park
Elkhorn Slough
Moss Landing
Salinas River
Marina Municipal Airport
Fort Ord Dunes State Park
California State University Monterey Bay
Castroville
Regional Map
Figure
1
Path: C:\GIS\GIS_Projects\2024-34 Castroville Self Storage Project\Final Products\Figure 1 Regional Map.mxd




Vicinity Map

Figure 2




# Site Plan

Source: C3 Engineering, Inc.

Figure 3

***Site Access, Onsite Parking, and Security***

The Proposed Project site is accessible from Tembladera Street in Castroville. The Project would include one covered and one uncovered parking space for employees, one Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") parking space with a side aisle, and two parking spaces for customers. Internal access to the Project site would include a single driveway and security gate. The gates to the Proposed Project would be open from 7 AM to 7 PM, seven days per week. The Project would include a metal 10-ft fence with a vehicle entrance gate and walls constructed from concrete masonry units ("CMU").

***Lighting***

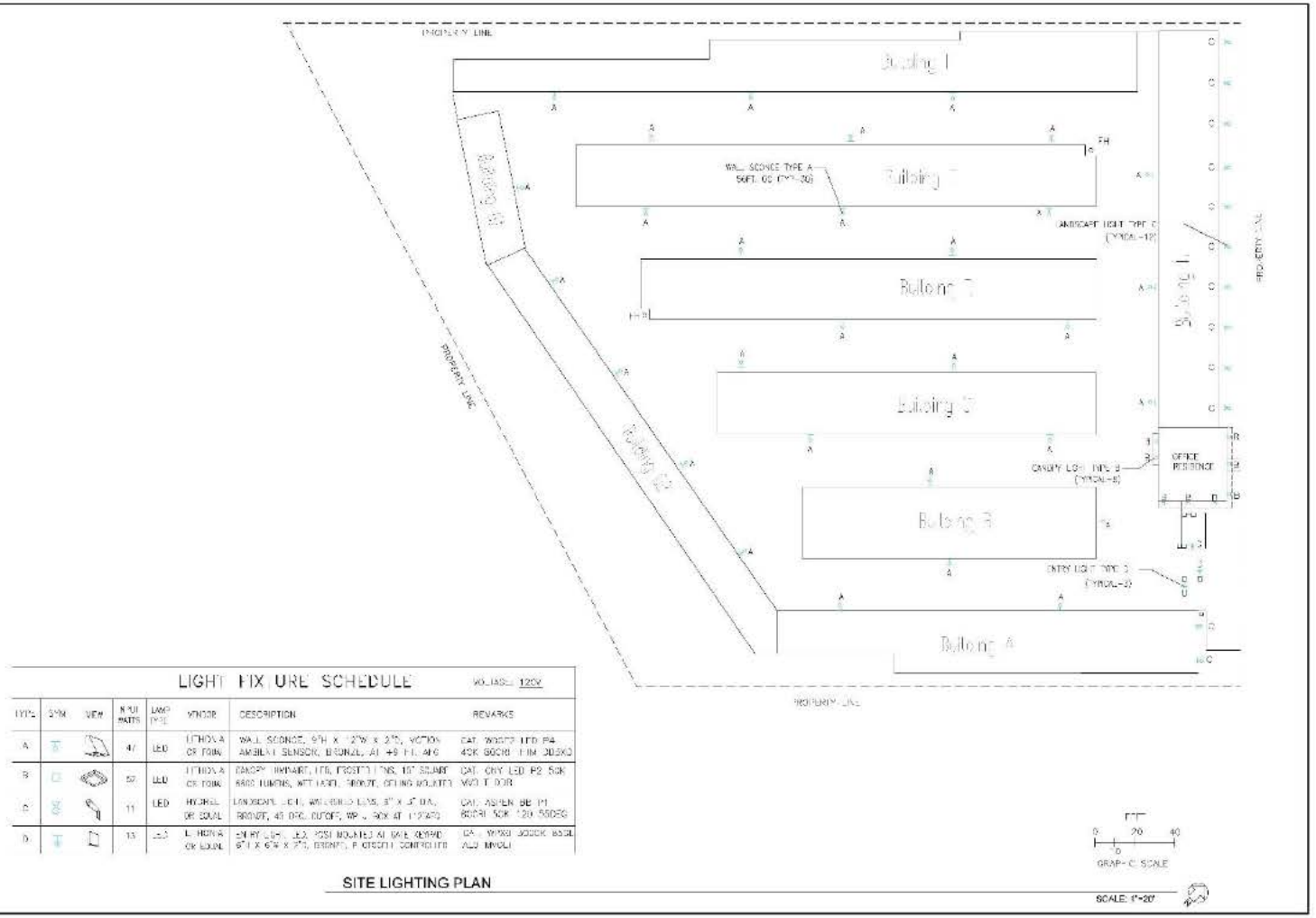
The Proposed Project site would include exterior lighting fixtures. Lighting would be unobtrusive, downlit, and shielded. Fixtures would include wall scones, canopy lights, landscape lights, and entry lights. LED bulbs would be utilized throughout the Project site. See **Figure 4. Lighting Plan.** In addition, a 32 sf LED-lit storefront sign, consisting of 17" letters in light green would be attached to the awning of the two-story mixed-use buildings at the front of the Project site, along Tembladera Street.

***Utilities***

The Proposed Project would construct new utilities including electrical, water, and wastewater. All utilities would connect to existing utilities located along Tembladera Street, and would be, where possible, underground, see **Figure 5a. Utilities Plan**. Pacific Gas & Electric ("PG&E") would provide electrical and natural gas services to the Project site. The Project would include rooftop array of photovoltaic ("PV") solar panels to provide additional power generation. See **Figure 5b. Roof Plan.** Castroville Community Services District ("CCSD") would provide water and wastewater services to the Proposed Project site. The Project would connect to the existing water main and sewer main located on Tembladera Street. Portable restrooms would be provided during construction. Waste Management ("WM") would provide solid waste collection services for the employees residing on the Proposed Project site.

***Stormwater Drainage***

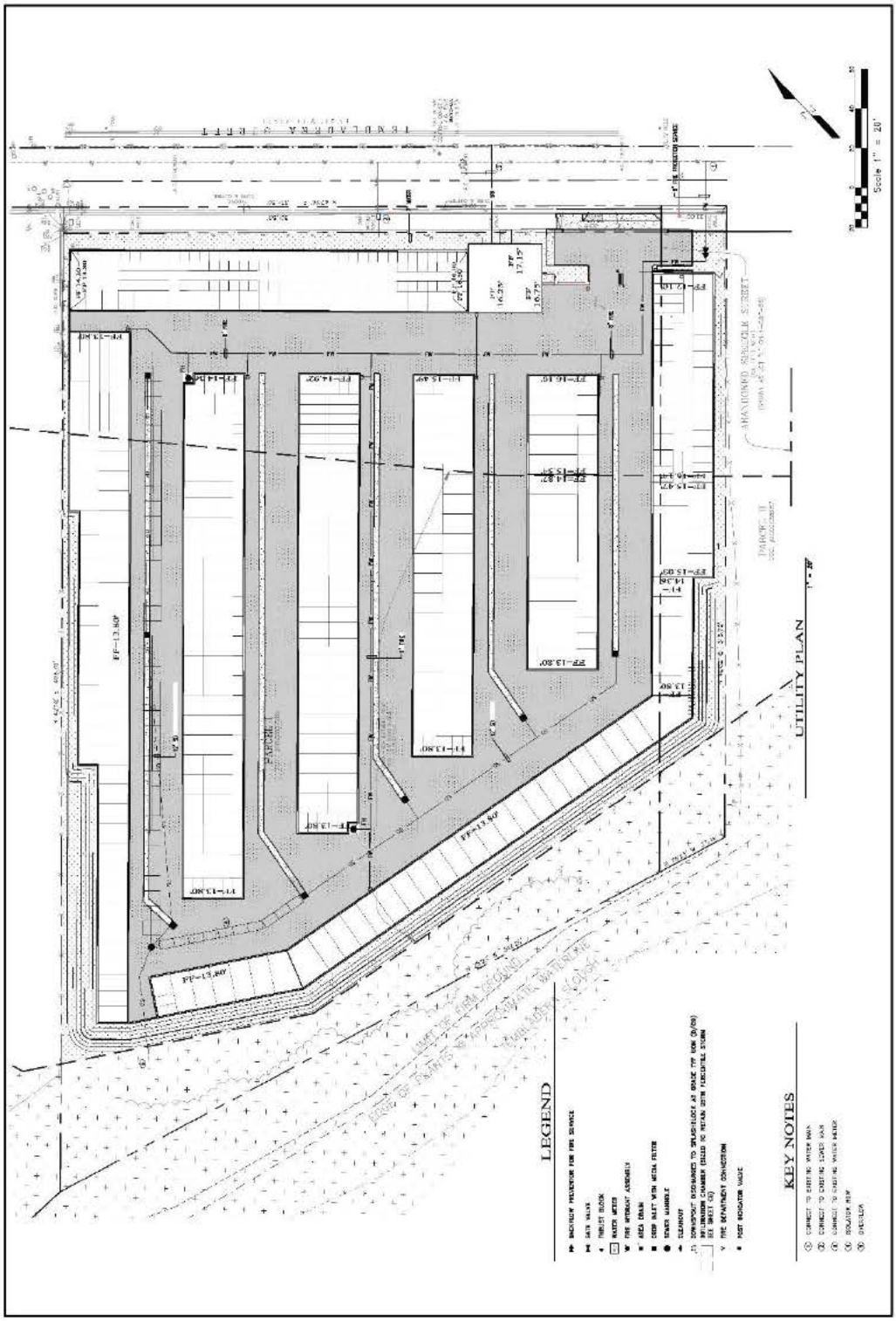
The project site is located immediately north and adjacent to the Tembladero Slough which borders the southern property line. The site is approximately 1.12 miles south of the Moro Cojo Slough, 2.15 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, and 2.7 miles west of Espinosa Lake. The Proposed Project would include a stormwater drainage system that would include five infiltration chambers, subdrains, area drains, drop inlets with media filters, and downspouts. Stormwater collected by these features would be transported through subsurface stormwater pipes before being captured in an isolator row. Overflow of stormwater would be released to the Tembladero Slough through a subsurface pipe in the southwest corner of the Project site. See **Figure 6a and 6b. Stormwater Drainage Plans**.




# Lighting Plan

Source: E. Michael Louden, P.E.

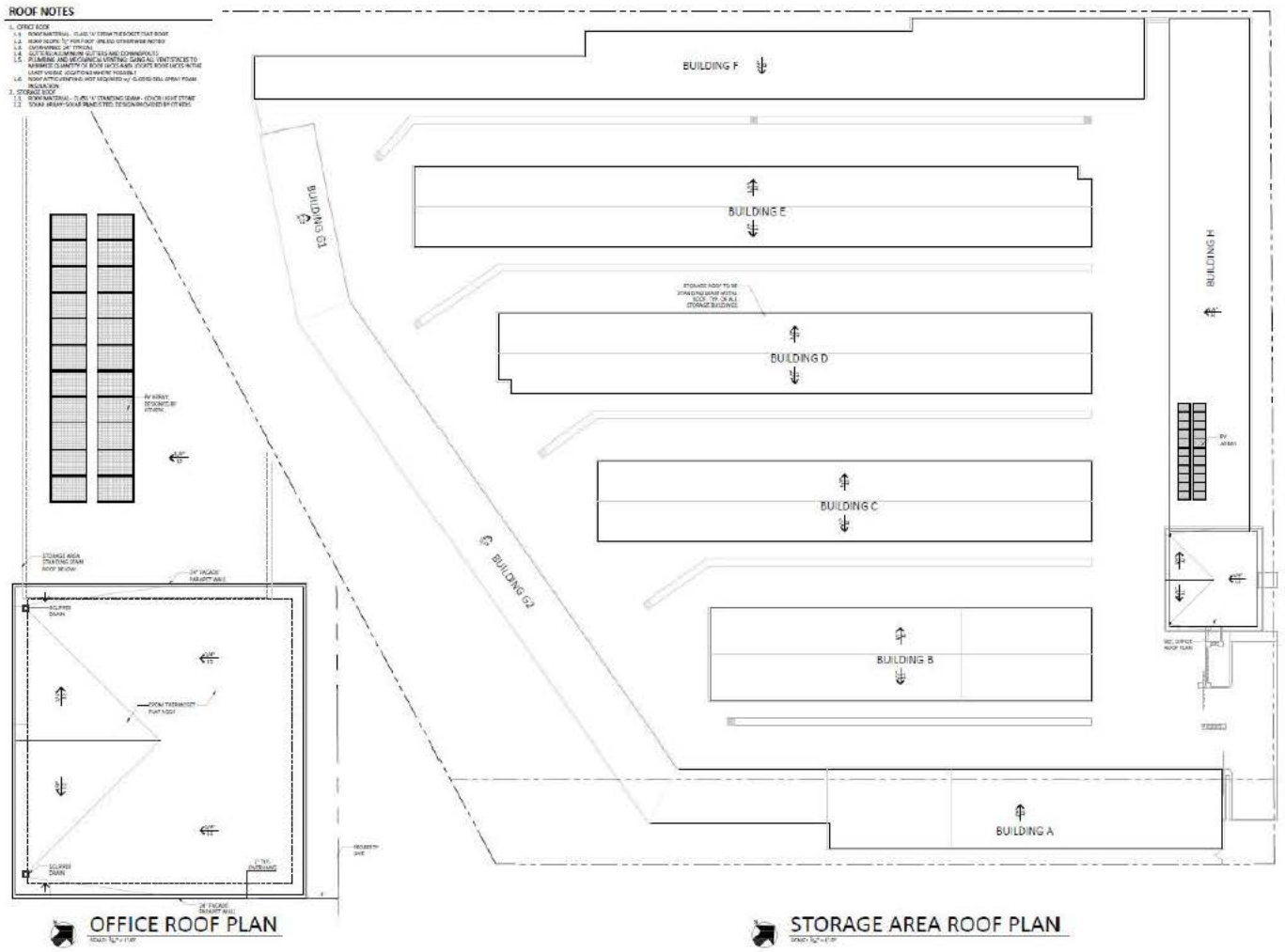
Figure 4




Utilities Plan

Source: C3 Engineering, Inc.

