

**INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE
DECLARATION (Draft)
Tract 38652 Oak Hills West Project
MENIFEE, CALIFORNIA**

Prepared for:

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SECTION 1.0 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

1.1 PROJECT PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The City of Menifee proposes the construction of a residential complex consisting of a 37-lot subdivision with duplexes (74 units total) on an approximately 78-acre vacant parcel located at the end of a cul-de-sac on Boulder Crest Way, just west of Ganymede Way (Proposed Project) in the City of Menifee (City), Riverside County (County), California; see Figure 1 and Figure 2, below.

The City is the lead agency for the Proposed Project. This Initial Study has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Public Resources Code [PRC] §21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations [CCR], §15000 et seq.) and has determined that preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration would be appropriate under CEQA.

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

1.2.1 Location

The Project site is located in the western portion of the City. The approximately 78-acre Project site is currently vacant and is bounded by open space to the west and north, single-family homes to the east, and single-family homes along Boulder Crest Way to the south. The Proposed Project site is located at the end of an existing cul-de-sac on Boulder Crest Way.

The Proposed Project will utilize Chapter 9.170, the cluster development provisions, of the Municipal Code to reduce the minimum lot size to 7,200 feet (sq. ft.) and preserve 64 acres (roughly 80%) of the site as natural open space to prevent future development of the sloped areas. The lot sizes will range from 7,210 to 32,382 sq. ft. and would occupy approximately 14 acres of the Project site. Two stormwater basins will be located at the southern end of the tract along Boulder Crest Way, directly adjacent to the existing residential development.

1.2.2 Site Access and Circulation

Vehicular access to the Project site will be provided off Boulder Crest Way and Polaris Drive.

1.2.3 General Plan Designation/Zoning

The Project site's General Plan land use designation is 2.1-5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac; DUAC) Residential (2.1-5 R) which allows for single family detached and attached residences with a density range of 2 to 5 DUAC. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted; however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged (City, 2023). The surrounding General Plan Designations are Commercial Retail (CR), 2.1-5 R, Recreation (OS-R), and Specific Plan (SP).

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to construct a 37-lot subdivision with duplexes (74 units total) at the end of the existing cul-de-sac on Boulder Crest Way, just west of Ganymede Way in the City on a 78-acre site. This Project will utilize Chapter 9.170, the cluster development provisions, of the Municipal Code to reduce the minimum lot size to 7,200 sq. ft. and preserve 64 acres (roughly 80%) of the site as natural open space to prevent future development of the sloped areas. The Proposed Project would disturb 14 acres. The lot

sizes will range from 7,210 to 32,382 sq. ft. The Project site will receive access of Boulder Crest Way and Polaris Drive. Access to the existing trail system at Boulder Crest Way will be preserved as part of this Project. Two basins will be located at the southern end of the tract along Boulder Crest Way, directly adjoined to existing residential.

The General Plan and Zoning Designation for the site is 2.1-5 R and Low Density Residential (LDR-1) respectively.

1.3.1 Construction

Construction of the Project is expected to begin in Spring 2025 and last until Fall 2026. Construction activities of the Proposed Project will be scheduled in compliance with the City's Municipal Code Title 9 for the provisions of operating and permitting the use of tools and equipment during construction, drilling, repair, or alterations.

Construction activities occurring on-site will include vegetation removal, grading, excavation, and recompaction on the areas proposed for development. Approximate earthwork quantities will be 108,500 cubic yards of cut and 45,700 cubic yards of fill, which will require the export of 62,800 cubic yards of dirt from the Project site. Easements will be required from the City and Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) for the construction of the retaining wall and water lines. In addition to contractor vehicles, heavy equipment will be used on-site, which will include excavators, backhoe, cranes, bulldozer, graders, compactors, and dump trucks. All equipment will be staged within the Project site.

1.3.2 Operations

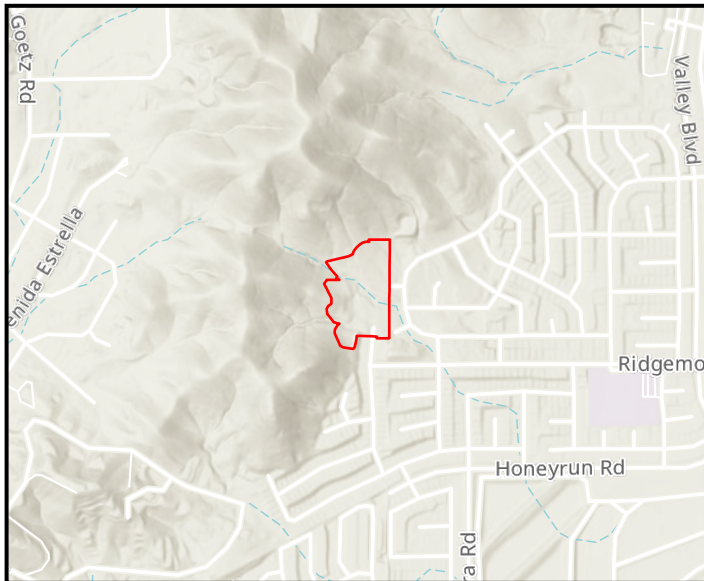
The proposed duplexes will be available for purchase beginning Spring 2027.

1.3.3 Permits and Agreements

As required by the CEQA Guidelines, this section provides, to the extent the information is known, a list of permits and other approvals required to implement the Project.

The following approvals and permits may be required for the Project:

- Building Permit



Project Location

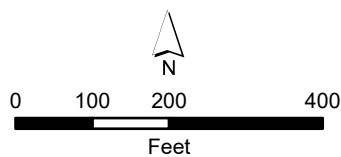
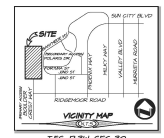


Figure 1
Oak Hills West Tract
Project Location and Vicinity

APN: 341-160-001



Name: 21473 Oak Hills West Tract 38652.Mxd
Print Date: 9/19/2024 3:48 PM Author: pcarlos



SECTION 2.0 – ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would potentially be affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact," as indicated by the checklists on the following pages. For each of the potentially affected factors, mitigation measures are recommended that would reduce the impacts to less than significant levels.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forestry 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	☐ Tribal Cultural Resources
☐ Utilities /Service Systems	☐ Wildfire	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

2.2 DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

1. I find that the project **could not** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared. ☐
2. 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. ☒
3. I find the proposed project **may have a significant effect** on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required. ☐
4. 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. ☐
5. 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

Date

Name

Title

SECTION 3.0 – 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. 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 a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
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 substantial evidence exists that an effect may be significant. If one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries are marked when the determination is made, an Environmental Impact Report (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 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 significant.

*Note: Instructions may be omitted from final document.

SECTION 4.0 – CHECKLIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

4.1 AESTHETICS

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

4.1.1 Impact Analysis

a) *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Natural visual resources in the City include low-lying valleys, mountains, and rock formations. The Project site is located at the end of a cul-de-sac on Boulder Crest Way. The Proposed Project site is currently undeveloped; however, the surrounding area of the site is developed with residential properties. The Proposed Project would alter the existing aesthetics of the Proposed Project area from open space to a residential area. The building heights would be like the existing buildings in the area. The Proposed Project would incorporate landscaping and building design that would be compatible with the existing setting and land use. The construction of the Proposed Project would not obstruct any scenic vistas. The trails that exist on the Proposed Project site will be preserved as a part of the Project. Therefore, the Project construction and operation would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista, and impacts would be less than significant.

b) *Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?*

No Impact. Although some vegetation would be removed from the site as a result of the Project, no vegetation/trees would be removed that is located within or within view of a state scenic highway (Caltrans 2024). The closest eligible state scenic highway to the Project site is approximately 4 miles north; Route 15 is approximately four miles south of the Proposed Project. The Project site is not within its viewshed. Further, construction of the Project would not damage rock outcroppings or historic buildings, as neither are present at the Project site. No impacts to scenic resources within a state scenic highway would occur.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is located within an undeveloped area of the City with residential development located to the east and south, and open space and to the north and west. Currently, a residential neighborhood exists to the east of the Proposed Project site. The Project, being a residential condominium and duplex complex, would therefore be consistent with the land use and existing visual character of the area. Additionally, the Project would be designed using the standards dictated by the City's zoning and land use regulations for residential planned development, as well as the City's Landscape Design Standards and Guidelines. Therefore, impacts to the City's visual character and public views of the area would be less than significant.

- d) *Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Existing lighting includes street lighting at the adjacent residential neighborhood. New lighting would be limited to street lighting and outdoor lighting. All lighting would be constructed in compliance with the lighting regulations set forth in the City's Zoning Code section 9.205.060, including using shielded lamps directed away from adjacent properties and streets; not exceeding 2 foot-candles on 95 percent or more of the grid points within the parking area of the duplex; light poles not exceeding 25 feet in height; and curbed planters around all light poles (City 2024). Compliance with these regulations would ensure that impacts associated with the Project's new lighting would be less than significant.

4.2 AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY RESOURCES

2.	AGRICULTURE & 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 Department 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?				
(b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(c)	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.2.1 Impact Analysis

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

No Impact. The Project site is zoned Low Density Residential (LDR-1; thus, the City's intended use of the site is for residential purposes) (City 2019). According to the California Department of Conservation's Important Farmland Finder, the Project site is categorized as Urban and Built-Up Land and does not encompass Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (DOC 2024a). Therefore, no impacts to agricultural land would occur.

- b) *Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

No Impact. The Project site is zoned LDR-1 and designated by the General Plan as residential; thus, the City's intended use of the site is for residential purposes (City 2019). Moreover, a map of agricultural preserves produced for the City's General Plan EIR shows no lands under Williamson Act contracts are within the Project site (City 2013a). Therefore, no impacts to agricultural land would occur.

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

No Impact. The Project site is zoned LDR-1 and designated by the General Plan as residential; thus, the City's intended use of the site is for residential purposes (City 2019). No land within the Project site is designated as agricultural land, forest land, or timberland; thus, no impacts would occur.

- d) *Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

No Impact. The Project site is zoned LDR-1 and designated by the General Plan as residential; thus, the City's intended use of the site is for residential purposes (City 2019). No land within the Project site is designated as forest land or timberland; thus, no impacts would occur.

- e) *Would the project 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 the conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

No Impact. The Project site is zoned LDR-1 and designated by the General Plan as residential; thus, the City's intended use of the site is for residential purposes (City 2019). The Project site does not encompass Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance and does not contain land currently under a Williamson Act contract (DOC 2024a; City 2013a). Furthermore, no designated forest land is within the Project site. The Project would not result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use; therefore, no impacts would occur.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

3.	AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

An Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis was prepared in May 2024 for the Proposed Project (Appendix A).

4.3.1 Environmental Setting

The Proposed Project site is located in the western portion of Riverside County, which is part of the South Coast Air Basin (Air Basin) that includes the non-desert portions of Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles Counties, and all of Orange County. The Air Basin is located on a coastal plain connecting broad valleys and low hills to the east. Regionally, the Air Basin is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the southwest and high mountains to the east forming the inland perimeter.

Monitored Air Quality

The air quality at any site is dependent on the regional air quality and local pollutant sources. Regional air quality is determined by the release of pollutants throughout the Air Basin. Improvements in cleaner technology and strict regulations have reduced ozone levels since its peak in the mid-twentieth century. However, ozone levels have remained unacceptably high over the past decade despite significant reductions. This trend is due to the changes in climate and other weather conditions such as the increase

in hot, stagnant days that can lead to the formation of ozone that we have experienced in recent years (Appendix A).

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has divided the Air Basin into 38 air-monitoring areas with a designated ambient air monitoring station representative of each area. The Project site is located in Air Monitoring Area 24, Perris Valley. The nearest air monitoring station to the Project site is the Lake Elsinore-West Flint Street Monitoring Station (Lake Elsinore Station), which is located approximately 6.3 miles west of the Project site at 506 West Flint Street, Lake Elsinore. However, it should be noted that due to the air monitoring station's distance from the Project site, recorded air pollution levels at the Lake Elsinore Station reflect with varying degrees of accuracy, local air quality conditions at the Project site. It should also be noted that carbon monoxide (CO) measurements have not been provided, since CO is currently in attainment in the Air Basin and monitoring of CO within the Air Basin ended on March 31, 2013.

The monitoring data from the Lake Elsinore Station is presented in Table 4-1 and shows the most recent three years of monitoring data from the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Table 4-1 shows that ozone (O₃) and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) are the air pollutants of primary concern in the Project area, which are detailed below.

Table 4-1 – Local Area Air Quality Monitoring Summary

Pollutant (Standard)	Year ¹		
	2020	2021	2022
Ozone:			
Maximum 1-Hour Concentration (ppm)	0.130	0.118	0.121
Days > CAAQS (0.09 ppm)	18	18	17
Maximum 8-Hour Concentration (ppm)	0.100	0.097	0.091
Days > NAAQS (0.070 ppm)	54	44	37
Days > CAAQs (0.070 ppm)	55	46	37
Nitrogen Dioxide:			
Maximum 1-Hour Concentration (ppb)	43.6	43.7	37.2
Days > NAAQS (100 ppb)	0	0	0
Days > CAAQS (180 ppb)	0	0	0
Inhalable Particulates (PM₁₀):			
Maximum 24-Hour National Measurement (ug/m ³)	192.4	90.0	91.8
Days > NAAQS (150 ug/m ³)	1	0	0
Days > CAAQS (50 ug/m ³)	ND	ND	ND
Annual Arithmetic Mean (AAM) (ug/m ³)	23.7	22.4	20.3
Annual > NAAQS (50 ug/m ³)	No	No	No
Annual > CAAQS (20 ug/m ³)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ultra-Fine Particulates (PM_{2.5}):			
Maximum 24-Hour State Measurement (ug/m ³)	41.6	28.8	16.2

Pollutant (Standard)	Year ¹		
	2020	2021	2022
Days > NAAQS (35 ug/m ³)	3	0	0
Annual Arithmetic Mean (AAM) (ug/m ³)	7.2	6.9	5.8
Annual > NAAQS and CAAQS (12 ug/m ³)	No	No	No

Notes: Exceedances are listed in **bold**. CAAQS = California Ambient Air Quality Standard; NAAQS = National Ambient Air Quality Standard; ppm = parts per million; ppb = parts per billion; ND = no data available.

¹ Data obtained from the Lake Elsinore Station.

Source: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/>

Ozone

During the last three years, the State 1-hour concentration standard for ozone has been exceeded between 17 and 18 days each year at the Lake Elsinore Station. The State 8-hour ozone standard has been exceeded between 37 and 55 days each year over the last three years at the Lake Elsinore Station. The Federal 8-hour ozone standard has been exceeded between 37 and 54 days each year over the last three years at the Lake Elsinore Station.

Ozone is a secondary pollutant as it is not directly emitted. Ozone is the result of chemical reactions between other pollutants, most importantly hydrocarbons and NO₂, which occur only in the presence of bright sunlight. Pollutants emitted from upwind cities react during transport downwind to produce the oxidant concentrations experienced in the area. Many areas of Southern California contribute to the ozone levels experienced at this monitoring station, with the more significant areas being those directly upwind.

Nitrogen Dioxide

The Lake Elsinore Station did not record an exceedance of either the Federal or State 1-hour NO₂ standards for the last three years.

Particulate Matter

There is no data available at the Lake Elsinore Station State 24-hour concentration standards. Over the past three years the Federal 24-hour standard for PM₁₀ has only been exceeded for one day in 2020 for the past three years at the Lake Elsinore Station. The annual PM₁₀ concentration at the Lake Elsinore Station has exceeded the State standard for the past three years and has not exceeded the Federal standard for the past three years.

Over the past three years the federal 24-hour concentration standard for PM_{2.5} has been exceeded between 0 and 3 days each year over the past three years at the Lake Elsinore Station. The annual PM_{2.5} concentrations at the Lake Elsinore Station has not exceeded either the State or Federal standards for the past three years. There does not appear to be a noticeable trend for PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} in either maximum particulate concentrations or days of exceedances in the area. Particulate levels in the area are due to natural sources, grading operations, and motor vehicles.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), some people are much more sensitive than others to breathing fine particles (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). People with influenza, chronic respiratory and

cardiovascular diseases, and the elderly may suffer worsening illness and premature death due to breathing these fine particles. People with bronchitis can expect aggravated symptoms from breathing in fine particles. Children may experience decline in lung function due to breathing in PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Other groups considered sensitive are smokers and people who cannot breathe well through their noses. Exercising athletes are also considered sensitive, because many breathe through their mouths during exercise.

4.3.2 Impact Analysis

a) *Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). The following section discusses the Proposed Project's consistency with the SCAQMD AQMP.

SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan

The CEQA requires a discussion of any inconsistencies between a proposed project and applicable General Plans and regional plans (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125). The regional plan that applies to the Proposed Project includes the SCAQMD AQMP. Therefore, this section discusses any potential inconsistencies of the Proposed Project with the AQMP.

The purpose of this discussion is to set forth the issues regarding consistency with the assumptions and objectives of the AQMP and discuss whether the Proposed Project would interfere with the region's ability to comply with federal and state air quality standards. If the decision-makers determine that the Proposed Project is inconsistent, the lead agency may consider Project modifications or inclusion of mitigation to eliminate the inconsistency.

The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook states that "New or amended GP Elements (including land use zoning and density amendments), Specific Plans, and significant projects must be analyzed for consistency with the AQMP." Strict consistency with all aspects of the plan is usually not required. A proposed project should be considered to be consistent with the AQMP if it furthers one or more policies and does not obstruct other policies. The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook identifies two key indicators of consistency:

- (1) Whether the project will result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations or delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the AQMP.
- (2) Whether the project will exceed the assumptions of the AQMP or increments based on the year of project buildout and phase.

Both of these criteria are evaluated in the following sections.

Criterion 1 - Increase in the Frequency or Severity of Violations?

Based on the air quality modeling analysis contained in this report, short-term regional construction air emissions would not result in significant impacts based on SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance discussed in Section 9.1 of the technical report (Appendix A) or local thresholds of

significance discussed in Section 9.2 in Appendix A. The ongoing operation of the Proposed Project would generate air pollutant emissions that are inconsequential on a regional basis and would not result in significant impacts based on SCAQMD thresholds of significance discussed in Section 9.1 in Appendix A. The analysis for long-term local air quality impacts showed that local pollutant concentrations would not be projected to exceed the air quality standards. Therefore, a less than significant long-term impact would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

Therefore, based on the information provided above, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the first criterion.

Criterion 2 – Exceed Assumptions in the AQMP?

Consistency with the AQMP assumptions is determined by performing an analysis of the Proposed Project with the assumptions in the AQMP. The emphasis of this criterion is to ensure that the analyses conducted for the Proposed Project are based on the same forecasts as the AQMP. The AQMP is developed through use of the planning forecasts provided in the Regional Transport Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) (Connect SoCal) and Federal Transportation Improvement Plan (FTIP). The RTP/SCS is a major planning document for the regional transportation and land use network within Southern California. The RTP/SCS is a long-range plan that is required by federal and state requirements placed on Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and is updated every four years. The FTIP provides long-range planning for future transportation improvement projects that are constructed with state and/or federal funds within Southern California. Local governments are required to use these plans as the basis of their plans for the purpose of consistency with applicable regional plans under CEQA. For this Project, the City of Menifee General Plans Land Use Plan defines the assumptions that are represented in AQMP.

The Project site is currently designated as a 2.15-dwelling unit per acre Residential (2.1-5R). The Proposed Project would consist of development of 37 lots on 14.4 acres, which results in density of approximately 2.7 lots per acre, which is within the land use designation of 2.1 to 5 dwelling units per acre. The Proposed Project would be consistent with the current land use designation and would not require a General Plan Amendment. As such, the Proposed Project is not anticipated to exceed the AQMP assumptions for the Project site and is found to be consistent with AQMP for the second criterion.

Based on the above, the Proposed Project would not result in an inconsistency with the SCAQMD AQMP. Therefore, a less than significant impact will occur in relation to implementation of the AQMP.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. The SCAQMD has published a report that assumes that individual projects that do not generate operational or construction emissions that exceed the SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would also not cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Basin is in nonattainment, and, therefore, would not be considered to have a significant, adverse air quality impact. Alternatively, individual project-related construction and operational emissions that exceed

SCAQMD thresholds for project-specific impacts would be considered cumulatively considerable. The following section calculates the potential air emissions associated with the construction and operations of the Proposed Project and compares the emissions to the SCAQMD standards.

Construction Emissions

The construction activities for the Proposed Project are anticipated to include site preparation and grading of the Project site, building construction of the homes, and paving of the on-site roads and parking areas, sidewalks and hardscapes, and application of architectural coatings. The CalEEMod model has been utilized to calculate the construction related emission from the Proposed Project and the input parameters utilized in this analysis have been detailed in Section 8.1 in Appendix A. The maximum daily construction-related criteria pollutant emissions from the Proposed Project are shown below in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2 – Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Season and Year of Construction	Maximum Daily Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Daily Summer Maximum						
2025	4.20	42.6	35.0	0.09	9.38	4.96
2026	1.30	10.3	16.9	0.03	1.15	0.53
Daily Winter Maximum						
2025	4.19	42.8	34.7	0.08	9.38	4.96
2026	26.9	10.4	15.9	0.03	1.15	0.53
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	26.9	42.6	35.0	0.09	9.38	4.96
SCQAMD Regional Thresholds	75	100	550	150	150	55
SCAQMD Local Thresholds¹	--	237	1,346	--	11	7
Exceeds Thresholds?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes:

¹ The nearest off-site sensitive receptors to the Project site are single-family homes located as near as 4 feet (1.2 meters) from the Project site. According to SCAQMD methodology, all receptors closer than 25 meters are based on the 25-meter threshold. Calculated from SCAQMD's Mass Rate Look-up Tables for 4 acres interpolated from two and five acres in Air Monitoring Area 24, Perris Valley.

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1.

² Volatile Organic Compound (VOC)

³ Nitric Oxide (NO_x)

⁴ Sulfur Oxide (SO_x)

⁵ Particulate Matter 10 (PM₁₀)

⁶ Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM_{2.5})

Table 4-2 shows that none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed either the regional or local emissions thresholds during construction of the Proposed Project. Therefore, a less than significant regional or local air quality impact would occur from construction of the Proposed Project.

Operational Emissions

The ongoing operation of the Proposed Project would result in a long-term increase in air quality emissions. This increase would be due to emissions from the project-generated vehicle trips, emissions from energy usage, and on-site area source emissions created from the ongoing use of the Proposed Project. The following section provides an analysis of potential long-term air quality impacts

due to regional air quality and local air quality impacts with the ongoing operations of the Proposed Project.

Table 4-3 – Operations-Related Pollutant Emissions

Activity	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Mobile Sources	2.42	2.28	19.6	0.05	4.23	1.10
Area Sources	2.28	1.27	4.72	0.01	0.10	0.10
Energy Usage	0.02	0.39	0.17	<0.01	0.03	0.03
Total Emissions	4.72	3.94	24.49	0.06	4.36	1.23
SCQAMD Regional Operational Thresholds	55	55	550	150	150	55
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes:

¹ Mobile sources consist of emissions from vehicles and road dust.

² Area sources consist of emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment.

³ Energy usage consists of emissions from natural gas usage.

Source: Calculated from CalEEMod Version 2022.1.

As shown in Table 4-3, none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the regional emissions thresholds. Therefore, a less than significant regional air quality impact would occur from the operation of the Proposed Project.

Accordingly, the Proposed Project would not result in a cumulative considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The local concentrations of criteria pollutant emissions produced in the nearby vicinity of the Proposed Project, which may expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations have been calculated above in Section 10.3 in Appendix A for both construction and operations, which are discussed separately below. The discussion below also includes an analysis of the potential impacts from toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions. The nearest sensitive receptors to the Project site are single-family homes located on Boulder Crest Way and as near as four feet to the south of the Project site. There are also single-family homes located as near as 28 feet east of the Project site.

Construction-Related Sensitive Receptor Impacts

The construction activities for the Proposed Project are anticipated to include site preparation and grading of the Project site, building construction of the homes, paving of the on-site roads, driveways, sidewalks and hardscapes, and application of architectural coatings. Construction activities may expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations of localized criteria pollutant concentrations and TAC emissions created from on-site construction equipment, which are described below.

Local Criteria Pollutant Impacts from Construction

The local air quality impacts from construction of the Proposed Project have been analyzed in Section 10.3 in Appendix A and found that the construction of the Proposed Project would not exceed the local NO_x, CO, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} thresholds of significance discussed in Section 9.2 in Appendix A. Therefore, construction of the Proposed Project would create a less than significant construction-related impact to local air quality and no mitigation would be required.

TAC Impacts from Construction

The greatest potential for TAC emissions would be related to diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions associated with heavy equipment operations during construction of the Proposed Project. According to SCAQMD methodology, health effects from carcinogenic air toxics are usually described in terms of “individual cancer risk.” “Individual Cancer Risk” is the likelihood that a person exposed to concentrations of TAC over a 70-year lifetime will contract cancer, based on the use of standard risk-assessment methodology. It should be noted that the most current cancer risk assessment methodology recommends analyzing a 30-year exposure period for the nearby sensitive receptors (Appendix A).

Given the relatively limited number of heavy-duty construction equipment, the varying distances that construction equipment would operate to the nearby sensitive receptors, and the short-term construction schedule, the Proposed Project would not result in a long-term (i.e., 30 or 70 years) substantial source of TAC emissions and corresponding individual cancer risk. In addition, CCR Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9, Section 2449 regulates emissions from off-road diesel equipment in California. This regulation limits idling of equipment to no more than five minutes, requires equipment operators to label each piece of equipment and provide annual reports to CARB of their fleet’s usage and emissions. This regulation also requires systematic upgrading of the emission Tier level of each fleet, and currently no commercial operator is allowed to purchase Tier 0, Tier 1, or Tier 2 equipment. In addition to the purchase restrictions, equipment operators need to meet fleet average emissions targets that become more stringent each year between years 2014 and 2023. By January 2026, 75 percent or more of all contractors’ equipment fleets must be Tier 2 or higher and by January 2029, 100 percent of all equipment fleets must be Tier 2 or higher. Therefore, no significant short-term TAC impacts would occur during construction of the Proposed Project. As such, construction of the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Operations-Related Sensitive Receptor Impacts

The ongoing operations of the Proposed Project may expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations of local CO emission impacts from the Project-generated vehicular trips and from the potential local air quality impacts from on-site operations. The following analyzes the vehicular CO emissions. Local criteria pollutant impacts from on-site operations, and TAC impacts.

Local CO Hotspot Impacts from Project-Generated Vehicle Trips

CO is the pollutant of major concern along roadways because the most notable source of CO is motor vehicles. For this reason, CO concentrations are usually indicative of the local air quality generated by a roadway network and are used as an indicator of potential impacts to sensitive receptors. The analysis provided in Section 10.3 in Appendix A shows that no local CO Hotspots are anticipated to be

created at any nearby intersections from the vehicle traffic generated by the Proposed Project. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant exposure of off-site sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Local Criteria Pollutant Impacts from On-site Operations

The local air quality impacts from the operation of the Proposed Project would occur from on-site sources such as architectural coatings, landscaping equipment, and on-site usage of natural gas appliances. The analysis provided in Section 10.3 in Appendix A found that the operation of the Proposed Project would not exceed the local NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} thresholds of significance discussed in Section 9.2 in Appendix A. Therefore, the ongoing operations of the Proposed Project would create a less than significant operations-related impact to local air quality due to on-site emissions, and no mitigation would be required.