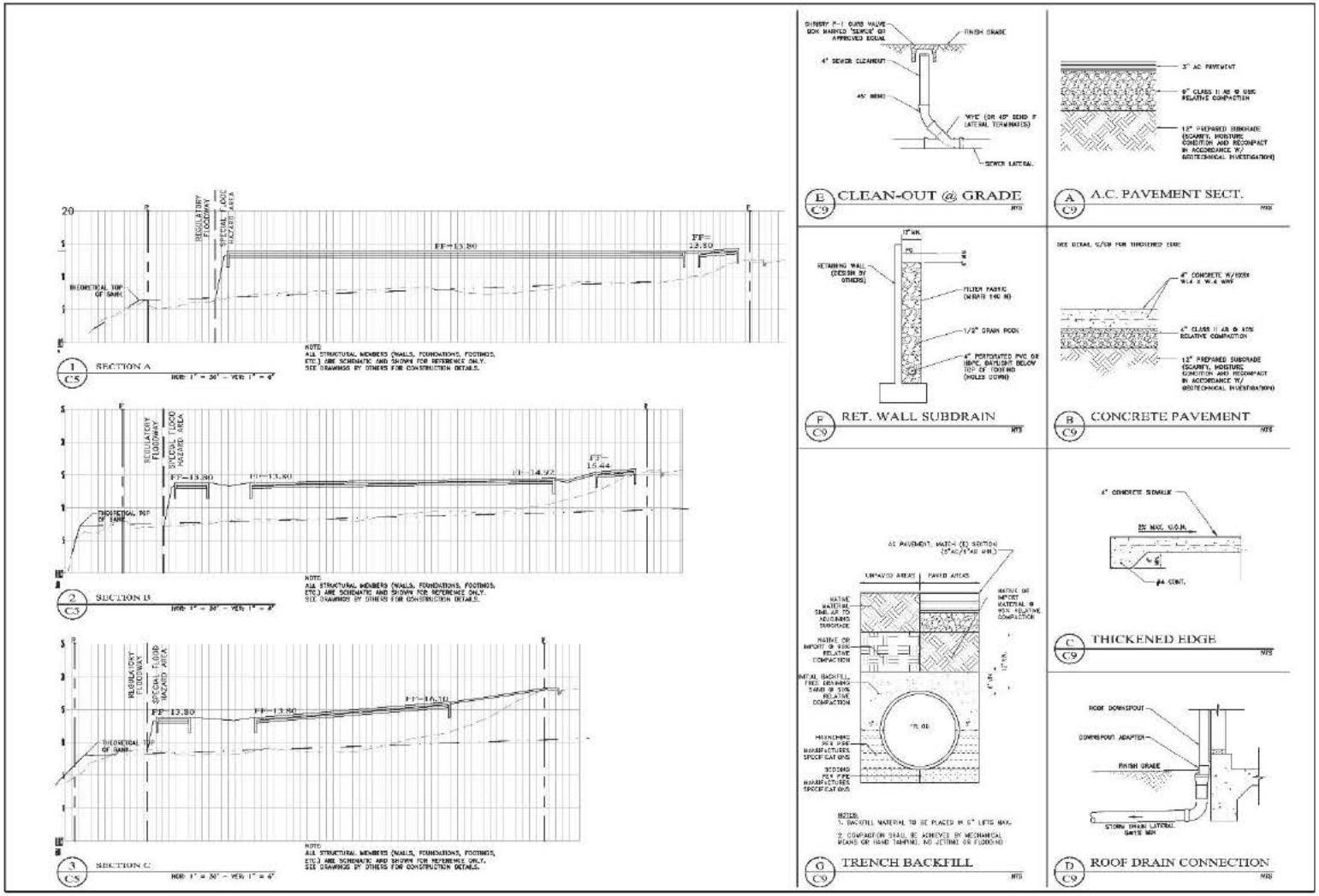
Figure 5a




# Roof Plan

Source: Mehringer Construction & Design

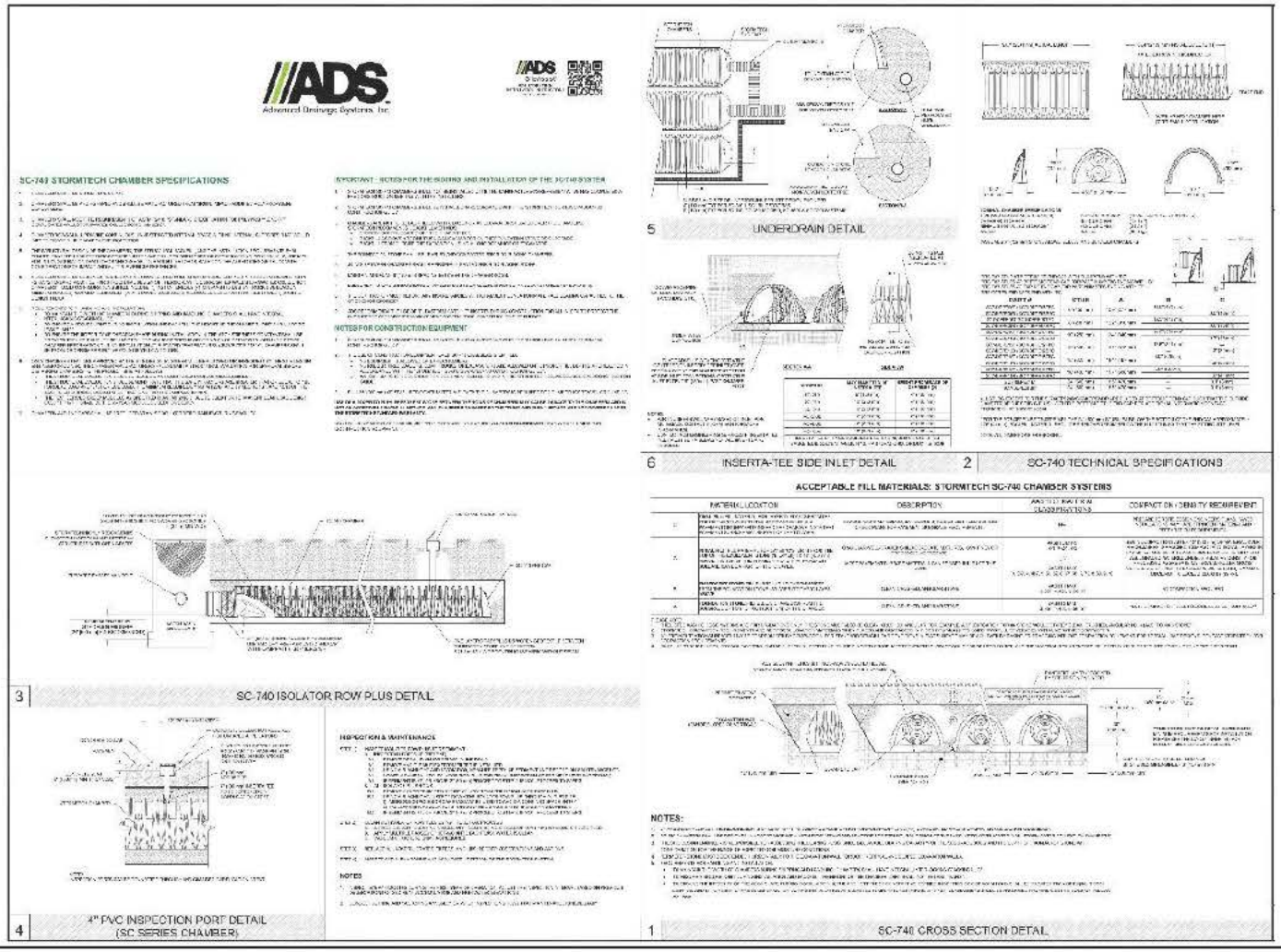
Figure 5b




# Stormwater Drainage Plans

Source: C3 Engineering, Inc.

Figure 6a




# Stormwater Drainage Plans

Source: C3 Engineering, Inc.

Figure 6b

***Landscaping***

The Proposed Project would include approximately 9,985 sf of irrigated landscaping. Landscaping would be located along the perimeter of the proposed development and consist of seven trees, 116 shrubs, and groundcover consisting of rock mulch and erosion control blanket. The Project would utilize species approved by the Monterey County Agricultural Commission's office. Moreover, the species selected will be water efficient, and California natives. Irrigation for landscaping will be "smart controlled" to reduce water use and metered separately from the rest of the Project site. The landscape design plan is shown in **Figure 7. Landscape Plan**.

***Construction***

Construction of the Proposed Project would generally involve tractors, backhoes, compactors, excavators, rollers, dump trucks, etc. Most of the equipment would be brought to the site at the beginning of work and remain until the completion of construction. Trucks would bring materials to the site, as necessary. Construction equipment and stockpiles would be kept onsite. Deliveries would likely take place over a short period of time (e.g., less than a month). The estimated number of construction workers on site at any one time would be approximately 10 workers and not exceed 20 workers on busiest days. The start of construction depends on the Project approval date, seasonal factors, and the contractor's schedule. However, once approved, construction is expected to last approximately one year. Construction activities would be limited to the hours between 7 AM to 7 PM, Monday through Saturday. No construction activities would occur on Sundays or holidays. Construction access to the Proposed Project site would be provided by Tembladera Street.

***Grading***

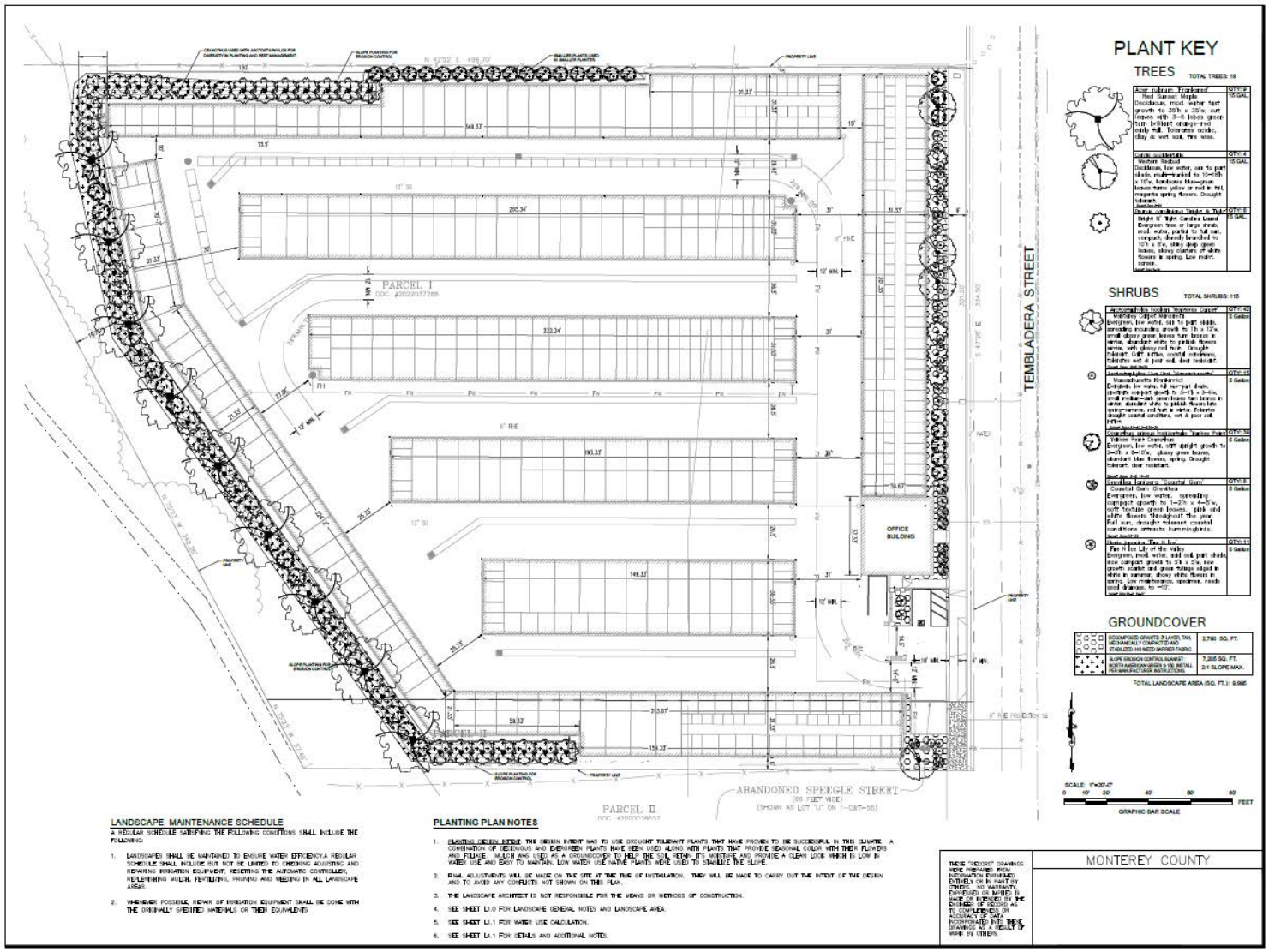
The Proposed Project would disturb approximately 2.74 acres of the 3.03 acre Project site, and would require approximately 100 cubic yards of cut and 16,075 cubic yards of imported fill. Due to the proximity to the Tembladero Slough and being located within a floodplain fringe, the Project would utilize fill to raise the elevation outside of the 100-year storm anticipated flood zone. The maximum height of excavation would be one foot. Please see **Figure 8. Grading Plan**.

***Pervious and Impervious Cover***

The Proposed Project site is currently without structures and active uses, but disturbed; and has approximately 132,029 sf of pervious coverage. The Proposed Project would result in 105,110 sf of impervious coverage and 26,919 sf of pervious coverage. Specifically, the Proposed Project would result in 55,703 sf of impervious building coverage, and 49,407 sf of impervious hardscape and paving. Additionally, the Project would include 2,539 sf of landscaping, 10,865 sf of erosion control, and 13,515 sf of the Project site would remain undeveloped.

***Tree Removal***

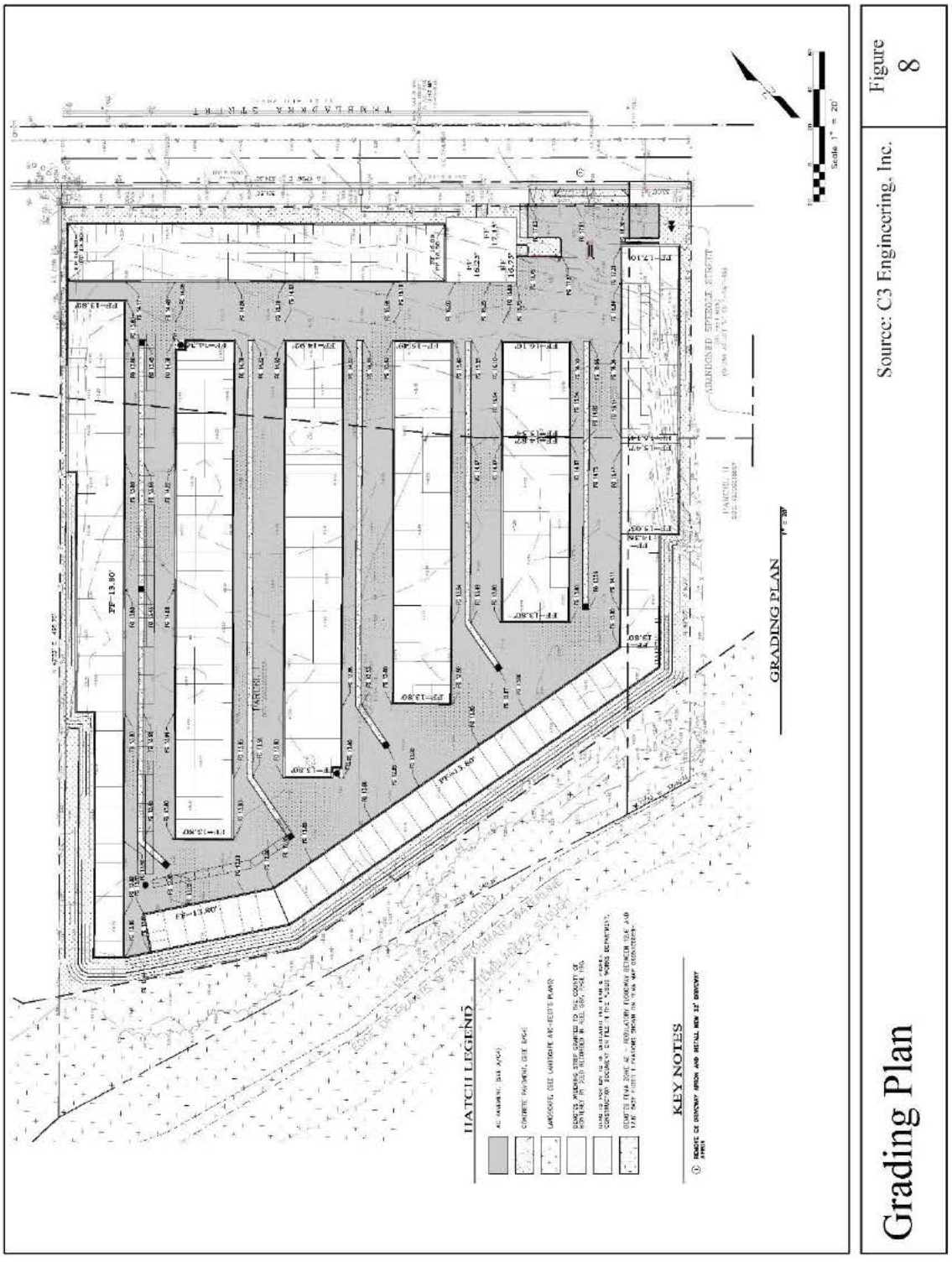
Construction of the Proposed Project would not result in the removal of trees.




Landscape Plan

Source: Mehringer Construction & Design

Figure 7




***Operations and Employees***

The Proposed Project would include the construction and operation of an office that would operate from Mondays to Saturdays 9 AM to 6 PM, and Sundays from 9 AM to 5 PM. The Project would employ two full-time and two part-time employees with no more than two employees working at a time. In addition to the office, the Project would include a residential unit on the second floor (i.e., above the office) that would be exclusively used by the office manager.

**B. Surrounding Land Uses and Environmental Setting**:

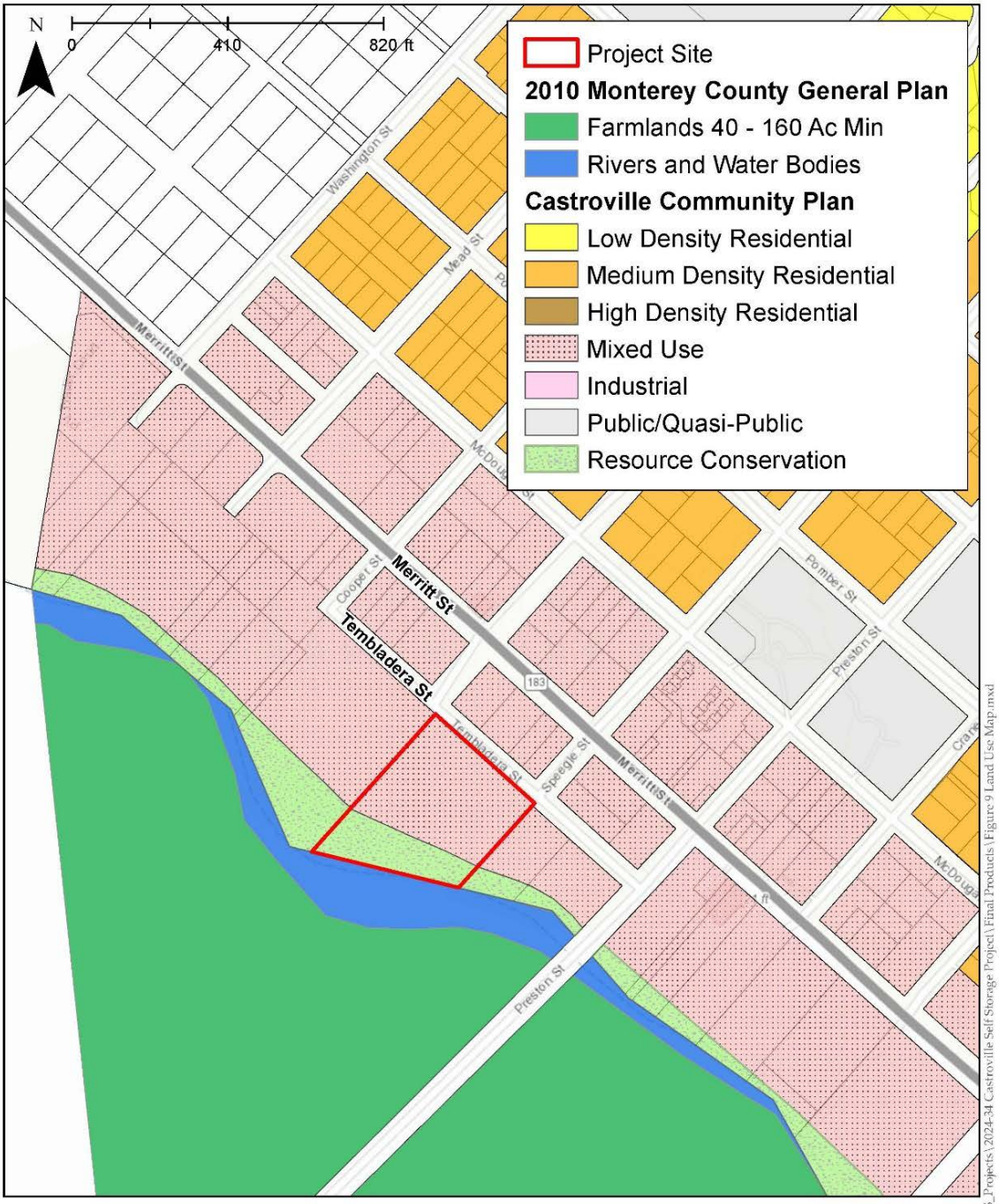
The Proposed Project is located at 10520 Tembladera Street, Castroville, California 95012, APN 030-156-002-000. The site is approximately 1.12 miles south of the Moro Cojo Slough, 2.15 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, and 2.7 miles west of Espinosa Lake. The parcel is currently vacant. Project would disturb approximately 2.74 acres of an approximately 3.03-acre parcel. The Project site is subject to the requirements of the 2010 General Plan, North County (Inland) Area Plan, and Castroville Community Plan. Within the Castroville Community Plan, a Land Use Classification Designation System is used to identify appropriate land uses rather than referring to Zoning Districts. The site is identified with a Land Use Classification Designation of "Mixed-Use | Resource Conservation" in the Castroville Community Plan. The Proposed Project site is surrounded by parcels identified as mixed-use to the north, west, and east; and resource conservation to the south. The Tembladero Slough is a narrow channel to the south of the site and agricultural fields are located on the other side of the channel, south of the Project site. The parcel boundary line for a parcel with Farmland zoning district ranges between 75 and 125 ft away from the subject parcel boundary. Specifically, the neighboring parcel is identified as "Castroville Community Plan | Farmlands 40 – 160 ac Min | Rivers and Water Bodies" in the 2010 Monterey County General Plan. (See **Figure 9. Land Use Map.)**

**C. Other public Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:**

The IS/MND is an informational document for both agency decision-makers and the public. The County is the lead agency responsible for adoption of the IS/MND and approving land use permits related to the Proposed Project. Below is a list of approvals required by Monterey County. Project entitlements would include, but not be limited to:

- Use Permit
- Design Approval
- Grading Permit
- Building Permit

Other agencies that could have permit or review authority over some aspect of the Proposed Project may include Monterey Bay Air Resources District ("MBARD"), Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board ("CCRWQCB"), and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife ("CDFW").