Operations-Related TAC Impacts

DPM is the predominant TAC in most areas and according to *The California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality 2013 Edition*, prepared by CARB, about 80 percent of the outdoor TAC cancer risk is from diesel exhaust. Some chemicals in diesel exhaust, such as benzene and formaldehyde, have been listed as carcinogens by State Proposition 65 and the Federal Hazardous Air Pollutants program. Due to the nominal number of diesel truck trips that are anticipated to be generated by the ongoing operation of the proposed single-family homes, a less than significant TAC impact would be created from the ongoing operations of the Proposed Project and no mitigation would be required.

- d) *Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not create objectional odors affecting a substantial number of people. Individual responses to odors are highly variable and can result in a variety of effects. Generally, the impact of an odor results from a variety of factors such as frequency, duration, offensiveness, location, and sensory perception. The frequency is a measure of how often an individual is exposed to an odor in the ambient environment. The intensity refers to an individual's or groups' perception of the odor strength or concentration. The duration of an odor refers to the elapsed time over which an odor is experienced. The offensiveness of the odor is the subjective rating of the pleasantness or unpleasantness of an odor. The location accounts for the type of area in which a potentially affected person lives, works, or visits; the type of activity in which he or she engaged; and the sensitivity of the impacted receptor.

Sensory perception has four major components: detectability, intensity, character, and hedonic tone. The detection (or threshold) of an odor is based on a panel of responses to the odor. There are two types of thresholds: the odor detection threshold and the recognition threshold. The detection threshold is the lowest concentration of an odor that will elicit a response in a percentage of the people that live and work in the immediate vicinity of the Project site and is typically presented as the mean (or 50 percent of the population). The recognition threshold is the minimum concentration that is recognized as having a characteristic odor quality, this is typically represented by recognition by 50 percent of the population. The intensity refers to the perceived strength of the odor. The odor character is what the substance smells like. The hedonic tone is a judgment of the pleasantness or unpleasantness of the odor. The hedonic tone varies in subjective experience, frequency, odor

character, odor intensity, and duration. Potential odor impacts have been analyzed separately for construction and operations below.

Construction-Related Odor Impacts

Potential sources that may emit odors during construction activities include the application of coatings such as asphalt pavement, paints, and solvents, and from emissions from diesel equipment. Standard construction requirements that limit the time of day when construction may occur, as well as SCAQMD Rule 1108 which limits volatile organic compounds (VOC) content in asphalt, and Rule 1113 which limits the VOC content in paints and solvents, would minimize odor impacts from construction. As such, the objectionable odors that may be produced during the construction process would be temporary and would not likely be noticeable for extended periods of time beyond the Project site's boundaries. Through compliance with the applicable regulations that reduce odors and due to the transitory nature of construction odors, a less than significant odor impact would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

Operations-Related Odor Impacts

The Proposed Project would consist of a single-family residential development. The Proposed Project would not contain any known sources of odors. Therefore, no significant impact related to odors would occur during the ongoing operations of the Proposed Project.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.	BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(c)	Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(d)	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.	BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.4.1 Existing Conditions

A biological literature review was conducted for the Proposed Project by VCS Environmental in October 2023 (Appendix B) to determine the potential impacts of the Proposed Project.

4.4.2 Impact Analysis

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The Proposed Project site does not contain special status vegetation communities. A total of 15.5 acres of permanent impacts to four vegetation communities/land cover types will occur as a result of Project activities and construction. The four vegetation communities/land cover types are Brittle Brush Scrub, California Buckwheat Scrub, Tamarisk Thicket, and Disturbed Developed. The vegetation communities are not considered sensitive; therefore, impacts to vegetation communities are considered less than significant.

San Diego tarweed (*Deinandra paniculata*), a sensitive plant species, was observed on the Project site during the September 25th, 2023 biological survey. The sensitive plant species is not state or federally listed, and has been previously disturbed by off-road vehicles, therefore, no mitigation is warranted for the limited impacts that would occur to the plant species as a result of the Project and impacts would be less than significant.

Robinsons Peppergrass is a special status plant that could potentially exist on the Proposed Project site. The biological surveys conducted for the Project were not considered during the blooming period for this species; therefore, it is not known if this species occurs on-site. This species is known to be fairly common in California. It does not have a federal or state listing as a threatened or endangered species. Therefore, no mitigation is warranted for the limited impacts that may occur as a result of Project activities. Impacts would be less than significant.

During the site visit, no suitable burrows or burrow surrogates were identified on the Project Site. Additionally, focused surveys are not recommended; however, as documented in the 2006 United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) letter, a 30-day pre-construction survey will be conducted prior to implementation of the Project; therefore, MM BIO-2 will be implemented to ensure no impacts occur to burrowing owls (Appendix B).

The Crotch's bumblebee is a state listed candidate endangered species. Crotch's bumblebees nest in the ground, and prefer undisturbed habitat with native vegetation, which is plentiful within the

Project Site and Property Boundary. Additionally, the general survey identified suitable pollen and nectar species for the bee, allowing moderate to high potential for this species to occur. If the species is listed when construction is to begin, then a pre-construction survey will be required. If the species is observed on-site and will be impacted, an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) through California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will be required as described in MM BIO-6 (Appendix B).

Direct impacts from Project activities could include injury to or mortality of individuals and destruction of active nests during vegetation removal and loss of foraging habitats, while indirect impacts could include general harassment or nest failure from noise and other disturbances in the vicinity of a nest. MM-BIO-1 will be implemented to prevent the destruction of active nests. Furthermore, MM-BIO-2, MM-BIO-3, and MM-BIO-6 will be implemented to reduce impacts to burrowing owls, urban/wildland interface, and Crotch's bumblebee, an endangered species. Therefore, with implementation of MM-BIO-1,2,3, and 6 impacts regarding substantial effects through habitat modification on any species identified as sensitive or special status species in local regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the *California Department of Fish and Game* or *US. Fish and Wildlife Service* would be less than significant.

MM BIO-1: Nesting Birds. There is suitable avian nesting habitat on the Project Site. If the clearance of vegetation occurs during the avian nesting season (February to August), it is recommended that a preconstruction nesting bird survey be conducted prior to any vegetation disturbance activities. If passerine birds are found to be nesting or there is evidence of nesting behavior inside or within 250-feet of the impact area, a 250-foot buffer will be required around the nest where no vegetation disturbance would be permitted. For raptor species (birds of prey, such as hawks and owls), this buffer is expanded to 500 feet. A qualified biologist would be required to monitor the nest closely until it is determined that the nest is no longer active, at which time vegetation removal could continue. All construction activity within the vicinity of active nests must be conducted in the presence of a qualified biological monitor. Construction activity may encroach into the buffer area at the discretion of the biological monitor.

MM-BIO-2: Burrowing Owl. A qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction presence/absence survey for burrowing owls within 30 days prior to site disturbance. If burrowing owls are documented on-site, the owls will be relocated/excluded from the site outside of the breeding season following accepted protocols as specified in the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP).

MM-BIO-3: Urban/Wildlands Interface. To address MSHCP guidelines pertaining to the Urban/Wildlands Interface, the Project should incorporate the following:

1. Untreated surface runoff from developed and paved areas into the Public/Quasi Public (PQP) lands will be avoided;
2. Manufactures slopes will not extend into the PQP lands;
3. A stone wall barrier will be erected adjacent to development on the Project's norther border;
4. Landscaping will avoid the use of invasive species listed on Table 6-2 of the MSHCP;

5. No lighting will be use; and
6. Pre-and post-construction best management practices will be implemented.

MM-BIO-6: Crotch's Bumblebee. Crotch's bumblebee is a CDFW candidate endangered species, and it will be surveyed for prior to construction. An Incidental Take Permit (ITP) would be processed prior to grading with CDFW should the species be present if the Fish and Game Commission (FGC) continues to list the species.

- b) *Would the project 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 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project site does not fall within or near critical habitats for any sensitive plant species, therefore, no impacts to critical habitats will occur (Appendix B).

- c) *Would the project 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?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. According to the USFWS's National Wetlands Inventory, no riparian habitat occurs within the Project site boundary, and no wetland or riparian drainage courses were observed. Multiple drainages, however, were observed within the Proposed Project site. The Project site is generally sloped with elevation increasing as you move west and decreasing as you move east. Water would generally drain east/southeast/south from the hills in the western portion of the Project boundary. All drainage courses observed within the Project Site consists of ephemeral streambed and are considered streambed waters of the state. The Proposed Project contains drainage features totaling 0.39-acres of CDFW and RWQCB jurisdiction. With implementation of MM-BIO-5, impacts to jurisdictional waters would be less than significant.

MM BIO-5: The Project Site contains drainage features totaling 0.39-acres of CDFW and RWQCB jurisdiction. Due to impacts that will occur to the jurisdictional features, regulatory permits will be required from CDFW and RWQCB.

- d) *Would the project 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 site?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project site is surrounded by residential uses and open space. None of the adjacent land uses provide means of movement or migration of wildlife or fish populations, and no potential wildlife corridors have been identified in the Project vicinity (Appendix B). Impacts would be less than significant.

- e) *Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project site does not presently contain any trees which would require removal for project implementation. Therefore, no impact would occur.

- f) *Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservancy Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The Project site contains marginally suitable habitat for Stephen's Kangaroo Rat (SKR) and is located within the boundaries of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for SKR in Western Riverside County. The Project site is located in an area subject to an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan. Therefore, MM BIO-4 will be implemented to ensure a less than significant impact to SKR.

MM-BIO-4: Stephen's Kangaroo Rat. The Project Site contains marginally suitable habitat for SKR and is located within the boundaries of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for Stephen's Kangaroo Rat in Western Riverside County. With adherence to the HCP's implementation agreement (IA) and payment of the County's per-acre mitigation fee for this species, no further action is required.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.	CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.5.1 Existing Conditions

VCS Environmental prepared a cultural resources assessment for the Oak Hills West Residential Project in October of 2023 (Appendix C).

4.5.2 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As a result of the records search and review and archival research, no previously recorded resources or any other listed or potentially significant properties are located within the Project site. However, the Eastern Information Center (EIC) records search identified 36 cultural resources within one mile of the Property. Implementation of the Proposed Project would not adversely affect any existing known significant archaeological or paleontological resources; however, there is one archaeological site (P-33-010944/CA-RIV-6619) recorded on the Project study area that was not relocated during the survey. The resource may have been destroyed or eroded downslope into the drainage. The Proposed Project includes ground-disturbing activities, which includes the potential to uncover resources during grading.

The following mitigation measures shall be implemented during construction of the Project:

MM-CUL-1: Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the Developer shall retain a professional archaeologist and Tribal monitor(s) (if requested pending Tribal consultation) to conduct monitoring of all mass grading and trenching activities. The Project Archaeologist shall have the authority to temporarily redirect earthmoving activities in the event that suspected archaeological resources are unearthed during Project construction. The Project Archaeologist, in consultation with the Consulting Tribe(s), the contractor, and the City, shall develop a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to address the details, timing, and responsibility of all archaeological and cultural activities that will occur on the Project study area. Details in the Plan shall include:

- a. Project grading and development scheduling:
- b. The Project Archaeologist and the Consulting Tribe(s) shall attend the pre-grading meeting with the City, the construction manager and any contractors and will conduct a mandatory Cultural Resources Worker Sensitivity Training to those in attendance. The Training will include a brief review of the cultural sensitivity of the Project and the surrounding area; what resources could potentially be identified during earthmoving activities; the requirements of the monitoring program; the protocols that apply in the event inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources are identified, including who to contact and appropriate avoidance measures until the find(s) can be properly evaluated; and any other appropriate protocols.
- c. The protocols and stipulations that the contractor, City, Consulting Tribe(s), and Project Archaeologist will follow in the event of inadvertent cultural resources discoveries, including any newly discovered cultural resource deposits that shall be subject to a cultural resources evaluation.

MM-CUL-2: In the event that Native American cultural resources are discovered during the course of grading (inadvertent discoveries), the following procedures shall be carried out for final disposition of the discoveries:

- a. One or more of the following treatments, in order of preference, shall be employed with the Tribe(s). Evidence of such shall be provided to the City of Menifee.
 - Preservation-In-Place of the cultural resources, if feasible. Preservation in place means avoiding the resources, leaving them in the place they were found with no development affecting the integrity of the resources.
 - On-site reburial of the discovered items. This shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts in perpetuity. Reburial shall not occur until all legally required cataloging and basic recordation have been completed. A confidential exhibit will be prepared. No recordation of sacred items is permitted without the written consent of all Consulting Native American Tribal Governments.

MM-CUL-3: If potential historic or cultural resources are uncovered during excavation or construction activities at the Project study area, work in a 100-foot radius around the find must cease immediately and a qualified person meeting the Secretary of the Interior's standards (36 CFR 61), Tribal Representatives, and all site monitors per the Mitigation Measures, shall be consulted by the City to

evaluate the find, and as appropriate recommend alternative measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate negative effects on the historic or prehistoric resource. Determinations and recommendations by the consultant shall be immediately submitted for consideration, and implemented as deemed appropriate by the City, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and any and all Consulting Native American Tribes as defined in MM-CUL-1 before any further work commences in the affected area.

MM-CUL-4: A final monitoring report will be prepared that describes the results of the monitoring program, assesses any discoveries, and makes any additional recommendations. The monitoring report shall be prepared by the Project Archaeologist in conjunction with the Tribe(s) and approved by the City of Menifee.