Land Use Map

Figure 9

Please see North County Inland Area Plan for additional land use in the vicinity of the Project site.
https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/45974/636389942307670000

## *III. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER APPLICABLE LOCAL AND STATE PLANS AND MANDATED LAWS*

Use the list below to indicate plans applicable to the project and verify their consistency or non-consistency with project implementation.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| General Plan/Area Plan | ☒ | Air Quality Mgmt. Plan | ☒ |
| Specific Plan | ☐ | Airport Land Use Plans | ☐ |
| Water Quality Control Plan | ☒ | Local Coastal Program-LUP | ☐ |

General Plan/Area Plan: The Proposed Project is located in Castroville, CA, an unincorporated area in Monterey County. Land use and development within Castroville is governed by the 2010 Monterey County General Plan (2010 GP), North County (Inland) Area Plan, and the Castroville Community Plan. Together, these planning documents provide guidance to support development and future growth while preserving the scenic and environmental resources to the greatest extent feasible. The Project site is designated as "Mixed-Use" which allows for residential and commercial uses in the same building or on the same building site. Detailed further in the Castroville Community Plan, mixed use in the Land Use Classification Designation System (MU-C) allows the combination of non-residential and residential uses combined vertically within a multi-story building or in separate buildings on the same site. The Proposed Project consists of a mini-warehouse storage facility with an attached two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office on the first floor and a residential unit on the second floor. Therefore, construction and operation of the Project would be consistent with the land use designation and the Castroville Community Plan zoning of MU-C. Section 7 of Design Guidelines within the Castroville Community Plan includes Commercial and Mixed Use guidance. The Proposed Project adheres with the guidance of building placement, outdoor spaces, site access, and parking. The Project is located within the jurisdiction of the Castroville Land Use Advisory Committee ("LUAC") which is responsible for reviewing project applications and providing advice and assistance to decision makers on regional land use and comprehensive planning related issues. The LUAC reviewed the Project and voted to recommend that the decision-maker approve the project as proposed on November 7, 2023. Design of the Project was deemed consistent with the Castroville Community Plan development and design policies and goals.

The Project is also designated with a "Resource Conservation" Land Use Classification over the southwest portion, which is applied in areas with sensitive resources and allows for low intensity uses and supporting facilities. Through development siting outside of the RC zoned portion and landscaping including 19 trees, the Project would not conflict with 2010 GP policies pertaining to conservation of sensitive resources, including but not limited to visually sensitive areas, critical viewsheds, public and private viewsheds, or environmentally sensitive habitats. Please see **Section VI.1. Aesthetic Resources** and **Section VI.4. Biological Resources**, for a more detailed discussion.

North County Area Plan Policies that relate to the Proposed Project include land use and conservation/open space policies. Land Use Policy NC-1.1, which requires new commercial development to be designed to minimize traffic, noise, visual and other impacts on the surrounding area to the greatest extent feasible. The Project does so by adhering with the Castroville Community Plan's design guidelines and by proposing a use which is inherently low traffic and low noise. Conservation/open space Policy NC-3.3 requires conservation of North County's native vegetation and retention of the viability of threatened or limited vegetative communities and animal habitats. The owner/applicant has cooperated with the County in designing the construction to be limited to entirely outside of the nearby Tembladero Slough's floodway and to avoid impacts to native plants and animal habitats. The project Biologist recommended mitigation measures to ensure construction shall avoid any impact to potential biological impacts. Furthermore, after Project application review by the Agricultural Commissioner's Office and review of the Project Biological Report, HCD-Planning applied a site-specific Landscape Plan with Agricultural Buffer and Biologist Review (Condition No. 7). Please see **Section VI.2. Agricultural and Forest Resources** and **Section VI.4. Biological Resources** for further discussion.

As conditioned, and mitigated, the Proposed Project is consistent with the 2010 GP including the North County Area Plan and the Castroville Community Plan. **CONSISTENT**

Water Quality Control Plan: The Proposed Project site lies within Region 3 of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (CCRWQCB), which regulates water quality related issues resulting in actual or potential impairment or degradation of beneficial uses, or the overall degradation of water quality. The Water Quality Control Plan for the CCRWQCB serves as the master water quality control planning document and designates beneficial uses and water quality objectives for waters of the State, including surface waters and groundwater, and includes programs of implementation to achieve water quality objectives. Construction phase impact of the project would not generate pollutant runoff in amounts that would cause degradation of water quality because the Project is conditioned to adhere with the regulations and will be monitored by the local regulating office of HCD-Environmental Services. The Project could result in temporary construction-related effects (e.g., erosion). These effects would not likely be significant for two reasons. First, the Project would require minor ground-disturbing activities. Specifically, the Project would disturb approximately 2.74 acres and require 100 cubic yards of cut. Second, ground-disturbing activities would be temporary in nature. Second, construction would implement erosion control measures identified in the erosion control plan. Moreover, construction would be required to comply with Chapters 16.08 and 16.12 of the Monterey County Code ("MCC") which addresses erosion and grading activities. Additionally, the Proposed Project will be required to comply with standard HCD Condition of Approval No. 10 – Stormwater Control Plan, Condition of Approval No. 11 – Construction General Permit, and Condition of Approval No. 14 – Operations and Maintenance Plan; all of which address stormwater runoff management and minimization. Operation of the Project would not generate pollutant runoff in amounts that would cause degradation of water quality because the Project is conditioned to adhere with the operation phase regulations and will be monitored by the local regulating office of HCD-Environmental Services. Stormwater runoff would be collected through drainage and impoundments with media

filters to reduce contaminants. For additional discussion on hydrology and water quality, please refer to **Section VI.9 Hydrology and Water Quality** of this Initial Study. **CONSISTENT**

Air Quality Management Plan: The Proposed Project is located within the North Central Coast Air Basin ("NCCAB"), which includes unincorporated areas of Monterey County. Air quality in the Project area is managed and regulated by MBARD. MBARD has developed Air Quality Management Plans ("AQMPs") and CEQA Air Quality Guidelines to address attainment and maintenance of state and federal ambient air quality standards within the NCCAB. The 2012-2015 AQMP, the 2008 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, and 2016 Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act are the most recent documents used to evaluate attainment and maintenance of air quality standards. The California Air Resources Board ("CARB") uses ambient data from each air monitoring site in the NCCAB to calculate Expected Peak Day Concentration over a consecutive three-year period. The closest air monitoring station is located in Salinas. There are no indications that the Project would cause a significant impact on air quality or greenhouse gas emissions ("GHGs") based on available air quality monitoring data. **CONSISTENT**

# *IV. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED AND DETERMINATION*

## A. FACTORS

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, as discussed within the checklist on the following pages.

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

Some proposed applications that are not exempt from CEQA review may have little or no potential for adverse environmental impact related to most of the topics in the Environmental Checklist; and/or potential impacts may involve only a few limited subject areas. These types of projects are generally minor in scope, located in a non-sensitive environment, and are easily identifiable and

without public controversy. For the environmental issue areas where there is no potential for significant environmental impact (and not checked above), the following finding can be made using the project description, environmental setting, or other information as supporting evidence.

☐ Check here if this finding is not applicable

**FINDING**: For the above referenced topics that are not checked off, there is no potential for significant environmental impact to occur from either construction, operation, or maintenance of the proposed project, and no further discussion in the Environmental Checklist is necessary.

**EVIDENCE**:

***Mineral Resources***: Mineral resources are determined in accordance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act ("SMARA") of 1975, and the California Geological Survey which maps mineral resources of regional significance. There are no known mineral resources on the Proposed Project site (California Department of Conservation, 2024). As a result, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state. Additionally, the Project site is not designated as a mineral resource recovery site. The Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in any impacts to mineral resources.

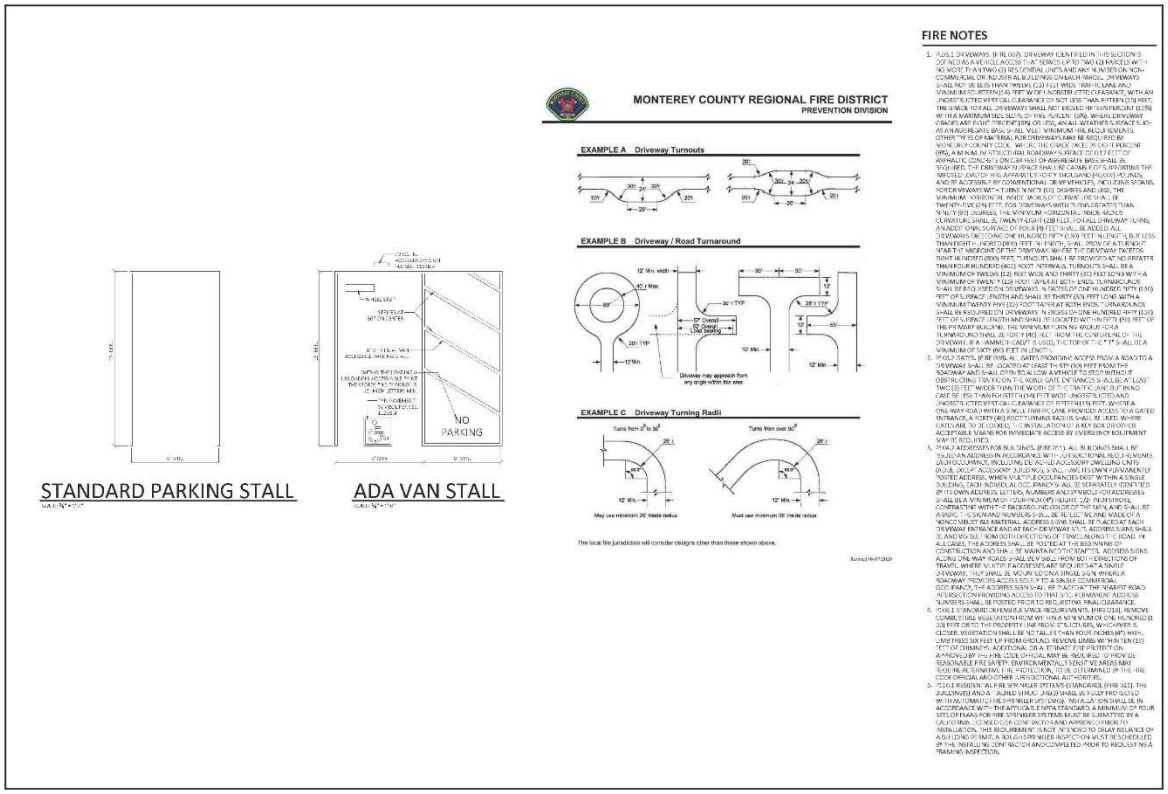
***Population and Housing***: The Proposed Project would construct and operate a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. The residential two-bedroom unit would not significantly contribute to regional growth that was not previously forecasted. The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments ("AMBAG") projects the region's population, housing, and employment and documents anticipated changes in the regional growth forecast. The current regional growth forecast was adopted on June 15, 2022. The regional growth forecast does not evaluate individual areas of unincorporated Monterey County, and therefore growth projections for Castroville are combined under *Unincorporated*. Population within this area is anticipated to increase by 6,317 persons between 2015 and 2045, representing a 6-percent increase. The Project would require four employees during operation, which would not result in a substantial increase that is not accounted for in the regional growth forecast. The Project would not induce substantial population growth either directly or indirectly.
Additionally, the construction and operation of the Project would not displace existing housing units. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in any population or housing-related impacts.

***Public Services***: The Proposed Project would not result in any adverse impacts resulting in the need for new, or physically altered, government facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any public services (i.e., fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities). The North County Fire Protection District of Monterey County provides fire protection services to the Project site and has a station 0.2 miles

away (approximately 1 minute drive away). The Monterey County Sheriff's Department provides police protection services in Castroville from their offices at 1414 Natividad Road in Salinas (approximately 10-15 minute drive away). The North Monterey County Unified School District ("NMCUSD") serves the community of Castroville. The Project would construct and operate a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and single residential unit. Because the Project is relatively small (one 3-acre parcel) and adds only one unit of housing, County departments and service providers that reviewed the project application did not identify any impacts to these services. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in impacts related to public services.

***Wildfire:*** The Proposed Project is not located in a Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone within the State Responsibility Area. The North County Fire Protection District of Monterey County provides fire protection services to the Project site and has a station three blocks away on Speegle Street in Castroville. The area surrounding the Project contains developed and agricultural uses. Wildfire The Project is not located in an area that due to slopes, prevailing winds, and other factors, would exacerbate wildlife fire hazards. The Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks because of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Due to the relatively flat nature of the site, it is unlikely the Project would result in a potentially significant impact with regards to wildland fires. Furthermore, implementation of fuel management guidelines and Best Management Practices ("BMPs") during construction and operation of the Project would ensure that fire risk is minimized. Furthermore, the Project would be designed consistent with the Monterey County Regional Fire Districts safety provisions (e.g., driveway turnarounds, gates and access, fire sprinklers, defensible space), see **Figure 10. General Notes**. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in wildfire-related impacts.

## Figure 10 – General Notes




General Notes | Source: Mehringer Construction & Design | Figure 10

## B. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

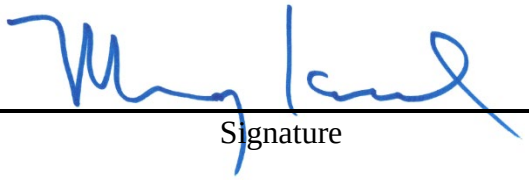
☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

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

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

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

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



Signature

October 22, 2024

Date

*Mary Israel, Supervising Planner,*
*Monterey County Housing and Community Development*

## *V. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS*

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take into account the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

    a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
    b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
    c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used, or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8) The explanation of each issue should identify:

   a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
   b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

# *VI. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST*

| **1. AESTHETICS**<br><br>**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? (sources: 9, 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? (sources: 9, 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) In nonurbanized 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? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 25, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

The Proposed Project site is located at 10520 Tembladera Street in Castroville, California. The Project site is surrounded by mixed-use and agricultural land uses. Additionally, the Project site borders the Tembladero Slough and is currently undeveloped. The Project site is not located in a critical viewshed as defined in the Monterey County General Plan. Scenic vistas within the vicinity of the Project site include views of the Gabilan and Santa Lucia Mountains, and the Pacific Ocean.

The Proposed Project site is located approximately 0.25 miles north of State Route 1 ("SR 1"), which is a State designated eligible scenic highway, and 0.55 miles north of SR 156 which is a County and State designated scenic highway. However, views of the Project site would be limited from SR 1 and SR 156 due to topography, vegetation, and existing development in the vicinity of the Project.

Within Castroville Community Plan area, there is regulation of design such that any new structural development requires a Design Approval. For commercial and mixed use developments, the Plan recommends visual separation between structures, visual impression of increased lot coverage by placing the building toward the front of the lot, and blank walls are discouraged. The Project building placement conforms with these site design recommendations and the front wall is proposed to be painted as a mural. Service access areas are to be located out of public view, and

the Project conforms with this by design as the mini warehouse self-storage users would enter to site to use their units and perimeter walls block the view of most pull up doors from the street. Conforming with the Plan's parking recommendations, most parking is located behind the gate and only ADA and drop-in parking for potential customers is outside the gate, not in front of the building. Frontage areas are proposed to be landscaped, conforming with the design guidelines for commercial and mixed use development. Furthermore, the form, mass and scale of the architecture conforms with the Plan's architectural design guidelines: the building has the recommended simple rectangular form accented with a strong roofline. The upper floor windows are divided into units and not a "ribbon of glass," and there is a clear visual division between street level and upper floor incorporated through the change of materials, colors, and a short canopy. Traditional patterns are delineated both vertically and horizontally, and the light gray colored perimeter walls have columns of dark gray incorporated as shown in **Figure 11**, **3D Renderings of the Project**. Plan regulations for commercial and mixed use exterior lighting include that lighting fixtures are to be compatible with and complement the building's design and architectural style, appropriately sized and in scale with the building façade, and accentuate the building design and highlight architectural details and features integral to the building design. Like the exterior lighting codes in Monterey County Code ("MCC") Zoning Ordinance Title 21, section 21.63.020 – Design Guidelines for Exterior Lighting, lighting is to be down-lit and limit offsite glare in the case there are nearby residences.

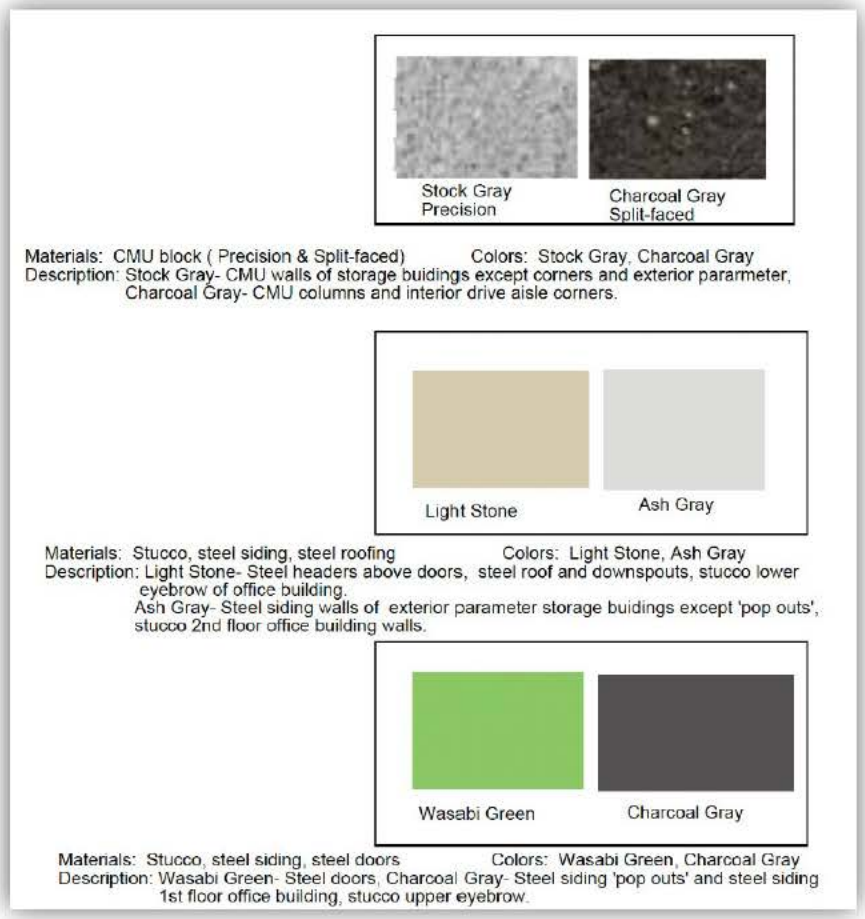
**Figure 11. 3D Renderings of the Project**




Above, view of the proposed project from northwest on Tembladera Street. Below, view from southeast on Tembladera Street.




**Figure 12. Proposed Project Colors and Materials.**



**Aesthetic Impact (a) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. The Project is not located in an area that is designated as a public viewing area or within a critical viewshed. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact on a scenic vista.

**Aesthetic Impact (b) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. The Project does not contain, nor is it located near, trees, rock outcroppings, or a historic building. The segment of SR 1 located south of the Project site is a State designated eligible scenic highway; as is SR 156, located southeast of the Project. Views of the Project site from both SR1 and SR 156 are limited due to topography, vegetation, and existing development in the surrounding parcels. Similarly, the Project site is not visible from any designated scenic corridors or a common public viewing area. The Project site would be located entirely within the existing parcel and is bordered by existing mixed-use buildings and vegetation that generally obstruct views of the Project from surrounding areas. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would not have substantial adverse impacts on any scenic resources within view of a state designated scenic highway. This represents a less than significant impact.

**Aesthetic Impact (c) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. As discussed above, the Project consists of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. The Project site would be located entirely within the existing parcel and would be designed to be visually compatible with the surrounding area. Furthermore, the LUAC reviewed the Project to determine consistency with development standards. The LUAC reviewed the Proposed Project and voted in support on November 7, 2023. Design of the Project was deemed consistent with the Castroville Community Plan development and design guidelines. Consistency with the design guidelines ensures that the Project does not degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. The Project site is not visible from any public viewing areas and views of the site are generally obstructed by distance from public viewing areas, topography, and existing vegetation. As a result, the Project would not degrade public views of the site or its surroundings. For these reasons, the Proposed Project represents a less than significant impact.

**Aesthetic Impact (d) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project does not entail any nighttime construction-related activities; therefore, the Project would not result in any temporary increases in construction lighting. The Project would include exterior lighting, and a plan is part of the project application plans (Sheet E-1). The plan includes 47 wall sconce lights 9 feet up on the walls of the storage unit structures, 8 downlit frosted canopy lights placed in the ceilings of the mixed use building's first floor canopy, and photocell controlled entry lights near the gate. Although the draft exterior lighting plan appears to comply with the Castroville Community Plan's design guidelines for commercial and mixed use lighting and MCC section 21.63.020, staff applied HCD standard Condition of Approval No. 6 – (PD014(A) – Lighting Exterior Lighting Plan) to require a final plan and site inspection prior to building final. As a result, the Proposed Project would not

result in a significant impact due to a new source of light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. This represents a less than significant impact.

## 2. AGRICULTURAL 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? (sources: 2, 18, 22, 17) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? (sources: 3, 18, 22, 25, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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))? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

### Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The California Department of Conservation Division of Land Resource Protection and the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program ("FMMP") maps California's agricultural resources. The FMMP designated the Proposed Project site as "Urban and Built-Up" and therefore would not

result in the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (California Department of Conservation, 2024).

**Agricultural and Forest Resources Impact (b) Less than Significant:** The Project is not zoned for agricultural use and is not under a Williamson Act contract (California Department of Conservation, 2024). However, as described in Chapter II. Of this Initial Study, agricultural lands are actively farmed on the other side of the Tembladero Slough, within 125 ft of the subject parcel southwest boundary. General Plan Policy AG-1.2 requires a well-defined buffer area to be provided between new non-agricultural development proposals that are located adjacent to agricultural land uses on viable farmlands designated as Prime, of Statewide Importance, Unique, or of Local Importance. As the neighboring parcel to the southwest is used for agricultural operations, an Agricultural Buffer in the form of landscaped area is proposed. Due to the proximity to agricultural lands, the Project would be required to comply with an HCD-Planning non-standard Condition of Approval No. 8 – Landscape Plan with Agricultural Buffer and Biologist Review, which would ensure that development, and more specifically landscaping, would not negatively impact surrounding agricultural crops. The Agricultural Advisory Committee of Monterey County reviewed the proposed landscape plan with this agricultural buffer as the focus of the review on January 25, 2024. The AAC found the proposed landscaping to serve the needs of required buffering. The Project site is not zoned or designated as forestland, and therefore would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land for non-forestland use. The Project would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land for non-forest land use. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in impacts to agriculture and forestry resources.

**Agricultural and Forest Resources Impacts (a, c, d, e) No Impact:** The FMMP designated the Proposed Project site as "Urban and Built-Up" and therefore would not result in the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (California Department of Conservation, 2024).

## 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? (sources: 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? (sources: 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? (sources: 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? (sources: 16, 18, 22) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

### Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The Proposed Project is located within the NCCAB, which is under the jurisdiction of MBARD. MBARD is responsible for producing an Air Quality Management Plan ("AQMP") that reports air quality and regulates stationary air pollution sources throughout the NCCAB. MBARD is also responsible for measuring the concentration of pollutants and comparing those concentrations against Ambient Air Quality Standards ("AAQS"). Additionally, MBARD monitors criteria pollutants to determine whether they are in attainment or not in attainment. **Table 3-1** illustrates the attainment status for criteria pollutants.

**Table 3-1**
**Attainment Status for the NCCAB**

| Pollutants | State Designation | Federal Designation |
|---|---|---|
| Ozone ($O_3$) | Nonattainment – Transitional | Attainment |
| Inhalable Particulates ($PM_{10}$) | Nonattainment | Attainment |
| Fine Particulates ($PM_{2.5}$) | Attainment | Attainment |
| Carbon Monoxide (CO) | Monterey Co. – Attainment | Attainment |
| | San Benito Co. – Unclassified | Attainment |
| | Santa Cruz Co. – Unclassified | Attainment |
| Nitrogen Dioxide ($NO_2$) | Attainment | Attainment |
| Sulfur Dioxide ($SO_2$) | Attainment | Attainment |

**Table 3-1**
**Attainment Status for the NCCAB**

| Pollutants | State Designation | Federal Designation |
|---|---|---|
| Lead | Attainment | Attainment |

Source: Monterey Bay Air Resources District, 2017. 2012 – 2015 Air Quality Management Plan

MBARD has set air quality thresholds of significance for the evaluation of projects. **Table 3-2** illustrates the thresholds of significance used to determine if a project would have a significant air quality effect on the environment during construction.

**Table 3-2**
**Thresholds of Significance Construction Emissions**

| Pollutant | Threshold of Significance (lbs./day) |
|---|---|
| Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) | 137 |
| Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) | 137 |
| Respirable Particular Matter ($PM_{10}$) | 82 |
| Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) | 55 |
| Carbon Monoxide (CO) | 550 |

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, 2016. Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act.

In addition to these thresholds, MBARD has also determined that a significant short-term construction generated impact would occur if more than 2.2 acres of major earthmoving (i.e., excavation) per day was to occur. Activities associated with this threshold include excavation and grading. For projects that require minimal earthmoving activities, MBARD has determined that a significant short-term construction generated impact would occur if more than 8.1 acres per day of earthmoving was to occur (MBARD, 2008).

**Table 3-3** illustrates the thresholds of significance used to determine if a project would have a significant air quality effect on the environment during operation.

**Table 3-3**
**Thresholds of Significance Operational Emissions**

| Pollutant | Threshold of Significance (lbs./day) |
|---|---|
| Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) | 137 |
| Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) | 137 |
| Respirable Particular Matter ($PM_{10}$) | 82 |
| Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) | 55 |
| Carbon Monoxide (CO) | 550 |

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, 2016. Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act.

CARB defines a sensitive receptor as children, elderly, asthmatic, and others who are at high risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Sec. 42705.5, a sensitive receptor includes hospitals, schools, daycare centers, and such locations as the district or state board may determine. MBARD similarly defines sensitive

receptors and adds that the location of sensitive receptors be explained in terms that draw a relationship to the project site and potential air quality impacts. The nearest sensitive receptor (i.e., residence, health care center, day care or school) is a leadership center for children located approximately 120 feet to the northeast of the Proposed Project site.

A project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the 2015 AQMP if it induced population such that the population of unincorporated Monterey County exceeds the population forecast for the appropriate five-year increment utilized in the 2015 AQMP. The proposed two-bedroom residential unit would have the potential to increase the local population by four people (the average household size for this area).

**Air Quality Impact (a) No Impact:** CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15125(b) requires that a project be evaluated for consistency with applicable regional plans, including the AQMP. MBARD is required to update its AQMP every three years. The most recent update was the 2012 – 2015 AQMP which was adopted in March 2017. This plan addresses the attainment of the State ozone standard and Federal air quality standards. The AQMP accommodates growth by projecting growth in emissions based on population forecasts prepared by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments ("AMBAG") and other indicators. Consistency determinations are issued for commercial, industrial, residential, and infrastructure-related projects that have the potential to induce population growth. A project is considered inconsistent with the AQMP if it has not been accommodated in the forecast projects considered in the AQMP.

The Proposed Project consists of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. The Project would employ two full-time employees, two part-time employees. Onsite housing would be available for the office manager. The creation of these new employment opportunities would not induce substantial population growth or result in the need for additional residential development beyond what currently exists. Accordingly, the project would be consistent with the 2012-2015 AQMP because it would not cause an exceedance of the growth projections that underlie its air pollutant emission forecasts. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct an applicable air quality plan. For these reasons, no impact would occur.

**Air Quality Impact (b) Less than Significant:** The MBARD 2016 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines contain standards of significance for evaluating potential air quality effects of projects subject to the requirements of CEQA. According to MBARD, a project would violate an air quality standard and/or contribute to an existing or projected violation if it would emit (from all sources, including exhaust and fugitive dust) more than:

- 137 pounds per day of oxides of nitrogen ($NO_x$),
- 137 pounds per day of reactive organic gases (ROG),
- 82 pounds per day of respirable particulate matter ($PM_{10}$),
- 55 pounds per day of fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), and
- 550 pounds per day carbon monoxide (CO).

According to the MBARD's criteria for determining construction impacts, a project would result in a potentially significant impact if it would result in 8.1 acres of minimal earthmoving per day or 2.2 acres per day with major grading and excavation.

Construction of the Proposed Project would disturb approximately 2.74 acres and require approximately 100 cubic yards ("cy") of cut and 16,075 cy of imported fill. Construction would require equipment such as tractors, backhoes, excavators, loading trucks, and pickup trucks. Construction-related emissions would come from sources such as exhaust or fugitive dust. Construction of the Proposed Project would not, however, exceed MBARD's significance criteria. Grading and excavation related activities would occur over several days and would not exceed MBARD's daily ground-disturbing thresholds for excavation (2.2 acres per day) or grading (8.1 acres per day). Moreover, the Project would implement standard construction Best Management Practices ("BMPs") related to dust suppression (e.g., watering active construction areas, prohibiting grading activities during periods of high wind (over 15 mph), covering trucks hauling soil, covering exposed stockpiles, etc.) thereby further ensuring temporary construction-related effects would be minimized. For these reasons, construction of the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact on air quality.

The Project could result in operational emissions due to operational energy use and traffic. However, a significant impact resulting from operational emissions from Project activities is unlikely for several reasons. First, the Project would be constructed in accordance with contemporary building standards. The installation of energy efficient building upgrades would reduce operational energy demand, See **Section VI.5 Energy** for more information regarding energy consumption. Second, the Project would include energy efficient upgrades (e.g., rooftop PV solar arrays). And, third, the transportation impact analysis prepared by Keith Higgins concluded that the operation of the Project would result in minimal additional traffic increases once operational, see **Section VI.17 Transportation/Traffic**. Therefore, the Project would not result in a significant increase in operational emissions associated with traffic-related impacts. For these reasons, operational emissions associated with the Project would not exceed an applicable MBARD threshold of significance. The Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact to air quality during operation.

**Air Quality Impact (c) Less than Significant:** CARB identifies sensitive receptors as children, elderly, asthmatics, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Locations where sensitive receptors congregate may include hospitals, schools, and daycare centers. The Project is located in the community of Castroville, and the nearest sensitive receptor, Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast leadership center, is located approximately 120 feet to the north of the Proposed Project site. Additionally, residential uses are located approximately 320 feet to the north and northeast of the Project site. As discussed above, construction of the Project would generate temporary air quality impacts. However, these impacts would be temporary in nature and would not exceed the thresholds set by MBARD. Therefore, impacts of the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

**Air Quality Impact (d) Less than Significant:** Construction of the Proposed Project could generate temporary odors from construction equipment (e.g., diesel exhaust) which could be noticeable at times to residences, visitors, and others in the Project vicinity. However, construction generated odors would be temporary in nature and would not create objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of persons. This represents a less than significant impact.

| **4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**<br><br>**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? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29, 31) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29, 31) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29, 31) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 16, 18, 22, 27, 28, 29, 31) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? (sources: 18, 28, 29, 31) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 18, 28, 29, 31) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

## Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Ed Mercurio prepared a biological resources assessment for the Proposed Project. The assessment, *Biological survey report for the Castroville Self Storage Property, 10520 Tembladera Street, Castroville, California 95012. APN: 030-156-002-000 [sic](June 2023),* evaluated potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Project. Mercurio subsequently prepared an update to the report on January 31, 2024. The following discussion summarizes the findings of these technical reports. The findings of these technical analyses are herein incorporated by reference consistent with the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15150. For a more detailed discussion of biological resources, please refer to the technical reports available for review in Accela Citizen Access, using the Project number PLN220122 to view related reports (Source 18) as well as at the Monterey County HCD – Planning Office located in Salinas, California.

Mercurio conducted biological surveys of the Proposed Project property on May 10, 2023, and June 23, 2023. Mercurio did not observe sensitive habitat, sensitive plant species or sensitive animal species on the Project site. Of potential concern for HCD-Planning was the possibility that there would be evidence of wetland environmental conditions on the project area of the property. In the May 2023 report, Mercurio concluded that the presence of patches of willow weed (*Persicaria lapathifolia*) may give the false appearance that some wetland vegetation is present on parts of the project area. The "Persicarias" are familiar plants that commonly occur in wetlands and some species are obligate wetland plants, which means that they can only grow in wetlands. The presence of obligate wetland plants in an area is a good biological indicator of the presence of wetland environments. Willow weed, Mercurio clarified, although it looks superficially very much like some of the obligate wetland Persicarias, grows in both wetlands and in non-wetland environments. Mercurio stated that some willow weed is present but no wetland is on the project area of the Castroville Self Storage Property. Furthermore, Mercurio determined that no special status plant or wildlife species had been found to occur on or very close to the property from current CDFW Natural Diversity Data Base ("CNDDB") records for the Prunedale and Moss Landing Quadrangles and surrounding areas. Suitable terrestrial upland habitat for California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) usually contain burrows of rodents such as California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*) and sometimes valley pocket gophers (*Thomomys bottae*). Very few rodent burrows were observed on the subject parcel and the few observed by Mercurio were too small and shallow to be the right type of burrow and "probably from mice or voles." Mercurio found no evidence of the presence of these or other adult amphibians during parcel surveys.

Mercurio found that the Project site consists primarily of highly disturbed non-native grassland. The most abundant plants on the property are naturalized non-native plants including wild radish (*Raphanus sativa*), poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), Cretan mallow (*Lavatera cretica*) and wild oat (*Avena fatua*). The most common native plants observed on the property are, California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), beardless ryegrass (*Elymus triticoides*), willow weed (*Persicaria lapathifolia*) and west coast Canada goldenrod (*Solidago elongata*).

Mercurio noted the close proximity of the project site to the Tembladero Slough could result in potential impacts during the construction phase in the form of accidental degradation of the breeding habitat of rare, threatened and endangered birds and protected amphibian breeding

habitat. Water pollution controls are required through standard adherence with the with regulations related to development and use within floodplains in Monterey County (MCC Chapter 16.16). See also **Section VI.9 Hydrology and Water Quality** of this Initial Study.