MM-CUL-5: Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist to observe ground disturbing activities and recover fossil resources as necessary. The Paleontologist will attend the pre-grade conference where they will establish procedures for paleontological monitoring and, through the preparation of a mitigation plan, shall establish procedures and protocols to temporarily halt ground disturbing activities to permit sampling, evaluation, and recovery of any discovery. Excavations that impact older Quaternary deposits may encounter fossil vertebrates. Any substantial excavations below the uppermost layers of the surface should be monitored. Sediment samples should also be recovered to determine the small-fossil potential of the site. If a discovery is determined to be significant, additional excavations and salvage of the fossil may be necessary to ensure that any impacts to it are mitigated to a less than significant level. A final monitoring report shall be prepared that describes the results of the monitoring program and evaluates any fossil resources recovered.

- b) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As noted above, as a result of the records search review and archival research, no previously recorded resources or any other listed or potentially significant properties are located within the Project site. In the event that subsurface resources are discovered during the course of grading and/or excavation, they would be handled pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and PRC Section 5097.94 and 5097.98. Adherence to existing regulations would ensure that impacts to archaeological and paleontological resources and human remains would be less than significant. Due to the demonstrated sensitivity of the area, MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-5 will be implemented and impacts will be reduced to less than significant.

- c) *Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Project-related earth disturbance has the potential to unearth previously undiscovered human remains, resulting in a potentially significant impact. If human remains are encountered during excavation activities, all work shall halt and the County Coroner shall be notified (*California Health and Safety Code*, §7050.5). The Coroner will determine whether the remains are of forensic interest. If the Coroner determines that the remains are prehistoric, they will contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. The NAHC is responsible for the ultimate disposition of the remains, as required by Section 5097.98 of the *California Public Resources Code*. The Most Likely Descendants (MLD) recommendation shall be followed if feasible

and may include scientific removal and non-destructive analysis of the human remains and any items associated with Native American burials. If the landowner rejects the MLD's recommendations, the landowner shall rebury the remains with appropriate dignity of the property in a location that will not be subject to further subsurface disturbance. Therefore, in compliance with the California Health and Safety Code, impacts related to the disturbance of human remains would be less than significant.

4.6 ENERGY

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

An Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis was prepared in May 2024 for the Proposed Project (Appendix A).

4.6.1 Environmental Setting

Energy conservation management in the state was initiated by the 1974 Warren-Alquist State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Act, which created the California Energy Resource Conservation and Development Commission (currently named California Energy Commission [CEC]), which was originally tasked with certifying new electric generating plants based on the need for the plant and the suitability of the site of the plant. In 1976, the Warren-Alquist Act was expanded to include new restrictions on nuclear generating plants that effectively resulted in a moratorium of any new nuclear generating plants in the state. The following lists specific regulations adopted by the State in order to reduce the consumption of energy.

- CCR Title 20 – Regulations for appliance efficiency standards
- CCR Title 24 Part 6 – Energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings
- CCR Title 24 Part 11 – CalGreen Building Standards
- Senate Bill (SB) 100 – Regulations for retail sales of electricity
- Executive Order (EO) N-79-20 – Requires all new passenger vehicles and trucks to be zero-emission by the year 2035
- Assembly Bill (AB) 1109 – Requires the use of high-efficiency lighting in new structures

4.6.2 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would impact energy resources during construction and operation. Energy resources that would be potentially impacted include electricity, natural gas, and petroleum-based fuel supplies and distribution systems. This analysis includes a discussion of the potential energy impacts of the proposed projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy. A general definition of each of these energy resources is provided below.

Electricity, a consumptive utility, is a man-made resource. The production of electricity requires the consumption or conversion of energy resources, including water, wind, oil, gas, coal, solar, geothermal, and nuclear resources, into energy. The delivery of electricity involves a number of system components, including substations and transformers that lower transmission line power (voltage) to a level appropriate for on-site distribution and use. The electricity generated is distributed through a network of transmission and distribution lines commonly called a power grid. Conveyance of electricity through transmission lines is typically responsive to market demands. In 2022, Riverside County consumed 17,781 Gigawatt-hours of electricity (Appendix A).

Natural gas is a combustible mixture of simple hydrocarbon compounds (primarily methane) that is used as a fuel source. Natural gas consumed in California is obtained from naturally occurring reservoirs, mainly located outside the State, and delivered through high-pressure transmission pipelines. The natural gas transportation system is a nationwide network and, therefore, resource availability is typically not an issue. Natural gas satisfies almost one-third of the State's total energy requirements and is used in electricity generation, space heating, cooking, water heating, industrial processes, and as a transportation fuel. Natural gas is measured in terms of cubic feet. In 2022, Riverside County consumed 431.05 Million Therms of natural gas (Appendix A).

Petroleum-based fuels currently account for a majority of the California's transportation energy sources and primarily consist of diesel and gasoline types of fuels. However, the state has been working on developing strategies to reduce petroleum use. Over the last decade, California has implemented several policies, rules, and regulations to improve vehicle efficiency, increase the development and use of alternative fuels, reduce air pollutants and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transportation sector, and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Accordingly, petroleum-based fuel consumption in California has declined. In 2022, 981 million gallons of gasoline and 173 million gallons of diesel were sold in Riverside County (Appendix A).

Construction Energy

The construction activities for the Proposed Project are anticipated to include site preparation and grading of the Project site, building construction of the homes, paving of the on-site roads and driveways, sidewalks, and hardscapes, and application of architectural coatings. The Proposed Project would consume energy resources during construction in three (3) general forms:

1. Petroleum-based fuels used to power off-road construction vehicles and equipment on the Project Site, construction worker travel to and from the Project Site, as well as delivery and haul truck trips (e.g. hauling of demolition material to off-site reuse and disposal facilities);
2. Electricity associated with the conveyance of water that would be used during Project construction for dust control (supply and conveyance) and electricity to power any necessary lighting during construction, electronic equipment, or other construction activities necessitating electrical power; and,
3. Energy used in the production of construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass.

Construction-Related Energy

During construction, the Proposed Project would consume electricity to construct the proposed warehouse and infrastructure. Electricity would be supplied to the Project site by Southern California Edison and would be obtained from the existing electrical lines in the vicinity of the Project site. The use of electricity from existing power lines, rather than temporary diesel or gasoline powered generators, would minimize impacts on fuel consumption. Electricity consumed during Project construction would vary throughout the construction period based on the construction activities being performed. Various construction activities include electricity associated with the conveyance of water that would be used during project construction for dust control (supply and conveyance) and electricity to power any necessary lighting during construction, electronic equipment, or other construction activities necessitating electrical power. Such electricity demand would be temporary, nominal, and would cease upon the completion of construction. Overall, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would require limited electricity consumption that would not be expected to have an adverse impact on available electricity supplies and infrastructure. Therefore, the use of electricity during Project construction would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary.

Since there are currently power lines in the vicinity of the Project site, it is anticipated that only nominal improvements would be required to Southern California Edison Utility distribution lines and equipment with development of the Proposed Project. Compliance with City's guidelines and requirements would ensure that the Proposed Project fulfills its responsibilities relative to infrastructure installation, coordinates any electrical infrastructure removals or relocations, and limits any impacts associated with construction of the Project. Construction of the project's electrical infrastructure is not anticipated to adversely affect the electrical infrastructure serving the surrounding uses or utility system capacity.

Construction-Related Natural Gas

Construction of the Proposed Project typically would not involve the consumption of natural gas. Natural gas would not be supplied to support construction activities, thus there would be no demand generated by construction. Since the Project site is adjacent to roads that currently have natural gas lines, construction of the Proposed Project would be limited to installation of new natural gas connections within the Project site. Development of the Proposed Project would likely not require extensive infrastructure improvements to serve the Project site. Construction-related energy usage impacts associated with the installation of natural gas connections are expected to be confined to trenching in order to place the lines below surface. In addition, prior to ground disturbance, the Proposed Project would notify and coordinate with Southern California Gas (SoCalGas) to identify the

locations and depth of all existing gas lines and avoid disruption of gas service. Therefore, construction-related impacts to natural gas supply and infrastructure would be less than significant.

Construction-Related Petroleum Fuel Use

Petroleum-based fuel usage represents the highest amount of transportation energy potentially consumed during construction, which would be utilized by both off-road equipment operating on the Project site, on-road automobiles transporting workers to and from the Project site, and on-road trucks transporting equipment and supplies to the Project site.

The off-road construction equipment fuel usage was calculated through use of the off-road equipment assumptions and fuel use assumptions shown in Section 8.2 in Appendix A, which found that construction of the Proposed Project would consume 13,214 gallons of gasoline and 94,661 gallons of diesel fuel. This equates to 0.001 percent of the gasoline and 0.05 percent of the diesel used annually in Riverside County. As such, the construction-related petroleum use would be nominal, when compared to current county-wide petroleum usage rates.

Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would be required to adhere to all State and SCAQMD regulations for off-road equipment and on-road trucks, which provide minimum fuel efficiency standards. As such, construction activities for the Proposed Project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Impacts regarding transportation energy would be less than significant. Development of the Project would not result in the need to manufacture construction materials or create new building material facilities specifically to supply the Proposed Project. It is difficult to measure the energy used in the production of construction materials such as asphalt, steel, and concrete, it is reasonable to assume that the production of building materials such as concrete, steel, etc., would employ all reasonable energy conservation practices in the interest of minimizing the cost of doing business.

Operational Energy

The ongoing operation of the Proposed Project would require the use of energy resources for multiple purposes including, but not limited to, heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC), refrigeration, lighting, appliances, and electronics. Energy would also be consumed during operations related to water usage, solid waste disposal, landscape equipment, and vehicle trips.

Operations-Related Electricity

Operation of the Proposed Project would result in consumption of electricity at the Project site. As detailed in Section 8.2 in Appendix A, the Proposed Project would consume 31,485 kilowatt-hours per year of electricity. This equates to 0.002 percent of electricity consumed annually in Riverside County. As such, the operations-related electricity use would be nominal, when compared to current electricity usage rates in the County.

It should be noted that the Proposed Project will be required to meet the 2022 Title 24, Part 6 building energy efficiency standards that have been developed to meet the State's goal of zero-net-energy use for new homes. The zero net energy use will be achieved through a variety of measures to make new homes more energy efficient and by also requiring installation of photovoltaic systems of adequate size to generate enough electricity to meet the zero-net energy use standard. The size of the PV

system required for the project pursuant to the 2022 Title 24 standards was calculated in Section 8.1 in Appendix A, which found that the Proposed Project would need to install at least 78.4 Kilowatts of photovoltaic panels within the Proposed Project. Although the CalEEMod model found that with implementation of the 2022 Title 24 Part 6 standards, the Proposed Project would continue to utilize a nominal amount of power, it should be noted that the electricity usage and emission rates utilized by the CalEEMod model are based on regional average usage rates for existing homes, which were not all built to the most current Title 24 Part 6 standards, so the CalEEMod model provides a conservative or worst-case analysis of electricity use from the Proposed Project. Therefore, it is anticipated the Proposed Project will be designed and built to minimize electricity use and that existing and planned electricity capacity and electricity supplies would be sufficient to support the Proposed Project's electricity demand. Thus, impacts with regard to electrical supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures would be required.

Operations-Related Natural Gas

Operation of the Proposed Project would result in increased consumption of natural gas at the Project site. As detailed in Section 8.2 in Appendix A, the Proposed Project would consume 1,543 MBTU per year of natural gas. This equates to 0.004 percent of the natural gas consumed annually in Riverside County. As such, the operations-related natural gas use would be nominal, when compared to current natural gas usage rates in the County.

It should be noted that, the Proposed Project would comply with all federal, state, and county requirements related to the consumption of natural gas, which includes CCR Title 24, Part 6 *Building Energy Efficiency Standards* and CCR Title 24, Part 11 *California Green Building Standards*. The CCR Title 24, Part 6 and Part 11 standards require numerous energy efficiency measures to be incorporated into the proposed structures, including enhanced insulation as well as use of efficient natural gas appliances and HVAC units. Therefore, it is anticipated the Proposed Project will be designed and built to minimize natural gas use and that existing and planned natural gas capacity and natural gas supplies would be sufficient to support the Proposed Project's natural gas demand. Thus, impacts with regard to natural gas supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures would be required.

Operations-Related Vehicular Petroleum Fuel Usage

Operation of the Proposed Project would result in increased consumption of petroleum-based fuels related to vehicular travel to and from the Project site. As detailed in Section 8.2 in Appendix A, the Proposed Project would consume 72,504 gallons of gasoline per year from vehicle travel. This equates to 0.007 percent of the gasoline consumed annually in Riverside County. As such, the operations-related petroleum use would be nominal when compared to current petroleum usage rates.

It should be noted that the Proposed Project would comply with all federal, state, and city requirements related to the consumption of transportation energy that includes CCR Title 24, Part 10 California Green Building Standards that require that all new garages to install electrical panels of adequate size to support the installation of electric vehicle charging systems. Therefore, it is anticipated the Proposed Project will be designed and built to minimize transportation energy through the promotion of the use of electric-powered vehicles, and it is anticipated that existing and planned capacity and supplies of transportation fuels would be sufficient to support the Proposed Project's

demand. Thus, impacts with regard to transportation energy supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures would be required.

In conclusion, the Proposed Project would comply with regulatory compliance measures outlined by the State and City related to air quality (see section 4.0 in Appendix A), energy (see section 5.0 in Appendix A), and GHGs (see section 6.0 in Appendix A). Additionally, the Proposed Project would be constructed in accordance with all applicable City Building and Fire Codes. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) *Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The applicable plan for the Proposed Project is the *City of Menifee General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element*, adopted in 2013. The Proposed Project's consistency with the energy conservation policies from the General Plan are shown in Table 4-4.

Table 4-4 – Proposed Project Compliance with the General Plan Energy Conservation Policies

General Plan Policy	Proposed Project Implementation Actions
Goal OSC-4: Efficient and environmentally appropriate use and management of energy and mineral resources to ensure their availability for future generations	
Policy OCS-4.1: Apply energy efficiency and conservation practices in land use, transportation demand management, and subdivision and building design.	Consistent. The proposed homes will be designed to meet or exceed the 2022 Title 24 Part 6 building standards that require all single-family homes built in California to have rooftop solar PV systems, enhanced insulation, and to install energy efficient appliances.
Policy OCS-4.2: Evaluate public and private efforts to develop and operate alternative systems of energy production, including solar, wind, and fuel cell.	Not Applicable. The policy is for the City to implement, however the Proposed Project will be required to install a solar PV rooftop system onto each home.
Policy OCS-4.3: Advocate for cost-effective and reliable production and delivery of electrical power to residents and businesses throughout the community.	Not Applicable. This policy is directed to Southern California Edison.
Policy OCS-4.4: Require that any future mining activities be in compliance with the State Mining Reclamation Act, federal and state environmental regulations, and local ordinances.	Not Applicable. The policy is related to mining, which is not a part of the Proposed Project.
Policy OCS-4.5: Limit the impacts of mining operations on the city's natural open space, biological and scenic resources, cultural resources and landscapes, and any adjacent land uses.	Not Applicable. The policy is related to mining, which is not a part of the Proposed Project.

Source: City of Menifee, 2013.

As shown in Table 4-4, the Proposed Project would be consistent with all applicable energy conservation policies from the General Plan Conservation Element. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

7.	GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
	i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
	ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f)	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

In March 2004, GeoSoils, Inc. prepared a geotechnical investigation for the Project site for the Project's entitlement processes. Results of the geotechnical investigation are incorporated below. For further details regarding methods and results, please refer to Appendix D.

4.7.1 Impact Analysis

- a) i) *Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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.*

Less Than Significant Impact. The City is located within a seismically active region of Southern California; however, the Project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone. The closest fault is the Elsinore fault, located approximately 8 miles southwest of the Proposed Project site (DOC

2024b). The City of Menifee General Plan EIR outlines control measures for projects pursuant to the general plan. The Proposed Project would conform to current seismic safety standards, general plan measures, and ground disturbance required for the Project. The proposed ground disturbances would not reach depths that could exacerbate the risk of rupturing a known earthquake fault. Because the Proposed Project is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and would conform to safety standards, impacts would be less than significant associated with directly or indirectly causing adverse effects.

ii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project site is located in a seismically active region of Southern California; however, it is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone (DOC 2024b). The City of Menifee General plan EIR requires the Proposed Project to comply with safety provisions to the CBC (Title 24, Part 2 of the CCR). A geotechnical investigation will be conducted for the affected Project site, which would assist in reducing hazards to people and structures arising from ground shaking (City 2013b). Because the Proposed Project is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and will conform to safety standards in the General Plan EIR, impacts would result in less than significant impacts associated with strong seismic ground shaking.

iii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less Than Significant Impact. The potential for liquefaction is dependent upon the occurrence of a significant earthquake; sufficient groundwater to cause high pore pressures; and on the grain, size, relative density, and confining pressures of the soil at a given site. Although the Proposed Project site is located within a seismically active region in Southern California, the site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone or liquefaction zone (DOC 2024b). The Proposed Project would have a geotechnical investigation of the Project sites conducted per state laws and regulations and General Plan policies. The Proposed Project would comply with recommendations and the geotechnical investigation's reports would be required as conditions of issuance of building and grading permits. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not expose people and structures to substantial hazards from liquefaction and related ground failure, thus impacts would be less than significant.

iv) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the City of Menifee General Plan, the Proposed Project is within an area where local topographic and geological conditions suggest the potential for earthquake induced landslides (City 2012a). The Proposed Project would comply with the City's General Plan EIR and complete a geotechnical investigation on the Project site. The Proposed Project will implement the recommendations from the geotechnical investigation, located in Appendix D, to ensure a less than significant impact on potential substantial adverse effects involving earthquake induced landslides. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities associated with the Project include vegetation removal, grading, excavation, and recompaction throughout the site. Considering the Project would involve soil disturbance, and the development would introduce impervious surface to the Project site in excess of 1 acre, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be written and implemented. A SWPPP identifies best management practices (BMPs) to further reduce soil erosion during construction. Any BMPs employed at the Project site would be consistent with the Federal Clean Water Act (City 2013b). Furthermore, The Proposed Project would comply with the City's General Plan EIR and implement BMPs for erosion control that are required under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) 2009-0009-DWQ Construction General Permit (City 2013b). Categories for BMPs include erosion controls, sediment controls, wind erosion controls, tracking controls, non-storm water management controls, and waste management controls (City 2013b). Compliance with the General Plan EIR would result in less than significant impacts regarding substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. As stated above, the Proposed Project is not located in an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone, or liquefaction zone (DOC 2024b). The Proposed Project is located in a seismically active region of Southern California and within an area where local topographic and geological conditions suggest the potential for earthquake induced landslides. Soil conditions could potentially result in risks to life or property. The Proposed Project will adhere to the City's General Plan EIR construction BMPs including erosion controls, sediment controls, wind erosion controls, tracking controls, non-storm water management controls, and waste management controls (City 2013b). Compliance with recommendations from the Proposed Project's geotechnical investigations would be required and recommendations are located in Appendix D. With adherence to recommendations in the geotechnical investigations report for the Proposed Project, impacts to substantial hazards arising from compressible soils, collapsible soils, expansive soils, corrosive soils, or ground subsidence impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Expansive soils are certain types of clay soils that expand when saturated and shrink when dried. The Project site is underlain by alluvium and potentially compressible bedrock. Compliance with the site-specific design recommendations identified in the geotechnical investigation would reduce potential impacts relative to expansive soils to less than significant levels. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

- e) *Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?*

No Impact. The Project would connect to the City's existing sewer infrastructure; therefore, the Project would not require the installation of new septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No impact would occur.

- f) *Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. A cultural report of the Proposed Project site was prepared in October 2023 (Appendix C). The report found that there are no known fossil localities recorded within one mile of the Proposed Project site. The geologic units underlying the Property are mapped as black phyllite, a metamorphic rock. This metamorphic rock unit has low to no paleontological sensitivity. The northwest corner of the Proposed Project site and the eastern third of the study area is covered in very old alluvial fan deposits of the Pleistocene age that are highly paleontologically sensitive. Therefore, implementation of MM CUL-5 will be implemented to reduce impacts to paleontological resources to be less than significant.

MM-CUL-5: Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist to observe ground disturbing activities and recover fossil resources as necessary. The Paleontologist will attend the pre-grade conference where they will establish procedures for paleontological monitoring and, through the preparation of a mitigation plan, shall establish procedures and protocols to temporarily halt ground disturbing activities to permit sampling, evaluation, and recovery of any discovery. Excavations that impact older Quaternary deposits may encounter fossil vertebrates. Any substantial excavations below the uppermost layers of the surface should be monitored. Sediment samples should also be recovered to determine the small-fossil potential of the site. If a discovery is determined to be significant, additional excavations and salvage of the fossil may be necessary to ensure that any impacts to it are mitigated to a less than significant level. A final monitoring report shall be prepared that describes the results of the monitoring program and evaluates any fossil resources recovered.

4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

8.	GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

An Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis was prepared in May 2024 for the Proposed Project (Appendix A).

4.8.1 Environmental Setting

Climate change is the observed increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans along with other substantial changes in climate (such as wind patterns, precipitation, and storms) over an extended period of time. Climate change is the result of numerous, cumulative sources of GHGs that contribute to the "greenhouse effect," a natural occurrence that takes place in Earth's atmosphere to help regulate the temperature of the planet. The majority of radiation from the sun hits Earth's surface and warms it. The surface, in turn, radiates heat back toward the atmosphere in the form of infrared radiation.

Gases and clouds in the atmosphere trap and prevent some of this heat from escaping into space and re-radiate it in all directions. However, anthropogenic activities since the beginning of the industrial revolution (approximately 250 years ago) are adding to the natural greenhouse effect by increasing the gases in the atmosphere that trap heat. Emissions resulting from human activities thereby contribute to an average increase in Earth's temperature.

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

Significant legislative and regulatory activities directly and indirectly affect climate change and GHGs in California. The primary climate change legislation in California is AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California and requires that GHGs emitted in California be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. In addition to AB 32, Executive Order B-30-15 was issued on April 29, 2015, that aims to reduce California's GHG emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. In September 2016, AB 197 and SB 32 codified into statute the GHG emission reduction targets provided in Executive Order B-20-15.

CARB is the State agency charged with monitoring and regulating sources of emissions of GHGs in California that contribute to global warming in order to reduce emissions of GHGs. The CARB Governing Board approved the 1990 GHG emissions level of 427 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (MtCO₂e) on December 6, 2007. Therefore, in 2020, annual emissions in California are required to be at or below 427 MtCO₂e. The CARB Board approved the Climate Change Scoping Plan (Scoping Plan) in December 2008, the First Update to the Scoping Plan in May 2014, and California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan in November 2017. The Scoping Plans define a range of programs and activities that will be implemented primarily by State agencies but also include actions by local government agencies. Primary strategies addressed in the Scoping Plans include new industrial and emission control technologies; alternative energy generation technologies; advanced energy conservation in lighting, heating, cooling, and ventilation; reduced-carbon fuels; hybrid and electric vehicles; and other methods of improving vehicle mileage. Local government will have a part in implementing some of these strategies. The Scoping Plans also call for reductions in vehicle-associated GHG emissions through smart growth that will result in reductions in VMT (Appendix A).

The *Menifee General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report* (General Plan EIR), adopted September 2013, utilized the SCAQMD Working Group Thresholds for the determination of significance of GHG emissions from implementation of the General Plan. It should be noted that SCAQMD's Working Group's thresholds were prepared prior to the issuance of Executive Order B-30-15 on April 29, 2015 which provided a reduction goal of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. This target was codified into statute through passage of AB 197 and SB 32 in September 2016. However, the California Supreme Court's ruling on *Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Association of Governments* (Cleveland v. SANDAG), Filed July 13, 2017 stated:

SANDAG did not abuse its discretion in declining to adopt the 2050 goal as a measure of significance in light of the fact that the Executive Order does not specify any plan or

implementation measures to achieve its goal. In its response to comments, the EIR said: “It is uncertain what role regional land use and transportation strategies can or should play in achieving the EO’s 2050 emissions reduction target. A recent California Energy Commission report concludes, however, that the primary strategies to achieve this target should be major ‘decarbonization’ of electricity supplies and fuels, and major improvements in energy efficiency.

In order to identify significance criteria under CEQA for development projects, SCAQMD initiated a Working Group, which provided detailed methodology for evaluating significance under CEQA. At the September 28, 2010 Working Group meeting, the SCAQMD released its most current version of the draft GHG emissions thresholds, which recommends a tiered approach that provides a quantitative annual threshold of 3,000 MtCO₂e for all land use projects.

4.8.2 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. The Proposed Project would consist of the development and operation of a residential community. The Proposed Project is anticipated to generate GHG emissions from area sources, energy usage, mobile sources, waste disposal, water usage, and construction equipment. The Project’s GHG emissions have been calculated with the CalEEMod model based on the construction and operational parameters detailed in Section 8.1 in Appendix A. A summary of the results is shown below in Table 4-5.

Table 4-5 – Project Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions

Category	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Metric Tons per Year)			
	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	CO ₂ e
Mobile Sources ¹	686	0.03	0.03	698
Area Sources ²	18.9	<0.01	<0.01	19.0
Energy Usage ³	137	0.01	<0.01	138
Water and Wastewater ⁴	6.11	0.10	<0.01	9.28
Solid Waste ⁵	4.88	0.49	0.00	17.1
Refrigeration ⁶	--	--	--	0.09
Construction ⁷	36.0	<0.01	<0.01	36.5
Total GHG Emissions	889	0.63	0.04	918
SCAQMD Draft Threshold of Significance				3,000
Exceed Thresholds?				No

Notes:

¹ Mobile sources consist of GHG emissions from vehicles.

² Area sources consist of GHG emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment.

³ Energy usage consists of GHG emissions from electricity and natural gas usage.

⁴ Water includes GHG emissions from electricity used for transport of water and processing of wastewater.

⁵ Waste includes the CO₂ and CH₄ emissions created from the solid waste placed in landfills.

⁶ Refrigeration includes GHG emissions from refrigerants in air conditioning units.

⁷ Construction emissions amortized over 30 years as recommended in the SCAQMD GHG Working Group on November 19, 2009.

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1 (see Appendix A)

As shown in Table 4-5, the Proposed Project would create 918 MTCO₂e per year. According to the SCAQMD draft threshold of significance detailed in Section 9.6 of Appendix A, a cumulative global climate change impact would occur if the GHG emissions created from the ongoing operations would exceed 3,000 MTCO₂e per year. Therefore, a less than significant generation of GHG emissions would occur from development of the Proposed Project.

- b) *Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The applicable plan for the Proposed Project is the *City of Menifee General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element*, adopted 2013, that requires the City to consider impacts to climate change as a factor in evaluating projects within the City. The Proposed Project would be designed to exceed the current Title 24 Part 6 building standards that require all new homes to be designed to use net zero energy, through a combination of energy efficiency measures as well as requiring all new homes to install rooftop photovoltaic systems that are of adequate size to generate enough electricity to meet the net-zero energy requirements. Also, the California Green Building Code requires that all new developments institute additional energy efficiency and water conservation measures. Through adherence to the current Title 24 Part 6 building standards and the California Green Building Code, the Proposed Project would meet the reduction goals provided in the General Plan.