**Biological Resources Impact (a) Less than Significant with Mitigation:** The Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect either directly or indirectly through habitat modifications on any species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special status. The Project site is located within a ruderal non-native grassland habitat. No sensitive habitat, sensitive plant species or sensitive animal species were observed on the property during the two biological surveys. Similarly, CNDDB records for the Prunedale and Moss Landing Quadrangles and surrounding area did not show any records for sensitive plant species on the Project site. However, CNDDB records for the Prunedale and Moss Landing Quadrangles and surrounding area show records for four sensitive plant species within a three-mile radius of the Proposed Project. These plants are Congdon's tarplant (*Centromadia parryi* ssp. *congdonii*), Monterey spineflower (*Chorizanthe pungens* var. *pungens*), Seaside Bird's Beak (*Cordylanthus rigidus* ssp. *littoralis*), and Saline clover (*Trifolium hydrophilum*). Therefore, although occurrences of these species have been recorded in the Project vicinity, none of these species were observed on the Project site.

The biological resource assessment identified occurrence data for burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) within a three-mile radius of the property. Burrowing owls are not a state or federally listed species and are classified as a Species of Special Concern by the CDFW, a Bird of Conservation Concern by the United Stated Fish and Wildlife Service ("USFWS"), a Sensitive Species by the Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") and a Threatened Species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources ("IUCN"). No burrowing owls or burrows suitable for their occupation were observed on or around the Proposed Project site.

There are three listed species of amphibians that have been found in and near wetland habitats in northern Monterey County. These species are the California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), which is federally listed as threatened and is a state species of special concern, the California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*), which is federally listed as threatened and state listed as threatened, and the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum croceum*), which is listed as endangered by both the state and federal governments. However, there are no records for occurrences of these sensitive amphibian species in or immediately around Tembladero Slough from current CNDDB records for the Prunedale and Moss Landing Quadrangles and surrounding area. Nonetheless, due to the site's proximity to the Tembladero Slough (approximately 70 feet), the Project may have a potentially significant impact that would be reduced with implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** and **BIO-3,** detailed below.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-1.** Although results of the project biologist's site surveys in 2023 were negative for California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), which is federally listed as threatened and is a state species of special concern, California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*), which is federally listed as threatened and state listed as threatened, or the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander (Ambystoma *macrodactylum croceum*), due to the proximity of the Tembladero

Slough, there is potential for individuals of these protected species to enter the site during the construction phase and be harmed. The aim of this measure is to avoid harm by avoiding construction in any areas with sensitive animal species present. Therefore, the owner/applicant shall cause a qualified biologist to conduct a wildlife preconstruction survey of permanent and temporary impact areas for special wildlife that could occur on the property within 14 days prior to the start of vegetation removal or grading. The report shall be provided to the Chief of Planning prior to construction permit issuance. If any individuals are found within the construction impact area or would otherwise be at risk during construction, work activities shall be delayed in that particular area and the animal allowed to leave the work zone on its own volition. Individuals can be relocated outside of the work area if authorization is provided by CDFW, or USFWS for federally listed species. If the individuals do not leave the area by their own volition and the biologist is not authorized to move them, the biologist shall continue the stop work, employ BMPs to protect the individuals from harm and consult with the appropriate regulating agencies. If it is necessary to pursue appropriate permits from these agencies, the owner/applicant shall ensure this is done. The biologist shall monitor the area to determine when individuals of special status species have left, and work can commence. The biologist shall submit a report detailing the methods and results of the wildlife preconstruction survey to the County. The report should detail any sensitive species found during the survey and measures taken for their avoidance. Observations of special status species shall be submitted to the CNDDB.

**Mitigation Monitoring Action BIO-1.a:** Prior to the issuance of any construction permit, the Applicant shall submit the results of the preconstruction survey done by a qualified biologist no more than 14 days prior to vegetation removal or grading to HCD – Planning for review and approval.

**Mitigation Monitoring Action BIO-1.b**: A qualified biologist shall monitor the construction area during all grading, fill and building activities. If any special status species are discovered, the biologist shall create the temporary no-work zone barrier and determine when individuals of special status species have left, and work can commence.

**Mitigation Monitoring Action BIO-1.c**: After temporary no-work zone barrier is constructed, if individuals of special status species have not left of their own volition after what the biologist deems a reasonable time, a qualified biologist may relocate the individuals outside of the work area if and when authorization is provided by CDFW, or USFWS for federally listed species.

**Mitigation Monitoring Action BIO-1.d**: On a monthly basis starting at the first day of ground disturbing activity, the biologist responsible for monitoring shall provide to the Chief of Planning a detailed report on any sensitive species found during the month and measures taken for their avoidance. The Chief of Planning may require additional information and evidence pertaining to monitoring activities and results prior to approving the report(s). All observations of special status species shall be submitted to the CNDDB.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-2.** Although the results of the project biologist's site surveys in 2023 were negative for sensitive plant species, there remains the potential for four sensitive plant species to be impacted by the grading and construction phase of the Project. These plants are Congdon's tarplant (*Centromadia parryi ssp. congdonii*), Monterey spineflower (*Chorizanthe pungens var. pungens*), Seaside Bird's Beak (*Cordylanthus rigidus ssp. littoralis*), and Saline clover (*Trifolium hydrophilum*). Therefore, the owner/applicant shall cause a qualified biologist to conduct a plant preconstruction survey and avoid construction in any areas with sensitive plant species. Within 14 days prior to the start of vegetation removal or grading, a qualified biologist shall survey permanent and temporary impact areas for special plant species that could occur on the property. If special status plans are not identified, no additional mitigation is required. If special plant species are identified and can be avoided by project design, they shall be fenced or flagged for avoidance prior to ground-disturbing activities. A biological monitor shall supervise the installation of protective fencing and shall monitor the site at least once per week until construction is complete to ensure that protective fencing remains intact. If avoidance of all individuals is not possible, a Revegetation Plan shall be prepared by a qualified biologist prior to construction and shall be implemented following construction. The plan shall include the species and number of individual special-status plants that are expected to be impacted by development and a detailed description of revegetation areas, plant source material, planting specifications, and a monitoring program that describes annual monitoring efforts which incorporate success criteria and contingency plans if success criteria are not met. If special status plant species that require take authorization from the Service and/or CDFW are identified during surveys and cannot be avoided by the project, the project proponent shall comply with the ESA and/or CESA and obtain necessary authorizations prior to construction.

> **Mitigation Monitoring Action BIO-2a:** Prior to the issuance of any construction permit, the owner/applicant shall submit the results of the preconstruction survey to HCD – Planning for review and approval.
>
> If required, **Mitigation Monitoring Action BIO-2b:** Prior to the issuance of any construction permit, the owner/applicant shall submit a proposed project redesign that accommodates the retention of special plant species. The Chief of Planning shall determine whether the redesign requires a project amendment hearing, or if the project's construction level plans are in general conformance with the proposed project. If the owner/applicant, in consultation with the project biologist, finds that redesign to accommodate the special status plants is not feasible, then they shall cause a Revegetation Plan as described in MM BIO-2 to be prepared by a qualified biologist prior to construction and it shall be implemented following construction. In that case, the owner/applicant shall submit the Revegetation Plan to the Chief of Planning for review and approval. If special status plant species that require take authorization from the Service and/or CDFW are identified during surveys and cannot be avoided by the project, the project proponent shall comply with the ESA and/or CESA and obtain necessary authorizations prior to construction. In that case, the Revegetation Plan shall adhere with the regulatory agency(ies)' recommendations.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-3.** The project biological reports identified potential impacts during the construction phase in the form of accidental degradation of the breeding habitat of rare, threatened and endangered birds and protected amphibian breeding habitat. Therefore, the project is required to include protective measures to avoid impacts to these biological resources. No fill, soil dislodged through construction activities, or any other debris shall enter areas of freshwater marsh habitat. Plastic sheet barrier fencing (silt/exclusion fencing) shall be erected before the start of construction between the area of construction and the freshwater marsh habitat. The area between the development and the freshwater marsh habitat of Tembladero Slough shall be protected and will not be used as access, storage, or staging areas for construction. Protective fencing (i.e., silt/exclusion fencing) shall be installed by a qualified biologist and checked weekly during construction.

> **Mitigation Monitoring Action BIO-3:** Prior to the issuance of any construction permit, the owner/applicant shall submit the final Site Plans that illustrate the location of protective fencing, identify the location of staging within the development site, and illustrate the design of curbs onsite consistent with the recommendations found in the project biologist, Ed Mercurio's Revised Biological Assessment dated January 31, 2024. Photographic evidence that protective fencing has been installed shall be collected and provided to the Chief of Planning for review and approval. The owner/applicant shall maintain records of protective measures throughout the duration of construction and operation and shall provide copies to the Chief of Planning upon request.

HCD-Planning applied a non-standard Condition of Approval No. 7 – Landscaping Plan with Agricultural Buffer and Biologist Review to further protect the resources which border the project site to the southwest. Pursuant to project biologist Mercurio's recommendations, the Landscape Plan shall include prescriptions and protocols for restoration, invasive species removal and long-term control methodology, erosion control measures, site-specific species restoration for upland and floodplain species including diverse understory species planted in appropriate micro-habitats, establish conditions for natural species recruitment, protocols for protection of sensitive habitat and special status species. The Landscape Plan shall ensure that the area between the development and where the coastal and valley freshwater marsh vegetation is present along the margins of Tembladero Slough shall be maintained in a natural state. This area on the property shall be vegetated with at least 60 percent native plants of local origin. According to the project biologist, up to 40 percent of the plantings may be plants native to coastal California but not native to this area. The Landscape Plan, including the specific plants utilized for revegetation, shall be reviewed by a qualified biologist and the Agricultural Commissioner.

Actions Required to meet Condition of Approval No. 7: Prior to issuance of any construction permit, the Applicant shall submit to the HCD-Planning a Landscape Package Application in accordance with MCC Chapter 16.63 as required in Section 16.63.050 or Section 16.63.060, and subject to review and approval by the Chief of Planning. The Landscape Plan shall be reviewed and approved by a qualified biologist and the Agricultural Commissioner prior to submittal to the Chief of Planning. Landscape shall be installed in accordance with the provisions of the approved Landscape Package. Compliance with the approved Landscape Package shall be verified by

inspections in accordance with Section 16.63.120. Upon completion of the project, monitoring shall be conducted by a qualified biologist once within two months of completion of development and landscaping, and once a year in the spring of each year, for three years. Monitoring reports or memorandums shall be maintained by the Applicant and copies submitted to HCD-Planning at least annually.

**Biological Resources Impact (b) and (c) Less than Significant with Mitigation:** The Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands as none exist within the Project site. The Project is located immediately north of the Tembladero Slough. The project Biologist characterized the slough in the Project area as being a wide, leveed ditch with little water beyond the levees. Habitat communities observed within the shallow waters and along the edges of the slough included coastal and valley freshwater marsh vegetation. Elements of the coastal and valley freshwater marsh community are present close to the edge of Tembladero Slough and range up to near the property line; however, none were observed on the Project site during the biological surveys. Similarly, the project Biologist did not identify any definitive biological evidence of wetland environmental conditions in the area proposed for development. The Project would be approximately 50.84 feet to 67.55 feet from the top of the slough bank. Regardless, given the presence and proximity to the slough, construction and operation of the Project could have indirect impacts (e.g., erosion, contamination from trash, etc.). To minimize impacts to less than significant the Proposed Project would implement **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** through **Mitigation Measure BIO-3** and Condition of Approval No. 7, detailed above.

**Biological Resources Impact (d) Less than Significant with Mitigation:** The Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species for several reasons. First, the Project does not require the removal of trees. Therefore, no permanent or temporary impacts to nesting raptors and other protected avian species and bats would occur. Second, construction and operation would not be located within 50 feet from the top of the bank of Tembladero Slough. Therefore, no direct impacts within this area would occur as a result of the construction or operation of the Project. However, given the proximity to the slough, the Project would implement **Mitigation Measure BIO-3** to minimize potential impacts. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact with mitigation.

**Biological Resources Impact (e) Less than Significant with Mitigation:** As described above, the Project site does not contain any sensitive habitat. However, the Project is located immediately adjacent to the Tembladero Slough which contains coastal and valley freshwater marsh vegetation. To ensure indirect impacts to this habitat area are minimized, the Proposed Project would implement **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** through **BIO-3** and Condition of Approval No. 7 to reduce impacts on biological resources to a less-than-significant level.

**Biological Resources Impact (f) No Impact:** The Proposed Project would not require the removal of trees. The Project is not within an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

| 5. CULTURAL RESOURCES<br><br>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? (sources: 1, 18, 27, 39) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? (sources: 1, 18, 27, 39) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries? (sources: 1, 18, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

## Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The Project is located in an area of high archaeological sensitivity. Archaeological resources within the Castroville area previously determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, as confirmed by the State Historic Preservation Officer, include CA-MNT-1382/H, a site that has both prehistoric and historic components consisting of a redeposited shell midden, and reburial site. Due to the sensitive nature of the cultural sites, exact location information is not provided. What can be understood about the prehistorical uses of the project area from CA-MNT-1382/H is that the area was used periodically from as early as 600 B.C. to 1908 A.D. Although the Proposed Project is not within the CA-MNT-1382/H site, Native American presence during the same period is known to include use of waterways and their banks.

Due to the potential for cultural resources to be discovered on the Project site during construction, consistent with MCC Section 21.66.050, HCD staff required the applicant to prepare a Phase I archaeological report. A Phase I report includes archaeological records searches, an onsite pedestrian survey, and recommendations. Archaeologists Rubén Mendoza and Jennifer Lucido of Archives & Archaeology prepared a cultural resources report for the Proposed Project. The report, *Phase 1 Inventory of Archaeological Resources for Tembladera Street, Castroville CA 95012 (APN: 030-156-002-000) [sic] (May 2022)* presents the results of the archaeological records searches, results of the Phase I survey, and recommendations. Mendoza and Lucido conducted a pedestrian survey on April 29, 2022.

**Cultural Resources Impact (a) No Impact:** CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15064.5 defines a historical resource as one being listed in or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. Public Resources Code Section 21084.1 states that a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. The Project site does not contain a historical resource nor is the Project located near a historical resource. As a result, the Project would not have an impact on historical resources.

**Cultural Resources Impact (b) Less than Significant:** Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 requires that lead agencies evaluate potential impacts to archaeological resources and determine whether a project may have a significant effect or cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource. A records search through the Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System ("NWIC") found no archeological resources previously recorded in the Proposed Project site. However, the records search found one (1) report within the Project area, and eight "Other Reports" were identified in the records search; however, Mendoza and Lucido determined that these reports did not provide any additional evidence of archaeological resources in the Project site. A Project-specific Phase I Inventory of archaeological resources was conducted in April 2022, which yielded no cultural resources. Although the records search and pedestrian survey determined no known cultural resources, ground-disturbing activities could potentially impact previously unknown or buried archaeological resources. While unlikely, the possibility of disturbing previously unknown archaeological resources represents a potentially significant impact that would be minimized with the implementation of HCD Condition of Approval No. 3 – PD003(A) Cultural Resources Negative Archaeological Report which requires work halt immediately in the event a cultural, archaeological, historical, or paleontological resource is uncovered during construction. If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find. If human remains are discovered, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall stop in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the county coroner contacted. If the remains are thought by the coroner to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, who, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, will then notify the Most Likely Descendant. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact.

**Cultural Resources Impact (c) Less than Significant**: No human remains, including those interred outside of a dedicated cemetery, are known to occur on the Proposed Project site. As a result, finding human remains during construction would be unlikely. Nevertheless, while unlikely, the Project could impact previously unknown human remains. The implementation of HCD's standard Condition of Approval requiring that work halt in the event of the discovery of any human remains would ensure less than significant impacts. This condition further requires that no excavation or ground-disturbing activities shall occur at the site or nearby area until the Monterey County coroner has been contacted in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. If the coroner determines that the human remains are of Native American origin, the appropriate Native American tribe shall be contacted to provide recommendations for the disposition of the remains. Work will not resume in the immediate area of the discovery until the remains have been appropriately removed from the site. Therefore, this represents a less than significant impact.

| 6. ENERGY<br>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? (sources: 14, 18, 22) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? (sources: 14, 18, 22, 28, 29 | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

PG&E is the primary electric and natural gas service provider in Monterey County. In 2018, all PG&E customers within Monterey County were enrolled in Central Coast Community Energy ("3CE"), formally known as Monterey Bay Community Power. 3CE is a locally controlled public agency providing carbon-free electricity to residents and businesses. 3CE works through PG&E which provides billing, power transmission and distribution, grid maintenance service and natural gas to customers.

The Proposed Project includes the installation of rooftop photovoltaic (PV) solar panels over Building H which is attached to the front office. The amount of power generated is unknown at this time, however, the electricity generated is expected to power the mini-warehouse facilities, office, and residential unit. The solar design and energy storage detail is noted as a deferred submittal with the building permit application. See **Figure 5b. Roof Plan** for reference.

**Energy Impact (a) and (b) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not result in a potentially significant environmental effect due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during construction or operation. The construction of the Project would require energy for the procurement and transportation of materials, and preparation of the site (e.g., minor grading, materials hauling). Petroleum-based fuels such as diesel fuel and gasoline would be the primary sources of energy for these activities. The construction energy use has not been quantified. However, construction would not cause inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy because 1) the construction schedule and process are designed to be efficient to avoid excess monetary costs, and 2) the energy use required to complete construction would be temporary in nature.

Operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a significant increase in energy, as the project consists of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. The Project would include the construction and operation of rooftop PV solar to provide additional power onsite. Moreover, construction of the Project would be required to comply with the current California Building Code,

which includes energy efficiency standards (Title 24, Part 6) which minimizes wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during operation. Additionally, the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the California Green Building Standards Code ("CalGreen"), which establishes mandatory green building standards for all buildings in California. County staff reviews the Project plans and checks for compliance with these Building Code Standards during building permit plan check. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

| **7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**<br><br>**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. (sources: 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? (sources: 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? (sources: 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| iv) Landslides? (sources: 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? (sources: 16, 19, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 16, 19, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

| 7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS<br><br>**Would the project:** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? (sources: 12, 13, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? (sources: 25, 27, 28, 29, 34) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

## Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Belinda Taluban with Soil Surveys Group, Inc. prepared a geotechnical investigation for the Proposed Project. The investigation, *Geotechnical and Infiltration Investigation for the proposed mini storage facility located off Tembladera Street APN 030-156-002 [sic] Castroville, California (January 2023)*, evaluated potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Project. Taluban conducted a field investigation and collected eight soil borings on September 27, 2022. She also prepared five soil borings for geotechnical investigative purposes and three for infiltration testing. Taluban evaluated each boring to determine near-surface and subsurface soil conditions and determine suitability for the construction of the Project.

Seismicity and Fault Zones

The geologic structure of central California is primarily a result of tectonic events during the past 30 million years. Faults in the area are believed to be a result of movements along the Pacific and North American tectonic plate boundaries. The movements along these plates are northwest-trending and largely comprised of the San Andreas Fault system. Monterey's complex geology is a result of changes in sea level and tectonic uplifting. Geologic units in the region have been displaced by faulting and folding. The Granitic basement and overlying tertiary deposits have been juxtaposed along many of the northwest/southeast-trending faults.

The Proposed Project is located at 10520 Tembladera Street in Castroville, California, in the northern portion of the Salinas Valley. The site is mostly flat and with a gradual slope towards Tembladero Slough and towards the south end of the site. Potential geotechnical hazards include seismic shaking, ground surface fault rupture liquefaction, lateral spreading, land sliding, and soil expansion. The nearest active faults or potentially active faults to the Proposed Project include the Reliz located 0.5 miles southwest, the Harper Fault located 0.9 miles west, the Rinconada located 0.9 miles southwest, Las Palmas located 2.07 miles south, corral De Tierra located 7.1 miles southwest, Monterey bay-Tularcitos located 10.25 miles southwest, Zayante-Vergeles located 13.2 miles north-northeast, San Andreas located 16.31 miles north-northeast, San Gregorio located 19.5 miles west-southwest, and Sargent located 20.66 miles north-northeast.

Soils

The Natural Resources Conservation Service ("NRCS") characterizes soils within the Project site as *Alviso*, a series of fine, mixed, silty clay loam. This soil typically occurs near sea level in basins and tidal flats that are flushed by sea water and varying amounts of fresh water (e.g., sloughs). Alviso soils are very poorly drained, have slow runoff, and slow permeability. Taluban determined that the soil conditions within the Project site were unstable and moderately to highly expansive.

**Geology and Soils Impact (a.i) No Impact:** The Proposed Project is not located within any of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones established by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act of 1972. No impact would occur.

**Geology and Soils Impact (a.ii) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project site is located in a seismically active region. Due to the proximity of the Project to active and potentially active faults, there is the potential for strong seismic shaking at the site during the Project's design lifetime. While the Project could be exposed to seismically induced hazards, the Project would be required to comply with California Building Code seismic design standards. In addition, the final design of the Project would be required to comply with the recommendations of a construction-level geotechnical investigation consistent with HCD Condition of Approval No. 12 – Geotechnical Report, which requires project-specific recommendations and conclusions regarding design criteria and grading procedures. As a result, potential impacts due to seismic hazards would be minimized. Therefore, the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact.

**Geology and Soils Impact (a.iii -iv) Less than Significant**: The Proposed Project site is located in an area of low landslide susceptibility; the Project site is mostly flat and disturbed. As a result, it is unlikely that the Project would be exposed to potential landslide-related hazards. Moreover, the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the recommendations of a construction-level geotechnical analysis. This represents a less than significant impact.

The Proposed Project is located in an area identified as having high liquefaction susceptibility by Monterey County. Liquefaction and lateral spreading tend to occur in loose, fine saturated sands and in places where the liquefied soils can move toward a free face (e.g., a cliff or ravine). Due to the level topography of the site, the potential risk of lateral spreading is low. Considering the highly plastic clays underlying the site and deeper groundwater levels, the potential risk for occurrence of damaging liquefaction would be low during a strong seismic event. To ensure impacts because of seismic shaking remain less than significant, Taluban provided recommendations to minimize impacts on proposed buildings. Furthermore, while located in a seismically active region, Taluban concluded that the potential for a large-scale or moderate-scale seismic event that would induce liquefaction is low. In addition, the final design of the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the recommendations of a construction-level geotechnical investigation consistent with the Condition of Approval No. 12 – Geotechnical Report. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

**Geology and Soils Impact (b) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project is located in an area identified as having low erosion hazards. Grading and excavation could result in localized erosion

onsite. However, the Project would implement standard construction BMPs intended to minimize potential erosion-related effects and would also be required to implement standard erosion control measures during construction. Similarly, the Project would be required to implement the recommendations of a construction-level geotechnical analysis to further ensure erosion impacts would be minimized. Finally, the Proposed Project would also be required to comply with standard HCD conditions of approval related to seasonal grading restrictions, as well as comply with the requirements of MCC Chapter 16.08 and 16.12. The implementation of standard construction BMPS, in addition to adhering to applicable MCC requirements, would ensure that impacts would be minimized. All disturbed areas would be revegetated consistent with Condition of Approval No. 7 – Landscaping Plan with Agricultural Buffer and Biologist Review and **Mitigation Measure BIO-3**. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

**Geology and Soils Impact (c) and (d) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable because of the Project or that would result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or be located on expansive spoil creating a direct or indirect risk to life or property. Project geotechnician Taluban concluded that the potential risk of lateral spreading and liquefaction is low. In addition, the final design of the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the recommendations of a construction-level geotechnical investigation consistent with the Condition of Approval No. 12 – Geotechnical Report. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**Geology and Soils Impact (e) No Impact:** Castroville Community Services District would provide wastewater/sewer services to the Proposed Project. The Project would not utilize septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in an adverse impact related to site soils being incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No impact would occur.

**Geology and Soils Impact (f) No Impact:** Significant paleontological resources are fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, and diagnostically or stratigraphically important, as well as those that add to an existing body of knowledge in specific areas, stratigraphically, taxonomically, or regionally. They include fossil remains of large to very small aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates, remains of plants and animals previously not represented in certain portions of the stratigraphy, and assemblages of fossils that might aid stratigraphic correlations – particularly those offering data for the interpretation of tectonic events, geomorphic evolution, paleoclimatology, and the relationships of aquatic and terrestrial species. Most of the fossils found in Monterey County are of marine life forms and form a record of the region's geologic history of advancing and retreating sea levels. A review of nearly 700 known fossil localities within the County was conducted in 2001; 12 fossil sites were identified as having outstanding scientific value. The Proposed Project site is not located on or near any of those sites. No impact would occur.

| 8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS<br><br>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? (sources: 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? (sources: 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

Various gases in the earth's atmosphere, when exceeding naturally occurring or 'background' levels due to human activity, create a warming or greenhouse effect, and are classified as atmospheric GHGs. These gases play a critical role in determining the earth's surface temperature. Solar radiation enters the atmosphere from space and a portion of the radiation is absorbed by the earth's surface. The earth emits this radiation back toward space, but the properties of the radiation change from high-frequency solar radiation to lower-frequency infrared radiation. Greenhouse gases, which are transparent to solar radiation, are effective in absorbing infrared radiation. As a result, the radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is retained, resulting in a warming of the atmosphere known as the greenhouse effect. Among the prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect, or climate change, are carbon dioxide ("$CO_2$"), methane ("$CH_4$"), ozone ("$O_3$"), water vapor, nitrous oxide ("$N_2O$"), and chlorofluorocarbons ("CFCs"). Human-caused emissions of these GHGs in excess of natural ambient concentrations are responsible for the greenhouse effect. In California, the transportation sector is the largest emitter of GHGs.

MBARD has not yet adopted a threshold for construction-related GHG emissions but recommends utilizing thresholds set by neighboring districts (e.g., Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District ["SMAQMD"]). SMAQMD adopted an updated threshold based on the 2030 target year in April 2020. According to SMAQMD, a Project would result in a significant GHG related impact if the Proposed Project would emit more than 1,100 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalent-$CO_2$e ("$MTOCO_2e$") per year. The operation of a stationary source project would not have a significant GHG impact if the project emits less than 10,000 $MTOCO_2e$.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions (a) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project is in the NCCAB, where air quality is regulated by MBARD. As discussed above, if a project emits less than 1,100 $MTOCO_2e$ per year, its GHG emissions impact would be less than significant. The Project would generate temporary construction-related GHG emissions. Any potential effects from GHG generation during construction would be short-term and temporary.

The Proposed Project could result in operational GHG emissions due to operational energy use and traffic; however, operation of the Project would not generate emissions, directly or indirectly, that a significant environmental impact would occur. First, the Project would be constructed in accordance with contemporary building standards and would include energy efficient upgrades (e.g., rooftop PV solar arrays). The installation of energy efficient building upgrades would reduce operational energy demand and therefore reduce emissions. Second, the transportation impact analysis prepared by Keith Higgins concluded that operation of the Project would result in minimal additional traffic increases once operational, see **Section VI.17 Transportation/Traffic**. Therefore, there would not be any significant increases in operational emissions associated with traffic-related impacts, and the Project would not be creating a substantial increase in traffic impacts near the Project vicinity. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact to GHG emissions during operation.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions (b) Less than Significant:** As described above, the Proposed Project is not expected to generate significant GHG emissions. Pursuant to the Castroville Community Plan and its related CEQA document, the Project does not exceed the expected development pattern for the area of Castroville. Construction permits processed by County of Monterey require compliance with all California Air Resources Board rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes, some of which can reduce greenhouse gas construction emissions. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases, and impacts of the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

| **9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**<br>**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? (sources: 18, 22, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 18, 22, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? (sources: 18, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 8, 10, 18, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

| 9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS<br><br>**Would the project:** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? (sources: 18, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (sources: 18, 20, 21, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? (sources: 6, 7, 20, 21) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

Hazardous materials, as defined by the California Code of Regulations, are substances with certain physical properties that could pose a substantial present or future hazard to human health or the environment when improperly handled, disposed, or otherwise managed. Hazardous waste is any hazardous material that is discarded, abandoned, or slated to be recycled. Hazardous materials and waste can result in public health hazards if improperly handled, released into the soil or groundwater, or through airborne releases in vapors, fumes, or dust. Soil and groundwater having concentrations of hazardous constituents higher than specific regulatory levels must be handled and disposed of as hazardous waste when excavated or pumped from an aquifer.

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Site ("Cortese") List is a planning tool used by the state, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements related to the disclosure of information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California EPA ("CalEPA") to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. Various state and local government agencies are required to track and document hazardous material release information for the Cortese List. There are no hazardous materials release sites in the vicinity of the Project site. Similarly, according to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control's ("DTSC") EnviroStor database and State Water Resources Control Board ("SWRCB") GeoTracker database, there are no open or active cleanup sites in the vicinity of the Proposed Project.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impact (a) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would entail the use of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel, cleaning materials, etc.) during construction and operation. The types and amounts of hazardous materials used would vary according to the type of activity. It is unlikely that construction of the Project would create a significant impact due

to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials in part due to the size of the Project and the temporary nature of construction. Hazardous materials would be handled and stored in compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to hazardous materials. The implementation of these measures would ensure that impacts would be less than significant.

Operation of the Proposed Project would entail the use of hazardous materials. Hazardous materials would be handled and stored in compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to hazardous materials, including the Department of Toxic Substances Control; Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA); California Department of Transportation (Caltrans); and the Monterey County Health Department - Hazardous Materials Management Services. Furthermore, any hazardous materials would be limited in quantity and concentrations set forth by the manufacturer and/or applicable regulations. Therefore, this represents a less than significant impact.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impact (b) Less than Significant:** Operation of the Proposed Project could generate surface runoff that may contain urban pollutants from vehicles, including oil, grease, and heavy metals. Construction permits processed by County of Monterey require compliance with all state and federal rules, regulations, and statutes related to hazardous materials storage and handling. The Project Applicant would implement erosion control measures consistent with MCC Chapter 16.12 to minimize potential impacts due to contaminated runoff. Implementation of recommended erosion control measures identified by project geotechnical engineer Taluban would further ensure impacts are minimized (see **Section VI.6 Geology and Soils**). Additionally, as HCD Conditions of Approval, the Project would be required to prepare and submit a Stormwater Control Plan (Condition of Approval No. 10), California Construction General Permit (Condition of Approval No. 11), Operation Maintenance Agreement (Condition of Approval No. 13), and Operation Maintenance Plan (Condition of Approval No. 14). The implementation of these conditions of approval would address stormwater control measures and procedures for managing stormwater runoff. Therefore, this represents a less than significant impact.

**Hazard and Hazardous Materials Impact (c) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project is within one-quarter mile of a school. The Project would not result in emissions of hazardous materials, or the handling of hazardous materials exceeding what currently occurs on site. The Project consists of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. The implementation of HCD Conditions of Approval would ensure impacts remain less than significant. Therefore, this represents a less than significant impact.

**Hazard and Hazardous Materials Impact (d) No Impact:** The Proposed Project is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. No impact would occur.

**Hazard and Hazardous Materials Impact (e) No Impact:** The Proposed Project is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of an airport. The nearest airport is

approximately 10 miles away on the east side of Salinas. Therefore, the Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area and no impact would occur.

**Hazard and Hazardous Materials Impact (f) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not interfere with or impair the implementation of any emergency response plans or evacuation plans. Emergency response services are provided by the North County Fire Protection District which has a fire station approximately 0.20 miles away on Speegle Street in Castroville. The closest emergency route to the Project site is Highway 1 to the west and SR 156 to the east, which both connect to Merritt Street/SR 183 running east to west through the town of Castroville. Access to the Project site is via Tembladera Street which is a block over from Merritt Street to the south. Traffic generated from the facility, if unregulated, would have the potential to interfere with the emergency route via Merritt Street. However, the project shall be required to submit a Construction Management Plan to HCD-Engineering Services for review and approval prior to construction permitting. Also, construction of the Project would be temporary, and the Project would result in minimal additional traffic increases once operational. Additionally, the design of the Proposed Project would comply with Monterey County Regional Fire Districts Prevention Division's safety standards. Safety standards include specific driveway and road turnabout minimum widths and radii, as well as access and gate provisions, and fire sprinkler systems (see **Figure 10. General Notes**). For these reasons, impacts would be less than significant.

**Hazard and Hazardous Materials Impact (g) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project is not located in a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection ("CALFIRE") State Responsibility Area and is not located in a Very High Fire Hazard Zone in a Local Responsibility Area. The Project site is surrounded by mixed-use development to the north, east, and west. The Tembladero Slough separates the Project site from the adjacent farmland to the south. The Tembladero Slough functions as an agricultural drainage ditch for the surrounding farmland which typically holds water all year round. The Project includes irrigated landscaping around the perimeter of the site which creates a green buffer to the surrounding land uses. Due to the previously disturbed nature of the site, surrounding land uses, and CALFIRE assessment of wildfire risk for the area, the Proposed Project impacts would be less than significant.

| 10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY<br><br>**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 groundwater quality? (sources: 15, 16, 18, 22, 25, 35, 37) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? (sources: 12, 15, 16, 18, 22, 25) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: | | | | |
| i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site? (sources: 15, 16, 18, 22, 25, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite? (sources: 15, 16, 18, 22, 25, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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 (sources: 15, 16, 18, 22, 25, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| iv) impede or redirect flood flows? (sources: 15, 16, 18, 22, 25, 35, 37) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? (sources: 5, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 27) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? (sources: 12, 15, 16, 18, 25, 28, 29, 37) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

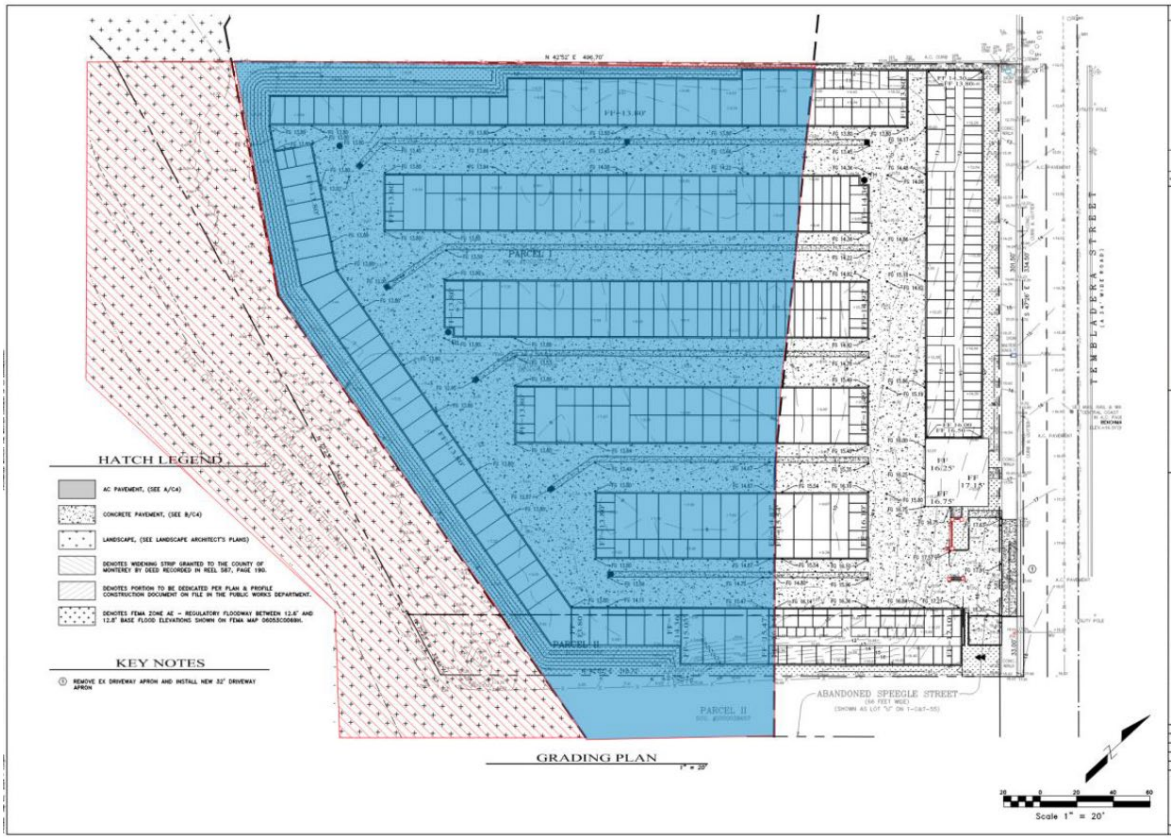
## Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Frank Campo of C3 Engineering, Inc. prepared a Stormwater Control Plan for the Proposed Project. The report, *Stormwater Control Plan Castroville Self Storage, LLC* was prepared in

September 2023, and revised in December 2023. The following discussion references the findings of these technical reports.