In addition to the City's GHG reduction plan, the SCAQMD initiated a Working Group to develop a GHG emissions policy and provided detailed methodology for evaluating significance under CEQA, and the SCAQMD's thresholds were utilized in the analysis of the General Plan EIR (Appendix A). As detailed in Section 10.8 in Appendix A, the GHG emissions created from the Proposed Project were found to be within the SCAQMD's Tier 3, quantitative screening value of 3,000 MTCO₂e per year. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

9.	HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?				
(e)	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f)	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(g)	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.9.1 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would involve the construction of a 74-unit residential subdivision with duplexes. Construction activities include excavation and grading operations, utility work, surface paving operations, and landscaping. The Project site would operate as a residential community. Potentially hazardous materials, including but not limited to gasoline, oil, solvents, cleaners, paint, pesticides, and fertilizer may be used during construction and operation of the Project. Nonetheless, all construction and operational activities would be required to adhere to local standards set forth by the City, as well as state and federal health and safety requirements that are intended to minimize risk to the public from hazardous materials, such as California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) requirements, the Hazardous Waste Control Act, the California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program, and the California Health and Safety Code.

As a result, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore, construction and operational impacts for these issues would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would involve the construction of a 74-unit residential subdivision with duplexes. Construction requires excavation and grading, utility work, surface paving operations, and landscaping. Operations on-site would not involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials as the area is a residential community. Potentially hazardous materials, including but not limited to gasoline, oil, solvents, cleaners, paint, pesticides, and fertilizer may be used during construction and operation of the Project. Nonetheless, all construction and operational activities would be required to adhere to local standards set forth by the City, as well as state and federal health and safety requirements that are intended to minimize risk to the public from hazardous materials, such as Cal/OSHA requirements, the Hazardous Waste Control Act, the CalARP Program, and the California Health and Safety Code.

As a result, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials. Therefore, construction and operational impacts for these issues would be less than significant.

- c) *Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction would involve the use of heavy equipment and other gas- or diesel-powered equipment that would generate emissions associated with internal combustion engines (i.e., diesel and gasoline). As described in impacts 4.9.1 a) and b) above, construction would also require temporary transport of potentially hazardous commercial materials, including but not limited to gasoline, oil, solvents, cleaners, paint, pesticides, and fertilizer. Considering the Project is a 74-unit residential complex, operations on-site will be residential in nature and will not involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

The Project site is within 0.5 miles of two existing schools: Ridgemoor Elementary School is located east of the Proposed Project site, and Kathryn Newport Middle School is located 0.5 miles to the south. Ridgemoor Elementary is located at 25455 Ridgemoor Rd, Sun City, CA 92586. Kathryn Newport Middle School is located at 29792 Audie Murphy Rd, Menifee, CA 92584. Heavy equipment and vehicles which may be transporting or emitting hazardous materials during Project construction would avoid travel along Ridgemoor Rd and Audie Murphy Rd, the roads that provide access to the schools. Main construction access to the Project site would be Polaris Drive via Boulder Crest Way. Furthermore, Project operations would be consistent with local regulations and standards set forth by the City, State, and federal governments. Therefore, construction and operational impacts for these issues would be less than significant.

- d) *Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?*

Less Than Significant Impact. A review of federal and state standard and supplemental databases indicated that the Project site is not located within an identified hazardous material site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (DTSC 2024; SWRCB 2024). Considering the absence of active hazard cases in the vicinity of the Project site, impacts would be less than significant.

- e) *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?*

No Impact. The Project site is located approximately 5 miles south of the Perris Valley Airport (Google 2024). The Project site is not within the Airport Influence Area for the airport (City 2013c). No impact would occur.

- f) *Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the Safety Element of the City's General Plan, the City has developed an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to maintain a responsible level of emergency

preparedness. This program includes Standard Operating Guidelines and Procedures (SOGs/SOPs) that detail personnel assignments, policies, notification rosters, resource lists, and specific steps for accomplishing the functions assigned in the EOP. Staff emergency response personnel should be acquainted with the SOGs/SOPs and receive periodic training on the policies and procedures contained within the SOGs/SOPs in support of the EOP. The City's SOPs are maintained by emergency management staff (City 2021b).

Additionally, the County's Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJLHMP) includes an overview of the risk assessment process and identifies hazards present in the jurisdiction, hazard profiles, and vulnerability assessments. The plan identifies goals, objectives, and actions for each jurisdiction in the County, including participating cities (such as Menifee) and the County unincorporated areas (County 2023). The Project would not interfere with the City's Emergency Services Program or the MJLHMP because it would not prohibit subsequent programs or plans from being established or prevent the goals and objectives of existing plans from being carried out. The Proposed Project would not interfere with the emergency response plan; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

- g) *Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project site is located within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone of local responsibility (City 2021a). The Project site is located adjacent to a currently developed residential area, and all construction would comply with Chapter 49 of the California Fire Code and Chapter 7A of the California Building Code. Operations on-site would be residential in nature and would not exacerbate the risk of wildland fire. Further, no roads would be permanently closed as a result of the construction or operation of the Project, and no structures would be developed that could potentially impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The Proposed Project would be accessed via driveways along Boulder Crest Way and Polaris Drive. These roads would provide sufficient ingress/egress to and from the Project site to avoid significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

10.	HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flood on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	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	☐	☐	☒	☐
	iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.10.1 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction would require temporary disturbance of surface soils and removal of vegetative cover through grading and excavation for the proposed residential condominium development. Grading activities therefore could potentially result in erosion and sedimentation on-site, which may alter the existing drainage pattern.

The Project would be required to obtain coverage under a Construction General Permit to comply with Clean Water Act NPDES requirements. Compliance with the Construction General Permit would require the development and implementation of a SWPPP and associated BMPs. The BMPs would include measures that would be implemented to prevent discharge of eroded soils from the construction site and sedimentation of surface waters off-site. City-established construction BMPs include erosion controls, sediment controls, wind erosion controls, tracking controls, non-storm water management controls, and waste management controls (City 2013). With implementation of the required SWPPP, construction of the Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would increase impervious surfaces at the Proposed Project site compared to existing conditions. However, implementation of the Proposed project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project impedes sustainable groundwater management of the basin. According to the Geotechnical Investigation, the California State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) GeoTracker online environmental data management system was searched for groundwater information at the nearest facility with a groundwater monitoring array such as leaking underground storage tank (LUST) facilities or other agency-regulated cleanup sites.

EMWD would provide domestic water supply service to the Proposed Project site. According to the EMWD's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, local supplies such as recycled water, potable groundwater, and desalinated groundwater provide for half of EMWD's supply, while the other half is supplied by the Metropolitan Water of overdraft. EMWD is contributing to the replenishment of local groundwater basins by providing recycled water in lieu of groundwater production for outdoor irrigation water use. EMWD is also party to agreements with other local agencies to limit groundwater extraction. As such, sufficient water supplies are available from EMWD to serve the Proposed Project, and that local groundwater basins would not substantially deplete as a result of serving the project. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin, thus impacts would be less than significant.

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

i) *result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project includes the construction of a 74-unit residential community. Two water basins would be constructed on the Project site. The construction resulting in ground disturbing activities would require the City's adopted BMPs including water pollution and erosion control plans to be developed in accordance with RWQCB requirements. Further, the drainage pattern of the Project site and surrounding area is well established, and no streams or rivers are located near the Project site. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts associated with the existing drainage pattern.

ii) *substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not create or contribute to significant runoff from the Proposed Project site. The Proposed Project site is adjacent to a developed residential neighborhood. The Proposed Project would not create or contribute surface runoff volume that would exceed the capacity of the existing stormwater drainage systems. Roughly 64 acres (80%) of the Project site will remain as open space and only 14 acres will be developed. The Project site does not include any streams or rivers on or near the site; therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact associated with surface runoff, potentially resulting in flooding.

iii) *create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources or polluted runoff; or*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project involves construction of a 74-unit housing development. The Proposed Project is located adjacent to a developed residential neighborhood and the site is undeveloped. Construction of the site would follow the City of Menifee Stormwater Management Plan during construction activities and would comply with regulations and requirements of the City. The Proposed Project would not significantly impact stormwater runoff. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact associated with stormwater drainage from construction activities.

iv) *impede or redirect flood flows?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project is not located within a flood hazard area (City 2012b). Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in an impact associated with redirecting flood flows in a flood hazard area, and impacts would be less than significant.

d) *Would the project in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?*

Less Than Significant Impact. As previously mentioned, the Project is not located within the FEMA 100-year (FEMA 2024). The Proposed Project is also over 30 miles east of the Pacific Ocean and is not in the vicinity of any waterbodies that have potential to produce a seiche (Google 2024). All construction and operational activities would be required to adhere to local standards set forth by the City, as well as state and federal health and safety requirements that are intended to minimize risk to the public from hazardous materials, such as Cal/OSHA requirements, the Hazardous Waste Control Act, the CalARP Program, and the California Health and Safety Code. Impacts would be less than significant.

e) *Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is located within the Santa Ana Regional Watershed and is thus subject to the Santa Ana Water Quality Control Board's (SAWQCB) Basin Plan. The SAWQCB Basin Plan contains the region's water quality regulations and programs to implement the regulations.

The Proposed Project would apply for a NPDES permit and prepare a SWPPP. Implementation of the SWPPP would reduce polluted stormwater runoff from the Project site and ensure compliance with the SAWQCB Basin Plan. Furthermore, the Proposed Project would implement City adopted BMPs required to protect water quality, therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts associated with potential erosion or siltation on-or off-site.

4.11 NOISE

11.	NOISE Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☒	☐	☐

11.	NOISE Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

A Noise Impact Analysis was completed in August 2024 by Vista Environmental (Appendix E).

4.11.1 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project result in 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?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase of ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project site in excess of standards established by the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. The following section calculates the potential noise emissions associated with the temporary construction activities and long-term operations of the Proposed Project and compares the noise levels to the City standards.

Construction-Related Noise

The construction activities for the Proposed Project are anticipated to include site preparation and grading of the Project site, building construction of the homes, paving of the on-site roads and parking areas, sidewalks and hardscapes, and application of architectural coatings. Construction activities would primarily create noise impacts from haul truck trips on the nearby roadways and from off-road equipment operating on the Project site, which have been analyzed separately below.

Haul Trucks on Nearby Roads

Vehicle noise is a combination of the noise produced by the engine, exhaust, and tires. The level of traffic noise depends on three primary factors: (1) the volume of traffic, (2) the speed of traffic, and (3) the number of trucks in the flow of traffic. The Proposed Project would not alter the speed limit on any existing roadway, so the Proposed Project's potential off-site noise impacts have been focused on the noise impacts associated with the change of volume of traffic and the change in number of trucks in the traffic flow that would occur during the import of dirt to the Project site. The Air Quality Analysis found that the import of dirt would generate up to 287 haul truck trips per day, which would represent 3.4 percent of the 8,500 daily trips that currently travel on Simpson Rd in the vicinity of the Project site.

Neither the General Plan nor the Municipal Code defines what constitutes a "substantial permanent increase to ambient noise levels." As such, this impact analysis has utilized guidance from the Federal

Transit Administration for a moderate impact that has been detailed in Table 4-6 in Appendix E that shows that the Project's contribution to the noise environment can range between 0 and 7 dB, which is dependent on the existing roadway noise levels. The potential off-site haul truck noise impacts created during construction of the Proposed Project have been analyzed through utilization of the Federal Highway Association (FHWA) model and parameters described in Section 6.2 in Appendix E and the FHWA model traffic noise calculation spreadsheets are provided in Appendix E. The Proposed Project's potential off-site traffic noise impacts have been calculated through a comparison of the existing scenario to the existing plus construction trips scenario. The results of this comparison are shown in Table 4-6.

Table 4-6 – Proposed Construction-Related Traffic Noise Contribution

Roadway	Segment	dBA CNEL at Nearest Receptor ¹			Increase Threshold ²
		Existing	Existing + Construction	Project Contribution	
Boulder Crest Way	North of Ridgemoor Rd	39.3	45.6	+6.3	+7 dBA
Ganymede Way	At Polaris Drive	47.4	52.5	+5.1	+7 dBA
Ridgemoor Rd	East of Phoenix Way	53.5	53.5	+0.0	+5 dBA

Notes:

¹ Distance to nearest existing homes shown in Table F, does not take into account existing noise barriers.

² Increase Threshold obtained from the FTA's allowable noise impact exposures detailed in Table A in Appendix E.

Source: FHWA Traffic Noise Prediction Model FHWA-RD-77-108.

Table 4-6 shows that the Proposed Project's construction-related noise increases to the nearby homes created from the haul trucks exporting dirt from the Project site would not exceed the FTA's allowable increase thresholds detailed above. Therefore, the vehicular traffic generated by construction of the Proposed Project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels. Impacts would be less than significant.

Off-Road Construction Equipment Operating On-site

Noise impacts from off-road construction equipment associated with the Proposed Project would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, equipment location, sensitivity of nearby land uses, and the timing and duration of the construction activities. The nearest sensitive receptors to the Project site are residents at the single-family homes located on Boulder Crest Way and as near as four feet to the south of the Project site. There are also single-family homes located as near as 28 feet east of the Project site.

Section 9.09.030(B) of the City's Municipal Code exempts noise sources associated with new, private construction projects located within one-quarter of a mile from an inhabited dwelling from the City's noise standards, provided construction activities do not occur either: (1) Between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. during the months of June through September; or (2) Between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. during the months of October through May. However, the City construction noise standards do not provide any limits to the noise levels that may be created from construction activities and even with adherence to the City standards, the resultant construction noise levels may result in a significant substantial temporary noise increase to the nearby residents.

In order to determine if the proposed construction activities would create a significant substantial temporary noise increase, the FTA construction noise criteria thresholds detailed in Section 4.1 in

Appendix E have been utilized, which shows that a significant construction noise impact would occur if construction noise exceeds 80 dBA during the daytime at any of the nearby homes.

Construction noise levels to the nearby sensitive receptors have been calculated through use of the Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) and the parameters and assumptions detailed in Section 6.1 of Appendix B, including Table E – Construction Equipment Noise Emissions and Usage Factors. The results are shown below in Table 4-7 and the RCNM printouts are provided in Appendix C of Appendix E.