The Project site is located to the north of the Tembladero Slough. The Tembladero Slough flows northwest and into the Old Salinas River before emptying into the Elkhorn Slough and Pacific Ocean near Moss Landing. The topography of the Project site is mostly flat and gently slopes towards Tembladero Slough. Most of the site is within Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA") Flood Zone AE, and a smaller portion is within Zone X. FEMA designates the Tembladero Slough as a Regulatory Floodway. The natural drainage of the subject parcel is sheet flow over the land surface into the slough. The Project would include the installation of a stormwater drainage system that would include five infiltration chambers, subdrains, area drains, drop inlets with media filters, and downspouts. Stormwater collected by these features would be transported through subsurface stormwater pipes before being captured in an isolator row. Overflow of stormwater would be released to the Slough through a subsurface pipe in the southwest corner of the site. The Project does not propose to construct vertical development in the Floodway of the Tembladero Slough. This is demonstrated by **Figure 13. Floodway (red) and Floodplain Fringe (blue)**, taken from a memorandum prepared by project hydrologist Robin J. Lee of Schaaf and Wheeler to HCD-Environmental Services on September 20, 2024 (Source: 37).

**Figure 13. Floodway (red) and Floodplain Fringe (blue)**



**Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (a) and (c) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. Construction would result in ground-disturbing activities as a result of excavation, and grading. Ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal could generate temporary soil erosion and could potentially affect existing water quality. To minimize construction generated water quality impacts, the contractor/engineer would implement standard construction BMPs. Moreover, the Project would also be required to comply with the requirements of MCC Chapter 16.08, which would ensure that temporary construction-related water quality impacts would be minimized. The Project would be required to comply with HCD Condition of Approval No. 10 - Stormwater Control Plan, which would require the Project to submit a Stormwater Control Report and Stormwater Control Plan. Additionally, the Project would apply BMPs described in the California Stormwater Quality Association ("CASQA") Stormwater Handbook. Further, the Project would be required to comply with HCD Condition of Approval No. 11 - California Construction General Permit and would be required to submit a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, or a letter of exemption from the Central Regional Water Quality Control Board. Finally, the Project would be required to comply with the drainage policies of MCC Chapter 16.14 (Monterey County Stormwater Ordinance), and the recommendations of the geotechnical investigation for the Project. For these reasons, the temporary construction-related impacts associated with the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

The Proposed Project would include the construction of new impervious surfaces, which could cause localized increases in erosion on- or off-site in the absence of drainage improvements and could result in potential operational water quality impacts. The Project includes on-site drainage improvements (i.e., self-treating areas and underground retention) to address impacts due to increases in impervious surfaces. All storm drain structures and catch basins would be equipped with media filters to minimize pollution. These improvements would ensure that impacts would be less than significant. In addition, the final design of the Project would be required to comply with the recommendations of a stormwater control plan and geotechnical report. The Project would be required to comply with HCD Condition of Approval No. 13 – Operation and Maintenance Agreement and HCD Condition of Approval No. 14 – Operation and Maintenance Plan which would ensure stormwater control measures were adequately functioning and being maintained during operation. For these reasons, impacts associated with the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

**Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (b) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Temporary water use would occur during construction of the Project in connection with dust suppression activities. Construction water use would be minimal and would not decrease groundwater supplies or interfere with the process of groundwater recharge.

Water would be used during operation for the office and residential unit, landscaping irrigation, and on an as-needed basis for fire suppression. Landscape irrigation water use was estimated to require 0.210 acre feet per year (68,556 gallons per year). Water use calculations were not provided

for the office and residence, they were estimated by using Monterey Peninsula Water Management District ("MPWMD") Rule 24 Water Use Capacity Use Factors. As discussed, the Project consists of a mixed-use building with an office on the ground floor, and a residential unit on the second floor. The office component of the Proposed Project would have a single restroom, with a sink and toilet. MPWMD identifies this as "Group 1" which is a low water use with an estimated 0.0007 acre feet per square foot water use factor. The office is 1,294 square feet and would require 0.090 acre feet per year of water.

Alternatively, MPWMD determines residential water use by identifying the water fixtures (e.g., sinks, toilets, showers, etc.), and multiplying the fixture unit value by .01 to determine acre feet per year. **Table 10-1** identifies the fixtures within the residential unit and MPWMD fixture unit value.

Table 10-1. Residential Unit Water Use

| Residential Unit Water Fixture | Number of Fixtures | MPWMD Water Fixture Value | Water Value |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bathroom Sink | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| Toilet | 2 | 1.8 | 3.6 |
| Bathtub/Shower | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Kitchen Sink | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Washer | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| **Total** | | | **14.6** |
| **Acre Feet per year (Water Value x 0.01)** | | | **0.146** |

**Source:** Mehringer Construction & Desing. Castroville Self Storage, LLC. Site Plans October 16, 2023. And MPWMP, Rule 24 Calculation of Water Use Capacity and Capacity Fees, available at: https://www.mpwmd.net/wp-content/uploads/Rule24.pdf

The Proposed Project would connect to the CCSD for water services. CCSD provided a will-serve letter indicating that they could serve the water demand associated with the Project, subject to CCSD's conditions of approval. As a result, there is sufficient available water supply to serve the Proposed Project. This represents a less than significant impact.

**Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (d) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project site is not located in an area subject to significant seiche effects, but is located in an area subject to tsunami and flooding. The southern portion of the Project site is located adjacent to the Tembladero Slough in a California Tsunami Hazard Area and a FEMA designated Zone AE. FEMA designates the Tembladero Slough as a Regulatory Floodway. The Project does not propose to construct any vertical development in the Regulatory Floodway of the Tembladero Slough. At the time of this writing, FEMA cannot accept Letters of Map Revision (LOMR) due to a lawsuit with USFWS. There is no date set on when they will be accepting LOMR applications again. During application review, HCD-Engineering Services established that the Project would not be required to submit a LOMR. The Project would import fill to raise the elevation in the floodway fringe to minimize effects from potential flooding during high precipitation events. The Project would be required to comply with HCD Condition of Approval No. 9- Regulations for Floodplains in Monterey County, which requires the Project to submit the required documentation for complying with regulations

related to development and use within floodplain fringe in Monterey County (MCC Chapter 16.16). The Proposed Project would implement landscaping and erosion controls near the project boundaries that border the Tembladero Slough. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

**Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (e) No Impact:** The Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. As discussed previously, the Project would connect to existing water supply infrastructure and has received a will-serve letter by CCSD. No impact would occur.

| **11. LAND USE AND PLANNING**<br>**Would the project:** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Physically divide an established community? (sources: 18, 22, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? (sources: 18, 22, 27, 28, 29, 38) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

The Proposed Project is located on a legal lot of record designated as "Mixed-Use| Resource Conservation" in the North County Area (Inland) Area Plan and Castroville Community Plan. The Project would consist of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit.

**Land Use and Planning Impact (a): No Impact.** The Proposed Project is within one privately owned parcel located on an established road within the southwestern edge of Castroville. Therefore, it would not divide an established community.

**Land Use and Planning Impact (b): Less Than Significant**
The Proposed Project consists of a mini-warehouse storage facility with an attached two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office on the first floor and a residential unit on the second floor. The Project application was reviewed by all required groups within the Housing and Community Development Department, the North County Fire Protection District, the Environmental Health Bureau, and the Agricultural Commissioner's Office. These offices found that the project overall is designed in accordance with all applicable development standards and 2010 GP Policies. Among these, Public Services Policy PS-2.3 requires new development to connect to existing water service providers, which it shall (a "will serve" letter from Castroville Community Services District was provided in the application submittal). General Plan Policy AG-

1.2 requires a well-defined buffer area to be provided between new non-agricultural development proposals that are located adjacent to agricultural land uses on viable farmlands designated as Prime, of Statewide Importance, Unique, or of Local Importance. As the neighboring parcel to the southwest is used for agricultural operations, an Agricultural Buffer in the form of landscaped area is proposed. Consistent with 2010 GP Land Use Policy LU-1.11, this development is consistent with the GP Land Use Map designation of the subject property and the policies of the 2010 GP, pursuant to Figure LU8, North County. 2010 GP Land Use Policy LU-2.20 requires that the preferred location and priority for development in the County shall be in Community Areas such as Castroville, and that a mix of uses in Community Areas shall be supported. As a mixed use project in MU-C zoned district (within the Castroville Community Plan area), this project is consistent. As a commercial business with office and one residential unit, the project is also consistent with 2010 GP Policy LU-2.22 – Community Areas shall be designed to achieve a sustainable, balanced, and integrated community offering with opportunities for workers to live near jobs. As part of the Design Approval review, the Castroville LUAC reviewed the Project and recommended support as proposed on November 7, 2023. Overall, there is no significant environmental impact due to conflict with the Castroville Community Plan, the 2010 General Plan including the North County Area Plan, or the policies and regulations of Title 15, Title 16 or Title 21 which relate to development of this type and at this location. Therefore, through compliance with the required regulations and the applied conditions of approval and mitigation measures, the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact on the regulations for Land Use and Planning. See also the related sections of this Initial Study: **VI.1. Aesthetics, VI.2. Agriculture and Forest Resources, VI.4. Biological Resources, VI.5. Cultural Resources, VI.7. Geology and Soils, VI.9. Hazards and Hazardous Materials, VI.10. Hydrology and Water Resources, VI.13. Noise, VI.16. Recreation, VI.17. Transportation and Traffic**, and **VI.19. Utilities and Service Systems**.

| **12. MINERAL RESOURCES**<br><br>**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? (sources: 4, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? (sources: 4, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

Please refer to **Section IV.A Environmental Factors Potentially Affected**. The Proposed Project would have no impact on mineral resources.

| 13. NOISE<br><br>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? (sources: 18, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? (sources: 18, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 18, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

Noise is commonly defined as unwanted sound. Sound levels are usually measured and expressed in decibels ("dB") with zero decibels corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing. Most sounds consist of a broad band of frequencies, with each frequency differing in sound level. The intensities of each frequency add together to generate a sound. Most environmental noise includes a conglomeration of noise from distant sources, which creates a relatively steady background noise in which no particular source is identifiable.

The Proposed Project site is located in the community of Castroville. The Project consists of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. The Project site is located off Tembladera Street, which is accessible via Merritt Street/SR 183. The primary source of noise in the Project vicinity would be from vehicle traffic along Merritt Street/SR 183, SR 1, SR 156, and noise generated from the neighboring land uses. The nearest sensitive receptors are located 120 feet north of the Proposed Project site.

**Noise Impact (a) Less than Significant:** Construction of the Proposed Project would generate temporary noise in the project vicinity due to the use of equipment (e.g., trucks, tractors, excavators). The Castroville Community Plan contains general policies pertaining to noise reduction and Castroville Community Plan Policy MM 3.11-1 and MM 3.11-2 requires future development to be reviewed by the County of Monterey for potential impacts pertaining to noise, and therefore, this analysis relies on noise policies contained in the 2010 Monterey County General Plan. As such, construction activities are required to comply with the Monterey County Noise Ordinance as described in MCC Chapter 10.60 which was amended in 2024. The ordinance applies

to “any machine, mechanism, device, or contrivance” within 2,500 feet of any occupied dwelling unit and limits the noise generated to 70 dBA at a distance of 50 feet or more in any direction from the noise source. Noise generating construction activities are limited to the hours between 7 AM and 7 PM Monday through Saturday. No construction noise is allowed on Sundays or holidays.

While the extent, duration, and volume of noise generated by the construction of the Proposed Project has not been identified, it is unlikely that construction noise would result in a significant impact given the location of the Project site, proximity of existing sensitive receptors, type of construction, and the temporary nature of construction activities. **Table 13-1 Construction Equipment Noise Emission Levels** identifies typical noise emissions (i.e., levels) generated by construction equipment and how equipment noise reduces with distance.[1]

**Table 13-1**
**Construction Equipment Noise Emission Levels**

| Equipment | Typical Noise Level (dBA) 50 ft from Source | Typical Noise Level (dBA) 100 ft from Source[1] | Typical Noise Level (dBA) 200 ft from Source[1] | Typical Noise Level (dBA) 400 ft from Source[1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Air Compressor | 81 | 75 | 69 | 63 |
| Backhoe | 80 | 74 | 68 | 62 |
| Ballast Equalizer | 82 | 76 | 70 | 64 |
| Ballast Tamper | 83 | 77 | 71 | 65 |
| Compactor | 82 | 76 | 70 | 64 |
| Concrete Mixer | 85 | 79 | 73 | 67 |
| Concrete Pump | 82 | 76 | 70 | 64 |
| Concrete Vibrator | 76 | 70 | 64 | 58 |
| Dozer | 85 | 79 | 73 | 67 |
| Generator | 81 | 75 | 69 | 63 |
| Grader | 85 | 79 | 73 | 67 |
| Impact Wrench | 85 | 79 | 73 | 67 |
| Jack Hammer | 88 | 82 | 76 | 70 |
| Loader | 85 | 79 | 73 | 67 |
| Paver | 89 | 83 | 77 | 71 |
| Pneumatic Tool | 85 | 79 | 73 | 67 |
| Pump | 76 | 70 | 64 | 58 |
| Roller | 74 | 68 | 62 | 56 |

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, 2006.
Construction generated noise levels drop off at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of distance between the source and receptor.

As noted, the nearest sensitive receptors are located approximately 120 feet to the northeast of the Proposed Project site. Based on the proximity of the nearest receptor and the rate that noise diminishes, construction-related activities would not exceed the County’s noise-related threshold.

[1] The rate of noise diminishes as the distance from the source of noise doubles.

Operational noise would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise within the surrounding area. The Project consists of the operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. The office component of the Project would be open from 9 AM to 6 PM on Mondays through Saturdays, and 9 AM to 5 PM on Sundays. The security gate of the Project would be open from 7 AM to 7 PM, 7 days per week. There is no alarm system proposed for the security of the storage units, so the mini-warehouse storage component of the project will not add unusual sources of operational noise. Deliveries would occur during the hours the office is open. The Project would result in minimal new traffic increases once operational. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact.

**Noise Impact (b) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise. Construction of the Project would require excavation and grading. These activities would be minor and temporary in nature. The operation of the Project would not create a new source of vibration. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact.

**Noise Impact (c) No Impact:** The Proposed Project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip of an airport land use plan, or within two miles of a public airport. The nearest airport is approximately 10 miles away on the east side of Salinas. For these reasons, no impact would occur.

| **14. POPULATION AND HOUSING**<br><br>**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)? (sources: 18, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? (sources: 18, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

Please refer to **Section IV.A Environmental Factors Potentially Affected**. The Proposed Project would have no impact on population and housing.

| 15. PUBLIC SERVICES<br>**Would the project:** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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: | | | | |
| a) Fire protection? (sources: 18, 32) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Police protection? (sources: 18, 30) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Schools? (sources: 18, 33) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Parks? (sources: 18) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Other public facilities? (sources: 18) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

Please refer to **Section IV.A Environmental Factors Potentially Affected**. The Proposed Project would have no impact on public services.

| 16. RECREATION<br>**Would the project:** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? (sources: 18, 28, 38, 39) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 18, 28, 38, 39) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

The Tembladero Slough runs parallel to the southwestern property line of the Project site. The Castroville Community Plan emphasizes resource enhancement and protection of nearby sloughs for habitat and open space improvements. The vision of such improvements is to provide

recreational trails and wildlife viewing opportunities to the surrounding community. The Proposed Project consists of a mini-warehouse storage facility with an attached two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office on the first floor and a residential unit on the second floor. For reasons related to Agricultural Resources and Biological Resources, the section of property located within the 100-year floodplain along the Tembladero Slough is proposed for landscaping with review by the Agricultural Commissioner's Office and a qualified biologist. The Central Coast Wetlands Group at Moss Landing Marine Labs has a proposed trail concept that would connect Castroville residence to the beach, including the edge of the Tembladero Slough (Source 38). This potential may be realized only in concert with regional planning efforts. While the currently adopted Castroville Community Plan recommends the development of a public trail along the slough, the Plan is also in process of update at the time of this writing, with an anticipated release date for public review prior to June, 2025.

**Recreation Impact (a) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not result in an increased use of existing neighborhood and/or regional parks or other recreational facilities causing a substantial physical deterioration. No parks or other existing recreational facilities would be adversely impacted by the Project. Tembladero Slough, which is adjacent to the southwestern property line, is the subject of a Castroville Community Plan policy under Goal 9, *Create a safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle system that connects local and regional destinations*. Policy 9.4 recommends an "Artichoke Avenue improvement project" to include a bicycle and pedestrian trail along the Tembladero Slough be implemented. One planning effort that reflects the direction of Policy 9.4 is currently in concept stage. The concept is expressed as "Castroville to the Coast" per Central Coast Wetlands Group at Moss Landing Marine Labs flyers (Source 38). Artichoke Avenue improvements underway at the time of this writing include roadway improvements on Merritt Street, parallel to Tembladera Street and one block away, which improve bicycle and pedestrian uses. The Castroville State Route 183 Improvement Project by CalTrans has an adopted CEQA document and has already started implementation. Plans include reconstructing sidewalks, improving and adding crosswalks, delineating Class 2 Bike Lanes at select locations, and constructing other multimodal access improvements along Merritt Street (Source 39). Because these improvements are underway, the planning effort pursuant to Castroville Community Plan's recommendation under Policy 9.4 would require a separate collaboration with CalTrans for the Tembladero Slough pedestrian trail to become a plan. HCD-Planning does not find trail easements on record for the parcels with a property line on the same slough in the neighborhood, so any planning effort to create a trail along the slough will require requests for easements. Toward that end, the owner/applicant has expressed to HCD-Planning that they are willing to dedicate such a trail easement when and if the regional planning effort is complete. In the meantime, the owner/applicant is not developing in the portion of the parcel which could align with a public trail. It is currently proposed as part of the landscaping with agricultural buffer. As no hardscape development is proposed there, some part of the area could provide trail opportunities in the future. Therefore, the impacts of the Project as proposed on other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated is less than significant.

**Recreation Impact (b) No Impact:** The Proposed Project would not induce significant population growth or result in a substantial change in the population where recreational resources would be negatively impacted or require expansion. The Project does not propose recreational facilities or expansion of existing plans for trail alignments, therefore there are no impacts. Should the County or another lead agency plan to construct or expand recreational facilities involving this project's parcel in concert with other neighboring parcels which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment, the analysis of potential impacts shall be done separately as part of the regional planning effort.

| **17. TRANSPORTATION**<br><br>**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? (sources: 18, 20, 21, 25, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? (sources: 18, 20, 21, 25, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? (sources: 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) Result in inadequate emergency access? (sources: 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

Keith Higgins prepared a traffic analysis for the Proposed Project. The analysis, *Transportation Impact Analysis for the Tembladera Self Storage Project (September 2022)* evaluated transportation-related impacts associated with the Project. Higgins subsequently prepared a supplemental analysis titled *Transportation Impact Analysis Update for the Castroville Self Storage Project (October 2023)* that evaluated potential traffic and safety impacts of the Proposed Project for the intersections of Merritt Street (SR 183)/Sanchez Street and Merritt Street (SR 183)/Speegle Street, as well as evaluating Project access on Tembladera Street.

Significance Criteria – Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Senate Bill (SB) 743 required that starting July 2020 transportation impact for projects per CEQA be based on a project's Vehicle Miles Traveled ("VMT"). CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1) calls for the evaluation of transportation impacts of projects based on VMT.

CEQA uses the VMT metric to evaluate a project's transportation impacts. The publication "Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research," December 2018, suggests that a significant environmental impact would occur if a project would generate more than 110 trips per day.

Based on Project traffic engineer Higgins' September 2022 transportation analysis, the Proposed Project would generate a maximum of about 90 daily trips with seven (four in and three out) during the AM peak hour and eight (four in and four out) in the PM peak hour, or the equivalent of about one vehicle every 10 minutes during the morning peak hour and one vehicle every eight minutes during the PM peak hour.

Higgins also prepared a collision analysis and determined that collision rates at the Merritt Street/SR 183 intersections with Sanchez and Speegle Streets are both 0.32 collisions per million vehicle miles, which is less than the statewide average. The Higgins report concluded that the low trip generation of the Proposed Project would not result in adverse effects on nearby intersections or Project driveway operations.

**Transportation Impact (a) and (b) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines Section 15064.3(b). The Project would result in temporary construction-related traffic. The Transportation Impact Analysis and Transportation Impact Analysis Update concluded that the operation of the Project would result in an almost imperceptible amount of traffic, and the extremely low trip generation will not result in significant traffic impacts anywhere in the Project vicinity. There would be no significant increase in operational traffic due to the Proposed Project.

The Proposed Project consists of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. Construction would require 10 – 20 workers onsite at any given time during the duration of construction, and construction hours would be from 7 AM – 7 PM. In addition, the Project would be required to comply with HCD Condition of Approval No. 18 – Construction Management Plan (CMP), which would propose temporary traffic control measures to be implemented during construction. The CMP is reviewed and approved by HCD-Engineering Services prior to implementation. Due to the temporary nature of construction and the implementation of an approved CMP, this would not result in a significant impact.

Operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a significant impact as a result of new VMT. For the purposes of this IS/MND, the Project would result in a significant traffic-related effect if the Proposed Project exceeds the 110 daily trip threshold recommended by the Office of Planning and Research. As noted previously, the Project would generate approximately 90 vehicle trips per day. As a result, the Project is below the 110 daily trips threshold; and therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a significant VMT-related impact. This represents a less than significant impact.

**Transportation Impact (c) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not substantially increase hazards due to the geometric design features or incompatible uses. The Project would not be changing existing circulation systems, roadways, or bicycle and pedestrian facilities in a way that would generate hazards. As discussed above, Project traffic engineer Higgins evaluated the intersections of Merritt Street/SR 183 and Sanchez Street, as well as Merritt Street/SR 183 and Speegle Street. Higgins similarly evaluated access to and from the Project site on Tembladera Street. Higgins concluded that the low trip generation of the Project would result in acceptable driveway operations, and vehicle queuing for exiting or entering vehicles would be low. Additionally, Higgins concluded that there is no evidence of safety issues at either study intersection. Therefore, the Proposed Project represents a less than significant impact.

**Transportation Impact (d) Less than Significant Impact:** The Proposed Project was reviewed for conformance with all County and Fire Department requirements regarding emergency access during project application review. The North County Fire Protection District did not require redesign or recommend conditions of approval. Therefore, the project would not result in inadequate emergency access. The Project would result in acceptable driveway operations, and vehicle queuing for exiting or entering vehicles would be rare. Therefore, the Proposed Project represents a less than significant impact.

| **18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES**<br><br>**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 Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: | | | | |
| i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k); or (sources: 1, 18, 27) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. (sources: 1, 18, 27) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

## Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

California Assembly Bill ("AB") 52, in effect since July 2015, provides CEQA protections for tribal cultural resources. All lead agencies approving projects under CEQA are required, if formally requested by a culturally affiliated California Native American Tribe, to consult with such tribe regarding the potential impact of a project on tribal cultural resources before releasing an environmental document. Under California Public Resources Code Sec. 21074, tribal cultural resources include site features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, or objects that are of cultural value to a tribe and that are eligible for or listed on the California Register of Historic Resources or a local historic register, or that the lead agency has determined to be of significant tribal cultural value. A Phase I report prepared for the Project by Archaeologists Rubén Mendoza and Jennifer Lucido of Archives & Archaeology includes archaeological records searches, an onsite pedestrian survey, and recommendations. The report informed this section on Tribal Cultural Resources (Source 1). The information contained in this discussion is supplemented with additional information provided by Native American representatives as part of the Tribal consultation process undertaken by the County of Monterey in accordance with AB 52.

On May 10, 2024, the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation (OCEN) was formally notified. Then, on May 14, 2024 representatives of the OCEN had formal consultation with County staff regarding the Project. During the consultation, OCEN requested archaeological and tribal monitoring during construction activities. Although the Project's Phase I Archaeological Report was negative for cultural resources during a pedestrian survey, County found the request reasonable because the project location is within the floodplain fringe where resources could have been covered by flood-borne materials during a 100-year flood. Also, there is a higher than normal likelihood for tribal cultural use of the project location in the past due to the close proximity to a waterway. Therefore, there is a possibility resources exist below the ground surface of the project site, which could be disturbed by grading and site preparation activities associated with the Proposed Project.

**Tribal Resources Impact (ai) and (a.ii.) Less than Significant with Mitigation:** Public Resources Code Sec. 21074 defines a tribal cultural resource as "sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe that are either of the following: a) included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources, [or] b) included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of [Public Resources Code] Section 5020.1" (Public Resources Code Sec. 21027(a)).

No Tribal cultural resources, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074, are listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources, or in a local register of historic resources, are known to exist at the Proposed Project site. No known or previously recorded archeological sites are located in the Project site. Additionally, the field reconnaissance conducted in April 2022 did not find surface evidence of potentially significant historic period archaeological resources. While no known Tribal cultural resources exist at the Project site, construction-related activities could potentially affect a buried Tribal Cultural Resource or a previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resource. This represents a potentially significant impact that would be reduced to a less than significant level through the incorporation of the following mitigation.

**Mitigation Measures TCR-1:** To minimize potential impacts to previously unknown or subsurface Tribal Cultural Resources (TCR), culturally affiliated Native American tribes shall be notified prior to ground-disturbing activities. Prior to the issuance of any permit for ground-disturbing activities, the owner/applicant shall submit evidence (i.e., a contract) to the Chief of Planning demonstrating that the owner/applicant has retained a Tribal Cultural Monitor (TCM) to monitor initial ground-disturbing activities. The TCM shall be responsible for preparing daily monitoring reports and shall prepare a final report following the completion of ground-disturbing activities. The final report, along with the daily monitoring reports, shall be submitted to the Chief of Planning for review within 60 days following the completion of ground-disturbing activities. All work shall stop if a TCR is discovered during construction. In accordance with Condition No. 3, Cultural Resources Negative Archaeological Report, an archaeologist will be contacted at the time of the finding to evaluate the resource to determine whether the finding is significant. The archaeologist shall be required to consult with the TCM as part of the evaluation. If the finding is a historical resource or unique TCR, avoidance measures or appropriate mitigation shall be implemented. Work will cease in the immediate vicinity of the find until mitigation can be implemented (in accordance with Condition No. 3, Cultural Resources Negative Archaeological Report). In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(f), work may continue in other parts of the project site during the implementation of potential resource mitigation (if necessary). The TCM and archaeologist shall provide a mitigation plan for review and approval by the Chief of Planning prior to the resumption of ground-disturbing activities. All tribal resources shall be returned to the affected Native American tribe or reburied onsite following the recommendations of the mitigation plan.

> **Mitigation Monitoring Action TCR-1.a:** Prior to the issuance of any construction permit, the owner/applicant shall submit evidence (i.e., contract) to the Chief of Planning for review and approval demonstrating that the owner/applicant has retained a Tribal Cultural Monitor (TCM) to monitor ground-disturbing activities and that the TCM has been informed of the construction calendar. The TCM shall prepare daily monitoring reports that shall be available upon request by the Chief of Planning. A final report, including all of the daily monitoring reports, shall be submitted to the Chief of Planning for review and approval within 60 days of completion of ground-disturbing activities.

**Mitigation Monitoring Action TCR-1.b:** In the event that TCR is discovered during construction, work will be stopped pursuant to Condition No. 3, Cultural Resources Negative Archaeological Report. The TCM shall consult with an archaeologist who will be contacted at the time of the finding to evaluate the resource to determine whether the finding is significant. If the finding is a historical resource or unique TCR, avoidance measures or appropriate mitigation shall be implemented. The TCM and archaeologist shall provide a mitigation plan for review and approval by the Chief of Planning prior to the resumption of ground-disturbing activities. All tribal resources shall be returned to the affected Native American tribe or reburied onsite following the recommendations of the mitigation plan.

| 19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS<br><br>**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? (sources: 12, 13, 18, 22, 25) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years? (sources: 12, 18, 25) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 13, 18, 25) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? (sources: 18, 25, 28, 29, 36) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statues and regulations related to solid waste? (sources: 18, 25, 28, 29, 36) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

## Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The Proposed Project would be provided water and wastewater services by the Castroville Community Services District (CCSD). The CCSD provides water and wastewater services to the community of Castroville. The CCSD received the Project application and has provided a will-serve letter for water and wastewater services. Service by CCSD is contingent upon the submittal of their conditions of approval. As a result, there is sufficient available water supply and wastewater capacity to serve the Proposed Project.

Waste Management, Inc. provides waste and recycling services to the existing Project site. Solid waste generated by the Project would be transported and disposed of at the Monterey Peninsula Landfill and Recycling Facility north of the City of Marina, which is operated by the Monterey Regional Waste Management District ("MRWMD"). The landfill has a permitted capacity of 3,500 tons per day of solid waste. Currently, the landfill receives approximately 1,100 tons per day of solid waste. The remaining landfill capacity is approximately 48 million tons or 72 million cubic yards. At current rates of disposal, the landfill will continue to serve the present service area for approximately 150 years. The Project has a will-serve letter from Waste Management that is

sufficient to serve the Project. PG&E would provide electrical and natural gas services to the Proposed Project.

**Utilities and Service Systems Impact (a) through (c) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. The Project consists of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit. Construction of the Project would include new stormwater drainage, electrical power, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities or infrastructure. However, construction of these utilities would not result in a substantial environmental effect as the Project would be required to implement Mitigation Measures and Conditions of Approval identified throughout this IS/MND. Additionally, the Project would connect to existing water and wastewater infrastructure owned and operated by the CCSD. As discussed above, CCSD reviewed the Project application and has provided will-serve letters for water and wastewater. The uses are expected to be minimal, as there is only one residential unit and an office with low-flow irrigation. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not substantially increase the demand for utilities beyond existing levels, or result in the need for expanded infrastructure. This represents a less than significant impact.

**Utilities and Service Systems Impact (d) and (e) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not generate solid waste exceeding State or local standards or that exceeds the capacity of local infrastructure. Waste Management would provide solid waste services to the Project. The Project has a will-serve letter from Waste Management that states they can serve the Proposed Project. As such, solid waste generated by the Project would not be 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. In addition, the Project would comply with all Federal, State, and local statutes and solid waste regulations including recycling of paper, plastic and cardboard and pickup of household green waste for composting. The EHB regulates waste receptacle design and installation to further ensure the waste generated in connection with the Project would be handled in accordance with all applicable statutes and regulations to the extent they are applicable to the Project. For these reasons, the Proposed Project represents a less than significant impact.

| **20. WILDFIRE**<br><br>**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? (sources: 6, 7, 18, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? (sources: 6, 7, 18, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? (sources: 6, 7, 18, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? (sources: 6, 7, 18, 28, 29, 35) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

## Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Please refer to **Section IV.A Environmental Factors Potentially Affected**. The Proposed Project would have no impact on wildfires.

## *VII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE*

NOTE: If there are significant environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated and no feasible project alternatives are available, then complete the mandatory findings of significance and attach to this initial study as an appendix. This is the first step for starting the environmental impact report (EIR) process.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21082.1, 21083, 21083.05, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21095, and 21151, Public Resources Code; *Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino*, (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296; *Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors* (1990) 222 Cal.App.3d 1337; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; *San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

| **Does the project:** | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) 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? (sources: 1, 18, 28, 29, 31, 34) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b) 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)? (sources: 18, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? (sources: 18, 27, 28, 29) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:**

**Mandatory Findings Impact (a) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated:** As discussed in this Initial Study, the Proposed Project would not 1) degrade the quality of environment; 2) substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species; 3) cause a fish or

wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; 4) threaten to eliminate plant or animal community; 5) reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal; or 6) eliminate important examples of major periods of California history or prehistory. The Project shall be required to meet Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, TCR-1, and several project-specific or standard Conditions of Approval. The Project would result in temporary construction-related impacts to biological resources that would be mitigated to less than significant through mitigation measures identified above. Similarly, the Project site is not known to contain, nor is the site located near, any known cultural or Tribal cultural resources. While unlikely, construction could unearth resources that were previously unknown. However, the Project would implement standard County Conditions of Approval to ensure potential impacts related to the inadvertent discovery of previously unknown resource are minimized. Further, this Initial Study also identifies a mitigation measure (TCR-1) to ensure potential impacts to previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resources are minimized to a less than significant level. All potentially significant impacts associated with the Proposed Project would be minimized to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures and adherence with local, State and Federal codes which inform the conditions of approval identified in this Initial Study.

**Mandatory Findings Impact (b) Less than Significant:** In order to determine whether a cumulative effect requires an EIR, the lead agency shall consider whether the impact is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable (CEQA Guidelines §15064(h)(1)). In addition, CEQA allows a lead agency to determine that a project's contribution to a potential cumulative impact is not considerable and thus not significant when mitigation measures identified in the initial study will render those potential impacts less than considerable (CEQA Guidelines 15064(h)(2)). This IS/MND contains mitigation measures to ensure that all potentially significant impacts are minimized to a less than significant level. Furthermore, the County has identified Conditions of Approval that require the Project to adhere to local, state and Federal codes and minimize potential impacts through the regulatory environment. Implementation of these various measures would ensure that the Project's impacts would be less than significant. A project underway in Castroville, CalTrans' State Route 183 Improvements, was also analyzed under CEQA for potential adverse environmental effect and those effects avoided or minimized through project-specific mitigations (SCH# 2021050148). When assessed with the project underway in the area, the Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable adverse environmental effect. Therefore, the Project would not result in any significant impacts.

**Mandatory Findings Impact (c) Less than Significant:** The Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The Project would result in temporary construction-related impacts that would be minimized to a less than significant level through the incorporation of construction best management measures and mitigation measures identified throughout this Initial Study. The Project consists of the construction and operation of a mini-warehouse storage facility and a two-story mixed-use building consisting of an office and residential unit, and would not result in a change of existing type of use at the site. No mitigation measures are required to reduce potential impacts to Air Quality, Hazards, Noise, Utilities or Wildfire. Humans may be negatively affected by unmitigated disturbance of Tribal Cultural Resources. Therefore, this Initial Study identifies a mitigation measure (TCR-1) to ensure potential

impacts to previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resources are minimized to a less than significant level. Additionally, the Proposed Project would not induce substantial population growth either directly or indirectly or result in a substantial increase in traffic.

## *VIII. CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FEES*

**Assessment of Fee:**

The State Legislature, through the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 1535, revoked the authority of lead agencies to determine that a project subject to CEQA review had a "de minimis" (minimal) effect on fish and wildlife resources under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Projects that were determined to have a "de minimis" effect were exempt from payment of the filing fees.

SB 1535 has eliminated the provision for a determination of "de minimis" effect by the lead agency; consequently, all land development projects that are subject to environmental review are now subject to the filing fees, unless the California Department of Fish and Wildlife determines that the project will have no effect on fish and wildlife resources.

To be considered for determination of "no effect" on fish and wildlife resources, development applicants must submit a form requesting such determination to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. A No Effect Determination form may be obtained by contacting the Department by telephone at (916) 653-4875 or through the Department's website at www.wildlife.ca.gov.

**Conclusion:** The project will be required to pay the fee.

**Evidence:** Based on the record as a whole as embodied in the HCD-Planning files pertaining to PLN220122 and the attached Initial Study / Proposed (Mitigated) Negative Declaration.

## *IX. SOURCES*


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