Table 4-7 – Construction Noise Levels at the Nearby Sensitive Receptors

Construction Phase	Construction Noise Level (dBA Leq) at:	
	Homes to South ¹	Homes to East ²
Site Preparation	68	68
Grading	68	68
Building Construction	67	67
Paving	62	62
Painting	54	54
FTA Construction Noise Threshold³	80	80
Exceed Thresholds?	No	No

¹ The homes to the south are located as near as 500 feet from center of Project site.

² The homes to the east are located as near as 280 feet from center of Project site. 5 dB of shielding was added to RCNM in order to account for the existing 6-foot wall on the east side of Project site.

³ The FTA Construction noise thresholds are detailed above in Table B.

Source: RCNM, Federal Highway Administration, 2006

Table 4-7 shows that the greatest noise impacts would occur during the site preparation and grading phases, with noise levels as high as 68 dBA equivalent continuous sound pressure level (Leq) at the nearest homes to the south and east. All calculated construction noise levels shown in Table 4-7 are within the FTA daytime construction noise standard of 80 dBA averaged over eight hours. Therefore, through adherence to the allowable construction times provided in Section 9.09.030(B) of the City's Municipal Code, the construction activities for the Proposed Project would not create a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels that are in excess of applicable noise standards. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operational-Related Noise

The Proposed Project would consist of the development of 37 residential lots of which each residential lot would be developed with a duplex, which would result in a total of 74 residential units. Potential noise impacts associated with the operations of the Proposed Project would be from Project-generated vehicular traffic on the nearby roadways. The on-site operations of the Proposed Project would not introduce any new noise sources (i.e., air conditioning equipment, landscape maintenance activities, trash trucks, etc.) that do not already exist in the vicinity of the Project site. As such, less than significant on-site noise impacts are anticipated to occur from operation of the Proposed Project.

Roadway Vehicular Noise Impacts to Nearby Existing Homes

Vehicle noise is a combination of the noise produced by the engine, exhaust, and tires. The level of traffic noise depends on three primary factors: (1) the volume of traffic, (2) the speed of traffic, and (3) the number of trucks in the flow of traffic. The Proposed Project does not propose any uses that would require a substantial number of truck trips and the Proposed Project would not alter the speed limit on any existing roadway, so the Proposed Project's potential off-site noise impacts have been focused on the noise impacts associated with the change of volume of traffic that would occur with development of the Proposed Project.

Neither the General Plan nor the Municipal Code defines what constitutes a "substantial permanent increase to ambient noise levels." As such, this impact analysis has utilized guidance from the Federal Transit Administration for a moderate impact that has been detailed in Table A in Appendix E that shows that the Project contribution to the noise environment can range between 0 and 7 dB, which is dependent on the existing roadway noise levels.

The potential off-site traffic noise impacts created by the ongoing operations of the Proposed Project have been analyzed through utilization of the FHWA model and parameters described in Section 6.2 in Appendix E and the FHWA model traffic noise calculation spreadsheets are provided in Appendix E. The Proposed Project's potential off-site traffic noise impacts have been calculated through a comparison of the existing scenario to the existing plus Project operations scenario. The results of this comparison are shown in Table 4-8.

Table 4-8 – Project Operational Noise Contributions

Roadway	Segment	dBA CNEL at Nearest Receptor ¹			Increase Threshold ²
		Existing	Existing Plus Operations	Project Contribution	
Boulder Crest Way	North of Ridgemoor Rd	39.3	45.1	+5.8	+7 dBA
Ganymede Way	At Polaris Drive	47.4	48.7	+1.3	+7 dBA
Ridgemoor Rd	East of Phoenix Way	53.5	54.3	+0.8	+5 dBA

Notes:

¹ Distance to nearest sensitive receptors shown in Table F, does not take into account existing noise barriers.

² Increase Threshold obtained from the FTA's allowable noise impact exposures detailed above in Table A.

Source: FHWA Traffic Noise Prediction Model FHWA-RD-77-108.

⁴ A-weighted decibels Community Noise Equivalent Level

Table 4-8 shows that the Proposed Project's permanent noise increases to the nearby homes from the generation of additional vehicular traffic would not exceed the traffic noise increase thresholds detailed above. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels for the existing conditions. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) *Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The Proposed Project would not expose persons to a generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. The

following section analyzes the potential vibration impacts associated with the construction and operations of the Proposed Project.

Construction-Related Vibration Impacts

The construction activities for the Proposed Project are anticipated to include site preparation and grading of the Project site, building construction of the homes, paving of the on-site roads and parking areas, sidewalks and hardscapes, and application of architectural coatings. Vibration impacts from construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would typically be created from the operation of heavy off-road equipment. The nearest sensitive receptors to the Project site are residents at the single-family homes located on Boulder Crest Way and as near as four feet to the south of the Project site.

Since neither the Municipal nor the General Plan provide a quantifiable vibration threshold for temporary construction activities, guidance from the *Transportation and Construction-Induced Vibration Guidance Manual*, prepared by Caltrans in April 2020 has been utilized, which defines the threshold of perception from transient sources such as off-road construction equipment at 0.25 inch per second peak particle velocity (PPV) (Appendix E).

The primary source of vibration during construction would be from the operation of a bulldozer. From Table I in Appendix E, a large bulldozer would create a vibration level of 0.089 inch per second PPV at 25 feet. Based on typical propagation rates, the vibration level at the nearest off-site home (4 feet to the south) would be 0.67 inch per second PPV. The vibration level at the nearest structure would exceed the 0.25 inch per second PPV threshold, described above. This would be considered a significant impact.

Mitigation measure NOI-1 would require that the applicant restrict the use of a large dozer or any other large earthmoving equipment within 10 feet of any off-site structure. For all grading activities that occur within 10 feet of any off-site structure, the applicant shall require the use of a small dozer or other type of equipment that is less than 150 horsepower. From Table I in Appendix E, a small bulldozer would create a vibration level of 0.003 inch-per-second PPV at 25 feet. With application of NOI-1, the vibration level at the nearest structure would be reduced to 0.24 inch per second PPV from large dozers and 0.02 inch per second PPV from small dozers, which would both be below the 0.25 inch per second PPV threshold detailed above. Therefore, with implementation of NOI-1, a less than significant vibration impact is anticipated from construction of the Proposed Project.

Operations-Related Vibration Impacts

The Proposed Project would consist of the development of a residential community. The ongoing operation of the Proposed Project would not include the operation of any known vibration sources other than typical on-site vehicle operations for a residential development. Therefore, a less than significant vibration impact is anticipated from operation of the Proposed Project.

MM NOISE-1: The Project applicant shall require that all construction contractors restrict the operation of any large bulldozers that is powered by a greater than 150 horse power engine from operating within 10 feet of any off-site structure. The Project applicant shall require the use of a small bulldozer (i.e., D1, D2, or D3 dozers) or other type of equipment that is less than 150 horsepower to perform all demolition and grading activities that are located within 10 feet of any off-site structure.

- 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 us airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

No Impact. The nearest airport is the Perris Valley Airport that is located as near as 3.8 miles north of the Project site. The Project site is located outside of the 60 dBA CNEL noise contours of this Airport. Therefore, the proposed homes would not be exposed to excessive aircraft noise. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.12 LAND USE AND PLANNING

12.	LAND USE/PLANNING Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.12.1 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project physically divide an established community?*

No Impact. The Project proposes construction of a 74-unit residential subdivision with duplexes on vacant land, surrounded by residential, as well as open, space. During construction, temporary road blockages may occur due to heavy equipment use and material deliveries to the Project site. However, no long-term road blockages or changes to the surrounding traffic patterns are proposed. During operations, the Project would maintain an interconnected and pedestrian-friendly environment between the Project site and adjacent areas. Thus, construction and operational Project activities would not physically divide the established surrounding community, and no impacts would occur.

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

No Impact. The Project site is designated under the City's land use plan as 2.1-5 R land use zone, which allows for single family detached and attached residences with a density range of 2 to 5 dwelling units per acre (City 2023). The vision of the land use under the General Plan is to create a residential village (City 2023). The Proposed Project includes the construction of a 74-unit residential subdivision with duplexes. Because the Proposed Project aligns with the City's general plan vision and land use zones, no impacts would occur regarding conflicts due to a land use plan.

4.13 MINERAL RESOURCES

13.	MINERAL RESOURCES Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.13.1 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?*

No Impact. According to the City's General Plan, no known significant resources have been designated in the City (City 2013b). The Proposed Project site is located in a mineral resource zone (MRZ) 3, a mineral resource area containing known or inferred mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance (City 2008). Areas to the northeast and northwest are zoned as urban areas. Because there are no known significant mineral resources in the City, the implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. No impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The City's General Plan does not designate any locally important mineral resource recovery sites within the City boundaries (City 2013b). Additionally, there are no mining sites in the City. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. No impact would occur.

4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

4.14.1 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project proposes construction of a 74-unit residential subdivision with duplexes. The average persons per household in the city is 3.3 (City 2016). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume approximately 245 persons are planned to live in the residential community. The Proposed Project is located in land use specifically for a residential village in the City's general plan. Although the Proposed Project will directly induce population growth in the area, it will not induce population growth exceeding existing general plan projections. Therefore, impacts regarding substantial unplanned population growth would be less than significant.

- b) *Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

No Impact. The Project site is currently vacant and does not contain any housing units; thus, no existing housing units or people would be removed or displaced as a result of the Project. Additionally, the Project proposes construction of a 74-unit subdivision with duplexes which would provide new housing opportunities for local residents. The Project would not displace existing people or housing, and no impacts would occur.

4.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

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

4.15.1 Impact Analysis

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Riverside County Fire Station 5 is located approximately 4 miles north of the Project site at Quail Valley FS, 28971 Goetz Rd, Quail Valley, CA 92587 (Riverside County Fire 2024). Construction activity would increase traffic adjacent to the Project site during working hours because commuting construction workers, trucks, and other large construction vehicles would temporarily be added to normal traffic. Slow-moving construction traffic along local roadways may reduce optimal traffic flows on these roadways and could delay emergency vehicles or contribute to a vehicle accident. Nonetheless, potential fire protection impacts would be minimal due to the temporary nature of construction traffic.

During the Project's operational phase, the frequency of emergency calls may incrementally increase because residential uses would be introduced to the currently vacant site. For a residential project, the majority of calls are likely to be emergency medical and rescue. The Project would be required to conform to the California Fire Code and follow requirements in the Menifee Municipal Code, which requires integration of fire safety features such as fire sprinklers, fire hydrants, and water service infrastructure capable of delivering the required fire flows rates.

Additionally, the Project would fulfill an existing need for housing in the City. Therefore, the housing and job opportunities generated by the Project are expected to be filled by residents who currently live in the area. Considering the Project would not induce unplanned population growth, the Project is not expected to increase the demand for fire protection or require new facilities. Impacts to fire services would be less than significant.

- b) *Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The City of Menifee's Police Department is approximately 4 miles southeast of the Project site, or approximately a 13-minute drive (Google 2024). As previously mentioned, construction activity would increase traffic adjacent to the Project site during working hours because commuting construction workers, trucks, and other large construction vehicles would temporarily be added to normal traffic. Slow-moving construction traffic along local roadways may reduce optimal traffic flows on these roadways and could delay emergency vehicles or contribute to a vehicle accident. Nonetheless, potential impacts would be minimal due to the temporary nature of construction traffic.

During the Project's operational phase, the frequency of emergency calls may incrementally increase because residential uses would be introduced to the currently vacant site. However, the Project would fulfill an existing need for housing in the City. Therefore, the housing and job opportunities generated by the Project are expected to be filled by residents who currently live in the area. Considering the Project would not induce unplanned population growth, the Project is not expected to increase the demand for police protection or require new facilities. Impacts to police services would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is within 1 mile of Ridgemoor Elementary School, and Kathryn Newport Middle School (Google 2024). As previously discussed, the Project would fulfill an existing need for housing in the City. As stated above in 4.14.1 a, approximately 245 persons are planned to live in the residential community. Therefore, the housing and job opportunities generated by the Project are expected to be filled by residents who currently live in the area. Considering the Project would not induce unplanned population growth, the Project is not expected to increase the demand for schools or require new facilities. Impacts to schools would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. As mentioned above, the Project would fulfill an existing need for housing in the City and would not induce unplanned population growth. Furthermore, additional jobs generated by the Project are expected to be filled by residents who currently live in the area and would not result in the relocation of any population. La Ladera Park and Silver Star Park are located approximately 0.5 and 0.7 miles south of the Proposed Project. Residents of the Proposed Project will have access to these public parks. As stated above, the Proposed Project is consistent with the land use and general plan (City 2013b). Thus, the Project is not expected to increase the demand for parks or require new facilities. Impacts to parks would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would not induce growth requiring the extension of existing, or creation of other, public facilities. Further, the Project would not increase the demand for other public facilities. The Proposed Project is required to pay the City's development impact residential fee. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.16 RECREATION

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

4.16.1 Impact Analysis

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project proposes construction of a 74-unit residential subdivision with duplexes; however, the Project would fulfill an existing need for housing in the City and would not induce unplanned population growth. Furthermore, additional jobs generated by the Project are expected to be filled by residents who currently live in the area. Thus, the Project would not increase the use of the existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would be accelerated. Impacts to recreational facilities would be less than significant.

- 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?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project plans to preserve 64 acres (or roughly 80%) of the Project site as natural open space to prevent future development of sloped areas. The existing open space includes a network of trails; however, these trails are not designated as community or regional trails by the city (City 2013b). The Project does not involve construction or expansion of off-site public recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Additionally, Parks and Recreation Fees will be paid by the applicant in compliance with the City's Municipal Code. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

4.17 TRANSPORTATION

17.	TRANSPORTATION. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

17.	TRANSPORTATION. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(b)	Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e. g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

A Traffic Impact Study (TIS) was prepared for the Project by General Technologies and Solutions (GTS) on July 2024 (Appendix J). The TIS presents existing conditions (2024), existing conditions (2024) with Proposed Project conditions, opening year cumulative (2026) without Proposed Project conditions, and opening year cumulative (2026) with Proposed Project conditions. The Proposed Project is expected to be screened out for VMT analysis, and the full screening memo can be found in Appendix B of Appendix F. The level of service (LOS) traffic study has been prepared in accordance with the City of Menifee's *LOS Traffic Study Guidelines* (October 2020).

4.17.1 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?*

Less Than Significant Impact. To analyze the Project's compliance with the City General Plan Circulation Element, GTS counted existing traffic volumes at Ganymede Way at Polaris Drive (TMC1) and Ridgemoor Rd at Boulder Crest Way (TMC2). The existing conditions operated at LOS A, an acceptable LOS. Trip generation was calculated using the rates in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition (2021). The Proposed Project is expected to generate 36 a.m. peak hour trips and 42 p.m. peak hour trips. All intersections have a LOS of A with implementation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not exceed the traffic operations criteria at the intersections studied.

Additionally, the applicant would pay all applicable fees required by the City's Municipal Code, including the traffic systems management fee, the citywide traffic fee, and the county traffic impact mitigation fee. Thus, implementation of the Proposed Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Section 15064.3(b) of the CEQA Guidelines describes criteria for analyzing transportation impacts. The City of Menifee Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled (adopted June 3rd, 2020), projects may be presumed to have a less than significant impact if they meet any of the following criteria: (1) Transit Priority Area (TPA) Screening, (2) Low VMT Area Screening, and (3) Project Type Screening. The Proposed Project does not meet any of the criteria to screen for VMT and therefore, the Proposed Project is expected to screen out for VMT analysis. Impacts regarding Project VMT would therefore be less than significant.

- c) *Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project does not propose any hazardous design features such as sharp curves or dangerous intersections. The Project is compatible with surrounding uses. Impacts would be less than significant.

- d) *Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project's circulation system will be reviewed by the City's emergency response personnel and the City's Public Works Department to ensure that ingress and egress widths are sufficient and that the proposed circulation system would not interfere with an emergency response access route. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

18.	TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES. 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:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	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	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	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 Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.18.1 Impact Analysis

- 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 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)?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project involves the construction of a 37-lot subdivision with duplexes (74 units total) at the end of the existing cul-de-sac on Boulder Crest Way, just west of Ganymede Way in the City on a 78-acre site. The Project site is undeveloped and is surrounded by other residential uses. Grading of the site would be required to allow for construction of the

residential units and associated structures. A NAHC Sacred Lands File search resulted in negative findings within the search radius. No tribal cultural resources are expected to be encountered due to heavy ground disturbance previously occurring on-site. Furthermore, the City contacted the Pechanga Band of Mission Indians, Soboba band of Luiseño Indians, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians. Consultation closed on September 24, 2025 and the City will implement the standard conditions of approval, which has been approved by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, and Pechanga Band of Mission Indians, who previously requested consultation. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?*

Less Than Significant Impact. As noted above, the City worked with the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians and the Pechanga Band of Mission Indians to create a standard condition of approval. As noted above, the NAHC responded that no records of tribal cultural resources were within the Project site. With implementation of the standard conditions, impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources would be less than significant.

4.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

19.	UTILITIES/SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

19.	UTILITIES/SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(e)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.19.1 Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or expansion of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The City is located within the water service boundary of the EMWD. The District provides domestic water services to the City and wastewater services via the Sun City Water Reclamation Facility (WRF). Electricity is provided to the City by Southern California Edison, and natural gas service is provided by SoCalGas. Telecommunications services in the City are provided by Time Warner Cable and Spectrum. Water and wastewater service for the Project would connect to existing water and sewer lines, and existing electricity and telecommunication services. No off-site impacts are proposed as part of the Project.

- b) *Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal dry and multiple dry years?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Water supplies for the Proposed Project site would be provided by EWMD. EWMD is a public water agency formed in 1950 and annexed into the service area of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California under a system permit issued by the California Department of Public Health. Presently, EWMD has four sources of water supply, potable groundwater, desalinated groundwater, recycled water, and imported water from MWD. According to EMWD's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (2020 UWMP), imported water accounts for between 50 and 60 percent of the total water supply, while potable groundwater, desalted water, and recycled water accounted for the rest (EMWD 2020).

According to the 2020 UMWP, EMWP would be capable of providing adequate water supply to its service area under a normal supply and demand scenario, single dry-year supply and demand scenario, and multiple dry-year supply and demand scenarios through 2045. The 2020 UMWP water supply predictions are based on existing General Plan designations and account for increased demand growth as the City occurs. Based on the General Plan, the Project site is designated 2.15-R and the site is zoned LDR-1. The purpose of 2.15-R designation and LDR-1 zoning is to provide single-family attached and detached residences. As concluded in section 4.12 Land Use/Planning, the proposed development is consistent with the allowed uses under 2.15-R designation. Thus, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact regarding sufficient water supplies.

- c) *Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

Less Than Significant Impact. EMWD owns and operates four active regional water reclamation facilities including Sun City WRF, which would provide wastewater collection service for the proposed development. On-site sewer laterals would connect to existing sewer facilities in the adjacent roadways. The Sun City RWRf redirects wastewater from residents living within its service area to the Perris Valley RWRf for wastewater processing and treatment. The Perris Valley RWRf currently has a capacity of 22 million gallons per day (mgd) with a planned capacity of 100 mgd (EMWD 2021). As the project is consistent with land use designation for the area, payment of standard sewer connection fees and ongoing user fees would ensure that sufficient capacity is available. As such, the project's potential impacts on wastewater treatment provider would be fully mitigated via payment of fees and EMWD's service commitment. Impacts would be less than significant.

- d) *Would the project 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?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project includes the construction of a 37-lot subdivision with duplexes (74-units total); therefore, no demolition is required. The Proposed Project would comply with the City of Menifee's Municipal Code Chapter 9.225 Waste Storage Facilities requirements. Construction waste generated by the Project would be taken to a facility approved by the City for the diversion of construction and demolitions materials within the County.

Waste Management provides solid waste services to the City, including the Proposed Project site and is the primary disposal location for Waste Management Services. In 2019 (the most recent reporting year available), a total of 62,210 tons of solid waste were disposed in the five permitted landfills serving the city (CalRecycle 2019). Among the five sites serving the City, Badlands Sanitary Landfill, El Sobrante Landfill, and Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill admitted the majority of City's waste. This is sufficient capacity for solid waste generated by the Project. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

- e) *Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project includes the construction of a 37-lot subdivision with duplexes (74-units total). The Project would comply with the City of Menifee's Municipal Code Chapter 9.225 Waste Storage Facilities Requirements and general plan policies. The code requires projects to divert or recycle at least 65 percent of construction materials. Construction waste generated by the Proposed Project would be taken to a facility approved by the City for the diversion of construction and demolition materials within the county. Compliance with this Chapter of the Municipal Code would align the Project with goals set forth in AB 939 and AB 341, which state the City must divert at least 50 percent of its annual waste and set a recycling goal of 75 percent for California by 2020. Therefore, the Project would comply with all federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Impacts will be less than significant.

4.20 WILDFIRE

20.	WILDFIRE. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.20.1 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is located within a Very High Fire Severity Zone (VHFSZ) within the Local Responsibility Area (LRA; City 2021a). As mentioned in Section 4.9 above, the City has developed an Emergency Services Program that includes City staff receiving training in emergency preparedness, management, and mitigation; the City maintaining the EOC; the City organizing and training a Disaster Assistant Response Team composed of volunteers; and the City promoting emergency planning, training, public awareness, and education (City 2021b). Additionally, the Proposed Project would comply with the Fire Protection Plan that was approved by the Riverside County Fire Department in 2023 (Firewise 2023). The Fire Protection Plan includes strategies to reduce fire risk including BMPs for vegetation management.

No roads would be permanently closed as a result of the construction or operation of the Project, and no structures would be developed that could potentially impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The proposed Project would be accessed via Boulder Crest way and Polaris Drive. These roads would provide sufficient ingress/egress for the Project site. The Project would not prohibit subsequent programs or plans from being established or prevent the goals and objectives of existing plans from being carried out. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project, 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?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is within the LRA VHFSZ. The Project site is slightly sloped to the east and gradually increases in elevation going west. Elevations on the Project site range from approximately 1,520-1,615 feet above mean sea level (Google Earth 2023). Santa Ana Wind Events also tend to occur in the City during the months of August, September, and October. Due to the presence of nearby gentle slopes and wind direction, which could carry fires within the VHFSZ, the Project site could expose new residents to wildfire impacts. However, building code fire safety requirements and General Plan policies would require the provision of fire suppression and alarm systems and payment of fire protection facility fees, which would aid in preventing the spread of wildfires. Fire safety procedures include checking weather and having fire watch. Additionally, the Proposed Project would comply with the Fire Protection Plan that was approved by the Riverside County Fire Department in 2023 (Firewise 2023). The Fire Protection Plan includes strategies to reduce fire risk including BMPs for vegetation management. Therefore, compliance with these policies would ensure impacts are less than significant.

- c) *Would the project 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?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Although the Project is located within the LRA VHFSZ, the Project is located within an urbanized area and would involve the development of the majority of the Project site with structures. No new roads would be constructed, and fuel breaks would not be required. The Project will comply with building code and fire safety requirements, as well as DTSP and General Plan policies. Construction BMPs, such as ensuring equipment has spark arresters installed, would ensure temporary construction does not exacerbate fire risks in the area. Additionally, the Proposed Project would comply with the Fire Protection Plan that was approved by the Riverside County Fire Department in 2023 (Firewise 2023). The Fire Protection Plan includes strategies to reduce fire risk including BMPs for vegetation management. This impact would be less than significant.

- d) *Would the project 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?*

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in impact 4.20.1a, implementation of the Project would introduce new residents to the site, which is within a VHFSZ of local responsibility. As discussed in Section 4.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, development of the Project would introduce more impervious surfaces, which would increase the volume of stormwater runoff from the site. This increase in runoff volume could also increase the rate of surface runoff and flooding on- or off-site. However, landscaping of the Project area would help reduce off-site flows and reduce runoff volumes and rates. Furthermore, the Project would comply with all NPDES requirements, Riverside County's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit, and the City's runoff requirements and would therefore not significantly increase the rate of surface runoff and flooding on or off-site. Compliance with the City's general plan BMPs would ensure a less than significant impact.

4.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

21.	MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.	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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects?)	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.21.1 Impact Analysis

- 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?*

Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The Project Site is approximately 75.26 acres and is located in the City of Menifee, Riverside County, California. The property is situated on the southeastern slopes of Oak Hills, immediately west of Ganymede Way and a new residential neighborhood, and north of the end of the cul-de-sac on Boulder Crest Way. As described in Section 4.4 Biological Resources, implementation of mitigation measure MM-BIO-1 through MM BIO-4 and MM BIO-6 would address potential impacts to nesting birds, burrowing owls, urban/wildlands interface, Crotch's bumblebee, and Stephen's kangaroo rat. MM BIO-6 requires that the Project obtain permits from the CDFW and RWQCB. As noted under Section 4.5 Cultural Resources, and Section 4.18 Tribal Cultural Resources, no known historical, archaeological, or tribal resources on-site were impacted due to the previous ground disturbance. However, due to the grading and ground disturbance proposed, implementation of mitigation measures MM CUL-1, MM CUL-2, MM CUL-3, MM CUL-4, and MM CUL-5 would reduce impacts to historical resources, archaeological resources, and unanticipated human remains to a less than significant level by providing a process for evaluating and, as necessary, avoiding impacts to any identified resources during construction. In addition, standard conditions would ensure that impacts to tribal cultural resources encountered during construction are reduced to less than significant levels. Impacts would be less than significant with the mitigation incorporated for biological, cultural, and tribal resources.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The potential for cumulative impacts occurs when independent impacts of the Project are combined with the impact of related projects in proximity to the Project such that impacts occur that are greater than the impacts of the Project alone. As discussed throughout Sections 4.1 through 4.20 above, it has been determined that the Project would have no impact or impacts would be less than significant with or without mitigation measures, with respect to environmental issues. Where the Project would have no impacts or a less than significant impact, it would not contribute to cumulative impacts.

Since the Proposed Project includes the addition of a 37-lot subdivision (74 units total) residential development to the City, it has the potential to result in an increase in population. However, the Project would fulfill an existing need for housing in the City and would not induce unplanned population growth.

As noted in Section 4.8, the Proposed Project would not generate emissions higher than the allowed per year thresholds. In addition, since the proposed structures will be required to meet the 2019 Title 24 Part 6 building standards and institute the water conservation measures that are detailed in the California Green Building Code, a less than significant generation of GHG emissions would occur from construction and operation of the Proposed Project.

According to the Project’s traffic study, the Proposed Project would not result in cumulative impacts associated with traffic. Cumulative projects within the 3-mile radius are not anticipated to add any traffic to the study area. Therefore, no additional trips have been added beyond the growth rate and project trips.

Cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Project and identified related projects would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. Effects to human beings are generally associated with air quality, noise, traffic safety, geology/soils, and hazards/hazardous materials. As discussed in the previous environmental topic areas, the Project would not result in significant impacts to human beings because the Proposed Project would not cause significant impacts to air quality, noise, hazards, and traffic that would impact humans in the area. Adherence to regulatory codes, ordinances, regulations, BMPs, and standards listed throughout this document would ensure that construction and operation would not result in substantial adverse direct or indirect effects on humans. The impacts to human beings as a result of the Project would be less than significant.

SECTION 5.0 – REFERENCES

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